



The Nation's Report Card and 12th Grade Academic Preparedness

Regional Symposium

Transcript: October 24, 2011
Boston, Massachusetts

NAEP—the National Assessment of Educational Progress—is also known as The Nation's Report Card. Congressionally authorized and funded since 1969, NAEP reports to the public on the status and progress of student achievement in core subjects at grades 4, 8, and 12.

The National Assessment Governing Board that oversees NAEP is conducting a comprehensive program of research to transform it into an indicator of 12th grade academic preparedness for college and job training.

The Governing Board established the NAEP 12th Grade Preparedness Commission to raise public awareness of the Governing Board's planned research program on 12th grade preparedness, the research results, and the potential of NAEP 12th grade data as an indicator of academic preparedness for postsecondary education and training.

As a part of this work, the Commission is conducting a series of symposia around the nation with leaders in K-12 and higher education, business, civil rights, and legislative policy. This is a record of the symposium conducted on October 24, 2011 in Boston, Massachusetts.

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PRESIDING

Governor Ronnie Musgrove

Chair, NAEP 12th Grade Preparedness Commission

Former Governor of Mississippi

PANEL

David Driscoll

Former Massachusetts Commissioner of Elementary and Secondary Education

Chair, National Assessment Governing Board

Governor Deval Patrick

Governor, Commonwealth of Massachusetts

Maura Banta

Chair, Massachusetts Board of Elementary and Secondary Education

Mitchell Chester

Massachusetts Commissioner of Elementary and Secondary Education

Richard Freeland

Massachusetts Commissioner of Higher Education

Representative Alice Peisch

House Chair, Joint Committee on Education, Massachusetts Legislature

Paul Reville

Massachusetts Secretary of Education

Darvin Winick

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Former Chairman, Hudson School Board (New Hampshire)

Susan Pimentel

Member, National Assessment Governing Board

Curriculum and Standards Specialist

David Driscoll:

I'm Dave Driscoll, former Massachusetts commissioner of education, and delighted to welcome you here this morning. We will be making a presentation to set the context, but primarily, we really want to hear from you. We are having a series of forums across the country. We were in California, and now we're here in Massachusetts, and we really do want to hear your views on what we could do to make our research on preparedness –academic preparedness – of high school kids better.

We use the word preparedness, as opposed to readiness, and it may be semantics in some ways. It was the National Assessment Governing Board's thinking that you could determine whether someone has been academically prepared, but it's pretty hard to determine whether someone is ready, since it can get into some subjective areas. You'll see in your packet a blue report of the 12th Grade Commission on NAEP Assessment and Reporting, which I served on and which I'm sorry to see was 2002. Seems like last year. But we began back then talking about the issue of whether or not, since we were testing kids in grades four and eight, whether we should test kids in grade 12. And of course, the sort of common sense immediate reaction of everyone about 12th grade NAEP is, "Well, how hard would they try?"

And motivation—and you'll see it in the report—motivation was a major focus. While there still is a concern, and we've actually had focus groups with kids—interestingly enough, the results have been pretty consistent—and so there's probably a motivation factor, that we hope to address. But nonetheless, we've gotten very important information. Two very quick things before I introduce the governor: First of all, I think it's worth noting the tremendous relationship between Massachusetts and the National Assessment of Educational Progress, and the National Assessment Governing Board, or NAGB.

Massachusetts has long been an active supporter of NAEP and has agreed to be part of the 12th grade NAEP, agreed to be part of the state results, just as Boston was a part of the TUDA.¹ There's just never been an issue here in Massachusetts. We have embraced it. In fact, thanks to Jeff Nellhaus, it's part of Massachusetts law; the Education Reform Act of '93 indicates that schools and districts will participate in NAEP.

Secondly, of course, it's been a great bellwether for us. I mean we felt for a long time that it set the right high standard, and as you know, we worked hard to see to it that our standards mirrored NAEP. And we're pleased to say that if you look year after year at the results, now that No Child Left Behind has mandated that NAEP be used

¹ The acronym TUDA stands for Trial Urban District Assessment program, which is congressionally authorized to study the feasibility of the National Assessment of Educational Progress reporting on student achievement in large urban districts.

to run alongside state standards, we consistently are the state that is closest to NAEP in terms of percentage at proficient and advanced and so forth. And it's worth noting, we were the first state in 2003 to get the highest scale scores on fourth grade reading, fourth grade math, eighth grade reading, eighth grade math. No state had ever done that before. I took personal credit.

Although Tom Payzant took credit in Boston, so in '03 and '05 and '07 we were fine, but then Commissioner Mitchell Chester comes along and does it again in '09. So I guess it wasn't me.

I have the great privilege of introducing Governor Ronnie Musgrove, and it's always nice to have a legend among us. Governor Musgrove is legendary because he's likely to be the last Democratic governor elected in Mississippi. We know something about Republican governors. It was kind of strange, governor, that you are the Democratic governor from Mississippi and we had all these Republican governors here in Massachusetts. But that's the way we do things.

We've now switched, and I guess you've switched, and that's the way it's going to be. But the governor was a great leader and obviously a great supporter of education during his time as governor in Mississippi. He serves as chair of our NAEP 12th Grade Preparedness Commission, and he was governor from 2000 to 2004, and served two terms as a state senator and also served, no coincidence, as the chairman of the education committee.

He's an attorney with a firm in Mississippi, and as governor of Mississippi, introduced many education reforms that are in place today. He's held numerous leadership positions on national and regional boards and organizations. Governor Musgrove is a former member of the National Assessment Governing Board, and as you will see, he's a strong proponent of public education. It gives me great pleasure to give to you Governor Musgrove.

0:06:08

Governor Musgrove:

Thank you, Dave, for that kind introduction. I want to welcome all of you to this morning's symposium. You are leaders from across the commonwealth of Massachusetts, representatives from K through 12 and higher education, the policy making and legislative arenas, the business community, and the civil rights community here in Massachusetts. I want you to know that even though my accent is not exactly that of a Bostonian, I tell people all the time that I'm from south Boston, which is an absolutely true statement.

About a month ago, I had the privilege of having breakfast with and introducing in Chicago David Axelrod to speak to a group of about 400.

And I explained to him before my introduction that the group was about 90 percent hard right, and in the political arena, I just wanted him to know what he was walking into. So I wanted to give him a nice introduction that would be warm to the public and to the crowd, and I did so. And he thanked everybody, and he said, "To be honest with you, I feel a little bit like Michael Vick at the Westminster Kennel Club this morning." I want you to know, I do not feel that way. Even though I may not understand everything that you're saying, I will listen very closely and intently, and I thank you very much for allowing us to be here.

But you all here today are the people who understand the critical importance to the state, to the region, and to the nation of producing 12th graders who are well-prepared academically. Who are ready for the next step, either college or the workplace. And who understand the necessity of having a trusted indicator to tell us whether we are indeed producing individuals well-prepared to advance our nation's place in the global marketplace and to participate effectively in civic life, and promote collective and individual economic well-being in our country.

This symposium in Massachusetts is one of ten we're conducting across the country, and you may ask; why did the NAEP 12th Grade Preparedness Commission choose Massachusetts? And, as Dave pointed out, because you have been a leader, and you're one of the courageous 11 states who said: "We want to participate in the voluntary 12th grade state assessment."

I want to thank you for being at that forefront. For me, educational opportunity in the public sector is extremely important, and I think it's extremely important for our country. I come from a family that is not untypical in Mississippi for my age. I hope all of you feel that I look like I'm about 38. I am not.

You can be assured—my scars and the gray hair obviously give that away—but I am a first generation college graduate in my family. My mother dropped out of school in the tenth grade. My dad dropped out of school in the eighth grade. I am the first person in my family to graduate from college and to have gone a little step further and graduate from law school. I recognized, for me, the benefit of public education and how important it is. Well, it's just not important to me individually. It's important to us collectively as a country and where we will position ourselves in the next 10, 15, or 20 years—both economically and individually, as far as the well-being and as far as our civic life and our communities. So my involvement in NAEP and what we're trying to do to make sure that 12th graders are prepared, which I believe is the ultimate form of accountability in public education. When a girl or boy walks across the stage to receive their high school diploma, are they prepared to go to the next step? That's the real form of accountability.

This morning, I'd like to thank Linda Noonan and Joe Esposito of the Massachusetts Business Alliance for Education, which is co-sponsoring this morning's event. Your

**NAEP 12th Grade Preparedness Commission:
Symposium on The Nation's Report Card and 12th Grade Academic Preparedness
10.24.2011 Boston, MA**

support is truly appreciated, and Linda and Joe, would you please stand up and let us recognize you this morning?

We're also very appreciative to have you here, the audience, as Massachusetts leaders because you're going to be an integral part of this morning's session. Now you might not have come here thinking that that would be the case, but you really will be.

That's our focus here today--to hear from you about the potential role of the National Assessment of Educational Progress as a 12th grade preparedness indicator; about the research we are doing and its relevance to Massachusetts; and your ideas about the research that the national Governing Board could and should be doing with regard to potential partners in the research.

Our format this morning will be a mix of presentations and discussions with you, the audience. The first half of the morning will include a presentation on our 12th grade NAEP work by Commission advisor Darvin Winick and a panel discussion of the implications of that work for Massachusetts.

The panel is made up of Massachusetts education leaders: Secretary Paul Reville, State Board Chair and businesswoman Maura Banta, Commissioner Mitchell Chester, Higher Education Commissioner Richard Freeland, and state Representative Alice Peisch, co-chair of the Joint Committee on Education, all of whom are very familiar to you. But there will also be time for questions and answers when they get through with their presentation. The presentation by Darv and the panel discussion are intended to be food for thought for the second half of the morning, which will be focused on hearing from you.

We will structure our time for the discussion at your tables on two particular questions that the panel will address and open it up on the floor to hear from you and your comments and your suggestions. Notes will be taken and projected on the screen so that you will see the thought process that is taking place, and everything will be transcribed and taken down. So if you want to make sure for posterity's sake that you can go back and read the transcript, make sure you form your question very well and it's noted, so then you'll be recognized.

Susan Pimentel and Dave Alukonis, members of the National Assessment Governing Board, are with us this morning, and they're on the dais. They're from New Hampshire, close at hand to here. And they will be assisting us in the presentation today and will be handling the two particular questions at the end. Dave Driscoll will then come back and follow up and close out the discussion this morning. I also want to tell you that Governor Patrick will be with us this morning. Because of his packed schedule, his time will be a little limited. So at the time that he arrives, we will stop the presentation to hear from him this morning, and we look forward to that part.

Now I would like to introduce Darv Winick and go ahead and move right into our presentation this morning. Darv is an advisor to us on the NAEP 12th Grade Preparedness Commission. He is a senior research fellow at the University of Texas at Austin and executive director for the Institute for Public School Initiatives at the university. Darv is the previous chair of the National Assessment Governing Board and a longtime leader in Texas education reform.

Also—might tell you as a side note this morning being a great University of Texas supporter—he confided with me this morning at breakfast. He said, “If only the University of Texas could play football this year like Boston College.” I think that is a great, great statement for where we are. Darv, welcome. Look forward to hearing from you.

0:15:10

Darvin Winick:

Governor, thank you for the introduction. Thank you for chairing the Commission. Actually, I have very deep family roots in Massachusetts. My father was an orphan raised in Chelsea a long time ago, went to high school, early high school, in Newbury Port. My wife was born, raised, and graduated high school in Malden. However, I have been advised by other panelists here that now that I live in Texas, given current politics, I should drop any conversation about comparisons between Massachusetts and Texas. So I'll pass beyond that. My job today is to give you a little background.

I'm concerned that you represent a rather informed, experienced audience. So I'll try to move through some of the background— hopefully not too quickly, but I suspect that most of you are pretty well advised about the Governing Board. But in case not, let me go through some kind of elementary background information. The National Assessment Governing Board represented by the logo on the top of your screen is a board set up in law by Congress. Twenty-six members appointed by the secretary of education in a very prescribed method of selection and classification of members.

The law specifically says, and I think I quoted, that the Board shall be independent of the secretary of education, the officers of the Department of Education, and all offices of the Department of Education. Rather interesting and different kind of federal board from many. The Board has the right and the responsibility to appoint commissions. The primary responsibility of the Governing Board, however, is to set the policy, approve the content and the achievement levels of the National Assessment of Educational Progress, the NAEP.

I think as governor – as commissioner – I'm sorry, I promoted you, David. As Commissioner Driscoll pointed out, we have back from my very beginnings an interest in public ed, have watched what Massachusetts does, so we're aware of the relationship between Massachusetts performance and NAEP achievement levels, which among the states are the closest correlations we have, as he pointed out. The

logo for the NAEP in the statement there I think is indicative. The only continuing nationally represented state comparable measure of student achievement. We were set up by Congress to provide that and have stayed quite close to that. NAEP talks about what is happening, not why it's happening, as specified in the law.

The third logo identifies the Commission that is here sponsoring this event with you today. As already pointed out, the history of the Commission is interesting. It grew from a concern going back about ten years about how important it is to know what happens in the 12th grade, and what we should do to better understand.

The National Assessment is very carefully designed to measure performance of states and large groups of students. It does not produce individual student nor individual school results—This is by the direction of Congress.

