

## QUESTION ON NOTICE 1

*Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: I have not heard this analysis of NAPLAN particularly focusing on those children who are in bands 1, 2 and 3. Do you know if there are any peer reviewed studies or research that looks at how useful or not useful NAPLAN is for that lower cohort?*

*Ms GENTLE: I have read an article saying that schools are not sufficiently accountable for students with disability because NAPLAN does not provide them with adequate data. I will take that on notice. I will find that article and get it to you.*

The first article is the one I was thinking of when I answered the question. The following three articles also deal with questions around NAPLAN testing and students with disability. The final one is a book on the same topic.

Dempsey I. & Davies M. (2013). National test performance of young Australian children with additional educational needs. *Australian Journal of Education*, 57(1), 5-18.

Elliot, S., Davies, M. & Kettler, R. (2012). Australian students with disabilities accessing NAPLAN: Lessons from a decade of inclusive assessment in the United States. *International Journal of Disability, Development and Education*, 59(1).

Davies, M. (2012). Accessibility to NAPLAN assessments for students with disabilities: A 'fair go'. *Australasian Journal of Special Education*, 36(1), 62-78. doi:10.1017/jse.2012.7

Cumming, J. & Dickson E. (2013). Educational accountability tests, social and legal inclusion approaches to discrimination for students with disability: a national case study from Australia. *Assessment in Education: Principles, Policy & Practice* 20(2).

Cumming, J. (2012). *Valuing students with impairment: International comparisons of practice in educational accountability*. Springer Science & Business Media.

Please let me know if Mr Shoebridge needs assistance gaining access to these texts.

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**The Hon. DANIEL MOOKHEY:** *Mr David Shoebridge will correct me if I am not right. The RAM methodology is the baseline and then the disability loading is layered on top of that. It could be either/or?*

**Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE:** *I think RAM includes assessing the school population and they get additional funding based upon the nature of the school population.*

**Mr DEACON:** *So far as I am aware the disability loading does not exist at this stage.*

**Reverend the Hon. FRED NILE:** *Is it the best use of that money to go to the executive staff?*

**Ms GENTLE:** *It can be justified. There is research evidence that the most decisive factor in a child's education is the quality of the teacher. If you have a school with a lot of inexperienced teachers, and you have more experienced executives supervising them, and they have a day off a week to actually go into the classrooms and observe their teachers working and guide them then in theory that will help the whole project of education. But how much it actually results in measurable progress for the students with disability, I would be very doubtful—*

**The Hon. DANIEL MOOKHEY:** *I am not suggesting that the decision itself is illegitimate. The purpose of my question is more to understand the transparency of the expenditure. You may want to take this question on notice as it is very specific. The Committee has been told by the department that the way in which it reports the use of disability loading funding is through its mechanism of an annual report.*

**Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE:** *And through ad hoc feedback with regional directors.*

**The Hon. DANIEL MOOKHEY:** *In your experience did that decision get reported in the annual report or, to the extent to which you are aware, the ad hoc feedback anecdotal point made by my colleague, was it flagged there?*

**Ms GENTLE:** *The annual report is not on my bedside table but I will get it there, and I will take the question on notice and look it up and see if it was mentioned.*

I have now read the Annual Report for the school to which I was referring, to see if it discloses that the school's Gonski money was used to release executives for the purpose of working more closely with the teachers on their teams. The report covers areas that are not part of my expertise as a teacher, so I will refrain from drawing conclusions about the level of disclosure and just relay what I found in reading it, hoping I can give the Committee members enough information to draw their own conclusions.

Under a section headed "Self-assessment and school achievement," the Report outlines the school's self-assessment using the School Excellence Framework, a rubric developed by the Department of Education and Communities. This rubric uses three domains, Learning, Teaching and Leading.

Under Learning, the document states, "... our school focussed (sic) primarily on providing professional development to increase the capacity of teachers to provide quality learning experiences in literacy and numeracy." And later in the same section, it reported that there was monitoring of student progress "towards our target of 12 months growth for 12 months of learning." This target also comes from the Department.

Under Teaching, it states, "As part of our Differentiated Learning project, team leaders modelled effective practice and classroom teachers regularly reviewed and revised teaching and learning programs."

Later in the Annual Report, there is a section headed "Strategic Direction 1: Successful, engaged learning." In this section there is a table titled "Progress towards achieving improvement measures." It has three columns. The first is headed "Improvement measures (to be achieved over 3 years)" and under it is the previously mentioned target: "All students achieve a minimum 12 months growth per year on the Literacy and Numeracy Continuums." The next column is headed "Progress achieved this year." It notes that in 2016 66% of students achieved 12 months progress in 12 months in literacy and 67% achieved it in numeracy, but that this was an improvement on the preceding year (61% and 63% respectively.) The third column is headed "Funds Expended (Resources)" and contains the following:

RAM Aboriginal background funding  
RAM Low Socio-economic background funding  
RAM English Language Proficiency funding  
RAM Low level for disability funding  
Total \$80 100

The next section is headed "Strategic Direction 2: Inspirational teaching." Under this is a statement headed "Purpose" which includes: "To develop staff skilled in meeting the individual learning needs of all students supported by appropriate professional learning." Under a sub-heading "Overall summary of progress" is another sub-heading "Differentiated Teaching." This section contains this statement: "Grade Supervisors worked with their teams on a weekly basis to monitor achievement of target groups, providing constructive feedback to individual teachers on lesson delivery, programming, assessment and classroom management. Grade supervisors also facilitated peer observations and gave demonstration lessons to increase staff capacity with delivering differentiated curriculum."

Later in this section is a similar table to the one under Strategic Direction 1: "Progress towards achieving improvement measures." In the column headed "Improvement measures," it says "Staff meet the individual learning needs of all students through evidence-based, differentiated curriculum delivery. In the column headed "Progress achieved this year," it says, first among other items, "Teachers have received mentoring support tailored to their individual needs, improving their ability to deliver differentiated curriculum." Under "Funds Expended (Resources)," the following are listed:

QTSS staffing allocation [Quality Teaching, Successful Students]  
Tied professional learning  
RAM Low socio-economic funding  
Total \$115 750

Following the Strategic Directions sections, there is a table with three columns headed "Key Initiatives," "Impact achieved this year" and "Resources (annual)." Under "Key Initiatives" is an item "Low level adjustment for disability." In the corresponding row under "Resources (annual)," are listed

Resources \$1000  
Autism Kit \$1000  
KSLSO x 4hrs p/d \$32800  
Perm. SLSO \$32000  
Total \$66800

Another item under “Key initiatives” is “Socio-economic background.” This item has a total under “Resources” of \$204 242. The “Impact achieved column for this item includes “Increased capacity of staff to deliver differentiated curriculum to all students” and “Aspiring leaders have increased their leadership capacity and supported grade teams in the delivery of quality differentiated programs to meet the learning needs of all students.” There are 13 items under “Resources” for “Socio-economic background,” and one of them reads “QT release \$92 250.” QT probably stands for Quality Teaching.

There is a section called “Financial information.” It has a table headed “Financial summary equity funding.” It is divided into two sections, headed respectively “Base Total” and “Equity Total.” Base Total includes Base per capita, Base Location (\$0) and Other Base. Equity Total includes Equity Aboriginal, Equity Socio economic (\$291 890), Equity Language \$291 743) and Equity Disability (\$263 716).

I hope this information is useful to the Committee.