

Video transcript: Literacy and Numeracy Achievement Outcomes for Victorian Students

About this audit

People need reading, writing and maths skills to take part in the community, thrive at work and learn throughout their lives.

The government has set ambitious excellence and equity targets for literacy and numeracy.

In this audit, we looked at whether the Department of Education is improving outcomes for all Victorian government school students.

Conclusion

Since 2012, overall literacy and numeracy outcomes for Victorian government school students have been stable.

However, the department is not improving outcomes for Aboriginal students and students experiencing disadvantage.

And the department's budget performance measures for student outcomes are not a fair or transparent presentation of students' skills.

Issue 1

Aboriginal students and students experiencing disadvantage are not learning at a rate that will close the gap with other students.

For example, in 2022, over 20 per cent of Aboriginal and highly disadvantaged year 9 students were reading at least 2 years below the level expected for their age.

The department needs to broadly and sustainably improve literacy and numeracy to meet its own targets.

Issue 2

The department's reporting does not give a fair presentation of its performance because it includes results for all Victorian schools, not just the government schools it manages. Also, it reports students' outcomes for reading, but not writing.

Another issue is that reporting focuses on high-achieving students but leaves out groups of students who are less likely to meet expected levels.

This means Victorians don't have a full picture of student literacy and numeracy in government schools, especially since other public literacy and numeracy reporting is not easy to access.

What we recommended

We made 3 recommendations to the department about how it reports on literacy and numeracy. One is about defining literacy as both reading and writing. Two are about improving the way the department reports to the public.

More information

To find out more, or read our full report, go to audit.vic.gov.au.