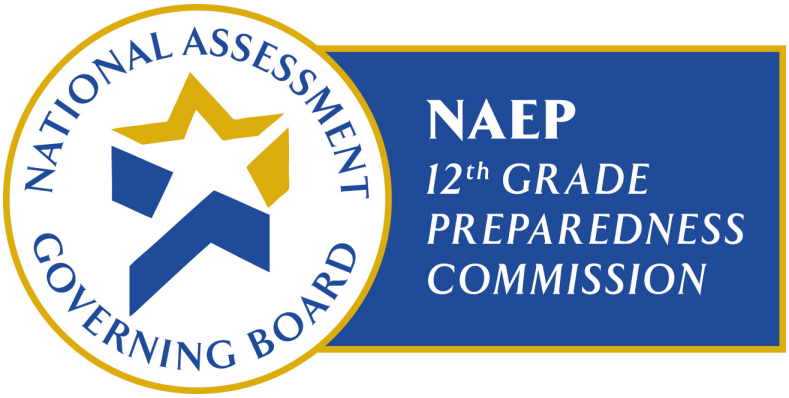

The Nation's Report Card and 12th Grade Academic Preparedness

Regional Symposium

Transcript: June 20, 2011
Sacramento, California

NAEP—the National Assessment of Educational Progress—is also known as The Nation's Report Card. Congressionally authorized and funded since 1969, NAEP reports to the public on the status and progress of student achievement in core subjects at grades 4, 8, and 12.

The National Assessment Governing Board that oversees NAEP is conducting a comprehensive program of research to transform it into an indicator of 12th grade academic preparedness for college and job training. The Governing Board established the NAEP 12th Grade Preparedness Commission to raise public awareness of the Governing Board's planned research program on 12th grade preparedness, the research results, and the potential of NAEP 12th grade data as an indicator of academic preparedness for postsecondary education and training.

As a part of this work, the Commission is conducting a series of symposia around the nation with leaders in K-12 and higher education, business, civil rights, and legislative policy, and members of the public. This is a record of the symposium conducted on June 20, 2011 in Sacramento, California.

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Alice Perez
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Blair Taylor
President and CEO, Los Angeles Urban League

Charles Reed
Chancellor, California State University

Greg Jones:

Good morning to all of you. Thank you so much for coming out this morning, and welcome to the California symposium on The Nation's Report Card and 12th Grade Academic Preparedness. This is the first of ten symposia that we're planning to do around the country, and we thought California would be a great place to start. We very much appreciate your being here and being a part of it. My name is Greg Jones. I am the vice chair of the NAEP 12th Grade Preparedness Commission, and I'll be presiding over today's discussions.

I do know many of you—but for those of you who don't know me, a bit about my background and my former life. Before I retired, I was executive vice president of State Farm Mutual; president and CEO, State Farm General Insurance Company; past chair of the California Business Roundtable; past chair of the Los Angeles Urban League; member of the State Board of Education; and currently the chair of California Business for Education Excellence.

But more importantly, we have a very distinguished panel of speakers this morning; I'm going to introduce them in just a little bit. Our audience includes leaders from across the state of California. Some of you have traveled far and wide, and we appreciate that very much. We have representatives here today from K-12 and higher education. We also have representatives from the policymaking and legislative arenas. We have business leaders here, and the civil rights community represented as well. All of you are a very welcome, important part of our meeting today.

All of you, I know, already understand the critical importance— to the state, to the region, to the nation—of producing 12th graders who are prepared for the next step: college and training for good jobs. And I know you also understand the necessity of having a trusted indicator to tell us whether we, indeed, are producing individuals with the human capital potential to advance our place in the global marketplace, participate effectively in civic life, and promote collective and individual economic well-being.

That is our focus today: the potential role of the NAEP, the National Assessment of Educational Progress, as this 12th grade preparedness indicator.

Our format today will be a mix of presentations and Q&A. Each presenter is going to have about 20 minutes or so. We will take a couple of questions after each presentation, but we're going to have a general Q&A session at the end, so either of those times will be fine.

I'll make a few concluding comments, and we hope to adjourn by noon. You do have a feedback form in front of you. We're planning nine more of these symposiums, and will appreciate any feedback that you can give us. You can leave

the feedback forms here at the conclusion of the session, and we'll also give instructions on where to send the form if completed after the session. These proceedings are being recorded through the sound system, to have a transcript of today's discussions. So if you ask questions, we would appreciate that you identify yourself.

We are very gratified to have a panel of eminent education leaders sitting up here with me this morning. The second to my left, whom you'll hear from in just a minute, Andrea Corso, who is a consultant to Mayor Kevin Johnson's STAND UP for education initiative. I'll tell you a little bit about Andrea in a second. We have Michael Kirst, president of the State Board of Education. To Andrea's left, Mark Musick, who is an advisor to the Commission. We are very fortunate to have Alice Perez, vice president of the California Community Colleges Board of Governors.

Alice—thank you for being here. Next to Alice is Blair Taylor. Blair is president and CEO of the Los Angeles Urban League. And finally, at the end of the table is Dr. Charles Reed, chancellor of California State University. I also want to recognize Darv Winick. Darv has joined us from Texas. Darv is an advisor to the Commission. And we have Ray Fields, the Commission staff director. So again, thank you all for joining us.

Andrea is going to visit with us first, and Andrea is no stranger to education challenges. During her career, she's taught in the toughest of circumstances, from rural North Carolina to an alternative school in Chicago to a charter school in New York. She came to Sacramento in 2000, where she was director of student achievement for Sacramento High during the time when the school made some tremendous gains, particularly in AP. She currently serves as a consultant to Mayor Johnson's groundbreaking STAND UP initiative, and we are very pleased to have her with us. Andrea, would you please join us?

Andrea Corso:

Good morning. Welcome, everybody. I'm speaking on behalf of Mayor Johnson today. He was very anxious to come, but was actually invited to the White House to speak with the president, so I got a call this weekend letting me know that I would be here to welcome you. So I am very, very pleased to be here this morning. First, I just wanted to say welcome to Sacramento. As the mayor always says, if you are not from here originally, we hope you come back early and often to our great city and are very, very glad to have this conversation happen here in the capital of our state.

Mayor Johnson's number one priority is education. This past Saturday, he was in Baltimore, Maryland for the U.S. Conference of Mayors. He led a morning discussion with all the business leaders that came to the U.S. Conference of Mayors regarding education and mayors' role in public schools. Many people will say, "Actually, the mayor should not have a role in public schools. Those things should

be separate: city hall, school district." Mayor Johnson has always had a different view.

You cannot, as he has said many times, have a great city without great schools. They are inseparable. It's impossible to move forward as a community without amazing public schools that prepare students for the future. We are very far from where we need to be in Sacramento. We're far from where we need to be in California, and we're far from where we need to be in our country. I know this is not new information for anybody here. What's going to drive action? What's going to drive people to move forward and do the difficult work and do things differently than we have done before?

One of the things the mayor has often said is what we're missing is a sense of urgency. What we're missing is a sense that things are actually not OK in terms of our public schools. What we're missing is the community standing up and saying, "We must have a change. We must do better than what we're doing right now." There is nothing that drives action and urgency like data and accountability. That's why we absolutely must have the type of accountability that we're discussing all day today with using the 12th grade NAEP data to really look and see: are our 12th graders prepared?

This is the information that is trusted. This is the information that compares states across the country on an equal basis. This is the information that mayors can use as a call to action to say we have to do things differently. From someone whose career has been in education, our students are not prepared. It's just the truth. Many people would like to say, "Actually, things are OK," or, "Maybe they're not great, but they're OK for my kid," or, "Maybe they're not wonderful, but it's just the same as it always was."

Unfortunately, other countries are not doing just the same as they always did. They're moving forward much faster and much further than we're doing here in our country. There are real consequences. If you cannot move forward quickly with a sense of urgency, the action is going to change.

When I look at it—stepping away from the mayor's perspective for a minute—when I look at it from a classroom teacher perspective, I taught for nine years: fifth grade to 12th grade—the problem is real on the ground. When I go to schools and visit high schools and I see them doing the same work I did with fifth grade students, that's where the problem starts. When they're making cell diagrams out of jellybeans in the 11th grade, we are not doing our job. Students are spending those last four years not moving forward, not advancing, not prepared. That's good news and bad news. The bad news is they're not prepared.

The good news is we have four years that are not being well utilized. We have four years where we could aggressively move students forward so they're ready for careers, so they're ready for college, so they're ready to be deployed in our

workforce and to make our country great. We have that time to do substantially different work than what we're doing right now.

I am so, so pleased to be here this morning. Thank you so much for all the work you've done. I really urge everybody in this room—in addition to thanking you—we've got to make this happen.

We've got to make this happen in Sacramento. We've got to make this happen in California. We need the data. This is what mayors need in order to move the conversation forward throughout the community. Thank you again. Have a great day.

Greg Jones:

Thank you, Andrea. You know, when I talked to Kevin last week, he spoke so glowingly about you and the contributions that you are making, and I can see why. We really appreciate your being here, filling in for Kevin. We do need more people like Kevin Johnson, who clearly has a vision and commitment to education and a will to challenge the status quo. I know he is very supportive of this work. The things that he is doing here in Sacramento, I think, clearly are a model for other cities around the country.

Now, to set the stage for this morning's discussion, Mark Musick and I will be providing an overview of NAEP, the information it provides about student achievement in California and the nation, and the research being carried out to make NAEP an indicator of 12th grade academic preparedness for college and training. Just a bit about the distinguished Mark Musick. He holds the James H. Quillen Chair of Excellence in Education and Teaching at East Tennessee State University and is the president emeritus of the Southern Regional Education Board, America's first interstate compact for education.

Mr. Musick was appointed by three U.S. secretaries of education to chair the National Assessment Governing Board. He is a charter member of the new board of ACT and serves as its chairman, and as a member of the ACT executive committee. Mr. Musick was elected in 2006 to the board of directors of the National Center for the Improvement of Educational Assessment. So with that, we are very pleased to have with us Mr. Mark Musick. Mark.

Mark Musick:

Thank you, Greg. We're going to start this morning by trying to answer two questions that were disastrous when asked 20 years ago. As I look around the room today, some of us were freshmen in high school or freshmen in college at the time, so you may have forgotten this. But it was General James Stockdale, a vice

presidential candidate on the Ross Perot ticket, who looked into the TV camera in that vice presidential debate and said, and I quote, "Who am I, and why am I here?"

Now that did get attention, but it got the wrong attention, and it proved disastrous for General Stockdale. But we're going to ask those questions this morning. Who is this NAEP team, and why are we here? This slide answers it in part. This meeting today is sponsored by the NAEP 12th Grade Preparedness Commission. The logo at the top of the slide is for the National Assessment Governing Board. That board is a non-partisan group of state and local policy makers, of educators, principals, teachers, state and local school board members, business representatives, test specialists, and yes, the general public.

And I did say non-partisan. That may be hard to believe in 2011, and it may be hard to believe in California, but let me tell you, this is about as close as you get to non-partisan in this day and time. The Board is appointed by the U.S. Secretary of Education, but by law, by tradition, by precedence, by determination, it is independent of the U.S. Secretary of Education. Non-partisan and independent. You're probably already questioning my credibility, but let me tell you that I do not use those words lightly, and Darv Winick and Greg Jones will testify to that.

The logo at the bottom of the page is for the NAEP 12th Grade Preparedness Commission. The Governing Board established this commission to raise awareness about 12th grade preparedness—academic preparedness for college and for job training—and to stress what NAEP, the National Assessment of Educational Progress, is doing as a national indicator of preparedness. Now NAEP and 12th grade academic preparedness – that's what we are about today.

California, as Greg said, is the location for the first of these symposiums.

California was chosen because of the keen interest you have in this topic, and because what you have been doing, what you, the persons in this room are about, has been recognized nationally.

So what is NAEP? Again, the National Assessment of Educational Progress. Lamar Alexander, senator, former governor, former U.S. Secretary of Education called it the Nation's Report Card. He thought that had a little more to sell to it than "NAEP." So you may hear that term used.

You also hear NAEP referred to as the "gold standard" in assessing achievement. It is the only continuing nationally representative measure of student achievement in America. It has been congressionally authorized and funded since 1969. I don't have to tell you what "funded" means in this day and time. That is quite an endorsement. NAEP reports to the public on student achievement—grades 4, 8, and 12— in subjects including reading, writing, math, science, U.S. history, geography, civics, foreign language, economics, the arts, and in a couple years, we'll be doing a

technology and engineering literacy assessment as a part of an initiative for NAEP to assess the STEM subject areas.

