

PISA TEST RESULTS NOT A “WAKE-UP CALL”

Sydney, Australia, 4th December 2019: Australian schools have recorded their worst results in reading, maths, and science, according to the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA). The results have been described by PISA national project manager Sue Thomson as a “wake-up call”. Cluey Learning argues, however, that the PISA test results are not a wake-up call, rather that alarm bells were missed in the lead up to these shock findings. Chief Learning Officer, at Cluey Learning, Dr. Selina Samuels comments: “These results are certainly alarming. But are they really a wake-up call? Australian students and their parents and teachers have been worried about their academic performance for quite some time. Cluey’s research tells us that 40 per cent of school children have used or are being considered for extra educational support. We speak to students and parents and teachers throughout the country every day. Students tell us that they lack confidence, that they feel under prepared and that they do not know how they are going to compete with others. Parents are worried that their children are getting lost in the system, with their individual learning needs going unmet. They say it again and again: that with the best will in the world, teachers in the conventional classroom are not able to meet all the needs of every student. Teachers lament that they cannot devote the time needed to every student. The Grattan Institute’s report “Targeted Teaching” investigated the decline of Australian students’ achievement in international tests such as PISA, and concluded that, “A huge spread of achievement levels in Australian classrooms is making it hard for teachers to implement best education practice and target their teaching to the needs of every individual student.” That was in 2015. Although it is probably inevitable that blame will be laid in many quarters, these results are not the fault of Australia’s teachers any more than they are of our students and their parents. Indeed, it is the teachers, like the students, who have been warning us about the need to take education and school reform seriously. I do not believe that for many – if not most – of my profession, these results will come as much of a wake-up call at all.”

-ENDS- NOTES TO EDITORS: Dr. Selina Samuels (qualifications: BA (Hons), LLB, Ph.D., Med) is available to discuss: Why the PISA test results are not a “wake-up” call The alarm bell warnings Australia missed ahead of the PISA test results Why blaming teachers for the PISA test results is the wrong way forward What Australia needs to be concentrating on to improve student performance What Australia can learn from other countries’ approaches to education For interviews with Selina please contact Hayley Kerrigan | hkerrigan@clueylearning.com | 0475 586 400 About Cluey Learning: Cluey Learning delivers personalised online tutoring support for students in Years 2 -12, across Maths, English and Chemistry. All content is mapped to the Australian National Curriculum and is based on the unique learning needs of each individual. Cluey has supported over 5,000 Aussie families, run over 25,00 sessions and has been rated 4.7/5 by parents and students.