



School League Tables

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“League Tables” refer to the public publication of test scores of students which rank schools according to their performance.

What is Required

The Australian Government Schools Assistance Regulations 2005 specified requirements for the publication of school performance. Schools are required to publish their own test results in two ways from an option of five, viz. hard copy annual report, newsletter or school handbook, internet, or school billboard.

There is currently no government requirement for league tables of school results to be published.

The Research

In Britain and the United States league tables have been counter productive and destructive for many school communities and students.

League tables:

- exacerbate the problems of misleading and inaccurate information about school performance;
- lead to public labelling of students, communities and families as ‘failures’; and
- lead to greater education inequities and social segregation of schools as perceived “high ranking” schooling select their students.

League tables also undermine school improvement efforts because they may:

- distort curriculum and teaching;
- encourage teaching to the test and systematic cheating by schools, states and teachers;
- discourage collaboration between schools around improved strategies and practices;
- promote increased focus on school image rather than school improvement; and

- discourage parents as seeing themselves as partners in schooling and tend to promote a divisive relationship between parents and schools rather than a collaborative approach to learning.

QTU Position

Schools provide unique educational environments for a diversity of student groups. The QTU vehemently opposes the use of league tables as they serve no educational value, would not lead to the improvement of educational outcomes for any students, and would be counterproductive.

Suggestions that league tables would provide necessary information for parents to exercise choice about schools is based on the false premise that parents will be choosing schools. In an era of league tables it would be a case of schools choosing their students rather than parents exercising choice.

Further References

League tables: the beginning of the end? *Qld Teachers' Journal* October 2008 p.10

Models of education reform: an interview with Prof. Allan Luke, *QTU Professional Magazine* November 2008.

Queensland Teachers' Union Website

www.qtu.asn.au

Australian Education Union (AEU) Website

www.aeufederal.org.au