

National Assessment Governing Board

Meeting of May 15, 2020

Virtual

OFFICIAL SUMMARY OF GOVERNING BOARD ACTIONS

Complete Transcript Available

National Assessment Governing Board Members Present

Haley Barbour, Chair

Tonya Matthews, Vice Chair

Dana Boyd

Alberto Carvalho

Gregory (Greg) Cizek

Tyler Cramer

Christine Cunningham

Frank Edelblut

Rebecca Gagnon

Paul Gasparini

James Geringer

Eric (Rick) Hanushek

Andrew Ho

Patrick Kelly

Terry Mazany

Reginald McGregor

Mark Miller

Joseph O'Keefe

Alice Peisch

Beverly (Bev) Perdue

Nardi Routten

Martin (Marty) West

Grover (Russ) Whitehurst

Carey Wright

Mark Schneider (ex-officio)

Governing Board Members Absent

None

National Assessment Governing Board Staff

Lesley Muldoon, Executive Director
Lisa Stooksberry, Deputy Executive Director
Michelle Blair
David Egnor
Stephaan Harris
Donnetta Kennedy
Laura LoGerfo
Munira Mwalimu
Tessa Regis
Sharyn Rosenberg
Angela Scott
Anthony White

National Center for Education Statistics (NCES)

Lynn Woodworth, Commissioner
Peggy Carr, Associate Commissioner
Gina Broxterman
Samantha Burg
Jing Chen
Jamie Deaton
Alison Deigan
Enis Dogan
Patricia Etienne
James Forester
Elvira Germino Hausken
Eunice Greer
Shawn Kline
Daniel McGrath
Nadia McLaughlin
Taslina Rahman
Eddie Rivers
Holly Spurlock
Bill Tirre

Ebony Walton
Bill Ward
Grady Wilburn
Angela Woodard

American Institutes for Research (AIR)

George Bohrnstedt
Markus Broer
Jack Buckley
Kim Gattis
Cadelle Hemphill
Sami Kitmitto
Gabrielle Merken
Fran Stancavage

Chief State School Officers, CCSSO

Fen Chou
Scott Norton

CRP, Inc.

Shamai Carter
Carolyn Rudd
Hona Subin
Edward Wooford

Educational Testing Service (ETS)

Debby Almonte
Jonas Bertling
Jay Campbell
Peter Ciemins
Gloria Dion
Amy Dresher
Gary Feng
Robert Finnegan
Helena Jia
Edward Kulick

Juliette Lyons-Thomas
Sharon Maloney
John Mazzeo
Daniel McCaffrey
Jessica Miller
Rupal Patel
Hilary Persky
Emily Pooler
Shannon Richards
Luis Saldivia
Lisa Ward
Nancy Waters
Andy Weiss
Karen Wixson

Hager Sharp

David Hoff
Joanne Lim

The Hatcher Group

Matt Anthes
Jenny Beard
Ann Bradley
Sami Ghani
Robert Johnston
Alex Sanfuentes
Devin Simpson

Human Resources Research Organization (HumRRO)

Monica Gribben
Thanos Patelis
Anne Woods

Optimal Solutions Group

Meaghan Bowman
Brian Cramer
Sagen Kidane

Pearson

Kevin Baker
Scott Becker
Francisco Garcia
Daniel Mullaney
Paula Rios
Pat Stearns
Cathy White

Reingold

Kathleen Kenney
Jessica Murray

Westat

Chris Averett
Greg Binzer
Lauren Byrne
Lisa Rodriguez
Rick Rogers
Keith Rust

WestEd

Mark Loveland

Other Attendees/Speakers

Terry Ausman, Project Lead the Way
Vickie Baker, WV Department of Education
Tamika Brinson, FL Department of Education
Timothy Brophy, University of Florida

Jeff Butts, Metropolitan School District of Wayne Township (IN)
Brandon Dart, Management Strategies
William Donkersgoed, WY Department of Education
Jeremy Ellis, MO Department of Elementary and Secondary Education
Andrea Faulkner, NC Department of Public Instruction
Deborah Frison, NE Department of Education
Laura Goadrich, AR Department of Education
Raymond Hart, Council of the Great City Schools
Jim Hull, Consultant
Marie Julienne, NM Public Education Department
Michelle Kinzer, American Association of Geographers
Troy Knoderer, Metropolitan School District of Lawrence Township (IN)
Beth LaDuca, OR Department of Education
Carly LeVan, BGR Group
Regina Lewis, ME Department of Education
Tamara Lewis, MD State Department of Education
Brian Lloyd, MI Department of Education
Rebecca Logan, OK State Department of Education
Shelley Loving-Ryder, VA Department of Education
Raina Mouljian, AK Department of Education and Early Development
Sandra Olivarez-Durden, RTI International
Sonya Powers, RTI International
Crystal Puckett, Metropolitan School District of Lawrence Township (IN)
Renee Savoie, CT State Department of Education
Roger Sheffield, AL Department of Education
Debra Silimeo, Silimeo Group
Mark Stephenson, KS Department of Education
Christy Talbot, American Educational Research Association
Anand Vaishnav, Education First
Dorothy Zbornak, Miami-Dade County Public Schools

Opening Remarks

Haley Barbour, Chair, called the webinar to order at 11:02 a.m. and welcomed attendees to the May 15, 2020, National Assessment Governing Board (Governing Board) meeting. Barbour noted that the day's agenda would be flexible; if additional time is needed for the NAEP 2021 discussion, time could be taken away from the Strategic Vision session scheduled for the afternoon.

Approval of May 2020 Agenda

Chair Barbour requested a motion for approval of the May 2020 agenda. Father Joseph O'Keefe made a motion to accept the agenda, and this motion was seconded by Rebecca Gagnon. No discussion ensued and the motion passed unanimously.

