Senate Standing Committee on Education Employment and Workplace Relations

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
Additional Estimates 2011-2012

Agency - Australian Curriculum, Assessment & Reporting Authority

DEEWR Question No. EW1182_12

Senator Mason asked on 16 February 2012 , Hansard page 29

Question

ACARA - national minimum standards

Senator MASON: .... It just struck me the national minimum standards seem to be very low. Where are these national minimum standards? Can we get a hold of them and have a look at them? Dr Hill: Absolutely, yes. Senator MASON: Who devised them? Dr Hill: They were devised as a collaborative exercise by all of the states and territories working with the federal government. Senator MASON: How long ago? Dr Hill: I cannot put a date on it precisely. Mr Adams: I think the development of the national minimum standards would have happened around about 2007, prior to 2008. They were developed with an understanding of the benchmarks that pre-existed them. So as Dr Hill explained, the location of the benchmarks for identifying a student's ability to deal competently with schooling was used to consider the distribution and the trialling that was done prior to NAPLAN, and it was in that year that the national minimum standards were established. I need to check the 2007, but I am fairly confident that is the date.

Answer
ACARA has provided the following response.

The NAPLAN scale bands were developed during 2007 by the AESOC NAPLAN Steering Group, with reference to advice from the Expert Advisory Group (comprising leading Australian measurement experts). The bands were endorsed by the Australian Education Systems Officials Committee (AESOC) early in 2008.

The National Minimum Standard (NMS) for each year level is represented by a band on the NAPLAN common scale. The skills described in the table at **Attachment 1** represent those typically assessed in NAPLAN tests at the relevant NMS band level for each year level. This information is available at www.nap.edu.au.

Students who do not achieve the NMS at any year level may need intervention and support to help them achieve the literacy and numeracy skills they require to progress satisfactorily through their schooling. Students who are performing at the NMS may also require additional assistance to achieve their potential.

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Year NMS Band	Reading	Persuasive Writing	Language Conventions	Numeracy
Year 3 (Band 2)	Makes some meaning from short texts, such as simple reports and stories, which have some visual support. Makes connections between pieces of clearly stated information.	Shows some audience awareness by the use of simple persuasive language; for example, *I think ... because ...* and by providing some information to support reader understanding. Uses some capital letters and full stops correctly. Correctly spells most simple words used in the writing. Some other one- and two-syllable words may also be correct.	Identifies errors and correctly spells some words with simple spelling patterns. Recognises grammar and punctuation conventions in short sentences, such as the correct use of pronouns (*herself*).	Doubles a whole number to solve a simple problem. Recognises a 2D shape within a pattern of different shapes. Visually compares the area of similar shapes. Locates a position of an object on a simple plan.
Year 5 (Band 4)	Makes inferences from clearly stated information in short factual texts and stories. Identifies the meaning of some unfamiliar words from their context. Finds specific information in longer stories and factual texts supported with tables and diagrams.	Writes a persuasive text in which paragraphs are used to group like ideas and persuasive devices are used to attempt to convince a reader. Correctly punctuates some sentences with both capital letters and full stops. May demonstrate correct use of capitals for names and some other punctuation. Correctly spells most common words.	Identifies errors and correctly spells some one- and two-syllable words with common spelling patterns (*cent, building*). Recognises grammar and punctuation conventions in short sentences and speech, such as the correct use of appropriate structure, descriptive phrases, abbreviations, brackets and commas in lists.	Uses addition and subtraction to solve problems. Calculates money amounts using addition and subtraction. Identifies a prism displayed in an everyday context. Estimates the volume of liquid in a familiar container. Recognises attributes of 3D objects. Visualises a 3D model from a different perspective.
Year 7 (Band 5)	Uses clearly stated information in familiar text types to draw some conclusions and inferences. Draws conclusions about a character in narrative texts. Connects and sequences ideas in longer information texts and identifies opinions in persuasive texts.	Structures a persuasive text to include an introduction and a body containing some related points of argument. Includes enough supporting detail for the writer's point of view to be easily understood by the reader, although the conclusion may be weak or simple. Correctly structures most simple and compound sentences and some complex sentences.	Identifies errors and correctly spells one- and two-syllable words with common spelling patterns (*grown, drafting, message*). Recognises grammar and punctuation conventions in standard sentences and speech, such as the correct use of verb forms, synonyms, connecting words (*however*), brackets and apostrophes for contractions (*he's*).	Applies a small range of strategies to solve problems. Calculates money amounts using multiplication and division. Calculates the missing value in a decimal multiplication equation. Estimates the size of an angle. Finds the chance of a simple event occurring. Uses knowledge of factors to solve problems. Compares and orders decimals with two decimal places.
Year 9 (Band 6)	Makes meaning from a range of text types of increasing difficulty and understands different text structures. Recognises the purpose of general text features such as titles and subheadings. Makes inferences by connecting ideas across different parts of texts. Interprets descriptive and figurative language and identifies the main difference between characters in narrative texts.	Organises a persuasive text using focused paragraphs. Uses some effective persuasive devices and accurate words or groups of words when developing points of argument and ideas. Punctuates nearly all sentences correctly with capitals, full stops, exclamation marks and question marks. Correctly uses more complex punctuation marks some of the time.	Identifies errors and correctly spells most words with common spelling patterns (*record, disturb*). Demonstrates knowledge of grammar and punctuation conventions in more complex texts, such as concise expression and the correct use of extended groups of adjectives, prepositions (*from*), commas to separate phrases and the stroke or forward slash (/).	Solves number sentences that may include negative numbers. Identifies the rule describing a number pattern. Visualises the result of a single flip of an object. Interprets simple line graphs. Identifies area as the measurement attribute for a given situation. Identifies attributes of a 3D object including its net.