



EVENT TRANSCRIPT

NAEP, Massachusetts, and Academic Preparedness for College

May 14, 2014
Revere High School
Revere, Mass.

On May 14, 2014, the National Assessment Governing Board hosted an event at Revere High School in Revere, Mass., to release findings on relationships between 12th graders' performance in reading and mathematics on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), and their academic preparedness for college. Panelists also discussed how NAEP has informed Massachusetts' standards to prepare students for college and careers, as well as the close historical connection between NAEP and the Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS).

PANEL

Mitchell D. Chester

Commissioner, Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education

Paul Dakin

Superintendent, Revere Public Schools

Jon DeMarco

Social Studies Teacher, Revere High School

Logan DiCarlo

Student, Revere High School

Lourenço Garcia

Principal, Revere High School

David Driscoll

Chair, National Assessment Governing Board (moderator)

TRANSCRIPT

David Driscoll: There have been a number of studies, and we are ready to make our announcement of the results of 12th graders in America and their academic preparedness. We are here at Revere High School because Revere High School, and frankly the Revere Public Schools, are a great example of what can happen when everyone pulls together, focuses on the data, focuses on student engagement. And I'm just delighted to be here.

Before I introduce my good friend and colleague, Superintendent Dakin, I do want to introduce the Board members from NAGB who are here and have joined us. We'll begin with Father Joe O'Keefe, who's the dean of the School of Education, the Lynch School of Education, at Boston College, and we learned the grandson of a former principal here at Revere High School, Bob O'Keefe. So, welcome. Rebecca Gagnon, who is on the Board as a representative of parents and is on the Minneapolis Board of Education. Lou Fabrizio, from the great state of North Carolina who's the testing director, kind of the MCAS guy, although they use a different test, pleased to have you. Tonya Miles, from Maryland, who is a general public member of our Board, but has been very active in parent engagement and works on a commission in the great state of Maryland. Hector Ibarra, who is our eighth-grade science teacher, represents teachers, he is from Iowa. And Dale Nowlin, who is the 12th-grade math teacher from Indiana, representing, again, teachers. Did I miss anybody? ... Good.

OK, Revere High School is a high school that has not your typical demographics for a school that has achieved Level 1 here in Massachusetts, which is the top level. So, Revere High School is in the same level with Wellesley High School and Andover High School and "name your favorite high school." So it's a great story, but the whole Revere Public Schools is a great story. They only have one school that's below Level 2, and that's Level 3.

So a lot of great things are happening in Revere and I'm pleased to introduce my former colleague and friend. Paul Dakin has done a tremendous job here as superintendent of schools in the Revere Public Schools. That's not just my opinion; that was the opinion of the superintendents in Massachusetts that named him Superintendent of the Year last year. And he was president of the Massachusetts Association of School Superintendents, so my pleasure to introduce Paul Dakin.

Applause

Paul Dakin: Thank you, Dr. Driscoll, thank you. What it takes to have success in school ... thinking of the successes that Revere Public Schools has had over the past years, is purely a function of education reform and the initiatives that began in the state in 1993 at that time the then-superintendent took education reform and the restructuring of schools seriously. I had the advantage of coming into this world of the private school education world, where I worked for 19 years, right at that same time as an administrator in the district, and moved through the ranks. The common philosophy in the district has been that in order to stay abreast of those components in education that are most beneficial for our students is to stay on top of the research and to constantly reinvent what you're doing. And over the years we have worked to stimulate a culture

of risk in staying on top of the current research so that we could embed those practices into our students.

Our moral imperative exists and whenever we're struggling with a concept, the moral imperative that we ask ourselves is what is best for kids, and behind that moral imperative, our driving mission, which is around our four Rs in Revere: rigor in the curriculum; relevance to the curriculum; relationships with teachers and students, students to students, teachers and administrators, teachers to teachers, etc.; and resilience, because to do this work we have to reaffirm our own resilience working with urban children, and our children need resilience.

Revere is a community adjacent, just north of Boston; we serve about 7,100 students. Our poverty level is just under 80 percent. The minority is the majority and the successes are due to teachers who have bought into the mission of restructuring ourselves continually, and Dr. Garcia will be able to speak specifically to those issues and the teachers and the students at the high school, but it's a realization that in order to honor our moral imperatives through our four Rs, what we need to continually do is to—and the best we can do to serve our children and close achievement gaps is to—constantly to be renewing ourselves and our practices.