Al Shanker once called NAEP a national treasure, and those who are familiar with NAEP like to believe he was right. It's unique in a number of ways. In addition to the national results, it is the only source, and you heard Andrea say this a moment ago, the only source of comparable state data in grades four and eight in the United States. Under the Federal Title I Act, all states, at grades four and eight, take the NAEP reading and math assessments. California has participated in the state NAEP program since the 1990s at grades four and eight, so you have NAEP results that you can use to compare the California results to other states and the nation since the 1990s.

This slide shows some of the results since 1990. I hope that's visible from everywhere in the room. That line at the top is Massachusetts. The line at the bottom is the District of Columbia, and you will see where California, the gold line, fits in comparison to the other jurisdictions, and also to the national results. Comparisons with all other states are available and are easily accessible on the NAEP website.

NAEP also has 21 large urban districts that have volunteered to use NAEP. Now this is called the Trial Urban District Assessment, or TUDA. If you find yourself saying, "NAEP TUDA," without giggling, smiling, or feeling slightly uncomfortable, then you know too much about NAEP, so it's time to step back. For these 21 districts to use NAEP is a major sea shift in America, for these urban districts are saying, "Measure us by this most rigorous assessment in the country."

Fresno, Los Angeles, and San Diego have all participated, and you can see those results on this slide along with where the national large city average is as well.

In my view, the ability to analyze achievement gaps by race, ethnicity, and economic status over time is among the most important things that NAEP provides. You can see that over time, over the period 1992 to 2009, that gap has closed for both black and Latino students.

But let me tell you, that gap is still huge. That's H-U-G-E. And the importance of NAEP is that it doesn't hide these gaps. It's not a low-standards test. If you set standards low enough, gaps go away. NAEP is in essence, a truth teller. We don't claim it's exactly right, but the NAEP role as a truth teller is one not to be overlooked.

Now NAEP provides benefits to states, one of those being to track progress over time. With California, you can see the progress over almost two decades compared to the other states and the nation. And it's important to underscore, it's especially important to underscore today in Sacramento, there is no cost to states to participate in the National Assessment of Educational Progress. No direct cost. The cost of

test development, administration, and reporting are all paid by the federal government.

The burden on schools and students ranges between minimal and modest.

Student testing time is about 60 minutes. The tests are secure and administered by NAEP contract staff. The reports are provided at the state level. There are no individual student or school results, only results for these various groups of students. So there's no incentive for taking time away from instruction for test prep.

NAEP is also important to states because it can be linked to international results.

NAEP is being linked in 2011 with the Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study at grade eight, and with the grade four literacy study in international reading. What this means is you get your state NAEP score, and link that to an equivalent score for the international tests. So with California's 2011 NAEP results at the eighth grade in science and math, and fourth grade in reading, you'll be able to see how California's students compare with students in other nations, such as China and Japan, England, and Canada.

NAEP provides states with a common measure that provides valid cross-state comparisons. Other than with NAEP, there is no way of telling whether proficient on a state test means it's more or less rigorous than proficient on a test in another state. State assessments, believe me, are so different in content in what they measure, you can't combine them to show national results, and they cannot be compared across the country.

NAEP provides that common benchmark. It's the only source, also, of student achievement data at the 12th grade, 12th grade being the end of mandatory schooling. High school assessments are typically administered before the 12th grade. And just like other state assessments, they can't be combined to produce national results. In the case of your program that has gotten national recognition attention, the California Early Assessment Program, you are assessing more students than any other state at the 11th grade, frankly, in a more rigorous way.

But even so, there, you're probably assessing two-thirds or so of your students in math, and more in reading. Even the ACT or SAT, these are not representative samples, as you know. They tell us something important, but again, they are not representative of 12th grade achievement. So NAEP is the only source of nationally representative student achievement results at grade 12, and it is possible to get 12th grade state results, and I hope that maybe there'll be some discussion about this today.

Twelve states volunteered to do this. In 2009, those included some large states like Florida and Illinois; also included New Hampshire and Iowa. So I wonder if we

can draw any conclusions about caucuses, primaries, and 12th grade results. We'll leave that up to you.

12th grade academic preparedness, is what we're really about and NAEP is the only source of truly comparable 12th grade data. In 2004, a Blue Ribbon Commission, studying the 12th grade NAEP, made several recommendations. I want to highlight two of those. The first was that, with Grade 12 being the transition point to adulthood, adult pursuits—particularly post secondary education and training, or entrance into the military—for national security and economic viability, it's important for this country to have an indicator of 12th grade student academic preparedness for college and job training.

It is just abundantly clear that ensuring, as Andrea was indicating a moment ago, that high school students are well prepared is one of the most important things we can do in today's global and competitive economy.

I grew up in Virginia. Thomas Jefferson—if you have a friend from the University of Virginia, they still think Tom is walking the campus there, and you can hear him on a quiet night.

Thomas Jefferson said something to the effect of: if the nation wanted to be free and uneducated, it wanted something that never was and never will be, and I think 12th grade academic preparedness is probably a stake in the ground that tells us whether we're pursuing the possible.

The most recent data in terms of academic preparedness from The National Center for Education Statistics talks about the percentage of students who need remedial courses, and those numbers are somewhere between startling and frightening. In some states, and particularly in urban areas, including some areas of California, the pictures are even more startling.

The New York Times article about the City College of San Francisco got my attention. Ninety percent of the new students are not prepared for freshman English and math, and the City College of San Francisco offers more remedial classes than regular college level courses. The cost to students, to families, to this nation is great, and it comes home when you get the statistics, and take a little closer look at them. Minority students, unfortunately, and students from economically distressed and challenged backgrounds, are significantly over-represented in remedial classes.

If you look at the City College of San Francisco – I'm not picking on City College– but if you look at a class of 25 students, 25 African-American students, taking a remedial English course, only one out of 25 of those African-American students in that remedial English course would take and pass a regular, for-credit English course.

If you looked at 25 Latino students taking a remedial course in English, only two of 25 would take and pass a regular, for-credit English course. The cost is obviously enormous, both personally and to our states and our country. The estimate here by the Pacific Research Institute is a quarter of a billion dollars in the direct cost of remediation in California, and other costs, including diminished earnings.

Greg– I'm happy to present this wonderfully uplifting picture here and hand it over to you.

Greg Jones:

Thank you, Mark. On that high note, I'll take it from here. I know that everybody here knows intuitively that education and training beyond high school have important economic implications. For example, the data for May 2011 from the U.S. Department of Labor show a direct correlation between unemployment and education, as you can see in this slide. The overall unemployment rate was, in May 2011, 9.1 percent. Among those without a high school diploma, the unemployment rate was 14.7 percent, and for those with a bachelor's degree or higher, it was 4.5 percent.

Now this is national data, but the situation isn't much different here in California. In 2009, the last year that these data were available on a statewide level, the state unemployment rate was 9.8 percent. As of this April, I believe it was about 11.9 percent. Back in 2009, only 6.1 percent of those holding a B.A. degree were without work. That figure, for those without a high school diploma, jumps to 17.3 percent.

Now there's a similar story, as you might imagine, on education and earnings. Nationally, those who have less than a high school diploma earn approximately $449.00 a week, while their counterparts with a bachelor's degree or higher earn over three times that rate, or $1,368.00 a week. Clearly, concern about our students' academic preparedness is not a mere rhetorical question. Our nation's position in the world, our global competitiveness, our economic well-being in fact do hinge on that.

The National Academy of Sciences, I think, said it best. Some of you may have read this quote from their report, *Rising Above the Gathering Storm:* "…because other nations have the competitive advantage of a low-wage structure, the United States must compete by optimizing its knowledge-based resources, particularly in science and technology."

As a businessman, this is particularly important to me. To be globally competitive, we need to educate 12th graders who are academically prepared for rigorous college coursework and job training. A recent study by the Public Policy Institute of California points out that the California economy is increasingly dependent on

highly educated workers. In California, with its highly diverse populations, minorities, particularly Latinos and African Americans, will be a primary source of new entrants into the workforce.

These are the very populations that are most underrepresented in college and in rigorous job training programs, and today are most likely to be in remedial programs in the colleges, as we discussed earlier. I can tell you as the former chairman of the California Business Roundtable, a number of CEOs all across the state, all up and down the state, say that there are thousands of jobs that go unfilled because they're unable to find applicants with the skills to fill them.

I'm sure many of you have heard that or even seen that in your businesses. This lack of a well-prepared workforce is a problem not just for the businesses themselves, but for our state, and in fact, for our nation, because for every job that goes unfilled, there are goods and services that can't be delivered to the global marketplace, and in turn, dollars that can't be returned to the California or U.S. economy. So that is a broader challenge, not just for the businesses themselves.

As we saw from an earlier slide with NAEP fourth grade data, achievement gaps appear early on, as I'm sure some of you well know. Clearly, the imperative to close these gaps is not only to benefit individual students, but ultimately, closing the gaps is an important economic imperative essential for the well-being of California and all of its citizens alike.

While K through 12 education is important, we also know that it's really no longer sufficient.

Today, education and training beyond high school is essential for the well-being of the nation and of the individual. As a policy matter, it's important to know whether our 12th graders have the knowledge and the skills to meet the challenges of today's college level academics and today's high-skill careers and job market.

But the question is—how are we going to know if our young people are academically prepared? Let's examine briefly what we know and what we don't know.

We have a lot of important measures that provide an indication of our current status and our future prospects, as you see in this slide. We know the daily changes in the stock market—and we don't like what we have seen in the last six weeks. We also know the number of bushels of wheat produced and the price of gold, those kinds of things. But today, sadly, we cannot answer this critical question: How well prepared, academically, are our 12th graders for college and training for good jobs?

That is a critical question. How well prepared academically are our 12th graders for college and training for a good job? What we need is a credible, trustworthy indicator to tell us. But again, sadly, none currently exists. And remarkably, there

is no common definition for preparedness generally understood by students and parents and educators. Now to answer that question, how are we going to know, a program of research is being conducted to transform NAEP at the 12th grade in reading and mathematics into indicators of preparedness for post-secondary education and job training.

The Governing Board that oversees NAEP is sponsoring research that's designed to make NAEP an indicator of preparedness, something that we just do not have. This slide illustrates the sequence of things that have been happening. The Governing Board started this process, as you can see by this slide, back in 2002. The Board created the Blue Ribbon panel we mentioned earlier that recommended in March of 2004 the transformation of NAEP to report on the academic preparedness of 12th graders. The Board has proceeded methodically in that regard.

After a number of interim steps, the Board contracted with Achieve to review NAEP's 12th grade reading and math tests in terms of preparedness and made changes in 2006 targeted for the assessments to be conducted in 2009.

Now recognizing the central issue of all of this is the validity of the statements that NAEP would make about preparedness, the Governing Board convened a distinguished technical panel to advise on the research that needed to be conducted.

That panel was chaired by Dr. Michael Kirst, whom we are pleased to have with us today. We'll be hearing from him in a little bit. He was professor emeritus at Stanford University at that time. The panel also included Dr. David Conley and other experts in research, policy, and psychometrics. The technical panel began its work in 2006 and delivered its report in November of 2008. The report, *Making New Links*, was among the background readings that were available with the meeting invitation that you received, and it's also in your packet.

The technical panel recommended a program of validity research. The Governing Board approved the validity research program in 2009. It soon began conducting the research. The Board's report on the first phase of this research is planned for late this year or early 2012. Today, we'll talk about our definition of academic preparedness and give an overview of the five types of research, as well as the studies underway and planned. More than 30 studies have been authorized, and we'll talk a little bit about the results that we have so far.

A working definition of academic preparedness was necessary to design the research. The working definition addresses the academic preparedness in reading and mathematics to qualify—without remediation—for entry level, credit bearing, college course work and for job training. The definition assumes that 12th graders will need training beyond high school to qualify for a career, not that they necessarily will leave high school ready for that career. The definition focuses on academic preparedness because assessing academic proficiency is really what NAEP does best.

So again, the definition addresses what it takes to qualify for entry into post-secondary education and training, not on success in the course or the likelihood of completing a degree or a training program. There are many factors beyond academic preparedness that affect success in college or a training program. These are personal qualities and attributes, like possessing good study skills, effective time management, persistence, and things like that.

