

National Assessment Governing Board Reporting and Dissemination Committee Report of August 1, 2014

Reporting and Dissemination (R&D) Committee Attendees:

R&D Committee Members—Chair Andrés Alonso, Vice Chair Terry Mazany, Rebecca Gagnon, Tonya Miles, Gov. Ronnie Musgrove and Father Joseph O’Keefe.

Other Governing Board Members—Chair David Driscoll.

Governing Board Staff—Stephaan Harris.

Other Attendees—NCES: Gina Broxterman, Ebony Walton Chester, James Deaton, Arnold Goldstein, Emmanuel Sikali, Holly Spurlock, and Grady Wilburn. AIR: Cadelle Hemphill and Sami Kitmitto. CRP, Inc.: Sondra M. Gaines, Carolyn Rudd, and Edward Wofford. ETS: Debby Almonte, Nicole Beaulieu, and Jonas Bertling. HagerSharp: David Hoff and Debra Silimeo. HumRRO: Steve Sellman. Optimal Solutions Group: Rukayat Akinbiyi. Reingold: Amy Buckley and Valerie Marrapodi. Westat: Chris Averett.

Joint Committee on Standards, Design and Methodology Meeting (COSDAM) Attendees:

COSDAM Members—Chair Lou Fabrizio, Vice Chair Fielding Rolston, Lucille Davy, James Geringer, Andrew Ho, Terry Holliday, and James Popham.

Reporting and Dissemination Committee Members—Chair Andrés Alonso, Vice Chair Terry Mazany, Anitere Flores, Rebecca Gagnon, Tom Luna, Tonya Miles, Ronnie Musgrove, and Father Joseph O’Keefe.

Governing Board Staff—Executive Director Cornelia Orr, Michelle Blair, Lily Clark, Stephaan Harris, and Sharyn Rosenberg.

Other Attendees—John Easton, Director of the Institute of Education Sciences and ex officio member of the Governing Board. NCES: Associate Commissioner Peggy Carr, Gina Broxterman, Samantha Burg, Jing Chen, Patricia Etienne, Arnold Goldstein, Drew Malizio, Bill Tirre, Ebony Walton, Grady Wilburn. AIR: Sami Kitmitto, Cadelle Hemphill, and Young Yee Kim. CRP: Sondra Gaines and Edward Wofford. ETS: Debby Almonte, Jay Campbell, Steve Lazer, and Andreas Oranje. Hager Sharp: Melissa Spade Cristler, David Hoff, and Debra Silimeo. HumRRO: Steve Sellman and Laurie Wise. Metametrics: Malbert Smith. Optimal Solutions Group: Rukayat Akinbiyi and Yvette Clinton. Pearson: Paul Nichols and Brad Thayer. Reingold: Amy Buckley and Valerie Marrapodi. Westat: Chris Averett, Keith Rust, and Dianne Walsh. Arlington Public Schools: Amy Yamashiro. Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO): Katie Carroll and Scott Norton. New Mexico Department of Education and Governing Board/CCSSO Policy Task Force Member: Pete Goldschmidt.

1. NAEP Testing and Reporting on Students with Disabilities—Joint R&D-COSDAM Committee Meeting (ACTION ITEM)

Lou Fabrizio, Chair of the Committee on Standards, Design and Methodology (COSDAM), called the joint meeting to order at 9:45 a.m. and welcomed members and guests. Mr. Fabrizio noted that the session would focus on a particular challenge associated with the March 2010 Board policy on NAEP Testing and Reporting on Students with Disabilities (SDs) and English Language Learners (ELLs). The policy was intended to reduce exclusion rates and provide more consistency across jurisdictions in which students are tested on NAEP to promote sound reporting of comparisons and trends. The policy limits the grounds by which schools can exclude students to two categories—for SDs, only those with the most significant cognitive disabilities, and for ELLs, only those who have been in U.S. schools for less than one year. Although schools cannot limit student participation on any other grounds, individual participation in NAEP is voluntary by law and parents may withdraw their children for any reason.

The policy states, “Students refusing to take the assessment because a particular accommodation is not allowed should not be classified as exclusions but placed in the category of refusals under NAEP data analysis procedures.” Under NAEP data analysis procedures, a weight class adjustment is used to account for students who refuse to take the assessment, but excluded students have no impact on estimated scores. Contrary to the Board policy, NCES has continued to permit schools to exclude students whose Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) call for accommodations that NAEP does not allow. NCES asserts that it is technically incorrect to apply a weight class adjustment that combines students who did not participate due to receiving accommodations on their state tests that are not allowed on NAEP with students who refused for other reasons.

