

**National Assessment Governing Board**

**Meeting of May 15-16, 2015**

**Columbus, IN**

**OFFICIAL SUMMARY OF BOARD ACTIONS**

**Complete Transcript Available**

**National Assessment Governing Board Members Present**

Terry Mazany, Chairman

Susan Pimentel, Vice Chair

Andrés Alonso

Mitchell Chester

Lou Fabrizio

Frank Fernandes

Anitere Flores

Rebecca Gagnon

Shannon Garrison

James Geringer

Andrew Ho

Terry Holliday

Tonya Matthews

Tonya Miles

Ronnie Musgrove

Dale Nowlin

Joseph O'Keefe

James Popham

Fielding Rolston

Cary Sneider

Chasidy White

Sue Betka, Acting Director, Institute of Education Sciences (ex-officio)

**National Assessment Governing Board Members Absent**

Lucille Davy

Doris Hicks

**National Assessment Governing Board Staff**

Mary Crovo, Deputy Executive Director

Michelle Blair

Lily Clark

Dora Drumgold

Stephaan Harris

Laura LoGerfo

Munira Mwalimu

Tessa Regis  
Sharyn Rosenberg  
Angela Scott  
Anthony White  
Bill Bushaw, incoming Executive Director

**National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) Staff**

Peggy Carr, Acting Commissioner  
Jamie Deaton  
Arnold Goldstein  
Michael Moles  
Holly Spurlock

**American Institutes for Research (AIR) Staff**

Kim Gattis  
Cadelle Hemphill  
Fran Stancavage

**Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO)**

Michael Muenks, Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education,  
CCSSO/Governing Board Policy Task Force Representative

**CRP, Inc.**

Shamai Carter  
Renee Palmer  
Edward Wofford

**Educational Testing Service (ETS) Staff**

Jonas Bertling  
Jay Campbell  
Amy Drescher  
Andreas Oranje  
Steve Lazer  
Greg Vafis

**Fulcrum IT**

Saira Brenner  
Kevin Price

**Hager Sharp**

David Hoff  
Debra Silimeo

**Human Resources Research Organization (HumRRO)**

Steve Sellman  
Lauress Wise

**Optimal Solutions**

Rukayat Akinbiyi  
Brian Cramer

**Pearson Educational Measurement**

Steve Fitzpatrick  
Connie Smith  
Cathy White

**Reingold Inc.**

Amy Buckley

**Westat**

Chris Averett  
Keith Rust  
Dianne Walsh

**Widmeyer Communications**

Siobhan Mueller

**Other Attendees**

Jagir Patel, U.S. Department of Education

**Attending Speaker**

Glenda Ritz, Indiana Superintendent of Public Instruction

## **Call to Order**

The May 15, 2015 session of the National Assessment Governing Board was called to order by Chairman Terry Mazany at 8:30 a.m.

## **Approval of May 2015 Agenda and the March 2015 Board Meeting Minutes**

Chairman Mazany reviewed the May 2015 agenda and requested a motion for approval. Tonya Miles moved for Board approval. The motion was seconded by Ronnie Musgrove and passed unanimously.

Mr. Mazany noted that the March 2015 Board minutes were circulated to members for review. Lou Fabrizio moved for Board approval of the meeting minutes. The motion was seconded by Fielding Rolston and passed unanimously.

## **Opening Remarks**

Chairman Mazany welcomed the attendees and noted the Board's commitment to representing the nation in its work, evidenced by scheduling the meeting in Columbus, Indiana. Mr. Mazany commented on the successful Board activities on Thursday, May 14, including a tour of Columbus North High School where Dale Nowlin teaches, and a well-attended community outreach event. He expressed gratitude to the Governing Board staff for their work in organizing the logistically complicated Board meeting in the beautiful town of Columbus.

Mr. Mazany noted that the Chicago Community Trust, the second oldest community foundation in the nation, celebrated its 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary on Tuesday, May 12 by organizing a community-wide conversation about the role philanthropy plays in our communities. He remarked that over 25,000 people participated in the "On the Table" conversations, resulting in the event being the number one Twitter trend for Chicago and number seven nationally for the day. He noted the importance of philanthropy and public-private partnerships for the well-being of our communities.

Mr. Mazany discussed how dramatically technology can evolve in a relatively short period of time. He provided illustrative videos to compare the results of the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency's unsuccessful Grand Challenge to create a self-driving vehicle in 2004 to that of Google's sophisticated, road-ready self-driving car in 2014 (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wTDG5gjwPGo> and <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TsaES--OTzM>, respectively). He noted that this tremendous shift in technology occurred in one decade, and exemplifies why it is critical for the Governing Board and NCES to continue innovating on assessment.

Mr. Mazany invited Board member Dale Nowlin and the Indiana Superintendent of Public Instruction, Glenda Ritz, to provide welcoming remarks.

### **Welcoming Remarks - Dale Nowlin**

Mr. Nowlin expressed his pride in the town of Columbus, Indiana and said the goal of Columbus is to be the best city of its size in the nation. He noted that though the city boasts many unique qualities, it is not unlike other cities in the increasing social and economic diversity of its student population. He commented that all schools need to make adjustments to meet the needs of their changing student populations in order to maintain and increase their collective academic success. Mr. Nowlin thanked the Governing Board staff for managing the logistical challenges presented by Columbus, which required multiple venues to accommodate the Board meeting.

### **Welcoming Remarks – Glenda Ritz**

Ms. Ritz offered a “Hoosier welcome” to the Governing Board. She began her remarks by noting that her efforts as the Indiana Superintendent of Public Instruction are informed by her experience as a National Board Certified Teacher teaching at the elementary, middle and high school levels and licensure in special education, general education and library science. She stated that NAEP results serve as the objective marker of Indiana’s educational progress.

Ms. Ritz commented on the importance of literacy and valid assessments. She noted that schools need systems that inform teaching and provide students with the information they need to progress; she further commented that NAEP is an important national measure to contribute to this information. Ms. Ritz spoke of her passion for literacy and the desire to cultivate students who “do read,” rather than those who “can read.”

Governing Board members engaged in a question and answer session with Ms. Ritz, which resulted in the following remarks by Ms. Ritz.

Ms. Ritz noted that NAEP provides a summative, objective measure of the academic progress in Indiana as a result of efforts to improve instruction. She stated that formative assessments guide instruction and learning and are valuable to teachers. She noted that focusing only on whether a student has passed an assessment is a disservice to students, particularly those with disabilities and English language learners, by not identifying their abilities and measuring their progress. She noted that Indiana does not have provisions allowing students to opt out of assessments, and that it is important for parents and students to have assessment results. She stated that it is her goal to have an assessment system in Indiana that informs teaching and empowers students.

### **Deputy Executive Director’s Report**

Mary Crovo, Deputy Executive Director of the Governing Board, began her report by welcoming the Governing Board’s incoming Executive Director Bill Bushaw, who will begin work for the Board in late July 2015.

Ms. Crovo congratulated Governing Board members for their recent accomplishments, including Andrés Alonso’s appointment as Board Chair of the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching; Jim Popham’s receipt of the American Educational Research Association (AERA)

Robert L. Linn Distinguished Address award at the 2015 AERA meeting in Chicago, Illinois; and Terry Holliday's retirement in August, after six distinguished years as Kentucky's Commissioner of Education.

Ms. Crovo recognized Arnold Goldstein of NCES, who has worked on the NAEP program for 22 years and is retiring at the end of May.

Ms. Crovo highlighted a number of significant recent and upcoming outreach items:

- The April 29<sup>th</sup> release of the 2014 Nation's Report Card in U.S. History, Geography, and Civics via webinar, which drew 260 participants nationwide and resulted in nearly 1,100 media placements including print, online, and broadcast stories. She highlighted the participation of Chasidy White and a video-taped statement of support from Senator Lamar Alexander in this release.
- In April, the Governing Board hosted four sessions at the AERA and at the National Council on Measurement in Education (NCME) annual meetings in Chicago, Illinois, on the topics of Assessment Literacy and the Board's Strategic Planning Initiative.
- In June, Cary Sneider will present at the CCSSO National Conference on Student Assessment in San Diego regarding the comparison study between NAEP and the Next Generation Science Standards; and a panel of NAGB board members will present the work on Assessment Literacy.
- The Governing Board's ongoing outreach efforts with the CCSSO Policy Task Force and the planned restart of the Governing Board's Business Policy Task Force provide policy input and feedback on a regular basis, through direct involvement of state policymakers and business representatives, respectively.
- The Governing Board's first online newsletter was launched on May 8, and has attracted more than 400 visitors and resulted in 2,600 page views in its first week.

Ms. Crovo concluded her report by acknowledging individuals who contributed to the success of the May Board meeting, especially Governing Board member and host Dale Nowlin and staff Angela Scott.

### **Institute of Education Sciences (IES) Update**

Sue Betka, IES Acting Director, provided an update on IES activities, focusing on the Regional Educational Laboratory (REL) program.

RELs are established in law and have existed in some iteration for 50 years. The program is managed by the National Center for Education and Evaluation and Regional Assistance (NCEE) in the Institute for Education Sciences. NCEE is currently planning the next competition for a contract to begin in January 2017.