The NAEP working definition distinguishes academic preparedness from readiness, which would include all those personal qualities and attributes that I just mentioned. Again, our focus is on academic preparedness because these other factors, while obviously important, are not measured by NAEP. Finally, our definition makes no assumption about whether being academically prepared for college and for training for specific jobs are the same or not the same; we'll see what the research tells us.

This is a comprehensive plan, and there are five types of studies: content comparison, statistical linking, standard setting, benchmarking, and the higher education survey. I'll talk for just a minute about each one of those.

The content comparison studies look at the degree of overlap between what 12th grade NAEP, reading and math tests measure, and the tests used for college admissions and placement, such as the ACT, SAT, Accuplacer, WorkKeys, and so forth.

These content comparison studies have already been completed. The research found significant overlap between NAEP and the other tests, especially the SAT and the ACT reading and math tests.

The next one is statistical linking. In the statistical linking studies, large samples of students take 12th grade NAEP and one of the comparison tests—the ACT, SAT, ones that I've mentioned before. The analysis looks at the relationship between the performance on NAEP and the other test.

Preliminary results linking NAEP and the SAT mathematics performance indicate a pretty high correlation, about .90. Also the Proficient level on NAEP is equivalent to about 500 on the SAT in reading and math, the score that the College Board considers as its college readiness benchmark. These are promising results, and we're continuing to do our analysis.

Another statistical linking project is underway, but we don't have the results yet. But it's promising, and we're excited about it. The Florida Department of Education is participating in a study capitalizing on Florida's very well developed longitudinal database. The study will match NAEP results and state records for Florida students who participated in the NAEP state pilot back in 2009.

The study will examine the relationship between student achievement on NAEP and, respectively, the ACT, Accuplacer, COMPASS, SAT and WorkKeys. It will analyze employment data and salary data for Florida examinees, along with course grades in college and job training programs and follow these students over time, which is exciting for us. We're hoping to replicate this study in other states.

In the area of standard setting, panels of experts in student college placement or in training for specific jobs are convened together. These panels carry out a standard-setting process. This process identifies the cut scores on NAEP reading and math tests that represent the knowledge and the skills needed to qualify for placement into credit-bearing college courses or into job training programs.

In this first phase of research, five job training programs are the target, with a plan to do some additional training programs in the future. This first set includes automotive master mechanic; computer support specialist; heating, ventilation, air conditioning technician; licensed practical nurse; and pharmacy technician.

The criteria used for selecting these particular occupations were a significant number of positions in the economy now and projected into the future. That's number one.

Second, a wide range of occupations. Third, significant training required beyond high school, but not a bachelor's degree. Fourth, among the jobs, a range of reading and math skills are needed to qualify for the training. Fifth, reasonably good compensation with likelihood of growth, and finally, familiarity to the public.

For college, the research will identify the knowledge and skills to qualify for entry-level math courses, such as college algebra or calculus, and reading skills needed to handle college texts in subjects like history and psychology and the sciences. These studies are 12 in all—separate studies for reading and math for each of the five job-training programs and college placement are underway. We expect and hope to have the results of these by the fall.

In a related study, the course syllabi and texts used for the respective job training programs will be examined to determine the pre-requisite reading and math skills and knowledge that are needed.

In the benchmarking studies, NAEP reading and math assessments will be administered to specific reference groups. We're looking for partners in this, but examples of reference groups that we've imagined include individuals in various job training programs, military recruits, and freshman college students.

And finally, the higher education survey. The survey will report on the tests and cut scores on those tests used for making placement decisions for entry-level college students. This will be a nationally representative sample of two-year and four-year institutions, public and private. A pilot test of 120 institutions was conducted last

fall. The full study, with a sample of 1,800 institutions, will begin later this year. As we mentioned earlier, the Governing Board expects to issue a report on the first phase of this preparedness research in late 2011or early 2012.

So what might all of this research tell us? The next three slides illustrate some possible scenarios. One of the important things we're trying to convey is that everything really turns on the research results. We don't want to assume what the results will be, but do want to look at some possible scenarios.

We're very optimistic from the results that we've seen so far, but whether NAEP will be able to report on academic preparedness is still not a foregone conclusion.

In this first slide, the bar with colors represents the NAEP score range, 0 to 500. The colors represent the NAEP performance standards or achievement levels, Basic, Proficient, Advanced, plus there's a range for below Basic. In this first scenario, the research results all converge and are mutually confirming.

If the results turn out this way, we'll be able to make some pretty strong statements about the status of 12th grade academic preparedness from the NAEP results. In this next scenario, the results from the college preparedness studies may converge in one range on the NAEP scale while workplace training preparedness converges in another range. Finally, in the third scenario, the results from both college and the workplace training preparedness studies may be dispersed all across the NAEP scale.

Again, a crucial point is the results will determine what NAEP will be able to say about preparedness. If the research supports NAEP's making valid statements about preparedness, the Board's report on preparedness research will also include NAEP results, and future NAEP reports will include preparedness indicators. This is just the first phase. As I've said before, much more research is planned.

As we begin now to turn to our other presenters, I do want to say—please be thinking about the implications of this research and the 12th grade data for states like ours. What's the potential use for this research here in California, what additional research should the Governing Board consider, who might be potential partners in this research, and what research could be considered if California were to volunteer for the 12th grade NAEP at the state level in 2013?

So that's what Mark and I have to say. Again, we'll take a minute for questions. We'll have a full Q&A in a little bit. Let me just take a minute and see if there are any questions on what Mark and I talked about before we turn to our next speaker.

Rick Miller, CORE:

Rick Miller. So my question is, given the move to a national Common Core assessment, it seems like [transcriber could not discern this part of the question]. I'd love your thoughts on that and why you would move here if you're moving there.

Ray Fields:

A question about the planned Common Core assessments and NAEP. There are a couple of things to be aware of. First, the Governing Board that has sponsored the research has, from the beginning of the Common Core State Standards Initiative, been working with that initiative. Representatives have provided periodic updates at Governing Board meetings. Second, the English language arts standards state in the document that they're based on the NAEP reading and writing framework, and the math standards also make use of NAEP. Third, we're working supportively with them. The assessment projects are under a very ambitious schedule, and we're continuing to watch and communicate and work in a coordinated way. So a takeaway is that NAEP is very much a part of the Common Core and the Governing Board is actively engaged with the assessment projects.

Greg Jones:

Our first speaker today represents the K through 12 policy perspective. Dr. Michael Kirst is the president of the California State Board of Education, and professor emeritus of education at Stanford University, where he served on the faculty since 1969. Dr. Kirst received his PhD in political economy and government from Harvard University. Before joining Stanford's faculty, Dr. Kirst held several positions in the federal government, including staff director of the United States Senate Subcommittee on Manpower, Employment, and Poverty, and director of program planning for elementary and secondary education at the U.S. Office of Education.

His latest books include *From High School to College* and *Political Dynamics of American Education*. Dr. Kirst is a member of both the National Academy of Education and the International Academy of Education. We are privileged to have him with us. Please welcome Dr. Kirst.

Michael Kirst:

Thanks, Greg. We miss you on the state board, but now I can see you're doing other important work. I'm going to talk today from three perspectives that I've worked on and am working on. One, about five years ago, I wrote a paper for Pat

Callan at the National Center for Public Policy and Higher Education on the "senior slump." Two, as Greg indicated, I chaired the 12th grade technical panel on college preparedness for NAEP. And lastly, my current role as state board president. Since we're talking about grade 12, when you look at the history of grade 12, there has been no rationale that students understand for what they're doing in grade 12.

Neither the colleges have claimed grade 12 in any way in terms of exactly what they want from students. Often, they're done with their applications. They've made their decision on community college, and it is an area which has not been assessed by any state much, except New York with its Regents test. So grades 2 to 11 are the typical assessment levels, and it has become increasingly unmoored from post-secondary education in terms of what you need to do to finish fast during that era.

It's a particular problem, I think, in California. I just looked at the education lead graduation preparation issue, and California just leaps off the tables for having such low graduation course requirements. I mean, I'm stunned by how low we are compared to everybody else, and therefore, I would assume most students are done with their core graduation requirements by the 12th grade, and so what are they doing there?

We know the talk of the senior slump, and it's an early vacation year, and so on and so forth. So the Early Assessment Program of Cal State has tried to remedy that and have an impact. But I think we're dealing with a grade that is fundamentally in trouble in all these years. Indeed, when I released this report, the man that released it, that commented on it, Gerry Tirozzi, the head of the National Secondary School Principals, he summarized my report and said, "I'm not talking about Kirst's report. I just read from a report that was put out in 1952 in New York State."

So we never have figured out the 12th grade. One area that particularly troubles me is the mathematic sequences and what they really aim for for most 12th graders, and this worries me in California. I just got back from visiting my grandchild up in Auburn. He has a single course open to him in the 12th grade, Advanced Placement calculus. He's taken all the others. So we have this strong push to get through grade eight algebra, but what I haven't seen is a careful, systematic analysis of what are the sequence of courses and the capstones after that.

In fact, you could complete 9th grade algebra, end up not taking any mathematics in your senior year, and this is a classic prediction of problems with remediation and placement tests. So if I had any influence with the research organizations here, like PACE and WestEd and so on, I'd say take a look at our mathematics sequences. What is there for various people? What are the options? I don't see much trigonometry. I don't see much statistics and probability, and I don't – if you've done your Algebra II, where do you go next?

Not all pupils really, I think, should be pushed into calculus or nothing, which seems to be what I'm seeing. So that's an issue that I think we need to pay attention to in that regard. What I do see is a domination of A to G thinking, but A to G thinking doesn't necessarily translate into anything that is beyond the A to G requirements for many pupils, and of course, the community college pupils aren't really there.

The A to G requirements are not, to me, a sequence of curriculum through the 12th grade. So as we get to these issues of assessment, I think, assessment for what? What are we doing in these last two grades, and what are we assessing in terms of what our goals are in a state like California?

Now let me talk a little bit about the current effort NAEP is undergoing and some thoughts on this. I had NAEP come to the state board of education at our main meeting and talk about what they're doing.

And one of the areas that we were particularly interested in on the board is what NAEP is doing with career and technical education and how they're thinking about it. And if you read the *Making New Links* report and you want to see some thinking on career tech, which is beyond some of what you usually see, read pages 18 to 21 where we talk about how to understand career tech in some ways from asking what the people who prepare students for a career in technical education really want their students to know and be able to do, and in working the assessment back from that, which is different than most testing experts will do.

So my concern, and also worked with SREB on some of this. SREB sponsored a tour – well, sponsored a project I worked on reviewing the college readiness of policies in southern states. We saw there they have a lot of technical colleges, not just community colleges in some of those southern states. They just think differently about it than we do in California. So if you list the jobs, Greg put a list of the jobs up there, the Department of Labor has a listing called O*Net, and there are five levels that are there.

Basically, my concern was the Common Core essentially never gets below what is called level three. These are the higher levels in terms of career path that Greg showed, such as master auto mechanic. It would be an O*Net three job. So the Common Core says it ties to college and career. I wrote a rebuttal to them saying, "I don't see anything in your studies that link to career jobs, such as heating and air conditioning, which are O*Net level two, and our levels, jobs at that level. So how do you link to that?"

And they came back and said, "Well, we're assuming the careers are all these high level – there's nothing below auto master mechanic in there." I was at the auto collision course the other day over at Delta College in Stockton, and that's not an O*Net three kind of job, but there are students that are working in that field, and I assume there will always be auto collision. So in this area, I think that we need to

think about how our assessments will do, and that the NAEP assessment, what really was interesting, of course, is whether students are college ready.

But how does the college ready relate to these specific career technical jobs, and shouldn't we be having some conversation about that and some of our assessments are worked out with that in mind. So that's one of the areas that the board is contemplating and one of the areas that the NAEP stimulated when they came here. Now at the end of our state board meeting, Governor Musgrove suggested that California give the 12th grade NAEP, so I have some reactions to that.

First of all, from my members, the board, was this comment around Rick Miller's question. Is NAEP aligned, and how is it aligned with the Common Core? If we're working on implementing the Common Core, I need reassurance that this is indeed aligned. I don't think there's a huge issue there, but there might be in some areas, particularly in the higher levels of the grades 11 and 12, which are rarely looked at in these exercises.

