NAPLAN summary information: What’s been said …

“…While parents can be confident that their children are developing vital skills for life, like literacy and numeracy, it is important we continue to drive improvement, from early primary school through to senior secondary and beyond…”

“We should also remember that the primary value of NAPLAN continues to be the individual student report to parents, while schools also benefit from the valuable range of information provided to them about the performance of all students at the individual, class and year level…”

*Martin Dixon, Minister for Education Vic.*, 18 August 2014

“… my understanding it had a negligible impact in terms of the number of students affected…”

*Peter Collier, WA Education Minister*, 18 August 2014

"…The stark reality is that students who are failing to meet the national minimum standards are in danger of completing their schooling without the functional literacy and numeracy skills they need to succeed in the modern world…”

*Jeremy Rockliff, Tasmanian Education Minister*, 18 August 2014

*It is acknowledged that NAPLAN allows the conversations to be had …*

“…It is not all "doom and gloom", with improvements since the testing began…”

“…The final NAPLAN report for last year showed Tasmanian students were making gains faster than their interstate peers. In Tasmania, we have started from a low base and we have been making steady, incremental improvement…”

*David Raw, Tasmanian Principals Association President*, 18 August 2014
“…The teaching of writing is a very specialised skill and teachers do remarkably well in relation to the complex and diverse classroom…”

Robyn Cox, President, Primary English Teaching Association Australia, 19 August 2014

“…The results may indicate that schools are teaching to the test and students performed poorly because they were prepared for a narrative piece but were thrown when the question required persuasive writing…”

"…The decline may be partly because the writing task didn’t engage some students. It might also be because, for the first time, schools were not told in advance the style of writing that would be tested – persuasive or narrative – requiring students to be prepared to answer one or the other…”

“… ACARA would continue to not reveal the style of writing in future tests and would consider different tasks for primary and high school students…”

"…We believe that if there is a focus on teaching the full range of styles of writing then results should improve…”

Robert Randall, CEO ACARA, 18 August 2014

“…The Australian Association for the Teaching of English does not consider that performance in a single "on demand" writing task that has to be completed in just 40 minutes in response to an arbitrarily imposed writing prompt is capable of comprehensively measuring students' writing competence…”

“…NAPLAN results are just one piece of evidence available to teachers and other educational stakeholders…”

“…The main problem with NAPLAN results is that some people erroneously misuse them as an indicator of the effectiveness of schools and/or individual teachers. The tests have not been designed to measure these features…”

Garry Collins, President, Australian Association for the Teaching of English, Stafford Heights, 19 August 2014

“…NAPLAN remained a "snapshot" in time…”

Geoff Scott, President of the NSW Primary Principals’ Association

“…Can we celebrate our literacy successes, like the rest of the world does….”

Robyn Cox, President, Primary English Teaching Association of Australia, 19 August 2014
“…NAPLAN can be used to measure policies…”

“…So while it looks like Queensland's policy is working, given this year's results, it appears that Tasmania's policy attempt to raise literacy and numeracy standards hasn't fared so well…”

*The Examiner,* 19 August 2014

“… National program's important role in monitoring Australian education…..

“…WA parents, educators and employers alike should be pleased WA's reading and spelling results have improved since 2008 and remained steady when compared with last year…”

“… Although it causes some jitters among teachers and students, NAPLAN has become important in ensuring the accountability of education systems and individual schools…”

“…Like all testing, it has limitations. It should be seen only as a snapshot of a child's performance on a day based on a test that also has worthy bureaucratic aims. It is supposed to help governments better allocate resources and measure how a school is performing compared with others in similar areas and similar socio-economic cohorts…”

“…Such comparative testing is always open to abuse, such as when schools begin teaching in anticipation of the NAPLAN content at the expense of necessary work on the broader educational development of children…”

“…The ACARA team was right this year not to tell schools whether the writing test would involve a narrative or persuasive essay, thereby removing the temptation for schools to narrow their writing skills teaching…”

*Western Australian,* 19 August 2014

“…The overwhelming majority of students did not have a problem with the rule of law question…”

"…There is some evidence, especially in Year Three, [that] some students did have a problem with it…"

"…We're going to analyse that and use that information moving forward to develop and implement our next set of writing prompts into the future…"

*Stanley Rabinowitz, ACARA’s General Manager for Assessment and Reporting, ABC online,* 19 August 2014
“… Mr Mulherin also backed the test which he described as just one measure in judging school and student performance…”

"…NAPLAN is just one thing that gives a gauge on performance but there are many other things that contribute to success or failure of a student…”

**Tim Mulherin, Deputy Opposition Leader Qld, The Range News 19 August 2014**

“… NAPLAN summary report provided a valuable snapshot of literacy and numeracy standards across the state, as well as identifying areas that need greater attention.

