

National Assessment Governing Board

Meeting of March 5 - 6, 2026

DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel Houston – Greenway Plaza

6 Greenway Plaza East

Houston, TX 77046

& Virtual

**Official Summary of Quarterly Governing Board Meeting**

***Complete Transcript Available***

Initial draft of minutes was generated using a large language model, which Governing Board staff then fact-checked, reviewed, and revised. Note: An \* denotes which Board members attended virtually.

**Participant List**

National Assessment Governing Board Members Present

Mark White, Chair  
Marty West, Vice Chair  
Lisa Ashe  
Phil Bryant  
Kymyona Burk  
Michelle Cantú-Wilson  
Christine Cunningham  
Jhone Ebert  
Danielle Gonzales  
Angélica Infante-Green\*  
Patrick Kelly  
Anna King  
Suzanne Lane  
Scott Marion  
Reginald McGregor  
Michael Pope  
Julia Rafal-Baer  
Ron Reynolds  
Nardi Routten  
Michael Sidebotham  
Guillermo Solano-Flores  
Darein Spann

National Assessment Governing Board Members Absent

Shari Camhi  
Jared Solomon

National Assessment Governing Board Staff

Lesley Muldoon, Executive Director  
Elizabeth Schneider, Deputy Executive Director  
Rebecca Dvorak  
Stephaan Harris  
Donnetta Kennedy  
Laura LoGerfo  
Sharyn Rosenberg  
Angela Scott  
Joshua Warzecha  
Anthony White

National Center for Education Statistics (NCES)

Matthew Soldner, Acting Commissioner  
Jing Chen  
Brian Cramer  
Enis Dogan  
Janel Gill  
Alex McMillan  
Gina Ruehl  
Yan Wang  
Ebony Walton

U.S. Department of Education

James Forester  
Carter Volz

American Institutes for Research:

Brittany Boyd  
Markus Broer  
Christina Davis  
Marty Hooper  
Liz Kingsley

Council of the Great City Schools (CGCS)

Akisha Osei-Sarfo

Education Testing Service (ETS)

Terran Brown  
Brenda Calderon  
Peter Ciemins  
Amy Drescher Hauger  
Kadriye Erickan  
Robert Finnegan  
Helena Jia  
Mat Kandathil  
Madeleine Keehner

Ranu Palta-Upreti  
Rupal Patel

Lerner Communications

Michelle Lerner  
Ashley Zanchelli  
Nancy Zuckerbrod

Management Strategies

Brandon Dart  
Harrison Moore  
Zachary Rosensteel

Manhattan Strategy Group

Melissa Cristler  
Monica Johnson  
Joanne Lim

Pearson

Matt Brunscheen  
Scott Becker  
Paula Rios  
Pat Stearns

Westat

Lauren Byrne  
Kristin Flanagan  
Marcie Hickman  
Zully Hilton  
Jacquie Hogan  
Tom Krenzke  
Jason Nicholas  
Jason Schuknecht  
Lisa Rodriguez  
Desrene Sesay  
Leslie Wallace  
Rima Zobayan

Other

Andrea Allen, Sanametrix  
Latosha Branch, Virginia Department of Education  
Jacqueline Branco, Rhode Island Department of Education  
Katie Carroll, PIE Network  
Lucy Colangelo, Knowledge Alliance  
Tyler Cramer, Remarc Associates, LLC  
William Donkersgoed, Wyoming Department of Education  
Angela Dugas, Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction  
Alison Gerrior, Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education

Beth LaDuca, Oregon Department of Education  
Erica Lee, Mathematica  
Regina Lewis, Maine Department of Education  
Brian Lloyd, Michigan Department of Education  
Jeffrey Max, Mathematica  
Terry Mazany, Former Board Member  
Naaz Modan, K-12 Dive  
Raina Moulian, Alaska Department of Education & Early Development  
Claire Partain, Houston Chronicle  
David Powell, Ed First  
Sarah Schwartz, Education Week  
Jonathan Sedberry, South Carolina Department of Education  
Ashely Soebroto, Houston Chronicle  
Margaret Spellings, Bipartisan Policy Center  
Maura Spiegelman, Agora Education Research  
Mark Stephenson, Kansas State Department of Education  
Christy Talbot, American Educational Research Association

*The National Assessment Governing Board Quarterly Meeting convened open session on March 5, 2026.*

### **Session Summaries – Day 1**

#### Welcome and Chair's Remarks, Approval of March 2026 Agenda and the November 2025 Minutes

The meeting was called to order at 12:47 p.m. CST by Governing Board Chair Mark White. Chair White welcomed members and expressed appreciation for the morning's school visits, particularly seeing the Houston ISD's school improvement efforts in action. He highlighted the relevance of these observations for other districts, including his own work in Memphis. The Board then turned to procedural business, beginning with approval of the March 2026 meeting agenda. Scott Marion moved approval, Danielle Gonzales seconded, and the agenda passed unanimously. The Board also approved the minutes of the November 2025 meeting following a motion by Patrick Kelly and a second by Angélica Infante Green.

#### Supporting Success in Texas from K-12 to Workforce: Why NAEP Matters

Chair White invited Michelle Cantú Wilson to offer remarks, given her role as host Board member. Cantú Wilson explained her goal of illustrating the education-to-workforce pipeline, showing how NAEP's insights ultimately relate to real outcomes in students' lives. She described how Houston ISD centers student success by aligning all adults toward the singular purpose of improving achievement. Cantú Wilson connected these reforms to her personal experience as a student facing significant barriers, underscoring the urgency of disrupting inequitable educational patterns in elementary and secondary

education as well as in higher education. She thanked her Governing Board colleagues and Board staff for their work to plan the Houston meeting.

Chair White echoed these thanks and offered special recognition to Elizabeth Schneider who is retiring. Schneider received an extended round of applause.

Discussion then continued with comments and questions about Houston's approach to curriculum and instruction. Darein Spann appreciated seeing the impact of dual-credit pathways firsthand, especially for students completing associate degrees while still in high school.

Kymyona Burk asked for clarification on how HISD's performance-based compensation system is funded and structured. Cantú Wilson explained that she could not speak to specific funding sources, but some teachers earn higher salaries in a pay-to-perform model. She noted that districts also have separate performance systems for career and technical education programs, and that the approach aims to resolve inconsistencies between teacher evaluation ratings and student outcomes.

Julia Rafal-Baer highlighted the value of hearing directly from Superintendent Mike Miles and from academic leadership within HISD. She pointed to the district's intentional development of courses focused on decision-making—what leaders described as the “art of knowledge”—which she viewed as especially forward-looking in an era of artificial intelligence (AI). She also praised the power of hearing from a community college student who had already earned 24 credits in high school, underscoring the importance of connecting K–12 reforms to postsecondary access and success.

Chair White invited additional comments and acknowledged Angélica Infante-Green, who joined virtually. With no further discussion, he transitioned the meeting to the next agenda item, introducing Governing Board Executive Director Lesley Muldoon to provide her update.

### Executive Director's Report

Muldoon provided a comprehensive update, beginning with appreciation for the work involved in hosting the Board meeting in Houston and seeing local educational initiatives firsthand. She then reviewed major topics from the November meeting to help situate the Board's upcoming decisions. She highlighted that November's closed sessions covered the NAEP budget, contract considerations, and detailed planning for the 2026 NAEP administration. At this meeting, the Board would receive additional updates on the 2026 administration—now six weeks into its eight-week window—with early results indicating that implementation is proceeding smoothly.