RELs are supported by five-year contracts to serve different regions in the country. In serving the regions, RELs are required to establish strong partnerships among practitioners, policy makers and researchers. The purpose of the program is to help strengthen state and local capacity to use their own data to conduct high quality research and evaluation and to appropriately incorporate findings into policy and practice by providing technical assistance. RELs conduct applied

research to address regional needs and disseminate the research findings. The 79 research alliances increase the likelihood that REL activities are motivated by authentic problems of practice, and that policy and practice are informed by data and research.

Ms. Betka provided examples of research alliances and suites of tools developed by RELs. She noted that NCEE encourages collaboration among all the laboratories and with other U.S. Department of Education technical assistance centers.

### **National Center for Education Statistics (NCES)**

Peggy Carr, Acting NCES Commissioner, provided the Governing Board with her review of a report released by Achieve, entitled Proficient vs. Prepared: Disparities Between State Tests and the National Assessment of Educational Progress, and its relation to the new NAEP/State Mapping Report, scheduled for release in summer 2015.

Ms. Carr began her remarks by noting that she expects there to be confusion between the Achieve report and the forthcoming NCES report. She noted that both reports will provide the public with the takeaway that state standards vary widely across the nation. However, Ms. Carr expressed concerns with the methodology Achieve used to reach this conclusion.

Ms. Carr provided the following analysis of the differences:

- The Achieve report focuses on the proportion of students meeting the state and NAEP proficiency standards (by subtracting the percent proficient on the state assessment from the percent proficient on NAEP), rather than where the state standards map to the NAEP scale as the NCES report does.
- The Achieve report did not utilize data from the same cohort to conduct this analysis; instead it compared state assessment data from school year 2014 to NAEP data from school year 2013.
- It is unclear if Achieve adjusted its data sets to exclude results from alternate assessments to ensure valid and appropriate comparisons, as NCES does.
- The Achieve report labels states with smallest difference in the percent of students meeting proficient on the state versus NAEP results as “top truth tellers,” and the states with the widest gaps as “biggest gaps.” She commented that the Achieve report used this provocative language without explaining that states have valid reasons for creating their various standards or noting the differences in state and NAEP assessments in terms of what they are designed to measure.

Ms. Carr summarized Achieve’s approach to ranking states as “troubling.” She noted that the Achieve report received limited media coverage to date, perhaps because its overall conclusion regarding the disparities of state standards is consistent with the NCES state mapping reports since 2005.

Board members engaged in a discussion with Ms. Carr.

Mr. Fabrizio requested a copy of Ms. Carr’s presentation and recommended that she share her analysis with the State NAEP Coordinators.

In response to a question from Sue Pimentel, Ms. Carr clarified that the NCES report does not compare student performance, as the Achieve report does, but rather compares the definitions of “proficient.”

Andrew Ho commended Ms. Carr for her careful, considered, and correct approach to the NCES State Mapping Report and stated that the lack of media coverage of the Achieve report suggests that NCES’ reporting has been effective.

Ronnie Musgrove commented that advocacy groups may pick up this story at a later time so the Governing Board should consider if a Board or NAEP response to the Achieve report would be appropriate.

Mr. Sneider recommended Ms. Carr engage in a conversation with leadership at Achieve to discuss her methodological concerns.

Ms. Matthews commented that the Governing Board needs to consider its practice of addressing secondary uses of NAEP data. She noted that as the Governing Board promotes greater access to and use of NAEP data, it will not have control over how the data are used. However, the Governing Board and NCES will always be the ultimate voice on what the NAEP data report.

### **Recess for Committee Meetings**

The first session of the May 15, 2015 Board meeting recessed for committee meetings at 10:04 a.m., which were held until 12:30 p.m.

### **Meeting Reconvened**

The May 15, 2015 Board meeting reconvened at 1:06 p.m.

### **Governing Board Strategic Planning Initiative**

Chairman Mazany opened the Strategic Planning Initiative session by stating his goal for the Board to finalize its Strategic Planning Framework at the August 2015 Board meeting. He emphasized the importance of all Board members to voice their opinions at this session to improve the strategic plan.

Mr. Mazany summarized the feedback that he heard from the four NAEP-focused sessions at the April, 2015 AERA and NCME conferences in Chicago, Illinois. Overall there was emphatic support for NAEP as a vital measure of educational progress in the country. He noted the validation of the Board’s Assessment Literacy work and the importance of maintaining a broad scope of assessments to measure preparation of students for citizenship in a democratic society. The importance of NAEP maintaining its brand and the value of NAEP State Coordinators as ambassadors for the program were his takeaways from the conferences. He commented that these values are captured in the draft Strategic Planning Framework. He invited Board members to



share their reflections from participation at these conferences and on the Strategic Planning Framework document.

Tonya Miles shared feedback from a NAEP State Coordinator which demonstrated how the Board's parent engagement efforts have taken root and can impact others' outreach efforts to promote greater understanding of NAEP.

Rebecca Gagnon noted that parents want to know if an assessment fairly represents what their kids know.

Jim Popham noted the importance of upholding the Board's appropriate role in the national public dialogue about assessments more generally, and not expanding its work beyond its statutorily defined role.

Tonya Matthews highlighted the importance of the Strategic Planning Framework's inclusion of external partnerships as a priority. She noted that these partnerships can help increase NAEP's impact and that it is at the discretion of external organizations to address the public's need for information or take actions that are beyond the scope of the Governing Board's mission.

Board members discussed the Strategic Planning Initiative's process, noting that the Board is currently in Phase I, the visioning phase of its planning. The gathering of additional information to determine what actions to take and the Board's prioritization of activities will occur in Phase II.

Mitchell Chester commented that NAEP's legacy is at the leading edge in assessment, and he believes it is important that the Framework include a priority that upholds that legacy. He noted the evolution of "literacy" over time, citing the Board's work on Technology and Engineering Literacy (TEL) and digital-based assessments (DBA) as opportunities for NAEP to continue its leadership role. He expressed his reservation about the Board conducting extensive parent engagement work because NAEP does not provide individual student results.

Cary Sneider commented that defining literacy is an important underpinning of the Strategic Planning Initiative. Literacy, defined more broadly, is having skills needed to function in the world. He highlighted that the TEL Framework represents knowledge and skills the Board decided are important to measure.

Terry Holliday advised the Board to focus its Strategic Planning Initiative by considering its primary customer, Congress. He recommended that the Board ensure the final strategic plan is aligned with Congress's mandate and expectations for NAEP to justify continued investments in the program.

Board members engaged in a discussion of the draft Strategic Planning Framework document.

Members discussed the categorization of "goals" in the draft Framework and suggested further review to ensure that the goals are ambitious, actionable, and differentiated from the Board's strategies to achieve the goals. Editorial suggestions were offered to the draft document.

Frank Fernandes noted the importance of capturing both the Board’s mission and vision for NAEP in the Strategic Planning Framework document.

Lou Fabrizio suggested including more quotes from the authorizing statute, particularly in relation to the mission statement in the Framework. In addition, he suggested the Board consider including these statutory quotes on its Assessment Schedule to justify the breadth of subjects assessed.

Andrew Ho suggested that the Board take advantage of the flexibility of its authority to conduct state and district level assessments in subjects beyond reading and mathematics as a mechanism to evaluate which assessments have the most public demand and consider phasing out assessments in subjects that garner less public interest.

Anitere Flores noted the value of multiple perspectives provided by Board members given their various backgrounds, which are all valuable for the Strategic Planning Initiative. She noted that it will be critical for the Board to synthesize these goals and advised that the Board aim to achieve a few things well, rather than many things poorly.

Ms. Flores commented on the importance of assessment literacy and the unique positioning of NAGB to speak to the public on this topic. She advocated for a strategy that includes communications to external groups that can increase the reach of NAEP exponentially.

Board members agreed that the discussions with Congress regarding NAEP funding are a separate mission from the Strategic Planning Initiative.

### **Meeting Recessed and Reconvened**

The May 15, 2015 Board meeting recessed at 2:13 p.m. and reconvened at 2:39 p.m.

### **Assessment Literacy Initiative**

Chairman Mazany introduced the session on the Assessment Literacy Initiative by noting its alignment with the Strategic Planning Initiative. He emphasized that no decisions were to be made today, but the Board would need to decide its prioritization of the Assessment Literacy work within its strategic planning decisions.

Jim Popham provided an overview of the Assessment Literacy initiative, which aims to increase public knowledge about the roles and uses of assessments in American education and what NAEP results mean for students. He complimented the superb collaboration of the Assessment Literacy Work Group on this initiative, including the Governing Board and NCES staff support.

The Assessment Literacy Work Group’s goal was to identify a relatively small number of assessment literacy “understandings” to be communicated to the three target audiences (consisting of parents, policymakers, and students). He summarized the measure of success to be more informed and insightful conversations regarding education testing in the country.

Assessment Literacy Work Group members highlighted aspects of the project.

Lou Fabrizio summarized the valuable feedback on the initiative from external outreach efforts, including the recent AERA and NCME conferences in April, 2015, which resulted in modifications to the draft understandings and recommendations for seeking feedback from additional stakeholders.

Tonya Miles explained how the Board's Assessment Literacy initiative is a logical progression from its parent engagement work over the past several years. She summarized the five understandings that relate to parents. Ms. Miles posited that success for these understandings would include changing the way that assessments are used to improve student learning.

