

From:  
MRS DZINTRA RICHARDS

As the principal of a small school I work very hard at building a culture of belonging in our school community. When data sets of as few as 5 children are presented on the web - if I honestly want to explain our poor performance e.g. 2 of the five students were new to the school and have not benefited from the excellent teaching at the school as yet, I immediately identify families as "bringing our results down". I can't do this, so can never be entirely honest if as Julia Gillard wants, parents come and ask the principal about the school results. I also find it difficult to imagine how, despite whatever formulas are used, our small rural school of 57 students is 'like' St Stephen's School, in Duncraig WA, metropolitan, with an enrolment of 2517 in 2009. I would like the Myschool website to say how many children in each year level sat the test ie 5 and not that 100% sat the test. I also think that it is statistically unreliable and invalid to include data sets of less than 10 children in such a public way for comparison. Some statisticians believe the number should be much higher. I have included my annual reports on the school website for many years and have nothing to hide in terms of school performance. (warts and all!) However, when cohorts are small in a particular year level, I do not include raw data but include comments. I believe this should be the case for the Myschool website.