She also noted that the Board would continue its work on the NAEP Assessment Schedule at this meeting with the expectation to take formal action on an updated

schedule at the May meeting. Muldoon encouraged members to provide feedback so Board staff and NCES staff can revise materials and conduct additional analyses as needed. She explained staff are continuing to explore next steps from the prior meeting's session on changing K–12 enrollment patterns and their implications for NAEP sampling. Muldoon acknowledged that the issue is both complex and consequential for NAEP's representativeness.

Turning to innovation, Muldoon recapped the Board's November discussions on launching the Next Generation NAEP initiative and the presentations from Amber Northern on the future of the Institute of Education Sciences (IES)—the report for which was released on February 27—and Brian Reiter from the Hawaii Department of Education about AI applications in assessment. Muldoon confirmed that this meeting would include a dedicated session on Next Generation NAEP to outline priorities, timelines, and the project's current direction.

She then commended NCES, NAEP contractors, and Governing Board staff working on detail for the immense success of the NAEP 2026 administration and shared a personal anecdote about her child's positive experience taking NAEP. She also announced the opening of the public comment period on the NAEP civics framework, which has not been substantially updated since 1998. Preliminary expert reviews have pointed to likely areas for revision, including clearer grade-level differentiation and addressing shifts in civic knowledge, information consumption, and media literacy.

After the public comment period ends, the Board will determine in May whether to initiate an official framework update process. If the Board chooses to update the civics framework, the Board will adopt a charge, which will sketch the contours of the framework update to come. This charge will be used by panels of subject matter and assessment experts to consider what the framework update should include.

The Executive Director closed by recognizing Elizabeth Schneider for her years of dedicated service and partnership. She praised Schneider's contributions during an especially complex period for the Board specifically and education generally. Chair White then opened the floor for member questions. Seeing none, Chair White invited the Acting Commissioner of the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), Matthew Soldner, to provide an update on the center's recent activities.

#### National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) Acting Commissioner's Report

Acting Commissioner Soldner began his report by highlighting the release of the *Reimagining IES* (IES 2.0) report by Dr. Amber Northern, which explicitly affirms NAEP as the most important activity undertaken by NCES. Several recommendations in the report—such as developing device-agnostic assessments, leveraging AI for timeliness and efficiency, expanding state-level assessments, and improving the NAEP Data

Explorer—align closely with ongoing Board work and the Next Generation NAEP initiative.

He then updated the Board on federal appropriations, reporting that Congress finalized the FY 2026 budget with \$185 million allocated for NAEP, maintaining longstanding funding levels. He emphasized that this reflects continued bipartisan support for NAEP’s mission. He also shared that NCES has marked significant progress in hiring—onboarding five new team members since November and preparing additional offers to build capacity for Next Generation NAEP and ongoing assessment operations.

Soldner confirmed that the NAEP 2026 administration is progressing well, with strong performance indicators across student participation, school engagement, and operational targets. A detailed update would follow from NCES staff, but he noted that key performance dashboards were “bright green,” indicating positive performance across all measured areas.

The Acting Commissioner then shifted to the primary focus of his presentation: NCES’s international assessment portfolio. He explained that NCES participates in multiple international studies—such as the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA), Trends in International Math and Science Study (TIMSS), and Programme for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies (PIAAC)—because Congress explicitly charges the agency with maintaining comparative global education statistics. These assessments serve as national level analogues to NAEP’s state and district benchmarking functions, enabling the United States to understand its educational performance relative to other countries and to monitor economic and workforce competitiveness.

He provided an overview of upcoming cycles; the United States will participate in PISA 2029, with reading as the major domain, in TIMSS 2027, and in PIAAC 2032. He highlighted NCES’s work to make international data publicly accessible through the International Data Explorer and emphasized the technical documentation available to help stakeholders understand how these studies compare to NAEP.

In addressing the question of why the United States should invest in international assessments, he drew parallels between their role and NAEP’s value to states and TUDAs. Just as state leaders rely on NAEP to benchmark progress against peers, international assessments allow the nation to situate its performance globally. He underscored the programs’ importance for understanding long-term educational health, workforce readiness, and international competitiveness, and he encouraged the Board to consider how international assessments might complement NAEP in future strategic planning.

Scott Marion concurred that international comparisons help counter misconceptions and can inform state-level decision-making. The Acting Commissioner thanked the Board for its support and reiterated NCES's commitment to sustaining a strong international assessment program alongside NAEP.

#### NAEP 2026 Administration Update

The Board received a detailed status update on the 2026 NAEP administration from Gina Ruehl, the Director of Strategic Partnerships at NCES. She reported that the program is six weeks into an eight-week data collection window that began on January 26 and is scheduled to conclude on March 20. She reviewed the assessments currently in the field: mathematics and reading at grades 4 and 8 for national, state, TUDA, and Puerto Rico samples; national grade 8 civics and U.S. history; and pilots in mathematics and reading at grades 4, 8, and 12 (including Puerto Rico for grade 4/8 math).

For mathematics and reading, schools are using both school and NAEP devices; civics and U.S. history are being administered exclusively on NAEP-provided devices. The targeted sample sizes for reporting are approximately 12,300 schools and 455,000 students for grades 4 and 8 mathematics and reading, 620 schools and 16,000 students for grade 8 civics and U.S. history, and 1,100 schools and 36,000 students for the pilots.

Operational milestones in 2026 include two major firsts: (1) the initial large-scale operational use of school devices to administer NAEP, following a 2025 pilot, and (2) the first administration based on updated mathematics and reading frameworks with refreshed item types. NCES also expanded automated scoring for grades 4 and 8 reading, adding open-ended and constructed-response items to machine scoring alongside human scoring. These changes were accompanied by a planned bridge study to ensure comparability between NAEP devices and school devices, with the aim of maintaining trend.

Progress metrics for the administration indicate strong execution despite early weather disruptions. As of the end of week five, assessments had been administered in 7,936 schools; by midweek, that number had risen to 9,544 schools, reflecting successful rescheduling after significant school closures in the Mid-Atlantic and Northeast. Student participation advanced from roughly 325,000 assessed as of last Friday to approximately 378,000 by midweek, keeping pace with targets. Device readiness and usage were also strong: prior to administration, about 65 percent of schools were slated to use their own devices; after on-site verification, 63 percent did so, with roughly 2 percent shifting to NAEP devices due to local platform or operating system constraints. NCES confirmed that these figures pertain to reading and math; further, because the bridge study deliberately assigned some eligible schools to NAEP devices, the underlying eligibility rate for school-device use exceeds 65 percent and may approach 80–90 percent in future cycles without requiring a bridge study.

NCES reported high system stability and smooth student experience, with 99.3 percent of assessments completed without errors. The small remainder comprised network interruptions that were typically remedied by a refresh and a negligible fraction (0.05 percent) of system errors on the eNAEP platform. Administratively, schools favored flexible scheduling enabled by school devices. Many chose to test two sets of 25 students simultaneously in different rooms, replicating the efficiency of single-session paper administrations; others used morning/afternoon split sessions or a single large-room session. NCES indicated that this flexibility eases school burden and fits better with school schedules.

