



NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

CONTACT: Stephaan Harris, (202) 357-7504, Stephaan.Harris@ed.gov

Six National Leaders Named by U.S. Education Secretary Arne Duncan to National Assessment Governing Board

WASHINGTON (August 21, 2012) – Six education leaders from around the country—including a school board director, former governor, state senator, education foundation president and CEO, testing expert, and non-public school representative—have been appointed to the National Assessment Governing Board to serve four-year terms, U.S. Education Secretary Arne Duncan announced yesterday. Two appointees—current members Sen. Anitere Flores of Florida and former Gov. Sonny Perdue of Georgia—were reappointed for second terms. Terms for all members officially begin October 1, 2012, and are slated to end on September 30, 2016.

The appointees will help set policy for the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), also known as The Nation's Report Card. NAEP makes objective information on student performance available to policymakers and the public at the national, state, and district levels for nearly a dozen subjects. NAEP has served an important role in evaluating the condition and progress of U.S. educational achievement since 1969.

"The Governing Board plays a crucial role in ensuring that The Nation's Report Card reflects the results of a challenging assessment of our K-12 students," Duncan said. "We can be sure that the Board's insight, wisdom, and recommendations will help sustain the NAEP assessment as a barometer for what our students know and can do in the core subjects."

In overseeing The Nation's Report Card, the 26-member Governing Board—a group of governors, state legislators, local and state school officials, educators and researchers, business representatives, and members of the general public—determines subjects and content to be tested, sets the achievement levels for reporting, and releases the results to the public.

"These six individuals bring great insight and dedication from a variety of fields that will maintain the quality leadership this Board has shown in ensuring that NAEP remains the gold standard of measuring student achievement nationwide," said Governing Board Chairman David P. Driscoll. "I am also excited for the energy the new and returning members can bring to important initiatives that we hope ultimately will play a role in improving student performance nationwide."

The slate of four newcomers includes a member of the Minneapolis Public Schools Board of Education, the president and chief executive officer of The Chicago Community Trust, a Harvard University assistant professor, and a Boston College tenured professor. Reappointed members Flores and Perdue serve, respectively, as a state senator based in Miami and former governor of Georgia.

The new Board members and the categories they represent include:

- **Rebecca Gagnon**, Minneapolis (local board of education): Director on the Minneapolis Public Schools Board of Education. Since 2011, Gagnon has served as an elected board director of the district that includes 70 schools and 34,000 students, 70 percent of whom are minority. A parent of three children who attend Minneapolis Public Schools, Gagnon has served in a variety of paid and volunteer positions involving education and youth outreach, including as PTA president in Austin, Texas, and a parent volunteer in Singapore, working extensively with youth. She also has worked as a law clerk, legal research assistant, and event planner.
- **Andrew Ho**, Cambridge, Mass. (testing and measurement expert): Assistant Professor at Harvard Graduate School of Education. At Harvard University since 2010, Ho conducts psychometric research on accountability metrics and teaches courses involving educational measurement and statistics. Over the years, Ho has extensively used NAEP data in research projects, publications, and presentations, and his areas of analysis have included comparing score trends on NAEP and state tests and evaluating growth models for educational assessment. A recipient of numerous national awards and fellowships, he is also a member of the Future of NAEP Panel, appointed by the National Center for Education Statistics. Ho was a visiting scholar at Stanford University and served as an assistant professor of educational measurement and statistics at the University of Iowa.
- **Terry Mazany**, Chicago (general public representative): President and CEO of The Chicago Community Trust. Mazany oversees one of the nation's largest community foundations that, over the past decade, has awarded more than \$100 million in grant funds to nonprofit groups in the Chicago metropolitan area that aim to strengthen curriculum, improve teacher quality and principal leadership, and support the development of innovative school models. A 20-year veteran in education, Mazany has also served as the interim superintendent of Chicago Public Schools and as deputy or associate superintendent of Southfield Public Schools in Michigan and the Oakland Unified School District in California. Mazany is also a member of the Federal Reserve Bank of Chicago.
- **Father Joseph O'Keefe, S.J.** Chestnut Hill, Mass. (non-public school administrator or policymaker): Professor at Boston College's Lynch School of Education. Since 1992, O'Keefe has served as a professor and dean for the Lynch School, as well as a leader in the Catholic education community and a scholar of faith-related schools in the United States and abroad with numerous faculty appointments. O'Keefe had a part in numerous publications, presentations, and grants related to Catholic education and other education policy topics. Through the Lynch School, O'Keefe was involved in numerous projects, including teacher-effectiveness assessments and teacher-preparation curriculum. He also was responsible for the TIMSS/PIRLS International Study Center, which conducts large-scale assessments of academic achievement worldwide. His accolades include the F. Sadlier Dinger Award for contribution to Catholic education.

The continuing Board members and the categories they represent include:

- **Anitere Flores**, Miami (Republican state legislator): Florida State Senator. A state lawmaker for nearly a decade, Flores was elected to the Florida Senate in 2010, representing District 38, which consists of part of Miami-Dade County. From 2010 to

2012, she served as the Republican majority whip. Before her senatorial election, Flores represented District 114 in the Florida House of Representatives from 2004 to 2010. She also served as Education Council policy chief from 2000 to 2002 in the state legislature and advised former Gov. Jeb Bush on statewide policies. From 2002 to 2004, Flores served as director of state relations for Florida International University. Her honors include the Florida Association of School Administrators' Public Education Leader Award and the National Association of Social Workers' Legislator of the Year.

- **Sonny Perdue**, Atlanta (Republican governor): Consultant and Former Governor of Georgia. Perdue served as Georgia's governor from January 2003 until January 2011. During his term, Perdue invested in long-term school reforms by creating new accountability measures and working to increase the high school graduation rate and students' preparedness for college and careers. A former state senator, he also pushed for the development of a comprehensive longitudinal data system and supported measures to enhance the comparability of student achievement at national and international levels. Perdue serves as founding partner of Perdue Partners, LLC, an Atlanta-based global trading company that facilitates U.S. commerce through trading, partnerships, consulting services, and strategic acquisitions.

The members take office as the Governing Board is involved in several important initiatives, including research on how NAEP can be used as an indicator of 12th-grade academic preparedness for college and job training; NAEP parent engagement, with a focus on conveying the urgency of closing achievement gaps and improving student performance; innovative computer-based NAEP assessments; and studies linking NAEP with the Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS).

More information about the Governing Board can be found at www.nagb.org. More information about The Nation's Report Card can be found at www.nationsreportcard.gov.

###

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 oversee and set policy for NAEP.

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