

# REVISION OF FRAMEWORK DEVELOPMENT POLICY FOR NAEP ASSESSMENTS

According to the NAEP statute (P.L. 107-279), the Governing Board is responsible for developing assessment objectives and test specifications for each NAEP assessment. Since 1989 the Governing Board has developed assessment frameworks and specifications in 11 subjects through comprehensive, inclusive, and deliberative framework projects.

Board discussions have pursued the Board's Strategic Vision to develop framework update approaches that address evolving expectations for students along with rigorous reporting of student achievement trends. Committee and cross-Committee discussions in 2017 highlighted the need for more policy guidance on processes specific to updating existing frameworks rather than nearly exclusive guidance on creating new frameworks.

The Assessment Development Committee (ADC) began revising the Board's Framework Development Policy for NAEP assessments in Summer 2017, comprehensively examining ways to improve the policy while also clarifying and adding processes for updating and monitoring the content of frameworks. After briefing the Board in August 2017, the ADC presented a draft revision in November 2017. ADC Chair Shannon Garrison and ADC Vice Chair Cary Sneider also hosted a teleconference in January 2018 to address questions and additional comments. The ADC reviewed Board members' comments and offer solutions to these issues in the revised version of the policy and tracked changes (see below). This version reflecting Board feedback will be presented for Board action during the Saturday session of the March 2018 Board meeting.

Compared to the [current Framework Development Policy](#), the attached version reflects:

- Streamlined language, minimizing redundancies where possible.
- Removed details directed to the Board's framework development contractors (i.e., moving these directives to a procedures manual).
- Added flexibility and details for updating frameworks versus developing new frameworks. The current policy emphasizes new frameworks.
- More acknowledgement of trend issues as a factor in Board policy decisions for frameworks, while noting related research efforts.
- Membership overlap across the panel initially convened to set the direction of the framework development (the Visioning Panel) and the panel that continues in the drafting process (the Development Panel).
- Expanded ways to identify curricular content issues in the field.
- A new principle focused on a monitoring process, prompting periodic reviews for each framework at least every 10 years and allowing the Board to determine:
  - No update is needed;
  - Minor updates for clarifications are needed; or
  - A Framework Visioning Panel should be convened to determine how updates should be done.

**Adopted: TBD**



## **National Assessment Governing Board**

### **Framework Development**

#### **Policy Statement**

It is the policy of the National Assessment Governing Board to conduct a comprehensive, inclusive, and deliberative process to determine and update the content and format of all assessments under the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP). The primary result of this process shall be an assessment framework (hereafter, “framework”) with objectives to guide development of NAEP assessments for students in grades 4, 8, and 12 that are valid, reliable, and reflective of widely accepted professional standards.

The Governing Board, through its Assessment Development Committee, shall monitor the framework development and update processes to ensure that the final Governing Board-adopted framework, specifications, contextual variables documents, and their development processes comply with all principles and guidelines of the Governing Board Framework Development Policy.

#### **Introduction**

Since its creation by Congress in 1988, the Governing Board has been responsible for determining the content and format of all NAEP assessments. The Governing Board has carried out this important statutory responsibility by engaging a broad spectrum of stakeholders in developing recommendations for the knowledge and skills NAEP should assess in various grades and subject areas. From this comprehensive process, the Governing Board develops a framework to outline the content and format for each NAEP assessment at grades 4, 8, and 12. Development of a framework for a new assessment is guided by the schedule of NAEP assessments adopted by the Governing Board.

Under provisions of the National Assessment of Educational Progress Authorization Act of 2002 ([P.L. 107-279](#)), Congress authorized the Governing Board to continue its mandate for determining the content and format of valid and reliable assessments based on widely accepted professional testing standards and active participation of stakeholders. This mandate

aligns with the purpose of NAEP, which is to provide fair and accurate measurement of student academic achievement.

Given this mandate, the Governing Board must ensure that the highest standards of test development are employed in framework development to support the validity of educational inferences made using NAEP data. The Governing Board Item Development Policy details principles and guidelines for NAEP assessment items, and the Governing Board has final authority on the appropriateness of all assessment items.

By law, NAEP assessments shall not evaluate personal beliefs or publicly disclose personally identifiable information, and NAEP assessment items shall be secular, neutral, and non-ideological and free from racial, cultural, gender, or regional bias.

To develop the recommended framework for Board adoption, the Governing Board convenes stakeholders to identify the content and design for each NAEP assessment.