So let's move on. What is NAEP? Well, it is a highly carefully designed sampling of U.S. student academic performance. It is unique in some ways. It covers, and I think most of you are well aware of this, reading, mathematics—and I won't read it to you—and so on through the various topics. At different times and different intervals since the 1960s, there have been measures of student performance in a wide range of subjects. More recently, as interest in the performance standards grew, the essential obligation of all states to participate in the fourth and eighth grade NAEP is a requirement if you want Title I funds. So that becomes close to a mandate.

What is interesting that I want to mention, those of you who have not kept right up, is we, the National Assessment Governing Board, has added technology and engineering literacy as a new assessment topic. Thus, in 2014, the NAEP assessment will grow in an area of STEM activity, which is very popular. I won't repeat the fact, but Massachusetts has been involved for a considerable time. Just some quick information which you may all be aware of. But if you look at fourth grade NAEP, this is the kind of information that's available to all states and now to some urban districts. And it shows that Massachusetts, on the average, does very well in math, has had an uptick, as has the nation.

And if it makes anybody look good, we put in DC to show the other side of the performance measures. But this is the kind of chart that is produced—used now nationally by states for fourth grade, eighth grade, math and reading, and for the other topics sometimes by state, sometimes not. Several years ago at the request of the cities, the urban districts themselves, the urban districts went to Congress to obtain an appropriation and the authorization to start measuring the performance of large city districts. And that has grown over the period of time to 21 particular urban areas and includes Boston.

We call this TUDA. That is called the Trial Urban District Assessment. That's, you know, everything has to have an acronym. If you don't have an acronym in

Washington, you can't proceed. And it is called trial because that's what the law says. We're supposed to pilot it and see how it works.

This is a personal aside. I've been around a number of years and I've seen a number of these trials, and the law never says how do you get out of the trial.

So anyway, it's the Trial Urban District Assessment now, and some years old. This kind of information, when disaggregated by student group, becomes very informative, and I'll not try to vary too much here.

But for those of us that are interested in educational structure and education reform, this is very interesting data. Asian American and white students perform better—this is not new to all of you, I'm sure—than black and Hispanic students. The interest – there's several interesting things, though, to think about just as we pass by. One is that while we have increased our performance, particularly in math, not so much in reading, in this country, in Massachusetts, in most places, unfortunately, the difference between the white and Asian students on the one hand, and the black and Hispanic scores on the other, have not greatly changed. I mean we can pull out a couple points here and there. But for the most part, there's been no great change.

What I think might interest you, and this is not in the presentation, but recently, we were looking at some data, and you'll be fascinated, I think, to know that the scores in mathematics of Asian American students in Boston is very competitive with Asian students in Singapore, Asian students in Hong Kong, Asian students in South Korea, et cetera. Finland does not do so well either, so there's some interesting comments about international comparisons you may want to watch.

The bottom line, actually, and then I'll move on, for the position of the national assessment in the national scheme of things is really that it is – it produces a unique product. There is no other product that has representative, valid sampling of progress over time. There are other measures, as you all know, and there are many of them. But they either have self-selected samples or they're not done all the time, or there's various problems with statistically looking at them as a national assessment.

It is interesting to point out that this has all been done at no cost to the states; most of you, I guess, are aware of that. NAEP is actually administered by contractors paid for by the federal government. It is scored; it is maintained; it is monitored and reported at no cost to the state.

I mentioned that reporting is limited to the nation, the states and large urban districts. There is no reporting of individual student results as I mentioned, which does away with one of the concerns that some people have about our other assessments in that there is no incentive to teach to them. No student takes all of the NAEP. The NAEP is different every time. There really is no way to teach to it if you wish to, and there is no particular incentive because no scores come back.

So there's really no test preparation incentive. The value to the states is pretty obvious, I think, and probably obvious to all of you. What is new coming down the pike—and I think for public policy and public management of education importance—is the upcoming combination of NAEP items and international test items, each in the other's assessment. So we will have a direct linkage, if you wish, between NAEP scores and what's called TIMSS, which is the Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study and PIRLS, which is the international reading assessment at 4th grade. But we will have some direct comparison.

So, using NAEP data, you will find out how Massachusetts's results compare with other nations. We'll get some real data. That's now being worked on. It's in process, and we'll begin to see that data late in 2012 or early 2013. I think it probably may cause quite a bit of interest. I suspect it should. I think we're kind of repeating things there, so let's move on.

The Governor is here? Okay. I have agreed to stop and start with, Governor Patrick here. Welcome, glad to have you, and you don't have to do this technical presentation.

0:28:10

Governor Musgrove:

The Honorable Deval Patrick was re-elected to a second term as governor this past November 2010. Among his many accomplishments: one, the highest funding of education in the history of Massachusetts. Number two, he led the nation in the spot for the Race to the Top competition; and third, his fight for the elimination of achievement gaps here in Massachusetts. Governor Patrick was appointed by President Clinton to be an assistant US attorney for the Office of Civil Rights, and he's a graduate of Harvard College and Harvard Law School. Governor, it is a pleasure to have you here this morning, and it's a pleasure to be in the great Commonwealth of Massachusetts. Ladies and gentlemen, Governor Patrick.

0:29:05

Governor Patrick:

Good morning, everyone. David, wonderful to see you. Thank you all for having me. I want you to know that though I am not a career public servant or politician, I recognize a filibuster when I see one. Thank you for keeping the conversation going until I could get here this morning.

I'm delighted to welcome everyone here to Boston and to Massachusetts for a very important conversation. It is especially nice to see David Driscoll who is a tireless champion and an early designer and supporter of ed reform here in the commonwealth and now is active on the Governing Board.

I want to acknowledge also Secretary Reville, our current secretary of education. Commissioner Chester and Commissioner Freeland, I think, are here as well. Good morning. I see Charlie Desmond, who is the chair of the Board of Higher Education. Maura Banta is here, the chair of the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education. Is that you, Alice? Representative Alice Peisch is here. That's the Massachusetts table over there. Actually, we're kind of scattered among the whole group.

Thank you all for having me this morning and for giving me just a minute to welcome you. As you all know, of course, the Board is responsible for the national – for The Nation's Report Card, and I am very proud of the fact that our students have scored at the top of the list in the last five years. The thanks for that belonged to our teachers and educators and principals who have brought their very best to the classroom; to the students, and their parents who have supported their work; and to the visionaries who were committed to high standards and high stakes as a model here in the Massachusetts – in Massachusetts for the last 20 years.

Education, in my view, is the best long-term investment that government can make. That's why we have funded the public schools, as the governor said, at the highest level in the history of the Commonwealth, even when the bottom was falling out of everything else. That's also why we keep raising the bar for teacher performance and accountability. You know, if you're in the second grade, you don't get to sit out the second grade until the recession is over. Now is your chance. And so we have been very much about making that chance as meaningful as possible for kids at all levels in all schools right now.

But for all these years, the 18 or so years we've been on this journey of trying to lift up the public schools and make them more accountable—offering more choices and more creativity in the classroom—we've had a persistent achievement gap, and stuck in that gap are poor children and children with special needs or kids who speak English as a second language, a disproportionate number of whom are children of color. Now this is an education and an economic issue. You all know that. But to let it go for 18 years, that's a moral question. Because those are our children, too. And because of the work of many of you in this room and the leadership of the secretary, we were able last year with the legislature to enact the Achievement Gap bill, which gives us some new rules and new tools to reach the children that we are leaving behind.

The level of innovation in Massachusetts classrooms today is a thing to behold. It's incredibly exciting, and we are coming at these challenges and meeting in a whole host of different ways to meet children where they are. Because we believe that every child can learn, and that we have a responsibility to make sure that every child is prepared. The flexibility to do that is a part of the framework of the Achievement Gap act. And there is much, much more to come. I know you don't want to make all

these other announcements today. But stay tuned. We're going to continue our effort to make Massachusetts the place to look for what works in public education.

I am delighted to partner with all of you. I thank you so much for the leadership that you show in bringing consistent excellence to all of the schools in the nation. I think it's enormously important that we focus consistently on continuous improvement in public education: not what we do to the field, but what we do with the field to lift everyone up. And I say that not just as governor or as a policy maker. I say that as someone whose own life was transformed by a great education.

I grew up on the south side of Chicago. Most of that time on welfare, and I went to big and broken, under resourced, sometimes violent public schools. But even there, even there, there were teachers whose commitment to us, whose love for the children in that classroom, made all the difference in the world for me and for others. And how we create the environment where the magic of a great teacher is enabled in every community is, I think, very, very worthy work indeed. And work that bears our generational responsibility. Thank you for what you do. We look forward to a continuing partnership. Thank you.

0:34:30

Darvin Winick:

I'd like to say we planned that segue for right now. But it's not inappropriate because the next slide which we now have in front of you, in my personal view is the most important demonstration of information that we have to think about today. What it shows is average scale scores for the 11 states who were first involved in the state-by-state comparison of 12th grade results. And from this chart, there are two or three very, very important questions for the country, for us, and for you in Massachusetts.

So what it shows is that if you wish to talk about relatively how good are Massachusetts schools doing, the answer is "doing well." Because if you look there and do a little deducing, you will see that the blue line for so-called proficient, which is an achievement level on the National Assessment, and above, Massachusetts has the largest proportion. It would be 31 plus 5, 36 percent of the Massachusetts seniors in 2009 scored at proficient or above.

Relatively good. Better than the nation. Better than the other states involved. Second question is how good is that absolutely. Not relatively. Absolutely. Is that good enough? Well, one of the reasons that we're here today and you're here today is the inability that we have in answering the question, how good? That's a problem across public education in this country is how good is proficient or whatever title a particular state uses for qualifying.

Maybe the most important question. So, there's a long history of us worrying about this question. As I used to tell people on the Board, I'm always embarrassed when I

Speak to the rotary club and they ask me how good is proficient. I say, "Pretty good." Better than not proficient. These are not particularly satisfying answers, so a history – Commissioner Driscoll noted that he was on a Commission some years ago where we started the process of what do we know about 12th grade, what should we know about 12th grade, what should 12th grade assessment be?

And without going into great detail, what came out of that was a plea that 12th grade assessment should predict something tangible, something that we can tie onto. For any of the techies in the room, we were asked to anchor the scale. Those who have a temperature scale anchored at freezing and boiling. What does the performance scale on NAEP anchor to?

I'm kind of repeating what I've already said. Let's move on. We started looking at this, as I said, early on, and immediately came into the question of how good is good, and we started looking at various predictors. How many of the students out of high school with a high school diploma needed remediation? That's kind of a focus, and I know you're involved in that now in Massachusetts, as are most states. The Massachusetts picture is not really very exciting if you start thinking of the opposite.

It goes back to the earlier slide: if 36 percent are proficient, 64 percent by subtraction are not. And if proficient is meaningful, then two out of three Massachusetts students are not something. What is something? Anyway, so that's what we got into. There's no question and I'm not going to dwell on the cost and problems that unprepared—if that's the right word—students create in our country. You read about it. I'm sure you're involved in it. The cost of remediation. The disappointment. The promise that we make to youngsters and say you can go on, and then they can't.

The fact that they build debt to go on and then are not employed to pay off the debt. So this is common conversation now. There is one piece of data, though, that I want to focus on coming from where I come from. It's not just the cost of remediation, but it is the fact that the change in the demography of our country is such that this problem is not going to get better. Because the portion of youngsters in high school who are like the students now that don't perform as well is going to grow and grow and grow. I come from the state where it has grown, and we now have in Texas a minority-majority situation in our schools.

So if we're not able to reduce the difference between those youngsters that are harder to educate and those that are easy to educate, then the future is really pretty bad if you do a straight-line projection. It doesn't look very good. I suspect you know that, but it probably deserves stopping and thinking a moment for what that means for the country. So, we got involved. Long history. The Governing Board is slow, deliberate, and methodical, and I think that's appropriate. So we don't do things in a hurry. Some people get frustrated and say, "Come on, what's happening?"

But we started out in the very beginning; What do we know, what don't we know, what do we want to know? The usual questions that you should ask. So we know some very complex metrics in our country. We don't think of them as complex because they're very common. But the fact that minute by minute, I can get a stock market summary in 25 categories all over the world is really a very complex metric or set of metrics. We do that all the time. We think nothing about it, and I can go through some others which are not that easy to collect.

You know, we say school data is difficult, so it's hard to collect. Well, it's not very easy to count bushels of wheat from all over the country or all over the world. So anyway, we could go on. Things that we do know are complex and we put together a data collection system and an evaluation system. What we don't know, however, is: are our 12th graders academically prepared for life after high school? Well, so we need – we thought we had various committees and conferences, and to boil it down, it's pretty obvious.

We need a reliable indicator of, are kids prepared? No, no argument. We need a common definition. That's very interesting, we got into this. We couldn't get anybody to agree on what is preparedness. We ran into the argument that I'm sure you all run into. Prepared for Harvard is different than prepared for community college– so you get in all kinds of one job or another job. It was obvious to us that we needed some serious research into the issue of preparedness. And so the Governing Board started on a process that brought us here today.