Approval of March 2020 Board Meeting Minutes

Chair Barbour requested a motion for approval of the minutes of the March 2020 Governing Board meeting. Carey Wright made a motion to approve the March 2020 minutes, and Gagnon seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Action: Delegation of Authority to Assessment Development Committee for Approval of 2025 NAEP Mathematics Assessment and Item Specifications

Chair Barbour requested that the Board delegate authority to the Assessment Development Committee (ADC) to approve the 2025 NAEP Mathematics Framework and Item Specifications. Marty West offered a motion, and Mark Miller submitted a second. The motion was unanimously approved.

COVID-19 and Policy Implications for NAEP

Executive Director Lesley Muldoon posed the essential question of whether NAEP assessments should proceed as scheduled in 2021. She reported that the Board met on May 14, 2020 in a closed Executive Committee session to discuss the budget implications of proceeding with NAEP 2021 as planned given the COVID-19 public health crisis.

Muldoon highlighted policy factors to inform decisions about NAEP 2021 and additional information needed to make these decisions. The NAEP Assessment Schedule for 2021 includes Reading and Mathematics for grades 4 and 8 (national, state and TUDA), U.S. History and Civics for grade 8 (national only), and long-term trend (LTT) for 17-year olds (national only). This age group for LTT was scheduled to be assessed in spring 2020 but was disrupted when schools across the nation closed due to COVID-19. Muldoon acknowledged the uncertainty of school openings in the fall and how that might affect NAEP administration in January through

March of 2021. She noted that decisions likely would need to be made without complete and concrete information; however, she reminded the Board that NCES had indicated that decisions for the next year need to be made soon if testing is to commence on the current schedule. Muldoon urged Board members to listen to the information presented, allow time for discussion, establish a process to conduct due diligence, and then reconvene next month to get an update on that due diligence and potentially consider specific options for how to proceed.

Peggy Carr (Associate Commissioner, National Center for Education Statistics [NCES]) reminded the Board that conducting LTT is mandated (although the periodicity is not), and even though the data collection for 17-year-olds was called off in March when schools closed, it will need to be completed at some point. Carr described NAEP 2021 assessments to be a baseline in the context of COVID-19, emphasizing it will not be “NAEP as we know it.” Carr reiterated that NAEP, if occurring, may be the only nationally representative assessment with cross-state comparisons and could yield important survey data from students, teachers, and school administrators. Carr added that questionnaire data would provide information on how student learning experiences were affected by school closures, access to technology, their remote learning environment, and the involvement of adults at home. She added that, if granted permission from the Office of Management and Budget, NCES would gather information related to student self-efficacy, as well as teacher and school preparations, for remote learning. When NCES finalizes these additional proposed contextual questions, the Board will have the opportunity to review and approve them.

Moving forward, Carr discussed data quality risks, including issues related to validity, reliability, trends, and diminished sample sizes. She spoke about the health and safety risks of conducting NAEP in person. Carr reported that 7,000 test administrators would need to be hired, screened, and trained to ensure NAEP administration adheres to social-distancing protocols, 4,000 more administrators than usual given the planned sample sizes. She acknowledged the uncertainties facing the Board but emphasized the importance of making staffing and training decisions by July 1 to prepare for testing in 2021.

Following the presentation, Board members discussed the benefits and risks associated with conducting NAEP 2021 in the aftermath—or ongoing challenges—of COVID-19. The Board focused on issues of: (a) funding/budget; (b) status of international assessments; (c) feasibility of preparing for and conducting NAEP; (d) outstanding questions that need answers to make a decision; (e) health and safety; (f) variation in school schedules; (g) messaging the unique purposes and value of NAEP; and (h) back-up plans, unresolved uncertainties, and contingency plans.

Funding/Budget

In her presentation, Carr noted increased costs to NAEP associated with additional test administrators and other necessary modifications to proceed with a 2021 administration. She

presented a chart outlining costs at specific points in the timeline of preparing for NAEP field operations. She showed that most money would begin to be spent when it was time to train the test administrators; however, if the administration was cancelled or postponed after an initial decision to move forward, any money spent on initial tasks, such as recruiting field staff and background checks, would be lost. Barbour asked whether the projected additional funds needed were based on the Fiscal Year (FY) 2020 budget or the President's budget request for FY 2021 (which included a 28 million increase for NAEP). Commissioner Lynn Woodworth stated that NCES could only work with funds that were on hand. Rebecca Gagnon requested a follow-up closed briefing to discuss further details on the financial risk of moving forward with the planned test administration given the possibility of halting the work. Carr responded that she had already created funding flows based on the President's budget request for FY 2021 but did not have time to include those in her short presentation for the Executive Committee the previous day.

Tyler Cramer proposed that financial resources might be better used for alternative NCES projects with lower risk than a 2021 assessment. Woodworth responded that those alternatives may be viable, but NCES is proceeding as if NAEP is to begin in January 2021, as required by law.

Status of International Assessments

Board members asked what international assessments were planned for 2021 administration. Carr explained that she is a Board member of the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA), and the United States has decided not to participate in 2021. She added that among the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) countries, half of them requested postponing the 2021 administration to 2022. The Programme for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies (PIACC) is delaying testing until 2022. Carr did not know the status of the Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS) but reported the United States would not participate in 2021. Board members noted that testing programs such as SAT and AP are continuing, but finding immense challenges in the virtual setting.

Feasibility of preparing for and conducting NAEP

Nardi Routten questioned the feasibility of hiring and training staff for the upcoming administration, given the current limited capacity of government operations. Patrick Kelly concurred that many schools would be closed over the summer, which could delay collection of school information.

Alice Peisch asked whether it was possible to administer NAEP remotely. Woodworth responded that it was not possible, since NCES does not have the technical capacity to use secure items in a remote setting. He noted that the NAEP legislation requires that NCES keep the secure items constantly under their control, and that if anyone wishes to review a NAEP assessment they have to do so at a secured facility.

Outstanding Questions

Board members agreed that they would like additional information before making decisions on how to proceed with NAEP 2021. Carey Wright and others commented on the rapidly changing factors impacting school operations which could make decisions in May not reflective of schools' capacity to participate in NAEP in 2021. Reginald McGregor suggested looking at the decision from a business perspective, prioritizing tasks, including human resources, logistics, management, and finances. Matthews suggested meeting again in a month, perhaps in a closed session, so the Board could discuss financial implications in greater detail. Kelly advised looking at the health situation again in mid-June before making a final decision on the status of the administration.

