Technical Advisory Panel on Uniform National Rules for NAEP Testing of Students with Disabilities

Report to the National Assessment Governing Board
August 2009

Charge to the Expert Panel

- Provide that students with similar disabilities be tested on NAEP the same way, regardless of where they live;
- Maximize student access and meaningful participation;
- Ensure that the constructs on NAEP frameworks be measured and that all students may be placed on the same scale;
- Permit only accommodations that maintain the validity, reliability, and comparability of NAEP results; and
- Are feasible, logistically and financially, and without detrimental consequences.

Expert Panel Members

- **Alexa Posny**, Kansas Commissioner of Education (Chair); Former Director, Office of Special Education Programs U.S. Department of Education
- **George Engelhard**, Jr., Professor of Educational Studies (Educational Measurement and Policy), Emory University, Atlanta, GA
- **Louis Danielson**, Managing Director, American Institutes for Research; Former Director, Research to Practice Division, Office of Special Education Programs, U.S. Department of Education
- **Miriam Freedman**, attorney and author, Stoneman, Chandler & Miller, Boston, MA

Expert Panel Members

- **Claire Greer**, Consultant for Autism, Severe, and Multiple Disabilities, Exceptional Children Division, North Carolina Department of Public Instruction
- **Robert Linn**, Professor of Education (Emeritus), Research and Evaluation Methods Program, University of Colorado
- **Debra Paulson**, Middle school math and special education teacher, El Paso, TX.
- **Martha Thurlow**, Director, National Center on Educational Outcomes, University of Minnesota

Meetings

In-person meeting:

- April 23, 2009

Teleconference meetings:

- May 20, 2009
- June 1, 2009
- June 12, 2009
- July 6, 2009

Recommendations

1. Encourage as many students as possible to participate in NAEP, and provide for the use of allowable accommodations that are necessary to enable students with disabilities to participate.
    - The task force defined an appropriate accommodation and a modification
    - Reading the reading passage and using a calculator are modifications

Recommendations

2. Clarify and expand NAEP's guidance to schools, encouraging maximum participation of students with disabilities.
   - Set the clear expectation that at least 95% of all students with disabilities will take the test.
   - In deciding how a student with an IEP or 504 plan will participate in NAEP, if the student currently:
     - Is tested without accommodations, same on NAEP
     - Is tested with accommodations permitted by NAEP, same on NAEP
     - Is tested with "accommodations" or modifications not allowed on NAEP, takes NAEP without them
   - The only students excluded from NAEP are if they have a significant cognitive disability and are assessed by the alternate assessment based on alternate achievement standards (AA-AAS)

Recommendations

3. Report separately on NAEP results for IEP and 504 students.
   - Continue to report all students with disabilities to maintain trend, but separate IEP and 504 identified students.
   - Calculate state scores for students with disabilities using IEP results only.
   - Over time define students with disabilities as only those with an IEP.
   - All 504 students should participate in NAEP.

Recommendations

4. Provide incentives for schools to include students with disabilities.
   - Provide a short clear description of the purpose and value of NAEP.
   - Highlight in released information bullets, indicating the states and districts with more or less than 95% participation rates of students with an IEP
     - Report as a percentage of the total sample
     - Report as a percentage of students with an IEP (not 504?)
   - Study states with very high or low exclusion rates.
   - As an alternative to 95% SD participation guideline, some members recommend considering a rule based on percent of total student population to offset wide variations in state SD identification rates.

Recommendations

5. Support research efforts to develop targeted testing for all students at both the top and bottom levels of achievement, with sound procedures to identify students to receive targeted testing booklets on the basis of their performance on some standard indicator of achievement.
   - Use of a targeted test must be based on a standard indicator, NOT upon a student's label.
   - Find a psychometrically sound method to assist in targeting
     - A universal 2-stage process (e.g., R. Darrell Bock) which starts with a locator test and then a targeted test of the usual full range
     - A specially constructed new screener.
     - Student performance on a state assessment.
     - A new or different method that may emerge.

Recommendations

6. Encourage and review research on the identification and progress of students who have a significant cognitive disability but in the short term do not test this 1% of students on NAEP.
    - Form a panel of experts to review best practices for identifying, measuring and reporting on students with significant cognitive disabilities.
    - Exclusion of students with a significant cognitive disability should not be considered in determining whether a jurisdiction meets the 95% participation guideline.

Recommendations

7. Assess the English Language Proficiency of students with disabilities drawn for the NAEP sample and provide NAEP approved, linguistically appropriate accommodations for them before determining whether additional accommodations may be needed to address any disabilities these students may have.

Crosswalk: Charge & Recommendations

Charge

- Provide that students with similar disabilities be tested on NAEP the same way, regardless of where they live

Recommendations

1. Encourage as many students as possible to participate in NAEP
2. Clarify and expand NAEP's guidance to schools, encouraging maximum participation of students with disabilities so at least 95% of those drawn for the NAEP sample participate

Crosswalk: Charge & Recommendations

Charge

- Maximize student access and meaningful participation

Recommendations

3. Clarify and expand NAEP's guidance to schools, encouraging maximum participation of students with disabilities so at least 95% of those drawn for the NAEP sample participate
4. Provide incentives for schools to include students with disabilities, including additional outreach and public reporting of participation rates below 95% of students with disabilities

Crosswalk: Charge & Recommendations

Charge

- Ensure that the constructs on NAEP frameworks be measured and that all students may be placed on the same scale

Recommendations

5. Support research efforts to develop targeted testing for students at both the top and bottom levels of achievement, with sound procedures...on some standard indicator of achievement
6. Encourage and review research on the identification and progress of students who have a significant cognitive disability but in the short term do not test this 1% of students on NAEP

Crosswalk: Charge & Recommendations

Charge

- Permit only accommodations that maintain the validity, reliability, and comparability of NAEP results

Recommendations

7. Encourage as many students as possible to participate in NAEP, and provide for the use of allowable accommodations that are necessary to enable students with disabilities to participate

Crosswalk:
Charge & Recommendations

Charge

- Are feasible logistically and financially, and without detrimental consequences

Recommendations

8. Report separately on students who have IEPs and those with Section 504 plans, but (except to maintain trend) only count the students with IEPs as students with disabilities
9. Assess the English language proficiency of students with disabilities who are ELL and are drawn for the NAEP sample and provide linguistically appropriate accommodations for those who need them before determining whether additional accommodations may be needed to address any disabilities those students may have