

11 March 2026

## TRANSCRIPT

### NAPLAN 2026: STATEMENT FROM ACARA CEO FOLLOWING INCIDENT

#### Quotes attributable to ACARA CEO Stephen Gniel

Firstly, I'd like to confirm that the issue with students accessing NAPLAN tests this morning was resolved and testing resumed at about AEDT 1130 this morning.

I also recognise that this caused disruptions in a significant number of schools and for that we apologise unreservedly.

ACARA is responsible for overseeing the NAPLAN assessment working with our technology provider Education Services Australia who provide the online platform for the assessments.

As you are all aware there is a massive undertaking to work with test administration authorities in each state and territory who work with our 9,400 plus schools across Australia and the up to 1.4 million students across Australia to deliver the assessment.

And we thank them for their patience whilst the issue was resolved.

I'd also like to thank them for resuming the testing and ensuring we support students to complete all tests.

In terms of what happened and what we know...

At approximately 0920 AEDT this morning we became aware of a technical issue which was affecting students being able to log on to the online platform to complete their NAPLAN assessments, which on day 1 is the writing assessment.

This issue was urgently investigated by the technology provider Education Services Australia who provide the platform.

As per the tried and tested procedures we have in place, schools were advised to pause testing while the issue was investigated. This messaging was distributed to our state and territory partners to distribute to schools at 0931 AEDT.

While at this stage I am unable to say how many students were affected by this incident, I can confirm that as Year 3 students complete their NAPLAN writing tests on paper these students were not impacted.

Of course, we are working across 5 different time zones during NAPLAN 2026, this means that Western Australian schools had not started testing for the day.

And we also know from the Queensland Curriculum and Assessment Authority that as of 1130 Queensland time about 100,000 Queensland students in Years 5, 7 and 9 had completed the Writing test.

Education Services Australia, confirmed that the issue had been resolved and provided advice at about 1115 AEDT that testing could be resumed.

At approximately 1130 AEDT, schools were informed they were able to resume NAPLAN testing.

Education Services Australia continue to monitor the platform to ensure students are able to complete their assessments without further issues.

ACARA is also working with Test Administration Authorities to make sure all schools are provided with support and advice to minimise any impact on students arising from this incident.

We have measures in place to ensure students are not disadvantaged as a result of this technical issue.

In closing – rest assured, Education Services Australia, will conduct a full and thorough technical investigation so we can understand the cause of the issue.

As we have more information, I will ensure we communicate this information to our schools and wider community.

On behalf of ACARA, again I would like to sincerely apologise for the disruption to students and schools, and thank them for their patience.

**ENDS**

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