“…My team has a relentless focus on achieving better student outcomes and by getting the data out quickly we enable schools to analyse the results and make meaningful changes sooner rather than later…”

**John-Paul Langbroek, Education Minister Qld, The Sunshine Coast 19 August 2014**

“…As is the case in all competitive environments, they work best when they are at their most transparent; when the playing field is as level as possible, when results can be analysed as like against like, and the competitors know exactly what is expected of them if they wish to achieve…”

“…This is one of the reasons why NAPLAN (the National Assessment Program - Literacy and Numeracy) is such an important tool in our modern education system….”

“…Its testing regime across core skill sets in years 3, 5, 7 and 9 provides invaluable data at both a macro and a micro level. Importantly, this is not an assessment program as such, but rather one that measures performance in key areas from a classroom to a state and a national level, providing educators with a tool that can be used to improve eventual academic outcomes…”

“…It is a database that gives administrators the ability to assess relative performance, and identify areas of weakness and act accordingly to ensure that those students in need of more support receive the educational opportunities that all Australian children deserve…”

“…NAPLAN is of superb use at a state level, where in recent years Queensland has managed to lift its performance from near the bottom of the pack towards the centre - a process which takes time, especially given the 12-13 year time-frame of most schooling journeys. These improvements come because educators are able to do more than throw buckets of money and resources at a sector as a whole in a scattergun approach; they are able to target specific areas of need…”

“…These may be particular regions or schools that are performing poorly in literacy and numeracy. Or for an individual principal or administrator, the NAPLAN data may identify one class within a school that is performing below its peers and some extra attention or remedial action is required either at a student or a teacher level…”

“…In short, NAPLAN is an instrument that empowers our school system to deliver better outcomes through more and improved qualitative information…”
“...The bottom line is that - despite critics who allege the NAPLAN process has students studying for tests rather than "learning" per se - this exercise is all about better outcomes...”

“...And if NAPLAN assessments mean that our next generation are concentrating on doing well on some specific tasks in literacy and numeracy on top of other areas of their curriculum, then that is actually a bonus, not something to be bemoaned...”

“...Like our next generation of Australians toiling away in classrooms around the country, those charged with administering the NAPLAN process will make the odd mistake, and hopefully learn from it...”

_The Courier Mail_,
19 August 2014

"...NAPLAN helps to show as early as possible a child's strengths or areas of development and get children the help they deserve...”

_Rob Randall, ACARA CEO, Adelaide Advertiser_,
19 August 2014

“...Queensland is now ranked fourth in Australia in the number of students achieving benchmarks in years three and five, except for writing...”

“...The NAPLAN test enabled the government to direct resourcing to the right places...”

“...This year teachers were not given any guide on the writing category, which could be persuasive or narrative style...”

“...This came after controversy about teachers coaching students to do well on the test which is the national education measuring tool...”

“...he expected this lack of preparation might be the reason for the poor result in writing Australia-wide but denied the result showed the test was "a joke"...”

"That's a simplistic assessment..."

“...The summary report provided a valuable snapshot of literacy and numeracy standards across the state, as well as identifying areas that needed greater attention...”

" NAPLAN is one piece of the education puzzle....”

"It's over reacting to say let's not do it at all...”.  

_John-Paul Langbroek, Education Minister Qld, The Range News_
19 August 2014

“...NAPLAN results have again provided a clear snapshot of Australian students' achievements in literacy and numeracy.  
“...Critics seized on the glitch to call for the writing component to be dropped from future tests....that would be a retrograde step...”
“…As always, the NAPLAN results highlighted weaknesses that need to be addressed through a concentration of resources and a stronger focus on "the basics" in classrooms…"

“… The change advocated by the SA Primary Principals Association president, Pam Kent (for NAPLAN to scrapped)… is the last thing the state’s students need…”

“…Even the hostility of teachers’ unions towards NAPLAN has become more muted. The tests provide accountability and transparency and are a valuable feature of Australian education in all sectors. They deserve to retain bipartisan support…"

*The Australian,*
*19 August 2014*

“…Marking the writing test is more time-consuming, and therefore more expensive, than marking the multiple-choice format of the other four literacy and numeracy tests.