We call it our preparedness research. It has a long history. I won't dwell on it, but this is just to give you some idea of how we got here today. If you go back to the beginning in 2002, Commissioner Driscoll and others pointed out that we should do this. That led to other activities involving Achieve, involving some states. In 2006, we felt we were well enough along, that we had the problem defined, that we had a very high-level, prestigious technical committee stop and say; “Okay, if you are going to research the issue of what is preparedness and how prepared are our kids, what would you need to do?”

And so this Blue Ribbon panel came back with a set of things that we should do, and the Board adopted that in, I think, 2008. They adopted that set of recommendations and embarked. And so we're in the middle now of a rather major research plan starting out with defining preparedness and starting to look at various elements of what is it, what do we know, what do we need to know.

The reports of those research programs are now coming due. We have some preliminary reports I'm going to mention here as we pass through. More are coming, and you will see quite a crescendo of them in the next several years. It became obvious as we got into it, that we needed—we the Governing Board—needed a dialogue with the educators, the administrators, the public officials across the country. Because this is a major, major issue. So we put together a Commission, which

Governor Musgrove agreed to chair, and the Commission said, “Well, if we’re going to involve everybody, we better get out and about and start involving people and start a dialogue.” So that’s why we’re here today.

It’s already been mentioned that the definition of preparedness is quite specific. It is the entry-level hurdle, if you wish, for participation in postsecondary training or education. There is no statement about whether somebody will be successful, only if they qualify for placement in entry level courses. As Commissioner Driscoll pointed out, there are many elements of why students succeed or they do not succeed. Academic preparation is one. As I tell people, it’s one, but it is one we can’t do away with, because without adequate academic preparation, other affective behaviors are not sufficient. They’re nice, but they will not solve the problem if we don’t have academic preparedness.

I want to point out – it’s already been pointed about the difference between academic preparedness and readiness, but there are various opinions—and we are taking as a Governing Board and as a Commission, as a research program—we are taking no stand on whether the preparation for work, the preparation for industrial training, the preparation for military, preparation for academic work in a two year or four year institution are the same or they are different. That’s one of the things we’d like to find out. As you know, there are – others have made conclusions that they are or are not the same. In typical board fashion, we’ll see.

Anyway, we came up with a plan, and I want to conclude with just a little bit of description of what we’re up to, what little we know about what we’re up to now, and then I’ll turn it over to all of you to help us decide where to go from here. It was suggested by our research panel that we do five kinds of research projects, and we are involved in one phase or another in all of them now.

They have to do with content comparisons—which is getting kind of detailed now, but let me kind of hit them so you know—which is essentially trying to answer the question; is the content of the National Assessment the same as the content of other frequently used measures? SAT, ACT, WorkKeys, et cetera.

The second thing has to do with statistical linking, second kinds of studies. Here the question is-- how does the performance of students on NAEP compare with their performance on these other tests? If you get this on the NAEP, what would that predict on the SAT? And various comparisons. We’ve got some preliminary data, which I’ll give you in a moment on some of those comparisons. The third type of study now involved has to do with the question of standard setting. What is the point on the NAEP scale that corresponds to—in terms of expert judgment—that corresponds to academically prepared? As much as we set achievement standards now, going through the exercise, what knowledge and skills do experts in college placement and job training say you need to qualify for placement into entry-level credit-bearing courses without remediation?

Very interesting to me, and I think one of the things that I am most interested in waiting for, is harder to do and is in process, will take a while. And that is when you really get down to it, how good is a prediction? In other words, we have a linkage, and we have an idea of what NAEP's score means, how does it really work? I mean, can I go out really and predict and go into the industry and find out, by golly, those are the people who got into programming, and they did fine, and the scores actually predict it. So there's a whole series of kind of benchmarking studies, which are harder to do, requires much more participation in the public, and we'll be asking you before we're done today for ideas and how you might help us do that.

The final one has to do with our higher education survey, and that is a large undertaking to find out what's actually happening now. These are not in order of preference or priority. These are just in order of—we put them down because this is also very important—is that what cut scores are the universities using now, how do they get to them, how well do they work, what are they tied to? Early research is promising. And I'm going to double back onto the slide that I said was most important to me. And that's the one that says 36 percent of the Massachusetts seniors in high school (These are the students. Not the graduates. These are the students in high school.) – performed based on the sample of NAEP proficient or above.

Because the early research shows a high, high correlation between NAEP scores and SAT scores—particularly in math, which I suppose is not surprising. But anyway, they do, and it suggests, for openers, that proficient on NAEP is equivalent to 500 on the SAT, which the College Board says, is college ready. Now if that is true, then you're faced – the best state in the nation, you're faced with 64 percent of your high school students that are not college prepared. Now that's a jump yet that we are not making at this point – but you begin to see how important this is, and if not that number, what is the number? And that's particularly sobering to some other states where I spend some time whose numbers are not this good. So it's even more demanding.

Now in all honesty, and you think about this, that 64 percent includes youngsters that don't go on. It includes students that dropped out. So there are some numbers in there, but still not very exciting. You will begin to see the reports of these studies somewhat one after another coming out later this year, more next year, and it will be ongoing for some considerable time. I think it's interesting to move to a – let's go to the 12 studies. There we go, OK. This one I think is, for those of you here that have ties to the business community, you may be interested—and we talk about benchmarking—just what kind of jobs are we talking about.

So I thought we would have this slide of this kind of interest to see the beginning look at typical jobs, and these were selected because they are large jobs, their range, their training behind high school needed. These are pretty common things in industry, and particularly, I think the final criterion, criteria, the final criterion of the criteria is the

fact that they're familiar to the public. So, automotive master mechanic, computer support specialist...and so on...I won't read them to you. We will produce data on the NAEP scores that will qualify students academically in the training and the acceptance to training for these jobs.

What is actually going to happen with all of this? Well, there's three possibilities, and let me just hit them quickly as it kind of illustrates where we are, and then I'm going to turn this over to the panel. But the first possibility, this would be the psychometrician's dream. This would make life very nice in that we come up with a score on NAEP, and sure enough, it predicts college preparedness in various ways, and they all converge on 500 or 200 or some number. And it so happens that our five jobs or a number of jobs, by golly, it's the same number. As I say, that would be the psychometrician's dream. We have convergence.

There are some folks who are there now, and say they do converge. That will be nice if that happens. It may not happen. What we may have is convergence, but not between academic preparedness for academic pursuits and other training pursuits. That is, there may be a number – a NAEP score that does a pretty good job of predicting preparedness for credit bearing courses in community colleges and universities. That may be a score, and we may come to that. There may be another score that says this is about what you need in industry or in the military, but it's not the same.

That would be a psychometrician's second-best dream. And fairly easy to explain, and a certain amount of common sense, so we wouldn't get a lot of argument. However, what may happen, we don't know, is scenario three where we have no convergence. What I pointed out from the very beginning, and I was sort of ending my conversation with this. That would be an extremely important finding. It's not as neat and orderly, and it's not statistically satisfying. But the fact is that if we do have different requirements for different vocations or for different academic pursuits, for preparation if they indeed are different, we better know it. And we better structure our high schools and structure our system to account for it.

So a "no finding" here is a major finding. I'm not predicting one or the other of these will happen. We are very interested, and I'll close with this. One of the things we want to do is establish a dialogue. And very candidly, to establish a dialogue on this issue it is critically important to include Massachusetts. Because you've been out there in front, and we recognize that. So anyway, thank you for being here. Thank you for participating, and we look forward to dealing with you further.

0:56:45

Governor Musgrove:

Darv, thank you very much for that presentation, and I hope and trust that it has caused you to start thinking already. And we have a moment or two for a question or

two if it pops up that you may present to Darv, and before we go on to our panel. Okay. Let me – any questions? Oh, question here.

Robert Dais, GEAR Up Massachusetts:

Yes, I had a question, and I realize – thank you, first of all, for the explanation about NAEP because I think as an educator, it's very difficult sometimes to understand how these assessments are developed and what goes behind them. My question is, is there any discussion around a diag... not a diagnostic, but a way to – how do you inform states or cities about not only where they're at, but what steps they might want to take to improve? So I just wanted to ask that question. Thank you.

Darvin Winick:

I think that's an understandable question, and it's a fairly frequent question, and it's an important question, all of the above. The issue, though, is that the national assessment is set up to determine what is happening, period. That's the legal mandate. The question of what should we do about it is extremely important, but that passes on from the National Assessment to you all, to educators. It's a common question, but we are limited. The law is very specific about it. We are not into what schools should do, you know, again, curriculum and all the other questions that you know about.

Governor Musgrove:

Another question. Here first. We'll take three questions, here and here [pointing at audience members with raised hands]. Then you'll get an opportunity for questions as we move through the panel in just a minute.

Henry Braun, Boston College: *[Far from microphone, inaudible. His question was whether the relationship between NAEP and the National Adult Literacy Survey would be explored.]*

Darvin Winick:

I can't really answer how far. We're just starting those, but I would hope as the research unfolds that we will look at all sources of data. There are a number of repositories of data. You've mentioned one. The military has a huge amount of data on literacy and training trainability, so my hope is as we get into this, they will all be looked at.

Governor Musgrove:

Right here [pointing at audience member with raised hand]. Yes.

Anne Perkins, Massachusetts Department of Higher Education:

Hi, Anne Perkins, Mass Department of Higher Ed. This refers back to something that David mentioned, which is that in research, fourth and eighth grade NAEP scores are highly regarded, but the 12th grade generally disregarded because of a view that students don't take it seriously. Can you explain a little bit more how that would change with what you all are doing?

Darvin Winick:

You're asking us to predict the future, and that's some danger. Some of us would hope – I think I will put it this way – that the 12th grade assessment will become as boisterous, if you wish, as the fourth and eighth grade, and two things would happen. One is that we would see the 12th grade across the country being analyzed by state, at least, in large districts. We would hope that would happen. The second thing, which is, if you start getting into the future, the second iteration of this research, if it works and as it works will be to link eighth grade performance to 12th grade, fourth grade performance to eighth grade. Because as all the educators know, we have a process. It just doesn't start in the 11th grade or the 12th grade.

And to this point, we don't really have that nationally, a good relationship statistically established between how well kids do in the eighth grade, and what does that predict in the 12th grade or for preparedness.

1:01:34

Governor Musgrove:

I'm going to break my own rule. I'll take two more questions here and here [pointing to audience members]. No more. But we'll take a lot of questions after we have the panel to have an opportunity for the presentation. Here and then here [pointing].

Tom Payzant, Harvard Graduate School of Education:

Thank you. Tom Payzant, former superintendent in Boston and now professor of practice at the Ed School of Harvard. You didn't mention a couple of areas. Advanced placement, which is in part a gold standard in terms of preparedness, or International Baccalaureate. And I'm curious about where that might fit in. And then, my own view is that the Common Core Standards, which you did mention, will be extremely important, but what will happen when the states see what rigor is required in the assessments? Chaos will be there. What are your thoughts about that in the context of this presentation?

Darvin Winick:

I'll vote with you. The issue – I don't want to take a long time. The issue of Advanced Placement and International Baccalaureate is discussed, has been discussed. I think the best answer is: not there yet. We're trying to look at a very beginning threshold. And in theory—I've got to be careful here because there's a lot of controversy—but in theory, our Advanced Placement, International Baccalaureate kids are not the ones that are at the threshold, in theory. Now some of the data – I won't get into this, but as you know and I know, some of the data in Advanced Placement is less than stellar passing rates and so on.

So we'll get there. We'll get there. We're not there yet. The chaos I think you commented on, I'll just affirm.

Governor Musgrove:

And the last question right here [pointing].

Anna Saavedra, The RAND Corporation:

Hi, my name is Anna Rosefsky Saavedra. I'm working at the RAND Corporation. And I'm wondering if an issue on the table has been assessing some of the skills that employers have, say that they want critical thinking, problem solving, teamwork, communication. And I wonder if the U.S. is also considering assessing some of those skills, as some other countries are looking at that.

Darvin Winick:

You talk so sweetly and low, and my hearing is aged. [Turning to fellow panelists] Did you hear the question?

Susan Pimentel:

The question was about NAEP – does NAEP test skills that employers care a lot about, about critical thinking, problem solving, teamwork.

Anna Saavedra:

Is that an issue on the table, too?

Darvin Winick:

The answer is yes and no. That's an area we could spend a long – I have a great deal of experience in. And the employers are not very accurate in what they need to know for beginning preparation for training. You quickly get into issues that have to do

with promotability, that have to do with long-term success, that have to do with value to the company. We're not talking about that. We're talking about what are the academic skills needed to get into training. That's not denying that critical thinking and other things are important, but there's a lot of research in industry that says the actual entry level has a lot more to do with geometry and vocabulary than it does with these very nice to talk about, things like critical thinking and so on. The distinction here is we're looking at the hurdle to get in.

Governor Musgrove:

Let me say this much. It certainly does not surprise me, number one, Darv, that you have generated a number of questions. Number two, it does not surprise me that this audience, as capable as you are, are responding to this. And do not take it that I'm cutting off questions now to mean that we don't want questions. I'm about to give you a better scenario to ask questions in, so I want you to make sure you keep those questions and you ask them. Let me move on.

