

# National Assessment Governing Board

## Executive Committee

### Report of August 5, 2010

**Attendees:** David Driscoll, Chair, Amanda Avallone, Vice Chair, Alan Friedman, David Gordon, Steven Paine, Mary Frances Taymans, Darvin Winick, Eileen Weiser. Other Board Members: David Alukonis, John Q. Easton (*ex officio*), Kim Kozbial-Hess, Doris Hicks, Henry Kranendonk, Tonya Miles, Susan Pimentel, W. James Popham, Andy Porter, Oscar Troncoso. NAGB Staff: Cornelia Orr, Mary Crovo, Ray Fields, Susan Loomis, Lawrence Feinberg, Michelle Blair, Stephaan Harris, Munira Mwalimu. NCES Staff: Peggy Carr, Stuart Kerachsky, Suzanne Triplett, Arnold Goldstein, Steve Gorman, Eunice Greer, Samantha Burg, Andrew Kolstad, Drew Malizio, Holly Spurlock, Brenda Wolff. ETS: Steve Lazer, Jay Campbell, Mary Pitoniak, AndreAs Oranje, David Freund, Greg Vafis. HumRRO: Laress L. Wise, Steve Sellman. Pearson: Connie Smith, Brad Thayer. AIR: George Bohrnstedt. Westat: Marcy Hickman. NAEP ESSI: Kim Gattis. Hager Sharp: Debra Silimeo, Siobhan Mueller.

#### 1. Call to Order

Chair David Driscoll called the meeting to order at 4:30 p.m. Mr. Driscoll said that Carol D'Amico had resigned from the Governing Board, effective July 31, 2010, for family reasons. Ms. D'Amico's resignation creates a vacancy in the business/industry category. Consequently, a closed session is being added to the Board agenda on Friday afternoon, August 6, to consider recommendations from the Nominations Committee.

#### 2. Governing Board Committee Updates

Executive Director Cornelia Orr, on behalf of Lou Fabrizio, Chair, Committee on Standards, Design and Methodology

The Committee on Standards, Design and Methodology will receive a staff update on the status of the 12<sup>th</sup> grade preparedness research and procurements. Achievement levels will also be a focus at this meeting. Staff will report on the status of the procurement for achievement levels for the 2011 writing assessment. In closed session, there will be a discussion of the staff recommendations for achievement levels for the 2009 science assessment. There will be a discussion with the full Board in plenary session on August 6, 2010, and action by the full Board is expected on Saturday, August 7.

David Gordon, Chair, Reporting and Dissemination Committee

The Reporting and Dissemination Committee will review a communications plan proposed by Reingold, Inc., the Board's communications contractor. In connection with the communications plan, and Chair Driscoll's charge to the Board to convey the urgency of improving achievement and closing achievement gaps between demographic groups, the Committee will address ways to increase the visibility of NAEP and the Board.

Alan Friedman, Vice Chair, Assessment Development Committee

In its August 5, 2010 day-long closed meeting, the Assessment Development Committee (ADC) reviewed NAEP reading, economics, and writing items. The presentation of the items was made through a mix of media: (1) paper only, (2) paper and thumb drive, and (3) paper and on-line. This was done in an attempt to reduce the burden associated with Board members transporting excessive numbers of items in paper form. Eventually, the Board will be using an electronic item review process for all subjects.

On August 6, the Committee will receive recommendations for background variables for the Technology and Engineering Literacy Assessment (TELA) and will receive an update on item development for TELA, as well as preliminary findings from the 2010 computer-based writing pilot test.

Eileen Weiser, Chair, Nominations Committee

The Board's nominations for terms to begin on October 1, 2010 were sent to the Secretary of Education in mid-May. The categories to be filled are:

- grade 4 teacher
- grade 8 teacher
- secondary school principal
- general public
- chief state school officer

All of the individuals selected by the Secretary were chosen from among the Board's slate of candidates. With the vacancy in the business/industry category created by the resignation of Carol D'Amico, the Nominations committee met on August 3, 2010 to review potential candidates who had been nominated and vetted previously. This will be discussed with the full Board in the closed session that will be added to the Board agenda on August 6, 2010.

Preparations have been made for the next round of Board nominations, with the annual call to begin in about a week. The Board's communications contractor has proposed a new approach, with an expanded invitation list, which will be sent out primarily by email. The categories to be filled for 2011 are:

- two curriculum specialists
- testing and measurement expert
- chief state school officer
- local school superintendent
- grade 12 teacher
- state school board member

**ACTION ITEM**

**3. Nomination of Vice Chair for the Term October 1, 2010 – September 30, 2011**

Chair David Driscoll stated that, consistent with Board practice, he had recused himself from the process of nominating a Board member for election as Vice Chair, and had delegated that responsibility to David Gordon. David Gordon then moved the nomination of Sr. Mary Frances Taymans as Governing Board Vice Chair for the term October 1, 2010 – September 30, 2011. The nomination of Sr. Mary Frances Taymans was seconded and passed unanimously. Mr.

Driscoll said that he would ask the Governing Board to take action on the nomination during the plenary session on August 6, 2010.

#### **4. The Future of the Governing Board**

Chair David Driscoll said that much of the August Board meeting will be dominated by the transition created by the loss of four veteran Board members. He said that time is set on the August 6, 2010 agenda for the departing Board members to share their thoughts about their experiences on the Board and about the future of the Board. Mr. Driscoll said that his vision of the future is one in which more is done by the Board to communicate the urgency of improving student achievement and closing the achievement gaps. This will be a continuing discussion among all Board members, not an assignment to a committee. He said that this may not be a neat, linear process, although there are things the Board can begin doing soon, such as establishing a mentoring program for new Board members. Mr. Driscoll said that he has asked for a staff white paper to address ESEA reauthorization.

