

MEDIA RELEASE

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ONE IN 10 STUDENTS “NEED ADDITIONAL SUPPORT” TO MEET HIGHER NAPLAN EXPECTATIONS

Around 10 per cent of students across Australia need additional support in literacy and numeracy to meet higher NAPLAN expectations, according to the latest data released today by the Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA) in the new-look 2023 NAPLAN national results.

The latest figures also show that approximately 65 per cent of students across Australia are meeting the higher literacy and numeracy expectations, achieving in the ‘Strong’ and ‘Exceeding’ proficiency levels, while around 23 per cent of students are in the ‘Developing’ level and working towards meeting expectations.¹

Participation rates nationally have bounced back in 2023, increasing on average by 2 percentage points across all years and domains, compared to 2022, from 91.4 per cent to 93.3 per cent. This was “a very good sign” ACARA CEO David de Carvalho said, reversing a downward trend apparent in recent years and exacerbated by the impact of the COVID pandemic.

“This year’s NAPLAN results are the first to reflect the new reporting changes. They show strong performance among Australian students in literacy and numeracy skills, but also provide clear information on areas requiring improvement,” Mr de Carvalho said.

Under the new approach, students are assessed against 4 levels of proficiency based on previous years of schooling: Exceeding, Strong, Developing and Needs additional support. The new reporting system more clearly and simply shows NAPLAN achievement, identifying where expectations are being met.

“Importantly, with expectations set at a higher level than in previous years, the new reporting is showing those areas where we need to focus our efforts on supporting more students to meet expectations and succeed,” Mr de Carvalho said.

“The results also continue to highlight the educational disparities of students from non-urban areas, Indigenous Australian heritage and those with low socio-educational backgrounds.”

Key highlights from this year’s NAPLAN national results include:

- Across year level groups on average, 65 per cent of students in Year 3, 68

- In writing, primary students were more likely to achieve at 'Exceeding' or 'Strong' levels than secondary students, with 76.0 per cent of Year 3 students and 66.2 per cent of Year 5 students meeting expectations compared to 62.5 per cent in Year 7 and 58.0 per cent in Year 9.
- Nationally, participation rates have bounced back. For primary years, it increased from 93.8 per cent to 95.1 per cent. For secondary years, it increased from 88.9 per cent to 91.6 per cent.
- Participation rates ranged from 88.4 per cent (Year 9 numeracy) to 95.9 per cent (Year 5 reading).
- Demographic results reflect trends in other national assessments and previous NAPLAN results with girls outperforming boys in literacy, and higher results tending to align with students from the highest socio-educational backgrounds, in urban areas, or from non-Indigenous backgrounds. Specifically:
 - Nationally, just under 10 per cent of students (on average across all year levels and domains) are in the 'Needs additional support' level while, on average across all year levels and domains, around a third of Indigenous students 'need additional support'.
 - Average NAPLAN scores for all year levels and all domains for students from the highest socio-educational background were substantially above those from the lowest.
 - Fewer than 3 in 10 students (30 per cent) in very remote schools are rated as 'Strong' or 'Exceeding' in any domain or year level, while at least 3 in 5 students (60 per cent) in major city schools are rated 'Strong' or 'Exceeding' across almost all domains and year levels.
 - Girls outperformed boys in writing, achieving average NAPLAN scores above boys in every year group, with higher percentages of girls at 'Strong' or 'Exceeding' levels, notably 70.0 per cent of girls compared to 55.4 per cent of boys in Year 7 and 66.3 per cent of girls compared to 50.2 per cent of boys in Year 9.
 - Boys generally outperformed girls in numeracy. The difference was statistically

BACKGROUND

The NAPLAN national results provide nationally comparable data on the 2023 national and state/territory results for each test domain and year level assessed, and for each level by gender, Indigenous status and language background other than English.

NAPLAN was successfully undertaken in schools across the country and this was the first year that the annual assessments were taken in March instead of May. A record 4.4 million online tests were submitted by more than 1.3 million students in 9,390 campuses and schools across Australia.

The new way of reporting means that NAPLAN results from 2023 cannot be compared to NAPLAN results from previous years. Reporting on NAPLAN changes over time will start this year, building upon the 2023 results.

The new proficiency levels are:

- x Exceeding: the student's result exceeds expectations at the time of testing.
- x Strong: the student's result meets challenging but reasonable expectations at the time of testing.