In this process, involved stakeholders include:

Teachers	Policymakers
Curriculum Specialists	Business Representatives
Content Experts	Parents
Assessment Specialists	Users of Assessment Data
State Administrators	Researchers and Technical Experts
Local School Administrators	Members of the public

This Policy complies with the National Assessment of Educational Progress Authorization Act of 2002 ([P.L. 107-279](#)) and the documents listed below which express widely accepted technical and professional standards for test development. These standards reflect the agreement of recognized experts in the field, as well as the policy positions of major professional and technical associations concerned with educational testing. A procedures manual shall provide additional detail about how this Policy is implemented.

*The Standards for Educational and Psychological Testing.* (2014). Washington, DC: American Educational Research Association, American Psychological Association, and National Council on Measurement in Education.

*Code of Fair Testing Practices in Education.* (2004). Washington, DC: Joint Committee on Testing Practices.

*National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) Statistical Standards.* (2012).

# **Principles for Framework Development**

**Principle 1: Elements of Frameworks**

**Principle 2: Development and Update Process**

**Principle 3: Framework Review**

**Principle 4: Resources for the Process**

**Principle 5: Elements of Specifications**

**Principle 6: Role of the Governing Board**

# Guidelines for the Principles

## Principle 1: Elements of Frameworks

**The Governing Board is responsible for developing a framework for each NAEP assessment. The framework shall define the scope of the domain to be measured by delineating the knowledge and skills to be tested at each grade, the format of the NAEP assessment, and the achievement levels.**

### Guidelines

- a) The framework shall determine the extent of the domain and the scope of the construct to be measured for each grade level in a NAEP assessment. The framework shall provide information to the public and test developers on three key aspects of the assessment:
  - *What* is to be measured, including definitions of the constructs being assessed and reported upon and descriptions of the purpose(s) of the assessment;
  - *How* that domain of content is most appropriately measured in a large-scale assessment, including the format requirements of the items and the assessment, the content and skills to be tested at each grade, sample items for each grade to be tested, the weighting of the item pool in terms of content and cognitive process dimensions, and any additional requirements for the assessment administration unique to a given subject area, such as provision of ancillary materials and uses of technology; and
  - *How much* of the content domain, in terms of knowledge and skills, should students know and be able to do at the basic, proficient, and advanced levels in achievement level descriptions for each grade to be tested. The achievement level descriptions shall be based on the Governing Board's policy definitions for basic, proficient, and advanced achievement and shall incorporate the content and process dimensions of the assessment at each grade.
- b) The framework shall determine the construction of items for each NAEP assessment. The achievement level descriptions in each framework shall also be used in the level-setting process.
- c) The framework shall focus on important, measurable indicators of student achievement to inform the nation about what students know and are able to do without endorsing or advocating a particular instructional approach.
- d) Content coverage in each subject and grade shall be broad, inclusive of content valued by the public as important to measure, and reflect high aspirations for student achievement. (See *Principle 4* for more detail on the factors balanced in content coverage.)
- e) Frameworks shall be written to be clear and accessible to educators and the general public. The framework shall contain sufficient information to inform all stakeholders about the nature and scope of the given assessment. Following Governing Board adoption, the framework shall be widely disseminated.

## Principle 2: Development and Update Process

**The Governing Board shall develop and update frameworks through a comprehensive, inclusive, and deliberative process that involves active participation of stakeholders.**

### Guidelines

- a) In accordance with the NAEP statute, framework development and update processes shall be fair and open through active participation of stakeholders representing all major constituents in the various NAEP audiences, as listed in the introduction above.
  - *Framework panels* shall reflect diversity in terms of gender, race/ethnicity, region of the country, and viewpoints regarding the content of the assessment under development.
  - *Public comment* shall be sought from various segments of the population to reflect many different views, as well as those employed in the specific content area under consideration.
- b) Framework development and update processes shall be executed primarily via two panels: a Visioning Panel with a subset of members continuing as the Development Panel. This process shall result in three documents: a recommended framework, assessment and item specifications, and recommendations for contextual variables that relate to the subject being assessed. For each framework,
  - *The Framework Visioning Panel* shall formulate high-level guidance about the state of the field to inform the process, providing these in the form of guidelines. The major part of the Visioning Panel work will be at the beginning to provide initial guidance for developing a recommended framework. The Visioning Panel shall be comprised of the stakeholders referenced in the introduction above. At least 20 percent of this panel shall have classroom teaching experience in the subject areas under consideration. This panel may include up to 30 members with additional members as needed.
  - *The Framework Development Panel* shall develop drafts of the three project documents and engage in the detailed deliberations about how issues outlined in the Visioning Panel discussion should be reflected in a recommended framework. As a subset of the Visioning Panel, the Development Panel shall have a proportionally higher representation of content experts and educators, whose expertise collectively addresses all grade levels designated for the assessment under development. Educators shall be drawn from schools across the nation, including individuals who work with students from high-poverty and low-performing schools, as well as public and private schools. This panel may include up to 15 members, with additional members as needed.
- c) In addition to a recommended framework, the framework development or update process shall result in assessment and item specifications (see *Principle 5*) and recommendations on

related contextual variables to be collected from students, teachers, and school administrators. Recommendations shall take into account burden, cost, quality of the data to be obtained, and other factors. (See the Governing Board [Policy on Collecting and Reporting Contextual Data.](#))

