

**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. EW1186_12

Senator Mason asked on 16 February 2012 , Hansard page 35

Question

ACARA - national minimum standards

Senator MASON: To expedite matters, I might ask some questions. I suspect you will need to take them on notice. I have one other issue and that will be it. I am interested in who is meeting the national minimum standard that we discussed earlier. Could you possibly provide a list of those schools in which 100 per cent of students who achieved the minimum standard for their year levels across the years 2008 and 2010? Then could you provide a list of those schools in which 95 per cent of students achieved the minimum standard for the year levels across the years 2008 and 2010, and then a list of those schools in which 90 per cent of the students achieved the minimum standard for the year levels across the years 2008 and 2010, and then the same list in which 85 per cent of students achieved the minimum standards for the year levels across 2008 and 2010? Finally, could you provide a list of those schools in which 80 per cent of students achieved the minimum standards for the year levels across the years 2008 and 2010? Will that be possible, Dr Hill? Probably not right now, I understand. Dr Hill: We will take that on notice.

Answer

ACARA has provided the following response.

The *Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority Act (2008)* requires the Authority to 'perform its functions and exercise its powers in accordance with any directions given to it' by the council of Commonwealth, State and Territory Ministers for education in writing, including through ACARA's Charter. The current ACARA Charter states that ACARA must 'collect, manage, analyse, evaluate and report statistical and related information about schools and the outcomes of schooling' as required by COAG and under the National Education Agreement in accordance with the *Principles for reporting on schooling in Australia 2009* (available at http://www.mceecdya.edu.au/mceecdya/nap_principlesprotocolsforreponschool2009_27896.html).

The Principles were set by the Ministerial Council to 'guide and inform the use and publication of data generated in the process of measuring the performance of schooling in Australia'. They state that 'governments will not publish simplistic league tables or rankings, and will put in place strategies to manage the risk that third parties may seek to produce such tables or rankings'. They further stipulate that: 'Data will not be published in a form that compares the performance of individual schools without contextual information'.

In view of the above, ACARA believes that providing lists of schools set against minimum standards for publication would expressly contradict ministerial directions and put it at risk of breaching legislative requirements.