So, reconstruction, reformation of what we do, is constantly revisited. And I think those are reasons why, in addition to believing that the system is comprehensive, changing one part of the system and when we talk about these test results, we want to change a part of the system, which is the high school programming: It needs to get more rigorous that students are moving on more prepared.

We have to realize, nationally, that we have to step down that effort all the way, and I think the realization is becoming more clear, that early learning is where effort has to be spent. Readyng students at birth for the rigors that we want them to experience through the continuum of education. So children, and especially children we serve, children of poverty, we're constantly trying to reach out, to think of ways, to enrich what they're doing in the home before they walk to our door. If we can advance children's literacy by having programs in place where we don't have them in our building, and if we can help parents embrace things that they can do in the home. Sharing literacy, sharing books, more books in the home, take a bag of books home with your kindergartener and early learners, the more we can stimulate learning in those early years before we even get them. That is a gap closer and we have to realize that because when we come to our kindergartens and first grade ready more, then just as we want to improve high school students, they're ready more.

The success here at Revere High School is because of a system that was put in place, about 13 years ago, 12 years ago; we went to full-day kindergarten. Those students are the ones that are testing now at the high school. So, one of the reasons why we have seen a blip at the high school level is because that embedded program early on in kindergarten when they went full day, all of the sudden teachers in the first year, they were sort of stymied by the readiness of those kids compared to the half-day kindergarten program that they had. So all of the sudden, they started to have the ability to accelerate their programs. We want to continue that and bring it down to the early learning stages and that will certainly, in a generation of students, which is in our school's 12 or 13-14 years if we really go to early childhood education as we embed more concrete

programs and more rigor into the early learning programs, as they move through the stages, which they did here in Revere 7 years ago after the full-day kindergarten, we saw the need to put in a pre-AP program, pre-Advanced Placement program in middle school level, and those are the kids now that are testing at the high school for the first time.

So the continuum has always been strategically built through the spectrum of early learning through grade 12 that can compound itself, and in order to get us to the point where we're reaching the targets of a video that you will soon see and having those numbers improve, we can't only think of what we have to do in high school; there's not a level that is immune from assuming a responsibility to increase the rigor, in Revere we'd call it increasing the four Rs: rigor, relevance, relationships, and resilience. All the way through early learning before we even have children in school.

And I know the state and folks at the federal level are looking completely into early learning programs, and as that generation of learners moves through the system and if we all embed in it the deeper practices of the four Rs in the understanding that this will lead to ultimately a better place for students being prepared for college, we will have done what we are called to do as leaders in the profession. ...

Continuing onto our program, Dr. Garcia came to Revere Public Schools via Brockton Public Schools originally, and then he had a short stay in Rhode Island, then really learned that Massachusetts really is the place to be and especially Revere is the place to be. Actually he started out in Cabo Verde and spent some time across the world educating folks. So, we're fortunate to have somebody that strategically built on what we were doing at Revere High School and embedded some programs that we were ready for, that had to be "foundationed" by or for, by the previous principal, and took it to another place so I could tell you that Dr. Garcia could deliver this little talk he's going to do in one of the seven different languages and we'll ask him to stick to English this time, but he's certainly a man of many tongues and is certainly able to do that, so doc, it's your show to let us know what you saw in Revere.

Laurenço Garcia: First, let me begin by saying that I'm humbled by the fact that NAEP is here today with us at Revere High School and that also I'd like to recognize the presence of former Commissioner of Education David Driscoll, whom I have had the privilege of meeting about 10 years ago, and I'd like also to welcome Commissioner Chester to Revere High School and thank you all for attending this wonderful event.

I'd like to start my remarks by saying that when we talk about our progress that we see in Revere Public Schools, I would say that this is a district of excellence, of academic excellence, where each student's needs are met holistically. Whether it's an emotional, socio-economic, all kinds of issues that kids bring to school are minutely met in this school, so when I came on board in 2010, I had a difficult task of changing the school, so that we could have the accreditation standards, and with a team of well-established and highly educated teachers, we took the, upon ourselves the responsibility of restructuring the school.