- d) The scope and size of a framework development project shall determine the size of framework panels and the number of panel meetings needed. A framework update project may require smaller panels and fewer meetings if a smaller scope is anticipated for recommended revisions. Each project shall begin with a review of major issues in the content area. For a framework update, the project shall also begin with an extensive review of the current framework, and the Visioning Panel shall discuss the potential risk of changing frameworks to trends and assessment of educational progress. (See *4.b*).
- e) Framework development and updating shall be comprehensive in approach and conducted in an environment that is open, balanced, and even-handed. Panels shall consider all viewpoints and debate all pertinent issues in formulating the content and design of a NAEP assessment, including findings from research. Reference materials shall represent multiple views.
- f) For each project, protocols shall be established to support panel deliberations and to develop a unified proposal for the content and design of the assessment. Written summaries of all hearings, forums, surveys, and panel meetings shall be made available in a timely manner to inform deliberations.

### **Principle 3: Framework Review**

**Reviews of existing frameworks shall determine whether an update is needed to continue valid and reliable measurement of the content and cognitive processes reflected in evolving expectations of students.**

#### **Guidelines**

- a) At least once every 10 years, the Governing Board, through its Assessment Development Committee (ADC), shall review the relevance of assessments and their underlying frameworks. In the review, the ADC shall solicit input from experts to determine if changes are warranted, making clear the potential risk of changing frameworks to trends and assessment of educational progress. The Board may decide based on the input that the framework does not require revision, or that the framework may require minor or major updates. To initiate updates, the ADC shall prepare a recommendation for full Board approval. Minor updates include clarifications or corrections that do not affect the construct defined for the assessment. Major updates shall include the convening of a Visioning Panel (see *Principle 2*). Framework revisions shall also be subject to full Board approval.
- b) Within the 10 year period for an ADC review, major changes in the states' or nation's educational system may occur that relate to one or more NAEP frameworks. In this instance, the Governing Board via recommendation of the ADC shall convene a Visioning

Panel to determine whether and how changing conditions warrant an update, which may include minor or major framework changes or replacement of a framework. Before framework panels are convened, special research and analysis may also be commissioned to inform the updates to be considered.

- c) If the Visioning Panel recommends major updates, then a subset of panel members shall continue as the Development Panel to develop the draft framework and assessment and item specifications, in accordance with *Principle 2*. Regular reports will be provided to the ADC and the recommended framework update shall be subject to full Board approval.
- d) When a framework update is conducted, framework Visioning and Development Panel recommendations shall describe the extent to which adjustments in the achievement level descriptors (see *1.a*) and contextual variables (see *2.c*) are needed. (See the Governing Board [Policy on Achievement Levels](#) and the Governing Board [Policy on Collecting and Reporting Contextual Data](#) for additional details.)

#### **Principle 4: Resources for the Process**

**Framework development and update processes shall take into account state and local curricula and assessments, widely accepted professional standards, exemplary research, international standards and assessments, and other pertinent factors and information.**

#### **Guidelines**

- a) The NAEP framework development and update processes shall be informed by a broad, balanced, and inclusive set of factors. The framework shall reflect current curricula and instruction, research regarding cognitive development and instruction, and the nation's future needs and desirable levels of achievement. This delicate balance between "what is" and "what should be" is at the core of the NAEP framework development process.
- b) An initial compilation of resources shall summarize relevant research, advantages and disadvantages of the latest developments, and trends in state standards and assessments for the content area. This compilation shall also summarize how stakeholders have used previous NAEP student achievement trends in the assessment area. The compilation may include public comment. Using this compilation as a springboard, framework panel deliberations shall begin by thoroughly identifying major policy and assessment issues in the content area.
- c) The framework panels shall also consider a wide variety of resources as deliberations proceed, including but not limited to curriculum guides and assessments developed by states and local districts, widely accepted professional standards, scientific research, other types of research studies in the literature, key reports having significant national and international interest, international standards and assessments, other assessment instruments in the content area, and prior NAEP frameworks, if available.
- d) Technical experts shall be involved to uphold the highest technical standards for



development of the NAEP framework and specifications. As a resource to the framework panels, these experts shall respond to technical issues raised during panel deliberations.