Rebecca Gagnon summarized the draft understandings for policymakers. She noted that policymakers at local, state, and federal levels need understandable and relevant information about the function and quality of assessments to inform their policies and resulting resource allocations.

Andrew Ho described the assessment literacy understandings for students. He stated that the result of targeting students would be more students understanding that they are more than a test score; that formative assessments present opportunities for their growth, and how NAEP is relevant to them.

Amy Buckley provided an overview of the draft communications plan devised to reach parents, which the Board is scheduled to take action on at the August 2015 Board meeting.

Ms. Buckley described the project's approach to creating tools for external groups for use with their constituencies directly to more effectively reach the NAEP target audiences. She mentioned the insights from focus groups which emphasized the importance of making the tools accessible for audiences of varying levels of familiarity regarding assessment, using plain language to describe the concepts, and directly connecting the concepts to students. Ms. Buckley also noted that the materials would be modified to serve collaborators and intermediaries who would be critical allies in helping parents receive these messages. Ms. Buckley referred Board members to the materials provided which detail the seven priorities and noted that the content for the campaign, including its draft title, are still being finalized. She provided a brief overview of the three proposed phases of the assessment literacy campaign which include the initial launch of the campaign, an intermediate phase to build on the launch activities to introduce and intensify outreach, and will culminate with major public outreach efforts with collaborators.

Ms. Buckley and David Hoff demonstrated prototype communications materials, including a website and video to disseminate the intended messages.

Mr. Popham invited Board members to comment on the presentation.

Board members discussed the value of NAEP, as an established low-stakes national assessment, providing information about assessments to parents. Board members lauded the efforts to craft neutral messaging in the campaign materials, though Andrés Alonso noted that neutrality may

not be possible given the political atmosphere surrounding testing. Susan Pimentel added that the Governing Board is not neutral about NAEP, and is right to promote NAEP in its outreach efforts.

The Board discussed the selection of the three stakeholder groups. Several Board members suggested including administrators, teachers, and private schools in messaging campaigns targeted to parents to encourage and support conversations about assessments between parents and their schools. Cary Sneider suggested that the communications to parents include questions that parents should ask regarding assessments, including NAEP, to better understand a test's purpose, value, and validity. Ms. Miles challenged each Board member to interview three parents before the August 2015 Board meeting, to get a sense of what parents most want to know about testing.

Mitchell Chester expressed his reservations about the value of the Governing Board targeting parents given the generalized NAEP results and diversity of outreach to parents surrounding high stakes assessments. He suggested that to effectively reach parents, the Board's communications strategy must take into account the numerous pre-existing communications efforts regarding assessments in many states around the country.

Board members discussed how focused the Board's assessment literacy communications would be on NAEP specifically, versus assessments generally. Joe O'Keefe suggested that the communications materials explain how NAEP fits into the landscape of assessments, rather than trying to explain all assessments. Mr. Popham clarified that the Assessment Literacy initiative's planned communications will not focus exclusively on NAEP and will convey the larger context of assessments; yet the ultimate goal of the campaign will be to increase the knowledge people have of NAEP and of NAEP's contributions to education.

Board members discussed the potential level of detail that the communications would encompass, the need to crystalize the role of NAEP within the broader context of assessments, and the importance of partnering with stakeholder groups to provide the public with useful and neutral information. Several members stated that they would need to see additional details regarding the substance of the campaign's materials prior to approving the communications plan.

The Board expressed consensus on the critical need for assessment literacy in the country. However, members debated the degree to which the Governing Board's mission supports participating in or leading an assessment literacy campaign, as well as the opportunities and risks for doing so. Ms. Miles commented that the current political climate surrounding assessments, and the public's misunderstanding of what a good assessment looks like, are posing threats to NAEP and therefore it is within the Governing Board's scope and mission to address these misconceptions through an assessment literacy campaign. Members discussed the need to clarify why it is appropriate for the Governing Board to promote assessment literacy, and to consider the scope and alignment of this campaign within the larger context of the Strategic Planning Initiative.

### **Meeting Recessed and Reconvened**

The May 15, 2015 Board meeting recessed at 4:00 p.m. and reconvened at 4:23 p.m.

## **Draft Resolution on Trend Reporting**

Chairman Mazany introduced the session by stating the need for the Board to have a resolution on the criticality of maintaining trends in reading and mathematics from 2015 to 2017, as NAEP transitions to digital-based assessments (DBA) in addition to changes being made to state standards and assessments, which prevent trend comparisons among states. He noted that the Committee on Standards, Design and Methodology (COSDAM) drafted the resolution with valuable input from NCES, and requested the Board provide feedback on the draft resolution for action at the August 2015 Board meeting.

Lou Fabrizio noted the discussions of COSDAM over the past year which informed this draft resolution. He summarized the mode of assessments during the time period covered by the draft resolution to achieve the goal of maintaining trend. The 2015 NAEP reading and mathematics assessments were administered on paper. In addition, in 2015 NCES conducted a national sample of students in grades 4 and 8 for reading and mathematics DBA using tablets for a bridge study. NCES will analyze the extent to which the results from the paper and pencil assessments and the digitally-based assessments are similar and report those results to COSDAM in spring 2016. The 2017 NAEP reading and mathematics assessments of grades 4 and 8 will be DBA. In addition, NCES is planning to administer paper and pencil versions of the 2017 assessments to approximately 500 students in each state.

Andrew Ho introduced the draft resolution and summarized its content. He explained its intent to reaffirm NAEP's core mission to describe educational progress in the nation, the urgency of the Governing Board attending to its mission in light of changing state tests and policies, and the importance of working diligently to maintain trend as NAEP transitions to DBA. He thanked NCES staff for their contributions in developing the resolution.

Mr. Ho commented on the resolution's relevance to the Board's Strategic Planning Initiative. He said that NAEP is on the leading edge by its approach to address the challenges of maintaining trend while switching to DBA. NAEP's proactive approach to maintaining trend is salient for states, which are wrestling with similar challenges as they adopt new computer-based tests. He further noted that NAEP must continue efforts like these, anticipating and preparing for adoption of new technologies for NAEP. Finally, he noted that this innovative work to support the Governing Board's core mission does have cost implications for the NAEP program, noting that "the gold standard sometimes costs its weight in gold."

Chairman Mazany and Mary Crovo thanked NCES for their partnership with the Governing Board on developing this resolution, which is critical for its successful implementation. Peggy Carr noted that the costs of the bridge studies described by Mr. Fabrizio have been incorporated into NAEP's budget, and NCES is proceeding with this plan.

Ronnie Musgrove and Rebecca Gagnon suggested that because there was no opposition to the draft resolution, the Board should take action on it during this Board meeting rather than the August 2015 Board meeting. COSDAM was advised to include the revised draft resolution, with the editorial changes noted by Mr. Fabrizio, in its Saturday, May 16 Committee report for Board action.

### **Meeting Recessed**

The May 15, 2015 Board meeting recessed at 4:42 p.m.

### **Meeting Convened: Closed Session**

The May 16, 2015 Board meeting convened at 8:30 a.m. in closed session.

### **NAEP Schedule of Assessments and Budget**

Under the provisions of exemption 9(B) of section 552b of Title 5 U.S.C. the National Assessment Governing Board met in closed session on May 16, 2015 from 8:30 a.m. to 9:45 a.m. to receive a briefing on and to discuss the NAEP Schedule of Assessments and the budget.

Mary Crovo reviewed the Board's list of priorities for NAEP activities in fiscal year 2016. These priorities provide the staff of the Governing Board and NCES with guidance to adjust NAEP activities underway in the event of new appropriations. The Board affirmed that the same priorities would apply for fiscal year 2017 activities.

Ms. Crovo provided an overview of the anticipated schedule for Executive Committee and Board meeting discussions regarding the NAEP budget and decisions regarding the assessment schedule at future Board meetings. Ms. Crovo noted the tentative nature of the timeline, particularly given the unpredictability of Congress' timeframe to appropriate funds for NAEP. Ms. Crovo noted that the general timeline for budget and assessment schedule review was designed to ensure that the Board makes timely decisions to keep the NAEP budget solvent and avoid cancelling NAEP assessments prematurely.

Peggy Carr provided additional information about the timelines NCES needs for the Board's decisions on the NAEP Assessment Schedule. She noted the cost implications of decisions to cancel an assessment at various stages of its developmental cycles (including milestones such as the survey design, sampling, school notification, etc.). She also emphasized that the figures she presented were estimates and were expected to change for a variety of valid reasons.

Ms. Carr provided the Board with an in-depth briefing of cost projections impacting the NAEP Assessment Schedule through the year 2024. The Board examined and discussed the detailed information presented by Ms. Carr.

The Board considered NAEP's budgetary needs for the President's FY 2017 budget request and discussed the implications of the cost estimates for the NAEP Assessment Schedule and future NAEP activities. Board members engaged in a discussion regarding the value of investments in technology to provide equitable, secure, and interrupted assessment conditions for NAEP DBA.

Chairman Mazany introduced a draft funding resolution regarding the imperative to fully fund NAEP. The Board welcomed the proposed resolution and offered substantive suggestions to improve the draft for consideration at the August 2015 Board meeting. The Board also discussed potential strategies to promote the message of the resolution, once it is finalized.

