

Media Release

Catholic schools achieve leading NAPLAN participation rates

The release of the 2025 National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) results reveals that participation rates for Catholic systemic schools have once again outperformed both state and national averages, reflecting Catholic education’s strong commitment to assessment and ongoing support for students.

In 2025, 98.4% of students in Catholic systemic schools participated in NAPLAN, a result 4.6% higher than the National average (93.8%) and 1.2% higher than the NSW average (97.2%). This marks an increase from the already strong 2024 rate of 98.0%.

Participation rates in Catholic systemic schools were higher than both state and national averages across all grades and domains. Notably, they exceeded the benchmarks by more than 1% in Years 3 and 5, more than 2% in Year 7, and over 5% in Year 9 across Reading, Writing and Numeracy.

Beyond participation, Catholic systemic schools continue to perform strongly in learning outcomes. Seventy-four per cent of Catholic systemic students across all years and domains achieved results in the Strong & Exceeding proficiency levels, well above the National average of 66% and the NSW average of 69%. Only 5% of Catholic systemic students were in the Needs Additional Support category, compared with 10% nationally and 9% in NSW.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander student participation and achievement improved across multiple grades and domains, with notable gains in Years 7 and 9 Reading and Numeracy, underscoring a leading education experience in our schools.

Dallas McInerney, CEO of Catholic Schools NSW, said ‘The leading participation rates in the Catholic education sector demonstrate the commitment of our schools, teachers and families in ensuring every child has the necessary support to achieve their educational potential. ‘Giving students the opportunity to demonstrate their capability while also identifying areas for improvement is essential for learning.’

‘Though NAPLAN’s legitimacy has been contested, we are thankfully past the days of listening to those who blame the umpire. Catholic schools have joined the NSW Government in committing to supporting the early identification of student learning needs, including through the phonics and numeracy checks agreed to in the Better Fairer Schools Agreement.

‘We lean into assessment and accountability, noting its many beneficial purposes.’

Catholic Schools NSW represents the state’s 593 Catholic schools and their 271,000 students.

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