

**NAPLAN ONLINE — TECHNICAL ISSUES**

*Statement by Minister for Education and Training*

**HON SUE ELLERY (South Metropolitan — Minister for Education and Training)** [1.55 pm]: I rise today to make a brief statement about NAPLAN Online. Yesterday, students across Australia commenced NAPLAN testing, which will run for nine days. I am aware that approximately 300 Western Australian schools experienced technical connectivity issues when undertaking NAPLAN Online yesterday. I have been advised that these issues were also experienced by schools in other states and territories. I understand that the issues encountered yesterday will be distressing for a number of students and their families. Significant work has been undertaken by the Western Australian Department of Education and the School Curriculum and Standards Authority to prepare schools for NAPLAN Online. The issues that arose yesterday were not encountered during the practice testing phase. As a contingency plan, every Western Australian student completing NAPLAN Online also has a backup pen and paper test available. Schools were advised that they could seek approval from SCSEA to move from NAPLAN Online to pen and paper if they experienced any issues. This morning all schools have been issued with a blanket approval to proceed to use the pen and paper test for writing if they experience any difficulties using NAPLAN Online today.

Forty thousand Western Australian students and their teachers, parents and schools were disrupted and inconvenienced by technical issues with NAPLAN Online. It is disappointing to me that assurances that technical issues had all been worked through in advance were not delivered on. I have been advised that some schools are still experiencing connectivity issues today. As per my public comments this morning, schools are advised to switch to the contingency plan of pen and paper testing should they encounter any problems.