



PRESS RELEASE:

Literacy and numeracy school-tutor partnerships

25th August 2014

This week is national literacy and numeracy week (NLNW). Next week the NAPLAN (National Assessment Program Literacy and Numeracy) are released. The Australian Tutoring Association (ATA) is reminding parents and educators that the Commonwealth government should inform parents about the optional use of tutors in addressing literacy and numeracy issues. At present the NLNW website <http://www.literacyandnumeracy.gov.au/literacy-activities-0> provides some useful, though limited advice to parents.

The Commonwealth government also provides very useful advice to teachers, including lesson ideas and activities.

However, in the view of the Association, the information is limited on account of a significant oversight. It would be useful and appropriate for the Commonwealth government to remind educators and parents that the level of illiteracy and innumeracy is quite high and that there are remedial support options available for parents and schools. It is estimated that about 20% of Australian children will not even achieve basic benchmarks in literacy and/or numeracy.

ATA CEO, Mohan Dhall said, *“Direct investment in a cogent plan to address literacy and numeracy issues is required. NAPLAN results, the observations of teachers and parents, should all be harnessed to make effective accountable interventions for support. The provision of tutoring vouchers to families, for use with private tutors is an option that should be utilised. In Britain, the USA, Malaysia and South Africa this option has been used to successfully address literacy and numeracy issues.*

In Australia we have accredited and accountable tutors who can work closely with schools and families to ameliorate the disadvantages that are evident.”

The Australian Tutoring Association (ATA) takes the view that literacy and numeracy experts schools, principals, teachers, parents and accredited private tutors should all work together to assist the most disadvantaged of learners.

Mr Dhall added, *“However, at present a lack of imagination at the national level, combined with a short-sighted view of private tutors, means that a vital resource is not being used as it could be. Setting national literacy and numeracy benchmarks, including a timeline for the successful attainment of those benchmarks by all students, should energise and provide focus for the national effort. Tutors can be used by schools, as they are in Britain, to supplement mainstream education whilst providing accountability to the formal sector.”*

ATA Media contacts:

Mohan Dhall (ATA CEO)	(02) 9704 5724	or	0408 619 714
Storm McGrath	(02) 4929 6711	or	0419 295 637