

Media Release

The Hon James Merlino MP
Acting Premier
Minister for Education
Minister for Mental Health



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VICTORIAN STUDENTS CONFIRMED AS NAPLAN HIGHEST ACHIEVERS

Victorian students have achieved outstanding results in this year's NAPLAN in the face of unprecedented challenges, with the detailed breakdown of results confirming the state is the best-performing jurisdiction in Australia.

The NAPLAN 2021 National Report released today shows Victoria had the highest number of students performing at or above the national minimum standard of any state or territory on 13 of the 20 NAPLAN measures – with the ACT the next-best jurisdiction with 5.

Victoria has also improved on its results since 2019 in half of the assessed measures – including the critically important foundational Reading skills in both Year 3 and Year 5 – despite the challenges of the pandemic.

The results show the Andrews Labor Government's investments in the Education State are paying off. Students in Year 5 began Prep as the reforms began, and are now seeing the benefits of six years of dedicated investment – with primary school results improving in eight out of the 10 measures.

These improvements are expected to be reflected in secondary school results in the coming years as Victorian students see the benefits of targeted investment in every student and every school across the state.

The report shows that, while many Victorian students and families have faced profound challenges over the past two years, fears of a loss of learning as a result of the coronavirus pandemic have not eventuated.

Those predicted to be most affected by remote learning, including Koorie, rural and regional students, had better reading results at the primary level this year than in 2019. Koorie students improved in reading from 2019 to 2021 in Years 3, 5 and 7, and rural and regional primary students also improved their reading levels in Years 3 and 5.

The final NAPLAN results also indicate that more Victorian students than ever before are performing highly – with the percentage of Year 3 students scoring in the top two bands for Reading rising from 58 per cent in 2019 to 61.9 per cent in 2021. For Year 5 students, this figure rose from 40.4 per cent to 44.8 per cent.

There is still work to do, particularly in numeracy, in every jurisdiction across Australia – and maths will be a strong area of focus for schools throughout 2022. The Labor Government's Tutor Learning Initiative is providing students with individualised support to help them thrive at school.

Overall, the final NAPLAN results show the Labor Government's record investment in school infrastructure, a fairer funding model and unprecedented support for student wellbeing during the pandemic is delivering better learning outcomes for Victorian students.

This includes \$480 million for the Tutor Learning Initiative over two years, \$217.8 million in mental health support for schools – including \$200 million for a new School Mental Health Fund – and \$24.5 million in the *Victorian Budget 2020-21* to support students and their families to bridge the digital divide with devices and internet access.

Since coming to government, the Labor Government has invested more than \$22.2 billion in schools, including almost \$1.3 billion in equity funding this year alone to improve student learning.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Education James Merlino

"These results show that our investment in the Education State is paying off – not just improving students' school outcomes, but setting them up with the skills they need to succeed into their adult lives."

"I thank every teacher, tutor, principal, family and everyone else who supported Victorian students through 2021 – our nation-leading results show despite the pandemic's challenges, our kids are learning better than ever before."

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