Mr. Driscoll also mentioned that fact that the Governing Board's annual meeting in November coincides with the annual Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) meeting in November. He said that, with two Chief State School Officers on the Board, and Steven Paine having been elected President of CCSSO, the Board should consider moving the November meeting to the first week in December, possibly as early as 2011. The Board schedule for the November 2010 meeting will not be changed. The pros and cons of changing the fall meeting to the first week in December will be discussed with the full Board before taking action.

#### **5. Proposed Amendments to the Governing Board By-laws**

Ray Fields said that the Board's By-laws are reviewed periodically to ensure that they are clear, consistent with the NAEP legislation, and reflect Board practice. He presented a set of proposed amendments to the By-laws for consideration by the Executive Committee. None of the proposed By-laws represent a substantive change. The amendments are non-controversial, provide clarity, and are aligned with Board practice. The Committee members concurred with the changes, but directed staff to excise one unnecessary word from the text. The final version of the proposed amendments will be put before the full Board for action at the November 2010 Board meeting.

#### **6. Governing Board Personnel Matter: Evaluation Process for the Executive Director, Reappointments of Board Staff, and Appointment of New Staff**

Chair Driscoll said that, as Governing Board Chair, he is responsible for the annual evaluation of the Executive Director's performance and that this has now been completed. Mr. Driscoll thanked Board members for their input on Ms. Orr's evaluation. He said that the evaluation was very positive and well-deserved. He added that he and Executive Director Cornelia Orr agreed that the evaluation process should result in improvements, and that a focus for the coming year will be on increasing external contacts—making presentations at meetings and conferences, and on Capitol Hill.

Ms. Orr expressed appreciation to the Chair and the Board members for the professional manner in which the evaluation was conducted, embraced the goal of increasing her presence externally, and invited Board members to suggest outreach opportunities she should consider.

Ms. Orr then discussed the reappointments of certain Board staff. She explained that there are two categories of Board staff: those whose appointments are Administratively Determined (AD) and those who occupy Career Service positions. All Board staff are subject to the same evaluation procedures. However, a difference is that AD staff are appointed for three-year terms. Ms. Orr said that the Board is responsible for staff appointments, but that reappointments of AD staff has been vested in her through delegations of authority from the Board to the Executive Committee to the Executive Director. In addition to Ms. Orr, there are five staff on AD appointments: Michelle Blair, Mary Crovo, Larry Feinberg, Stephaan Harris, and Susan Loomis. The current three-year terms of all five will be ending between the August and November 2010 Board meetings. Ms. Orr said that she will be reappointing all five of these staff members to new three-year terms. Ms. Orr also announced that Angela Scott, who had served the Board on the staff of a contractor, became a Career Service member of the Governing Board staff on August 2, 2010.

## **7. Status of FY 2011 Appropriation for NAEP and the Governing Board**

Ray Fields reported that the Senate Appropriations Committee took action on its version of the FY 2011 appropriation for Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education on July 29, 2010. The committee recommended the President's request for NAEP and the Governing Board: a \$5 million increase for NAEP to \$135.1 million and \$8.723 million for the Governing Board. In the House, the Labor/HHS/Education subcommittee has marked up a bill, but the line item details are embargoed until the full Appropriations Committee reports its bill.

**CLOSED SESSION: 5:15 – 6:00 P.M.**

## **8. Contract Costs FY 2010-2012**

The Executive Committee met in closed session from 5:15 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. to discuss contract costs for FY 2010 and FY 2011. NCES Associate Commissioner Peggy Carr presented contractor costs and contract options under the NAEP contracts, including implications for linking NAEP with international assessments in 2011.

The meeting was conducted in closed session because the disclosure of technical and cost data would significantly impede implementation of the contract awards and is therefore protected by exemption 9(B) of section 552b(C) of Title 5 U.S.C.

**OPEN SESSION: 6:00 P.M.**

At 6:00 p.m., Chair David Driscoll declared the meeting open. Peggy Carr said that plans for the studies to link NAEP with TIMSS in 2011 were premised on an increase to the NAEP budget that was requested for FY 2011. The timing and funding level for NAEP in FY 2011 are

uncertain; however, according to Ms. Carr, a decision on whether to proceed with the linking studies is needed by October 2010. Ms. Carr agreed to provide the Executive Committee with specific options to consider for activities under the NAEP budget to cancel or delay that would be required under the scenario in which there is no increase to the NAEP budget for FY 2011. In order for the Executive Committee to act on those options in October 2010, a delegation of authority from the Board to the Committee is needed.

Consequently, Chair Driscoll asked for a motion to request a delegation of authority from the Governing Board, to act on its behalf prior to the November 2010 Board meeting, to make decisions affecting the NAEP budget and schedule of assessments in connection with the studies planned for 2011 to link NAEP with TIMSS. The motion was moved and seconded, and passed unanimously.

I certify the accuracy of these minutes.



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David P. Driscoll, Chair

August 6, 2010

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Date

**APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY BY NAGB—AUG. 7, 2010**

The Executive Committee is hereby granted a delegation of authority to act on behalf of the National Assessment Governing Board prior to the November 2010 Board meeting

- to consider options related to the NAEP budget, contracts, and assessment schedule to be presented by the National Center for Education Statistics, and
- to make decisions that would affect the NAEP budget, contracts, and schedule of assessments in connection with the studies planned for 2011 to link NAEP with the Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS) at the 8<sup>th</sup> grade.