PRESS RELEASE:

NAPLAN encourages tutoring

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NAPLAN tests encourage tutoring. However, the tutoring is more likely to take place after release of the results rather than prior to the tests. ACARA the body that administers the tests, has emphasised in respect of NAPLAN that ‘excessive coaching’ and also that ‘no tutoring is recommended’ in preparation for the tests. These types of statements by ACARA confuse parents, because parents are taking up private tutoring for their children in increasing numbers, part of which is encouraged by the results of testing.

The proportion of people seeking tutoring for their child prior to NAPLAN tests is stable, though there has been a spike in those checking that their tutor is accredited (www.accreditedtutor.org). However, the number of parents seeking tutors after the results of the NAPLAN tests are released has spiked. In this regard, ACARA needs to better understand the motivators of tutoring and how benchmark national tests assist parents to make informed choices about the need for tutoring.

ACARA also needs to better understand how the private tutoring market operates. Whilst a few tutors do offer specialised courses that help familiarise students with NAPLAN-type questions, the majority of tutoring organisations do not coach for the tests in a manner that would increase pressure or in a manner that could give the impression of the tests being ‘high stakes’ in nature.

Tutoring adjusting for NAPLAN

Tutors who are already tutoring are often requested by parents to spend a few weeks adjusting the tutoring to assist in helping their child gain exposure to NAPLAN test-type instruments. In this way the parents recognise the major role that private tutoring has in boosting self-confidence and ameliorating any stress that comes from other sources.

There are many benefits for students and families for using tutors to assist with NAPLAN preparation:

- Assisting students familiarise themselves with the range and type of questions they will face
- Helping students to increase their problem-solving skills through implementing various strategies
- Assisting students to acquire an ability to think quickly on timed tasks
- Improving confidence and transfer learning for mainstream classes

ATA CEO Mr Dhall said, "NAPLAN testing is important when establishing the basic numeracy and literacy levels of students. However a suggestion by ACARA that there is excessive coaching is misleading and unhelpful".

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