We used to have seven periods a day, realized that we needed four. We realized also that kids needed more time to spend with teachers, doing advisory to build relationships. We also, I just

saw, the video we are going to see very soon, it talks about preparing kids for college and careers. The way to do this, we realized the best way to do this is to build a freshman academy. To build those skills that kids are missing from lower grade levels. So, we saw those things coming and we decided to put a team together to address those needs.

And I'm glad to say that that was not the only structure that changed the pedagogy, the acquisition of learning in school, we built on what was already here, Revere has been the vanguard of academic excellence and we built on that. So, after three years, we have seen significant progress; we actually are above the state average in all categories: LA, math, science.

Imagine yourself in a school where you have 47 percent of Latinos/Hispanic kids, kids who have come from their native country with some gaps in their education; you have also African Americans, Asians, and actually the minority, Dr. Dakin is right about pointing out that the minority is basically surpassing the majority, that used to be the majority, white kids. So, this is a pluralistic school with kids from a variety of latitudes around the world, but with a team of teachers that is extremely dedicated, we were able to turn things around and make Revere one of the top urban schools in the nation, and I would say the best in Massachusetts.

So, Revere High School has been moved from Level 3 to Level 1. We are about to receive the national MCAS award, which is, we have already secured the silver and we are about to receive the gold, and we have been nominated as one of the top nations by the U.S. News and we have been granted the silver medal.

These achievements speak loudly and very clearly about success, and it takes the whole village to educate a child. I, myself, I cannot do it. You'll go into the literature, you will see that you'll find a lot of research out there, Barzano, Fullan, and many others that talk about three things that have to happen in a school for the school to move forward. One is a strong leadership; you have to have a team around you that is fully dedicated to the top form of commitment that we have here at the public schools. Second, actually the first, will be the highly qualified teaching. You have to have that team that has the best interest of the kids ... putting the best interest of the kids first. So, a highly committed teaching force you have to have. You have to have parents also supporting, so with those three conditions, and you have to have another element, which is critical in my opinion. You have to have a strong alignment between central office schools and elementary school, middle school, and high school. Those elements are in place, there is nothing you cannot achieve whether you are in an urban district, suburban, regional, it doesn't matter; you will be able to achieve those goals.

If you look at the data, you can clearly see that the trend with your high school is one that many schools around the nation would envy, to be honest with you. So, it's a great privilege to work with all these highly dedicated teachers and as a principal when I see results coming along it gives me a sense of joy. Not because of the data itself, but because of the fact that we are making sure that the job that parents have entrusted us with, which is basically delivering a rigorous curriculum to our students, making sure that they are receiving a meaningful education, making sure that they're here everyday, making sure that they are not dropping out, making sure we are increasing our graduation rate, to make sure that kids have the skills and knowledge that will

allow them to do great things out there. Whether at the college level or at development, I think those are the critical things.

That's a mission that I have as a public servant and it gives me a great honor to work with Dr. Dakin and his team since I got here, the directors, the teachers, my vice principals, the parents, and it gives me a great sense of honor to be here and accomplish the things I have accomplished. Thank you very much.

Driscoll to audience: You can applaud.

(Laughter and applause)

Driscoll: So if we have a lull we'll just have him talk in seven languages. *(Laughter.)*

Before we show the video and shift to why we're here, although we're really here to also honor Revere High School and Revere Public Schools, a couple people in the audience who have joined us tonight that I want to acknowledge. First of all, of course, my colleague and friend, Mitchell Chester, Commissioner Mitchell Chester, I'll introduce formally in a few minutes. I noticed, and Paul, I know you'll be pleased that I noticed this, the key person in the city, and with all due respect, and that's Mayor Dan Rizzo, and we're delighted to have you join us. Thank you, Mr. Mayor. Thank you, Paul, for what you do with the school.

NAGB, the National Assessment Governing Board, this alphabet soup, we work closely with NCEES, National Center for Education Statistics, and they are the ones, we make this pronouncement like NAGB did back in '03 that we want to do preparedness and they have to go through 30 studies, but we're delighted to have Peggy Carr here with us to discuss ... she runs the place, that's all. And someone, I'm not even sure that my NAGB colleagues know, Joe Esposito, he's a businessman here in Massachusetts and he has been on the business task force and is just a very big supporter of public education in Massachusetts and NAGB. So, Joe, great to have you. *(Applause.)*

So now, we're going to show the video. See, I'm on schedule. They worry.

