National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) results

NAPLAN is an annual national assessment for all students in years 3, 5, 7, and 9. All students in these year levels are expected to participate in tests in reading, writing, language conventions (spelling, grammar and punctuation) and numeracy.

Government school students who completed the Challenge in years 3, 5, 7 and 9 attained higher reading scores for NAPLAN in 2013 than government students who did not participate in the Challenge, consistent with the results from 2012, when these results were first investigated. (see Figure 6)

In addition, NAPLAN results showed that the Challenge is attracting students from all ability levels through the primary years, not just those who are in the upper bands for reading. However, in Year 9, students in higher proficiency levels were more likely to participate.

Figure 6 – Mean reading scores in 2013 NAPLAN for students completing and not completing the Challenge

In every year since 2009, NAPLAN results have consistently shown that students completing the Challenge in years 3, 5, 7 and 9 showed better rates of reading growth or improvement than DECD students who did not complete the Challenge.

For successive tests, students completing the Challenge had a larger percentage in the ‘High Growth’ category and lower percentages in the ‘Low Growth’ category across all year levels examined. This improvement trend has continued consistently since 2009. The growth distributions for all year levels are represented in Figure 7.

While the Challenge is just one of many literacy activities that may be contributing to these results, the data clearly supports the theory that consistent reading is one way for a student to improve their reading skills.

Figure 7 - Reading growth in 2013 NAPLAN for students completing and not completing the Challenge