

TO: QTU MEMBERS

Members vote to ban NAPLAN

NAPLAN ballot results

At the close of the ballot yesterday, more than 94 per cent of the more than 8,000 members who participated voted to ban NAPLAN in all its forms.

While the ballot return is lower than the usual voter turnout, the intention of members participating in the ballot was clear – NAPLAN must go.

In accordance with the ballot outcome, Executive last night decided to issue the following directive:

All QTU members are hereby directed to cease all activities associated with the National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) for the remainder of 2020 and the 2021 school year.

The QTU has previously outlined the many issues with NAPLAN ([refer to Newsflash 41-20](#)), and these issues remain. This current ballot is the latest in a long series about concerns with NAPLAN.

What does banning NAPLAN mean?

A ban on all activities associated with NAPLAN includes ceasing:

- administration of the NAPLAN pen and paper test
- administration of the NAPLAN Online test
- participation in NAPLAN training and professional development
- participation in NAPLAN practice testing
- participation in NAPLAN load testing
- participation in NAPLAN item testing
- participation in NAPLAN school readiness testing
- participation in the self-service test window
- participation in NAPLAN data analysis/meetings outside of school hours
- any other activity involving NAPLAN in its current form (this includes timetabling; providing or checking student information for either the department, ESA or the QCAA; pre-test sample testing; statistical sampling – please note this is not an exhaustive list)
- any activity, including those above, associated with other NAP trials.

This directive applies to all QTU members, irrespective of whether they participated in the recent ballot. The QTU's message for the past few years has been clear – NAPLAN in all its forms must go.

State election and NAPLAN

In the lead up to the state election on 31 October, the QTU wrote to the major political parties, including the ALP, LNP, The Greens, One Nation, North Queensland First, United Australia and Katter's Australian Party, and sought their views on NAPLAN.*

In response to the question on NAPLAN, the state government advised that a *“re-elected Palaszczuk government will continue to strongly advocate for the replacement of NAPLAN with a world-class test that best serves Queensland students.”*

The LNP has advised that it “*will continue to consult with you (the QTU) on the future of standardised testing given that it is a national decision. We (the LNP) fundamentally believe Queensland parents deserve to know how our schools are performing, providing transparency on education services.*”

The Greens state that “while standardised testing may have value as a diagnostic tool for individual students, we believe NAPLAN should be abolished in its current form.”

(*At the date of preparing this Newsflash, no response had been received from the other political parties.)

This state election is like no other – it is the first state election in a fixed four-year term during which both sectors (TAFE and schools) will negotiate a replacement agreement. It is important that members are informed of the various political parties' position on matters relating to state schooling and our profession when members are deciding how to vote.

Further information about the political parties' responses to the QTU is being prepared and will be available on the QTU website, including complete copies of the correspondence received by political parties and an online Journal.

Workload still in focus

Term 4 will see the implementation of workload reduction measures negotiated and agreed during Term 3.

Beyond the summary in the Newsflash ([Newsflash No. 42-20](#)), you can expect to receive explanations of what those “headline” agreements mean in practice.

In addition, the Workload Advisory Council starts the process of considering submissions from members and schools to identify additional ways to reduce workload.

Student free days

At the end of last term, members were advised that while the department was treating the early finish to the school year as student free days, attendance at school on these days is not required.

The allocation of the last two days of the year as student free days is to provide an appropriate payroll treatment for members on higher duties and to ensure that the varied roster for part-time teachers that operates over the summer holidays does not commence until 14 December.

These days are also not the mandatory student free days that exist within the school calendar. They are similar to what used to be referred to as the Ministerial show holiday, where members who were not rostered to work on those days were not required to attend or make up the student free day hours and consequently were not paid for these hours. The department has provided a set of FAQs that can be accessed on [OnePortal](#).

In addition to the early end of the school year, the department and the QTU have reached agreement in relation to the student free day allocated to 25 January 2021.

This day is an additional flexible student free day, however in honoring the certified agreement, the time allocated for this day cannot be used for professional development. How these five hours are used is a local decision, to be made following consultation and agreement through the LCC in schools required to have one. In schools not required to have an LCC, the principles of consultation should be followed.

In deciding how to use these hours, school should give consideration to the extra things that members do outside of rostered duty time, e.g. undertaking APR and cooperative planning, and determine whether some, if not all, of these hours can be used to support these activities. The department is not prescribing what these five hours should be used for - the only restriction to the use of these hours is that they are not to be used for professional development.

Additionally, student free days and professional development hours are to be used in the calendar year to which they are allocated. This ensures that all members of the school community have access to the hours and/or are not required to undertake additional hours in the school year.

QuEST – face-to-face professional development is back

QuEST's regular course offerings are back, including a three-hour HAT and Lead workshop with Rebecca Hack. [Click here](#) for the complete list of our face-to-face events for Term 4.

These popular courses will continue in more locations throughout 2021, so keep an eye on our website for details.

Due to COVID-19 restrictions, participation numbers are capped. We anticipate sessions filling quickly, so if you would like to participate in a QuEST face-to-face event, [register here](#).

Joining the waiting list for an at-capacity event will assist QuEST with scheduling forthcoming sessions of your preferred PD.

Financial literacy bootcamp for women

The Australian Trade Union Institute (ATUI), the education arm of the ACTU, is holding a financial literacy bootcamp for women today (7 October). The bootcamp will deliver six hour-long virtual sessions.

Union members can participate in the six-week program for \$25.

The program is being delivered in partnership with ME Bank and is being run by women, for women.

[Click here to learn more and to register](#), and don't hesitate to reach out to www.atui.org.au if you have any questions.

Invitation to participate in UQ survey on learning during COVID-19: stakeholder perspective

The University of Queensland is conducting an online survey to gauge stakeholder perceptions of student learning and how it was impacted during COVID-19.

The *Learning during COVID-19* study aims to understand how children and young people who were already struggling with learning and school experienced learning during COVID-19. The key purpose is to provide important information to help schools and service providers support children and families during times like this. With the information collected, researchers seek to understand perspectives on who is in need, what their strengths are, and what responses can best serve these needs and build on the strengths of at-risk children and young people. The study will identify evidence-based options for action to provide implementable policy and practice solutions that are most likely to be successful.

The researchers are consulting public sector employees, service providers who work in and outside of schools, and other experts in academia, government and the not-for-profit sector. It is vital that the perspectives of teachers, heads of program and school leaders are reflected in this research.

The QTU encourages all members to participate and [complete the anonymous online survey](#), which will take 15-20 minutes. The survey will close at the end of October and the results of the survey will be available early next year. Members can read more about the study [here](#).

A new record!

The previous record for Newsflashes in a year was 42. That was way back in 1997 when negotiations were occurring for the second enterprise bargaining agreements, there were two 24-hour strikes, the LNP Borbidge government tried to impose the Leading Schools program without negotiation, and the year ended with arbitration for four issues.

It has taken COVID-19, workload, NAPLAN and pay deferral, but this is the 43rd Newsflash for the year - on the second day of Term 4.

Authorised by:

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