Secondly, how does a NAEP exam relate to the Early Assessment Program? What are they doing? Are they similar, dissimilar? How do they differ or not? Because that's an instrument we have. And third, you know, members were concerned should we make any decisions on NAEP 12th grade. Now that we're redoing our assessment system over time through becoming a governing member in one of the assessment consortium called SMARTER Balanced.

So should we just put everything on hold until we get these new assessments, SMARTER Balanced? Should we move ahead? Those are some of the questions that were suggested, but there was a lot of interest, of course, in getting some understanding of how our students are prepared not just for college and very high level careers, but also for this range of career and technical specialties, and NAEP would provide that. The other thing that you see here that's different from NAEP from what we're doing and what NAEP is currently doing as well is that it would move with these anchor – with these cut points, as we saw here, in the last two slides.

It would move beyond these vague words of "advanced," "proficient," "basic." I remember Darv Winick telling me one of the reasons he wanted to get into this was when he spoke to the rotary club in East Texas, he wanted to tell them whether NAEP could tell students how many were really prepared for college, how many were prepared for jobs like this. They didn't really understand what "advanced" and "proficient" means. And a lot of the newspapers have proficient as grade level, which is a statistical average of what students get in a particular grade.

So our current reporting is not very clear to me, to the public, so the NAEP's approach of linking what our students can do to specific outcomes at the end of their 12 years of schooling has a lot of attraction. Other things that NAEP brings up to me are in the future, as state board president, we have a system of end of course

testing, which SREB and Mark have been very enthusiastic about, and generally, I'm enthusiastic about it as well.

We don't test cross-cutting skills anymore in a high school. We test Algebra II, biology, chemistry, physics, world history, and so on. However, those tests get very little publicity. They have very few stakes that I know of. It's not clear pupils are trying very hard on them, and it's not clear why they should. The ones going to competitive universities are pushing for advanced placement, or they're pushing for the subject matter tests that are administered by the College Board and ACT. And our tests in California, which are ten years old at the high school level, are of course, like everything in California, all multiple choice.

We just love multiple choice. Increasingly, AP is moving away from multiple choice. NAEP moved away from all multiple choice a long time ago, has extended constructed response items. I think we should be taking a hard look at what these end of course tests do, are they old technology, what should we do with them, and I think that's an issue that we definitely want to work on in the future.

Finally, I think that we need to think about new approaches in grade 12, which would be suggested by all these assessments. Increasingly, what grade 12 should do, it seems to me, is simulate to students what they will confront as they go on to post-secondary education or into the workforce in some ways. If you talk about students who want to go on to college that are interested in four year degrees, directly or through the transfer work, the senior year, it seems to me, needs to be much more like college in some of its courses.

I spoke recently at Northwest Missouri State in Missouri, and they were saying, "You know, our students are pretty good, but a lot of them, we teach in 45 days in mathematics what the high schools teach in 175 days," so they just get blown out by the pace. "Our homework assignments are three hours of homework for every hour of class." That's unheard of in high school. And finally, the students, when they don't do well, they can do do-overs in high school.

And so they come up and ask for the do-over. And we don't do many do-overs here at Northwest Missouri. So I think in this whole system of what we're assessing, we should also think about preparation models in courses. The University of Oregon has developed through David Conley what are called reference courses, which are grade 12 courses that reference college courses and integrated with the style and pacing of them.

And in closing, I'm hoping that we will reconsider what we're doing, of course, in 12th grade in content, in design, in purpose, and in assessment, and the national assessment work will, I think, be very useful in our re-thinking. Thank you.

Greg Jones:

And we have just a couple of minutes. If any of you have questions for Dr. Kirst. I can say with confidence, Mike, your point that auto collisions will continue as long as my son has a driver's license, so I'm very confident in that. Anything?

Mark Musick:

I had one observation, Michael. The 12th grade question may also be General Stockdale's question. Who am I, and why am I here?

Michael Kirst:

Unless you're trying to get into a selective university, then it's very – there's an AP track, you know, just trying to get into these selective universities. They have a purpose. They're pushing pretty much to the end in this game, but the rest is very, very unclear, and only about eight percent nationally go to these selective universities you hear so much about.

Greg Jones:

Thank you very much, Michael. We really appreciate your spending time with us and giving us your perspective. Our next speaker we're very fortunate to have because she represents the business and occupational training perspective, and indeed has a wealth of experience in those areas. We're fortunate that she is able to join us. Alice Perez is the vice president of the California Community Colleges board of governors, and the vice president of the California Asian Chamber of Commerce. She's the director of government affairs for STAND UP, an educational non-profit working to improve public schools in the Sacramento region.

She's served on the board of numerous professional and community service organizations, including the Sacramento Asian Pacific Chamber of Commerce, Sacramento Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, the California State Aid Commission, the Center for Fathers and Families, a national low income energy consortium, Mercy Health Foundation, and the California Museum for History, Women, and Art. Ms. Perez received the Sacramento State distinguished service award, which recognizes alumni who have made notable contributions to the campus and her community.

She received her bachelor's degree in finance and insurance from Sacramento state in 1999, and as I said, we're very pleased to have Alice Perez. Alice, will you join us?

Alice Perez:

Good morning. I see some of you doing the yawn that goes like this. If I see you doing that, I'm going to stop and say, "Everybody get up and do the hokey pokey." I'm very happy to be here today to represent the perspective of the community colleges and workforce. If we look at the issue here, the real question is really about—are our nations' 12th graders prepared for college and for job training? That's the real issue before us today.

I'm going to give you an overview of the California Community Colleges as well as talk about some facts that we're aware of that pertain to college readiness from the students that come to us; what we're doing to address this readiness; and also, how we can partner with NAEP, and what we look forward to in the future with these new testing tools that are coming forward. So, just to give you a little background on the California Community Colleges, in 2009-10, we had 112 colleges, with over 2.7 million students in the state of California.

Our students come close to mirroring the true diverse population of California. If you look at who we're serving, 7 percent of our students are African-American.

Eleven percent are Asian, 30 percent are Latino students. In the Los Angeles community college district alone, the population we educate is about three times as many Latino students and nearly four times as many African-American students than all of UC systems combined. Our system, unfortunately, had to turn away around 140,000 students in the 2009-10 year due to budget cuts. These students are generally going to be new high school students that are trying to enter the community colleges, as well as returning adult students, and students that have been displaced through the workforce that are looking to come back for retraining, and unfortunately, they don't have access because our first priority is our students who have continuing education priority enrollment.

In 2009-10, the community colleges awarded 80,000 associates degrees and 130,000 certificates. Ninety-two thousand students transferred to a four-year college or university, and 54 percent of CSU students that year and 28 percent of UC college graduates were transferred from a community college. Why is this important? Because I just want you to understand the important impact that California Community Colleges have within our state. We're in between the high schools, and we're in between the UC and the CSU system. We're where students come if they're under-prepared or they don't have enough funding, or if they're coming back to retrain themselves for new types of professions.

Our transfer students account for 80 percent of UC bachelor's degrees in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics fields. We have trained about 80 percent of all fire fighters, law enforcement officers, and EMTs, and about 70 percent of all nurses in the state are trained through the California community colleges. I'm proud to say all that. About 47 percent of community college students are a traditional college age, and what do we consider a traditional age? Eighteen to 24. Twenty-five percent of our students are 35 years or older. We have a lot of returning adults coming to the community college.

And I just want to tell you I'm going to put the rumors at rest, they're not all coming back to take aerobics classes. In 2009-10, about six percent were concurrently enrolled high school students. Unfortunately, that number has been declining because space is not available. We don't have the space to have concurrent enrollment, which I think is extremely critical for our students as we had talked about earlier. What are those students doing in the 12th grade? Just to share a personal experience with you, when I was in high school, and I'm not going to date myself and tell you when that was, but when I was in my sophomore year, I had fulfilled all of my needs to graduate in math.

And so I was given the option to just take 12th grade basic math. That was all I needed to graduate, which I thought, "God, I can get an easy A in this." "Easy A?" my mom said, "No way." She said, "You go and take a higher level of classes that you need to make sure that you're prepared for your future." But the school was willing to allow me to do that because the teachers in the schools, the counselors in the schools are overwhelmed. Fortunately for me, I had a very good teacher that counseled me and two of my best friends, to this date, we're still good friends, and told us to go to college.

We didn't know about college. Our families just told us, "Graduate high school." That was the immediate goal. Our teacher told us about college opportunities. And because of that, we went on to pursue higher education. If you look at the 2010 Early Assessment Program, 84 percent of California's 11th grade public high school students, which is about 378,000, that took the test took the English EAP test. Of those, 21 percent demonstrated readiness for college. Seventy-five percent did not.

Over 75 percent of those students are not ready for college, which means that there's a huge gap between college readiness and student academic preparedness in high school and post-secondary education and expectations. We need to ensure that students are learning what they need to know for entry into high school or into training for career paths. For the math EAP, there were roughly about 178,000 students that took that. Fifteen percent were determined college ready. Forty-two percent were conditional.

Forty-three percent were not yet college ready. Again, those students were only the students that concluded enrollment in Algebra II. That's what they had to do to

qualify. That's not talking about your full body of students in the 11th grade. There's a very strong correlation between the preparedness in K-12 and a student's ability to be successful when they get into higher education. Eighty-five percent of students entering California community colleges need remediation. And what does that mean?

That means that we have to have programs and spend a lot of time and effort in preparing them just to get them to the basic level of what we want them to learn. So extra levels of basic skills are a huge impediment for students to finish school, and often times, particularly your minority students, they become so frustrated with the process, they will just drop out, and they give up. They don't continue on with education. And unfortunately, you know, people say one of the strengths of the community colleges is local control and the diversity of the ability to have different programs.

It can also be a weakness because there's not consistency in the type of basic skill classes that are offered throughout the system. So students can receive one type of skill training in one area, but in another area, it might not be OK for them to have that level of training to attend certain classes. And if you look at the average student, it hasn't changed much.

From the time when I was a student and today, the picture looks exactly the same for our students. When I was a student, I was taking classes at Sierra College, Sac State and American River College and Sac City College simultaneously. I was taking classes at American River College and at City College to make up for courses that I transferred from upstate New York that California wouldn't accept. It's no different for our students today. Our students are taking courses at multiple campuses.

If they have to try to get an associate's degree at the local level— just here in our own neighborhood, we have two different districts neighboring each other. Both of those districts can have different qualifications for that student to achieve a degree. So if you imagine putting on top of them all the basic skill classes that are necessary, it's very discouraging for our students. The other thing is it costs us a lot. As taxpayers, we're spending over $274 million in remediation costs in public postsecondary institutions. That's a lot of money.

When we're in the current budget crisis that we're in today and we're spending this amount of money because students are coming to us under-prepared. We're not aligning what the students need to graduate high school with what they need to get into postsecondary education. We're spending hundreds of millions to teach these children what they should have learned when they were in high school. In addition to that, there's hundreds and potentially millions that California businesses are spending. And many of you are business owners yourself. That was said earlier.

In addition to that, it doesn't even cover their indirect costs, including dollars lost in our local economy and diminished earnings as well as reduced state and local receipts and other costs associated with that. What are we doing to try to improve this for student readiness? There's a couple of initiatives we've taken on at California community colleges. We have our Student Success Task Force, which is a task force that the board of governors put together to look at three main areas and come back with recommendations. The good news is this is a task force that only has a period of time to do this work in.

It's one year. It's not a task force that can go two, three, four, five years. That's really good news. Don't you agree? Come on, you guys. You've got to get the joke. So the area that we're focused on is really college readiness strategies. What are some of the best practices that are out there today? What are some of the campuses doing today that are very effective in preparing students? Improving basic skills and assessments. How can we ensure that this large sum of money, the millions of dollars that we're spending on basic skills and assessments, are best spent, and that we're spending it in a way that gets the students through that in the shortest amount of time?

If a student doesn't meet the full requirements of some component of English, they have to take a whole series of classes in basic assessment instead of being able to just take the one area they need help in. Maybe it's just compounding sentences; they still have to take the full length of the course. We need to find out the most effective way to help these students be successful, not waste their time.

Time is money, and money contributes to our local economy. We're also looking at policies that could potentially impact students, and finding out ways of which we could mandate orientation assessment, and also help students lay out their educational plans. What is it they're ultimately trying to achieve? They should know that. And I have to tell you, when I was in high school, the hardest decision for me to make when I went to college was what to major in.