### **Meeting Recessed and Reconvened**

The May 16, 2015 Board closed session meeting recessed at 9:45 a.m. and the Board reconvened at 10:00 a.m. in open session.

### **Remarks from Incoming Governing Board Executive Director**

Bill Bushaw addressed the Board on his priorities for the Governing Board as incoming Executive Director. He complimented the Board on its aptly timed Strategic Planning Initiative, which provides an opportunity to design a messaging campaign to increase the support for NAEP at a vulnerable time of funding uncertainty. He advised the Board to develop a communications strategy targeting senior leadership at the U.S. Department of Education and U.S. Congress. He commented on the potential for the Board to expand its partnerships with other organizations to increase the impact of NAEP. Mr. Bushaw also noted the importance of integrating the Strategic Planning Initiative with the ongoing work of the Governing Board staff to ensure its effective implementation.

In closing, Mr. Bushaw conveyed his enthusiasm about working with an engaged and ambitious Board, and his gratitude for the opportunity to attend the May 2015 Board meeting.

### **Committee Reports and Board Actions**

The standing committee chairs summarized the discussions of their respective committees.

- Shannon Garrison, Chair of the Assessment Development Committee, reported the Committee's review and approval of contextual questions for the 2017 pilot test for reading and mathematics in grades 4-8, and writing in grades 8 and 12, noting required modifications to be communicated to NCES, under its standing delegation of authority from the Board.
- Lou Fabrizio, Chair of the Committee on Standards, Design, and Methodology, made a motion to pass a resolution on maintaining NAEP trends with the transition to digitally-based assessments which the Governing Board unanimously approved.
- Andrés Alonso, Chair of the Reporting and Dissemination Committee, made a motion to approve the contextual variables, pending changes to be conveyed to NCES, which the Governing Board unanimously approved.

The full text of the action items is provided in the Committee reports, appended to these minutes.

Mr. Mazany concluded the meeting by appreciating the different perspectives provided to the Board by meeting in Columbus, Indiana. He thanked Board member and host Dale Nowlin for his efforts, as well Governing Board and NCES staffs and contractors for making the Board meeting a success.

**Meeting Adjourned**

The May 16, 2015 meeting of the Board adjourned at 10:42 a.m.

I certify the accuracy of these minutes.



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Terry Mazany, Chairman

July 26, 2015  
Date



**National Assessment Governing Board**  
**Assessment Development Committee**  
**Report of May 14-15, 2015**

**May 14, 2015**

**Assessment Development Committee (ADC) Members:** Shannon Garrison (Chair), Cary Sneider (Vice Chair), Frank Fernandes, Dale Nowlin, Susan Pimentel, Chasidy White.

**Governing Board Staff:** Mary Crovo, Michelle Blair, Laura LoGerfo.

**NCES Staff:** Jamie Deaton.

**Other Attendees:** AIR: Kim Gattis, Fran Stancavage. CRP: Ed Wofford. ETS: Debby Almonte, Jonas Bertling, Jay Campbell, Greg Vafis. HumRRO: Steve Sellman. Optimal Solutions Group: Rukayat Akinbiyi.

**1. ACTION: Review of NAEP Subject-Specific Contextual Variables**

Jamie Deaton of NCES provided an overview of the development process for NAEP contextual variables. Mr. Deaton noted the timeline and various contractors and committees involved in the process, and highlighted points at which the ADC reviews the variables at different stages. The current review is to determine which questions will be used in the 2016 pilot testing in reading and mathematics at grades 4 and 8, and for writing at grades 8 and 12. Questions were reviewed for students, teachers, and schools.

Mr. Deaton reviewed key recommendations being implemented in these contextual variables including increasing the number of response options, revising the approach to pilot testing, and using a matrix format for grade 4. In terms of the revised approach to pilot testing, Mr. Deaton explained that in the past the pilot was considered a dress rehearsal for the operational assessment. Now NCES views the pilot as an opportunity for additional testing of the questions using a split sample approach. In this design, some students will receive one form of certain questions and other students will receive another form to enable comparisons and selection of the best questions based on pilot data.

The ADC had a number of general and specific comments on the contextual questions, as well as complements on the quality and clarity of many questions. Committee members were pleased to see so many of the previous recommendations implemented in this set of questions. However, there were still outstanding issues related to wording, trend items, and other areas. The ADC

completed their review of mathematics and writing questions and continued the contextual variable review for reading at their May 15, 2015 meeting.

## **May 15, 2015**

**Assessment Development Committee (ADC) Members:** Shannon Garrison (Chair), Cary Sneider (Vice Chair), Frank Fernandes, Dale Nowlin, Susan Pimentel, Chasidy White

**Governing Board Staff:** Mary Crovo

**NCES Staff:** Jamie Deaton, Arnold Goldstein

**Other Attendees:** AIR: Kim Gattis. ETS: Debby Almonte, Jay Campbell, Greg Vafis. Fulcrum IT: Kevin Price.

### **1. ACTION: Review of NAEP Subject-Specific Contextual Variables**

The ADC continued its review of subject-specific contextual variables, which began at the May 14, 2015 meeting. The Committee reviewed reading contextual variables and had a number of comments and clarifications. Following their review and discussion, the ADC unanimously approved the following motion, under its delegation of authority from the full Board:

**ACTION: The Assessment Development Committee approves the subject-specific contextual variables in reading, mathematics, and writing for the 2016 pilot with changes to be communicated in writing to NCES.**

### **2. Update on the 2014 NAEP Technology and Engineering Literacy (TEL) Reporting**

Arnold Goldstein of NCES presented an update on the TEL web-based report design. Mr. Goldstein noted that a number of the recommendations from the March 6, 2015 joint meeting of the ADC and Reporting and Dissemination Committee have been implemented in the current design of the report.

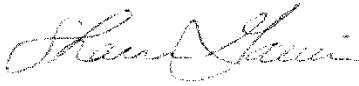
Mr. Goldstein displayed page views of the draft TEL report design and invited ADC feedback. Members were pleased that many of their previous recommendations had been made, however the TEL report website needs more work. The ADC members provided detailed feedback on each page of the mock-up. Overall, the report website needs to be as dynamic and innovative as the TEL assessment to appeal to as many users as possible, and to communicate the importance and engaging nature of this new assessment. Greater use of color and animation is needed throughout the website, and the home page should have a cleaner, simpler design. A major change the ADC would like to see is having a prominent link on the home page for users to take the TEL tasks. Finally, the Committee requested that the TEL report website be dedicated to

Alan Friedman, the previous ADC chair and TEL champion, who passed away in 2014. Detailed comments for improving the TEL report website will be communicated to NCES in writing.

### 3. NAEP Item Review Schedule

Mary Crovo of the Governing Board staff reviewed the new Item Review Schedule with the ADC. She noted that the next review will be the concept sketches (or outlines) for the 2018 U.S. History, Civics, and Geography assessments. As NAEP transitions to a digital-based format, it will be important for ADC members to have access to the same type of digital tablet as the students use for the NAEP assessment, to eliminate differences across devices in formatting or other superficial aspects of the tasks.

I certify the accuracy of these minutes.



Shannon Garrison, Chair

May 22, 2015

Date

**National Assessment Governing Board**  
**Committee on Standards, Design and Methodology**  
**Report of May 15, 2015**

**COSDAM Committee Members:** Lou Fabrizio (Chair), Fielding Rolston (Vice Chair), Mitchell Chester, James Geringer, Andrew Ho, Terry Holliday, and Jim Popham.

**Governing Board Staff:** Sharyn Rosenberg, Michelle Blair, Lily Clark, and Tessa Regis.

**NCES Staff:** Acting Commissioner Peggy Carr.

**Other Attendees:** AIR: Fran Stancavage. ETS: Steve Lazer, Andreas Oranje. Fulcrum: Saira Brenner. HumRRO: Laress Wise. Optimal Solutions Group: Rukayat Akinbiyi. Pearson: Steve Fitzpatrick, Connie Smith, Cathy White. Westat: Dianne Walsh. Widmeyer: Siobhan Mueller.

**1. Introductions and Review of Agenda**

Chair Lou Fabrizio called the meeting to order at 10:02 a.m. and welcomed members and guests. He noted that Lucille Davy was unable to attend this meeting due to a conflict with her son's graduation from law school. Mr. Fabrizio reviewed the agenda.

**2. Draft Resolution on Maintaining Trend with Transition to Digital Based Assessments**

Mr. Fabrizio began by noting that the Board has had several conversations about the importance of maintaining trends during the transition of NAEP from paper-and-pencil assessments to digital-based assessments (DBA). During the March Board meeting, COSDAM members provided input for a Resolution that would explain the importance of focusing on *how* rather than *whether* trends can be maintained. Mr. Fabrizio explained that Governing Board staff worked with him, in addition to Andrew Ho and NCES staff, to draft a Resolution for Board discussion.

Andrew Ho introduced the Resolution and discussed the urgency of maintaining trend in a time when state tests and testing policies are rapidly changing. All COSDAM members supported the sentiment of the Resolution; there was brief discussion about a minor editorial change.

Terry Holliday stated that a Resolution would not be necessary if NAEP were not moving to DBA; the easiest way to maintain trends would be to continue using paper-and-pencil assessments. There was discussion about the need to articulate the reasons why NAEP is

moving to DBA, but the committee reached consensus that such justification should be covered by a separate Resolution (i.e., the Resolution on the Imperative for Increased NAEP Funding).