- e) In balancing the relative importance of various sources of information, framework panels shall consider direction from the Governing Board, the role and purpose of NAEP in informing the public about student achievement, the legislative parameters for NAEP, constraints of a large-scale assessment, technical assessment standards, issues of burden and cost-effectiveness in designing the assessment, and other factors unique to the content area.

## **Principle 5: Elements of Specifications**

**The specifications document shall be developed for use by NCES as the blueprint for constructing the NAEP assessment and items.**

### **Guidelines**

- a) The assessment and item specifications shall produce an assessment that is valid, reliable, and based on relevant widely accepted professional standards. The specifications shall also be consistent with Governing Board policies regarding NAEP design, such as groupings of items, test administration conditions, and accommodations for students with disabilities and English language learners (see the Governing Board [Policy on NAEP Testing and Reporting on Students with Disabilities and English Language Learners](#)). The specifications shall be reviewed by technical experts involved in the process, prior to submission to the Governing Board.
- b) The primary audience for the specifications, or assessment blueprint, shall be NCES and the contractor(s) responsible for developing the assessment and the test questions.
- c) The specifications shall evolve from the framework and shall be written in sufficient detail so that item writers can develop high-quality questions based on the framework objectives for grades 4, 8, and 12, where applicable. The specifications shall include, but not be limited to detailed descriptions of:
  - the content and process dimensions, including the weighting of those dimensions in the pool of questions at each grade;
  - types of items;
  - guidelines for stimulus material;
  - types of response formats;
  - scoring procedures;
  - achievement level descriptions;
  - administration conditions;
  - ancillary or additional materials, if any;
  - considerations for special populations;
  - sample items, including a substantial number and range of sample items with scoring guidelines for each grade level; and
  - any unique requirements for the given assessment.

- d) Special studies, if any, to be conducted as part of the assessment shall be described in the specifications. This description shall provide an overview of the purpose and rationale for the study, the nature of the student sample(s), and a discussion of the instrument and administration procedures.

## **Principle 6: Role of the Governing Board**

**The Governing Board, through its Assessment Development Committee, shall monitor all framework development and updates. The result of this process shall be recommendations for Governing Board action in the form of three key documents: the framework; assessment and item specifications; and contextual variables that relate to the subject being assessed.**

### **Guidelines**

- a) The Assessment Development Committee (ADC) shall be responsible for monitoring framework development and updates that result in recommendations to the Governing Board on the content and format of each NAEP assessment. The ADC will provide direction to the framework panels, via Governing Board staff. This guidance shall ensure compliance with the NAEP law, Governing Board policies, Department of Education and government-wide regulations, and requirements of the contract(s) used to implement the framework project.
- b) When a framework Visioning Panel is to be convened, the ADC shall develop a charge for the panel, and the charge shall be subject to full Board approval. The charge will outline any special considerations for an assessment area.
- c) The ADC shall receive regular reports on the progress of framework development and updates.
- d) In initiating a framework update, the Governing Board shall balance needs for stable reporting of student achievement trends. Regarding when and how an adopted framework update will be implemented, the Board may consider the NAEP Assessment Schedule, cost and technical issues, and research and innovations to support possibilities for continuous trend reporting.
- e) At the conclusion of the framework development or update process, the Governing Board shall take final action on the recommended framework, specifications, and contextual variables. The Governing Board shall make the final decision on the content and format of NAEP assessments.
- f) Following adoption by the Governing Board, the final framework, specifications, and contextual variables shall be provided to the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES). These documents, which include the achievement level descriptions for Basic, Proficient, and Advanced performance definitions, are provided to NCES to guide development of NAEP test questions and questionnaires.

**Adopted: TBD**



## **National Assessment Governing Board**

### **Framework Development**

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The Governing Board, through its Assessment Development Committee, shall monitor the framework development and update processes (~~hereafter, “framework development”~~) to ensure that the final Governing Board-adopted framework, specifications, contextual variables documents, and their development processes comply with all principles and guidelines of the Governing Board Framework Development Policy.

#### **Introduction**

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To develop the recommended framework for Board adoption, the Governing Board convenes stakeholders to identify the content and design for each NAEP assessment.

In this process, involved stakeholders include:

Teachers	Policymakers
Curriculum Specialists	Business Representatives
Content Experts	Parents
Assessment Specialists	Users of Assessment Data
State Administrators	Researchers and Technical Experts
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## Principles for Framework Development

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# Guidelines for the Principles

## Principle 1: Elements of Frameworks

The Governing Board is responsible for developing a framework for each NAEP assessment. The framework shall define the scope of the domain to be measured by delineating the knowledge and skills to be tested at each grade, the format of the NAEP assessment, and the achievement levels.

