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LATEST PISA RANKINGS CONFIRM LONG-TERM DECLINE IN AUSTRALIAN STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

"Australia's education system and the National Curriculum are failing our students, as new international data shows the dramatic decline in academic achievement over the last two decades," said Colleen Harkin, National Manager of the Institute of Public Affairs' Class Action program.

Late last night, the OECD released its 2022 *Programme for International Student Assessment* (PISA) scores. PISA measures 15-year-olds' ability to use reading, mathematics, and science knowledge and skills to meet real life challenges. The latest PISA data on Australian students shows;

- **Scores in mathematics declined from 524 points in 2000 to 487 points in 2022, equivalent to students being approximately 16 months in learning behind where they were in 2000.**
- **Scores in reading declined from 528 points in 2000 to 498 points in 2022, equivalent to students being over a year behind in learning where they were in 2000.**
- **Scores in science declined from 527 points in 2006 to 507 points in 2022, equivalent to students being ten months behind where they were since Australia first participated in that test in 2006.**

"The primary objective of our education system must be to ensure students learn the core skills of reading, writing, and mathematics. These results yet again make it clear that Australia's education system is failing to meet this most basic goal," said Ms Harkin.

"The PISA results follow the latest NAPLAN scores, which show that one-in-three Australian students are not meeting basic standards of numeracy and literacy, despite record amounts of money being spent by state and federal governments. This is a nightmare for parents."

"With the National Curriculum focused on identity politics, critical race theory, and green ideology, at the expense of literacy and numeracy, it is little wonder why student achievement continues to fall. Our kids' education is polluted with activism that has little value in the real world," said Ms Harkin.

Recent IPA research identified that wholesale reform is needed in the way we train our teachers, as current methods are setting students and teachers up for failure. In Australia today;

- **The equivalent of just 10 weeks of classes across a four-year Bachelor of Education degree, less than one semester, is dedicated to the teaching of core literacy and numeracy skills.**
- **Fewer than one-in-ten teaching subjects focus on literacy and numeracy education.**

"There is a crisis in Australian teaching. Today, the average completion rate for students in a teaching degree is just 50 per cent. 20 per cent of new teachers leaving the profession in the first three years of their career, and more experienced teachers leaving the profession in droves," said Ms Harkin.

"The warped priorities of universities and those in charge of designing the National Curriculum is making it impossible for our teachers to succeed, which is undermining the academic achievement of Australian students."

"Australia's students and teachers deserve better. Our education system is setting Australia up for failure, urgent reform is needed with a focus on literacy and numeracy, not activism," said Ms Harkin.

To download the IPA's *Who teaches the teachers? An audit of teaching degrees at Australian universities* [click here](#).

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