Questionnaire collection is also tracking well. As of week five, 84 percent of school questionnaires were completed (with 4 percent in progress and 12 percent not yet started). Teacher questionnaire completion was at roughly 65 percent, with more responses expected as student testing occurs and at the close of the window. For non-mandatory subjects, preliminary public school participation in grade 8 civics and U.S. history is approximately 94 percent, comparable to 2022 levels by this point. Catholic school participation in mathematics and reading is similar to 2024 (about 82 percent for grade 4, 73 percent for grade 8). Preliminary participation for non-Catholic private schools will fall below reporting thresholds. NCES will finalize participation rates after the window closes.

Implementation highlights include successful preparation and readiness checks for school devices, strong field operations across a wide range of contexts, and rapid adaptation to operating system updates pushed by districts to school devices. NCES automated updates within eNAEP to maintain compatibility with newly-released system patches, preventing disruption on test days. Ruehl made note that future administrations need to account for technology support staff not always being present at a school every day, including assessment day. Moving forward, NCES will work with districts and schools to reduce that burden.

Ruehl shared photos from NAEP field staff, which captured the breadth of administration—from teams using school devices and NAEP devices side-by-side, to rural deployments in Alaska which required puddle-jumper flights and, in some cases, overnight stays on cots inside schools due to limited local lodging. Ruehl also showed social media posts from states which actively promoted participation (e.g., Infante-Green in Rhode Island cheering on students in one video; state-branded NAEP materials and videos in Alabama, Arkansas, and Kentucky).

Board discussion focused on lessons to draw from this administration. Vice Chair West commented that the pre-planned extension of the data collection window to eight weeks appears to have increased scheduling efficiency and resilience to weather and asked whether that approach should be retained long term. NCES confirmed that a planned

eight-week window enabled more balanced scheduling across weeks and more efficient contractor resource allocation.

Other Board members suggested analyses on session timing (morning versus afternoon, citing state assessment experience with lower performance in afternoons) and on the relationship between window timing and exposure to content. Ruehl replied that these analyses are feasible, including checks of missing data and completion patterns by session.

NCES outlined next steps in the reporting timeline. Following the end of data collection, scoring and analysis will begin, incorporating the bridge study to confirm comparability between NAEP Chromebook devices and school devices. NCES is planning for the release of math and reading results in winter 2027, with civics and U.S. history to follow in summer 2027. The Chair and Board members thanked NCES for the clarity of the update as well as the useful metrics, and recognized the coalition of contractors, state and district partners, and field staff for their work.

The session concluded with the Chair's instructions to transition to closed session at 2:05 p.m. Only Board members, Board staff, and NCES staff were authorized to attend the next segment, and contractors and visitors were asked to depart.

*The National Assessment Governing Board Quarterly Meeting convened closed sessions on March 5, 2026.*

NAEP Budget Update, 2025 NAEP Long-Term Trend Assessment, and NAEP Assessment Schedule Discussion (CLOSED)

The Governing Board convened in closed session from 2:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. CST to receive an update on NCES's financial projections for the NAEP program, receive an update on the 2025 NAEP Long-Term Trend Assessment, and discuss the NAEP Assessment Schedule. The NAEP Budget Update and NAEP Assessment Schedule Discussion were closed to the public pursuant to Exemption 9(B) of the Government Sunshine Act (5 U.S.C. 552b(c)(9)(B)), as they included confidential budget and procurement information not yet available to the public. The disclosure of this confidential information would have an adverse financial effect on the NAEP program by providing detailed proprietary contract costs of the current NAEP contractors to the public and would disclose independent government cost estimates for future NAEP assessments if conducted in open session. The 2025 NAEP Long-Term Trend Assessment session was closed under the provisions of exemption 9(B) of §552b(c) of Title 5 U.S.C because the presentation included embargoed data that are not yet public.

*Day 1 of the National Assessment Governing Board Quarterly Meeting went off record at 2:00 p.m. CST. The final session for Day 1 concluded at 4:45 p.m. CST.*

## **Session Summaries – Day 2**

*The National Assessment Governing Board Quarterly Meeting convened closed session on March 6, 2026.*

### Discussion on Slate of 2026 Governing Board Nominees and NAEP Assessment Schedule Discussion (CLOSED)

The Governing Board convened in closed session from 7:30 a.m. to 10:00 a.m. CST to discuss nominees for Governing Board terms beginning on October 1, 2026 and the NAEP Assessment Schedule. The discussion on the slate of 2026 Governing Board nominees was closed to protect all applicants' personal information and ensure confidentiality for conversations about the slate. The NAEP Assessment Schedule discussion was closed to the public pursuant to Exemption 9(B) of the Government Sunshine Act (5 U.S.C. 552b(c)(9)(B)), as they included confidential budget and procurement information not yet available to the public. The disclosure of this confidential information would have an adverse financial effect on the NAEP program by providing detailed proprietary contract costs of the current NAEP contractors to the public and would disclose independent government cost estimates for future NAEP assessments if conducted in open session.

*The National Assessment Governing Board convened in open session on March 6, 2026 at 10:05 a.m. CST.*

### Executive Committee Report

Vice Chair West reported that the Executive Committee was the only standing committee with an update, as COSDAM and R&D would meet the following week and ADC was focused on item review. He summarized that the Committee held an initial discussion on the NAEP assessment schedule, reviewed preliminary NAEP budget projections, acted to open the public comment period for the NAEP civics framework update, and revisited TUDA eligibility criteria in anticipation of adding districts to the program for the 2028 administration. Staff received guidance and will return in May with a draft TUDA policy for Board action. West concluded by recognizing and thanking Elizabeth Schneider for her years of support to the Executive Committee.

### ACTION: Slate of 2026 Governing Board Nominees

The Board took formal action on the 2026 slate of Governing Board nominees. As required, nominee names were not spoken to maintain confidentiality. Reginald McGregor presided over the voting process and reviewed the procedure: each category would be considered separately, a motion and second would be recorded, abstentions would be noted, and votes would then be taken.

For the curriculum specialist category, the motion to approve the slate was initiated by Lisa Ashe and seconded by Christine Cunningham. There were no abstentions, and the motion carried unanimously.

For the eighth grade teacher category, the motion was made by Ashe and seconded by Rafal-Baer. No abstentions were recorded except for Dr. Pope, consistent with prior disclosure, and the motion passed.

For the fourth grade teacher category, Cantú Wilson moved approval and Nardi Routten seconded. No abstentions were recorded, and the motion was approved unanimously.

For the general public representative / parent leader category, the motion was made by Spann and seconded by Ron Reynolds. Anna King abstained, and the motion carried.

For the secondary school principal category, Burk moved approval and Michael Sidebotham seconded. No abstentions were recorded, and the motion passed unanimously.

Upon completion of the votes, McGregor thanked the Board for its careful consideration and returned the floor to the Chair.

#### Addressing the Nation's Urgent Human Capital Challenge: The Commission on the American Workforce

The Board welcomed former U.S. Secretary of Education Margaret Spellings for a discussion on the nation's human capital needs, the roles of federal government and state governments in education, and the importance of NAEP as a national barometer of student achievement. Secretary Spellings opened by expressing gratitude for the work of the Governing Board and NCES, emphasizing how essential NAEP is to understanding the nation's academic health. She explained that one of the most consequential but overlooked elements of No Child Left Behind was the requirement that every state participate in NAEP, replacing the inconsistent, voluntary participation patterns which existed prior to the law.