Routten broached the possibility of postponing the decision to allow more time for the situation to unfold and to elicit more information. She also wondered if the 2021 NAEP administration could be postponed. Woodworth replied that postponing the administration was an option if Congress provided a waiver. The law states that NAEP math and reading need to be conducted every two years with a one-year gap between administrations. Thus, if Congress provided a waiver, NAEP math and reading could be administered in 2022 (and then next in 2024) or delayed until 2023. Carr noted that a decision needs to be made by July 1. She reiterated the costs and time sensitivity associated with the preparation work, especially with training a large cohort of field staff remotely.

Rick Hanushek supported proceeding with assessment planning but questioned the need for a final decision by July 1, given that the majority of expenses would not be incurred until November or December. He acknowledged the need to hire the additional field administrators beginning on July 1 but suggested spending some money to keep open the possibility of continuing the administration and potentially losing it should the situation change.

Health and Safety

Bev Perdue stressed that health concerns should be the Board's primary consideration. She questioned the intangible costs associated with proceeding, in light of the necessary deadlines. She suggested assessing the risk of test administrators traveling across the country, into schools, and potentially transmitting disease, either by the testing administrator, from the school, or as a consequence of travel. She also wondered about parental consent to testing. She asked if the risk and liability of administering NAEP in 2021 is worth the reward. Institute of Education Sciences Director Mark Schneider agreed, saying that even though the Board is working through several different scenarios, given the sheer volume of test administrators and participating schools and students, and even with strict standards for personal protection, there will be transmission of COVID-19. He stated that in addition to the moral and ethical considerations, the Board also must consider the legal liability.

Given Board member concerns with risks, Russ Whitehurst thought it would be prudent to solicit information from public health and infectious disease experts before the next meeting.

Whitehurst also stated that the Board should have a future discussion to consider a proposal to push NAEP back one year from 2021 to 2022. Miller asked Carr to elaborate more on the potential health risks of conducting the assessment. Carr reported they are on a “listening campaign” with stakeholders, beginning with school administrators and consulting with NAEP state coordinators, district superintendents, and the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO).

Schneider explained that a roadblock to engaging with NAEP stakeholders is that some school leaders do not feel the 2021 NAEP administration is an urgent concern, given the current landscape. So, even though the Board wants feedback from stakeholders to make a decision, those in a position to talk may not have time because of their competing priorities. He echoed Perdue’s concern of parental consent, worrying about schools or districts refusing to participate. While NAEP math and reading testing is mandated and Title I funding is tied to participation, Schneider worried about ruining relationships with states and districts and NAEP’s reputation by forcing administration of the assessment. Kelly stated it seemed that Congress, not the Board, should make the ultimate decision regarding Title I, testing, and funds.

Schneider touched upon an earlier comment regarding the need for additional funds which have yet to be approved or dispensed, indicating the legal ramifications associated with spending money they do not have. After running through the different variables, Schneider concluded that the human risk and legal liability, in conjunction with increased costs, was not worth the effort of a 2021 NAEP administration and recommended requesting a waiver from Congress.

Cramer supported looking at the risk versus benefits of proceeding or postponing. McGregor also supported looking at alternatives. McGregor, reporting the high incidence rates of COVID-19 in New York, sees the risk in conducting an assessment in 2021 and wants to expand the conversation of the consequences of moving the administration to 2022. Paul Gasparini, also from New York, agreed that health risks should be on the forefront of everyone’s minds and supported postponing the administration. Father Joe O’Keefe reported that being from the Bronx, the epicenter of the virus transmission, he would need to be persuaded to vote for proceeding with a 2021 assessment. Gasparini acknowledged that each area has different rates of infection, but all are still at risk of contracting the virus. O’Keefe added that schools in densely populated, urban districts were more likely to stay closed next year. Thus, the question becomes how the absence of a significant number of large urban districts would affect the representativeness of the sample. Carr agreed it would be difficult to produce a representative sample without some districts.

Matthews countered the argument to move the administration with the what-if scenario of schools reopening and NAEP testing does not occur. There could be potential fallout for not

being seen as prepared to test, citing pushback in communities when universities prematurely cancelled summer plans. She also noted that assuming that things will be settled down in a year is not guaranteed, so there is no benefit in waiting—the situation could be the same or even worse. Matthews urged the Board to consider repercussions from stakeholders if schooling is conducted as usual and if NAEP is not administered. Some communities may blame NAEP for a lack of information on student achievement if it is not conducted. She believes that if students are in school, the Board should find an appropriate way to test them. Several Board members agreed, stating that if appropriate measures were in place and school was in session, testing should proceed. However, some Board members were opposed, citing health risks including intergenerational households and underlying medical conditions.

Variation in School Schedules

Rather than cancel the 2021 administration, Kelly proposed shifting and extending the testing window to later in 2021, especially since states may adjust their school calendars for a start later in the year. Carr said that NCES has considered this option, and while they plan to make slight adjustments to the window, if they shift too far, they will need to address potential loss of trends. To connect current results to previous results, they need to keep the assessment in the same window of time as in past years. Carr stated that if their only concern was a snapshot of ability and not psychometric stability of the trend, then they would consider adjusting the window. She also acknowledged the logistical difficulties a later start would pose, given the time needed for sampling and assigning students to booklets.

Matthews agreed with many of her colleagues' comments and added that, while she accepts that the current situation will change NAEP results, she is still unsure how to interpret the change. She wondered if changes would be limited to superficial issues, such as the practicalities of administration, or something deeper, such as the whole purpose of the administration and how to interpret the data. Carr responded that there is a lot that is still unknown.

Carr explained more about NCES' plans. To abide by social distancing guidelines of six feet, there would need to be multiple test administrations to capture the same sample size, since fewer students could test at one time in one location. Woodworth added that, should guidelines relax, and school operations return to the way they were in the past, costs could be lower. He indicated that this scenario was not likely, so a lower budget estimate was not discussed. And, if costs ran too high, it would be difficult to justify proceeding with a NAEP administration.