You just have no idea how difficult it is for a political person to stay on a script and not to ad lib and go off and talk about some of the things that I'm thinking of now. But true to form, I'm going to stay on script. We're gratified to have a panel of eminent Massachusetts education leaders with us this morning. And having heard Darv's presentation, we have a good overview of the NAEP 12th grade academic preparedness initiative, the research, and the results to date.

We're also looking ahead to 2013 and the additional research that will be needed. We have asked the panel this morning to address two issues, which we believe will encompass a lot of what we're talking about. First, the potential relevance and utility to Massachusetts of the NAEP 12th grade preparedness initiative, that is, the relevance and utility of the 12th grade NAEP as an indicator of academic preparedness for college and job training, as well as the relevance and utility of the research being conducted and the research results.

Second, additional research we should consider conducting, potentially beneficial to Massachusetts and to our initiative, in connection with the 2013 12th grade reading and math assessments, and possibly partners in that research.

Paul Reville has graciously agreed to moderate today's panel. Mr. Reville is the Massachusetts secretary of education and directs the Executive Office of Education, which works in partnership with the commissioners and the departments of early education, elementary and secondary education, higher education, and the University of Massachusetts system. Mr. Reville, if you want to come on up this morning, I'm going to ask the panel here if they will step down.

And then as I introduce each member, if you will come up to the panel that's going to be handling this session. If you want to come up to this side.

Maura Banta is the chair of the Massachusetts Board of Elementary and Secondary Education. She is also IBM's east coast regional manager for corporate citizenship and corporate affairs. We've asked Maura to wear two hats today, providing her perspective as chair of the state board, but also and very importantly, her business perspective. Right there [pointing to a chair]. We want you guys to be casual this morning in a casual setting.

Mitchell Chester is the Commonwealth's commissioner of elementary and secondary education. Dr. Chester began his career as an elementary school teacher in Connecticut and has served in a wide range of education, administrative, and policy leadership posts at the local and state level.

Richard Freeland is the Commonwealth's commissioner of higher education. Dr. Freeland has spent his entire academic career in urban higher education, including leadership positions at the University of Massachusetts, Boston, and at City University of New York. And I noticed pursuant to Darv's presentation, Dr. Freeland had a question for Darv, so I am sure he is going to be capable of intertwining that thought and question into the presentation this morning.

And our last person on the panel is Representative Alice Peisch of the Massachusetts Legislature, and is the House chair for the Joint Committee on Education. Before serving in the Legislature, Representative Peisch served Wellesley as town clerk and chaired the school committee and advisory committee.

Secretary Reville, as we welcome you and the panel, we look forward to the discussion this morning. And I want to turn it over to you.

Paul Reville:

Thank you very much, Governor Musgrove. And thank you, David Driscoll, for bringing us all together in this occasion. And Darwin, thank you for the excellent presentation that frames the comments that we want to make today. This to me up here [indicating colleagues on dais] is a team. We work together regularly with our colleague, Charlie Desmond, who is chair of the Board of Higher Education and many others, including many others in the room. In our effort to improve our performance continuously in Massachusetts, as proud as we are of what we've accomplished as you can see from the presentation today, there's a great deal more work that needs to be done if we're to realize the ideals that launched us on education reform now nearly two decades ago.

And as I look around the room, I see lots and lots of partners in this work. And without your support and participation, we can't go forward together. So we have a fairly tight task here this morning. We've got a couple of questions that we've been asked to address, and we will address those questions. At the same time, I want the panelists to feel free to comment on any of the implications or ramifications of the kind of work that we've just seen and what they mean for the work that we're doing in our education system overall, pre-K through higher education. And that's why you see us up here together as a team.

So let's start with the – this whole question of the relevance and utility of the 12th grade NAEP assessment. We're one of a handful of states participating in this. This provides information, as we've heard, a unique indicator of 12th grade preparedness. It's going to be offered again in a couple of years. How is this information helpful, if it is to us, in doing a diagnostic or in describing the strategies we need to embrace going forward? How does this—as we contemplate this whole issue of college and career readiness—how does this information support us? How could it be improved if we were in charge of reshaping it in any way as we go forward? What is the use of this tool for us as we're doing this work? Mitchell, you want to start us off?

1:12:20

Mitchell Chester:

Sure, sure, thanks. First of all, it's my conviction that having multiple ways of measuring what you're up to is smart. Helps you to triangulate and understand exactly the kinds of performances you're getting, as well as particularly in an area where there's not real good clarity about what it means to be college and career ready. There's a lot of discussion in this arena. There's a lot of work being done in this arena, but it's important to bring multiple perspectives to bear on this. And for me, NAEP is really critical. I think of state testing programs—and in Massachusetts, we test in high school in tenth grade—as providing valuable feedback and data to our schools.

But the data from that testing program is really insufficient, and what NAEP provides to us is a validation, kind of an external validation, of whether or not the kinds of performance that we're looking at on our own state tests are in fact held up by other measures of assessment. And in that regard, I would think about – I would postulate four different assessments that are out there that folks are talking about, and I think the panel has already referred to this. We have our state tests, and many of us, Massachusetts included, are showing gains year after year on our own state assessments.

Now that varies depending on the grade level and the subject that we're looking at, but in general, it's continuous progress. And what a lot of people would argue is: show us that same kind of gain on a measure other than on your state tests. Because

one of the things that people worry about is whether or not your gains represent the ability of students and educators to do a better job on that assessment, but they're not really representative of more generalized kinds of learning that's occurring that you can measure with other measures. That's where NAEP comes in.

NAEP is very valuable in providing a second perspective on whether or not the trends that we're seeing on our own state assessment in fact are registered in another assessment. I'd throw in TIMSS, the Trends in International Math and Science Survey that Massachusetts has participated in twice, and I'd also throw in PISA, and that's been mentioned in this conversation as well. For me, as you bring more of those additional assessments to bear on looking at performance in your own state, you're getting a clearer picture and a more robust picture of student performance on a variety of measures. And for that reason, NAEP has been absolutely invaluable for Massachusetts.

Paul Reville:

Thank you. Other panelists want to tackle that? Maura?

Maura Banta:

Sure. I'll make a couple comments from the perspective of the board and what they see as the utility and will see as the utility. I think the board will be interested very much in how NAEP can help look at those proficiency gaps. We have a sub-committee that looks at proficiency gaps, and they are very focused on any data and instruments that will help advance that body of work. They'll also be interested in how NAEP might guide the work of the two national consortia, the PARCC consortia and Smarter-Balanced. Can it be an instrument that helps the airplane while it's in flight to adjust what those two sets of assessments look like?

So those will be two. We were talking about utility of NAEP, and I think those are two very clear things that the board will be interested. From the business perspective, the utility of it is, there are multiple things, but business will be interested, and it was covered by Darvin very well this morning. They'll be interested in how well NAEP measures how students can apply learning. We don't care what you've learned in school. We want to know that you can apply it. We'll be very interested in the new work that's being done to incorporate STEM into NAEP. Because as we know, there's thousands of STEM initiatives, and we need to all get on the same page. I see Isa smiling at me [indicating Isa Zimmerman, of IKZ Advisors].

And I think we'll be very interested in how NAEP compares to international assessments. Our whole world is about portability of employees, so whether it's common core standards or assessments that really tell me how people are doing across this country and how well we are doing compared to more advanced nations, that's what a company like IBM would care about. The last thing I'd add is that

we're very interested in the utility of NAEP to help this grade 14 kind of certification, whether that's community college or some other certification. We know there are great jobs out there for people with that credential. So those are the comments I'd make about the board and business.

Paul Reville:

Before we leave the K-12 leadership here, let me ask you both as you think about this. Let's stipulate that we've got gaps. No matter which of those four tools that Mitchell talked about we put, or any others, we find these persistent gaps, and closing those gaps, as you've said, Maura, is a high priority, . certainly for Governor Patrick and the board, our proficiency gap. How does having information like the information we've got here help us in figuring out what the strategy is? Because we've heard NAEP say, "We're not about telling you what to do. We're just about the *what*." So we have the *what*. It tells us we still have gaps at grade 12. How does that help us guide strategy?

Mitchell Chester:

I think it's critical that the performance outcomes, that these trends in the test results demonstrate, be translated into curricular implications. Exactly what is it from a curriculum perspective, that we expect students to learn and know how to do, that some students are succeeding on and some are not? And feeding that information back to our schools in ways that are actionable, that provide them with curriculum tools and resources. Support for upgrading curriculum is absolutely critical because simply showing people results in and of itself is not going to be sufficient to help folks figure out what is it that I need to do to upgrade my program of instruction?

Now you know, central to what I just said is an assumption that much of the gaps that we're looking at, is in fact related to the quality of the program that students are experiencing in schools. And I'm a believer that while there's outside factors that absolutely impact on students' lives and provide a steeper climb for some families and students than others, there's an awful lot that we can be doing in the course of the school day, in the course of instruction that we do control that can make a big difference. If you looked at the trend over time for Massachusetts on NAEP disaggregated by race, ethnicity, there's a large gap. But if you look at the size of that gap before – at the beginning of that trend, I think it was the early '90s to 2009, I believe, was the last marker up there, there's some substantial narrowing.

Gaps are still used but substantial narrowing. If you follow Boston's trajectory—and Tom Payzant is here—just an incredible progress in a large, urban school district in terms of what students are achieving, what students are able to do today compared to a decade ago. So we are able to make progress. It doesn't happen magically. It requires some careful attention to the program of study, curriculum instruction or approaches.

And to the extent that we can link our assessment programs to that kind of feedback around what can we do to upgrade the quality of curriculum instruction, we're on our path to better and better results and gap narrowing for sure.

1:21:01

Paul Reville:

Thanks, Mitchell.

Maura Banta:

I really don't have much to add there. I think the commissioner answered it well. I think in a time of very limited resources, the strategy becomes understanding the data and applying those as best you can. So our proficiency gap sub-committee is trying to figure out from a policy standpoint what are the couple of things we can do that are actually going to help in this area. What did we master? What did we miss? And to the degree that NAEP helps us as another instrument on top of MCAS and many other formative assessments, that's how we develop our strategy.

Paul Reville:

Thank you. Speaking of gaps, Commissioner Freeland, we saw the extraordinary gap really that exists when we look at college preparedness. And we have any number of students passing MCAS, meeting their local graduation requirements, and still, as we saw on the graph, going on to college and needing additional remediation in order to be prepared to do basic college courses. I wonder how this grade 12 testing and this information can help in closing that gap.

Richard Freeland:

In some ways, I was struck by the fact that, as the research points out, even though Massachusetts is at the top of the charts in terms of the NAEP test, when you actually look at that definition of what college readiness is, our results in remediation are not so surprising. Because they showed, what, 60-plus percent, 64 percent was it, of students on the NAEP tests score below the level defined by the NAEP test designers as equal in college readiness, and that's about what the percentage placed under remediation. So in some ways, the – what I have always seen as a disjunction between high performance on the NAEP test and the percentage placing to remediation is not surprising.

Paul Reville:

How does that inform policy and strategy then?

Richard Freeland:

I think it obviously, to Commissioner Chester's point, points up the urgency of addressing the issues programmatically at the K through 12 level, if despite the fact that we are doing so well on these national comparisons, so many of our students are simply not achieving at a level required for college. That's an enormously important finding. Up to now, I have been – we talk all the time about the sort of chasm that has historically existed between higher education and K through 12, and I think these test results tend to draw attention to that and highlight it. We know, for example, that in our community colleges, something like 62 percent of the students who complete high school, pass MCAS, place into remediation. We feel great in Massachusetts that we are at the top of the charts in terms of our NAEP scores, but if you look at the percentage of our high school graduates who place into remediation, we look like a lot of other states. How can it be that even though we're doing so well on the NAEP test, we're typical in terms of the percentage placing into remediation?

I don't say this to discount the value of NAEP. I say it to point out the fact that we have very different metrics to measure success in high school and college readiness. We use the ACCUPLACER test widely in Massachusetts to determine college readiness. I know one of the research projects is to look at the overlap between NAEP and ACCUPLACER, and that will be very helpful. But I think the first question about utility that occurs to me is we've got to find some way to close this signaling gap. And the signaling-to-ourselves gap: The signal we send to ourselves as a state around ACCUPLACER is we're doing great.

You know, we go around thinking, "Gee, Massachusetts is really in good shape, in terms of what NAEP tells us. We're proud of that." And yet, we're very typical of other states in terms of the percentage of students placed into remediation. So should we feel great or should we feel worried? It's kind of the fundamental signal to the state. We don't really – it's kind of a confused message.

Another observation I would make—it's really a question in my mind about the utility issue—has to do with the relation between the PARCC initiative and this initiative. Maura Banta mentioned this. But on the one hand, we have the NAEP initiative undertaking this very high-level and sophisticated and research-intensive and expertise-driven effort to identify what college readiness is.

On the other hand, through PARCC, we've started this discussion, which is very grass-roots oriented, and we're creating a huge machine, a communication machine around the state to involve stakeholders from the higher ed side and the K through 12 side to try to get to some agreement about what college readiness is. How do these two things compliment each other, converge with – are they redundant? How does one add value to the other? That's not clear to me. I think we need some discussion.

These are both in some ways federal government initiatives, so it must make sense. But how do they make sense is a little elusive to me as we sit here this morning.

