

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

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### **WHAT DOES IT TAKE TO CONSISTENTLY DELIVER HIGH PROGRESS IN NAPLAN?**

Explicit teaching, collaborating on the analysis of formative assessment data, and focused professional learning – these are some of the practices that are prevalent in schools that consistently deliver high progress in NAPLAN.

ACARA has recently updated the profiles of schools that consistently deliver high progress in reading, writing and numeracy, and ACARA CEO, David de Carvalho, said that looking for approaches that are prevalent in these schools can bring to light practices that have potential for wider application.

“It’s a contribution to the evidence on what works to improve literacy and numeracy achievement,” he said.

The 24 schools profiled are, however, not necessarily those that achieve high average results, which are often strongly correlated with socio-educational advantage.

“Instead, what we’ve done is approach schools that, taking into account where their students were two years previously as well as the school’s level of socio-educational advantage, have achieved progress that is above what you’d expect. And they are doing it consistently, year after year,” he said.

“So, the focus is on schools that are doing something intentional and systematic to achieve progress for their students.”

The schools profiled – nine for numeracy, eight for reading, and seven for writing – are from across Australia and are from government, Catholic and independent sectors.

Mr de Carvalho said no two schools follow the same regime and there is a great diversity of practices and approaches adopted, but there are also key lessons to be learnt.

“The information provided by the schools indicates that some of them do use similar methods,” he said.

Some of these include:

- explicit teaching, including the use of clear learning intentions and success criteria for lessons
- use of formative assessment to generate data on student progress
- analysis of that data to inform teaching strategies, which can include differentiated teaching depending on the level of support students need
- strong focus on sustained professional development, with more skilled teachers acting as instructional leaders and mentors
- collaborative approaches to planning and teaching, which build collective efficacy among teaching staff.

The following are representative excerpts from three of the schools for numeracy, reading and writing respectively:

- "Learning activities are directed towards a specific learning intention and are structured around big ideas and essential questions."
- "Classroom reading instruction is heavily supported via a structured instructional leadership program. Teachers work shoulder to shoulder with instructional leaders focused on classroom pedagogy."
- "We analyse big and small data to inform strategic direction ... to see what students have done well and where learning gaps remain, and we align this with our teachers' assessments ... This knowledge informs our professional learning agenda which is targeted to meet the gaps."

A number of the schools profiled also made it clear that they do not do any special preparation for NAPLAN.

Mr de Carvalho said that “high progress in NAPLAN” is not their primary aim.

“Rather, high progress in NAPLAN is merely a side effect of good teaching practice that focuses on the curriculum, and which aims to develop the knowledge and skills of the students,” he said.

“To this end, schools that adopt evidence-based teaching practices, are informed by data and have sustained and focused professional development are giving their students the best chance to progress in their learning.”

Read more about the individual schools on the [ACARA website](#).

**Ends.**

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