### Guidelines

- a) The framework shall determine the extent of the domain and the scope of the construct to be measured for each grade level in a NAEP assessment. The framework shall provide information to the public and test developers on three key aspects of the assessment:
  - ~~What is to should~~ be measured, including definitions of the constructs being assessed and reported upon and descriptions of the purpose(s) ~~and scope~~ of the assessment;
  - How that domain of content is most appropriately measured in a large-scale assessment, including the format requirements of the items and the assessment, the content and skills to be tested at each grade, sample items for each grade to be tested, the weighting of the item pool in terms of content and cognitive process dimensions, and any additional requirements for the assessment administration unique to a given subject area, such as provision of ancillary materials and uses of technology; and
  - How much of the content domain, in terms of knowledge and skills, should students know and be able to do at the basic, proficient, and advanced levels in achievement level descriptions for each grade to be tested. The achievement level descriptions shall be based on the Governing Board's policy definitions for basic, proficient, and advanced achievement and shall incorporate the content and process dimensions of the assessment at each grade.
- b) The framework shall determine the construction of items for each NAEP assessment. The achievement level descriptions in each framework shall also be used in the level-setting process.
- c) The framework shall focus on important, measurable indicators of student achievement to inform the nation about what students know and are able to do without endorsing or advocating a particular instructional approach.
- d) Content coverage in each subject and grade shall be broad, inclusive of content valued by states the public as important to measure, and reflect high aspirations for student achievement. (See *Principle 43* for more detail on the factors balanced in content coverage.)
- e) Frameworks shall be written to be clear and accessible to educators and the general public. The framework shall contain sufficient information to inform all stakeholders about the nature and scope of the given assessment. Following Governing Board adoption, the

**Comment [MFB1]:**

**Comment/Suggestion:** The framework should also articulate the intended subscores to be reported and intended uses. It sets the direction for item development, test construction, etc. This is important based on the 2014 Standards for Educational and Psychological Testing, listed on page 2.

**Response:** The Board will soon be working on a new policy document that more broadly addresses the issue of intended uses, including how this relates to various aspects of assessment design.

**Solution:** Added mention of intended subscores, with a plan to address intended uses in a new policy document.

**Comment [MFB2]:**

**Comment/Suggestion:** Broaden this to say "the public" because we are the "Nation's Report Card," not a collection of state report cards.

**Solution:** Edit made.

framework shall be widely disseminated.

## Principle 2: Development and Update Process

The Governing Board shall develop **and update** frameworks through a comprehensive, inclusive, and deliberative process that involves active participation of stakeholders.

### Guidelines

- a) In accordance with the NAEP statute, framework development **and update** processes shall be fair and open through active participation of stakeholders representing all major constituents in the various NAEP audiences, as listed in the introduction above.
  - *Framework panels* shall reflect diversity in terms of gender, race/ethnicity, region of the country, and viewpoints regarding the content of the assessment under development.
  - *Public comment* shall be sought from various segments of the population to reflect many different views, as well as those employed in the specific content area under consideration.
- b) Framework development **and update processes** shall be executed primarily via two panels: a Visioning Panel with a subset of members continuing as the Development Panel. This process shall result in three documents: a recommended framework, assessment and item specifications, and recommendations for contextual variables that relate to the subject being assessed. For each framework,
  - *The Framework Visioning Panel* shall formulate high-level guidance about the state of the field to inform the process, providing these in the form of guidelines. The major part of the Visioning Panel work will be at the beginning to provide initial guidance for developing a recommended framework. The Visioning Panel shall be comprised of the **stakeholders referenced in the introduction above**. At least 20 percent of this panel shall have classroom teaching experience in the subject areas under consideration. This panel may include up to 30 members with additional members as needed.
  - *The Framework Development Panel* shall develop drafts of the three project documents and engage in the detailed deliberations about how issues outlined in the Visioning Panel discussion should be reflected in a recommended framework. As a subset of the Visioning Panel, the Development Panel shall have a proportionally higher representation of content experts and educators, whose expertise collectively addresses all grade levels designated for the assessment under development. Educators shall be drawn from schools across the nation, including individuals who work with students from high-poverty and low-performing schools, as well as public and private schools. This panel may include up to 15 members, with additional members as needed.
- c) In addition to a recommended framework, the framework development **or update** process

#### Comment [MFB3]:

**Comment/Suggestion:** Retitle this to "Development of New Frameworks."

**Response:** This is supposed to be the nuts and bolts of the process for creation and updating of frameworks. The introduction tries to nickname "development and update process" to just "development process," but this comment highlights that this is not clear. In a nutshell, the policy revision in this principle is supposed to be that the ADC improved/updated the overall process and allowed for smaller sets of people to be convened when a smaller set of revisions is anticipated.