The other thing I would – again, is about the utility. If there is such a high correlation between the SAT and NAEP as we've observed, what additional value does NAEP – what does it tell us that the SAT doesn't tell us? Where does it add value to the discussion? I got the impression from the research that we'd be thrilled if there were 100 percent overlap between SAT and NAEP. If that's true, I think we need to ask ourselves a question. Where is the value added of the NAEP assessment versus what the SAT tells us?

1:27:35

Paul Reville:

Good set of questions. Chair Peisch, you have the awesome responsibility of making policy through the legislature on these and other topics affecting early childhood, as well as K-12 education. I wonder if you'd comment on the utility of this kind of information at the level of grade 12 of informing you and other policy makers in making critical decisions.

Alice Peisch:

Well, I think not unlike what has already been said, many of the – much of the utility the legislature would look at these things through the same lens. But one thing that struck me about this, although I chair the education committee and we are charged with reviewing all of the legislation and the budget matters relative to early ed through 12, most of us are also involved in many other issues. So we're not as focused solely on education as the rest of the panelists here are. Therefore, getting the legislatures' attention on something is not easy.

And what strikes me about this information, which I think can be very helpful, is two points. One, it will, I hope, do away with any sense of complacency that we might have about how well Massachusetts is doing. I don't want to, in saying that, indicate that we're not doing well. I mean obviously, we're doing very well, but we don't want to just look at that high scoring NAEP test and say, "OK, everything's fine." And given the demands on the limited resources that we have, the administration has been very focused on making sure that we continue to devote the resources to education that we need to, but that's a tough sell in this kind of an environment where we're cutting some really critical services in other areas.

So to have something that we can point to that shows we cannot take our eye off the ball here is important, and I think it's particularly important that we appreciate that in order to address this gap, which we are all very familiar with, we have got to put more emphasis on the early years. Changing things in the tenth and 11th grade is not

going to change these outcomes. I think the emphasis on early education and on out-of-school time is the direction in which we have to move, and I see this as being helpful in that – getting the focus on those areas.

Paul Reville:

Thank you. We've devoted a lot of time in our conversations between K-12 and higher education, this whole question of college and career readiness and are they the same thing, or are they different things? We've seen some proposed research here today on that topic. I wonder if you'd comment on the research that NAEP is proposing to do here. Does it come at the points that you're interested in learning more about? Would you have suggestions for other dimensions to that research that you've put forward? Richard, why don't you start on this one?

1:30:31

Richard Freeland:

Well, I very much applaud the research. We need much more of it, and I particularly applaud the openness with which the NAEP folks are approaching the research around exactly the questions you mentioned, Paul, of are college and career readiness the same thing? I think this has to some extent, in my opinion, been an ideology driven discussion. We have a tendency to want to say college and career ready are the same thing. We want to say all students need to get to the same level. I think that fits with our cultural predispositions as Americans, believing in social justice and – but are they really the same thing?

So I applaud NAEP kind of coming to that with a really open mind. It's not obvious to me they're the same thing. It's not obvious to me we serve our students well by some of this rhetoric about college and career are the same thing. Because maybe we lead students into some less than fully useful directions in terms of their education by doing that. So I think this openness and this let's look at it context by context by context by context and see whether or not these are the same thing or where they're different. To me, that's extremely valuable and extremely important.

An area that I would suggest we might look at is what is the relationship between college preparedness as defined by NAEP and college success as demonstrated by actual graduation or actual achievement in college. There's a lot of skepticism out there in higher ed about the SAT, for example. Many, many institutions are dropping the SAT as an indicator of college potential for a variety of reasons.

I'm not a testing expert. My general understanding of what the research shows is that the SAT is somewhat predictive of at least early success in college, first and second year success in college of at least some students. But it's less valuable, for example, for non-traditional students. And it doesn't pick up nuances like students who have

very high potential and who ought to be admitted if you're a university, but who because of their circumstances did not have the opportunities to develop the skills to score highly on the SAT. And so some of those students may get screened out if we look too closely at it.

So I think if we are going to use the NAEP tests to drive program and drive curriculum, we want to be sure that we're also looking at how predictive are the NAEP results in terms of what students are actually likely to accomplish in college. And that's a different question from whether or not they're prepared for college.

1:33:31

Paul Reville:

Thank you. How about over here? We have had this equation of college and career readiness, which implies one kind of a school system. On the other hand, if we see the sort of distribution that was posited in the second slide on this research topic, it would distribute it quite widely. What do you think, Mitchell, more on this?

Mitchell Chester:

Well, I'll start. You know, the trajectory of this discussion is really fascinating because if you go back a couple of decades and if you've been in this business for a couple decades, you don't really worry a whole lot about this discussion. The U.S. was sitting pretty. We were an expanding economy. Any measures that were out there a couple decades ago, that is firmly at the top of any international comparisons, college going rates and so forth, and we're in a very different climate at this point. As those two decades have unfolded, we've had some outstanding state leadership here, yourself included, Mr. Secretary.

Dave Driscoll, who said that for Massachusetts' testing program, we can't be content to just look within ourselves, but we need to be benchmarking ourselves against the best that's out there. So we deliberately looked at NAEP as Commissioner Driscoll articulated in his comments. We participated in TIMSS, and it's very clear from Maura's comments that only looking at the nation, how we compare what kind of expectations we have for our students' learning, our students' academic achievement, by only looking across our nation, we're missing the boat because international boundaries, political boundaries—whether they're state boundaries or international—increasingly, are irrelevant to students' economic opportunities. And so we've, as the governor said in his comments, investment in education is key to investment both in the individuals who are coming to our school system and the future of our state and the future of our nation.

So this conversation is really unfolded. At this point in time NAEP is critical. NAEP is critical to the two assessment consortia that are funded, the so-called

Smarter-Balanced and the PARCC assessment. It's critical to helping us understand whether or not the two assessments are aiming at roughly the same territory, having roughly the same expectations or not. And if they're not, helping understand what the difference in those expectations is, helping to understand what college readiness, what career readiness means.

And ultimately, NAEP needs to continue to benchmark against international comparisons and standards as it moves forward or NAEP is going to be increasingly irrelevant. Because certainly, the PARCC assessment consortium is very much committed to making sure that what we're aiming at is commensurate with what some of the top performing nations in the world are expecting of their educational systems. We feel if we don't get to that point, we will have missed the boat.

So it's really important that NAEP stay on top of its game, continue to look internationally, and play a very active role in informing the two assessment consortia. I know with the PARCC assessment consortium, we're in discussions with NCES staff about how best to accomplish some benchmarking, is there an opportunity to embed items, exactly how would we go about this. So that discussion is very active as we speak.

Paul Reville:

Thank you, Mitch. Maura?

Maura Banta:

I think Richard and Mitchell did a great job. I would add one thing on the being honest about maybe college and career not being the same thing. In a state like Massachusetts and indeed in this country, it's going to take courage to be honest about that because the more conservative folks will think that we are saying some people shouldn't go on to a 12th year or 14th or 16th year degree. They will say we're focused too much on the trades, if you will. So it's going to take courage, but I think we have to do it, because we know people need to be on a pathway, to steal a famous term. A pathway to success. The second thing I would add has to do with some of Mitchell's comment – oh, the original question about the research, and it strikes me that I don't know enough about the five domains of the 30 studies. I'm just learning about it today, so I'll be honest there.

But my quick answer to that would be certainly the standards, the benchmarking, and the higher education study are the ones that seem to best inform the work going forward.

Paul Reville:

Good, good, thank you. Chair Peisch, from the standpoint of the legislature—and you're looking at the research agenda here also not just from a standpoint of information—but also from the standpoint of creating what I would call the space that Maura talked about to have the conversation about differentiated paths to careers and college, what would be helpful from your standpoint in the research area?

Alice Peisch:

Well, I was thinking earlier that it would be helpful to see if there's any correlation between the scores and the preparation that the students are getting, the degree to which they differ. For example, we all know that in Massachusetts, we maintain extraordinarily local control over the curriculum and the courses and the graduation requirements. So it would be interesting to see if the preparation that the students are getting in the different districts has any correlation to their performance on the test.

I want to underscore the comment that Maura made. I think we absolutely need to have this conversation about where – whether everyone is going to take the same path. Because I think in the – with the objective of giving everyone equal opportunity, I think we have unwittingly closed some doors to students who would be better served by a preparation that is more career focused than it is four year academic focused. How we do that without making the mistake that I think has been made in the past of tracking particular groups into particular paths is going to be very challenging.

But getting the more research that shows what you need to succeed in which arena I think would be very helpful.

1:40:20

Paul Reville:

Let me press that a little further. Recently, the pathways to prosperity report came out. And they gathered a lot of different kinds of data, although it wasn't necessarily a big data report. It was a perspective. But among other things, they for example looked at the graduates in Florida I think it was, of two-year technical certificate programs and found that on average, they were earning \$10,000.00 more annually than graduates of four-year liberal arts colleges in Florida. Is that kind of data helpful? Are there other specific data points that would be helpful or data comparisons that would be helpful to you if in fact we want to have that conversation in Massachusetts, make it possible for policy makers as well as the general public to be receptive to a conversation about that without feeling like any of us are walking away from our equity commitments?

Mitchell Chester:

I mean, I would say absolutely. I'd also say this is a dynamic kind of research that's needed, and it's going to be ongoing. This world is transforming at a very rapid rate, and the workplace is transforming. Our economic infrastructures are transforming at a rapid rate, so we shouldn't think of this research agenda as we spend two or three or five years on it, and we're done. This needs to be an ongoing kind of effort.

Maura Banta:

And I would add in addition to the income disparity, it's kind of, I don't know how you do this, Paul, but it's tracking these people over a longer period of time or tracking how the job market is changing and what – you know, we do some of that, but we don't necessarily do it well as a country. So it's one thing at a point in time to say they're making \$10,000.00 more, but maybe ten years down the road, they're making \$100,000.00 less than. And we can't ignore the longer term. So I agree it is not a static process. It has to be much more dynamic.

Richard Freeland:

I think that this comment, the Florida study that you refer to, Paul, underscores the importance of – I think I might go in more here, looking beyond just readiness for the next step. If I understood the research that was being proposed, although it covers a lot of different territory, it's basically looking at the single question of what is needed to meet the entry point requirement to different careers and different institutions. As I mentioned before, I think there's a difference between meeting the requirements of the entry point and predicting likelihood of success down the road. So where I would go with that Florida type study is to say I think it would be valuable if the NAEP folks pushed out the timeline a little bit and looked at the correlation between NAEP scores.

And not just at readiness for the next step, but success at the next step and the next step. Not wanting to expand the project enormously, but those are different questions. And ultimately, we're concerned about what kind of lives people are going to lead and promoting maximum opportunity for success, and therefore, the longer look, I think, is a valuable perspective.

1:43:44

Paul Reville:

Let me reserve the sort of last conversation here to push it a little bit outside the box. You know, we hear a lot of discussion lately from various critics of the standards and accountability movement. Jerry Brown most recently, governor of California, talking about too narrow a focus. That we're relying heavily on this focus on English and

math and to the degree to which we're improving scores there. And those of us who were involved with the beginning of this always felt they were gateway subjects and absolutely essential to getting into anything else, and that was the theory of action. And we've stuck with that.

And at the same time, others are saying – we had a question from the audience today. Well, there are a suite of other skills that may well be important. We had a 21st century skills commission that was part of the work that we did at the Board of Education. Yesterday in *The New York Times*, there as a provocative piece, I don't know if you saw it, about maybe dropouts lead the way to the future. If we look at Bill Gates and Steve Jobs and take those as sort of [recording unclear] stories, and the author was positing that the new jobs are going to come not so much from small business, but from startups. And the kind of skills that we need to focus on in doing startups have to do with sales and creativity and things of this nature that we don't treat that much in schooling.

So I guess the question is, are there other things that we ought to be measuring? Aren't we to be thinking at this juncture about stepping out of the existing paradigm, or are we right and appropriate where we're directed? We need just to buckle down and look more deeply for the data. We need to find the strategies that will deliver the result that we promised to deliver at the beginning of education reform, preparing all our students for success. Any thoughts on that from the panelists?

Maura Banta:

Well, I'll start. You know, I think it's in the pathways to prosperity, or maybe it's another report. My memory isn't as good as it should be. But when we look at other countries and how they do this work, they have a very different model. They don't expect everything to happen in the classroom, so they actually teach critical thinking and teamwork and analysis and a bunch of other things in other settings. And so I think we have to think about schools differently. We clearly need more time. We all know that, but I don't think we should just think about that classroom doing the whole job because there's just too much to be done.

Governor Brown is right that it looks pretty narrow now, but we always felt that we had to get that right before we could return to a broader set of opportunities for children. And I think we just have to get more creative about how we provide those. It's not easy, but we have to get there.

Mitchell Chester:

Yeah, I don't think it's an either/or proposition. I'm very, very intrigued at sticking to the assessment arena with what PISA is doing and a real focus not so much on measuring what students have learned but what it is they can do with what they've learned, the application of that learning. If I think about the Common Core State

Standards effort, and I know Sue Pimentel is here and worked very much – was very central to the development of the English language arts component. I mean, that was an effort to move out of our comfort zone and think about standards in English language arts and in mathematics, and to think more broadly about the kinds of literacy demands that the world has of students as they either enter college or enter the world of employment, and the fact that it's not largely about writing personal narratives.