Looking towards the future, Secretary Spellings warned that the nation faces an unprecedented convergence of challenges—including stagnant student achievement, demographic shifts, AI-driven workforce changes, and strained labor markets. She urged education leaders to remain focused on academic achievement, cautioning that public debate increasingly drifts toward issues unrelated to student outcomes. She emphasized that data and transparency are more important than ever, particularly as federal and state responsibilities continue to shift.

West opened the question-and-answer session by asking Secretary Spellings about how to persuade more states to participate in optional NAEP assessments. Secretary Spellings responded that states must be pressed firmly—and sometimes publicly—to

demonstrate commitment to knowing how their students are performing. She argued that states cannot advance student achievement agendas without comparable data and suggested that nonprofit partners can help make the case.

Patrick Kelly inquired how NAEP modernization through the Next Gen NAEP effort could streamline and improve stakeholder experiences, given the recommendation that federal changes must help intended beneficiaries. Secretary Spellings called the task complex but essential, stressing the need for interoperable systems, common measures, and modern reporting. She praised Texas for recently aligning accountability with NAEP benchmarks, calling it a bold example of state leadership.

White wondered how policymakers should think about balancing traditional four-year college pathways with expanding workforce and credentialing pathways. Secretary Spellings reiterated that literacy and numeracy remain foundational to all postsecondary journeys—college, career, or military—and emphasized that national progress in achievement slowed once attention drifted from these fundamentals.

Cantú-Wilson asked how to engage business and economic development leaders in addressing barriers such as childcare and transportation, which impede adult participation in workforce pathways. Secretary Spellings agreed that employers have compelling reasons to engage and noted that AI-driven workforce changes will only intensify these pressures. She cited examples of regional cross-agency initiatives that align education, workforce, and childcare efforts, arguing that such models are powerful and scalable.

Gonzales sought Secretary Spellings' thoughts on how to strengthen the capacity of local school boards, noting their significant role in the decentralized U.S. education system. Secretary Spellings responded that strong accountability systems—with transparency and consequences tied to local decision-making—are essential. She argued that local control must be paired with high standards and relentless sunlight on outcomes, including school choice programs where applicable.

Reynolds expressed concerns about under-participation by private schools in NAEP despite the expansion of school choice. Secretary Spellings suggested exploring regional sampling models—similar to TUDA—that could provide insight into the performance of students participating in choice programs, even if individual school comparisons remain impractical.

Kelly followed by asking how NAEP can fulfill its legal charge to report on what America's students know as the population of students outside traditional public schools grows and statutory exclusions persist. Secretary Spellings acknowledged the complexity and political sensitivity of the issue and advised the Board to focus on

maximizing what is currently possible while continuing to elevate the value proposition of public education.

Burk focused on improving the evaluation and accountability components of the federal CLSD (Comprehensive Literacy State Development) grants, given their scale and importance to early literacy. Secretary Spellings recommended using federal waiver authority more strategically to provide states flexibility in exchange for stronger outcome reporting and accountability. She encouraged assembling coalitions of willing states to lead such efforts.

Routten asked how to address out of school factors—such as lack of early reading, absenteeism, and behavior—that influence achievement but fall outside classroom control. Secretary Spellings emphasized the need for leadership that elevates such data publicly and learns from districts successfully moving attendance and engagement metrics, noting that absenteeism has become a nationwide crisis.

Sidebotham wanted to know Secretary Spellings' response to maintaining a strong civil rights focus—historically central to federal education policy—within today's more delicate political climate. Secretary Spellings stressed that civil rights protections and achievement-gap transparency remain core federal responsibilities and that leaders must frame measurement as an expression of caring enough to know how students are doing.

Scott Marion posed another question, seeking Secretary Spellings's reaction to the recently released IES 2.0 report and recommendations for strengthening the federal research role. She affirmed the importance of IES and centralized federal research and said the federal government is uniquely positioned to collect nationwide data which states and universities cannot obtain independently.

Ashe asked how to strengthen alignment between K–12 and postsecondary systems to ensure students graduate prepared for modern workforce pathways. Secretary Spellings identified increased rigor and equitable access to advanced coursework as essential, noting longstanding disparities in course offerings between schools. She argued that states must use technology, funding alignment, and—in some cases—school consolidation to expand access to rigorous coursework.

Reginald McGregor probed about workforce challenges facing small and medium sized businesses, especially shortages created by childcare barriers. Secretary Spellings emphasized the importance of localized, cross-sector partnerships, referencing city-level initiatives that coordinate childcare access, tax incentives, and workforce development under unified leadership.

Cantú-Wilson added that state level coordination across workforce, education, and early childhood agencies can strengthen pipelines for both childcare workers and K12

teachers. Secretary Spellings cited Arkansas as a state that has consolidated governance structures effectively to support such alignment.

Michael Pope later asked how DoDEA schools can better prepare students who eventually reenter U.S. education and workforce systems. Secretary Spellings referenced successful military-family support models in regions like Fort Hood and recommended identifying scalable practices that can aid transitioning students.

Finally, Marion wondered what Secretary Spellings would preserve and what she would revise if she could revisit No Child Left Behind after two decades. She responded that she would have designed more realistic and thoughtful consequences for schools not meeting targets and exercised greater caution around policies affecting teachers, as these shifts accelerated backlash against assessment and accountability.

Chair White and Muldoon closed by thanking Secretary Spellings for her candid reflections and leadership. Secretary Spellings expressed her continued enthusiasm for NAEP and encouraged the Board to monitor the release of the Bipartisan Policy Center Commission's national talent strategy.

### Next Generation NAEP

The agenda's final session focused on the Next Generation NAEP initiative. Chair White opened the discussion by underscoring its significance for the future of NAEP and invited Muldoon to present. Muldoon framed the initiative as an effort to modernize the NAEP program while protecting its "gold standard" status and long-standing trend lines, particularly in mathematics and reading. She emphasized the challenge of making thoughtful changes to a complex program and noted recent modernization milestones, including the 2026 administration's successful delivery of assessments on school devices.

Muldoon reviewed the initiative's overarching goals: (1) shortening timelines to expedite reporting and achieve cost efficiencies; (2) keeping pace with technological advances to strengthen delivery systems and improve access to data (including appropriate consideration of artificial intelligence); and (3) expanding state-level results in subjects beyond grade 4 and 8 reading and math while minimizing burden on schools and students. She explained that the initiative is informed by years of Board, NCES, and external reflection—such as National Academies work on economizing and successive Board strategic visions—and is timed to precede planning for the next round of NAEP contracts.

To guide and pressure-test ideas, the Board has formed an advisory committee of experts across policy, measurement, assessment technology, and AI, alongside key end users. Muldoon highlighted that Matt Soldner (Acting IES Director and Acting NCES

Commissioner), Vice Chair Marty West, and herself—serve on the committee to ensure strong ties with Board and NCES activities.

Muldoon outlined a phased plan. Phase 1, the discovery phase currently underway, comprises interviews with leaders in state education agencies and TUDA districts, testing and technology experts, policy researchers, advocates, and media, including journalists who use NAEP data. Deliverables for this phase include an initial “system map” of NAEP’s key processes and stakeholders (at a conceptual rather than operational level), a set of narrowed priorities for the year-long effort, and a roadmap for subsequent prototyping, which the Board will review at the May quarterly meeting.

Phase 2 will prototype solutions. While “prototype” may evoke products such as a revamped report card site, Muldoon clarified that prototypes may also be processes, such as streamlined approaches to framework and item development. In August, the Board will engage directly with prototypes and weigh in on design priorities for reporting tools, the role of AI, and refined models for accelerated framework and item-development processes.