**Solution:** Deleted the page 1 "hereafter,..." nickname attempt. Clarified and spelled out updating where needed. Left the principle title as is.

#### Comment [MFB4]:

**Comment/Suggestion:** Add "including those who design and use assessments." Other expertise is highlighted here. This should be also.

**Response:** The stakeholders list in the introduction already calls out:  
Assessment Specialists  
Users of Assessment Data  
Researchers and Technical Experts

This list was intended to be comprehensive, prevent redundancy, and avoid the appearance of ranking some voices by virtue of who is and is not mentioned. The ADC felt that even with the stakeholders list, we should not lose sight of classroom teaching experience. So, in looking at the qualifications across the various stakeholders listed, classroom teaching experience should be represented (even if the person is not a current classroom teacher).

The highlighted expertise here is adding specificity to the stakeholders list.

The expertise noted in the next bullet also adds further specificity to the stakeholders list.

Principle 4.d also notes that an entire group of assessment experts will be convened as a resource for the process.

**Solution:** Left as is. Added reference to the introduction section's list of stakeholders.

shall result in assessment and item specifications (see *Principle 5*) and recommendations on related contextual variables to be collected from students, teachers, and school administrators. Recommendations shall take into account burden, cost, quality of the data to be obtained, and other factors. (See the Governing Board [Policy on Collecting and Reporting Contextual Data](#).)

- d) The scope and size of a framework development project shall determine the size of framework panels and the number of panel meetings needed. A framework update project may require smaller panels and fewer meetings if a smaller scope is anticipated for recommended revisions. Each ~~framework development~~ project shall begin with a review of major issues in the content area. For a framework update, the project shall also begin with an extensive review of the current framework, and the Visioning Panel shall discuss the potential risk of changing frameworks to trends and assessment of educational progress. (See 43.b).
- e) Framework development and updating shall be comprehensive in approach and conducted in an environment that is open, balanced, and even-handed. Panels shall consider all viewpoints and debate all pertinent issues in formulating the content and design of a NAEP assessment, including findings from research. Reference materials shall represent multiple views.
- f) For each project, protocols shall be established to support panel deliberations and to develop a unified proposal for the content and design of the assessment. Written summaries of all hearings, forums, surveys, and panel meetings shall be made available in a timely manner to inform deliberations.

**Principle 36: — Framework Review**

**Reviews of existing frameworks shall determine whether an update is needed to continue valid and reliable measurement of the content and cognitive processes reflected in evolving expectations of students.**

**Guidelines**

- a) At least once every 10 years, the Governing Board, through its Assessment Development Committee (ADC), shall review the relevance of assessments and their underlying frameworks. In the review, the ADC shall solicit input from experts to determine if changes are warranted, making clear the potential risk of changing frameworks to trends and assessment of educational progress. The Board may decide based on the input that the framework does not require revision, or that the framework may require substantial or minor or major updates. To initiate updates, the ADC shall prepare a recommendation for full Board approval. Minor updates include clarifications or corrections that do not affect the construct defined for the assessment. Major updates shall include the convening of a Visioning Panel (see Principle 2). Framework rRevisions shall also be subject to full Board approval.
- b) Within the 10 year period for an ADC review, major changes in the states’ or nation’s

**Comment [MFB5]:**  
**Comment/Suggestion:** Move up to appear after principle 2, and retitle to “Review and Updating of Existing Frameworks.”

**Response:** This principle is geared toward how Board monitoring of frameworks will be conducted and what triggers an “update” process – noted above in principle 2. The update process will need to be just as thorough as the process for a new development, but the update process needs to take into account the current framework.

**Solution:** Moved this principle to appear after principle 2. Left the principle title as is. Clarified distinction for update processes throughout the Policy – particularly that update panels need to look at the current framework and consider the extent to which changes will disrupt assessment of student progress, e.g., 2.d.

**Comment [MFB6]:**  
**Comment/Suggestion:** Replace with “a minor or major update”

**Response:** Board’s Working Group on Framework Update Processes discussed that it would be helpful to have a “monitoring” process which could affirm that no change is needed (if this is the case). Leaving the text as is keeps the dichotomy at “update” vs “no update” rather than shifting it to “minor update” vs “major update.”

**Solution:** Left as is. Clarified differences between minor and major updates in 3.a.

**Comment [MFB7]:**  
**Comment/Suggestion:** It is not clear: Is this the visioning panel? Are these standing panels?

**Response:** No. This includes hosting a panel discussion with experts, collecting papers, and other types of outreach so that the ADC can prepare a recommendation to the Board regarding how small or how large of a change may be needed.

