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NSW students excel in national tests: Firth

NSW students are performing well above the national average in every subject and at every year level tested, new national results have revealed.

NSW Education Minister Verity Firth today welcomed the release of the first National Literacy and Numeracy test results, saying NSW students, teachers, principals and parents should feel proud and reassured by the outstanding scores.

“What is most pleasing about these excellent results is that they are for students across every year that was tested and in both literacy and numeracy,” Ms Firth said.

“And NSW had the overall highest test participation rate of any state or territory.

“I am also pleased to report that NSW has one of the lowest proportions of students who are not reaching the minimum standard in all categories for literacy and numeracy.

“These results are a tribute to the hard work and dedication of staff and students in more than 3000 primary, secondary and central schools across the State.

“Special mention must be made of the outstanding spelling abilities of our students, with NSW ranked number one for spelling in Years 3, 5, and 7.

“NSW students in Year 3 are also ranked number one for their writing skills with students in Year 5 ranked number two in the country.

“We can also report that NSW students achieved outstanding results for numeracy with NSW being ranked second for numeracy in Year 5 and Year 9.”

About one million students from Years 3, 5, 7 and 9 sat the test across the nation in May, with more than 350,000 from NSW schools.

Ms Firth said the strong results showed the success of a range of NSW education priorities including:

- Focusing the primary school curriculum on the fundamental areas of literacy and numeracy, with teachers allocating about half of their classroom time to the two critical areas;
- Investing in professional development and raising teaching standards;
- Support programs like Reading Recovery which enable teachers to intervene and provide intensive support to children who are struggling with literacy,
- The Learning Assistance Program which provides additional support for children with learning difficulties; and
- State-wide challenges to encourage children to read and improve their literacy through the Premier’s Reading Challenge and Spelling Bee.

“This is supported by our investment this year of \$108.2 million for the Best Start initiative to introduce a consistent literacy and numeracy assessment to better guide the learning of all Kindergarten students in public schools,” Ms Firth said.

Ms Firth said the Government would further analyse the results of the tests and look at how schools had performed.

“Teachers will also be analysing how individual students in their classroom have performed and additional support will be provided to students who have not reached the minimum standard,” Ms Firth said.

From Monday individual student reports will be sent home to all parents/carers.

“I urge all mums and dad to read their child’s report and if you would like to know more about how your child is performing make an appointment to meet with your child’s teacher.

“NSW government school parents will receive an additional supplementary report on Monday. This report will contain information about your child’s and your school’s performance.

“This information provides parents of NSW Government school students with a greater level of transparency than they have received before, and substantially more information than parents in other states and territories will receive.”

From this extra information parents will see:

- 1) What the average performance of your child’s school was compared to the national average;
- 2) How your child performed compared to the national average; and
- 3) Your child’s own results for every test question, as well as details about how many children in the state answered each question correctly.

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NSW results compared to the national average

Year 3	Australian average	NSW test score average
Reading	400.4	412.3
Writing	414.2	427.6
Spelling	399.3	419.2
Grammar and punctuation	402.9	417.2
Numeracy	396.7	408.9

Year 5	Australian average	NSW test score average
Reading	484.3	494.7
Writing	486.4	495.4
Spelling	483.6	499.4
Grammar and punctuation	496.0	504.9
Numeracy	475.7	487.8

Year 7	Australian average	NSW test score average
Reading	536.6	542.5
Writing	533.7	535.3
Spelling	538.6	550.1
Grammar and punctuation	529.0	536.6
Numeracy	544.9	551.3

Year 9	Australian average	NSW test score average
Reading	578.0	583.1
Writing	569.3	569.4
Spelling	577.0	586.6
Grammar and punctuation	569.2	576.1
Numeracy	582.2	591.4

Proportion of students at or above the minimum standard, and proportion of students in the top achievement bands:

Year Three

Reading - 95.1% of all students are at or above the minimum standard, with 68.0% of all students in the top three achievement bands.

Writing – 97.5% are at or above the minimum standard. More than 80.2% of students are in the top three achievement bands. NSW has the highest proportion of students in the top achievement band of any state or territory.

Spelling - 96.1% of students are at or above the minimum standard and more than 72.9% of all students are in the three highest bands of achievement and the highest proportion of students in the top achievement band of any state or territory

Grammar and punctuation – 95.2% of students are at or above the minimum standard, with almost 70.4% in the top three achievement bands.

Numeracy – 96.9% at or above the minimum standard, with more than 67.6% in the top three achievement bands.

Participation rates – NSW had the highest participation rates for the year three national test with almost 97% of students participating in all tests.

Year Five

Reading – 93.5% of all students are at or above the minimum standard, with 58.6% of students in the top three achievement bands

Writing – 95.1% of all students are at or above the minimum standard, with 60.8% of all students in the top three achievement bands.

Spelling – 94.5% of all students are at or above the national standard with 62.4% of all students in the top three achievement bands, and the highest proportion of any state or territory in the highest achievement band.

Grammar and punctuation – 93.9% of all students are at or above the minimum national standard, with 63.3% of all students in the top three achievement bands.

Numeracy – 94.4% of students at or above the minimum standard with 52.9% of students in the top three achievement bands, and the highest proportion of any state or territory in the highest achievement band.

Participation Rates – Across NSW over 97% of all Year 5 students participated in the tests. This was the highest participation rate of any state or territory.

Year Seven

Reading – 95.4% of students were at or above the minimum standard, with 55.6% of all students in the top three achievement bands.

Writing – 93.5% off all students at or above the minimum standard, with 52.4% in the top three achievement bands.

Spelling – 94.2% off all students were at or above the minimum standard with 62.3% of students in the top three achievement bands, and the highest proportion of any state or territory in the highest achievement band.

Grammar and punctuation – 93.4% off all students were at or above the minimum standards, with 52.6% in the top three achievement bands.

Numeracy – 96% of year seven students were at or above the minimum standard, with 57.2% in the top three achievement bands, and the highest proportion of any state or territory in the highest achievement band.

Participation rates – NSW had one of the highest participation rates of any state or territory with more than 96% of all students undertaking the assessment.

Year Nine

Reading – 94.4% of students were at or above the minimum standard with 49.1% of all students in the top three achievement bands.

Writing – 88.9% of all students were at or above the minimum standard with 41.4% of students in the top three achievement bands.

Spelling – 92.2% of all students were at or above the minimum standard, with 53.4% in the top three achievement bands, and the highest proportion of any state or territory in the highest achievement band.

Grammar and punctuation – 91.4% of all students were at or above the minimum standards with 45.5% of all students in the top three achievement bands.

Numeracy – 94.7% of all students were at or above the minimum standard, with 51.8% of all students in the top three achievement bands, and the highest proportion of any state or territory in the highest achievement band.

Participation rates – NSW had the second highest participation rate with more than 94% of all students undertaking the assessment.