



NEWS RELEASE

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Minneapolis Education Board Director Appointed to National Assessment Governing Board Local Leader Is One of Six Members Named by U.S. Education Secretary Arne Duncan

WASHINGTON (August 21, 2012) — Minneapolis Board of Education director Rebecca Gagnon has been appointed to serve a four-year term on the National Assessment Governing Board, U.S. Education Secretary Arne Duncan announced yesterday. Five other Board members—three of them also new appointees—were announced as well. Their terms begin October 1, 2012.

Gagnon, who has served on the Minneapolis school board since 2011, will serve in the category of “local school board member” on the Governing Board, which sets policy for the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), known as The Nation’s Report Card. NAEP is the country’s only nationally representative assessment of student achievement in various subjects, including mathematics, reading, writing, and science.

“We are delighted to have Rebecca join the Board,” said Governing Board Chairman David Driscoll. “Her experience as a long-time educator and parent leader will be a major asset in efforts to oversee The Nation’s Report Card—the most valuable benchmark we have for monitoring student progress nationally and for states and large urban districts.”

A parent of three children who attend Minneapolis Public Schools, Gagnon has served as an elected board director of the local district that includes 70 schools and 34,000 students. She previously has served in a variety of paid and volunteer positions involving education and youth outreach, including a role as PTA president in Austin, Texas, and a parent volunteer in Singapore, working extensively with youth. Gagnon also previously worked as a law clerk, legal research assistant, and event planner.

Gagnon joins the Board as it is overseeing 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).

Congress established the 26-member Governing Board in 1988 to oversee NAEP, which makes objective information on student performance available to policymakers and the public at the national, state, and local levels. NAEP has served an important role in evaluating the condition and progress of U.S. educational achievement since 1969. Among many other duties, the Governing Board determines subjects to be tested, the test content, and achievement levels for each test; and works to inform the public about NAEP results.

Gagnon joins a group of governors, state legislators, local and state school officials, educators and researchers, business representatives, and members of the general public who make up the Board. In addition to Gagnon, others appointed by Secretary Duncan yesterday are listed below along with their hometown, category of appointment, and official title. The term for each member is slated to extend to September 30, 2016.

- **Honorable Anitere Flores**, Miami – Republican state legislator:
Florida state senator; Board member since 2008
- **Andrew Ho**, Cambridge, Mass. – testing and measurement expert:
Assistant Professor at Harvard Graduate School of Education
- **Terry Mazany**, Chicago – general public representative:
President and CEO of The Chicago Community Trust
- **Joseph O’Keefe**, Chestnut Hill, Mass. – non-public school administrator or policymaker:
Professor at Boston College’s Lynch School of Education
- **Honorable Sonny Perdue**, Atlanta – Republican governor:
Consultant and former governor of Georgia; Board member since 2008

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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.