Video plays

Driscoll: So, to make a few general remarks and then I want to turn it over to Mitchell for some of his reaction. We're actually going to have a discussion and open it up to you as well.

Again, just a reminder as context, it was back in 2003 that the National Assessment Governing Board said specifically that we wanted to change our framework and start looking at preparedness, that is, for college and career preparedness. And quite frankly, the studies we've done in the career area have not been clear yet. There's not a clear response, and a lot more work needs to be done, and part of that is the great variety of academic skills needed in various careers. So, it is a lot harder to examine that than it is for college.

The area of college preparedness, and we use the word “preparedness” because we think that we can measure what academic preparedness looks like. Whether the kid’s ready or not. Logan, I don’t know if you’re ready. (*Laughter.*) I know she’s prepared. So that was the decision made back in 2003.

We went through a series of studies looking at NAEP and SAT, looking at NAEP and ACT, looking at Accuplacer and NAEP, looking at some content alignment, looking actually at colleges across the country and what was being required of freshman in both the areas of reading and mathematics, looking at this whole issue of remediation. We conducted 30 studies and we still have more work to do and one thing you know when you’re in NAGB, nothing is ever done. There’s always work to be done, but clearly it is an indication after all of these studies that there is a place on the NAEP scale that we suggested where kids are academically prepared or not, and you saw the video. Slightly less than 4 out of 10 kids in mathematics and reading are academically prepared for college.

Again, we are the only ones that test a representative group of 12th graders in the country. Everyone else is testing a particular population. We’re the only ones that do a sample of kids in America and, as you know, we are the gold standard of The Nation’s Report Card. This does tell the state of affairs for 12th graders as they are entering the next level.

I want to make one more note, and that is we’re testing 12th graders, which means we’re not testing dropouts, so you need to factor in the dropouts in that particular, and a lot earlier, there is a very high dropout rate, some instances more than 50 percent of kids in high school. So we’ve got a lot of work to do, let’s put it that way.

And we’re fortunate to be here at Revere and talk about the success we’ve had here. We’re also very fortunate in Massachusetts; the president is coming on the 11th to a high school graduation, a vocational school in Worcester, a brand-new school, similar to Revere in that it is turned completely around, with a high percentage of kids going to a four-year college, et cetera. This was a school that had struggled, so he’s going to be a speaker at the graduation. So, there’s a lot to be proud of. I kept hoping that things would go south after I left. (*Laughter.*)

Anyway, I’m pleased to welcome my colleague and friend, Mitchell Chester, who has done such a great job here and continued to and has a lot of challenges in his race to the top. (*Laughter.*) Anyway, Mitchell has a long history as an educator and principal and curriculum developer in Connecticut and Philadelphia, and in Ohio, and then he came to Massachusetts.

So I begin to, just by asking you for your take on this, and I know we’re an outlier school, but how does this hit you, the fact that basically less than 40 percent of our kids are prepared?

Mitchell Chester: First of all, my apologies for being late. I was at a legislative hearing, but I am very pleased to be here and you know the part of the story about you hoping to see the results go downhill, this is indicative how powerful NAEP is as a key statistic. I got appointed in early 2008 to this position and I was hoping that the final NAEP results before I arrive would take a big dive. (*Laughter.*)

Very different challenge to follow in David's footsteps than to follow in 49 other commissioners' footsteps; he did a phenomenal job and gets the credit for shepherding a statewide system to the kind of results that are happening in Massachusetts.

And I'm sitting next to, and I would say this anywhere except in front of other superintendents in Massachusetts, but Superintendent Dakin, Paul Dakin, is probably the most can-do, inventive, keep-looking-forward, never-satisfied superintendent probably in the nation. I've visited probably half-dozen times in my tenure in school here and just tremendous, from preschool all the way up through high school. So, it's a real deal, it really is a real deal. A diverse and challenging population that if all you saw the numbers, you wouldn't predict the kind of performance that Revere is getting. So, my kudos to the mayor and other officials here and educators in Revere, but Paul gets tremendous amount of credit for that.