There was a motion by Jim Popham, and a second by Mitchell Chester, to move the Resolution to the full Board for possible action at this meeting rather than at the August meeting.

NOTE: On Saturday morning, the full Board voted unanimously to adopt the Resolution (attached).

### **3. Update on NAEP Academic Preparedness Research**

Mr. Fabrizio provided some context for the origins of the academic preparedness initiative, starting with the 2002 National Commission on NAEP 12<sup>th</sup> grade assessment and reporting. He noted that for more than a decade, the Governing Board has been engaged in planning and research to use NAEP as an indicator of academic preparedness for college and job training. Last year, the reporting of the 2013 grade 12 NAEP Reading and Mathematics results included plausible estimates of the percentage of students academically prepared for introductory, credit-bearing, non-remedial, college courses. A report is underway to summarize lessons learned from the research on using NAEP as an indicator of academic preparedness for job training.

Sharyn Rosenberg of the Governing Board staff gave a brief update on the status of the Board's ongoing research studies with state and national partners. She noted that Illinois will not be a partner for this work because all parties were unable to reach a data sharing agreement. Results from the exploratory studies at grade 8 (linking NAEP to ACT Explore in Reading and Math for three states and the content alignment study to support this work) are planned agenda items for the August COSDAM meeting.

There was some discussion about the difficulty of performing additional studies at the state level in the future, given that the current assessment schedule does not include grade 12 assessments at the state level. State legislation around data privacy is an additional barrier to performing studies that link NAEP to state longitudinal data systems. Terry Holliday raised a concern that the preparedness research may not be very useful without grade 12 results at the state level.

Jim Popham stated that the preparedness research has always made him uneasy and that future conversations should focus on whether NAEP should be doing this at all rather than what we should be doing next in this area. Peggy Carr, Acting Commissioner of NCES, noted that it may be possible to continue the academic preparedness research in more innovative and efficient ways, such as with the sample of students in the High School Longitudinal Study (HSLs) who took NAEP. Mr. Fabrizio invited her to share more information about this topic at a future COSDAM meeting.

#### **4. Other Issues and Questions**

Ms. Rosenberg reported that she and Deputy Executive Director Mary Crovo would be attending an open meeting on May 27<sup>th</sup> with the Committee that is charged with evaluating the NAEP achievement levels. The topic of the meeting is uses of NAEP achievement levels; additional information will be shared with COSDAM during the August meeting.

#### **CLOSED SESSION 11:30 am – 12:30 pm**

**COSDAM Committee Members:** Lou Fabrizio (Chair), Fielding Rolston (Vice Chair), Mitchell Chester, James Geringer, Andrew Ho, Terry Holliday, and Jim Popham.

**Governing Board Staff:** Sharyn Rosenberg, Michelle Blair, Lily Clark, and Tessa Regis.

**NCES Staff:** Acting Commissioner Peggy Carr.

**Other Attendees:** AIR: Fran Stancavage. ETS: Steve Lazer, Andreas Oranje. Fulcrum: Saira Brenner, Kevin Price. HumRRO: Laress Wise. Optimal Solutions Group: Rukayat Akinbiyi. Pearson: Steve Fitzpatrick, Connie Smith, Cathy White. Westat: Keith Rust, Dianne Walsh.

#### **5. Project Update for Technology and Engineering Literacy Achievement Levels Setting**

Steve Fitzpatrick of Pearson provided an update on the status of the Technology and Engineering Literacy (TEL) achievement levels setting (ALS). A pilot study was conducted from March 16-19 in San Antonio. The software that was used for the standard setting (adapted from the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium standard setting activities) did not function as intended during the meeting. In addition, the amount of time allocated to some of the meeting activities was insufficient, resulting in long days and some rushed activities.

Following the pilot study, a decision was made to discontinue use of the software and to extend the standard setting meeting by one day. The Technical Advisory Committee on Standard Setting (TACSS) unanimously recommended that the upcoming June 1-5 meeting serve as a second pilot study rather than as the operational meeting. Consequently, a third meeting is being planned for September 28 – October 2 to serve as the operational meeting.

According to the Board policy on Developing Student Performance Levels for the National Assessment of Educational Progress, public comment should be collected throughout the achievement levels process, including on the proposed levels. Mr. Fitzpatrick noted that the public comment event (to collect feedback on the results in conjunction with the National Conference on Student Assessment) that COSDAM had previously discussed is no longer

feasible due to the revised project schedule. Following some discussion, COSDAM members agreed that it is not necessary to find a new opportunity for public comment on the proposed levels, but that the Board policy on achievement levels should be revisited next year.

Jim Popham questioned whether the TEL assessment measures knowledge and skills that are teachable. He suggested asking the teacher panelists at the standard setting meetings whether the content of the assessment can be taught.

Mr. Fabrizio adjourned the COSDAM meeting at 12:30 p.m.

I certify the accuracy of these minutes.

*Louis M. Fabrizio*

5-28-15

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Lou Fabrizio, Chair

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Date



**National Assessment Governing Board**

**Approved Unanimously on May 16, 2015**

**Resolution on Maintaining NAEP Trends with the Transition to  
Digital-Based Assessments (DBA)**

**Whereas**, P.L. 107-279 Title III Section 302 (5) includes as the duties of this Board to (G) develop guidelines for reporting and disseminating results, and (I) take appropriate actions needed to improve the form, content, use, and reporting of results, and,

**Whereas**, P.L. 107-279 Title III Section 303 (2) states that the Commissioner of Education Statistics shall conduct a national assessment and collect and report assessment data, including achievement data trends, in a valid and reliable manner on student academic achievement, and,

**Whereas**, P.L. 107-279 Title III Section 303 (2) states that the purpose of state assessments is the “reporting of trends,” with repeated emphasis on “including achievement data trends,” and,

**Whereas**, Goal 1 of the Governing Board’s *General Policy: Conducting and Reporting The National Assessment of Educational Progress*, adopted unanimously by the Board in 2013, 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*" (emphasis added), and,

**Whereas**, NAEP stands for the National Assessment of Educational **Progress** (emphasis added), and,

**Whereas**, state tests and state testing policies continue to differ among states, and such tests and policies change over time, and,

**Whereas**, biennial state-level NAEP trends are the only representative measure of educational progress that is comparable across states and stable over time, and,

**Whereas**, NCES is designing and implementing the DBA transition with the goal of maintaining trends, including 1) a pilot DBA administration and a full paper-and-pencil administration in 2015 and 2) a full DBA administration and a state-level paper-and-pencil administration in 2017; and,



**Whereas**, NCES will examine data and conduct analyses from both 2015 and 2017 to determine whether trend interpretations based on the DBA results are scientifically defensible;

**Whereas**, NCES will explore additional analysis and reporting options, with involvement of the Governing Board, on the potential interpretations of trends for use in reporting the 2017 Reading and Mathematics results with the transition from paper and pencil to DBA administration;

**Now, therefore, the National Assessment Governing Board resolves that, unless scientifically indefensible, unbroken state-level and national trends be reported, by average scores, percentiles, and percentages at and above the Basic, Proficient, and Advanced achievement levels, to describe educational progress in Reading and Mathematics from 2015 to 2017.**

# National Assessment Governing Board

## Executive Committee

### Report of May 14, 2015

**Executive Committee Members:** Terry Mazany (Chair), Susan Pimentel (Vice Chair), Andrés Alonso, Lou Fabrizio, Rebecca Gagnon, Shannon Garrison, Tonya Miles, Fielding Rolston, Cary Sneider.

**Other Board Members:** Frank Fernandes, James Geringer, Andrew Ho, Terry Holliday, Tonya Matthews, Dale Nowlin, Joseph O’Keefe, Jim Popham, Chasidy White. Ex Officio Member: Sue Betka.

**Governing Board Staff:** Mary Crovo, Lily Clark, Michelle Blair, Stephaan Harris, Laura LoGerfo, Munira Mwalimu, Tessa Regis, Sharyn Rosenberg, Angela Scott, Anthony White. Incoming Executive Director: Bill Bushaw.

**NCES Staff:** Peggy Carr, Jamie Deaton, Arnold Goldstein, Michael Moles, Holly Spurlock.

**U.S. Department of Education Staff:** Jagir Patel.

**Other Attendees:** AIR: Kim Gattis, Fran Stancavage. CRP: Edward Wofford. ETS: Debby Almonte, Jonas Bertling, Jay Campbell, Amy Drescher, Andreas Oranje, Greg Vafis. Hager Sharp: David Hoff, Debra Silimeo. HumRRO: Steve Sellman, Laress Wise. Pearson: Connie Smith, Cathy White. Westat: Chris Averett, Keith Rust, Dianne Walsh.

#### 1. Welcome and Agenda Overview

Chair Mazany called the meeting to order at 4:30 p.m. He welcomed the Executive Committee attendees to Columbus, Indiana and thanked them for arranging their schedules to travel to this meeting. Mr. Mazany provided an overview of the agenda and noted that a portion of the Executive Committee meeting would occur in closed session.

