

CURRICULUM REPORT

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I am pleased to once again report on curriculum related matters and highlight areas of interest for families educating children living in rural and remote locations.

Isolated Children's Parents' Association (ICPA), Federal Council continues to meet quarterly with the Australian Curriculum and Report Authority (ACARA) through the Parents and Principals Peak National Bodies meetings. This allows us to hear firsthand from ACARA about the latest updates, as well offers the opportunity to contribute to discussion relating to the curriculum, reporting and assessment.

NAPLAN Online

This means moving NAPLAN from the current paper-based tests to computer-based assessments. NAPLAN Online will provide better assessment, more precise results and faster turnaround of information. The assessments can run through a real-time internet connection or onscreen without an internet connection.

NAPLAN Online features 'tailored testing' which gives students questions that are more suited to their ability – resulting in better assessment and more precise results. Watch ACARA's video about how tailored testing will feature in NAPLAN Online: <http://nap.edu.au/online-assessment>

During August 2016, students from more than 1 000 selected schools nationally took part in a trial of the new assessment platform for NAPLAN Online. Students took one or two online readiness tests, which included examples of the full range of NAPLAN Online questions and a separate writing test. There will be a focus placed on the testing of year 3 students' writing test, with comparisons being made between written responses compared to typed responses.

Autoscoring explained here:

http://www.nap.edu.au/docs/defaultsource/resources/20151130_automated_essay_scoring_infographic.pdf

Feedback from schools has been mainly positive. Students found the new online tests engaging; test administrators found the platform easy to operate. Initial results from the study demonstrate that items and tests are performing as expected.

State/territory education authorities make decisions about the logistics and timing to move NAPLAN online for their state/territory. These groups also lead implementation of NAPLAN Online in their state/territory.

Federal Council would like to encourage everyone to ask their school when and how they plan to rollover to NAPLAN online.

Curriculum

New optional area of learning for year 9 and 10 students: Work Studies, Years 9–10 has been written in response to key work-related issues facing young people today and into the future. It has been designed for all students, whether they pursue a vocational or an academic path.

Work Studies Years 9–10 is an applied learning curriculum that adapts discipline-based learning to work contexts. This requires a variation in the approach to curriculum design and content descriptions and elaborations, as they need to be active. It also allows for a cross-curriculum disciplinary mode of delivery. Go to the Curriculum website for more information - <http://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/work-studies/introduction>

Federal Council looks forward to contributing to discussions that now sees the government focused on improving testing, reporting and streamlining the curriculum. Our advocacy continues to draw attention to the issues of “access and delivery” for geographically isolated students making certain they are not forgotten during this new era in education reform.