

National Assessment Governing Board

Executive Committee

Report of March 1, 2012

Attendees: David Driscoll, Chair, Mary Frances Taymans, Vice Chair, David Alukonis, Lou Fabrizio, Alan Friedman, Susan Pimentel, Tonya Miles. Other Board Members: Shannon Garrison, Brent Houston, Hector Ibarra, Dale Nowlin, Fielding Rolston, Cary Sneider. NAGB Staff: Cornelia Orr, Mary Crovo, Ray Fields, Susan Loomis, Michelle Blair, Stephaan Harris, Larry Feinberg. IES: John Q. Easton. NCES Staff: Peggy Carr, Brenda Wolff, Andrew Kolstad, Suzanne Triplett. ETS: Jay Campbell, David Freund. HumRRO: Laress Wise, Steve Sellman. Westat: Dianne Walsh, Chris Averett, Marcie Hickman. Measured Progress: Luz Bay. AIR: George Bohrnstedt, Kim Gattis, Fran Stancavage. Optimal Solutions Group: Linda Hamilton. Hager Sharp: Debra Silimeo, Lisa Jacques.

1. Call to Order

Chair David Driscoll called the meeting to order at 4:30 p.m. He mentioned the Board members' visit earlier on March 1 to Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Charter School. He recognized Governing Board member Doris Hicks, the school Chief Executive Officer, and thanked her for the inspiring and moving experience. Mr. Driscoll also gave a brief preview of three matters that would come before the Executive Committee at the May 2012 meeting: (1) initiation of the process of nominating a Board member to serve as Vice Chair for the term beginning October 1, 2012; (2) Executive Director Cornelia Orr's contract renewal; and (3) planning for the Governing Board's 25th anniversary in 2013.

2. Committee Issues and Challenges

Chair Driscoll invited the Chairs of the Board's standing committees to describe the issues and challenges their committees will be addressing.

Committee on Standards, Design and Methodology (COSDAM)

Lou Fabrizio, COSDAM Chair, said the Committee will address two main areas at the March 2012 meeting: the NAEP 12th grade preparedness research and achievement levels for the 2011 writing assessment. Mr. Fabrizio emphasized the fact that the Governing Board has been carefully pursuing the preparedness initiative for 8 years, and this has been a regular topic on the COSDAM agenda over the same period. The first cycle of preparedness research is coming to a close in the next few months. The Committee will be discussing findings across the completed studies to consider the extent to which the findings are mutually confirmatory. There will be a presentation to the Board on the preparedness research to help everyone understand what we have found and what we think it means.

A briefing on the writing achievement levels will be conducted in closed session. Writing is the first fully computer-based assessment for NAEP, and Measured Progress, the achievement level-setting contractor, developed a fully computerized achievement levels-setting process for the writing NAEP. Governing Board staff and panelists felt the software worked well.

Based on the results of the writing achievement levels pilot study, staff recommended that the achievement levels descriptions (ALDs) be re-evaluated and possibly revised. The descriptions used in the pilot study appeared to be too ambiguous in some respects and the results were not considered reasonable. COSDAM recommended that if changes were required for the ALDs, then another small-scale study should be implemented prior to the operational study to set the NAEP achievement levels. The results of that study, as well as the operational achievement levels-setting panel meetings implemented in early February, will be presented to COSDAM for consideration. The results have been reviewed by the Technical Advisory Committee for Standard Setting, and the advisors found the results of the panel studies to be technical sound and reasonable.

The schedule calls for the Governing Board to set achievement levels for the 2011 NAEP writing assessment in grades 8 and 12 at the May 2012 meeting. During the March 2012 meeting, COSDAM will consider whether any additional information is needed to prepare for setting the achievement levels in May 2012.

Assessment Development Committee (ADC)

Alan Friedman, ADC Chair, said the Committee met on February 29, 2012 from 9:00 a.m. to nearly 5:00 p.m. in closed session to review:

- 300 Civics items at grades 4, 8, and 12 for the 2013 pilot test
- 12 computer-based task demonstrations for the 2014 Technology and Engineering Literacy (TEL) assessment at grade 8

Mr. Friedman said that the Civics items were challenging. For example, the multiple choice items measure concepts beyond factual recall and many items use original source documents. He said that the Technology and Engineering Literacy tasks are dynamic, engaging, and test very important concepts in new ways that take full advantage of computer-based technology.

In open session the ADC reviewed nearly 1,000 background items for students, teachers, and schools in the subject areas of Civics, U.S. History, and Geography. These questions are being proposed for the 2013 pilot. Mr. Friedman said the wording of background questions must be unchanged in order to maintain trend, but changes in education and society can make the wording out-of-date or inaccurate. The Committee is focused on the issue of ensuring that the wording of the background questions ensures the validity of the information NAEP reports. In connection with the background questions, the Committee discussed one of the Board's Making a Difference initiatives – preparing focused NAEP reports on important topics. The Committee suggests that the Board explore ideas for NAEP focused reports that highlight the rich information provided by background variables.