Phase 3, described as application, will translate promising innovations into NAEP’s context. By the end of Phase 3, the team expects to present draft recommendations on priority innovations and a draft implementation roadmap, acknowledging that changes may implicate Board policy updates, operational adjustments across the Board and NCES, and business process improvements across the NAEP ecosystem. This third phase will lead to publications about lessons learned for other assessment programs. The Board tentatively plans deliberation in November 2026, leading to refined recommendations for consideration at the March 2027 meeting.

Muldoon detailed a robust engagement strategy with state education agencies—including chiefs, assessment directors, and NAEP coordinators—as well as national organizations and TUDA districts. The team anticipates hosting public comment periods, first in the summer during prototyping and again after the November Board meeting, to gather feedback from a broad array of stakeholders. Vendor engagement will be structured, in coordination with the Department’s contracts office, through mechanisms such as an industry day or RFIs, with an explicit commitment to transparency so future contracting is fair and competitive.

Board discussion followed. Vice Chair West commended Muldoon’s careful work to align the effort with appropriate government rules and principles and noted the advisory committee’s strong participation. Gonzales urged inclusion of student perspectives within the human-centered design approach, particularly during Phase 1’s discovery interviews, and suggested framing around “emergent technology” rather than solely “AI” to future-proof terminology.

McGregor emphasized the nonlinearity of design work, advocating time for iteration that may loop back to discovery, and raised the need for security measures when engaging external experts in an AI context. Cantú-Wilson praised the design thinking approach, encouraging direct leadership and common sense prioritization over contractor-driven processes, and noted the importance of feedback cycles within the timeline.

Guillermo Solano-Flores called for more explicit articulation of the initiative’s conceptual foundation. He recommended dedicated time for conceptualization about new ways of looking at assessment and proposed commissioning white papers to anchor innovation in strong theory, including how to view and handle AI and understand the limitations of current practice. Muldoon acknowledged the tension between pursuing one ambitious goal versus multiple “nuts and bolts” improvements and indicated that, given the undertaking and broad involvement, a more ambitious target would be preferred, while recognizing the need to engage the Board on this choice in the coming weeks.

Further discussion addressed scope boundaries. Enis Dogan of NCEC suggested clarifying “what this is not” to sharpen understanding. Muldoon responded that the effort does not seek to completely redo NAEP or fundamentally change its purpose; stakeholders value the program’s trends and comparability over time. West added that the initiative is not about changing any single element in isolation but rather considering the entire program and its interrelated processes.

In closing, Chair White highlighted the importance of in-person participation at the upcoming May 14–15 meeting in Washington, D.C. Muldoon thanked Board staff who contributed to the meeting’s success. Chair White commended staff for a national op-ed underscoring NAEP’s importance and, after confirming no further business, adjourned the session at 11:52 a.m.

*The March 6, 2026 session of the National Assessment Governing Board Quarterly Meeting went off record at 11:52 a.m. CST.*

**National Assessment Governing Board**  
**Assessment Development Committee**  
**Report of February 26, 2026**

**CLOSED SESSION**

**Assessment Development Committee (ADC) Members:** Patrick Kelly (Chair), Christine Cunningham (Vice Chair), Lisa Ashe, Kymyona Burk, Anna King.

**ADC Members Absent:** Shari Camhi, Nardi Routten, Jared Solomon.

**National Assessment Governing Board Staff:** Sharyn Rosenberg, Angela Scott.

**National Center for Education Statistics (NCES):** Gina Ruehl.

**Other attendees:**

American Institutes for Research (AIR): Christina Davis. Educational Testing Service (ETS): Debby Almonte, Terran Brown, Marcel Ionescu, Madeleine Keehner. Manhattan Strategy Group: Monica Johnson, Joanne Lim. Michigan Department of Education: Brian Lloyd. Westat: Rima Zobayan.

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The Assessment Development Committee (ADC) met virtually in open session on Thursday, February 26, from 4:00 – 5:00 pm EST. Vice Chair Christine Cunningham called the meeting to order at 4:05 pm EST.

**Review of Subject-Specific Contextual Variables for 2028 NAEP Science Assessment at Grade 8**

Cunningham reminded ADC members that the contextual variable review materials were posted on a secure platform in advance of the meeting. Comments were sent to Sharyn Rosenberg in advance for discussion at this meeting. ADC members engaged in discussion of the comments and questionnaires and determined what changes to request from NCES. ADC comments were submitted to NCES and ETS staff shortly after the meeting concluded.

The meeting adjourned at 4:57 pm EST.

I certify the accuracy of these minutes.



Patrick Kelly, Chair

March 24, 2026

Date

**National Assessment Governing Board**  
**Committee on Standards, Design and Methodology**  
**Report of March 9, 2026**

**Committee on Standards, Design and Methodology (COSDAM) Members:** Suzanne Lane (Chair), Scott Marion (Vice Chair), Danielle Gonzalez, Michael Sidebotham, Guillermo Solano-Flores.

**COSDAM Members Absent:** Jhone Ebert, Michael Pope.

**National Assessment Governing Board Staff:** Rebecca Dvorak, Stephaan Harris, Laura LoGerfo, Lesley Muldoon, Sharyn Rosenberg, Angela Scott, Joshua Warzecha.

**National Center for Education Statistics (NCES):** Jing Chen, Brian Cramer, Enis Doga, Janel Gill, Alex McMillan, Gina Ruehl, Ebony Walton, Yan Wang.

**Other attendees:** AIR: Markus Broer, Marty Hooper, Young Yee Kim; ETS: Amy Dresher, Helena Jia; Pearson: Scott Becker, Susan Lottridge, Paula Rios, Pat Stearns, Brian Strauss.

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The Committee on Standards, Design and Methodology (COSDAM) met in closed session on Monday, March 9, 2026, in a virtual setting. Due to technical difficulties experienced by Suzanne Lane (Chair), Becky Dvorak, Assistant Director for Psychometrics, acted as facilitator and called the meeting to order at 9:38 am EDT.

Under the provisions of exemption 9(B) of 552b of Title 5 U.S.C., this meeting was closed to allow presentation of non-public preliminary data and item information, and discussion of planned procurement activities.

**Automated Scoring of Reading Constructed Response Items in 2026**

Susan Lottridge, Executive Partner of Automated Scoring at Pearson, shared the models prepared for automated scoring of NAEP Reading constructed-response items for the 2026 administration. She described the process used by Pearson's Intelligent Essay Assessor (IEA) transformer language model to generate a score comparable to human scoring, and the evaluation criteria used to determine the item-level model fit. Pearson evaluates the reliability of IEA using the industry standard acceptance criteria for quadratic weighted kappa (QWK) and absolute standardized mean difference (SMD). They also examine the difference between Human to IEA and Human to Human QWK to examine the comparability between the reliability of human-to-human scoring and IEA -to-human scoring.

Lottridge presented findings from the evaluation – including an overall summary of item performance and a selection of item-level statistics to illustrate the evaluation process. The findings revealed the IEA model was successful for almost all items.

