

NAEP Schedule of Assessments

Introduction and Background

The Governing Board's authorizing legislation (P.L. 107-279, Section 302), defines the duties of the Board, one of which is selecting "the subject areas to be assessed (consistent with section 303(b));" (Section 302(e)(1)(A) generally referred to as the NAEP schedule of assessments.

In the Board's general policyⁱ for conducting and reporting NAEP, the first goal is "To serve as a consistent external, independent measure of student achievement by which results across education systems can be compared at points in time and over time." The policy further provides (emphasis added):

"National, state, and local education leaders and policymakers—public and private—rely on NAEP data as an independent monitor of student achievement and as a way to compare performance across education systems. For NAEP to serve in this role, NAGB, in consultation with NCES and stakeholders, **periodically establishes a dependable, publicly announced assessment schedule of at least ten years in scope.** The schedule specifies the subject or topic (e.g., High School Transcript Study), grades, ages, assessment year, and sampling levels (e.g., national, state) for each assessment.

"The NAEP schedule of assessments is the foundation for states' planning for participation in the assessments. It is the basis for NCES operational planning, annual budget requests, and contract statements of work. In making decisions about the NAEP schedule of assessments, **NAGB includes the wide range of important subjects and topics to which students are exposed. NAGB also considers opportunities to conduct studies linking NAEP with international assessments.**

"As the NAEP authorizing legislation provides, assessments are conducted in reading and mathematics, and, **as time and resources allow**, in subjects such as science, writing, history, civics, geography, the arts, foreign language, economics, technology and engineering literacy and other areas, as determined by NAGB. **The goal for the frequency of each subject area assessment is at least twice in ten years, to provide for reporting achievement trends.**"ⁱⁱ

Discussion

In Article VII.2.a. of the Governing Board By-laws, the Executive Committee is given the responsibility for "recommending the selection of subject areas to be assessed, for consideration by the full Board." The Board has made changes in the subjects to be assessed based on changes to legal requirements (e.g., No Child Left Behind), important content considerations (e.g., the Arts and

Technology and Engineering Literacy), and new initiatives (e.g., linking to international assessments). Schedule adjustments also have been needed to meet the NAEP budget constraints.

The most recent fiscal uncertainty has not provided the opportunity for the Board to adopt a prospective schedule for 10 years into the future. In fact, the current schedule (Attachment A) only extends the schedule until 2017, four years from now. At the May 2014 Governing Board meeting the full Board will discuss a first draft of a schedule that extends through 2024 (Attachment B). The attached draft is proposed to illicit discussion and to inform the development of a proposed schedule by the Executive Committee. No action will be taken at the May 2014 meeting.

Historical Schedule Changes

This section highlights the major schedule changes that have occurred in the last 10 years. Below is a list of the big decisions that have contributed to the current schedule.

1. Added grade 4 and 8 state-level reading and mathematics every two years. (No Child Left Behind; 2002) [Prior to NCLB state assessments at grades 4 and 8 were given every two years with reading and writing in one biennium and mathematics and science in the next. Therefore, these subjects and grade 12 in reading and mathematics were tested once every four years.]
2. Added the High School Transcript Study (HSTS) as a regularly scheduled study. (2005)
3. Scheduled U.S. history, civics and geography on a once every four years cycle. (2005)
4. Added Technology & Engineering Literacy (TEL) to the NAEP subjects assessed. (2005)
5. Added grade 12 state-level reading and mathematics for volunteer states with a periodicity of every four years. (2008)
6. Adjusted the periodicity of science to correspond to the periodicity of TIMSS for the purpose conducting international benchmarking studies in both mathematics and science. (2010)
7. Scheduled Writing as a technology based assessment, beginning with national data collections only and delaying fourth grade in order to complete a special study. (2010)

Other schedule changes and program adjustments due primarily to budget constraints and/or technical challenges have been considered in the development of the draft schedule:

- Postponing the state-level writing assessment.
- Postponing various other assessments/studies (World History, Foreign Language, HSTS, Long-Term Trend).
- Assessing fewer grade levels in non-required subject areas (U.S. history, civics, and geography; writing; TEL).
- Changing the sample size and reporting depth for states in reading and writing, referred to as focal and non-focal subject reporting.

Planning for the Future

Although the Board has focused on incremental adjustments most recently, projecting a ten-year plan based on policy recommendations is needed at this time. The current approved schedule adopted August 3, 2013, ends in 2017 (Attachment A). Therefore, additional assessment years need to be added to provide for a 10-year outlook. For this discussion we should think beyond the budget constraints and think about what is good policy for NAEP and the United States.

As a stimulant for the discussion, the draft of a schedule of assessments through 2024 (Attachment B) has been prepared by Board staff. Staff used the three guiding principles below to prepare the discussion draft.

1. Follow the guidance in the NAEP Act (303(b)(2)),
2. Continue to cover a broad range of subject areas, and
3. Administer all assessments using technology beginning in 2017.

Guidance for the schedule is found in Title 303 Sec. 303(b)(2) which addresses the use of random sampling (A), testing in reading and mathematics at grades 4 and 8 once every two years (B), and testing in reading and mathematics at grade 12 at regularly scheduled intervals (at least as often as prior to NCLB (C).

After this initial guidance, Sec. 303(b)(2)(D) provides guidance for including other subjects in grades 4, 8, and 12 to the extent time and resources allow. It says, including assessments "... in regularly scheduled intervals in additional subject matter, including writing, science, history, geography, civics, economics, foreign languages, and arts, and the trend assessment described in subparagraph (F)."

