



Australian Education Union

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This fax is confidential to the sub-branch secretary and members of the Australian Education Union.

To the Sub-branch Secretary/AEU Rep

U R G E N T

AEU LIFTS MORATORIUM ON NAPLaN TESTS

Members are to be congratulated for their strong commitment to the AEU campaign. This has produced a significant win for the AEU.

Over the past 24 hours, events have moved very quickly at a Federal level. Federal Education Minister, Julia Gillard, has finally agreed to formal consultation with the AEU to address the issue of the misuse of student performance data, including the publication of simplistic league tables prepared from the MySchool website.

Ms Gillard has moved from a position of not negotiating with the AEU to one of establishing a process by which the AEU will have input into a working party to be formed to advise on improvements to the MySchool website. This working party will provide a way to address the concerns of the AEU and professional and parent groups relating to misuse of student test data.

The working party will be established by ACARA to address the concerns of league tables in line with the Deputy Prime Minister's statement dated 5 May 2010 which is attached for your consideration.

This has been achieved by AEU members' steadfast resolve under huge pressure, politically and industrially, to ensure that the Federal Government would respond to the significant concerns of the education profession.

As a consequence, the AEU Federal Executive has agreed to lift the moratorium on 2010 NAPLaN testing. The decision is attached for your information.

We are aware that due to Ms Gillard's reluctance to resolve this matter earlier schools are now placed under considerable pressure with respect to the implementation of NAPLaN next week. We are in urgent discussions with the DECS about providing schools with the necessary time to implement the test. Schools that feel that they will have difficulty in meeting next week's timeline should contact their Regional Director to make arrangements for the test to be implemented within a satisfactory timeline. There is capacity for this to happen under the NAPLaN guidelines developed by ACARA.

The decision of AEU Federal Executive this morning provides an opportunity for the AEU to engage in genuine dialogue with the Federal Government on a sound approach to school accountability. We will need to work very hard over the next few months to achieve our objective. We will also put Ms Gillard on notice that if the issue of league tables is not dealt with appropriately through this process the AEU will take further action.

Thank you for your support.

AEU Branch Executive



THE HON JULIA GILLARD MP
DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER

Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600

Mr Angelo Gavrielatos
Federal President
Australian Education Union
Ground Floor
120 Clarendon Street
SOUTHBANK VIC 3006

Dear Mr Gavrielatos

The Rudd Government is committed to:

- the transformative power of high quality education
- the value of transparency and accountability for ongoing school improvement
- effective assessment and reporting of student achievement including the diagnostic value of the NAPLAN
- the power of accurate data to provide comparable national reporting of school effectiveness
- ensuring that educational disadvantage is addressed, and
- an opposition to the misuse of student performance data including simplistic league tables.

The Rudd Government has pursued these commitments in the development and delivery of the Education Revolution including the My School website.

The Rudd Government, in conjunction with state and territory governments, has consistently stated its intention to add to the My School website by including value added data such as the improvement in student performance across two tiers of educational achievement, the resources available to schools and other measures of school effectiveness.

Further, the Rudd Government is committed to consultation between ACARA and stakeholders in this process.

The Rudd Government will ask ACARA to form a working party of educational experts including literacy and numeracy specialists, principal organisations and representatives of the AEU and the IEUA to provide further professional advice on the use of student performance data and other indicators of school effectiveness as ACARA develops additional improvements to the My School Website which will include the 2010 NAPLAN data, in line with Government commitments above.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Julia Gillard'.

Julia Gillard
Minister for Education

AEU FEDERAL EXECUTIVE

DRAFT RESOLUTION: 6 MAY 2010

The Federal Executive of the AEU acknowledges with admiration and respect the profound commitment and dedication of members in the campaign to protect students, schools and school communities from the misuse of student data and the damaging effects of league tables.

Acting with integrity, AEU members have demonstrated their professional and ethical commitment to their students and Federal Executive congratulates members on achieving an outcome that enables the profession's concerns to be addressed.

In contrast, this dispute has seen governments and their departments take extraordinarily deplorable and unwarranted actions, ignoring the professional and educational concerns at the heart of this dispute. The AEU Federal Executive condemns the intimidation and threats of disciplinary action, the recourse to punitive legal action raising the prospect of penalties and thousands of dollars in fines against individual teachers and principals as well as the employment of unqualified people, including tourists, to supervise tests.

The Federal Executive welcomes the proposal by the Deputy Prime Minister Julia Gillard to form a working party of educational experts including literacy and numeracy specialists, principal organisations and representatives of the AEU and IEUA to provide further professional advice on the use of student performance and other indicators of school effectiveness as ACARA continues to develop the My School website.

The working party's advice and the work of ACARA in further developing the My School website will be in line with the clear commitments of the Federal Government, as stated in the Deputy Prime Minister's letter of 5 May 2010, which includes "an opposition to the misuse of student performance data including simplistic league tables". This proposal from the Deputy Prime Minister will provide a process to advance and address the profession's educational concerns as they relate to the misuse of student performance data including league tables. It will also provide a way for the profession as a whole to engage in a genuine dialogue with the government on a sound approach to school accountability and improvement.

Accordingly, the Federal Executive of the AEU lifts the moratorium on the administration of NAPLAN 2010 and will advise its members of this decision.

While it is regrettable that the Federal Government has refused to entertain the option of delaying the NAPLAN in order to allow a smooth administration of the test, in light of the disruption to preparation over the last 3 weeks the opportunity exists for state / territory governments and their departments to delay the tests as per the NAPLAN guidelines developed by ACARA.

The AEU remains resolute in its opposition to the publication of damaging league tables and other inappropriate, invalid, inaccurate and misleading school rankings and will continue to campaign against the misuse of student performance data and the creation and publication league tables.