It's really about being able to read complex texts, define what complex texts means and the context of an employer or the context of a college curriculum and be able to analyze that text. And take a stand on or assess various options for addressing a problem or a challenge that you're facing in the workforce or in an academic environment and being able to articulate that clearly both in the spoken language and in writing. Which is very different than what we often do, and in our secondary school of curriculums or our middle grades' curriculums or our early grade curriculums for that matter. And so the Common Core State Standards in both subjects take us in, I think, a new direction toward thinking more actively about the application of knowledge and skills that has profound implications for curriculum and instruction and for our assessment protocols.

And I think it begins to take us in the direction of not thinking narrowly about literacy, but literacy across curriculum domains, reading, writing, speaking, and listening.

1:48:38

Richard Freeland:

A couple of observations. I'm somewhat of two minds about this. You know, I think that the notion that someone like Bill Gates or Steve Jobs is a paradigm for the rest of us is fun to think about, but fundamentally nonsense. You know, there are always geniuses and anomalies.

Paul Reville:

But in fairness, the point that's being made is that a lot of the jobs – and if you look at the data on jobs, a lot of the jobs are going to come from startups. New jobs, new businesses, don't necessarily become Apple or Microsoft, but they're new jobs and new kinds of corporations. Students inventing their own work rather than waiting to get jobs.

Richard Freeland:

Well, I get that, but what percentage of students are really going to invent their own jobs and create their own companies? I think encouraging that kind of creativity and

that kind of entrepreneurship, that's wonderful. But I don't think it's an alternative to having a really solid education for the great number of people. And I have tended to think even though I love the breadth of liberal education, that the focus on English and math as sort of threshold subjects nonetheless made some sense. Yes, you'd want everything for everyone, but there are some things which you absolutely have to have. And most peoples' lists would probably start with those two.

That said, are we really—if the issue is, these are in fact threshold intellectual capacities that are necessary for any kind of futures here—are we really measuring them appropriately? I started to have a question, for example, on the quantitative side that we tend to equate quantitative reasoning with algebra. And that's, I suspect—and I'm not a mathematician so I could be wrong about this—but that's because that's the way the mathematicians think about it. That algebra is sort of the step before you get to complex thinking.

But there's been some study in higher education showing that in fact other quantitative subjects like, let's say statistics, are even more useful as predictors of how students are going to do in advanced work than is algebra. So it may be that we're not wrong that literacy skills and quantitative skills are essential pre-requisites. We may just be measuring them in the wrong way or using the wrong metrics to get at them. I buy the notion that those are fundamental things. I'm not 100 percent sure we do them correctly.

I also echo the point that, the purely intellectual skills as sustained from the capacity to apply intellectual skills in the world is a really important distinction. And I'm thrilled that higher education as well as K through 12 is thinking more these days about how you link what you know to what you can do. Historically, higher education was a focus not just on intellectual capacities but on personal qualities, issues like character and discipline, and even values. All of that has been lost in the modern university as we have intellectualized the educational enterprise to a point that those other personal qualities, which are so important to success, are seen as irrelevant to what we do in higher education.

Maura makes the point that we can't rely just on the classroom to develop some of those qualities, and I get that. On the other hand, we all know we're in a society where if anything, the classroom is being asked to do more and more along those lines because social support systems and socializing systems in the culture have broken down in certain context. So how do we take an institution which has become more and more intellectually focused, more and more cognitively focused, and enable that institution to now deal with some of these broader qualities that we're talking about? I think that's a real dilemma that we face.

Paul Reville:

Thank you. Chair Peisch, last word for you.

1:53:11

Alice Peisch:

Getting back to your question about was this the wrong path, the narrow focus: I think that from the beginning, there has been that tension has existed with people being – many people being concerned that if we focused exclusively on those topics that we would be doing a disservice to our students. So I think the challenge remains to make sure that the focus is not exclusive, but only on making sure that our students are sufficiently prepared in those two areas so that they can access the other areas that are clearly of importance to success in any field. So I don't see this as a new criticism. I see this as just reminding us that we have to make sure that it is not viewed as an either/or, but it is a first step to ensure our students have access to all that they will need.

Paul Reville:

Thank you. I want to thank the members of the panel. We're on a clock, and our clock is running down now. What I've heard in terms of comments on the two key questions, one on utility and one on research, is that the members of the panel are unanimous in seeing utility and needing the kind of information that this instrument provides at grade 12 to help inform decisions. Both diagnostic decisions that we make about what's going on and how we explain some of the gaps that are persistent and that we're very concerned about. And also what we do, probably more importantly, in terms of guiding strategy, whether it's in curriculum and instruction, whether it's in expanding school time and working outside of school, whether it's focused on the gap of preparation for college or a more refined look at what the gap is as we think about particular careers. All of that. I think this information is very helpful for and is in itself research.

The second part of the question was, was the research that was posited here also of utility and how will we broaden that? And I thought the comments about the applicability of knowledge, and as we look at that applicability of knowledge, in particular, disciplines, was something that bears some further thought in terms of the way in which the research comes forward. Are we going to come forward with a kind of convergence that was posited in the presentation that we heard earlier, or is it going to be distributed? And if it's distributed, what kind – what does that tell us about the kind of system that we need? Is it a one-size-fits-all system, or are we moving toward a more hybridized form of preparing our young people for careers and college?

So I think this research is also going to be of great use, and to help inform a very active conversation that's now underway among our colleagues here in Massachusetts, both on the panel and in the audience. This is sort of job number one, solving these achievement gap problems that we've been talking about today,

growing jobs in the commonwealth, making sure that our young people are prepared not just to get into college but to persist through college, and then to move on to employment and to lead happy and successful lives in our society.

That's what we're all striving toward and working for. That's what I know NAEP cares about. That's what I know members of the audience care about. So thank you for giving us the opportunity to share our thoughts with you today, and I'll turn it back over to you, governor.

Governor Musgrove:

Would you all thank the panel? Wait a minute before you all get up. Secretary Reville, would your schedule allow a few questions?

Paul Reville:

Sure, sure.

Governor Musgrove:

The panel will take questions. What we've heard first this morning is Darv giving a presentation from the point of view of NAEP and what we're doing in 12th grade preparedness. You have now heard from a distinguished panel and some of the views and things that they're dealing with. So, if there are questions that you would have for the panel or that you want to ask of Darv, would you please let us know?

All right, has this panel done such a great job? First over here, and then here [pointing to audience members with raised hands]. Back here. Back at the back.

1:57:41

Mark Tomizawa, Six Degrees of Humankind:

Thank you very much. I don't think this is on [indicating microphone]. Is that on now? All right. Mark Tomizawa, Six Degrees of Humankind, which is basically an under-the-radar cooperative cross-disciplinary, business, academia, and most importantly I think, technical research. So there is a way to take social media and turn it into civic-minded media. A number of the suggestions I think you have made about areas that would be worthwhile could be easily done by people at MIT and the Center for Future Civic Media, to have an ongoing tracking that's informally based but that has the discipline in there that you would look for in terms of gathering, harvesting research. But it's something where young people already want to be involved with.

So the key is how do we go where they already are and start to put inline research in place? And if you're interested in that, I think we could describe something, diagram it, have you look at it, refine it, and I think it could be unleashed quite easily using social media across the commonwealth, and then go outside of the commonwealth, and perhaps with the organization's help, go broader. But there's no money transfer involved in this. These are people who want to pay it forward. So thank you.

Governor Musgrove:

Thank you. Joe Esposito.

Joe Esposito, Massachusetts Business Alliance for Education:

Thank you. Understanding that The Nation's Report Card, NAEP, is a sophisticated statistical measure and looking to the question of utility here for 12th grade academic preparedness, we're talking about a measurement and not a prescriptive solution for individuals you were talking about. Or a predictor of what's going to happen, graduation rates. I need some help, though, and I don't know if others do, but I need some help on the connection, the linking between what will come out of this new use for 12th grade NAEP scores and the individual. A lot of inference here is that OK, if we do as the result of a lot of this work in these studies come out with either scores that are meaningful or measurements that are meaningful, we're not, of course, linking that to the individual because that's not what NAEP does.

So how will this bridge for us in Massachusetts or elsewhere, this kind of data, which to me seems to be now a much farther reach than NAEP has done before.

Governor Musgrove:

Very good question. Mr. Secretary, you all are the ones that are charged with taking this data, whether it be a legislative person to implement policy, whether it be an educator that then takes that data and then tries to use it to make the schools better. Is there a way in which you can answer this question, to connect what you do with that data and the result that you try to reach?

Paul Reville:

You know, from my perspective, the multiplicity of assessment instruments that the commissioner described earlier that we look at give us different tools for different purposes. Now NAEP, because it's a sampling instrument, I think is helpful at top level. It's helpful in policy formulation, it's helpful in getting a sense of what trend lines are over time. It's helpful in the sense of benchmarking against others and how they're doing. Not helpful in an individual diagnostic about a particular student or about a particular school or probably about a particular school system, unless the depth of the sample was sufficient to draw those kinds of generalities.

But I think, given that we're doing a lot of individual measurement with MCAS, for example, to put the two of them together coming in at different points are complementary. So I know that as we think about policy, it's really helpful to have both kinds of measures to take into account. I mean, for us to know that, for example, that there's rough comparability between how our students are doing on MCAS versus how they're doing on NAEP is reassuring to us. Either that means there's a coincidence in the goals, or there's a coincidence in the rigor of the instruments, and we need to look at that in more depth as we think about it. But it's helpful to have that kind of comparison. I don't know if either of our commissioners were –

Mitchell Chester:

Yeah, I mean I think, Joe, I had similar questions as I looked at, for example, the three potential scenarios that might come out of the job analysis studies and linking it to score points on the NAEP range. It definitely – the studies definitely need a very strong sort of curriculum scaffold to make that useful because to know that to be a computer technician successfully translates to roughly a score of this on NAEP is not helpful in and of itself. Right? But if we have a rich description of the kinds of skills, math, reading, writing skills that in fact are essential to being prepared well to be a computer technician, then that's helpful. So that's what I would sort of add to this.

Governor Musgrove:

Here [pointing to the audience].

John D'Auria. Teachers21:

John D'Auria with Teachers21. I was fascinated by the discussion about paying attention to preparedness versus being able to graduate. And I want to link that to the KIPP data, and they have had tremendous success by paying attention to mathematics and literacy and getting a whole bunch of kids who wouldn't normally graduate from high school to graduate from high school. But they've been tremendously disappointed by the fact that only a third of them are actually graduating from college. And they're only in their preliminary research, but some of the hypotheses that were most intriguing is that the kids who do make it through college rather than focusing on the ones that drop out, have a dimension about social and emotional learning the other kids didn't. And I think to lose that focus, to me, seems that we're going to continue to pour efforts of water through a colander, and it's going to hold. So that's one comment that I want to make.

But the second thing that intrigued me was the discussion about distinctions between career readiness and college readiness and how do we make that distinction without

falling into the trap of lower expectations. And then there was the comment about applying knowledge versus just understanding knowledge.

I wonder if the problem isn't so much that we have to make a distinction between those objectives, but maybe we need to realize that all of our high schools need to teach differently. That there are some students who really need to see the application, you know, and it's through the application that they get excited about the content. Where there are other students who really are fine with hearing about the content and then learn how to apply it later. And it seems like by continually making this distinction between vocational and comprehensive education that we miss an opportunity to realize, I think, all our kids need to be exposed to this dual approach so that we capture more kids being successful. And I'd be interested in any comments on either one of those points.

Paul Reville:

I'll just quickly tackle your – I mean the first comment suggests to me that some of the things... And I follow that KIPP research as well, and it's fascinating. And it relates to kind of the last subject we were talking about. Are there other things that we should be looking at, measuring as difficult as they are to measure, and cultivating because they're critical – critical ingredients to college success, even if they aren't directly immediately related to the academic pursuit? And I have to tell you that as I travel around college campuses and talk with students, and talk with students who have dropped out, or friends of theirs who know why kids have dropped out, it confirms that kind of research that you're talking about with KIPP.

On your second question, it's always been my experience, for example, the extraordinary performance of the career technical schools in Massachusetts against MCAS when every prediction in '93 was by them themselves, they weren't going to do as well. And they've actually done better, and they argue, "Well, we spend half the time on academics that other schools do," but actually, they found a way to integrate it more effectively, and the level of motivation – I'll always remember Dave Driscoll commenting on the greatest problem in Massachusetts public schools being boredom at the secondary school level.

And I know when I travel into the vocational schools, I always see a greater spring in the step of those kids and a sense that they're connecting to the application of knowledge, which has a motivating aspect to them. It also connects to a hopeful future, and that's part of the motivation. And it seems to me that we've got to figure out back in the mainstream system how to do more of that applied knowledge without having to have a whole separate school system that does it.

Richard Freeland:

I would also echo that point. I spent a period of time at Northeastern University where we had this co-op program where students divide their time between classroom and the workplace. And what that brought home to me was the incredible power of that combination and the synergy of that combination, and many students flourished in the classroom because of the excitement that they see in the application in the workplace. And indeed, there's research that shows that it isn't just learning about application, but the actual intellectual understanding of the discipline is enhanced by the application.