For the benefit of the Reporting and Dissemination (R&D) Committee, Grady Wilburn of the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) presented three alternative methods for adjusting scores for students who were excluded from NAEP, contrary to the Board policy. These options had originally been presented to COSDAM at the May 2014 Board meeting. The first method, “*Expanded*” *population estimates*, would improve upon the methodology of the full population estimates (FPEs) and incorporate additional data from NAEP teacher and school contextual questionnaires and from school records (e.g., state test scores for individual students). The second method, *Modified participation A*, would involve administering only the NAEP contextual questionnaire to excluded students and using that additional information to predict how the students would have performed on the cognitive items. The third method, *Modified participation B*, would involve administering the contextual questionnaire in the selected subject (i.e., Reading) in conjunction with an assessment in a different subject (e.g., Mathematics) and using both sources of information to predict how the students would have done on the Reading assessment.

R&D members agreed with COSDAM members that the spirit of the policy was working as intended, and that none of the proposed procedures were desirable. There was general consensus that NCES’ current practices on this particular aspect of the policy—encouraging schools to

include more students in NAEP even when they receive accommodations on their state tests that are not allowed on NAEP, but still allowing schools to exclude such students if they insist—was acceptable.

The following motion was made by Rebecca Gagnon and seconded by Terry Holliday; all members voted in favor of the motion:

ACTION: The joint committees of COSDAM and R&D recommend approval to the Governing Board of a motion to change the fourth implementation for students with disabilities on page four of the March 2010 Board policy on NAEP Testing and Reporting on Students with Disabilities (SDs) and English Language Learners (ELLs) to the following:

The number of students who do not take the assessment because a particular accommodation is not allowed should be reported and minimized to the extent possible.

After the joint session adjourned, a suggestion was made to substitute “percentage” for “number” to be consistent with NCEs reporting practices; this substitution was incorporated into the motion that was subsequently approved by the full Board on Saturday morning. The final motion that was approved on Saturday morning included the following language:

The percentage of students who do not take the assessment because a particular accommodation is not allowed should be reported and minimized to the extent possible.

R&D Chair Andrés Alonso called for the joint committee to reconsider the requirement that English Language Learners (ELL) must be included in NAEP if they have been in U.S. schools for at least one year. Arnold Goldstein of NCEs noted that the accommodations policy was developed to be consistent with the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) federal legislation. Mr. Fabrizio suggested that a representative from the U.S. Department of Education be invited to address the joint committee about the origin of this requirement during the November 2014 Board meeting.

2. Communications Plan (ACTION ITEM)

The Committee discussed again the final draft of the communications plan, which Stephaan Harris, NAGB staff, and Amy Buckley, of Reingold, updated to reflect feedback from the Committee at the Board’s May 2014 meeting and a conference call held afterward. Feedback was also obtained from the chairs of the other Board Committees and NCEs. Mr. Harris said that the major updates from this feedback include designating three target audiences—parents, policymakers, and teachers and administrators—for outreach, laying out examples of what kind of actions key audiences can take with the plan, and building in collaboration with NCEs on various strategies and ensuring those do not duplicate efforts and resources already orchestrated by NCEs.

Several members complimented the plan as well laid-out and presenting specific ways to make NAEP data and resources actionable to audiences. Members also discussed aspects that should be considered as the plan is implemented.

Several members said future strategies should be mindful of the Board's legal boundaries in not prescribing specific actions as it informs and educates audiences on NAEP. Chair Alonso said the plan should build in benchmarks for success, so the goals and strategies presented can be measured for their effectiveness in reaching target audiences. In response to this, Ms. Buckley said that once you identify what you want from your audiences, you can measure success.

Vice Chair Mazany said a role should be established for each board member as implementation is finalized. Committee member Sen. Anitere Flores said plan strategies should endeavor to show how NAEP is unique in the testing landscape.

ACTION: The Committee approved the communications plan and moved that it be considered for vote by the full Board.

