

The move to NAPLAN online: The advantages and the road ahead



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Dr Stanley Rabinowitz commenced his role as General Manager for Assessment and Reporting at the Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA) in July 2014. Some of his key responsibilities involve managing the national assessment programs (the National Assessment Program — Literacy and Numeracy and the National Assessment Program sample), national data reporting, including the My School website, and utilising his experience to launch NAPLAN online in Australia in 2017.

Dr Rabinowitz has joined ACARA after serving as Senior Program Director of WestEd's Assessment & Standards Development Services, a program of national scope with more than 100 staff throughout the USA. In that role, he served as Director of the national Center on Standards and Assessments Implementation and the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium Project Management Partner.

Dr Rabinowitz has consulted extensively on standards, assessment and school/educator accountability issues with researchers, policymakers and assessment staff at national, state and district levels in the USA. Through his involvement in more than a dozen state and national technical advisory committees and the role he served in the Center on Standards and Assessments Implementation, Dr Rabinowitz is very familiar with the standards and assessment system challenges and constraints faced by states and districts. He also has experience in supporting states as they design and implement new standards, assessment and accountability systems.

Dr Rabinowitz was also a member of the Common Core State Standards national validation committee. Prior to joining WestEd, Dr Rabinowitz served as State Assessment Director for the New Jersey Department of Education.

Dr Rabinowitz received his PhD in Educational Psychology and Statistics from the State University of New York at Albany, New York, USA.

Abstract

The task of developing and delivering the National Assessment Program — Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) online presents enormous challenges. Nonetheless, the benefits of taking this on are well worth the efforts. With a tailored test design, NAPLAN online will provide a better measure of the Australian Curriculum, more precise results and a significantly faster turnaround of those results. NAPLAN will begin its delivery online in 2017, with an opt-in period until 2019. To ensure readiness, a large amount of research is being conducted through the Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority to inform the development process. This presentation will address the advantages of moving online, as well as outline

several key research studies to be conducted prior to the test's implementation, including:

- a trialling study to ensure all item types (traditional and innovative) work in the online environment
- a device-effect study to ensure no disadvantage to students regardless of whether they use laptops or tablets
- a fonts and readability study, to ensure the best layout for reading test (passages and items)
- an accessibility study to ensure the test is fair for all students, including students with disabilities, students in remote areas, and so on
- an autoscoring study, to demonstrate that computers can score NAPLAN writing as well as teachers.



With discussant Barry McGaw

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Professor Barry McGaw is Managing Director of McGaw Group and Honorary Professorial Fellow at the University of Melbourne. Professor McGaw has previously held roles as the Chair of the Board of the Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority, the Director for Education for the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development, and Executive Director of the Australian Council for Educational Research.