So you know, we've developed a notion of schooling, which is you do schooling first, you go to K through 12 school, and then you sort of move into the real world. And I think if we can find more ways to apply that co-op concept, that internship concept, that application concept, that's not just intellectual and in schools but has elements of what is really going on in real life, that we would enormously enrich and empower our education in our young people.

Governor Musgrove:

We can take two more quick questions. Back here first, and then there was one over here [pointing]. Okay.

Arthur MacEwan, Massachusetts Teachers Association:

Thanks. I'm Arthur MacEwan from the Massachusetts Teachers Association, but I'm also a professor emeritus of economics at UMass Boston, which probably informs my questions more than my MTA Association. I wanted to pick up on the comment about early childhood education being especially important because while there was information about the correlation between the NAEP and the SAT scores, I'd be curious about the correlation between the NAEP scores at various levels. For example, we know that the racial gap appears very early, and it would be extremely useful to know what difference it makes. Does the gap appear at the same level at each fourth, eighth, and 12th grade so we know what's happening? Which brings me to the other quick question –

Governor Musgrove:

You guys are not being quick.

Arthur MacEwan:

Well, let me just make it as a comment. You can't separate what and why. The very fact that you're collecting data on the racial gap and not social economic gaps suggests an explanation of the whys that seems to me to be we've known since the

Coleman report almost 50 years ago. The social economic stuff is pretty important. So I don't think you can do that separation.

Governor Musgrove:

Any response here from the panel on that to be more of a response from us?

Mitchell Chester:

Well, I mean I think certainly, I won't comment on the latter piece because I think that's – I believe NAEP is doing some disaggregation by economic background², so you just didn't see any of those displays today. On the former, you know, I think it makes a whole lot of sense to be smart about investing in high quality, early childhood programs.

Paul Reville:

Just on the latter point, in Massachusetts, the governor's theory of action with respect to closing achievement gaps has to do with instructional improvement and strengthening our academics. But at the same time, not continuing to ignore that 18 years in education reform, we still have this persistent gap associated with poverty, and that clearly, on average—not for any particular individual, but on average—the intervention of schooling alone isn't sufficient to regularly overcome the impediments that poverty places in the way of young people attending school, being attentive, and learning when they get there. And until we figure out a way to mitigate some of those factors and impediments, we're not going to make good on the promise of education reform. It's that simple.

2:11:30

Governor Musgrove:

Last question [pointing]. Thank you.

Carrie Costello, Andover Education Association, Massachusetts Teachers Association:

Hi, Carrie Costello. I'm also with MTA, but I'm a special educator and school psychologist by training. One comment, and then my question. I look through all the reports, and notable to me on these commissions is the almost absence of practitioners in the K-12 classroom. On one of the commissions, there's one, and on the other, there is two. An elementary, high school, and I guess middle school and junior high didn't need a voice. And so one thing I would really ask is that when we are forming these commissions, task forces, et cetera, that some attention be paid to those of us in

² The National Assessment of Educational Progress does report results for students by eligibility for the federal free and reduced price lunch program, as a proxy for income level.

the classroom, K12, who have something to offer with all due respect to the professors and higher ed and others. So I just put that out there in hopes that the composition of some of these will change. I work in a high school, so I live in the everyday reality of what happens with the testing, with the MCAS, with the PSAT, the SAT, the ACT, the mania of the taking of tests, what do they really mean. And so I guess what I would ask the panel, and one thing is not clear to me is the push to have NAEP taken by all 12th graders in Massachusetts at some point? So that's one just specific if that could get answered.

And if so – well, maybe that answer first, and if I have a follow up, I'll do that.

Governor Musgrove:

This is the last question, so give me your follow up right now.

Carrie Costello:

All right, my follow up would be if this is the case, how much testing is enough, and how are we really going to correlate that with the Massachusetts benchmarks and the curriculum frameworks we have? Because then how is it that we intend to integrate that with MCAS data with other forms of data that we might use and how much is too much, remembering that the MCAS is not a valid and reliable test from a psychometric point of view? I mean the NAEP is and other kinds of tests are. So that's really the essence of my question. Thank you.

Mitchell Chester:

I'd like to respond. First of all, there's no plan or intent or desire to have all 12th graders take NAEP. It's done on a sampling basis. That's the way NAEP is set up. You don't get as others have mentioned – you don't get individual student results back. I do think you raise a really important point, which is that at the secondary school level, our students take a variety of tests. And the stakes on those tests in some cases are high, and it's infrequent that the K-12 sector and the higher ed sector are paying attention to the same assessments, and that's a problem. It creates a scenario where the MCAS in Massachusetts is both an exit exam, and it's one of the key barometers that we use to assess how well our high schools are doing while if a student's at all aimed towards college, they're also focused on taking the SAT or maybe the ACT. And they're focused on ACCUPLACER, and the K-12 sector is not really paying attention to any of those assessments.

So one of the goals with the PARCC—you've heard us refer to the PARCC, P-A-R-C-C, Partnership for the Assessment of Readiness for College and Career. One of the goals of that consortium is to design a set of assessments. It begins in the early grades. But by the time it gets to the high school grades, is a more comprehensive assessment system than is our current tenth grade MCAS, and that will give students

very clear signals as to whether or not they're on track. And by the 11th grade at a point where they're really prepared for what employers are looking for and for at least entry level credit bearing courses.

Right now, we don't do a good job of signaling this to students. And part of our pathway to being successful in that regard is that the higher ed sector, my counterpart in Massachusetts, Richard Freeland, and the K-12 sector, have to agree on what is it that really signals college readiness, ready at least for an entry level credit bearing course. Which by the way, for a lot of students, isn't enough. And if you want to go into a STEM kind of career in higher ed, engineering, you better be well beyond an entry level credit bearing math course, for example. But at least that if you take this assessment, which the K-12 sector is using as its assessment protocol, the higher ed sector will also honor that. And therefore, it's really one set of assessments that applies to both worlds. So that's one of the key goals of this project.

2:16:42

Governor Musgrove:

Would you all help me thank the panel this morning for a great discussion?
[Applause.]

Since you all as an audience have engaged us and we have a timeframe for conclusion that's very important to keep you on schedule, we're just going to go right ahead into our third segment this morning, which is the shorter segment, which would allow us to conclude. If you need to get a cup of coffee, take a break, please do so. But we want to make sure that we preserve enough opportunity for you to hear the whole presentation and to have questions.

The third phase of the symposium this morning is, again, talking about the relevance and the utility of the NAEP 12th grade academic preparedness initiative. We have two members here of NAGB, the National Assessment Governing Board. One is Susan Pimentel, an expert in curriculum and standards who has consulted with school districts and states across the nation, and in the development of the Common Core State Standards, and Dave Alukonis, who was appointed to the local school board member position on the Governing Board and is the former chair of the Hudson School Board in New Hampshire, and a former chairman of the Ways and Means committee of the New Hampshire House of Representatives.

And I wanted to ask Dave Driscoll to come back up, and of course, you all know Dave very well. He is the chair of the Governing Board, and is former commissioner of elementary and secondary education here in Massachusetts. Now Susan will explain the process we will be using to introduce the first question and to get you started. Susan.

Susan Pimentel:

So now we've come to the most important part of the program, which is to hear from all of you. We really want you to talk to us about what you think is important and relevant about the NAEP research. So we have the question. It was actually a question that the panel reflected on, and we'd like you now to reflect on the relevance and utility of the NAEP preparedness research. And what you might want to do – you can think about what perspective or what aspect of the research is most important.

You've heard about the comparisons to international tests. You've heard about the research in different jobs, the reading, writing, and math requirements in those. About linking to other tests. So you might think about what seems to be most compelling about the research and why. You might want to put your hat on as an employer, as a college professor, as a K-12 representative, and think from that perspective, what would make this research that we're doing at NAEP useful and relevant.

And by the way, what if we don't do, or the results don't say, or our messages don't do, why it won't be relevant or useful. And you might also think about—and we heard a little bit about this earlier from some of your comments—about how can this research motivate students, especially 12th grade students who are going to be taking the test? How can this inform teachers and the like? So what we'd like you to do is take about ten minutes and talk to one another at your tables. If you're in a small group—if you've got two of you, you can talk to each other, or feel free to join another group. And then, what we're going to do is hear from you, as many of you who are willing to share and that we have time for.

We want to hear from you, your thoughts and suggestions reflecting on this question. You have in your packets, if you just need a little refresher about the preparedness, the aspects and different elements of the preparedness research, you have a little document in your packets about that. So is everybody clear? About ten minutes, and then we'll check in with you, and we're going to take down all of your advice to us so we can really make sure that this research counts. So go on. We'll talk to you in a bit.

2:24:55

Governor Musgrove:

I know that Sue said you had ten minutes, but actually, we're going to make it six. You all probably accuse us in the South of being real slow. Well, we're going to speed it up a little bit. So go ahead and continue to work, but I'm going to start over here on this side, and if anybody wants to present comments from your discussion, questions, or thoughts, please do so, because those are the ones we want to get down as it relates to suggestions to us.

Governor Musgrove:

Tim, go ahead.

Tim Eccleston, New Hampshire Department of Education:

Okay. Tim Eccleston. I'm the NAEP state coordinator from New Hampshire, your neighbor. And as NAEP state coordinators, we too are asking about the 12th grade assessment. And one of the recommendations that many of us throughout the nation, coordinators, is to move it to maybe the fall of the 12th grade year, and I don't know what consideration there has been. And also, for the states, Massachusetts and New Hampshire, participated in the 12th grade pilot, how much lobbying there is for other states to accept 12th grade NAEP?

Governor Musgrove:

Okay. We'll get those down, and we'll go through other recommendations or questions. Behind you.

Claire Duggan, Northeastern University Center for STEM Education:

I'm just curious, Claire Duggan from Northeastern University. Twelfth grade testing, I mean with current college admission deadlines, we've got, I know at Northeastern University, a November 1st deadline for early decision. So in terms of the 12th grade assessments for NAEP, who is going to benefit from actually reviewing this information? It's not going to be useful to the teachers at that point in the 12th grade by the time they get the test results. It's not going to be something that could be added into potentially the students' acceptance into higher education. So is 12th grade too late for this testing?

Is this something that should be done in the 11th grade, that it feeds into perhaps, remedial courses in senior year of high school maybe in line with things like the ACCUPLACER so that students are actually reducing the number of those courses when they move into community colleges and/or other academic pathways? So I'm just curious with this 12th grade time period.

Governor Musgrove:

Again, we're going on the recommendations. I don't want to cut anybody off from recommendations, but I think the 12th grade preparedness is to make sure you're looking at all 12 years to see what it is that a student has accomplished, but you're right. They're two different objectives. You've got the end user, and then the

student, himself or herself. But we'll come back to that. Other recommendations or questions? A thought? Any others that you would posit or put forward?

Tom Payzant:

Just very quickly, the most important part of NAEP for me was when we got into the TUDA and had the urban district sign up where you could go to the next level of understanding about what was going on in an urban school district. And it was a little bit of competition there among the urban districts that were engaged, but there was a set of data that went beyond what we've been talking about for the most part today. And I would be really discouraged if that piece went away if I were still superintendent.

2:29:14

Unidentified Audience Member:

Hi. Well, we talked about a number of things, primarily relevance, and that NAEP was essential before the Common Core. But it won't be after PARCC has had the time it takes to be proven and to create the data stream that's needed to benchmark internationally and do some of the other things that we've heard mentioned this morning. That right now, ACT or PISA may in fact be better, and NAEP needs to pay attention to that. That we also – the research that you're going to do connecting NAEP to readiness for various career paths and for higher ed is what's really going to distinguish it and make it important. Just having the measures – I think there was agreement that there are other measures that can do the same thing. But one of the points was that motivating 12th graders is something that NAEP is going to have to pay attention to for the test to be taken seriously.

So clearly, NAEP has to add value. We also talked real briefly about some of the comments about using new research methods, that if you just use historical academic research methods, you're going to miss information that can be gained in real time, that real time data that exists in various places, and the kind of social media use tapping into what Mark mentioned earlier. And I'm just going to add one thing that I didn't have time to raise at my table, which is I think we also heard from the panel that if you just look at the current school model, you're going to miss something, because school models need to change.

We need to test for mastery, not seat time. We need to integrate how kids apply knowledge to the teaching of knowledge, and all of that is going to be changing, and NAEP had better stay abreast of it or even help lead it if it's going to be relevant and have utility.

Governor Musgrove:

Thank you. Right here.

Anna Saavedra, The RAND Corporation:

I didn't end up making it into a group, so this is an individual question. But, it's a point about the surveys that have to do – that go along with the tests. And as far as I am familiar with the surveys, there are survey questions for students, teachers, administrators. As far as I know, I haven't seen questions that are asking questions about district policy or state policy, and it seems like those might be useful additions. And also potentially looking a little bit more about the – reviewing the teacher and administrative questions.

Governor Musgrove:

Back in the back [pointing].