Mr. Friedman said the Committee reviewed all of the items electronically on iPads or laptops. Significant savings were achieved that otherwise would have been spent on printing, shipping, and shredding item review booklets. An estimated 30,000 pages were not printed, the equivalent of four trees.

On March 2, the ADC will review background questions for reading and mathematics. The Committee will also hear about an "X-prize competition" sponsored by the Hewlett Foundation. The prize--\$100,000--will be awarded for automated student essay scoring software. Finally, the ADC will meet in closed session to receive an update about the computer-based special study in mathematics.

Reporting and Dissemination Committee

Sr. Mary Frances Taymans provided the Committee update in the absence of Chair Eileen Weiser and Vice Chair Tom Luna. She said that an important focus would be on implementation of "Making a Difference Initiatives," including the speakers' tool kit, the PowerPoint presentation for parents, and focused NAEP reports. Marshall Smith, chair of the NAEP Background Questions Expert Panel will provide an overview of the panel's report and recommendations. There will be an update on private school participation and reporting by Arnold Goldstein, staff member of the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES). Mr. Goldstein will also provide updates on the projected schedule for NAEP reports and on the implementation of the Board's Policy on NAEP Testing and Reporting on Students with Disabilities and English-Language Learners. Amy Buckley, staff of Reingold, Inc., the Board's communications contractor, will present a review of the release of the 2011 Trial Urban District Assessment results for 2011. The only action item taken up by the Committee will be the release plan for the NAEP 2011 Science Report Card.

Nominations Committee

David Alukonis, Chair of the Nominations Committee, said that the Committee has reviewed over 150 resumes during the past several months, for Board vacancies for the term beginning October 1, 2012. The Committee will present its slate of final candidates on March 3, 2012. The five openings are in the following Board categories:

- General Public Representative
- Local School Board Member
- Testing and Measurement Specialist
- State Legislator (Republican)
- Non-Public School Representative

After Board action on March 3, the final slates of candidates will be forwarded to Secretary Duncan's office.

3. Ad Hoc Committee on NAEP Parent Engagement

Tonya Miles reported on the March 1, 2012 meeting of the Ad Hoc Committee on NAEP Parent Engagement, its final meeting. Ms. Miles began by stating the Committee mission—

to develop recommendations to increase parent awareness about the urgency to improve the levels of student achievement in the U.S. and the urgency to reduce the size of achievement gaps by race, ethnicity, and income levels.

Ms. Miles said that the Committee has approved its report and recommendations, which will be presented to the Governing Board on March 2, 2012. Ms. Miles acknowledged the support and vision of Chairman Driscoll for appointing the Committee. She thanked the Committee members and staff for their hard work over the last year.

4. Updating Board Policy Statement: “Redesigning the National Assessment of Educational Progress”

Chairman Driscoll acknowledged the important impact the Board’s policy statement entitled “Redesigning the National Assessment of Educational Progress” had in guiding the Board’s work. However, he said, the educational environment NAEP serves today has changed substantially since 1996, when the Governing Board adopted this policy statement. Mr. Driscoll said it is time to take a fresh look at the policy statement and that he would appoint a committee to review and update it. Mr. Driscoll also mentioned that the Executive Committee would be used in the future as a forum for discussing issues that cut across the Board’s committees. Examples of potential topics he cited included NAEP and the Common Core Assessments, NAEP and PISA, and the future of NAEP.

CLOSED SESSION

5. NAEP Budget, Assessment Schedule, and Contract Cost Estimates: FY 2013 and Beyond

The Executive Committee met in closed session from 5:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. Governing Board Executive Director Cornelia Orr and NCES Associate Commissioner Peggy Carr discussed contractor costs and contract options under NAEP and Governing Board contracts.

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.

The President’s FY 2013 budget request contains a \$5 million reduction for NAEP from the FY 2012 level of \$129.6 million and a \$1 million reduction for the Governing Board.

While the FY 2013 appropriation for NAEP will not be known for at least several months, a number of program options and budget scenarios were presented. While it is prudent and essential to prepare for budget contingencies, no change to the NAEP schedule of assessments is being proposed. Given the uncertainty of the budget outlook for NAEP, the goal is to take steps that are necessary now to optimize the Board’s choices in the future while minimizing impact on the schedule of assessments. The development of new items for the 2014 assessments in U.S. history, civics, geography, and economics has begun. Alternatively, it is still possible to conduct

the 2014 assessments in these subjects with current items. Doing so will save costs without affecting the feasibility of conducting the assessments in these subjects scheduled for 2014. Therefore, the development of new items in these subjects is being put on hold.

I certify the accuracy of these minutes.



David Driscoll, Chair

March 2, 2012

Date