How many of you knew exactly what you wanted to major in? Raise your hand. Did you end up working in that major once you graduated? Those of you that raised your hands, is that the area you are working in today? OK, you're not the norm—I know so many people that end up focusing in one area, they graduate, and they don't work in that area. They end up working in another area and doing something completely different.

There was a discussion earlier from one of the panelists that had talked about using that time in 12th grade to really help students try to identify career path opportunities. There's a local school here called Cristo Rey High School, and one of the things I love about that school – OK, full disclosure, I'm on the board. But one of the things I love about that school is the way their system works is that students simultaneously are in a work study program that helps pay for their tuition. But it allows that student access to the corporate world.

It allows them to see professions that they might not be able to see. They get to actually go and work in that environment throughout the course of the four years that they're attending high school. And to me, that's a good way to bring students into the system to allow them to better understand and not waste as much time, to get out of high school. We also use the Early Assessment Program, as I had explained earlier. What we're trying to do, though, is get the colleges collectively to accept the assessment to see if students are college ready, and not make them do a whole other assessment. Again, that costs us money to keep testing the students over and over again.

So far, we have about 52 California community colleges that are accepting the EAP test results. We also have a basic skills initiative where we allocate categorical funding to schools that have best practices to implement basic skills into these different classes. I've heard of some great programs that are out there to date. They get these students through these programs very quickly, but I've also heard from students that are extremely frustrated because it seems like every time they think they're ready to get into that class now, there's another barrier before them that they have to overcome before they can actually get into the class that they need to get on the path towards graduation or completion.

And then we have the Centralized Assessment Project, and what we're trying to do with that is improve student placement into college level coursework. We want to make sure that we're helping our students to be successful from the very beginning. Assessment can also help us when we're looking at aid and workforce development. If we select candidates for career development programs and help monitor individual progress in the programs and aid individuals in guiding them, assessment can be an extremely good tool for us.

When we look at career counseling, part of what we can do in the counseling process is look at how do you help those students define what their career objectives are and help them develop a plan, help them screen what their skills are and whether or not they would be a good fit for that type of profession that they're pursuing, and also, help to refer them to some potential job opportunities. We can also help identify training opportunities for students.

We can monitor to see if they're actually making progress through the training programs and the true effectiveness of the training programs that we're putting the students through. And the career development piece is working in conjunction with employers as well as with workforce investment agencies to make sure that we're putting students on the right track to make sure that once they get through these programs, they're ready to hit the ground running and get out there and start contributing to society. Our economic vitality and quality of life depends on the education and skills of our workers. There's no question about that.

California community colleges continue to train students for jobs that provide good wages and benefits, and we have great results that make meaningful contributions to our local communities as well as our statewide society. Students at California community colleges can earn a vocational degree or certificate, and they can actually see their earnings increase. I've heard so many success stories from students that come to the colleges not knowing what they're going to get out of it, and at the end of it, they're making very decent wages.

That's a good gig. Now if they're college ready and they can go on to the next level, that's great, and we can prepare them for the four year. But you and I both know not all students are college bound for four year, PhD, et cetera. Some students need to be trained at a skill to start contributing to the workforce, and community colleges do both of those things. The other thing is we work closely with companies to identify their future workforce needs and customize training programs to ensure students have the skills to compete locally and to meet the local economic needs. We don't want our companies here to have to recruit from other countries.

We don't want our companies here to have to recruit from other states to bring the workforce here. We want to train the workforce locally. Either give them the proper education they need to be successful to complete the job or give them the proper skill sets they need to be able to do the job successfully.

In what ways can NAEP work with us? Some of the things we're looking at when we evaluated the program are the studies they're doing on content alignment and placement instruments, they're very aligned with the needs that we have at the community colleges.

In addition to that, multiple measures in some of the studies about accelerated pathways through remediation would also be helpful to us as well. The most important thing, though, is there's a lot of different assessments out there. We have the Common Core Standards, Early Assessment Program, et cetera. We need to ensure that NAEP aligns with these other standards. Otherwise, it creates additional confusion for all of us.

We're also looking at aligning the other assessments, such as SAT, ACT, Compass, Accuplacer and WorkKeys. For California community colleges, we don't use the SAT or the ACT. So again, if we can align to a common assessment, we can save taxpayers, you and me, millions of dollars by not having to do multiple assessments. If we can set standards for job training programs and for placement in college credit bearing courses, that would also be a good for us as well. And then being able to provide surveys of higher education cut scores, and relate it to reading and mathematics. We see that as a benefit.

The California community colleges have a lot of data, and we're willing to share that data, to be a partner with you, in whatever way we can to help ensure that your

program and our program can be a true partnership, and we can create great success. Academic preparedness for job training is an important indicator for employers and companies deciding where to locate. Clearly, this has an impact on economic development for our state. Ensuring that high school students are well prepared is one of the most important things that we can do in today's global competitive economy.

And I say "we" because you all are here today because you have an interest in this. You are also probably all here today because there's something that you can do in one way or another that can impact this, and I put that challenge out to you to take action to actually do something to be impactful. We need to make sure that in California, we have a productive, effective workforce. We need to make sure that we have people that are trained with the proper critical thinking skills as well as a strong foundation in math and communication skills.

If we don't create that workforce here, one of two things will happen. We'll be burdened with a society that will drain the system because if they don't leave California, somehow they have to be able to afford to live here, which means it could be a burden to us. Or companies will continue to recruit from out of state to bring others in, or worse yet, companies will leave California and go to other states because they find it more beneficial to them.

Prepared students help create the workforce needed to ensure California is competitive in today's global, competitive economy. We need to fill jobs with residents from our state, not recruit from out of state and not recruit from out of our country. There's a quote I'm going to give. It was referenced earlier by Thomas Jefferson. We need educated citizens for vibrant democracy. Today's young people need more than a diploma. It's not good enough.

They need the academic tools to succeed in a career to be able to lead a fulfilling life and to be able to participate meaningfully in civil affairs. Thank you.

Greg Jones:

Any questions for Alice?

Alice Perez:

I do want to give a small shout out, too. I have a couple of vice chancellors from the California community colleges in the audience.

Greg Jones:

Thank you, Alice, so much for those comments. When you look at those slides that Alice brought, they point out so clearly the challenge ahead of us and why this work is so important, particularly in this state, particularly with the demographics that we have. As you've so rightly pointed out, Alice, the new entrants into the job market here is heavily influenced by our Latino and African-American communities, the same groups that we really need our focus on to make sure that this readiness work concentrates on and gets all of our students ready for their careers ahead.

I think it is important for all of us to keep in mind. So thank you for bringing that to our attention. Also, to point out one of my failings, Alice, if I had known back then when I was running State Farm that you had majored in insurance, I would have done a lot better job of making sure that you did work in a field that you were trained in. But you've done some great work, and thank you so much, again, for being with us.

I'm going to do something really dangerous because we've got a couple of minutes. We did not plan on any breaks. We're not going to take a break, but I do know it's a long time to sit, and so let's just take two or three minutes to stand and stretch, and hopefully everybody doesn't bolt for the door because we are going to start in just about two or three minutes here with our next speaker.

[Short pause in the program]

OK, we're ready to start again. Well, I knew that was dangerous. Let me commend you on that. We'll get started here again with our next speaker. Our next speaker represents the civil rights perspective, although his perspective is far broader than that. I'm really pleased and very proud to have him here with us. I'm proud because I was pretty involved with the recruitment and hiring of Blair Taylor as the president and CEO of the Los Angeles Urban League, and I'm very pleased because I have seen Blair transform the league to being an impactful, influential voice in education through his vision and leadership.

And with a staff of over 300 and a budget in excess of $25 million, the 88-year-old Los Angeles Urban League is one of America's largest civil rights entities. Through the league, Blair has supervised several initiatives, including the nationally recognized, groundbreaking Greater Crenshaw Educational Partnership. And if you happened to watch The Morning Joe show not too long ago, you probably saw Blair and his team and about, what, 100 or so kids from that area talking about this groundbreaking work that's going on in Los Angeles.

So the partnership has worked to improve graduation rates and reduce drop-out rates at Crenshaw High School. Prior to joining the Los Angeles Urban League, Blair was executive vice president of College Summit, a national, non-profit organization that partners with schools and districts to strengthen college-going

culture and increase college enrollment rates. He's also a member, by the way, of the National Assessment Governing Board, and we are really thrilled and pleased to have with us Blair Taylor.

Blair Taylor:

Good afternoon. [response from audience]. Listen, we just had our stretch break, so we can do better than that. Let me try that one more time. Good afternoon. [response from audience]. Yeah, that's better. It's good to be here. I want to thank Greg and all the members of the NAGB board and all the folks who were behind putting this conference together, the symposium together. This discussion today is about our academic preparedness, and it's fundamentally critical to our nations' future. And in fact, I'm more convinced than ever before that all of us are living through what may well turn out to be the most critical era in the nations' history with respect to education and our preparedness.

I want to try to offer a slightly different view today from a civil rights perspective and from an on-the-ground perspective with the LA Urban League, and I will tell you by way of full disclosure that I am an MBA who is working very closely with educational initiatives in Los Angeles and across the country, from pre-K and through college and university levels, and I'm working in one of the oldest social and civil rights organizations in the country, the Urban League that's celebrating, actually, our 90th year this year.

My early career is not from the educational sector. I'm actually a corporate guy who, like Greg, came up with a degree in business and economics. So I will be offering a view from multiple perspectives, perhaps, today. But I want to ground it in the realities of civil rights and looking around at a situation that I think is and should be alarming to all of us. Economically speaking, the American economy is now shifting in some incredibly profound ways.

Most of you in this room are so well aware. The middle class of the 20th century is literally evaporating before our very eyes. It was access to this middle class that actually provided the drastic gains to African-Americans and other minorities in the 20th century that were so important. If you think about our economy as sort of an hourglass, you think about the top portion of the hourglass is certainly growing, and some folks are doing exceptionally well in our economy. The middle part of the hourglass is getting squeezed almost to oblivion, and the bottom part of the hourglass is growing exponentially faster than the top.

I say that because that is an unsustainable equation for our country. And I would also add that it is decidedly un-American with respect to our nation. Over the last hundred years, our middle class not only benefitted minorities and other disenfranchised groups in this nation, but frankly, it's what distinguished our nation from other countries around the globe. No one of us in this room or in this country

should ever want to preside or be a part of an era where that part of our economy is in demise.

And through all this, the great equalizer that we all know in this room and we've all been a part of and have all benefitted from has been education, and that's simply not functioning on the level that we need in order to stay competitive. We've talked a little bit this morning about other nations around the globe. All of us are aware of the global economy. Over the last five years, I've led two delegations to China. I led the first ever African-American delegation to China in 2006. Greg Jones was a part of that delegation, a very high-level group of African Americans.

I led another delegation with the national CEO of the Urban League, Marc Morial in 2010, and I did this because of a strong growing belief in my heart and spirit that African-Americans need to be fully injected into the global economy now. One of the important perceptions about China and other nations, but it's particularly China, by the United States is there's a worry that China will one day pass the United States in its economic prowess.

I'm here to tell anybody who hasn't visited the city of Shanghai this morning, a city with four times as many skyscrapers as New York, I'm here to tell anybody who hasn't traveled from Beijing to Tianjin on a – which is a distance of about 200 miles – on a high speed rail that runs as silently as a Lexus and does the trip in about an hour's time. I'm here to tell anybody who hasn't watched the Chinese as they quietly lifted 800 million people out of poverty over the last two decades, or I'm here to tell anybody who hasn't noticed that in the last economic downturn where our nation was in the economic doldrums, China's economy grew at a whopping nine percent annually.

I'm here to tell anybody who hasn't noticed China forming strategic relationships with the countries of Africa and South America. And in fact, the week before Greg and I went to China with the delegation of 15 African-Americans, they hosted 40 heads of state from African countries who walked away with almost $3 billion in infrastructure commitments from China as China locks down world resources, mineral resources, and economic alliances. And yes, I would add that I'm here to tell anybody that hasn't noticed that China has quietly had the biggest military buildup in the history of the world.

And all of that leads to a revelation, and that is that China is already ahead of us. This notion that they may pass us one day is something we need to wake up to because until we get out of our comfort zone and start to realize that we have to do things drastically differently, then as we said earlier, we have to have a sense of urgency behind what we're doing, particularly with respect to education. We are now the sleeping giant of the world. When we were in China, I met with the secretary of education, who has 250 million schoolchildren beneath him.

