

While the NAPLAN tests are a helpful tool for providing a snapshot of student ability they do not give an accurate picture of our student body or its cultural differences.

Data that is collected via testing can, by its very nature, be very obtuse and astoundingly misleading.

By allowing NAPLAN to be the measure of most things we are shutting our eyes to the cultural and socio-economic differences that form Australian society because not all Australian children have a positive response to this type of simplistic testing and many of our children have much more to offer than Math and English Literacy.

We are also inviting a possible dumbing-down of the curriculum via a "teach for the test" and a return to a "core subject curriculum" curricular format, as experienced in England recently. This has led to a generation of students who lack the creative potential to think laterally and flexibly - something a rapidly changing future will demand.

As a parent I am far more concerned with the broader picture of my children's life at school, something which NAPLAN can never inform me about and I am very concerned that funding arrangements can be "divined" from such shallow data. It is incredibly simplistic and naively convenient to conflate the provisions of good education with systems of data collection. I find it increasingly concerning that numerical data can replace qualitative knowledge and that answers can be cobbled together from vague statistics masquerading as rational economic truth.