#### 2. Updates

##### *Congressional Activity*

Lily Clark provided the Executive Committee with updates on the following Congressional activities of interest to the Governing Board:

- *Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) Reauthorization* - The Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions (HELP) Committee passed its bipartisan ESEA

reauthorization bill, called the “Every Child Achieves Act.” The HELP Committee report on the bill is expected in late May and Senate markup of the bill is expected in June. The House Education and the Workforce Committee has not yet voted on its ESEA reauthorization bill, which has a veto threat from the White House.

- *NAEP Reauthorization* – The reauthorization of the Education Sciences Reform Act (the “Strengthening Education Through Research Act”), which authorizes NAEP, is not on the Congressional schedules for action in either the House or Senate at this time.
- *Student Privacy* - Several draft bills relating to student privacy have been made public, signaling that Congress is interested in legislative action to put more limits on access to student data.
- *NAEP Appropriations* – The NAEP program is still awaiting its fiscal year 2016 appropriation. Congress’ non-binding budget resolution outlines significant cuts for non-defense discretionary budgets. Therefore, the U.S. Department of Education’s (ED) Budget Service and the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) have advised the Governing Board to be prepared to receive less than the \$149 million that the President requested for NAEP in fiscal year 2016.

### ***Trial Urban District Assessment (TUDA)***

Ms. Clark provided the Executive Committee with an overview of the timeline and process for the Governing Board to verify the participation of large urban districts in the 2017 TUDA in reading and mathematics. She referred the Committee to Attachment A, which included a list of the districts eligible to participate in TUDA. She further noted that TUDA would be expanded to include up to 10 new districts if NAEP is appropriated sufficient funds for fiscal year 2016.

### **3. Nomination Process for Board Vice Chair**

Mr. Mazany began the Governing Board’s nomination process for its Vice Chair for the term extending from October 1, 2015 – September 30, 2016. He recused himself from the selection process and appointed Lou Fabrizio to poll Board members individually to determine the nominee. Mr. Mazany requested that this informal polling be completed in time for the Governing Board to vote on the nominee at the August 2015 Board meeting.

He concluded by thanking Sue Pimental for her excellent leadership as Vice Chair over the past three years and noted that Mr. Fabrizio and Ms. Pimental would not be eligible for the Vice Chair position as they are both completing their final terms on the Governing Board in September.

### **4. Governing Board Strategic Planning Initiative**

Mr. Mazany provided an overview of the Strategic Planning Initiative documents included in Attachment B. He noted that the initiative is proposed to occur in three phases extending through the year 2020. He stated that he was pleased with the progress the Executive Committee has made on developing the Strategic Planning Framework document, which will sets the goals and priorities for the Governing Board’s work.

Mr. Mazany thanked the NCES staff for their feedback on the Framework document and noted the importance of deeper collaboration between the Governing Board and NCES on the development and implementation of the Governing Board's Strategic Planning Initiative.

Mr. Mazany invited the Executive Committee members to comment on the revised draft documents in the Board materials, and a brief discussion in support of the drafts followed.

Tonya Miles emphasized the importance of the partnership and collaboration between the Governing Board and NCES.

Sue Pimental commented on her support for the Strategic Planning Initiative's inclusion of research, particularly regarding the use of contextual variables.

Cary Sneider suggested modifying the typical Board meeting schedule structure at a future meeting to enable more time for brainstorming amongst Board members, staff, and contractors to further the ideas for the Strategic Planning Initiative.

Peggy Carr, Acting Commissioner of NCES, commented on areas of exploration in the Innovations Laboratory, which was created in response to a recommendation in the Future of NAEP paper. The Innovations lab is exploring the development of "virtual worlds" for NAEP, including two-dimensional scenario-based tasks (SBTs), on screen simulations of virtual worlds (such as science labs), and enabling students to manipulate objects shown on the screen. Ms. Carr commented that the infrastructure developed for one virtual SBT would be adaptable to other SBTs or virtual worlds, which enable development for the various subjects NAEP assesses. She further commented that she believes this work to potentially be groundbreaking for assessments.

### **CLOSED SESSION 5:00 pm – 5:45 pm**

**Executive Committee Members:** Terry Mazany (Chair), Susan Pimentel (Vice Chair), Andrés Alonso, Lou Fabrizio, Rebecca Gagnon, Shannon Garrison, Tonya Miles, Fielding Rolston, Cary Sneider.

**Other Board Members:** Frank Fernandes, James Geringer, Andrew Ho, Terry Holliday, Tonya Matthews, Dale Nowlin, Joseph O'Keefe, Jim Popham, Chasidy White. Ex Officio Member: Sue Betka.

**Governing Board Staff:** Mary Crovo, Lily Clark, Michelle Blair, Stephaan Harris, Laura LoGerfo, Munira Mwalimu, Tessa Regis, Sharyn Rosenberg, Angela Scott, Anthony White, Incoming Executive Director: Bill Bushaw.

**NCES Staff:** Peggy Carr, Jamie Deaton, Arnold Goldstein, Michael Moles, Holly Spurlock.

**U.S. Department of Education Staff:** Jagir Patel.

## 5. NAEP Budget Request for Fiscal Year 2017

The Executive Committee met in closed session from 5:00 p.m. to 5:45 p.m. The Executive Committee schedule and budget discussion was conducted in closed session because the disclosure of technical and cost data would significantly impede implementation of the contract awards and negotiations for awards. Therefore this discussion is protected by exemption 9(B) of section 552b(C) of Title 5 U.S.C.

Chair Mazany began the closed session by commenting on the productive budget conversation at the March Board meeting, at which consensus was reached on the Governing Board's priorities for fiscal year 2016 and the Board unanimously approved a forward-looking Assessment Schedule. Mr. Mazany provided the Executive Committee with an overview of the following four goals for the Governing Board's discussions in the Executive Committee and full Board plenary closed sessions at the May 2015 Board meeting:

- Reaffirm the Governing Board's priorities for NAEP activities in fiscal year 2017 and beyond;
- Develop an understanding of when the Board will routinely be considering the NAEP budget and acting on the Assessment Schedule;
- Discuss the Governing Board's input on the NAEP budget request for fiscal year 2017; and
- Consider a resolution on the importance of fully funding NAEP.

Mr. Mazany highlighted the importance of the invitation from ED's Budget Service for the Governing Board to provide input on the President's Budget request. Though the Governing Board does not have final say on the budget amount the President requests for NAEP from Congress, Mr. Mazany noted that this is a critical opportunity for the Governing Board to convince ED and OMB of why the NAEP program needs increased funding. He further noted the presence of the ED Budget Service staff person, Jagir Patel, who travelled to Columbus, Indiana to observe the Governing Board's budget discussions, as a sign of ED's commitment to increase collaboration between NAGB, NCES, and ED's budget office on the NAEP budget.

Deputy Executive Director Mary Crovo presented the priorities for the Governing Board's NAEP activities. This presentation included a review of the priorities for fiscal year 2016 unanimously agreed to by the Governing Board at its March 2015 meeting. The priorities provide direction to the Governing Board and NCES staff regarding how to prioritize NAEP activities in the event the program does not receive its full funding request.

The Executive Committee affirmed that they had no changes to the priority order for the planned NAEP activities as it applies to fiscal year 2017 and beyond. The priorities for NAEP activities are:

1. Transition to digital-based assessments (DBA) and maintain trend; state validation studies
2. Assessing broad-based curricular areas with a priority for science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM)
3. Providing state level data in curriculum areas beyond reading and mathematics
4. Including more Trial Urban District Assessments (TUDA)

Ms. Crovo provided the Executive Committee with an overview of the proposed calendar for when the Board will review the NAEP budget and take action on the Assessment Schedule. She proposed that the Governing Board adopt the following schedule as a general guideline for when these items will be discussed at future Board meetings:

- *March Board meetings* – no budget review or Assessment Schedule action anticipated;
- *May Board meetings* – consider the NAEP budget request for the next fiscal year;
- *August Board meetings* – review the NAEP budget in light of the Assessment Schedule and discuss cost saving proposals, if needed; and
- *November Board meetings* – review revised costs and estimates for NAEP, review the Assessment Schedule, and take action on the schedule if needed.

Ms. Crovo noted that while this approach will serve as the general guidelines for NAEP budget and Assessment Schedule discussions, there are items that cannot be scheduled in advance but which the Governing Board must address when they arise. Most notably, in any given year the timing of Congressional appropriations cannot be anticipated, yet the Governing Board must be prepared to promptly consider the impact of new NAEP funding on the Assessment Schedule.

Acting NCES Commissioner Peggy Carr presented additional detail regarding the timeline to implement the NAEP Assessment Schedule, highlighting when critical decision points for the Governing Board typically arise. Ms. Carr’s presentation of the timelines for critical decisions points synchronized with Ms. Crovo’s presentation of the proposed Governing Board calendar for budget review and Assessment Schedule decisions.

As a result of the information provided by Ms. Crovo and Ms. Carr, there was consensus amongst the Committee that each November Board meeting would be the ideal time to review the NAEP budget and take action on the Assessment Schedule, if necessary. Decisions at the November Board meeting would maximize the time the Governing Board has to make the difficult decision of postponing or cancelling any component of an assessment, while simultaneously providing NCES sufficient notice prior to drawing the NAEP sample and notifying schools.

Ms. Carr provided the Executive Committee with an historical review of NAEP’s funding levels over time. Her presentation highlighted that as the expectations for the scope of NAEP increased, so did its funding from Congress. For example, when the No Child Left Behind Act required biennial NAEP assessments at the state level in reading and mathematics, the program received a substantial and sustained increase in funding.