So, what do you do with the top-performing state in the nation? I mean, what do you do? Paul knows that I've pushed hard not to be content with where we are, to look for the opportunities to improve; we all have ways to improve. None of us is doing the best we can do; I think to a large degree that Paul and his colleagues have questioned whether I have pushed too hard or too fast on this agenda, but part of what I'm looking at is, are we doing a good job of preparing young people for the world after high school. What employers expect, what higher ed expects, and for citizenship.

And despite the very successful track record, and it's a very real track record in Massachusetts, the fact of the matter is, of our high school graduates from our public high schools, and as they've said with the NAEP, this does not include dropouts of our high school graduates who matriculate in our public campuses in Massachusetts, almost 40 percent of them require remediation. Now, that's pretty astounding and it's troubling in particular because when you disaggregate that, so that by four-year campuses, UMass four-year campuses, are very different. The four-year campuses, it's much lower.

At the two-year campuses, where we have open admission, we have the bulk of our lower-income students go to higher ed. That rate of remediation is two-thirds, two out of three are placed in at least one remedial course, and I suspect everyone in this room knows the consequences of that; they're devastating, and so we've been looking at the implications, what is the program of study all the way up into high school.

What are the implications of the program of study when we move up the grades and particularly in our high school level, because one of the things that I've noticed on our own testing program is that most folks would say that Massachusetts' state testing program is second to none in terms of the quality and the demand in terms of the rigor. And I think there is a lot of data to bear that out.

Nonetheless, at the high school level, the 10th-grade tests, which are a graduation requirement, the standards that we set on that are nowhere near as aspirational as they are on our assessments to 8th grade. One of the illustrations, one of the examples of that is that on our state tests, this is our statewide results, 80-90 percent of students, the first time that they take the test in sophomore year, are scoring proficient or higher in both math and in reading. Now, if you look at our 12th-

grade NAEP results, that's probably about 40 points lower in terms of the proficiency rate on NAEP, NAEP's proficiency standard. If you look at Massachusetts' tests in fourth and eighth grade and the standards we have set and the proficiency rates, they're pretty comparable to NAEP in fourth and eighth grade. So, top-performing state in the nation in our middle grade math, the standard we've set, about half the kids are hitting the bar.

We've set a very high standard and very comparable to NAEP, but at the high school level I'm concerned that we're not giving kids very clear information of what they are and aren't ready for. So of those 40 percent of students who graduate from our high schools, enroll in college, get placed in a remedial class, my guess is that most of them do not expect that. Most of them did what we told them to get a high school diploma. They passed the 10th grade, they met their curriculum requirements, they got a high school diploma, they got accepted to a college, they show up, and they need remediation.

So, that's an area that I'm very much focused on. It's one of the reasons Massachusetts is participating in the PARCC assessment, one of the two state consortia of assessments. My best guess is that Massachusetts will do pretty well on those assessments up to eighth grade because we set such a rigorous bar on our own tests up to eighth grade. My guess is it'll be a pretty substantial wake-up call for Massachusetts when we start to see the results on the high school tests on PARCC because PARCC is designed to measure up through 11th grade, that's one major distinction, and it's designed to measure whether students are academically prepared, have the academic preparation of what colleges expect of them.

I'm really pleased, Dave, that NAGB and NCES took on the studies that you described in trying to better understand how we can better think of NAEP as a barometer for college readiness and the score levels, and it's a great service. So, I'm pleased to be here and pleased to join you. Thank you.

Driscoll: So, very pleased to be joined by Revere-ites, true Revere-ites by the way. To my left is Jon DeMarco, who is now a teacher here at Revere High School, but was a student here at Revere High School. Next to him is a senior named Logan who is going to UMass Amherst in their honors program, and she is a student who has gone through her entire career in Revere Public Schools.

So let me start by asking them a positive question. I'm going to start with Jon, and Logan can chip in. What have you seen in Revere, or in your case Revere High School, Jon, that's different and some of the reasons you think you're doing so much better than you have been and doing so much better than your colleagues in terms of demographics.

Jon DeMarco: I know Dr. Garcia talked a lot about the structure changes we made to the school, some of them driven by accreditation, we talked about block schedule, and having an advisory period, which goes with Dr. Dakin with building relationships in the school, and I think that's really important in an urban school district; it's important in any school district.