And we came back, and I met with the superintendent of LA unified when I got back, and I said, "I thought you had a big job until I met with this guy who has 250 million children." And of those 250 million children, about two-thirds of them are fluent in English and Mandarin, and almost half of that remaining group speak English and Mandarin and a third language. And I say that because China is the greatest example of what our children will be competing against in the 21st century, and we're just not ready. Our kids are not ready.

I'm not here to depress you this morning. I'm here to try to help wake you up. Maybe a little bit after that stretch break that Greg gave us to try to do my part in waking us up a little bit more because in my heart and my belief is that we're not too far gone. The ship has taken on a lot of water, but it's not too late for us to catch up. And as someone who spent a good portion of my career in the private sector and a portion of my career in the public sector and a portion of my career in the non-profit sector and a portion of my career now focused heavily on education, I believe there are three things that we must do to help to get us out of this situation.

First, I think we must innovate. I'm going to talk more about that in just a second. Second, I think we must collaborate, maybe more than we've ever done before, and the third thing I think we must do is we must measure our results. So let me see if I can get this. This is just a little bit about the Urban League, and you can see from this chart that innovation and collaboration are two things that we are about and that we have been about over the six years of my term in particular.

These are things that I pushed the Los Angeles Urban League to be about, and I want to spend some time on innovation and collaboration for a moment, and then return to measuring results, which is the third thing that I think we must do, which is what today is all about. Let me start with just a few thoughts on innovation, particularly around in social and public sectors. And I think, as I said, the Los Angeles Urban League sees that as critical not only to us, but to our collective future. Innovation will be the key for America in the 21st century, and as I think about innovation in our children, I'm reminded about the story of the young boy from rural America who threw the outhouse in the river.

Has anybody heard this story? The young boy who threw the outhouse in the river. Well, there was a father who pulled his five sons together one day, and he said, "I need you to tell me, sons, which one of you threw the outhouse into the river." Now the boys knew that their father was a very strict man, and they knew he was going to punish them if they told him who threw the outhouse into the river. So naturally, none of the boys came forward. Well, the father took it as a teaching moment and said to his children, "Listen, I'm going to tell you boys the story of George Washington and when he chopped down the cherry tree."

And he proceeded to tell his children about how George had told the truth about chopping down the cherry tree, and his father hadn't gotten young George into trouble. At the end of the story, the middle son who was by far the most innovative

and creative of the whole bunch quickly saw his opening. He reasoned to himself that here is a way I can win all the way around. If he just raised his hand and he admitted to pushing that outhouse into the river, he could get credit with his brothers for being the most bold and creative and courageous of the whole group, and he could get credit from his dad for being honest just like George was.

And best of all, he could do all of this without getting punishment at all. Wow, triple win for the son. The young boy stepped forward, and he said, "Dad, I cannot tell a lie. I pushed the outhouse into the river." Without a word, his father took him quietly around the back of the house and gave him the worst spanking he'd ever received in his whole life. When it was over, the boy looked up at his dad with teary eyes and said, "Dad, I thought you said George Washington didn't get punished. I thought you said he didn't get into any trouble when he admitted chopping down the cherry tree."

His father looked back at his young son and said, "Yes, son. But George Washington didn't chop down the cherry tree with his father in it." So innovation and creativity and ingenuity come in all shapes and sizes, and sometimes they're more successful than others, but today, we're living in an era that mandates creativity and ingenuity. And yet think about this for a moment while we saw great social sector innovations and educational innovations many decades ago. What have we seen in those sectors over the last 40 or 50 years? How much social sector innovation have we actually seen in this nation over the past five decades?

How much innovation has there really been in the non-profit sector, or even in education? And it remains the case that the answers to America's social sector struggles may well lie in our ability to innovate our way out of our problem. Beyond innovations, it's also clear that collaborations are no longer just a nice to-do for all of us, but they are actually a pre-requisite to achieving impactful outcomes. So I want to talk with you a little bit about the Urban League, not because we've done everything right because clearly we haven't, but simply because I believe that we've developed an innovative 21st century model regarding community reform and education and preparation that I think is worth talking about.

So let's see if I can keep this moving. This chart is really kind of a backdrop for us, and it's important because it's the state of black Los Angeles as measured in 2011, and I'm going to use that just contextually to set the stage for African-Americans, Latinos, and others across the country because these numbers aren't that far off from the national number. You can see that on the right side is the equality index as measured in 2010, and by the way, this report is available on our website, http://www.LAUL.org, if you'd like to see the full details of it.

But really, what this chart depicts is across those different dimensions, education, economics, health, criminal justice, housing, civic engagement, it measures African- Americans, Latinos versus a standard of Caucasians being a 1.0. So it's a very interesting measurement, and you see that the aggregate, the whole index using

a weighting of each one of those different disciplines, you see blacks line up at about a .71. Latinos line up at a .72, and Asians actually are moving into the position perhaps arguably as the leaders in the 21st century, actually out-index Caucasians at a 1.03 index.

If you think about this, instead of thinking about it in different individual categories – If you think about this as an America with a single – as a single unit and think about it not as an us versus them type of scenario, recognize that those in the middle, that represents our under-prepared labor pool. That represents an unhealthy population who is significantly challenged with health crisis and with other issues in our urban communities. What these numbers also tell us is that all the work that we at the Urban League and many other non-profits have been doing over the last many decades, in many ways, has not been transformative.

It has not moved the needle sufficiently on many of those categories. This was the very real and clear reality to me when I assumed the helm of the Urban League in 2005, that we were not transforming communities. And in that regard, we decided that we needed a new strategy because like most non-profits, we had a one- off rescue strategy, which was not really applicable and was not a systemic change approach.

My argument is that that current path is not the right one. If you look at the numbers closely, you'll see that the bottom 20 percent of our population in this nation are actually faring worse today after the expenditures of billions and billions of dollars aggregately on social programs, and that formula screams out that it's time to do something different. And ultimately, we felt that that must be at the heart of any solution. So I just want to spend a moment telling you what we did because I think it dovetails into some of the things that we may need to think about from a measurement perspective. This map depicts our strategy.

And the strategy, quite simply, is starting with the notion that the change – the unit of change for transforming in America really is down at the neighborhood level. We have to think about our communities at the neighborhood level, and that the model would scale from neighborhood to neighborhood because the city was too big. But if you break something down to a neighborhood level, people can get their minds around it.

The second thing that we noticed was that the school is really the heart of a neighborhood, and that if you look at any high functioning neighborhood in America, they have at least one thing in common. They have a great school. Likewise, if you look at any low-performing neighborhood in America, they have at least one thing in common. They have a terrible performing school.

So without even determining where causality came from, it's clear that there's an integral connection between those things. So the thesis of this model is actually pretty simple. It says schools are the heart of the community, but schools and

education are affected by all these other variables. Safety affects schools. Employment affects schools. Housing and health affects schools. In fact, the model goes on to say that you really can't change a low-performing school if you focus just on education, particularly if that school is located in an area with three times the violent crime rates of the rest of the city, which was the case for us in schools that we engaged with in Los Angeles.

Or where kids walk to school, and they have a 20 to 30 percent chance of being held up on their way to school each and every day. That's not an equivalent situation with a child who grew up in another part of town that doesn't have those issues to deal with or where housing foreclosures, for example, are three times as high as a city average. And yet, these are the kinds of issues that are happening in the areas surrounding our urban schools. So in order to address these issues, we felt as if you needed to focus on five things, five levers simultaneously to be able to transform a community.

And they are education, employment, safety, health, and housing, and that you have to surround those with some social systems and social structures and high expectations for our young children from our leaders, our principals, our teachers, and our parents. And from an education perspective, we began to focus on changing the outcome at a high school, a local high school called Crenshaw High School and building with the collaboratives, with the feeder schools that would allow those schools to finally work together.

And by the way, one of the biggest shortcomings we have in our school districts today, particularly true in LA unified and true even with our school choice initiative is they're breaking up families of schools. So the feeder schools are not working collaboratively with the high schools that they feed into. So these kinds of pipelines that we're focused on are rarely happening in LA unified, and yet, if you look at the problems with our children, they often are occurring in the transition points between grades, going from elementary to middle or middle to high school.

So with our model, we begin to attack that and attack the interplay between these different disciplines, and we focused on interrelated services for youth and their families, providing mental and physical health for young kids, getting kids summer jobs, keeping them off the streets in the summer so that they weren't getting into crime or other issues. Training for parents, working with the LAPD, the sheriff's department, the city attorney's office, creating safe passage programs for youth so that they would walk to school safely.

In fact, when we started this program, we had almost 30 percent of the kids at Crenshaw High School were getting pocket checked each and every day on their way to school. Today, that problem has been almost eliminated by safe passage programs and by getting the community involved. So it doesn't just mean putting security officers out on the street. That's one element. It also means getting the neighbors to come out and water their lawn when school is coming in and coming

out because if you surround a school with neighbors, the other element tends to dissipate from a community, and we've certainly found that to be so.

So this is just our role, and I won't go through this in total, but I will say the Urban League took on the role as the fulcrum in this, and I think it's important to understand that there always needs to be a community based organization, at least one or maybe some that are taking the role of leadership, attracting funding, helping to define who are the players in the neighborhood, helping to coordinate those players. Almost the system integrating kind of role, which is what the Urban League did, creating a strategy, and then becoming the monitor for performance over time.

We are tracking performance across a whole series of metrics related to each of those disciplines that you saw earlier. This next chart just shows what that role might look like a little bit with the lead agency coordinating services across education and employment and health and safety and housing. In fact, today, we're working with more than 150 collaborative partners on the initiative in South Los Angeles, engaging all the different talents that they bring to bear on the issue.

This is just a quick look at our first neighborhood, and as I talked about Crenshaw High School, one of the 15 worst performing high schools in the city. Less than ten percent of the kids were completing four years of college. Less than 20 percent of the kids were at grade level in English or math. Had five principals in five years. Had almost 60 percent of the children dropping out of school. Just a really troubled school that we were working with in Crenshaw, and about a 65 percent African-American population.

This really just shows that we took on a 70-block area surrounding that school as our strategy, an area with about 10,000 residents. And again, think about that as the unit of change to how we can transform our communities. And we began to engage with that community across those five disciplines that I showed you earlier. Within that model, we developed another model, which Greg Jones referenced, called the Greater Crenshaw Educational Partnership.

I want to spend just a minute on this because it's sort of a model within a model, and the idea here is that education was so important to us that we felt we needed to develop a whole new structure to attack educational issues. So we worked with the University of Southern California, the Los Angeles Urban League, and another non-profit called the Tom and Ethel Bradley Foundation, and we created a governance structure for Crenshaw High School.

Now let me just pause and say one of the big resources that we don't use on the ground nearly enough in our communities is our universities. The university resources that can be brought to bear for teaching training, professional development system, other financial resources and supports are incredible. I serve on the board of trustees at Amherst College, which is my undergraduate alma mater.

I work closely with USC and serve on Dean Gallagher's board at the Rossier School. But this is one of the great examples of a university that said, "We're not going to theorize about this stuff. We're actually going to get involved at ground level," and they provided some incredible training for teachers and support of the principal.

They've put their staff on the ground at Crenshaw to help the school to evolve. So engaging these partners in a meaningful way is a key part of the Greater Crenshaw Educational Partnership that we've developed. As I've said, they're one of 150 partners that are involved. And by the way, corporate partners are also critical to school reform, and we've engaged corporations of every ilk in this project, and I say that because corporations are some of the best systems thinkers, some of the best out of the box thinkers that we have in this nation.

The problem is most corporations—and I think Greg would agree with me on this—most of America's corporations have no idea how to engage with schools. I mean the complexities that you have to get through to get to our school is almost a non-starter for many of America's corporations. And when they do engage, they often feel like their resources aren't well utilized. So we're trying to help broker that for them. And in fact, I'll just tell you as an aside, I sent a proposal into Secretary Arnie Duncan recently suggesting that he engage the top 2,500 American corporations to adopt the top – the worst 2,500 schools in the United States, literally providing them the systems, resources, training for the principal, and go through some kind of process that allows those two to be married.

Because if you just told a corporation, "You don't have to solve all the problems, just work on that one school," I think we can get our arms around this a lot more quickly. I want to just quickly step you through some of the results so far. These are broad results of what we've achieved. We're really proud of the graduation rate increases at Crenshaw, which are up more than 50 percent in just a couple of years. We've begun to secure model-replicating resources to look at the next neighborhood that's doing this in some other neighborhoods.