Ms. Carr presented the Executive Committee with revised NAEP budget costs and projections, reflecting the estimated cost of implementing the Assessment Schedule adopted at the March 2015 Board meeting, which includes assessments through the year 2024.

The Executive Committee members engaged in a discussion regarding the NAEP budget, including the desire for full funding from Congress to implement the Assessment Schedule.

Mr. Mazany proposed the Governing Board pass a resolution regarding the imperative for full NAEP funding as a part of its communications strategy to garner more funds.

Andrew Ho noted the important precedent of funding increases for NAEP as the program has expanded, particularly as the Governing Board seeks support for the shift to digital-based assessments. He noted that it is costly to maintain the gold standard of NAEP and more statistically significant progress could be identified within NAEP results with larger samples. Executive Committee members thanked Ms. Carr for the clarity of her budget presentation.

**OPEN SESSION 5:45 pm – 6:05 pm**

**6. NAEP Budget Request for Fiscal Year 2017, Continued**

The Executive Committee reconvened in open session at 5:45 p.m. and continued its discussion regarding the imperative of increasing NAEP’s funding levels to implement the Assessment Schedule and fulfill the Governing Board’s priorities.

Terry Holliday commented on the criticality of the Governing Board maintaining reading and mathematics trends and the comparative analysis of NAEP to state achievement levels in these subjects.

Andrés Alonso supported the comment of Mr. Holliday and added that TUDA is also a critical NAEP activity with tremendous impact on large cities across the country.

Shannon Garrison commented that she would be disheartened if Congress did not support the need to know how students in the nation are doing and provide adequate funding for NAEP to provide this information. She further stated that it is not enough to only assess in reading and mathematics because it is important to know what our nation's students know in all subjects.

Mr. Mazany concluded the Committee discussion by noting that the conversation would be continued in a full Board closed session on Saturday, May 16.

Mr. Mazany adjourned the Executive Committee meeting at 6:05 p.m.

I certify the accuracy of these minutes.



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Terry Mazany, Chair

May 23, 2015

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Date

# National Assessment Governing Board

## Nominations Committee (Closed Session)

### Report of May 16, 2015

**Nominations Committee Members:** Tonya Miles (Chair), Shannon Garrison, Andrew Ho, Joseph O’Keefe, Susan Pimentel, Fielding Rolston, Cary Sneider

**Governing Board Staff:** Mary Crovo, Deputy Executive Director

**Other Attendees:** William Bushaw, incoming NAGB Executive Director

In accordance with the provisions of exemptions 2 and 6 of Section 552b (c) of Title 5 U.S.C., the National Assessment Governing Board’s Nominations Committee met in closed session on May 16, 2015 from 7:30 a.m. to 8:15 a.m.

Nominations Committee Chair, Tonya Miles, called the meeting to order and reviewed the agenda. Ms. Miles thanked the Committee for their excellent work reviewing resumes for the 2015 nominations cycle, and noted the quality staff work as well. Ms. Miles then asked outgoing Nominations Committee member, Susan Pimentel, to reflect on her tenure on the Committee and the nominations process.

Ms. Miles asked the Board staff to review the 2015 nominations status. Deputy Executive Director, Mary Crovo, reported that letters and resumes of all finalists for the eight Board positions have just been finalized and will be delivered to the Secretary’s senior staff in the next week or so. The eight Board openings for terms beginning on October 1, 2015 are: chief state school officer, local school superintendent, testing and measurement expert, 12<sup>th</sup> grade teacher, state school board member, business representative, and curriculum specialist (two positions). It is anticipated that Secretary Duncan will make a public announcement of reappointed and new Board members in late summer or early fall of 2015.

The Committee then discussed the 2016 nominations timeline. The annual “call for nominations” will be issued in early September 2015, with nominations due in late October 2015. Following review of the timeline, the Nominations Committee reviewed a draft 2016 Nominations Outreach Plan developed by the Board’s communications contractor, Reingold. The plan outlines current, expanded, and new outreach initiatives to seek nominations for Board terms beginning in October 2016. For this cycle, there are five categories for which the Board will be seeking nominations: local school board member, general public representative, non-public school administrator, and state legislator (two positions).



Members discussed the outreach plan and expressed their agreement with the comprehensive approach and the expanded use of social media. The Nominations Committee reaffirmed that the personal statement should be a mandatory requirement of the nomination submission, as it was in 2015, since this document has proven useful in rating nominees. Members reinforced the idea that the Nominations outreach, because it is so extensive, serves to increase awareness of the Board, its mission, and its important policy initiatives.

I certify the accuracy of these minutes.



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Tonya Miles, Chair

May 20, 2015  
Date

# **National Assessment Governing Board**

## **Reporting and Dissemination Committee**

### **Report of May 15, 2015**

**Reporting and Dissemination Committee Members:** Andrés Alonso (Chair), Rebecca Gagnon (Vice Chair), Anitere Flores, Tonya Matthews, Tonya Miles, Ronnie Musgrove, Father Joseph O’Keefe.

**Governing Board Staff:** Stephaan Harris, Laura LoGerfo, Anthony White. Incoming Executive Director: Bill Bushaw.

**NCES Staff:** James Deaton, Holly Spurlock.

**U.S. Department of Education Staff:** Jagir Patel.

**Other Attendees:** AIR: Cadelle Hempill. CCSSO: Michael Muenks. CRP: Edward Wofford. ETS: Jonas Bertling, Amy Dresher. Hager Sharp: David Hoff, Debra Silimeo. HumRRO: Steve Sellman. Optimal Solutions: Brian Cramer. Reingold: Amy Buckley. Westat: Chris Averett.

#### **1. Core Contextual Variables Review**

Andrés Alonso called the meeting to order at 10:20 a.m. and welcomed Reporting and Dissemination (R&D) Committee members to his penultimate R&D meeting. He noted how the outreach event the previous night showed how the field perceives and experiences NAEP. The role and task of R&D is to engage the field and inform that perception.

The Committee immediately delved into reviewing NAEP core contextual items. Mr. Alonso asked Mr. Jonas Bertling of ETS, the lead developer of the core contextual variables, to explain where R&D finds itself in the review process for the core contextual questionnaire. R&D must approve the slate of core contextual variables for the 2016 pilot test for the 2017 operational assessment. R&D can make no substantive changes to items, though R&D can suggest items to drop or add from a list of pretested questions.

These pretested questions can be taken from previous rounds of NAEP, from cognitive labs, and from any national survey as long as the target populations match, i.e., same age or grade from the United States. Holly Spurlock of NCES explained that any decision-making about dropping items must consider first whether the items are so problematic that the R&D Committee does not even wish to pilot the item again to procure more data on its clarity and performance. Mr. Bertling explained that there are multiple versions of the same variable included in the review package so that results from the pilot test can point to which item version

is best (e.g., clearest, free of bias, not potentially sensitive) and thus deserves space on the operational assessment. Based on recommendations from the R&D deliberations, NCES must submit the slate of items for the pilot test to the Office of Management and Budget by late June.

***Digital Technology Questions.*** R&D Committee member Tonya Miles kicked off the discussion by asking Mr. Bertling if the core questionnaire includes items about students' exposure to digital technology, their first age of exposure to digital technology, and the extent of their experience with digital technology. Mr. Bertling explained that there are two sub-items under the socioeconomic status category on student access to tablets, computers, and Internet access, but no items on duration of digital technology exposure or experience.

Mr. Bertling added that a special study focused on computer access and familiarity was conducted, but the data from that study have not yet been analyzed. Depending on how those items performed, the best of those items may be included in this questionnaire. Committee members noted that such questions about students' familiarity with digital technology will provide critical context as NAEP digital-based assessment (DBA) results are released. Future rounds of NAEP questionnaires should include items on students' extent of technology (e.g., software, hardware, Internet) exposure and experience.

***Household Questions.*** Generally, R&D Committee members wondered why their previous feedback on some of these core contextual questions was not integrated or addressed. Comments on specific questions elicited agreement from the entire Committee, namely the definition of parent should be expanded to reflect non-traditional family structure. With so many different and complex options for caregivers across households in America, limiting questions about occupation and education to only mother and father may confuse participants and capture inaccurate information. Committee members recommended that the questionnaire seek input from the child to define the primary caregiver in the home.

The agility in programming provided by the DBA approach should permit responses to this family structure question to populate subsequent questions about those adults' education and occupation to keep the language consistent and the names or roles familiar to students. NAEP should be able to link these item responses and subsequent questions if not in 2017, then in 2019.

NCES dropped from the proposed pilot an item that sought participants' free response to the question "how would you describe each of the adults that live in your home? You can write things like, for example, 'Dad', 'Mom', or 'Grandma'." This was eliminated due to confusion among respondents; some students interpreted the item to require a response describing their caregiver as nice or tall, not delineating their relationship. In addition, asking about the number of people in the household struck some respondents and their parents as too intrusive, perhaps as an attempt to ferret out illegal housing conditions. But the number of working adults in the home serves as a rough proxy for wealthy home environment, so it seems critical to include. The Committee recommended that this question be reinstated and tested in the pilot.

