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Teachers Resolve to Act on League Tables

The Australian Education Union's Annual Federal Conference has resolved that teachers will not take part in national testing this year unless the Federal Government moves to stop damaging school league tables.

AEU Federal President Angelo Gavrielatos said delegates voted unanimously not to cooperate in the implementation of the Government's national (NAPLAN) tests, scheduled for May, if there was no action by the Federal Government.

"If the Federal Government refuses to protect students and school communities from the damaging effects of league tables, teachers will take action to protect them," Mr Gavrielatos said.

"Teachers, parents and principals are united in their opposition to damaging league tables which rank schools according to their test results.

"The Education Minister, Julia Gillard says she opposes league tables but the fact is she will publish every school's NAPLAN scores online next week in such a way that will facilitate the creation and publication of league tables by the media.

"League tables give an inaccurate and misleading picture of school performance.

"Schools in disadvantaged areas will be publicly branded as failing schools. That unfair branding has a damaging impact on students, teachers and parents and makes the job of addressing disadvantage much harder.

"As we have seen in Britain and the US, naming and shaming schools in league tables will damage the provision of education in Australia.

"League tables damage the provision of education by narrowing the curriculum and deepening inequality in schooling.

"We don't need league tables to work out which schools are struggling and need extra resources. Governments already have that information.

"Parents don't want league tables and support laws that would prevent them being created. In a survey by Labor pollster UMR late last year, 63 per cent of parents said they supported laws banning league tables.

The AEU will hold an Executive Meeting on 12 April to assess whether the Federal Government has introduced appropriate measures to stop league tables.

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