Lane inquired about the use of the same evaluation criteria regardless of number of item score-points; Lottridge reported that these statistics have been found to be robust across variations of score-points. Dvorak added that, in addition to QWK and SMD, the percent agreement between IEA-to-human and human-to-human scores were compared to determine if select score points would benefit from human scoring. Scott Marion inquired about examining reliability statistics by subgroup. Lottridge noted these were not evaluated at that level, and Enis Dogan (NCES) pointed out that the findings were so strong he would not expect to see differentiation. Guillermo Solano-Flores noted Pearson could consider using generalizability theory to examine human versus IEA as sources of variance as an additional way to further examine any differences.

### **NAEP Achievement Levels Overview and Planning**

Prior to the session on achievement levels, Dvorak requested all contractors leave the meeting – only Governing Board members and government staff were permitted to allow the discussion of upcoming procurement activities.

Dvorak began the session with a brief overview of the NAEP Achievement Levels. She described the role of the Governing Board, and specifically COSDAM, in their development and maintenance. Dvorak reminded COSDAM members that achievement level descriptions (ALDs) are specific expectations about student knowledge and skills in a particular content area, at each achievement level, for each subject and grade. NAEP defines different types of ALDs; they are developed for the NAEP frameworks to define what students performing at each level *should* know and be able to do to help guide test development and inform cut scores (e.g., the scores required to reach each achievement level), and more detailed Reporting ALDs are developed based on assessment data informing the broader public what students performing at each level *likely* know and can do.

Dvorak noted that the Board policy calls for updating the Reporting ALDs when a new framework is implemented, which is relevant for the 2026 administration of NAEP Reading and Math at grades 4 and 8. Dvorak provided an update on upcoming procurement activities to revise the Reporting ALDs.

Marion expressed the need to monitor the scope of changes that occur when Reporting ALDs are updated because significant changes may require revisiting the achievement level cut scores. Dvorak noted that, based on the framework updates, the modifications for 2026 are not expected to require a change in cut scores – though she agreed it is always important to be mindful of such changes. A study of Reporting ALDs that included a validity component occurred in 2022 and is expected again in 2028.



## National Assessment Governing Board

### Executive Committee Meeting

Report of February 17, 2026

#### OPEN SESSION

**Executive Committee Members:** Marty West (Vice Chair), Christine Cunningham, Suzanne Lane, Scott Marion, Reginald McGregor, Julia Rafal-Baer, Michelle Cantú-Wilson.

**Executive Committee Members Absent:** Mark White (Chair), Patrick Kelly.

**National Assessment Governing Board Members:** Lisa Ashe, Phil Bryant, Shari Camhi, Angélica Infante-Green, Danielle Gonzales, Michael Pope, Nardi Routten, Guillermo Solano-Flores.

**National Assessment Governing Board Staff:** Lesley Muldoon (Executive Director), Elizabeth Schneider (Deputy Executive Director), Rebecca Dvorak, Stephaan Harris, Laura LoGerfo, Sharyn Rosenberg, Josh Warzecha.

**National Center for Education Statistics (NCES):** Jing Chen, Enis Dogan, Gina Ruehl, Ebony Walton, Yan Wang.

**U.S. Department of Education:** Carter Volz (Budget Service).

**Other attendees:** Bose Public Affairs: Jack Carter; Connecticut Department of Education: Renee Savoie; Council of Great City Schools: Ray Hart, Akisha Osei Sarfo; Education Testing Service (ETS): Amy Dresher, Ranu Palta-Upreti; Industry Dive: Naaz Modan; Lerner Communications: Michelle Lerner; Virginia Department of Education: Latosha Branch.

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#### **Welcome and Opening Remarks**

The Executive Committee met in open session from 4:00 – 4:30 pm EST and was called to order by Vice Chair Martin West. West welcomed members, explaining that Chair Mark White was absent due to legislative business in Tennessee. West noted two items on the meeting agenda and invited Executive Director Lesley Muldoon to begin.

## **Executive Director Update**

Muldoon reported that NCES staff are conducting follow-up work on changes in K-12 education patterns and their implications for the NAEP sample, a topic discussed at the November quarterly meeting. Engagement with states and districts on this issue remains an ongoing priority. She noted that the 2026 NAEP administration is underway and that work on the NextGen NAEP initiative is progressing as well.

## **Update on TUDA Eligibility Criteria**

In November 2025, the Executive Committee asked staff to review the eligibility criteria and TUDA policy to determine what updates might be needed. Muldoon posed several questions for consideration, including changing the name from Trial Urban District Assessment to Trends in Urban District Assessment, addressing regional representation in the policy, and including a provision related to eligibility of districts whose participation has been disrupted. She noted the need to approve an updated policy in May 2026 so NCES can secure commitments from districts to participate in NAEP 2028 by November 2026.

Michelle Cantú-Wilson asked whether districts must meet the 50%+ minority population and/or eligibility for free/reduced price lunch (FRPL). Muldoon clarified that the policy requires that districts meet “at least one” of the criteria though it has been operationalized such that districts meet both criteria.

Scott Marion expressed appreciation for the information provided and discussion to date on this topic. He observed that getting rid of the “trial” name of the program could help with recruitment and suggested the Board prioritize states and regions (like the Pacific northwest), where there is no current TUDA participation. He referenced the [Education Recovery Scorecard](#), which uses district-level estimates from the Stanford Education Data Archive (SEDA) project. Marion recommended that expanding to other regions would help SEDA, which in turn would help improve the usefulness of NAEP data. Marion also thought it suitable to retain the 50%+ criteria for minority population or FRPL, or even to increase that to 75%.

West noted that one option for the eligibility criteria would be not to set a fixed level and require districts to exceed the national average.

Cantú-Wilson asked why districts have chosen to discontinue participation in TUDA. Muldoon replied that reasons vary and that staff are working with the Council of the Great City Schools to understand relevant explanatory factors. Sometimes there are concerns if state data diverge from patterns seen in NAEP data. Districts like Milwaukee

returned after a break in participation; indeed, Shelby County, Tennessee, would like to return. Cantú-Wilson wondered whether Board policy should be silent about or openly prioritize the return of districts whose participation was interrupted, indicating she would be eager to hear the perspective of members working in districts. Jhone Ebert responded that Las Vegas remains committed to TUDA participation but that the school board could always change and thus change the district's willingness to participate.

Julia Rafal-Baer suggested that if the word "trial" was removed from the program, it could provide an opportunity to re-brand and talk about the program differently, reigniting enthusiasm for it.

Reginald McGregor added that changing circumstances in districts might make participation undesirable at a given moment. West noted that NAEP is more valuable for the district if there is a past record of participation even if interrupted.

Muldoon then shifted the conversation to 2028 NAEP. The program is not as constrained as in the recent past and there is an opportunity to add districts to TUDA for 2028.

Julia Rafal-Baer expressed concern about justifying more assessment unless people feel that it adds something materially different from extant state and district assessments. She wondered what the value proposition for TUDA participation might be.

West asked if the program has interpreted the minimum population criteria of 250K or more as requiring that districts be part of a Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) of that size, noting that Fairfax County, Virginia, part of the DC MSA, has more than a million students but is not a TUDA. Board staff member Laura LoGerfo responded that in practice the criteria have been interpreted that the district must be in the limits of the city that is the basis for the MSA. The census definition is not helpful as it reflects only population, not density. Marion noted that Gwinnett County, Georgia, has more students, albeit a different student composition, than Atlanta.

West thanked members for a thoughtful discussion of the issues, underscoring the support for the name change, the value of bringing additional states into the sample, and good arguments on both sides about prioritizing districts with interrupted participation, suggesting updating the policy will compel further discussion on all issues. The updated policy will guide identifying new districts to invite to participate in TUDA 2028. West also observed openness to changing the requirement that districts be able to participate in three NAEP subject assessments at the same time and some interest in adjusting the FRPL criteria.

