Proposed NAPLAN replacement would put students first

The Australian Education Union has welcomed a new report from UNSW's Gonski Institute for Education proposing a NAPLAN replacement that puts students at the heart of assessment.

"The vision for a new national assessment system outlined by the Gonski Institute puts the needs of students, teachers and parents at the centre of assessment, which is precisely where the focus needs to be," Australian Education Union Federal President Correna Haythorpe said.

The proposed model would shift assessment to a comprehensive program of classroom-based and teacher-led assessments and sample-based testing.

"We must address the competitive, high stakes nature of NAPLAN," Ms Haythorpe said.

"This report makes clear that NAPLAN's census-based approach is deeply problematic and not fit-for purpose. It is a one size fits all approach that is detrimental to students, teachers and parents."

Leading education systems in high- performing jurisdictions such as Finland, Ontario, Scotland and Singapore have all moved away from standardised testing, instead focusing on assessment for learning.

They are focused on building trust and capacity in the teaching profession to harness the potential of assessment to drive student learning and school improvement.

"Australia needs a new national assessment framework and this report clearly steps out the critical need for governments to commit to a new national assessment system," Ms Haythorpe said.

"We have no doubt that this proposal will enjoy broad support nationally, from teachers, principals, parents and many other education stakeholders.

"This report must be viewed as a clear warning to federal, state and territory governments. It is time to take the steps required to implement a system that meets the needs of students, teachers and parents."

Authorised by Sally Dennis, General Secretary, The State School Teachers' Union of W.A.
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