Unidentified Audience Member:

[Introduction inaudible -- away from microphone] ...The kind of skills there. We're not measuring what is needed for the type of skills that are increasingly needed in our society in the 21st century or whatever we call ourselves. And we're falling back on measuring what we've always known how to measure, and it's not at all clear that we're measuring the right thing. I mean for example, we focus in our measurements almost entirely on cognitive skills, where as one of the things schools are all about is behavioral skills. And indeed, one of the things that employers care about are behavioral skills, and certainly, employers care about critical thinking. Yet, that's not dealt with. One question about that was sort of, "Well, we can't deal with that."

So we're like the man who is looking for his keys under the light even though he lost them around the corner because there's no light around the corner.

Governor Musgrove:

Make sure we use this microphone. It seems to be the one working. Here, this table [pointing].

Governor Musgrove:

You all had an energized discussion going on over there.

Unidentified Audience Member:

Excuse me. We don't believe in repeating what's already been said so eloquently, so thank you very much.

2:34:10

Julie Kimball, TERI:

Julie Kimball from TERI. I'm working with Trio and GEAR Up in Boston, and just very quickly, I think something that was very relevant to me, particularly with regard to the discussion around college and career readiness and making a distinction there was the assumption that was made in the presentation that every high school graduate will require some level of training after college – after high school. And to me, that really speaks to making that distinction. It's not happening during high school, but it's happening when you're making that pathway into post-secondary, that choice.

Governor Musgrove:

While we're looking around, Dave, would you mention the second aspect right there if you would?

David Alukonis:

Thank you, Governor. Before I bring up the second discussion point, I'd like to remind everyone in your yellow packets, there is a feedback form. And we'd love for you all to fill this out and get it back to us. You can fill it out here and turn it in at the table outside the doors to the room, or you can send it on back to Ray Fields. And Ray is on the NAGB staff, and his e-mail is on the form itself. So if you could do that, it would be greatly appreciated.

The second discussion point is to ask all of you what further research we should be looking at. We've talked about that. I've heard comments regarding socio-economic status, a number of other things, and actually, these are issues that on the Board, we talk about quite frequently. We look at issues, other questions that we have. But quite frequently, it's research that goes kind of beyond the pale of what we're able to do, what we're allowed to do at any one point. However, this is a good point for us to talk about that. What other research should we be looking at in developing this new instrument? And further, who are those research partners that we could engage in those efforts? Governor?

Governor Musgrove:

Since you all have been here all morning and you're well versed, I'm not even going to give you ten minutes to discuss because I think that individually or collectively, we would like to hear some ideas of thoughts that you may have had. And again, we've already heard a couple of good ones this morning, and these are the kinds of things that I really do believe matter. When they make sense, then implement them, or at least start the discussion of implementation. So in response to the second, and I don't want to cut you off from the first, if you have something as a follow up on the first, please feel free to give it.

But in either regard, let us know, and we'll get a microphone to you. Right here [pointing].

Tom Payzant:

This is just a suggestion that we do a lot of reports, and they have a very short shelf life. Dave Driscoll and I were on a commission led by Mark Tucker called Tough Choices, Tough Times. And there is a model in there that goes to a piece that we didn't directly address here, but I think would be another good reference point for what the work here is all about. Dave, you disagree?

David Driscoll:

No, I agree.

Tom Payzant:

Okay, that's my only comment.

Governor Musgrove:

Linda.

Linda Noonan:

Thanks. I'm Linda Noonan from the Massachusetts Business Alliance for Education, and so the college career distinction discussion is very important to us because we've always based our position on the Achieve data that says every kid needs the same baseline skills whether they're going to college and career. We're also acutely aware that we are educating kids for jobs that don't exist yet, and that what we really have to do is educate them to be lifelong learners capable of adapting, of acquiring new skills and knowledge, of using the critical thinking skills that have been spoken about before to understand what's an urban myth and what's real on the Internet.

And so I think that the question that you said that NAEP is—that NAGB is going to answer—is it different and where do the different requirements for different jobs fall on the scale is critically important. But I also think that—and I've said this to the people on the panel and the pathways to prosperity people before—that it is very important to emphasize that every kid needs the same basic skills level no matter which pathway they're taking. And you know, all of this, we have to be brave to discuss this. We have to discuss it, but if we're being brave, it's probably because we're going to tell somebody that we're going to start differentiating too soon, and I just wanted to put that out there for the people who are doing this research.

Unidentified Audience Member:

It seems to me that what I've heard today is that people would like the new NAEP or the new 12th grade NAEP to be able to provide more directly useful information. And that suggests that there needs to be some research on how we build assessments like NAEP in a way that's very different from what we do now with a sort of framework and blueprint, which are not designed to provide meaningful interpretations at a particular cut score.

And I think if we were in fact hoping to be able to interpret scores along the scale, behaviorally anchor them, and to make specific points along the scale have the kind of meaning that we're talking about today around college and career readiness, however that's defined, then I think we need to think about how to develop such assessments in ways that are very different from what we do now, whether it's NAEP or SAT and so on.

And I think, unless we begin to examine that approach or new approaches, we're going to always be stuck in the current situation where we really don't know how to interpret the scores because they're not really interpretable.

Mark Tomizawa:

Hi. Well, as John Dewey liked to say, we should involve people in democracy by getting them to do it. So perhaps what we need, and some of us have been thinking about this, is a form of "just Dewey." And the idea would be that you actually involve people in activities online and elsewhere, and you capture the conversations that happen with their permission, and you start to see how they perceive where jobs are going, how their money is being used. What's the value of an individual person in a society where it's mostly institutions that determine which way we go? And that might be a nice complement to your efforts to what you're doing. You might actually get some ideas and feedback from retired people, from education, or students whose lives were changed by certain experiences that aren't being captured right now in any of the data.

Governor Musgrove:

Thank you. Last comment. And do not let me cut off any comments that you may have if you want to follow it up, comments through e-mail, through any kind of source because that's the whole subject is to make sure we get them here.

Audience Member:

Yeah, and this may be an incomplete statement I'm going to make, but working obviously with—working with students and parents, one of the questions I have for the folks who are involved with NAEP is what is your communication process? So how do you communicate NAEP's relevance not only to policy holders, but to the general public? Because I'm very thankful to be here because I feel like I've learned a tremendous amount about NAEP, but I wonder what your average person knows about NAEP, what its impact is. So I'm just curious about what is your policy, your communication strategy, do you have one and do you have an intention to have one?

Governor Musgrove:

Dave Driscoll, do you want to answer that as chairman?

David Driscoll:

Well, I could go on and on. Typically, what we do – and we actually have a full sub-committee reporting in dissemination, and they do a terrific job, but we're still not well known. I mean this audience is much more sophisticated about who we are than anybody else. We put out reports all the time, as you know. We don't just test in reading and mathematics. We test in economics, in geography, in the arts. So we get a one-day story. You know, 46 percent of the kids don't know who the vice president is. Thirty-six percent of the kids didn't know California is west of the Mississippi River, and everybody is in horror for a day, and then it goes away. So I've actually challenged the Board on this very issue. How do we make a difference?

Darv mentioned, and you all ought to keep this in mind, we are very limited in what we can do statutorily. We're not to get involved in curriculum or classroom. Our job is to tell – is to be The Nation's Report Card. How are our kids doing, period. But I still think there's a whole series of ways that we can get that message out, and hopefully, and I'm very curious about the social media and this idea of getting people aroused from within because our stuff is landing with a dull thud four times a year or whatever time we put out reports.

We have a very robust communication system. For those NAEP junkies, it's the best thing in the world.

They go on our website. We have a tool, they can go in, they can look at the NAEP test questions. NAEP junkies just think we're the best, but that's about one-tenth of one-percent of the population. So we really, in my judgment, need to do more to get the word out about NAEP— because we are The Nation's Report Card, because we are valid and reliable, because we're doing some cutting edge things, and we are actually doing computer based testing in schools. We have to bring our own computers to make sure it's valid, et cetera. There's a lot of things we're doing. We're going to assess technology and engineering literacy. We're adding that as a new subject matter. Who else tests economics?

So there's a lot to be told about NAEP. We need to communicate better, but to my way of thinking, our real challenge is how do we make it real? How do we make it such that it makes a difference? And that's still a gap we haven't closed.

Governor Musgrove:

OK, we have comments here and here [pointing]. Here and here, and then we'll get through.

Marilyn Segal, Citizens for Public Schools:

Marilyn Segal from Citizens for Public Schools. I'm really concerned. I just heard that every student needs to have the same basic skills. And that's a wonderful goal, but is it a realistic one? Are we going to say to that fabulous artist that can't do math that you can't go on to art college? You're now a throwaway without a high school education.

What about an electrician, a plumber, who now needs in order to be licensed, has to have post-secondary school in Massachusetts? Well, we're saying to that kid, "You didn't get your high school diploma. You're not good in English, but you're one heck of a plumber." We're going to say, "You can't really perform your job, your career, because you don't have good English skills."

So what are we doing with some of these tests? Yes, it's a goal for us as a country to have a very well educated population, but are we simultaneously making some people throw away people because they can't pass these tests? And I think we need to give a lot of thought to that before we decide who's failing and who's succeeding.

Governor Musgrove:

And then here.

Unidentified Audience Member:

I realize that NAEP is focused on certain criteria and certain purposes, but listening to the conversation today, what I'm finding absent and wondering about research in perhaps a different – from a different set of people is the relationship between the individual and the individual youngster and his teacher and her school and her school system. We have millions of institutions in the United States. We're all doing different things. It'd be very interesting, especially in line with what Linda said about we need to think about how we educate differently, what other schools should be doing differently. If we could collect some data about—we started to do that a little bit with the charter schools, but it's not organized—about what kinds of environments engender, the kind of growth and development and success that we want for our youngsters.

We can't just be looking at their performance. We need to be looking at the matrix, I think, in which they've grown up and developed. So I don't know if this is NAEP. Probably it isn't NAEP, but you're talking about partners and additional research. This seems to be something that would be very useful as well.

Governor Musgrove:

Before I close us out, I want to recognize—I'm going to keep us on schedule, but I want to recognize Dave for a few remarks for us being here in Boston. Dave.

2:48:28

David Driscoll:

Thank you very much, governor. I want to be very brief, but I want to particularly thank our NAEP – our NAGB staff that are just terrific. Angela Scott just ran out because she has to do her job. Just ran out of the room literally as I was about to introduce her. But let me introduce our deputy executive director, Mary Crovo, who has been with NAGB since day one. Mary. And Angela is back. Angela Scott, who is a newbie on the staff and handles all the logistics. Angela, thank you. And I know the panel will agree with me. The board knows this. When Ray Fields runs an event, it's amazing. And we all had a script and 27 pages, by the way, and so forth.

And if you're really interested in the history of NAEP, he goes back to Thomas Jefferson somehow and so forth. But tremendous person and resource for NAGB and this country, Ray Fields. Thank you, Ray. So I just really want to thank you. I do want to make this historic note. NAEP has been around since 1969, I think, testing since the early '70s. I, as a very young math teacher back in the early '70s, remember looking at NAEP questions and thinking as a high school math teacher, "Boy, this is great stuff," and it is great stuff and has been all those years.

It was about 22 years ago when NAGB was formed to oversee NAEP. At that point, NAEP was subject to an independent contractor to oversee it. And it was the great wisdom of Senator Lamar Alexander and someone else who won't surprise anybody in this room, Senator Edward M. Kennedy, who came together and had this vision of establishing NAGB; a board to oversee NAEP. To oversee our Nation's Report Card, which came about because the then-commissioner of education—by the way, that's what they called Frank Keppel. It wasn't a cabinet position—went before Congress. And they said, "So how are our kids doing?" And he couldn't answer and that's how NAEP was formed.

But NAGB, which was the creation of Ted Kennedy and Lamar Alexander, is the Board that we serve on, we all serve on. Its composition is what we refer to as a Noah's ark. It has two governors--a Republican governor and a Democratic governor. This year, it's Sonny Perdue of Georgia is the Republican and Jack Markell from Delaware is the Democrat. And it has two state legislators—a Republican legislator and a Democratic legislator, and it also has practitioners, teachers, high school teachers, principals, psychometricians. It's very carefully laid out. And I would suggest to you it isn't often that Congress passes a law that works so well, but NAGB has really been, I think, a tremendous asset to this country.

It is NAGB that established these performance levels, and the definition of Proficient. And it was determined that we needed state results, and that was a huge problem back then. In fact, the chief state school officers voted by one vote to allow state tests. It was the Board that decided to have TUDA and go into our urban areas and so forth. So really, the history that we enjoy currently as Board members is something that we truly treasure, and often, NAEP is called our nation's treasure.

It's very important, the work that we've done over the years. We do it carefully, as you know, and it's above reproach, as is this Commission led by Governor Musgrove. And of course, you saw the work that Darv did, and Darv was a Board chair for eight years of NAGB. So I just want to conclude by thanking you, because I think this has been a tremendous forum. I'm not surprised, governor. People in Massachusetts take their education very seriously, and as you know, there are some diverse opinions here, which is great. But people are very respectful and very interested and passionate about what has to happen for young people in this country.

So I thank you. We learned a lot, which is the most important thing. I hope you learned a lot, and I thank you for your kind attention. Thank you.

Governor Musgrove:

Thank you very much for being here. We are now adjourned.

[End of Audio]