Governor Phil Bryant asked whether NAEP Civics was ever administered at the TUDA level. West responded in the negative, to which Bryant suggested there may be value to Congress and others in determining how to teach civics better.

## **CLOSED SESSION**

**Executive Committee Members:** Marty West (Vice Chair), Christine Cunningham, Patrick Kelly, Suzanne Lane, Scott Marion, Reginald McGregor, Julia Rafal-Baer, Michelle Cantú-Wilson.

**Executive Committee Members Absent:** Mark White (Chair).

**National Assessment Governing Board Members:** Lisa Ashe, Phil Bryant, Shari Camhi, Angélica Infante-Green, Danielle Gonzales, Michael Pope, Nardi Routten, Guillermo Solano-Flores.

**National Assessment Governing Board Staff:** Lesley Muldoon (Executive Director), Elizabeth Schneider (Deputy Executive Director), Rebecca Dvorak, Stephaan Harris, Laura LoGerfo, Sharyn Rosenberg, Josh Warzecha.

**National Center for Education Statistics (NCES):** Jing Chen, Enis Dogan, Gina Ruehl, Ebony Walton, Yan Wang.

**U.S. Department of Education:** Carter Volz (Budget Service).

After a brief break, Vice Chair Marty West started the closed session of the meeting at 4:45 pm EST.

This session was closed because the discussion could have impacted current and future NAEP contracts and budgets and thus must be kept confidential. Disclosure of this confidential information would significantly impede implementation of the NAEP assessment program if conducted in open session. Such matters are protected by exemption 9(B) of the Government Sunshine Act, [5 U.S.C. 552b](#).

## **NAEP Assessment Schedule Discussion**

West summarized the Executive Committee's discussions about the NAEP assessment schedule during the previous week's working session. He noted that for several years the Board has asked Congress to approve a shift back to odd-year administration of main NAEP. West expressed interest in re-connecting with Congressional staffers after the March quarterly board meeting to share a clear, compelling vision for the future assessment schedule that might make action on their part more likely. He invited Lesley to open the discussion.

Muldoon noted the committee's affirmation of the Board's continued interest in expanding state level assessment, given the utility of state level data. The Board discussed issues related to state participation in voluntary assessments, interest in civics from key stakeholders, and the importance of working closely with states and other stakeholders about any changes to the assessment schedule.

At 6:00 pm EST, Vice Chair West adjourned the meeting.

I certify the accuracy of these minutes.



March 27, 2026

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Marty West (Vice Chair)

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Date

# National Assessment Governing Board Nominations Committee Virtual Meeting

## Report of February 10, 2026

### CLOSED SESSION

**Nominations Committee Members:** Reginald McGregor (Chair), Lisa Ashe, Angélica Infante-Green, Patrick Kelly, Suzanne Lane, Ron Reynolds, Nardi Routten.

**Nominations Committee Members Absent:** Scott Marion.

**National Assessment Governing Board Staff:** Lesley Muldoon (Executive Director), Elizabeth Schneider (Deputy Executive Director).

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Under the provisions of exemptions 2 and 6 of § 552b (c) of Title 5 U.S.C., the Nominations Committee met in closed session on Thursday, February 10, 2026, from 5:00 to 6:00 p.m. (ET). Chair McGregor called the meeting to order at 5:00 pm to discuss the following agenda topics:

- Review of Nominees
- Preparation for Closed Discussion of the Slate of Nominees at March Board Meeting
- Questions and Comments

After welcoming members, McGregor noted Scott Marion's absence but expressed appreciation for his review and scoring of applicants in two categories. He then called on subgroup leaders to provide summaries of each nominee on their slates and share how they arrived at the decisions. The categories discussed were:

- Curriculum Specialist
- Eighth Grade Teacher
- Fourth Grade Teacher
- General Public Representative (Parent Leader)
- Secondary School Principal

There was a discrepancy in regard to the finalists in the Curriculum Specialist category and it was agreed that staff would consult with all subcommittee members to confirm the names, circulate the information to all committee members, and that committee

members would reply via email with their vote. Action was taken to approve the finalists in each of the other categories.

McGregor reminded members that subcommittee leaders will present the finalists in each category in a closed session on March 6, after which time votes would be taken on each slate, with incumbents abstaining from votes on their slate. He thanked the staff and all members for their work. The meeting was adjourned at 6:00 p.m.

I certify the accuracy of these minutes.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Reginald McGregor". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'R'.

04/27/2026

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Reginald McGregor, Chair

Date

**National Assessment Governing Board**  
**Reporting and Dissemination Committee**  
**Report of March 10, 2026**

**Reporting and Dissemination Committee (R&D) Members:** Julia Rafal-Baer (Chair), Michelle Cantú-Wilson (Vice Chair), Governor Phil Bryant, Angélica Infante-Green, Reginald McGregor, Ron Reynolds, Darein Spann, Marty West.

**National Assessment Governing Board Members:** Suzanne Lane, Scott Marion.

**National Assessment Governing Board Staff:** Laura LoGerfo, Stephaan Harris, Lesley Muldoon, Joshua Warzecha.

**National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) Staff:** Brian Cramer, Jing Chen, Enis Dogan, Alex McMillan, Gina Ruehl, Ebony Walton, Yan Wang.

**Other attendees:** American Institutes for Research (AIR): Markus Broer. Council of Chief State School Officers: Ben Erwin. Council of the Great City Schools: Akisha Osei Sarfo. Educational Testing Service (ETS): Peter Ciemins, Amy Drescher, Madeline Keehner, Robert Finnegan, Victoria Tanaka. K-12 Dive: Naaz Modan. Lerner Communications: Michelle Lerner, Ashley Zanchelli. Management Strategies: Brandon Dart. Manhattan Strategy Group (MSG): Melissa Cristler, Monica Johnson. NAEP State Coordinators: Latosh Branch (Virginia), Beth LaDuca (Oregon), Regina Lewis (Maine), Brian Lloyd (Michigan), Renee Savoie (Connecticut). Olivet Middle School: Meghan Loughlin. Other: Norbert Tchiadje Tchoua (Kesmonds International University), Traniessa Wright (unaffiliated). Pearson: Tim O’Neil, Pat Stearns. Westat: Marcie Hickman, Tom Krenzke, Rima Zobayan.

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Reporting and Dissemination (R&D) Committee Chair Julia Rafal-Baer called the meeting to order at 1:33 pm EDT. She began the open session by welcoming everyone and acknowledging the chair and vice chair from the Committee on Standards, Design and Methodology (COSDAM) who were attending the meeting.

Rafal-Baer congratulated COSDAM Chair Scott Marion on his reappointment to the Board and expressed excitement that Michelle Cantú-Wilson agreed to serve as the

R&D Committee's vice chair. Rafal-Baer also thanked Cantú-Wilson for organizing and hosting the quarterly board meeting in Houston the previous week.

### **Chair and Vice Chair Remarks**

Rafal-Baer then turned to sharing her top priority for the R&D Committee this year: ensuring the public can understand the importance of NAEP and within that focus, center the parent perspective and experience. Inspired by the participants on the Texas outreach panel, Rafal-Baer emphasized the importance of partnerships with organizations in achieving this goal. Partners can use and explain NAEP data in ways that the Board cannot accomplish alone.