These are just some charts showing our graduation rate increases. We have the second highest graduation rate increase in all of LA Unified last year under this model. So we're very comfortable that we're doing something right. I often say to people, "We probably moved the ball to the 30 yard line. We've got a long way to go, but we started from the parking lot, not the end zone." We were actually out in the parking lot when we began, so I feel reasonably good about that.

This shows the dropout rate decreases for the school over the last several years. And again, the measurements are the key for us in tracking; these measurements in school and crime and health are the ways that we believe we're going to achieve success. This chart is actually very interesting because it shows A through G course – students taking A through G courses, and you can see from this chart – there's another chart that I haven't included, but it'd show previous years, showing the

numbers for 9th and 10th grade were about where the 11th and 12th grade numbers are.

And we have intentionally focused on the ninth and tenth graders in bringing them through at a different set of standards over the next several years, and that's beginning to reflect in those A through G course requirements. Just some of the key takeaways, and then I want to spend just a couple of seconds closing out on what we might think about with respect to NAEP. I am 100 percent convinced that these holistic models lie – within these holistic models lies one of the answers for America in terms of innovation. I've been around this work, doing this kind of work for almost 25 years, and even when I was in corporate America, I was heavily involved in education and working with schools.

And I will tell you, this is some of the most promising work I've ever seen or been a part of just because it's beginning to look at the whole picture, and I truly believe that some of these things are incredibly important for us to understand or for anyone who is interested in this kind of work. Maslow's hierarchy is an important takeaway. You've got to understand that you can't go in and talk to folks about advocating for their kids when crime rates are three times the average or when somebody has been unemployed for 150 weeks or they're about to lose their home.

There are things that trump advocating for your children. If you're losing your home, you're not in school advocating for Johnny or Jane. It's just not happening. So until you've stabilized some of these other elements, it's very hard to get parents to focus on the things that we want them to focus on. Place-based efforts require organizations that are on the ground to do the work, and these are called place-based efforts, often, for those of you who aren't familiar with that term. You've got to have somebody there, not parachuting in, but someone who the community trusts and understands.

Community outreach has become our sixth discipline, this notion of engaging folks. Even with the credibility of the Urban League that's been in the community for 90 years, we had to focus intentionally on community outreach. School reform models beyond charters. Beyond charters. Charter schools, I love them to pieces. I'm on the California Charter School Association board. I'm on the KIPP school board. I'm on the ICF school board in Los Angeles. I work with charters all the time. Charters will never scale to cover our problems.

We have to figure out other innovative ways of solving issues in schools, and then we must re-orient ourselves to the 21st century reality that schools are at the heart of a community, and a failing school equals a failing community. Finally, let me just make a couple of closing comments. And by the way, one other quick comment, and that is just with respect to performance measurements. You know, this is a big debate that's going on right now at street level and across states like California as to whether or not we should be measuring teachers' performance.

And I come from a long line of teachers, so I'm going to preface what I'm about to say with that, and a long line of teacher union members. But the notion of saying that we can somehow move forward in education without measuring the performance of our teachers is just a non-starter. I mean we have to recognize that. It sort of is like the idea that folks are just saying indiscriminately it's not the teachers that are the problem. It's kind of like somebody bringing a broken car into a garage and saying, "I know it's not the engine." You've got to check out everything before you can make that diagnostic decision.

And I think we need to make sure we are measuring our teachers' performance and linking that to compensation and letting parents and communities know where their schools stand. Just a couple of quick closing thoughts on research opportunities. I think that parent advocacy and its importance to college readiness is something that we need to take a closer look at and continue to take a closer look at parenting profiles that are culturally related.

There are cultural differences between black and brown students and black and brown parents, so I think we have to recognize that. There's a propensity in the nation right now to sort of lump those groups together. They are distinctly different than what they need, and I think there needs to be more research and study of that. Development of guide of key learnings from each of those cultures, and then I'd like to see us think holistically in our measurements, in the research that we're doing, and I think NAGB and NAEP can do a lot with respect to this, the comprehensive study of how different disciplines affect educational outcome, affect college readiness.

Health, for example. We've got children in our school districts who have never been to the dentist, and they're sitting in a classroom, senior year, holding their jaw in the back of the class, trying to learn mathematics. It just doesn't make sense. If that's affecting somebody's test taking skills, we need to understand what that impact is. Employment, as we've talked about earlier.

Safety, obviously, and safe passage in getting to school. And housing, which as we talked about, affects everything. But let me just suggest in closing that we consider a partnership with America's social and civil rights organizations and that community. I think that community has a tremendous amount to offer and that NAGB and the NAEP efforts can leverage their collective knowledge and incredible rich history on the ground. And I think those organizations candidly need the data and skills that NAGB can offer to move their agenda forward. So thank you. Thank you, Greg.

Greg Jones:

Any questions for Blair? Yes.

Don Daves-Rougeaux:

First of all, Blair, thank you very much for your very compelling remarks, and I think they're spot on with the situation in our schools and our communities. Don Daves-Rougeaux, I'm the UC Office of the President's associate director for freshman policy, and part of my portfolio is we take education in A through G course approvals. I have a question for you. You made a comment about something to the effect of you're seeing the breaking up of families of schools and the feeders going into the high schools.

I was curious to know what your thoughts or what the Urban League's thoughts are around the breaking up of the larger high schools in Los Angeles down into the small learning communities into the separate schools on the same campuses, and if you're seeing that as a positive or maybe having a negative impact on the process.

Blair Taylor:

So great question. I will tell you I'm a big fan of small learning communities when appropriately implemented. So just as an example, we broke Crenshaw High School into small learning communities. One of them was an academy focused – is an academy focused specifically on freshmen. And then we have several others, Justice Academy, Business Academy, et cetera. I think it allows the student – and you still don't flex at all on A through G requirements and having students college ready, but I think that it allows the students to engage in a way that is more meaningful to them.

And so I think the feedback that we've gotten from students and their families just in the implementation at Crenshaw, for example, has been overwhelmingly positive. And what I've seen across the city, just involvement with small learning communities, is they have to be designed for that community. So the idea that you can just go in and it's a cookie cutter approach is totally wrong.

You've got to have your finger on the pulse of a community and understand what that community needs. Before we implemented this model, we spent one year, and we had been in the community for 90 years. One year researching what would work and what wouldn't work in the community. I think that kind of in-depth understanding helps you to design the SLCs that will work on a campus. So I think it's a great point. I see them as incredibly effective.

Greg Jones:

Anybody else? All right, again, thank you so much, Blair, for being here. It does illustrate the importance of this partnership, the partnership between education and the community and business and why that is so valuable. And you are right in this connecting – because I know there are a number of business leaders that are connecting education to business. Making them engaged is such a key part of this. And one of the things I would have to say, I was actually the board chair at the time we started this initiative.

And one of the things that Blair said to me as we were going to reach out to the business community to get them involved is that we can't just go and say, "Hey, we've got this great thing that we think that we'd like to have you fund for us." What we really have to say is, "Look, we have this initiative, this idea, this approach that we think is groundbreaking, that we think is transferrable. But not only do we want you to fund this."

I think Blair said, "We are willing to hold ourselves accountable because we're going to have performance measures, and we're going to come to you, and we're going to share those with you, and we're going to tell you where we're making progress and where we're not. And if we achieve the objectives we hope to achieve, we hope you will feel that you want to continue to support us and fund us maybe even more. If we're not, then we'll understand why you would not want to continue to do that."

And that is, frankly, from a business perspective as those of you know, that is quite unique, and it is a model we really tried to push beyond this, because it's a model, I think, that corporate America is looking for that really has some accountability to the dollars that they're investing in education. So, I just wanted to say that, again, thanks for your insights, Blair.

Our final speaker, excuse me if you will, is our cleanup hitter for a reason—because he is widely known and respected nationally. He's somebody that has done tremendous work, has tremendous insight and vision about education, and has done that all over this country.

Dr. Charles Reed is chancellor of California State University. As chancellor, he's chief executive officer in the country's largest senior system of public higher education. He provides leadership to 43,000 faculty and staff, and 412,000 students on 23 campuses and seven off-campus centers. CSU offers approximately 1,200 bachelors degree programs, 783 masters programs, 29 joint doctoral programs, and 319 areas of study.

This is just important to understand the magnitude of Dr. Reed's responsibility. CSU prepares the majority of the state's new public school teachers, and ten percent – this is important–ten percent of the nation's K through 12 instructors. Dr. Reed

has written widely on education, finance, management, government, and politics in education. He's served internationally and nationally as a consultant, conference leader, keynote speaker on education and other subjects, and we are thrilled that he is here to speak with us today. Dr. Reed.

Charles Reed:

Thanks, Greg. Being last, I'm sitting there thinking, "Everything has been said about the nation's report card and the 12th grade, but everybody hasn't said it." So here it goes. We're here today to talk about why preparation for jobs and for college are important. The responsibility that our K through 12 system has is to get folks prepared. Now I can tell you over the last 20 years or so, we have seen an epidemic of under-preparedness among incoming college students.

And when I say an epidemic, think about it this way: if this were a disease and more than 50 percent of all the people in this country have this disease, we'd be in trouble, and I think we would do a lot more about it if we thought about this disease of unpreparedness. And we would focus a lot more of our resources and our energy to fix this epidemic. You all already know this.

Too many students graduating from high schools are required to take remediation. I see so many students graduate from high school in California with a B average who can't do algebra when they get to the California State University. We also know that the cost of student's time and money and their parent's money delays graduation, taking them five or six years to graduate instead of four or five, and how unproductive that is for the workforce. The other thing that we know in looking at our retention rates is that too many students who come to us unprepared drop out. They just get discouraged and leave after their first semester or the first year.

Now you've heard this. Michael said this. This issue starts long before the 12th grade. It reaches down in the middle and even the elementary school years, so we're all a part of this.

Increasingly, if you look at the demographics of this country, you look and you see that the Latino population is going to triple in size in the next 40 years. The public schools of California are over 60 percent Latino. By 2050, Latinos will make up over 35 percent of the population in the United States. Many of these students come from homes where English is not spoken. They need more outreach, more assistance, and more help than we're giving them.

Now about six years ago, California State University started to work on this very problem. I believe that those of us in the university business need to get the hell out of our ivory tower.

We need to get into the public schools and the neighborhoods. The CSU has taken on a whole range of outreach efforts for the under- served community of California. Of those students that Greg talked about, over 400,000, almost 60 percent of them are from the under-served communities of color in California. We have an over arching graduation initiative. We have an early start program. Frankly, we want to start in the 12th grade and earlier to get students prepared for the CSU.

We know that improving teacher education, both pre-service and in-service, makes a difference. We have produced and distributed over five and a half million posters on how to get to college starting in the sixth grade. It is very prescriptive – it describes what tests to take, how to get financial aid, and how to get advice about going to college. Greg has worked with us and others here that I see.

We have something called Super Sundays. We're now in over 101 African-American churches throughout California. We talk to over 100,000 African-American families each year on how to get prepared to go to college. We have a program called PIQE -- Parent Initiative for Quality Education -- for Latino parents. We graduate about 10,000 parents a year from this program to prepare their students for college. And of course, we have had now for six years our Early Assessment Program for college readiness. As you know, EAP is a test taken in the 11th grade. I know we're here to talk about 12th grade academic preparedness.

Michael, you have a lot of power. Why don't you talk NAEP into offering the 12th grade NAEP at the 11th grade, and I'll come back and tell you why I recommend that. But our Early Assessment Program is offered in the 11th grade because we wanted to be able to tell students before they started the 12th grade as to whether or not they were on track to go to college.

As you saw on the community college screen, about 50 percent of the students are prepared in math, except here is the problem. If you don't take any math, as Michael said, from the time you're a junior in high school to the time you become a freshman in college, you're going to forget a hell of a lot of mathematics. So there is no math in the 12th grade. So what we've tried to do is get students to take Algebra I or Algebra II again in the 12th grade.

In our English Early Assessment Program, as you saw, only about 20 percent of the students are prepared at that level to go to college. Eighty percent are not. Now what are we doing about it? Well, we have started professional development programs for K through 12 teachers. One of the things that I've learned is what I call the "ah ha." That is when we went out and met with algebra teachers and explained the Early Assessment Program standards of algebra. We got, "Ah ha, that's what you meant about algebra."

