



NEWS RELEASE
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**Governing Board Awards WestEd \$1.86 Million Contract
To Develop
First-Ever Technological Literacy Framework**

WASHINGTON, DC (October 6, 2008) – For the first time ever, technological literacy will be part of the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), also known as The Nation’s Report Card™. The first step toward this unprecedented assessment was announced today by the National Assessment Governing Board, which awarded WestEd a \$1.86 million contract to develop the 2012 NAEP Technological Literacy Framework.

Under this new contract, awarded after a competitive bidding process, WestEd – a national education research and development organization based in San Francisco – will recommend the framework and test specifications for the 2012 NAEP Technological Literacy assessment. Ultimately, this task will lead to ways to define and measure students’ knowledge and skills in understanding important technological tools. Governing Board members will then decide which grade level – 4th, 8th, or 12th – will be tested in 2012.

“We are delighted to have WestEd help us lay the groundwork for an assessment in such an important area,” said Darvin Winick, Chairman of the Governing Board, which sets policy for NAEP. “Technology is changing and moving very fast, so accurate evaluation of student achievement in this area is essential.”

The NAEP Technological Literacy Assessment is the country’s first nationwide assessment of student achievement in this area. The work comes at a time when there are no nationwide requirements or common definition for technological literacy. Few states have adopted separate tests in this area, even as more business representatives and policymakers voice concern about American students’ abilities to compete in a global marketplace and keep up with quickly evolving technology.

Several groups will assist WestEd for this 18-month project, including the Council of Chief State School Officers, the International Technology Education Association, the International Society for Technology in Education, Partnership for 21st Century Skills, and the State Educational Technology Directors Association. With this assistance, WestEd plans to convene two committees that will include technology experts, engineers, teachers, scientists, business representatives, state and local policymakers,

and employers from across the country. The committees will advise WestEd on the content and design of the assessment and make recommendations to the Board on the framework and specifications for the 2012 NAEP Technological Literacy Assessment.

In addition, hundreds of experts in various fields and the general public will participate in hearings or provide reviews of the framework document as it is developed. Ultimately, the collaboration will reflect the perspectives of a diverse array of individuals and groups.

"WestEd has assembled a highly qualified team comprised of exceptional organizations and knowledgeable individuals that bring a broad perspective on what students should know and be able to do in the area of technological literacy," said Steve Schneider, Senior Program Director of WestEd's Mathematics, Science, and Technology Program. "We look forward to this opportunity to develop a framework that will guide the nation to a high-quality assessment of how our students meet the demands in this important international domain."

The Governing Board is slated to review and approve the technological literacy framework in late 2009.

"We all know that engineering and technologies in all forms – including computers, communications, energy usage, agriculture, medicine, and transportation – affect everything we hear, see, touch, and eat," said Alan J. Friedman, a physicist and member of the National Assessment Governing Board's Executive Committee. "With this new framework and the tests it will guide, we'll discover how well students today are learning to understand and use these immensely powerful tools."

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The Nation's Report Card is the only nationally representative, continuing evaluation of the condition of education in the United States and has served as a national yardstick of student achievement since 1969. Through the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), The Nation's Report Card informs the public about what America's students know and can do in various subject areas, and compares achievement data between states and various student demographic groups.

The National Assessment Governing Board is an independent, bipartisan board whose members include governors, state legislators, local and state school officials, educators, business representatives, and members of the general public. Congress created the 26-member Governing Board in 1988 to set policy for NAEP.