Therefore, the discussion draft includes the following "regularly scheduled intervals" for the various subjects included in the discussion draft.

- Reading and mathematics at grades 4 and 8 once every two years
- Reading and mathematics at grade 12 once every four years
- Science and writing once every four years in alternating biennia
- U.S. history, civics, and geography once every four years
- Technology and engineering once every four years, expanding from grade 8 in 2014 by one additional grade each cycle through 2022
- The arts, economics, and foreign languages at least twice in a ten-year period

Exceptions: Understanding that existing budget constraints are likely to affect assessments in the years 2017 and 2018 was considered in the draft schedule. Therefore, 2017 writing is only a national assessment, and the 2018 subjects are for grades 8 and 12 only.

Discussion Questions

What is the Governing Board's feedback on the attached discussion draft of the schedule proposed by the Board staff?

- Does it align with the needs of national and state policy makers for information about the achievement of U.S. students?
- Does it align with the changing role of NAEP in the Common Core era?
- What changes to the national level assessments and/or grades are recommended?
- What changes should be made to the state-level assessments and/or grades?

ⁱ *General Policy: Conducting and Reporting the National Assessment of Educational Progress*, National Assessment Governing Board, August 3, 2013, page 5.

ⁱⁱ Ibid.

NAEP Schedule of Assessments – Approved August 3, 2013		
Year	National	State
2005	Reading MATHEMATICS Science High School Transcript Study	Reading (4, 8) MATH (4, 8) Science (4, 8)
2006	U.S. History Civics ECONOMICS (12)	
2007	Reading (4, 8) Mathematics (4, 8) Writing (8, 12)	Reading (4, 8) Math (4, 8) Writing (8)
2008	ARTS (8) Long-term trend	
2009	READING Mathematics* SCIENCE** High School Transcript Study	READING (4, 8, 12) Math (4, 8, 12) SCIENCE (4, 8)
2010	U.S. History Civics Geography	
2011	Reading (4, 8) Mathematics (4, 8) Science (8)** WRITING (8, 12)**	Reading (4, 8) Math (4, 8) Science (8)
2012	Economics (12) Long-term trend	
2013	Reading Mathematics	Reading (4, 8, 12) Math (4, 8, 12)
2014	U.S. History (8) Civics (8) Geography (8) TECHNOLOGY AND ENGINEERING LITERACY (8) **	
2015	Reading Mathematics Science**	Reading (4, 8) Math (4, 8) Science (4, 8)
2016	Arts (8)	
2017	Reading Mathematics Writing**	Reading (4, 8, 12) Math (4, 8, 12) Writing (4, 8, 12)

*New framework for grade 12 only.

**Assessments involving test administration by computer.

NOTES:

- (1) Grades tested are 4, 8, and 12 unless otherwise indicated, except that long-term trend assessments sample students at ages 9, 13, and 17 and are conducted in reading and mathematics.
- (2) Subjects in **BOLD ALL CAPS** indicate the year in which a new framework is implemented or assessment year for which the Board will decide whether a new or updated framework is needed.
- (3) In 2009, 12th grade assessments in reading and mathematics at the state level were conducted as a pilot in 11 volunteering states (AR, CT, FL, IA, ID, IL, MA, NH, NJ, SD, WV). For 2013, 13 states agreed to participate (with MI and TN added).
- (4) The Governing Board intends to conduct assessments at the 12th grade in World History and Foreign Language during the assessment period 2018-2022.

MAY 2014 DISCUSSION DRAFT SCHEDULE

NAEP Schedule of Assessments – Discussion Draft 4/10/14		
Year	National	State
2014	U.S. History (8) Civics (8) Geography (8) TECHNOLOGY AND ENGINEERING LITERACY (8) **	
2015	Reading Mathematics Science**	Reading (4, 8) Math (4, 8) Science (4, 8)
2016	Arts (8) [Last Arts assessment in 2008, grade 8]	
Assumption: Technology Based Administration for ALL Assessments Beginning in 2017		
2017	Reading Mathematics Writing [Last Writing at grade 4-2002, grade 8 & 12-2011]	Reading (4, 8, 12) Math (4, 8, 12)
2018	U.S. History (8, 12) Civics (8,12) Geography (8,12) Technology and Engineering Literacy (8, 12)	
2019	Reading Mathematics Science High School Transcript Study [Last HSTS in 2009]	Reading (4, 8) Math (4, 8) Science (4, 8)
2020	Long-term trend [Last LTT in 2012] Economics (12) FOREIGN LANGUAGE (12)	
2021	Reading Mathematics Writing	Reading (4, 8, 12) Math (4, 8, 12) Writing (4, 8, 12)
2022	U.S. HISTORY CIVICS GEOGRAPHY Technology and Engineering Literacy (4, 8, 12)	
2023	Reading Mathematics Science High School Transcript Study	Reading (4, 8) Mathematics (4,8) Science (4,8)
2024	ARTS (8)	

**Assessments involving partial or full test administration by computer. Beginning in 2017 all assessments will be computer-administered.

NOTES:

(1) Grades tested are 4, 8, and 12 unless otherwise indicated, except that long-term trend assessments sample students at ages 9, 13, and 17 and are conducted in reading and mathematics.

(2) Subjects in **BOLD ALL CAPS** indicate the year in which a new framework is implemented or assessment year for which the Board will decide whether a new or updated framework is needed.