One of the things I remember about Revere High School is the relationships I built with teachers, and that was really helpful. One other thing that we're currently doing is the use of technology,

and I think technology has made a huge difference at Revere High School the last couple of years, just teaching students how to use technology appropriately and to use it as a tool in the classroom; we provided them with iPads and we didn't just say, "Here, figure them out for yourselves." And Dr. Garcia has spent a lot of time sending us to professional development to learn how to use iPads as a tool in the classroom. One of the things we're doing now at Revere High School now is called "flipped learning," where lessons are student-centered, and it really forces students to take accountability and go back to Dr. Dakin with the Rs, you know, we really do believe in those, and that makes for rigorous lessons. We're asking students to take that accountability and asking students to work in the classroom to complete lessons. Less direct instruction in the classroom, we send that home now. We can send readings home, we can send videos home on the iPads, but one of the biggest things has been time for student-centered lessons in the classroom.

That would not have been possible without all the other structures that were put in place, we need that 80-minute block schedule, we're fortunate to have that because now we have time for those activities in the classroom, you know, aside from that advisory time to build relationships with the students has been really huge too. So, all the structures, but I think that the biggest one has been coming out of the pipeline now is the flipped learning; you know, I feel fortunate to work here and to have been a student here. I'm excited about the flipped learning initiative as well.

Driscoll: Thank you for that. I wanted to ask you, probably for Lourenço and Paul as much as you, but is there, from your perspective in history and social sciences, I think it would be more reading and math, but is it more focus on the test results, do you think Paul, Lourenço, and Jon, and actually using the results than there used to be? Right now the MCAS' results, which are individual and separate.

DeMarco: I can, yeah, one of the big initiatives we've had over the last couple of years has been with writing, so we've looked at those tests and especially the English, but all the MCAS tests and with the PARCC exam coming down the line as well, they require students to be literate and obviously be able to read and write at a higher level, so we've really made an effort to focus on content literacy, not before it was English and history and you'd do some writing. Now, it's all the content areas, and we've focused in history here on creating common writing prompts and document-based questions and each ... U.S. 1, U.S. 2, and world history, we have all those content areas, are doing that as well. We're trying to stay ahead of the curve with that. Our director, Christina Porter, has done a good job pushing us forward and keeping us ahead of the curve with all the writing that's required on exams.

Driscoll: Thank you. So Logan, it's a little unfair because you just got through yourself. You only have your own experience in four years. Is this something from your perspective that you think RHS does better than you know from friends and other cities? Describe what you think have been helpful at RHS.

Logan: Well, when I talk about RHS, I could talk about it for days. I promise you they didn't brainwash me to tell you all these good things. I just truly, genuinely like RHS and the opportunities that they hold for us.

When I talk to Peabody High School from sports or other student athletes, they're like, "You have iPads, that's crazy!" They're just jealous and wish they had these kinds of opportunities that we have. I would really like to reiterate the fact that the technology that we have received is definitely going to propel us to the next level and make us ready for college because in 20 years, everything is going to be technology-based. We probably won't even be able to have conversations with people, it will be online, so our school is definitely an outlier as you said and I believe that we are an outlier because of what Revere holds.

And we were talking about the freshman academy, there is a sense of community-built. People are seniors who are ahead of the game, would take time out of their day to tutor students who are a little behind in math and different things.

We also have this really important group called the school improvement team, and that is where students, administrators, teachers, and school committee members, you name it, all come together once a month to talk about the problems in RHS and talk about what we can improve. I have definitely seen improvements where we've implemented, and we have talked about at these community meetings and it really helps our community as a whole.

What I would like to say, the dedication in this school is outstanding. From the guidance, from the administrators, to the teachers. I had a calculus teacher who stayed until 7 at night every single night to help students who need the help, students who need the extra lift to get an A on the next test. My guidance counselor will stay hours upon hours helping me with different things. It really is the key to having a successful community as a whole and, again, I would really like to reiterate the fact about the technology and the iPads and it's fantastic, the opportunities we have at this school, such as the AP courses that are offered, and one instance I would really like to point out, this girl who is really interested in music and music technology. We didn't have a course for AP music, but our guidance counselors and our administration made it possible for her to take an AP course online and let her study what she was really interested in. So, that's what I would really like to say.

Driscoll: So, Logan, tell us why you don't do well at the microphone.