Cantú-Wilson agreed, endorsing the need to develop partnerships. When she talks with audiences about education in Texas, such as the Texas Workforce Commission, she does not need to convince them of the importance of data generally and NAEP specifically. They already believe it. Cantú-Wilson sees board meetings outside of Washington, DC as a powerful way to engage people with NAEP and galvanize communities to embrace data and improve student learning. A visit from the Board serves as a symbol of recognition and a valuable opportunity to learn best practices.

### **Strategic Communications Update**

Laura LoGerfo, Assistant Director for Reporting and Analysis, updated the committee on communications activities since the last meeting in November 2025.

When the Governing Board and NCES released the 2024 NAEP grade 8 Science results and the Grade 12 reading and math results in September 2025, the federal government shut down days later. This delayed the usual schedule of follow-up presentations and dissemination efforts. However, once the government reopened in mid-November, that work resumed. One product of that work included a LinkedIn Live hosted by Bellwether. The well-attended session featured current Governing Board member, Kymyona Burk, former Governing Board member, Carol Jago, and LoGerfo discussing NAEP results, suggesting ways to strengthen reading skills from home activities to state policy, and fielding questions from viewers.

LoGerfo shared that Board staff and NCES staff have worked with journalists from *The Wall Street Journal*, *The New York Times*, *New York* magazine, and *The Atlantic* to answer queries, check data analyses, and help interpret results. Board members saw their op-eds placed in the *Washington Post*, *Education Week*, EdNC, Principal Magazine, and the *Santa Fe New Mexican*. This reflects both the broad reach of posts beyond education sector publications and the deeper relationships being developed with journalists whose beats intersect with NAEP.

Similarly, blogs over the last three months indicate wide interest in NAEP efforts. A blog posted by Matthew Soldner, acting Commissioner of the National Center for Education Statistics, and Lesley Muldoon, Governing Board Executive Director, elicited attention for announcing the launch of the NAEP 2026 administration and explaining differences between the 2024 and 2026 NAEP assessments, e.g., new NAEP Reading and NAEP Mathematics Frameworks. The *Education Gadfly* ran Muldoon's description of the Next Generation NAEP effort, which was also featured in the Fordham Institute's weekly newsletter. Marty West and Patrick Kelly, who chairs the Assessment Development Committee, kicked off the process to update the NAEP Civics Assessment Framework with an op-ed in *Education Next*.

The public comment period for the Civics Assessment Framework opened in mid-February and will remain open through March. Those interested in providing feedback about if and how the framework should change must submit their thoughts by March 27. In January, Vice Chair Marty West testified about NAEP to the Alaska state legislature, coincidentally at the same time as some Alaska students were taking NAEP.

LoGerfo concluded her presentation by anticipating next steps for the Board's communications team. The first step is completing an audit of the Governing Board's website, with the goal of refreshing and reorganizing the site. Additionally, Board staff and Lerner communications will update one-pagers with achievement level descriptions pegged to content and skills to reflect the new reading and mathematics frameworks.

In April, LoGerfo will send the Long-Term Trend report card site as well as a draft release plan to the committee members for their review. The release plan will be drafted based on R&D members' feedback and will be disseminated via email for review prior to approving it at the R&D meeting in May. Rafal-Baer then will present the approved plan to the full board at the May quarterly board meeting for a vote in plenary session.

LoGerfo invited questions and reactions from board members. Scott Marion suggested case studies of TUDAs or states that use NAEP data in exemplary ways, which could spotlight what strategies are most replicable and potentially effective. Cantú-Wilson concurred: A case study can unearth what a given TUDA did, how they did it, and with what outcomes, which would point to whom the Board should engage first. Suzanne Lane endorsed the prospect of case studies and advised that case studies' length, scope, and depth of information should vary by stakeholders' interests. Different topics could be destined for different audiences, e.g., case studies about setting cut scores could be aimed at state assessment directors.

Rafal-Baer mentioned how John White, the former state chief of Louisiana, used NAEP to drive efforts to transform teacher training, school curricula, and the state assessment system. State chiefs familiar with NAEP use the results to propel conversation and

initiate and sustain education improvements. Rafal-Baer urged committee members to consider this approach -- and specific partners such as [Hanna Skandera at the Daniels Foundation](#) -- as the Board seeks support for state-level NAEP Civics.

Rafal-Baer also requested more information on engagement in webinars, e.g., data on the number who attended and who asked questions. She praised this medium as an approachable way to present the results and as well-aligned with the Board's strategic aspirations. Ron Reynolds echoed this feedback and asked about analyzing the number of impressions and/or engagements from the Board's social media channels given key NAEP events. He also asked who views the Governing Board's newsletter.

Rafal-Baer ended the open session by proposing the Board consider other social media channels for disseminating information about NAEP. People generally consume content in short durations, if they even click on videos longer than a few seconds. Instagram is a good example of a media space where the Board could pursue new avenues and new audiences.

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## CLOSED SESSION

**Reporting and Dissemination Committee (R&D) Members:** Julia Rafal-Baer (Chair), Michelle Cantú-Wilson (Vice Chair), Governor Phil Bryant, Angélica Infante-Green, Reginald McGregor, Ron Reynolds, Darein Spann, Marty West.

**National Assessment Governing Board Members:** Suzanne Lane, Scott Marion.

**National Assessment Governing Board Staff:** Laura LoGerfo, Stephaan Harris, Lesley Muldoon, Joshua Warzecha.

**National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) Staff:** Brian Cramer, Jing Chen, Enis Dogan, Alex McMillan, Gina Ruehl, Ebony Walton, Yan Wang.

**Other attendees:** American Institutes for Research (AIR): Markus Broer. Educational Testing Service (ETS): Peter Ciemins, Amy Drescher, Madeline Keehner, Robert Finnegan, Victoria Tanaka. Lerner Communications: Michelle Lerner, Ashley Zanchelli. Manhattan Strategy Group (MSG): Melissa Cristler, Monica Johnson. Pearson: Tim O'Neil, Pat Stearns. Westat: Marcie Hickman, Tom Krenzke, Rima Zobayan.

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The R&D Committee then moved to closed session to discuss releasing and reporting results from the 2025 Long-Term Trend (LTT) assessments, in reading and mathematics, for ages 9 and 13.

The discussion included Long-Term Trend findings, which are not yet released. Unreleased NAEP results must be embargoed because they constitute confidential and secure federal statistical information protected under exemption 9(B) of the Government Sunshine Act (5 U.S.C. 552b). Embargoed briefings are closed to prevent premature disclosure of national assessment data, and no one may discuss or reveal results until the official public release.

The R&D Committee members discussed very preliminary results briefly and shared initial thoughts for the release plan. LoGerfo suggested a video highlighting important results, similar to what the Board and NCES did for the September 2025 release of the grade 8 NAEP Science assessment results and the grade 12 reading and math results. The video could focus on the 55-year throughline of the LTT trendlines, reminding audiences of the evolving education context since the 1970s, a then/now perspective. As always, the release will include plans for well-placed op-eds distilling the results for the public and for more specific audiences such as state legislators and TUDA superintendents.

Rafal-Baer adjourned the meeting at 2:40pm.

I hereby certify the accuracy of these minutes.

*Julia Rafal-Baer*

***3/26/26***

\_\_\_\_\_  
Julia Rafal-Baer, Chair

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date