

I am writing because I am incensed by the manner in which the NAPLAN tests and their results are being used. I am currently employed at Clyde PS and as a Union Rep I have been following the class teachers' response to the testing.

The issue is not specifically the test, but the way its results are used and the comparisons made between schools on the My School website. Our small 215 student outer rural school was compared to a much larger inner city private school in the Like-schools match, which is totally unfair. Our school has a low socioeconomic standard, very few resources, outdated and rundown buildings and struggles to meet the daily expenses of heating etc. How the results of our students can be compared to a private school is ridiculous. Even more concerning is the fact that these results are being used to determine funding and resources to schools and may also have an impact on teacher employment etc.

We should not be following the example of the British and American systems, which have already been shown to be detrimental to children and society in general. Children have the right to feel positive about their schools and their efforts as learners without being shamed by league tables. It will only serve to reduce the number of effective teachers working in more difficult schools and areas and further damage the reputation of teachers, who are currently working under difficult circumstances.

Apart from these issues, because the test results are so vital to the school, large areas of the curriculum are being shoved aside for the sake of test preparation, which is also causing a great deal of stress for staff and students. Children do not learn more by testing more often. Many schools skew their results by removing children with academic difficulties from the testing or refuse entry to their school to students who are not likely to benefit their test results.