(Laughter)

Logan: I just never have heard my own voice.

Driscoll: That was great, thank you, and from the heart, very. So, we can open it up for questions.

This is a hard one to ask and I'll just throw it out. But it'd be great if someone had an answer. Having just come back from China, where kids at a high school level go from 8 in the morning to 9 at night. And they all speak English, which is incredible, a terrible language to learn, and they speak Chinese. So, we see statistics like this and know that Revere is an outlier but still, not 100 percent of your kids are going on and there's still too many kids ... so the question is, and something I think the Board really talks about: What can we do to get people to understand,

particularly parents, I think the business community kind of gets it more than anyone else, but anyone else is sleeping through it. So I guess the question is, how do we get people excited? This is just another set of statistics and do statistics all the time and people sleep through it. Does anybody have a bright idea of how to get people out of their thoughts?

Dakin: One area, doc talked about educating the whole child, and I think one area we fall short of and we don't give enough credence to is college, career, and civics readiness and the civics readiness, by that I mean how we live in this world together and how we as a people can provision foundations of what we do such that during a student's tenure in a public school system, they're learning not only the content of what they're learning, what you need for a college or a career. But that they are utilizing that content and stretching the thinking and how they can really live in a community of learners locally and nationally by engaging a civic component of how we live and work together.

And I think when you get that discussion rolling, the content pieces don't take a background, but they puzzle in an area of emotional and social growth that leads and has a capital of why a student would be in school. Not only from my own readiness for college, but as a readiness for our community and future and how much we need. So I think, we have to start thinking even deeper than college and career preparedness; we have to think about civic engagement and how we utilize it and optimize it to puzzle together a more complete child that sees and feels from that civic engagement—that necessity to do better from a broader community.

Driscoll: We're going to open up and add a little bit more to that. My perspective of several decades is that I do think we've become far too top-down and we're seeing decisions made by states and third-grade reading as if they're going to [*inaudible*] ... it's crazy and all kinds of mandates. You're seeing some negativity towards teachers and I don't understand it. And I think we're becoming so top-down that we're losing out on this issue of having people at the local level who have to deal with all of these issues.

So, this whole holistic approach, which can only really come from a local level, I think has to be factored back in. So, I worry that we're getting too clinical from a top-down perspective. RHS, as well-articulated by Jon and Logan, has just done great work about community relations. So I think that's a good lesson and for god sakes what a simple lesson.

Chester: Dave, a couple of responses. First of all, I'm surprised that the 4 Rs, you took me to task a couple of months ago for not needing Rs.

(Laughter)

Chester: So, to follow up your comment, I think there's got to be a balance between local initiative and not becoming too insular. So, one thing I do worry about for our nation and the tension between being a nation and being 50 states, and this is playing around on the Common Core, around the assessments, playing around in legislatures, the concern in the name of "don't tell us what to do." We end up shortchanging the students we serve.

And I think that NAGB has a very special perch for informing that conversation. And NAEP is such a powerful, emblematic assessment that people pay attention to and more and more I am seeing the results from NAEP being linked to the, some of the international results, the PISA, the TIMSS results. Just yesterday, Paul Peterson at Harvard released a new study that was very provocative that drew on the eighth-grade NAEP results as indexed to the PISA results to make some very interesting observations. I think that NAGB has a responsibility to keep the insights that come from the assessments in front of the American people, at large, as well as state by state. That, to me, is very critical.

Driscoll: Thank you and that's helpful. By the way, we probably don't do enough to articulate our relationship. We actually embed NAEP questions in TIMSS tests and TIMSS questions in NAEP, so we really are paying a lot of attention to both PISA and TIMSS.

OK, we got a microphone, Logan doesn't need one. (*Laughter.*) And we've got a few minutes. Although this was kind of fun, isn't it? Hector, from Iowa.

Hector Ibarra: Good afternoon. Thank you for your comments you made, Dr. Garcia. They were very enlightening. One of the things, to me, that you mentioned is the importance of administration. Sets the culture, sets the atmosphere. I work under six principals and five superintendents and I have had 40 years of teaching. And the ones that set the bar high, you saw the school moving in the direction it needs to be.