For this reason, amid concerns about the consistency of marking, there is a push by some states to drop the writing component from the national tests. This would be a retrograde step; its faults can be fixed and it is an important indication of literacy skills. It is also the only independent response students are required to give in the tests…"

*The Australian,*
*18 August 2014*

“…It helps no one if teachers and students know the content of the tests before they sit them…”

“…Naplan is not a pass/fail test so there is no need for children to be stressed or anxious about it…”

“…But the test tasks should be made as clear as possible for students. ACARA … is now exploring the use of different tasks for primary and secondary students…”

“…It is also thinking about requiring students to demonstrate their mastery of more than one style of writing…”

“…The most beneficial change is likely to be a move away from the practice of using the same writing prompt for students at all year levels…”

“…The test people want to get on the same page as teachers and believe a focus on the full range of writing styles will eventually improve results…”

*Daily Telegraph,*
*19 August 2014*

**People on the street answering the question – should NAPLAN be scrapped?**

“…No. It gives an indication of the national average and shows consistency as well as problems…”

*Somayya Hanifie, Walkley Heights,*
*19 August 2014*
“…No. It gives us an indication of how our kids are doing. I wish we had it when I was at school…”

*Jason Scott, Elizabeth Grove, Adelaide Advertiser*
*19 August 2014*

“…I was a marker of the NAPLAN writing task this year, and contrary to the criticism, rather than seeing students stumped by the question I read texts that were creative, fluent, persuasive and showed flair and adaptability…”

“…Even students with low literacy skills were able to describe home or school rules that they would change, for example: "Why we should be allowed to run in the playground." Older students took on issues of wider importance such as gay marriage. Some students were even able to explain why rules were important and not needing change…”

“…I was impressed. Yes, NAPLAN remains a snapshot in time…”

“…Students who were not able to give it their best shot have been paralysed by the pressure from parents, teachers and schools who forget that important point…”

*Vivienne Nicoll-Hatton, Balmain, 20 August 2014*

“…Having two tasks would allow students to more broadly showcase their talents and cut down on the opportunity for teachers to coach for the test…”

*Barry McGaw, Australian Curriculum Assessment and Reporting Authority Chairman, 20 August 2014*

"I have to show improvement and Naplan is one way,"

*Len Fehlhaber, Principal of Mackay Central State School, 20 August 2014*

“…It is normal to have small changes in results year on year…”

“…While we obviously want our percentages to go up it’s not a huge concern for us given the slightly ambiguous nature of the writing task…”

“…I’m actually quite pleased our children were able to cope so effectively…”

“…NAPLAN for us is a bit of a line in the sand at which we can test the temperature, but it’s not the only thing that has an impact on the decisions we make…”

*Patrick Innes-Hill, Emmanuel College Principal, 20 August 2014*
“… raised the issue with the states and territories and .. suggested options such as varying the questions, so that some schools would be asked to write a persuasive piece and others a narrative…”

“… will also investigate other options, such as making the questions more age appropriate and giving students a choice of questions rather than a single prompt…”

*Sydney Morning Herald,*
*20 August 2014*

“… NAPLAN results are a reflection of the quality of teaching and learning that is taking place at Scots PGC College…”

*Simon Shepherd, Principal, Scots PGC College*

“…The release of the NAPLAN test results was a cause for celebration at Toowoomba North State School, recognised as one of the schools showing the greatest improvement in Toowoomba…”

“… The school had worked solidly for three years to improve student learning outcomes and the results showed her staff's efforts were being directed in the right place…”

"...It's great feedback for us on our teaching methods and resource allocation…”

“…The results were now rolling out and the student specific data would be analysed and used to improve teaching methods and target problem areas…”

"…NAPLAN is one of useful data strategy collection in our toolbox…”

*Kaarin Littleton, Toowoomba North State School Principal,*
*20 August 2014*