What I have found in California, and I know around the country, is most high schools teach algebra-light. It might be algebra someday, but it's not algebra. So we've tried to get teachers to understand what those standards are. We've put

together a math success and an English success website so that students can take math and English for free during the 12th grade, and we've started an expository reading and writing course for both 11th and 12th graders. Since we launched our early assessment test in 2006, we've tested more than 1.7 million California students.

Now we don't think that that is enough. What have we learned from the EAP? One, college preparedness starts early. College preparedness starts, frankly, in the third or fourth grade. We have to focus more on helping K through 12 because those are especially critical times for students to learn math and reading and writing.

Number two, you've heard this, and I'm going to repeat it. The 12th grade is the biggest wasteland in America, and I'd like to see Michael start to experiment in California with doing away with the 12th grade. Think what you could do with the money – superintendents are out here -- that you spend on the 12th grade if you took that and spent that on the first 11 grades.

Students don't take mathematics. It's not even recommended in a lot of 12th grades. They don't take reading in the 12th grade. You have a whole generation of students that can't read, and we don't teach reading in the 12th grade. What the hell do we need the 12th grade for? The other thing is there are a lot of really smart kids who are making decisions about going to college, going into community college, taking a trade, technical program. I think they're ready after the 11th grade.

And think of the incentive program that you could put in place for students to complete that by the end of the 11th grade and start college right away. So as you can see, I am not a big fan of the 12th grade.

The other thing that we all have to think about in a better way is that college preparedness is everyone's responsibility. Here, I'm talking about every American, every parent, every teacher, every business leader, every member of the public, and every student – they all have the responsibility for better preparedness.

You heard me say this. We also have learned that there is no ivory tower. Michael talked about the eight percent of the students that go to the high-demand, high-entry level colleges and universities. I'm talking about the other 92 percent, and we have to get out of these ivory towers and get out there and explain what it takes to go to college. Many of these students have never set foot on a college or university. Their parents have never seen a college or university.

And the reason that we have to go to the schools and to the community, just think about this: Universities are great at inviting these people to come visit the campus. 7:00 in the evening, come to building C. First of all, try to find a parking place. Second, in the dark, try to find building C. We need to go to those schools to help them out.

Fifth, I think we've learned that Common Core standards are key, and I think we need to find a way to make sure that we're all on the same page in terms of expectations and achievements. California is a part of 43 other states that are adopting these rigorous standards.

Sixth, we need everyone's help to get better information out, especially about the EAP. And there's so much misinformation that gets out there. I'm surprised when I run into parents who say, "Well, I understand that my daughter or son didn't do well on EAP. That means they can't go to college."

No, that's not what it means. That means why don't you work during the 12th grade in order to get better prepared and take algebra again, take reading again. The other thing that we're going to try and do is to get more preparation in the 12th grade, but more preparation in the summer before school starts in September because we know that if those students start prepared, their chances of graduating are so much better.

Seventh, accountability is paramount. Our students, our parents, our tax payers need to know what the return is on their investment. We need to be able to say that in universal English so that they understand. And if they start to understand, they'll start to do something about helping us all improve preparedness. You know, I really would like to see California give the 12th grade NAEP test. One, for no other reason than to find out from the other states how California compares, but also how California compares in preparing Latinos, African-Americans, and others and find out what those states that do better are doing.

I think also, we can take the signs from the 12th grade NAEP and eighth grade and look at our EAP and see if that's right. I heard something last week, which I had not heard before. That was that the Early Assessment Program standards were too high. Now you know, people can say a lot of things, but I had not heard that until last week that we had set the standards too high. As Mark said earlier, that's the problem with all the graduation rates among all the states. If you set them low enough, they'll all graduate for sure, but then what happens to them?

So we could use the NAEP results to identify some of the best practices and help us close the gap between Latino, blacks, and the majority population. Our main goal in CSU is to help students become better prepared for college, to come prepared, and to graduate. Let me stop there and thank you.

Greg Jones:

Thank you so much, Charlie, for those very insightful comments. We said we would take a few minutes for any final general questions for any of the panel

members up here, so let me just pause and see if we have any questions for our distinguished panel.

Gordon Freedman:

Gordon Freedman from Blackboard. Charlie, the people, the kids that you've intervened with, whether it's with a church program or early assessments or so forth, are you tracking in any way what's happening with those students?

Charles Reed:

Yes, we are. Over the last six years, we have seen an increase of 25 percent African-Americans applying for admission to the California State University since we've started our Super Sunday program. We call it Super Sunday, but actually we meet with the African-American ministers every month throughout California. We also run summer algebra workshops in those African-American churches and do that. We have seen a 15 percent increase in Latino applications for admissions since we started the PIQE program.

The one failure that we have and that California has is with Native American students. There are more Indian tribes in California than in any other state, which surprised me. And two, their going to college rate is less than two percent, and they have the most financial aid available to them of any group that I know about. I had a meeting here in Sacramento with the Native American tribes, and I really got taught a lesson.

We had about 80 tribes represented here, and I had invited them. And at the end, they thanked me, and they said, "You know what? We're never going to meet with you again because you have to have a better understanding about how we work." And I said, "Well, yes." And they said, "We are all each sovereign nations, and we want you to work with us one at a time." Now that is a real challenge for the 23 presidents and me, but they are serious about that, and we're working on it and trying.

Gordon Freedman:

One other question for the panel and an observation. My company is in the technology sector, obviously, and in this state, we have the majority of the technology and media companies that are succeeding in distracting our children worldwide. And I stepped out of this conference room to take a long scheduled call with Qualcomm, and I told them that I'm up here at a meeting with all the people in California that could make a difference, and they said to me, essentially, "We don't

know how to talk to those people, but we know that every kid in this state is carrying a cell phone, and many of them have iPads."

Question, challenge. Why aren't we sitting down in a consult environment? You guys could call it with the tech between Los Angeles and Silicon Valley, these people need to get together because those kids are not only not doing well because they're bored out of their minds, they're doing other things, as you know, with those devices. So at some level, it would be nice to get us all together.

Charles Reed:

We've done something that I hope I don't go to jail for, but we started to hire 17 and 18 year old students to work for us in our technology and IT in order to communicate with those very students because they know how to do it, and our old IT folks really didn't.

Mark Musick:

I think it was Ms. Perez who said that, often times, the solution is not a course. It may be an app. And we are not looking at developmental problems, remedial problems from that perspective. We're looking at a core solution and maybe not an app solution. I know that I'm over-simplifying, but that's getting at the issue.

Gordon Freedman:

As corporations, the heads of those corporations know something. We'd certainly sit down with a group, and we'd have this conversation, but it's never happened. We'll pitch in and help organize. I think at the highest level, the signals need to go out. And those companies are selling things to us to buy for our kids. They're going to need people with money to buy those things. Right? It seems like they need each other. So anyway, that could be an outcome we could discuss. It'd be great.

Blair Taylor:

Well, it's a great observation, and it's something that clearly needs to be done. We need to create a better process to share information. One of the challenges that I felt being on the business side is we really need to find a better way for corporations and the business community to have a voice, because they have so much at stake in the outcome, but you know, it's part of our responsibility to help create an avenue to find a voice, and so that we can all be – and particularly businesses can be—part of the solution to this as well. We haven't quite done that as well as we should.

Alice Perez:

And the community colleges regularly meet with a lot of corporations because that's how we actually develop a lot of our technical programs. We've done an extremely good job recently working in the green industry with a lot of the utility companies, creating new jobs. Also utilizing our funding where we can't leverage that. There've been new types of training that have come forward, looking at if you look at an individual, from an entry level, how do you get them through an apprenticeship, through a journeyman level, et cetera, and working in conjunction with community colleges to help create that workforce for the future.

So I would say we're very willing to sit down at any time to have that dialogue with any companies to see how we can create that workforce for tomorrow. We don't want to create a worker that doesn't have a job. We don't want to educate a student that doesn't have a possibility of working here in our state. And just as a side note on that, recently, there was a crisis for nurses in the state of California, and due to budget cuts, we were having to cut back on some of our course offerings.

Well, we're still graduating those nurses, but nurses are leaving our state and going to Texas because they can get jobs there. We don't want to educate professionals to go to other areas, so we're more than willing, just let us know when and where. If we have to host it, we'll do that, too.

Blair Taylor:

There are some organizations – I'll get to you. There are some organizations, I think, that are beginning to do a good job of that, to help bridge that gap, but Kirk Clark is the president of an organization called California Business for Education Excellence, which is really trying to call us, the voices of the business community, into the education issues. So there are beginning to be avenues due to that. Steve.

Steve Winlock:

Thank you. Steve Winlock. I'm the director of the leadership institute for the Sacramento County Office of Education. I was very impressed with the leadership role about what we have to do and leading in schools and being a part of it, which is the work that I work with in training administrators. Blair, you said something that I wanted to just get a little bit more around when you talk about the issue about the cultural differences for parents, and when you talked about the issue around African-American parents and Hispanic parents, and that we've got to look at them in a way that it's not grouping all parents together.

There's some cultural support that we need to do. I just wanted you to elaborate a little bit more on that if you would.

Blair Taylor:

So I think that if you look at the issues surrounding, for example, first generation immigrants in this nation versus the issues surrounding somebody who has been in an impoverished condition in America for four generations, the issues that they're facing are very, very distinct and different. And I would also supplement that by saying the language differences are extraordinary. And it's interesting how in California, we focus very heavily on English language learners, for example, where the African-American community needs a specific focus for our young people in English language learning as well, but that's not standard in our schools in terms of giving that extra support for African-American students.

So I think there are distinct cultural differences both from the immigration side to the language side, and then candidly, black and brown people in Los Angeles, for example, live in the same communities and have – certainly share a lot of things in common, a lot of very positive things in common, and are neighbors in many, many ways. But I think that lumping them together often does a disservice to one group or the other. So I'll give you a real hard example on that.

African-American males are the lowest performing students in all of the state of California. They're the lowest performing in major school districts, like Los Angeles Unified. There are specific needs that African-American male students have that other students may not have. If we lump those students in with the larger population, we miss the opportunity to be able to understand what are the nuances and the dynamics of that group that if you change their performance, you actually have a more drastic impact on performance overall because they're so far removed at the bottom. So I hope that begins to answer your question.

Steve Winlock:

I just want to explore the piece about the transformational leadership and helping those people who are working in our schools to understand what it is that's needed in a community and understand it isn't a [transcriber could not discern text]. You've got to be thinkers about what you do in assisting that school, and I just want to underscore that even more. I do think that that's a big piece for us.

Blair Taylor:

It is. And I think there has to be a conscious focus on ensuring that there's fair representation of teachers, for example, in schools where there are high populations

of one ethnic group or another, and I think that's an important element as well, that our students are seeing role models of their particular ethnic category represented in these schools.

Greg Jones:

Well, we are arriving at that hour, and I think all of us even before we came in, agreed that students need to be ready for the challenges ahead. Everybody in this room agrees with that. To compete in a world that is far different, far more competitive than when you and I left college many years ago. And not just so that our country can be competitive and the country can compete in this rapidly changing world market or global market as people like to call it. But beyond that so that they can enjoy the same opportunities, the same standard of living that everyone in this room enjoys.

It's important. It's essential for them as well. We can no longer afford not to have the answer to that question that we talked about very early in this session. How do we know? How do we know if they're prepared? We can no longer afford not to be able to answer that question. That's why this work is so important. That's why it's important for each of you to be here, share in this, and to share your insights and perspectives and to be a part of this as well.

And part of that, you have, as I mentioned earlier, you have an evaluation form there, but we would also like not just an evaluation, but your thoughts on how this work can continue, the things that we need to focus on, the things that you think we need to give our attention to, and how you feel you may wish to contribute. So that's important as well. But before we close, let me thank all of you, first of all, for coming and being a part of this, and please, help me thank all of our presenters for the great work that they have done. [applause]

Thanks to each and every one of you. You've added so much to this. As I've mentioned earlier, this is the first of ten planned symposia that are being hosted around the country by the NAEP 12th Grade Preparedness Commission. We do plan to have a transcript of this and each of our symposia on the commission website, as I think we've got up here on the screen: http://www.NAGB.org/commission. And so hopefully you can keep in tune with this work as it goes forward.

So again, unless I forgot any housekeeping things, the most important thing again is to say thank you so much for not just being here, but being engaged and involved in this important issue, and we look forward to continuing to be engaged with you as we go forward. So thank you very much, everybody. Thanks for being here.

[End of Audio]