The other thing is, when I talk to my students about national projects, there are two big things I address, and that is buy-in and ownership, and I try to talk to my last superintendent about those aspects because if we don't have people who are buying into it, then what are you doing in education? They're not going to own it; they're not going to get any further. Because too many believe that it's someone else's problem. Those 40 percent aren't us; they aren't our school. They just aren't opening their eyes until you get people buying in; there just isn't going to be that other 60 percent or 50 percent rising to the position. So, thank you.

Driscoll: Thank you. Any other questions, comments? Peggy.

Peggy Carr: Thank you. I first want to say that I enjoyed all your comments. They were all very enlightening. Just a week ago the 12th-grade NAEP results were lackluster. They weren't that great; they were lacking in comparison to the last report of states that had participated. But you know we looked deep in those areas and we saw that significant improvement in the graduation rate over this time period and we also saw a significant increase, very much like the composition you describe here. This trend to minority students being the majority ... [*inaudible*]. So what would you say to the nation that's struggling ... [*inaudible*]?

Dakin: I really think we have to expand the thinking and the responsibility of education and look often and hard. Especially for our immigrant population for which Revere has a large immigrant population, we are certainly a gateway community, so close to Boston that first-generation immigrants wind up settling in Revere.

We can't release any of our 4 Rs, especially the rigor "R" because a child may be an English language learner for a while or come from a home who hasn't really had the advantage of supplying literacy. So in order to gain an advantage, we have to reach out more and help these populations understand how the ingredient of success is their understanding of the American education system and how they can help that system by participating in it as a parent and understanding what they can do at home to help us fill any gaps or accelerate learning as we go on.

So, I don't think our K-12 project ... we've inherited lots of things in K-12 that when I first went to school in the 1950s, we didn't do. We do hot breakfasts, we do hot lunch, we have in this school a Mass General Hospital satellite that can help folks provide services to kids, you know, medically in connection with their primary care position that is at Mass General. We do lots of things that we didn't do before.

In one area and we've always said it is, engage parents, engage parents in the community, and it's not only engage at this time, I don't think. It's educate parents how to parent in an educational system that they might not understand because they are from other countries or are a Native American and living in poverty; they didn't understand themselves when they were a student and didn't participate in the rigor "R" that we would hope that they did. So, it's working with those populations. We'll help fill a gap.

Chester: I think it's a great question and I think it's kind of hopeful, Peggy. Because we are doing a better job of holding onto kids and helping them persist and reach graduation. Our understanding of what it means to be prepared for success after high school, even a lot of folks who have gotten this for a long time. It's only now, really, starting to elevate as a national discussion, and I think NAGB is doing a great job by contributing to that dialogue. I think the two assessment consortia are really elevating our understanding of that. Education Commission of the States is taking on a project to define a common metric for remediation rates when you get to college. So, I think that we're doing better and better in terms of keeping kids in high school, gives us the opportunity to elevate the programs that they're experiencing. I think it bodes well. It's certainly an opportunity.

Driscoll: Well, let me close as a chairman of NAGB is supposed to, which is how I hardly ever operate. You know, our job is to tell the story and frankly to tell the truth. We're supposed to leave it to others to conjecture, but I think it is fair to point out that while there is this concern, we look at our results that less than 40 percent of kids are prepared and that doesn't include dropouts.

Peggy's point is that we have a, quite a different population trend, if you look at our long-term trend if you put a commercial increase budget from NAGB, we've had to pay a sequestration of central ... [*inaudible*] and I think there are some legitimate concerns from people that we could expand. For example, should we be testing writing? It's a very good question to me.... But it is interesting to note that our minority students, black and Hispanic students, are scoring where students were 20 years ago. So, we have this very strange paradox, where every subgroup is growing, but the overall doesn't grow. So everyone's doing better, but the overall is not as good and that's because of the mix. While everyone is doing better, the number of white students who

are our highest-achieving ... [inaudible] ... so the impact of blacks and Hispanics is greater. So, the overall, we say, "Well, it's flat." But for the blacks and Hispanics, which is our future by the way, if you've noticed, are doing better.

So, I do think, we would hope if we put the numbers out there, we will see more robust discussions, more meaningful discussions of what does this all mean and what does it mean for people in schools. Fortunately, here in Revere ... [inaudible] ... this has been a great day and now you know why I chose this place. This has always been a great place, great place to be. Thank you for your kind attention and you are dismissed.