***Tenure Questions.*** The Committee then turned to an item on the school administrator survey, which asks, "Does your school offer tenure to teachers?" A companion question to this school

administrator question is asked of teachers, “Have you been awarded tenure by the school where you currently teach?” Mr. Alonso explained that, in his experience, schools do not offer tenure, but districts do. Ms. Miles suggested that administrators may interpret the item figuratively, meaning that if their district provides tenure, then they may respond affirmatively for their school. But some of the respondents who replied “no” may have taken the question literally. Thus the phrasing of this question may baffle respondents and as such, elicit erroneous information. Mr. Bertling reported that this item was not flagged for showing extreme results in the cognitive lab but is not significantly associated with NAEP scores.

In sum, variability in the interpretation of the item’s meaning across respondents yields inconsistent, inaccurate results that have little bearing or substantive meaning. The high proportion of affirmative responses suggests that respondents did misinterpret the question and consequently provided an incorrect answer. The meaning of the question struck the Committee members as so unclear, especially for such a complex issue, that NCES should find an alternate item that has been pretested with the appropriate target respondents, especially an item that includes the word district (though district does not work in the private school sector, perhaps “district or diocese” would be more appropriate phrasing). Unfortunately adding “district or diocese” to the question requires pretesting by NAEP or by a similar national survey.

***Mobility Question.*** The Committee next examined the question posed to school administrators about the percentage of 12<sup>th</sup> graders in the school who are new to the school. To capture mobility appropriately and accurately, the questionnaire must solicit data on the number of 9<sup>th</sup> graders relative to the number of 12<sup>th</sup> graders. But the questionnaire as it stands does not include measures to calculate graduation rate and mobility. By asking only about 12<sup>th</sup> graders, the survey ignores the critical issue of dropouts, which most frequently occurs in the 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> grades. Thus, what information do these items provide about the student and/or the school they attend? Mr. Musgrove noted that perhaps this item intends to tap whether the school is a sufficient draw for students, attracting seniors transferring into the school. The Committee did not recommend any action on this question, but several members agreed that there is limited utility and value to this question for its intended purpose.

### ***Outstanding Questions and Overall Remarks***

Father Joseph O’Keefe asked if and how the core contextual items account for differences in developmental ages and stages among the student respondents. No immediate reply was given.

Several Committee members inquired to Mr. Bertling and Ms. Spurlock about the perceived intrusiveness of the contextual questions. Ms. Spurlock responded that actually asking the number of people in the household is perceived as far more intrusive and thus problematic than the phrasing or approach of a question (i.e., multiple choice or constructed response).

The Committee’s discussion focused on an essential, critically important question: Can the core contextual questions accurately describe modern households while retaining the basis for international comparisons and maintaining trend? How can the household structure, education, and occupation variables change to evolve with the changing nature of society?

Despite the conversation’s focus on a few problematic items, in general the majority of core contextual items are “spot-on”. Specific items received praise for their potential value, such as how many adults live in the household and who they are, and merit inclusion based on their centrality to questions about student and school background and NAEP scores. Additionally, Committee members agreed that knowledge generated from these questions should be actionable. Findings about parent occupation provide no means for schools to improve. What NAEP chooses to measure limits or expands the scope of potential action.

### *Next Steps*

The R&D Committee recommends that NCES and ETS find more inclusive questions to measure family structure, parent occupation, and parent education effectively. If such questions exist and have been pretested with the appropriate target populations, then these items should be used in the pilot. If the search for alternate items is futile, NCES should include the original item in the pilot. If its performance is weak or poor in the pilot, then R&D may recommend dropping it from the operational questionnaire.

It is understood that these more inclusive items may not exist by the time needed for the 2017 operational assessment. It is also understood that next May’s R&D Committee meeting will review how these specific items perform in the pilot, and the Committee may not approve questions for the 2017 operational assessment based on the findings from the pilot test. Thus, the subsequent planning for 2019 must include developing more accurate, more inclusive, and more appropriate family structure items and socioeconomic status (SES) items.

R&D members agreed to approve the proposed slate of core contextual items but stipulated that more inclusive and effective variables must be investigated thoroughly. The Committee also recommended that NCES should submit a memo to Laura LoGerfo updating R&D Committee members on the results of their research for better questions, and especially whether any preferred alternative items emerged. However, with that condition, the Committee agreed to approve this slate of contextual variables for the pilot test and submit it for approval to the full Board at the Saturday morning session.

**ACTION: The Reporting and Dissemination Committee recommends approval of the core contextual variables, with specific changes to be communicated to NCES in writing.**

## **2. Focused Reports: Reviewing and Prioritizing**

Laura LoGerfo, the Assistant Director for Reporting and Analysis, introduced the next topic on the agenda, which is a follow-up to a conversation at the March R&D Committee meeting. The Board seeks to restart an agenda of policy-centric reports that extend the message of NAEP between main report releases. The Board will bid a contract later this year to create a vehicle for developing, producing, and releasing brief policy reports. The contract will be nimble enough to adapt to the Board’s needs. But it needs to be primed with an initial report, and then as topics compel further investigation, those subsequent reports can be launched under the same contract.

Ms. LoGerfo presented a list of ten ideas at the March meeting for the initial report, which the Committee discussed and narrowed down to four big ideas. Ms. LoGerfo came to the May meeting with two feasible topics from the four that could be good starts for such a contract:

(1) reports on regional highlights, showcasing patterns in achievement overall and by subgroup across states in specific regions that share similar issues; and (2) a look at NAEP in charter schools, non-charter public schools, and private schools. The May meeting of the Committee focused on prioritizing and approving the topics.

### ***Charter, Non-Charter Public, Private Schools***

Father O’Keefe opened the conversation, reporting that he had presented at the annual meeting of the National Catholic Education Association and received questions about what NAEP is and its importance. The audience also asked whether NAEP shows that private schools perform better than public schools. This audience’s expressed interest in NAEP results suggests that this second topic about achievement by sector may be valued by stakeholders. It is imperative that in an environment when data become highly politicized, NAGB should make a clear statement about what NAEP does and does not show.

Father O’Keefe then inquired about students who participate in schooling options that lie outside the charter, non-charter public, and private school groupings, such as home-schooled students, which now exceed the number of students in Catholic schools. Rebecca Gagnon agreed and asked under what category online charter schools fall.

In sum, these R&D Committee members cautioned against focusing this report or brief on “school choice” given the limited options such a report can cover. Moving forward, the report must make it very, very clear about what choice actually means and consider how to capture the complexity and nuance of choice within public school systems.

### ***Regional Highlights***

Rebecca Gagnon then discussed the proposed report highlighting practices common to high-performing districts and states by region. She noted that the presentation by Acting IES Director Sue Betka to the full Board that morning about the Regional Education Laboratories dovetailed nicely with the proposal to look at NAEP in regions. One compelling question in this topic might be differences in proficiency among states in regions. Andrés Alonso asked whether some valuable information may be lost from disaggregating the data by region. Perhaps by integrating the regional level within a report that focuses on the state level, the report may make a bigger impact than a report with only state-level highlights.

### ***Overall Remarks***

Tonya Matthews expressed the need for the Board to drive the story, control the narrative, and encourage analysts to use the data. The Board should not just respond and be defensive when other reports featuring NAEP data emerge. R&D should work on a strategy to make a persistent, cohesive impact with the data, an idea which aligns well with the strategic planning efforts of the whole Board. The reports should belong to a nimble contract that allows for one of these two reports as an initial product and lead to 2-3 page briefs focusing on contextual variable analyses by subgroup as those data become available. The reports would serve the Board and its mission well by sharing good news, highlighting surprising and intriguing trends

that typically elude the main releases, and setting models on how to use NAEP data for others to follow.

Though the Committee intended to discuss the media embargo policy next, a report released by the organization Achieve on the day before the Board meeting drew Committee members' attention. The report did not analyze or present NAEP findings accurately. Mr. Alonso expressed "mixed feelings" about the nature of the error. On the one hand, more analysts should use NAEP data. On the other hand, the inaccuracies should be addressed, thus should Acting Commissioner Carr make a public response about the technical quality of the report? The R&D Chair suggested Board staff ask Ms. Carr, because the Board communicates results but does not comment on reports, the latter of which is within NCES' purview. The entire Committee agreed that this issue merits more time for thoughtful discussion. They also repeated Tonya Matthews' previous call to move away from reaction to a more proactive strategy to reporting.

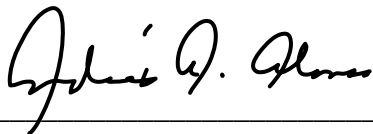
### 3. Media Embargo Policy

Stephaan Harris, Public Relations Specialist for the Board, suggested that the Committee needs to review and perhaps expand what qualifies as media under the Board's embargo policy. Mr. Alonso suggested that to ensure this topic receives appropriate and careful deliberation, the Committee should meet via teleconference in the next two months. The results of that conversation could lead to a draft resolution for action at the August Board meeting.

Mr. Alonso admitted that the media coverage of the Civics, Geography, and U.S. History reports disappointed him. The media missed the exciting story about subgroups' improvement. He noted that this again shows how the Board needs to drive the narrative more effectively.

Mr. Alonso adjourned the R&D Committee meeting at 12:35pm.

I certify the accuracy of these minutes.



Andrés Alonso

June 8, 2015

Date

Chair of Reporting and Dissemination Committee