Hanushek supported Kelly's suggestion of extending the testing window. Even though testing would be different, he feels the slight adjustment would be less consequential, given all the other adjustments to the administration process. He supported the claim that reliability and validity and trend are matters of degree, not all or none, to which Carr agreed. Carr emphasized the interpretation of results needs to be consistent with standards, and given the unknowns, that is the real threat to reliability and validity and trend. Andrew Ho offered an example from a

presentation at the Association for Public Policy Analysis and Management (APPAM) conference explaining how the testing window affected scores; he urged the Board to consider the implications related to an adjusted window. Carr stressed that even if the test window shifts, it does not diminish the importance of the July deadline, given the time and resources needed to prepare for a 2021 administration.

Messaging the Purposes and Unique Value of NAEP

Greg Cizek mentioned that he is hopeful that instead of changing or abandoning NAEP for 2021, the Board could work with NCES to help develop a plan to accomplish its core mission successfully with creative adjustments in procedures, as necessary. Addressing NAEP's reputation, Cizek indicated that few people would be disappointed to see NAEP and similar tests not administered. He worried that if the NAEP assessment were pushed to 2022, these same people would protest that the test was unnecessary, since there was no consequence from not testing in 2021. He argued that the real consequence would be an increase in support for eliminating testing.

Several Board members supported this claim, saying that similar discussions were occurring in their states. Kelly said that Board members need to build the narrative to the public for NAEP's value and why NAEP differs from other tests. He said they can promote NAEP as a tool to inform instructional practices and analyze student performance in a way that many of the state accountability tests are not equipped to do. In support of Carr's presentation that survey data would illuminate student learning related to COVID-19, Cizek indicated that it will be particularly important to measure how the disruption has affected equity. He expected that students with greater access to resources would fare better than those without, but that NCES must be diligent in measuring and understanding the potential effects.

Kelly supported the idea of moving forward with NAEP 2021, believing that NAEP will yield important and necessary information, especially regarding the differential impact of COVID across states. He acknowledged that testing could adversely affect NAEP's reputation but, like other Board members, thought negativity could be mitigated by meaningful stakeholder engagement and promoting the value of the test. Kelly was interested in feedback from Congress, TUDA superintendents, and state chiefs. He does not want to make a decision without their input.

Back-up Plans, Unresolved Uncertainties, and Contingency Plans

Cizek challenged Carr's claim that NAEP would act as a COVID-19 baseline, preferring that NAEP continue to act as a barometer, rather than assigning it a new purpose. And while he does understand the risks, he does not agree that all risks represent immediate concerns and wonders if NCES is working on a plan for how to make the administration happen. He likes the idea of broadening the surveys to gain additional insights on the impact of school closures on educational progress. Matthews agreed with Cizek that the purpose of NAEP should not change.

Carr assured Cizek that NCES contemplated multiple scenarios when considering the upcoming administration and pointed out several documents that were provided for Board review. Carr added that task forces are busy working on several scenarios, including safe working conditions and diminished sample sizes. Woodworth added that NCES has every intention of administering NAEP as required by law and with rigorous procedures in place to produce valid and reliable data, noting that NCES would not proceed if these results were not possible. Hence, NCES is consulting states to gather more information about what is needed to ensure their participation. Cizek added a request for a quantifiable risk assessment to serve as a threshold in the decision to proceed with the assessment.

Ho stated that if the Board plans for a 2021 administration, it is possible that students will start the school year in the fall with virtual lessons and will not return to a physical classroom until the beginning of the calendar year. He believes that if students are in the classroom, then NAEP should test, as there is no better opportunity to learn about where students are in their education trajectory. Ho added that moving the administration to 2022 should only be a worst-case contingency plan.

Kelly requested adding meaningful discussions of which tests should be administered in 2021 if they decide to proceed with the assessment, since states are prioritizing elementary and middle schoolers returning first to the physical classroom setting. Matthews wondered if they would need contingencies per grade for the assessment to be feasible.

Dana Boyd drew attention to the new need for social distancing. She proposed that rather than shorter testing sessions over multiple days, instead to have one day of testing using multiple large testing rooms to reduce test administrator time in the school building. Carr agreed but stated that many schools do not have the requisite space or infrastructure. Further, large testing rooms would require multiple test administrators, perhaps requiring an even greater number of staff.

Kelly noted that school opening contingency plans would likely include remote and in-person days for different groups of students, options that would prevent all students from being in the building at the same time, thus posing significant challenges to NAEP administration. Also, contingency plans would need to be in place to accommodate schools opening on different schedules during different times of the year.

Carr reminded the Board that while the number of field staff needed for the upcoming administration is large, it is within the realm of past administrations, and not a large increase, especially since testing is scheduled in four subject areas. Carr said that Westat, the contractor responsible for the hiring and training, expressed some concern with attracting past participants, given their talent pool demographic of retired educators correlates with the population at increased health risk from COVID-19.

Final point

Miller summarized that the Board cannot make a determination to move forward yet and the Board will need to weigh several factors before deciding. He said that health and safety should be the greatest priority, but it is too early to pre-emptively cancel the 2021 administration. Moving forward, the Board must include parallel planning for a 2021 administration as well as a backup plan. This summary was met with a chorus of agreement from many Board members.

Barbour thanked the Board for the rich discussion and encouraged them to mull over the information before meeting again next month. Documents will be provided to assist the Board in making a decision. Barbour encouraged Board members to submit additional questions or comments.

Recess for Break

The May 15, 2020, Governing Board meeting recessed at 12:33 p.m. for a lunch break. The meeting reconvened at 1:02 p.m.

Strategic Vision 2025

Vice Chair Matthews presented two objectives for the Strategic Vision 2025 session: (a) provide feedback on draft high-level priorities for the next Strategic Vision, and (b) understand next steps to bring a final draft for Board consideration at the August meeting. Matthews described the timeline of key activities in the Strategic Vision 2025 process beginning with the Executive Committee retreat in January 2020, the full Board discussions at the March and May 2020 Board meetings, and culminating with Board action at the August 2020 Board meeting.

Following the March 2020 Board discussion, five Sprint Teams were created to focus on key areas of impact. The key questions for discussion:

- Sprint Team 1: What do we measure and why?
- Sprint Team 2: What do we report and why?
- Sprint Team 3: How can we increase the use of NAEP results by states and TUDAs to improve policy and practice?
- Sprint Team 4: How can we leverage connections between NAEP and external data to improve the public's understanding of student outcomes?
- Sprint Team 5: How will we continue to anticipate the future of learning?

The key questions for Teams 2 and 4 involved similar topics and those teams were merged. Two sprint team leaders spoke about the process. Gasparini stated the discussions went well overall and the essence of their discussions were captured, however, the phone conversations were not as rich as an in-person dialogue. Gagnon appreciated that this model allowed participants to drill down in follow up emails and maintain an ongoing process. She stated it was as interactive as possible without meeting in person. Matthews echoed their comments, adding she missed having “hallway” conversations, but Board staff helped manage discussion among team members.

Matthews introduced the discussion of the ten draft high-level strategic priorities identified by the Sprint Teams. The priorities are labeled by letters and Board members referred to them by these letters in their discussion:

- A. Develop, sustain, and deepen strategic partnerships
- B. Link NAEP resources with external data sources and disseminate to inform policy and practice in actionable ways
- C. Identify and disseminate high-quality uses of NAEP resources to demonstrate NAEP's utility and unique value
- D. Promote sustained dissemination and use of NAEP information beyond Report Card releases
- E. Improve the utility, relevance, and timeliness of NAEP subject-area frameworks and assessment updates
- F. Ensure NAEP reflects advances in assessment design and reporting
- G. Promote the use of NAEP contextual data to enable stakeholders to understand and improve student achievement
- H. Proactively monitor and make decisions about the NAEP assessment schedule to ensure NAEP results that are policy relevant
- I. Promote the ways NAEP can illuminate important skills for postsecondary education and workforce
- J. Develop a body of validity evidence to interpret and communicate NAEP achievement levels

Matthews indicated some of the priorities carry over from the Strategic Vision 2020 because the issues warrant continued consideration. Matthews asked Board members to consider the following guiding questions: (a) What is your high-level reaction to the proposed priorities? (b) Relevance of the statements? (c) Are “inform” and “innovate” still the right pillars for the next Strategic Vision?

High-level feedback

Members responded that some priorities seem more important and there is overlap among them. Several members commented that ten priorities are a lot. Cramer suggested “ensuring NAEP reflects advances in assessment design and reporting” is an overarching priority, with “promoting the use of NAEP contextual data,” “NAEP’s role in postsecondary education and workforce issues,” and “development of validity evidence” as a subset of the more encompassing priority. Andrew Ho noted that the first and third priorities to “develop, sustain, and deepen strategic partnerships” and “identify and disseminate high-quality uses of NAEP resources to demonstrate NAEP’s utility and unique value” are important. Gagnon asked if “ensuring NAEP reflects advances in assessment design and reporting” is overarching. Ho indicated it is not as actionable.

Ho reminded Board members of a discussion about including a banner with to signal NAEP as “American progress in education” in context and over time. Matthews requested Board staff include a banner in the next draft of the Strategic Vision 2025.

Individual priorities feedback

Frank Edelblut referenced NCES data about student engagement – process data¹ – and asked if it should be part of the Strategic Vision as related to understanding student engagement and its effect on equity. Matthews pointed to the priority on “reflecting advances in assessment design and reporting” as encompassing process data; Sprint Teams also talked about process data as they discussed “disseminating data” and “uses of NAEP contextual data.” Matthews asked the Board if the priority statements should be more explicit to include process data. Several members responded process data is not a high priority and should not be singled out. West suggested incorporating it with the “promotion of contextual data.” McGregor suggested process data could be a sub-priority under “high-quality uses of NAEP resources.”

O’Keefe stated the language of the “postsecondary education and workforce priority” avoids problematic use of “readiness.” Although Ho suggested the postsecondary priority is less actionable, several members supported its inclusion because of the Board’s commitment to and investment in this topic and the intense focus on post-secondary preparedness in school districts as reported by the Council of Chief State School Officers.

Routten asked for clarification on strategic partnerships. Muldoon pointed to a chart of strategic partners in the meeting materials and noted the Board is moving from creating and strengthening relationships with stakeholders and partners to developing deeper relationships and helping others improve and expand their use of NAEP data.

Pillars for the next Strategic Vision

McGregor suggested a third pillar – agile – to include the notion of being flexible and able to pivot, especially in the post-COVID-19 world. Issues of digital device access and device literacy are important for digital based assessment. Cramer noted the time it takes for change in NAEP might not be consistent with agility.

Members engaged in a discussion about the difference between pillars, strategies, and activities. Gagnon mentioned earlier discussions about NAEP as a catalyst for change. She stated the importance for stakeholders to make an explicit connection between NAEP and policy change, to elevate the value and usefulness of NAEP as a tool for increasing student achievement and closing gaps.

Gasparini explained that school administrators talk about goals and a strategy is a means to attain a goal. Cizek described two levels of priorities: (a) strategic goals, such as “improving utility and relevance” and “promoting sustained dissemination and use,” and (b) activities to achieve larger

¹ Process data is time-stamped click stream data or “digital footprints” of student interactions with the NAEP system and items.

goals, such as “linking NAEP with external data sources” and “developing a body of validity evidence.” West agreed and suggested the ten priorities include two to three goals; the other priorities, however, are more like activities for meeting those goals. Boyd asked that the Strategic Vision include priorities and activities that the Board could do. She emphasized the activities need to be SMART – specific, measurable, attainable, results oriented, and time bound. Further, Boyd asked if the Board is ready to take on the activities in the next Strategic Vision.

Next steps

Matthews reported that the Board and staff had some of the same difficult and rich conversations in creating the first Strategic Vision. She described deadlines and next steps. In May and June, the Board will hold conversations with key stakeholders for feedback on the proposed priorities. In June, draft priorities will be revised and introductory language for the Strategic Vision 2025 will be completed. Staff will seek feedback from Board members in July and make further revisions to present a final draft to the Board for action at the July 30-August 1 quarterly meeting.

Meeting Adjourned

Board Chair Barbour adjourned the meeting at 2:32 p.m.

I certify to the accuracy of the minutes.


Chair

July 23, 2020
Date

National Assessment Governing Board

Special Meeting of June 29, 2020

Virtual

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Grover Whitehurst
Carey Wright
Mark Schneider (ex-officio)

Governing Board Members Absent

Mark Miller
Joseph O'Keefe

National Assessment Governing Board Staff

Lesley Muldoon, Executive Director
Lisa Stooksberry, Deputy Executive Director
Michelle Blair
Stephaan Harris
Donnetta Kennedy
Laura LoGerfo
Munira Mwalimu
Sharyn Rosenberg
Angela Scott
Anthony White

National Center for Education Statistics (NCES)

Lynn Woodworth, Commissioner
Peggy Carr, Associate Commissioner
Jacob Acosta
Gina Broxterman
Samantha Burg
Jing Chen
Jamie Deaton
Enis Dogan
Patricia Etienne
Elvira Germino Hausken
Eunice Greer
Shawn Kline
Daniel McGrath
Nadia McLaughlin
Taslina Rahman
Holly Spurlock
Ebony Walton
Bill Ward
Grady Wilburn

American Institutes for Research (AIR)

George Bohrnstedt
Markus Broer
Jack Buckley
Mary Ann Fox
Kim Gattis
Cadelle Hemphill
Sami Kitmitto
Fran Stancavage

Chief State School Officers, CCSSO

Fen Chou
Carissa Moffat Miller
Scott Norton
Carolyn Phenicie

CRP, Inc.

Shamai Carter
Hona Subin
Edward Wooford

Educational Testing Service (ETS)

Peter Ciemins
Gloria Dion
Amy Dresher
Kadriye Ercikan
Gary Feng
Robert Finnegan
Dave Freund
Helena Jia
Elizabeth Kingsley
Daniel McCaffrey
Jessica Miller
Rupal Patel
Hilary Persky
Emily Pooler

Hager Sharp

James Elias
David Hoff
Joanne Lim

The Hatcher Group

Jenny Beard
Ann Bradley
Robert Johnston
Alex Sanfuentes
Devin Simpson

Human Resources Research Organization (HumRRO)

Monica Gribben
Anne Woods

Optimal Solutions Group

Brian Cramer

Pearson

Scott Becker
Pat Stearns
Cathy White
Llana Williams

Reingold

Kathleen Kenney

Westat

Chris Averett
Greg Binzer
Lauren Byrne
Bill Chernik
Zully Hilton
Lisa Rodriguez
Rick Rogers
Keith Rust

WestEd

Steve Schneider

Other Attendees/Speakers

Therese Abeita
Kim Ackermann, TX Education Agency
Angela Battaglia, UT State Board of Education
Tabitha Bellamy-McKinley, NJ Department of Education
Collin Bonner, CO Department of Education
Fred Bost, Cognia
Jackie Branco, RI Department of Education
Danielle Branson, DC Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE)
Tamika Brinson, FL Department of Education
Jennifer Cain, MN Department of Education
Michael Casserly, Council of the Great City Schools (CGCS)

Lily Clark, Gates Foundation
Pat Cuchens, University of Houston-Clear Lake
Brandon Dart, Management Strategies
William Donkersgoed, WY Department of Education
Donna Dubey, NH Department of Education
Angela Dugas, WI Department of Public Instruction
Jeremy Ellis, MO Department of Elementary and Secondary Education
Chester Finn, Thomas B. Fordham Institute
Nicole Gaudiano, POLITICO
Wendy Geiger, VA Department of Education
Laura Goadrich, AR Department of Education
Raymond Hart, CGCS
Swea Hart, DC OSSE
Victoria Hume, Center for Education Reform
Carol Jago, University of California Los Angeles
Allison King
Beth LaDuca, OR Department of Education
Bob Lee, MA Department of Elementary and Secondary Education
Regina Lewis, ME Department of Education
Tamara Lewis, MD State Department of Education
Brian Lloyd, MI Department of Education
Rebecca Logan, OK State Department of Education
Gwyn Marback, ND Department of Public Instruction
Ted McConnell, CivXNow Coalition
Harrison Moore, Management Strategies
Raina Moulian, AK Department of Education and Early Development
Mariah Mowbray, House Committee on Education and Labor
Sandra Olivarez-Durden, RTI International
Philip Olsen, WI Department of Education
Sonya Powers, RTI International
Stephen Pruitt, Southern Regional Education Board (SREB)
Vaughn Rhudy, WV Department of Education
Alan Richard, SREB
Jennifer Robinson, MS Department of Education
Renee Savoie, CT State Department of Education
Debra Silimeo, Silimeo Group
Peggy Sorensen, OH Department of Education
Sarah Sparks, Editorial Projects in Education (Education Week)
Mark Stephenson, KS Department of Education
Christy Talbot, American Educational Research Association
Jennifer Tschetter, SD Department of Education
Anand Vaishnav, Education First

Welcome

On June 29, 2020, the National Assessment Governing Board (Governing Board) held a special meeting to continue discussing the impact of COVID-19 on the administration of NAEP assessments in 2021. Haley Barbour, Chair, called the meeting to order at 2:00 p.m. and welcomed attendees to the closed session of the meeting held by webinar.

COVID-19 Impacts on NAEP 2021 (Closed Session)

Under the provisions of exemption 9(B) of §552b(c) of Title 5 of the United States Code, the Governing Board met in closed session from 2:00 – 3:15 p.m. to discuss confidential budget information. The National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) presented budget projections for FY20 to FY24 under various scenarios: whether the FY21 budget remained at \$153 million or was increased to \$181 million as reflected in the President’s Budget Request, and whether the additional one-time appropriation was received to proceed with a full sample for 2021 Reading and Mathematics. The projections indicated that the additional funds are needed to support the full sample for 2021, and that the \$181 million in the President’s FY21 Budget Request is needed annually to implement the NAEP Assessment Schedule for 2019–2029 (as adopted by the Board in July 2019).

A one-time appropriation would mitigate the additional costs from COVID-19; a small percentage of that money would offset unanticipated expenses from 2020 assessments and the majority of the funds would be used to cover the additional costs of administering a full Reading and Mathematics assessment in 2021 (approximately 4,000 additional test administrators, personal protective equipment, and other costs resulting from conducting NAEP during the pandemic). For each month that the 2021 assessment activities continue to proceed, there is some degree of nonrecoverable costs; these costs grow steeper towards the end of the year in preparation for a January–March 2021 administration. This means that continuing the preparatory work necessary to be ready for a 2021 administration will become increasingly costly in the fall.

If NCES does not receive additional funding from Congress by August 28th to support increased costs associated with implementing NAEP in the wake of COVID-19, then they will need to change course and instead proceed with a “thin sample” (approximately 875 students per subject/grade/state). The “thin sample” approach would mean that results for fewer subgroups could be reported and there would be less power to detect achievement gaps.

The budget projections did not include costs for administering U.S. History or Civics (currently scheduled for 2021 at grade 8) or the Long-Term Trend (LTT) for 17-year-olds (scheduled for spring 2020 but postponed when schools abruptly shut down in March 2020). Governing Board and NCES staff recommended to the Board that these assessments not be administered in 2021 as planned. These assessments are voluntary, and many states and districts have already indicated they may refuse to participate, which would make it unlikely that NCES could obtain a nationally representative sample. Board members agreed the NAEP program should focus its efforts on trying to maximize the feasibility of 2021 Reading and Mathematics, and that U.S. History and Civics should be postponed to the soonest feasible date. The Board needs more

information about budget and other operational considerations before formally deciding whether these assessments can be moved to 2022 or whether it is necessary to wait until 2023. U.S. History and Civics were last assessed in 2018, and the Board is committed to conducting assessments in these subjects every four years.

NAEP 2021: A Conversation with Key Stakeholders

Haley Barbour, Chair, called the open session to order at 3:32 p.m. Barbour introduced the panel of key stakeholders and asked each to take five minutes to provide remarks on whether NAEP should conduct testing in spring 2021.

Carissa Moffat Miller, Executive Director of the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO), spoke about a meeting with CCSSO Board members, representatives from NCES; Governing Board staff; the Governing Board Chair; and the two state chiefs serving on the Governing Board, Carey Wright and Frank Edelblut. Miller stated that in her conversations with state chiefs, they all agreed that the most important NAEP assessments are Reading and Mathematics at the state and national levels. However, they were divided on whether NAEP should conduct testing in 2021. One group wanted more time to address the logistics of conducting NAEP before deciding, while the other suggested postponing NAEP for a year.

Michael Casserly, Executive Director of the Council of the Great City Schools (CGCS), reported on a poll conducted with leaders of the 27 Trial Urban District Assessment (TUDA) school systems. The poll asked TUDA leaders for their preference of five options for NAEP 2021: (a) same sample size as NAEP 2019 (TUDA, state, and national results including subgroups), (b) reduced sample that would not yield subgroup results, (c) state and national sample but no TUDA results, (d) postpone until 2022, and (e) other ideas. All TUDA leaders responded, with 21 out of 27 preferring to postpone NAEP until 2022; the remaining 6 leaders preferred a full sample (including TUDA results) in 2021. The TUDA leaders agreed that NAEP results without disaggregated subgroup data are of limited value. Casserly presented key issues and concerns related to the logistics of NAEP administration, health and safety of individuals, quality of the data, and consequences of a 2021 test administration on NAEP's reputation. The TUDA leaders did not know when or if schools will open or what school configurations will look like when they open. They expressed concerns about the ability of schools to support a NAEP administration with social distancing and the impact of test administrators on the health and safety of students and staff. TUDA leaders expressed concern that moving forward with NAEP 2021 could be likened to being tone deaf, and CGCS requested that the next NAEP administration of Reading and Mathematics be postponed until 2022.

Stephen Pruitt, President of the Southern Regional Education Board (SREB), agreed with the statements from CCSSO and CGCS. Members of the SREB weighed the risks and benefits of administering NAEP in 2021 and suggested postponing NAEP. Most districts will likely operate with a hybrid model of in-person and online instruction in the 2020–2021 school year. Health is a priority and schools will restrict who can enter their buildings. SREB members are concerned about equity and how representative the NAEP sample would be with the exclusion of students choosing online-only instruction. Also, NAEP would be a burden to some schools at this time.

Barbour opened the floor to discussion. Board members commented on a range of topics including the state of schools and data quality concerns, health and safety concerns, and reputational risks.

State of Schools and Data Quality Concerns

Board members noted concerns about how many students will attend school in person, what school schedules will look like, student and staff stress, and equitable implementation of options (e.g., some parents may not be able to keep their children at home due to the nature of their jobs). Peggy Carr, Associate Commissioner of NCES, stated the rationale for requesting an increase in test administrators from 3,000 to 7,000 is to handle staggered participation of students in schools. A major challenge is obtaining stable student enrollment numbers and sampling data in the fall that will reflect student attendance in early 2021.

Tyler Cramer raised the issue of postponing NAEP to 2023, the next scheduled date after 2021. Andrew Ho warned that a four-year gap in data during one of the most critical and volatile periods in American educational history would be very problematic. Regarding trend, Ho asked Board members of large urban districts how they viewed their district assessments compared to NAEP and if they had the same interpretation concerns. Patrick Kelly cautioned the Board to be mindful that things may not return to "normal" post-COVID, especially with the rise in eLearning.

