

NZEI
CAMPAIGNS

**NATIONAL
STANDARDS**

**N
AT
ION
ALSTA
NDARDS**

FAILED?



“I suck at reading”, my six year old son Luke said to me. He’d just been told he was “below standard”. His teacher said he was making pretty normal progress for a boy of his age, but that’s not what he felt. I felt a failure as a parent too even though the teacher and I had worked really well together to support his reading. *Karen, parent, North Shore*

Luke is not alone. Half of all New Zealand 6 year olds are going to fail the Year 1 National Standard for reading, even though many of them read at the normal level for their age

Is that OK?



At the end of last year my grandson and two grand-nephews, all six, and all with very similar abilities and skills, came home with their National Standards reports. One was “above standard”, one was “at standard” and one was “below standard”. We couldn’t understand it. It just didn’t make sense. *Jane, grandmother, Wanganui*

Is that OK?

These stories are based on real children, but names and images have been changed to protect their privacy.

FAILED?



Maria is 11 and has just finished her first year at intermediate. She's struggled with maths in the past, but this year has become really interested. She's made heaps of progress and consistently scored well in assessments but knows her report says she's "below Standard". She now feels discouraged about trying at all and says she wants to drop maths as soon as she can at secondary school.

Is that OK?



Delia is 8. When she came to school, she found reading and writing really hard and her teachers realised she had dyslexia. With intensive support from her parents, teacher and teacher aide, she's made twice as much progress as most children in a year and now has a reading age of 6. But she's just been given a report with "well below Standard" in reading, writing and maths. "You told me I was doing well!" she told her teacher. "But look - I'm rubbish at reading!"

Is that OK?

WHY IS THIS?

In the past, your child's report may have included information about how they perform nationally compared to their age group, through well-researched assessments tests like **PAT**, **STAR** and **asTTle**.

National Standards have been pitched much higher than where children normally achieve for their age. The Minister of Education says they are "aspirational", designed so that all students who meet them will be on track to achieve NCEA Level 2. What this means though, is that even if your child's achievement is average or above average for their age, they are likely to be judged either "below" or just "at" the Standard.

Many children who achieve above the national average for their age group are being labelled as "failures".

Percentages of children expected to be at or above the National Standards

	Reading	Maths
After 1 year	50%	80%
Year 4	60%	70%
Year 8	60%	35%

Source: Ministry of Education, Education Gazette

IF YOU'RE CONFUSED ABOUT NATIONAL STANDARDS, YOU'RE NOT ALONE. EVEN THE GOVERNMENT ADMITS THE STANDARDS ARE FUZZY.

IF YOU WANT A CLEAR PICTURE OF YOUR CHILD'S ACHIEVEMENT THEN TALK TO THEIR TEACHER. THE TEACHER CAN GIVE YOU A BETTER ASSESSMENT OF YOUR CHILD'S PROGRESS THAN NATIONAL STANDARDS CAN. TEACHERS KNOW YOUR CHILD.

WHY IS THIS HAPPENING?

Because National Standards have never been tested or trialled, your children are being used as guinea pigs in a nationwide trial.

Because National Standards are inconsistent - there is nothing national about National Standards. Schools are interpreting and reporting against Standards in a wide variety of ways.

New Zealand schools are world leading - Kiwi kids achieve in the top five countries in the world. National Standards will do nothing to improve the quality of education in New Zealand.

▶ **If you're concerned** about the impact of National Standards on your child, please talk to your principal.
Visit www.nzei.org.nz or call 0800 NZEI HELP