

From:
Mrs Anne Matthews

My involvement with NAPLAN is threefold in that I have experienced NAPLAN as a parent, as a teacher and as an management member in our school.

Overall I believe the NAPLAN data is a useful tool for a school. We use the information in the following ways

1. To analyse as a whole staff each year and determine what strategies and resources are working
 2. Class teachers working individually with each student to develop individual learning plans about what they know and what they need to learn right through from Year 3 to Year 9
 3. Together with other testing, observations and information collection, to determine future goals and resourcing to support student learning.
- In this process NAPLAN is an extremely useful tool for our school.

As a management member and coordinator of NAPLAN in our school, I have concerns about the negative influence that the MySchool website has had on the process this year. Not only were students and parents feeling the pressure but it also affected staff. One student believed that she would have to repeat Year 9 if she failed NAPLAN.

Reports about teachers 'cheating' made us feel for the schools and staff members who felt the need for such drastic action and the pressure they must have felt to take this action. We have heard stories from parents of students in other schools query the level of support given to students by supervisors. Discussions have occurred about the security of the test since it arrived unsealed in schools so early and it was up to the discretion of the school to maintain ethical and moral standards, which I believe the majority of schools would uphold.

I believe the MySchool Website has put schools and staff under too much pressure especially in an economic climate where schools with diminishing enrolments are often closed for economic reasons.

I have had a parent come to me this week with only these results and comment on the value of secondary programs in our school. The information does not take into account the very small numbers of students in our school in particular year levels swaying the results, the special needs of a large percentage of students in that group and the support programs currently in place.

I believe open communication with parents is good but the flip-side is their lack of knowledge and understanding as the information presented on My School is very one dimensional.

As a parent I have concerns about the data being published and about the pressure students felt this year undertaking the test with the publicity about the MySchool website occurring. For students and staff in schools where the results were not good publishing them is demoralising and negative. The Even Start tutoring program was fantastic in that it supported individual students who weren't succeeding but over the past 2 years there has been no external support stretching the resources and staffing in schools. Children today are under enough pressure without facing yet another negative experience.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment.