

Progress Toward Realizing Strategic Vision 2025

Inform

Identify the needs of stakeholders and refine resources to promote sustained use of NAEP data

The Board expanded its outreach to state education leaders beyond the State and TUDA task forces presenting to state and district policymakers at conferences and in webinars about NAEP results.

The Governing Board significantly changed its approach to communications from reactive to proactive, i.e., from responding to media requests to pitching op-eds, interviews, and posts to both traditional and social media outlets as a means to disseminate accurate interpretations and pragmatic implications of NAEP results widely. This approach, beyond exponentially increasing the presence of NAEP and the Governing Board members' expertise in the education sector, also has supported journalists' investigative reporting on achievement across the nation. Information is shared more widely, more visibly, more consistently and more effectively than ever before.

As part of this proactive approach to communications, the Board is hosting a series of roundtable discussions now with stakeholders to prepare for the early 2025 release of the 2024 Nation's Report Card. These discussions surface questions that stakeholders still have about the 2022 data and what they need to know to understand and use the 2024 data next year.

For the first time, the Board sponsored communications directors to attend the NAEP Data Workshop prior to the October 2022 release. This was greatly appreciated and communication directors requested that this practice continue for NAEP 2024. This allowed communications directors to understand the results more completely with greater insight rather than seeing them only 24 hours prior to the release, which resulted in too much pressure and afforded too little time to develop messaging and explain results to state and district personnel. The state and district communications teams who participated now use NAEP data more consistently and continuously between NAEP releases.

Elevate high-quality uses of NAEP resources to demonstrate NAEP's utility and highlight NAEP's unique value

New approaches to communications and revamped Report Card releases in 2022 and 2023 led to richer, sustained coverage of NAEP results. Multiple times per month, the comms team successfully pitches op-eds with Board members in traditional high-profile media outlets and posts on websites specific to the education sector. Releases resulted in journalists taking deep dives into cases and places of academic success post-pandemic, i.e., Mississippi, DoDEA. Television news, including PBS NewsHour and Nightly News, covered NAEP releases in 2023. Release events included students,

teachers, principals, policymakers, researchers, state chiefs and federal education leaders.

Link NAEP resources with external data sources and disseminate learnings to inform policy and practice

A Linking Studies Working Group was convened, resulting in the Board adopting a resolution to prioritize this activity. The resolution identified linking studies using overlap samples (e.g., the same sample administered NAEP and an external measure) as the most useful for understanding how NAEP performance relates to external academic outcomes (e.g., postsecondary preparedness). The resolution expresses the Board's intent to be a collaborative partner with NCES on future linking study opportunities.

External researchers have used studies linking NAEP to external measures to increase the accessibility and utility of NAEP data and results to the general public.

Lessons learned from linking studies regarding NAEP achievement levels are being incorporated into a NAEP Achievement Levels Validity Argument, currently under development.

Innovate

Optimize the utility, relevance and timing of NEAP subject area frameworks

Successful adoption of the 2026 NAEP Reading Assessment Framework following development of a Chair's draft and additional outreach to reach consensus.

Updated Assessment Framework Development Policy with increased emphasis on continued outreach and engagement with both the Board and external stakeholders adopted in 2022.

In 2023, the Board adopted its first framework change based on updated policy. That framework, which will go into effect in 2028, is the 2028 NAEP Science Assessment Framework. It was developed through an exceptionally smooth process and lauded for its relevance and utility.

Exploration of new framework approaches currently underway, including proposal to create a Social Studies Content Advisory Group to inform initial stages of updates to NAEP U.S. History and Civics Frameworks and serve as a proof of concept for how to implement more frequent updates of subject area frameworks.

Monitor and make decisions about the NAEP assessment schedule based on Board priorities of utility, frequency, efficiency and credibility to ensure results are policy-relevant

Surveys conducted of states and districts to learn more about their current and potential future use of NAEP for policy and other purposes.

Research conducted into science, civics and U.S. history instruction in elementary, middle and high school to inform decisions about what grades to administer NAEP assessments.

Board update of NAEP Schedule of Assessments to adjust subjects, grades and levels (state and TUDA) tested based on utility, frequency, efficiency and credibility.

Develop a body of evidence to improve interpretation and communication of NAEP achievement levels to ensure reasonable, valid and informative to the public

Robust activity and steady progress on achievement levels workplan, including:

Completed achievement level description (ALD) review studies to develop ALDs for use in reporting, and to evaluate the alignment of the assessments to the NAEP frameworks. The Reporting ALDs have been useful for understanding what students at each achievement level know and can do. Board members and contractors have shared this methodology with states through their technical advisory committee because the information may benefit their individual assessment programs.

Development underway of a NAEP Achievement Levels Validity Argument to compile validity information and note appropriate and inappropriate uses and interpretations of the levels.

To help general audiences understand the NAEP achievement levels and how they correspond to recognizable skills and knowledge, the Board developed clear, concise informational one-pagers to guide interpretations of NAEP achievement levels ahead of the 2022 and 2023 NAEP data releases. The 2023 Civics and History one-pagers incorporated sample items and item map information with exemplar reporting ALDs to present more tangible descriptions of student abilities at each level.

Engage

Develop, sustain and deepen strategic partnerships to ensure NAEP remains a trusted, relevant and useful resource

Strengthening partnerships with state and districts through the task forces, continually working to understand and respond to their needs.

Expanded outreach to and beyond state policymakers, including education advocates and parent groups. Through conference presentations, webinars, op-eds, interviews, and roundtable discussions, staff and Board members have met with national and state education leaders and prominent outlets to explain and model the value and use of NAEP data, e.g., NAEP 2022 releases.

Releases of NAEP results enhanced by convening influential stakeholders in relevant fields to discuss the results and explain how they use and value NAEP data. For example, in May 2020, the Governing Board hosted the release of the 2019 NAEP

Science Assessment results at which nearly 600 attendees joined to hear Acting Commissioner Peggy Carr's presentation of the findings and a policy-focused conversation with Board member Christine Cunningham and Board alumnus, Cary Sneider. The event featured stakeholders in the science education community, building a network of NAEP-savvy experts within policy and advocacy groups, such as the National Science Teachers Association (NSTA), National Association of Elementary School Principals (NAESP), and the National Association for Research in Science Teaching (NARST).

In 2021, Michael Solem of the American Association of Geographers (AAG) tapped the robust collaborative relationship staff developed with him by hosting a symposium on how to analyze NAEP Civics, NAEP U.S. History, and NAEP Geography data. The sessions spotlighted exemplary research for new researchers to follow.

Help stakeholders understand how the Governing Board and NAEP can illuminate important skills for postsecondary education pathways