3. Review of Core Contextual Questions for 2017 NAEP Administration

The Committee reviewed both current core contextual questions and draft items that will be administered as part of NAEP in 2017. The feedback will be taken by NCES and ETS at this meeting and be used as items are reviewed in cognitive labs later this summer. During the discussion, Committee members pointed out concerns they saw in current and draft items that fell into several categories. In brief, those included:

- **More Inclusive Family and Home Dynamics:** Committee members believed items overall needed to have wording that is much more inclusive in terms of home and family dynamics, so students don't struggle as to how to respond if they are in nontraditional home situations—such as living with an adult who may not be a legal guardian or even a relative, or being temporarily homeless.
- **Positive Aspects of School Climate and Behavior:** Overall, members believed that many of the questions that tried to ascertain school climate and how students felt about school tilted far more to the negative than the positive, and believed a better balance was needed across those items. Additionally, members believed it was important for items to map those school behaviors associated with effectiveness.
- **Occupation Responses:** Members had concerns that some students, especially fourth-graders, may not understand enough about their parents' jobs to answer items correctly. For example, if a child has a parent that is at home during the day, he or she may not understand the difference between that parent being a homemaker and that parent doing work for a company at home.
- **Technology Inclusion:** Items that ask about accessibility to technology both at home and in the classroom should be inclusive of the variety of tools available. For example,

questions that pertain to technology in the classroom shouldn't just ask about computers, but include devices like smart boards.

For the current item pool, Chair Alonso said that the item—"Do the following people live in your home?"—wasn't sufficiently inclusive as it only included biological, step, and foster parents, while Vice Chair Mazany adding that same-sex relationships and single parents with a live-in boyfriend or girlfriend are examples of household situations that need to be kept in mind. Committee member Gagnon said that in Minneapolis Public Schools, an estimated 18 percent of students were homeless or had high-mobility rates. Jonas Bertling, of ETS, pointed out that a similar item proposed for 2017 has many more options.

Chair Alonso said a current item that asked teachers if they hold a regular or standard certificate needs updating and seems stuck in a past era when certification was the premiere measure of qualification and ability. He said teachers can be knowledgeable and effective in a particular subject without formal certification. Vice Chair Mazany said in the phrasing of another current item—"Our curriculum is based on a particular moral philosophy or set of values, for example, African-centered education, character-based education, Eastern philosophy."—the word "moral" should be removed in the future as it is not correct in some instances. For example, African-centered education suggests a political, rather than a moral, underpinning.

For the draft items, Committee member Flores said that technology related items that deal with classroom technology should expressly mention smart boards, since that is a common classroom tool. She added that we should ensure inclusion of all types of technological tools in and out of school to which students might have access. Several members had concerns with a series of items that asked students if their mother worked and what she does at work. Committee member Miles said occupation questions wouldn't be an age-appropriate question for fourth graders, many of whom may be too young to really know what either or both parents do at work and what the parents' occupation is. Committee member Luna said he had a concern about being able to show the public the educational purpose and justification of collected occupational data, as it doesn't seem to be relevant to student performance like other contextual factors.

Citing draft items related to bullying, several members believed more items that attempted to ascertain school climate should reflect more positive attributes of school climate, such as encouraging teachers and other adults. Mr. Bertling said those items were representative of related research. Chair Alonso said that it is important to have a balance as there are limits to what can be learned from dysfunction. He added that it is important for items to map school behaviors associated with effectiveness. Committee member Miles thought many students, especially fourth-graders, didn't have the mindset to answer the following question: "Teachers in this school tell us that we cannot really change our ability, even if we try hard."

Members thought many questions posed to teachers that asked them to describe themselves—including "I encourage my students to take school seriously," "I believe all students can get good grades," and "I have high expectations of students"—were not very meaningful and could be removed because few teachers would say no, even if they agreed with that sentiment. Committee member O'Keefe suggested that items for students that ask questions about their teacher's attitude, work habits, etc., would be a better measure of this student-teacher dynamic.

Committee member O’Keefe also said draft items in this section that fall under the heading “In your teaching, to what extent can you do the following?” should be cast under a different heading that says, “What do you consider most important as a teacher?” He said this is a more effective measure of an educator’s priorities and abilities in the classroom.

A written summary of Committee comments, edits, and feedback will be sent to NCES following the meeting ahead of item review in cognitive labs later this year.

I certify the accuracy of these minutes.



Andrés Alonso, Chair

08-25-14

Date