

Using *My School* to support school and student improvement

Schools and education authorities know that in order to improve student learning the focus has to be on improving teaching quality. The availability of good quality information is essential to help teachers improve their professional practice and to assist school leaders drive school improvement.

Effective teachers need quality information about how and what their students are learning in order to diagnose student learning needs, monitor progress and make sure their students are being taught the right things in the right ways. Effective schools collect quality information from student assessments to evaluate themselves and examine where they need to improve and how they can use experiences of success and failure to generate that improvement.

Parents and carers need access to quality information to help them make informed decisions about their child's education. Access to information on schools helps parents and carers to actively engage in their child's school and support their child's learning.

Teachers, schools and parents already use information at the individual school level. For instance, teachers and schools use regular student assessments and data from the National Assessment Program—Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) to monitor student progress and inform teaching programs and improvement initiatives. Parents receive reports on their child's NAPLAN results and their child's progress in other areas of the curriculum, as well as information about their school through school reports and newsletters.

Since January 2010, information on all Australian schools has been available in one location on the *My School* website. This website provides contextual information about each school, as well as nationally comparable data on students' performance in literacy and numeracy. Updates to *My School* ensure that the most current information is available to schools and their communities.

However, simply making this information available does not guarantee improvement. It is what schools, teachers, parents and school communities do with the information that counts. Some constructive ways in which information from the *My School* website can be used are listed below.

Schools can use the information on *My School* to:

- monitor performance and identify priority areas in which to focus improvement efforts
- support and enhance existing activities to identify schools that are performing at a high level, particularly in their priority areas
- enhance activities that explore success factors in high-performing schools and incorporate relevant strategies into their improvement plans
- support communication with the wider school community about their performance and gain support for improvement initiatives.

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Teachers can use the information on *My School* to:

- integrate with system and classroom data and use this to develop intervention programs to support higher levels of student achievement in literacy and numeracy
- determine where they need to make adjustments to teaching programs and strategies
- connect with teachers in other schools to share ideas
- compare the progress of their students with students with statistically similar backgrounds in other schools
- engage with parents in support of their child's learning.

Parents and other members of the school community can use the information on *My School* to:

- understand how their local school is performing relative to other schools with students from statistically similar backgrounds
- gain a broader understanding of the learning environments and performance of schools in their local community, as well as within their State or Territory and across the nation
- understand the financial resources available to each school
- initiate communication with a school based on comprehensive and detailed information
- seek a greater level of engagement with a school in support of their child's learning
- become involved in advocating for and supporting improvement initiatives within the school.

The *My School* website provides quality data that teachers, schools, parents and the wider community can use, along with other information, to help ensure that every child in every classroom is receiving a high quality education.