**Solution:** Clarified this in 3.a as general outreach and what their input feeds into, namely, an ADC recommendation for Board action.

**Comment [MFB8]:**  
**Comment/Suggestion:** Consider whether potential changes are worth breaking trend in initial discussions with experts.

**Solution:** Added to initial discussion with experts.



educational system may occur that relate to one or more NAEP frameworks. In this instance, the Governing Board via recommendation of the ADC shall convene a Visioning Panel to determine whether and how changing conditions warrant an update, which may include minor or major framework changes or replacement of a framework. Before framework panels are convened, special research and analysis may also be commissioned to inform the updates to be considered.

- c) If the Visioning Panel recommends major updates, then a subset of panel members shall continue as the Development Panel ~~be convened~~ to develop the draft framework and assessment and item specifications, in accordance with Principle 2. Regular reports will be provided to the ADC and the recommended framework update shall be subject to full Board approval.
- d) When a framework update is conducted, framework Visioning and Development Panel recommendations shall describe the extent to which adjustments in the achievement level descriptors (see 1.a) and contextual variables (see 2.c) are needed. (See the Governing Board [Policy on Achievement Levels](#) and the Governing Board [Policy on Collecting and Reporting Contextual Data](#) for additional details.)

### Principle 43: —Resources for the Process

The framework development and update processes shall take into account state and local curricula and assessments, widely accepted professional standards, exemplary research, international standards and assessments, and other pertinent factors and information.

#### Guidelines

- a) The NAEP framework development and update processes shall be informed by a broad, balanced, and inclusive set of factors. The framework shall reflect current curricula and instruction, research regarding cognitive development and instruction, and the nation's future needs and desirable levels of achievement. This delicate balance between “what is” and “what should be” is at the core of the NAEP framework development process.
- b) An initial compilation of resources shall summarize relevant research, advantages and disadvantages of the latest developments, and trends in state standards and assessments for the content area. This compilation shall also summarize how stakeholders have used previous NAEP student achievement trends in the assessment area. The compilation may include public comment. Using this compilation as a springboard, framework panel deliberations shall begin by thoroughly identifying major policy and assessment issues in the content area.
- c) The framework panels shall also consider a wide variety of resources as deliberations proceed, including but not limited to curriculum guides and assessments developed by states and local districts, widely accepted professional standards, scientific research, other types of research studies in the literature, key reports having significant national and international interest, international standards and assessments, other assessment

**Comment [MFB9]: Comment/Suggestion:** It is not clear: how is this different from convening a visioning panel every 10 years (3.a)?  
**Response:** 3.a. does not automatically imply a Visioning Panel. Only major updates do. 3.b. highlights that if a watershed change happens before 10 years, ADC will begin expert outreach sooner so the Board may convene a Visioning Panel to look at what is needed. This includes adopting a charge from the Board to the Visioning Panel.  
**Solution:** Connected Visioning Panel to major update in 3.a. Added parallel “ADC recommendation” step in 3.a to clarify that Visioning Panel launches are full Board actions.

**Comment [MFB10]: Comment/Suggestion:** Delete this. Say “whether and how changing conditions warrant an update” and focus the Visioning Panel exclusively on whether they are conducting minor or major updates.  
**Response:** Re-conceptualizations of a domain are infrequent, but the field has sometimes shifted in ways that prompted a replacement, e.g., reading, writing, science. This may be the least attractive outcome, since it threatens trend, but allows NAEP to do what is needed to stay relevant.  
**Solution:** Left framework replacement as an outcome. Clarified that when a Visioning Panel is convened they may still determine that no change or only a minor change is needed.

**Comment [MFB11]: Comment/Suggestion:** It is not clear: Is this subset the Development Panel?  
**Response:** Yes. This 3.c. bullet describes how framework reviews connect with update processes outlined in principle 2. The 3.d. bullet reminds that framework updates also require attention to achievement level descriptions and subject-specific contextual variables.  
**Solution:** Label the Development Panel explicitly. Note that this 3.c. bullet connects with principle 2. Note that products in 3.d. connect with earlier outputs described in principles 1 and 2.

**Comment [MFB12]: Comment/Suggestion:** Clarify what applies to development of new frameworks versus what applies to updating of existing frameworks.  
**Response:** This principle applies to both developing new frameworks and updating current ones.  
**Solution:** Add “update” where needed to clarify that this applies to both creation and updating of frameworks.

