Senate Standing Committee on Education Employment and Workplace Relations

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
Supplementary Budget Estimates 2011-2012

Agency - Australian Curriculum, Assessment & Reporting Authority

DEEWR Question No. EW0554_12

Senator Boyce provided in writing.

Question

ACARA - making NAPLAN more accessible to special needs students.

I understand the Department has followed on from the Committee's recommendation in investigating making NAPLAN more accessible to special needs students. Can the Department update the Committee on the progress of investigations into making NAPLAN more accessible to these students?

Can the Department articulate methods identified so far that can make the test more accessible to special needs students?

When will the Department finalise its investigation and begin implementing changes that allow special needs students better access to NAPLAN?

Answer

ACARA has provided the following response.

The *National Protocols for Test Administration,* which are revised annually by ACARA in collaboration with states and territories, reinforce the messages of the *Disability Discrimination Act 1992* and Disability Standards for Education 2005, and outline a range of adjustments permitted for students with disability to access NAPLAN tests including Braille, large print, extra time and use of support staff.

Ongoing investigations (particularly around new technologies) are carried out by ACARA into enhancements to adjustments permitted for and available to students with a disability that will better enable them to participate in the National Assessment Program (including NAPLAN).

ACARA piloted an alternative electronic test format (NAPLAN 2011) for use by students with a severe physical disability to assist in their participation in the NAPLAN tests. Analysis of feedback obtained from the pilot was finalised. An electronic version of the tests will be provided in 2012 for those students otherwise unable to access the tests by any other adjustments, as outlined in the *National Protocols for Test Administration*.