Health and Safety Concerns

Kelly indicated the Governing Board should move past issues of data validity, logistics, and burden on schools and suggested the key question is, can NAEP be administered safely in January 2021? He suggested obtaining additional public health guidance about the extent of the spread of COVID-19, including safety of testing in schools, before deciding on whether to administer NAEP in 2021. Several Board members supported Kelly's recommendation and volunteered to contact local public health officials in their local districts. Besides consulting public health officials, members also voiced the necessity of seeking the advice of mental health professionals. Rebecca Gagnon stated that while her top concerns are the health and safety of students and staff, she stressed the importance of proceeding with assessments to gain an understanding of how COVID-19 has affected students and impacted their learning. Lynn Woodworth, Commissioner of NCES, reported that although NCES has consulted with and received guidance from health experts to develop detailed protocols for safe test administration in schools, they are concerned about test administrators transmitting COVID-19. All agreed that a decision for administering NAEP should still be postponed until the next quarterly Board meeting on July 30-31 so they can gather more information and guidance from experts.

Reputational Risks

Nardi Routten and Dana Boyd noted that moving forward with assessments in 2021 could make NAEP seem tone deaf by appearing to focus on testing rather than students. Additional members expressed reluctance to request additional money to test during COVID-19 while so many families need economic assistance for housing, food, and healthcare. Besides the costs, many worried it would result in the impression the Governing Board is prioritizing testing over basic

needs. Although there are sophisticated tools for maintaining trend, choosing to test in 2021 if schools have limited in-person instruction may result in breaking trend. On the other hand, choosing to postpone testing risks losing the opportunity to collect data if schools are open.

Next Steps

Looking beyond the logistics of NAEP 2021, Tonya Matthews and Jim Geringer asked how COVID-19 will change the way instruction is delivered. What does the Governing Board need to know to examine how changes to education will impact trend? What questions should the Governing Board ask? Board members suggested using NAEP to measure the gaps and inequities in online learning options resulting from COVID-19. However, Board members were not ready to decide on whether to move forward with NAEP 2021 or to request a waiver from Congress to postpone until 2022.

The standing committees will meet before the next quarterly meeting and staff will continue to share relevant information in preparation for the July 30-31 Board meeting.

Meeting Adjourned

Board Chair Barbour adjourned the meeting at 5:03 p.m.

I certify to the accuracy of the minutes.



Chair

July 23, 2020
Date



RELEASE PLAN FOR THE NATIONAL ASSESSMENT OF EDUCATIONAL PROGRESS (NAEP)

The Nation's Report Card: 2019 Reading and Mathematics – Grade 12

The national results of the 2019 National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) Reading and Mathematics assessments for grade 12 students will be released to the public in late October 2020. Typically, results from these assessments are released a year after administration, however, the shift to digital-based assessment required additional quality control processes and statistical checks. The release will be held virtually to comply with public health norms in response to the COVID-19 crisis.

The event will be webcast live for a national audience and last approximately 60 minutes. It will include data presentations by both the Commissioner and Associate Commissioner of the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES). The Commissioner will share other grade 12 data that NCES collects through other vehicles, such as longitudinal surveys and statistical programs. The Associate Commissioner will release and present the grade 12 NAEP results.

Following the data presentations, the focus will shift to two Governing Board members who will respond to comments and/or questions from stakeholders invested in reading and mathematics, secondary education, the workforce, and higher education. The stakeholders will submit their comments and/or questions in advance, whether by video or in only text. If by text only, a voiceover will read their submitted comments while their photo appears on screen. The solicited comments/questions will serve as springboards for the featured Governing Board members to elaborate on the results and connect the results to policy. Board staff will collaborate with the communications contractor to identify stakeholders to submit questions or comments along with a twelfth-grade student and a high school teacher or administrator. This will be a relatively short segment, about 20 minutes in duration. The session should offer opportunities for dynamic and informative conversation about NAEP Grade 12 and spotlight the expertise on the Board.

Note that Board members are welcome to recommend colleagues and/or acquaintances to submit a question or comment. Ideally, staff will receive a considerable number of comments or questions to feature at the release event itself and in social media promotion after the event.

DATE AND LOCATION

The release event will occur in late October 2020 via virtual platform. The Chair of the Reporting and Dissemination Committee will set the release date, in accordance with Governing Board policy, in collaboration with the National Center for Education Statistics, and following Committee acceptance of the final report card.

ACTIVITIES BEFORE THE RELEASE

In the weeks before the release event, the Governing Board will mount a social media campaign to build interest in the release, with special focus on stakeholders involved in secondary education and the transition from secondary education to postsecondary life courses, whether workforce or higher education. The Board's [website](#) will dedicate a webpage to release events.

Shortly before the release, NCES will host a call for members of the media, during which NCES will present highlights and answer questions. NCES will oversee an embargoed website with results available to stakeholders approved for access by NCES, including Congressional staff and media. The goal of these activities is to provide a comprehensive overview of the findings, to deepen understanding of the results, and to help ensure accurate reporting to the public.

REPORT RELEASE

The Commissioner of the National Center for Education Statistics will release the report card on the [NAEP website](#)—at 12:01am the day of the release event. The Governing Board press release, the full and abridged versions of the 2019 NAEP Reading and Mathematics Assessment Frameworks, and related materials will be posted on the Board's web site. The site will feature links to social networking sites and multimedia material related to the event.

CENTRAL MESSAGES

Activities before and after the release, as well as the release itself, will promote several critical messages. First, data from NAEP provide invaluable information about the knowledge and skills that twelfth-graders have. Second, data from other NCES collections offer rich insight into the postsecondary choices and pathways grade 12 students pursue. Third, the discussion will connect results for grade 12 to results for grades 4 and 8, which have inspired national, state, and local efforts to narrow subgroup differences in performance across both subjects.

ACTIVITIES AFTER THE RELEASE

The Governing Board's communications contractor will work with Board staff to coordinate additional post-release communications efforts—which could include such strategies as a social media chat or major presentation—to target communities and audiences. Video clips of the release event will be publicized on social media. The goal of these activities is to extend the life of the results and provide value and relevance to stakeholders.