**Comment [MFB13]: Comment/Suggestion:** Note the importance of NAEP’s trends to the framework panels’ deliberations.  
**Response:** For a potential update or consolidation, this prompts the panels to review how previous NAEP achievement data for the relevant assessment(s) have been used so they can consider the disruption to the field and how to make updates as useful to the field as possible.  
**Solution:** Added that the initial resources/issues for Visioning Panel deliberation include how NAEP trends have been used by the field. Added to 2.d also.

instruments in the content area, and prior NAEP frameworks, if available.

- d) Technical experts shall be involved to uphold the highest technical standards for development of the NAEP framework and specifications. As a resource to the framework panels, these experts shall respond to technical issues raised during panel deliberations.
- e) In balancing the relative importance of various sources of information, framework panels shall consider direction from the Governing Board, the role and purpose of NAEP in informing the public about student achievement, the legislative parameters for NAEP, constraints of a large-scale assessment, technical assessment standards, issues of burden and cost-effectiveness in designing the assessment, and other factors unique to the content area.

## **Principle 5: Elements of Specifications**

**The specifications document shall be developed for use by NCES as the blueprint for constructing the NAEP assessment and items.**

### **Guidelines**

- a) The assessment and item specifications shall produce an assessment that is valid, reliable, and based on relevant widely accepted professional standards. The specifications shall also be consistent with Governing Board policies regarding NAEP design, such as groupings of items, test administration conditions, and accommodations for students with disabilities and English language learners (see the Governing Board [Policy on NAEP Testing and Reporting on Students with Disabilities and English Language Learners](#)). The specifications shall be reviewed by technical experts involved in the process, prior to submission to the Governing Board.
- b) The primary audience for the specifications, or assessment blueprint, shall be NCES and the contractor(s) responsible for developing the assessment and the test questions.
- c) The specifications shall evolve from the framework and shall be written in sufficient detail so that item writers can develop high-quality questions based on the framework objectives for grades 4, 8, and 12, where applicable. The specifications shall include, but not be limited to detailed descriptions of:
  - the content and process dimensions, including the weighting of those dimensions in the pool of questions at each grade;
  - types of items;
  - guidelines for stimulus material;
  - types of response formats;
  - scoring procedures;
  - achievement level descriptions;
  - administration conditions;
  - ancillary or additional materials, if any;
  - considerations for special populations;
  - sample items, including a substantial number and range of sample items with scoring

- guidelines for each grade level; and
- any unique requirements for the given assessment.

d) Special studies, if any, to be conducted as part of the assessment shall be described in the specifications. This description shall provide an overview of the purpose and rationale for the study, the nature of the student sample(s), and a discussion of the instrument and administration procedures.

### **Principle 64: Role of the Governing Board**

The Governing Board, through its Assessment Development Committee, shall monitor all framework development and updates. The result of this process shall be recommendations for Governing Board action in the form of three key documents: the framework; assessment and item specifications; and contextual variables that relate to the subject being assessed.

#### **Guidelines**

- a) The Assessment Development Committee (ADC) shall be responsible for monitoring framework development and updates that results in recommendations to the Governing Board on the content and format of each NAEP assessment. The ADC will provide direction to the ~~framework development contractor or~~ framework panels, via Governing Board staff. This guidance shall ensure compliance with the NAEP law, Governing Board policies, Department of Education and government-wide regulations, and requirements of the ~~framework~~ contract(s) used to implement the framework project.
- b) When a framework Visioning Panel is to be convened, the ADC shall develop a charge for the panel, and the charge shall be subject to full Board approval. The charge will outline any special considerations for an assessment area.
- c) The ADC shall receive regular updates-reports on the progress of framework development and updates.
- d) In initiating a framework update, the Governing Board shall balance needs for stable reporting of student achievement trends. Regarding when and how an adopted framework update will be implemented, the Board may consider the NAEP Assessment Schedule, cost and technical issues, and research and innovations to support possibilities for continuous trend reporting.
- e) At the conclusion of the framework development or update process, the Governing Board shall take final action on the recommended framework, specifications, and contextual variables. The Governing Board shall make the final decision on the content and format of NAEP assessments.

**Comment [MFB14]:** Reordered. Moving the Framework Review principle to become principle 3 suggested that the overall Role of the Board principle would be a good way to conclude. This ordering also keeps the related principles on resources and specifications closer together.

**Comment [MFB15]:** Clarified that this 6.a bullet also applies to update projects, per solutions noted above.

- f) Following adoption by the Governing Board, the final framework, specifications, and contextual variables shall be provided to the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES). These documents, which include the achievement level descriptions for Basic, Proficient, and Advanced performance definitions, are provided to NCES to guide development of NAEP test questions and questionnaires.