



NEWS RELEASE

For Release: October 9, 2020

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**U.S. Education Secretary Appoints Five Members
To Board Overseeing The Nation’s Report Card**

Former Mississippi Gov. Haley Barbour, appointed in 2019, to continue as chair

WASHINGTON – Secretary of Education Betsy DeVos has appointed an executive at a national education nonprofit, a professor, a leader of a state association of private schools, and two state legislators to the National Assessment Governing Board, which oversees the only ongoing, nationally representative assessment of U.S. students’ knowledge.

The Governing Board is a nonpartisan body established by Congress that works independently from the U.S. Department of Education to oversee and set policy for the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), also known as The Nation’s Report Card. NAEP provides objective information on student performance in various subjects and for different student groups and reports on student achievement across the nation, in states, and in large urban districts.

The 26-member Governing Board is responsible for deciding which subjects NAEP assesses, determining the assessments’ content, setting achievement levels that describe student performance, and pursuing new ways to make NAEP results useful and meaningful to the public.

“It’s a privilege to appoint this distinguished group of leaders to the National Assessment Governing Board,” said Secretary DeVos. “Because so many students had their educations disrupted by the pandemic, measuring their progress is more critical than ever as we continue our work to ensure every student is learning and growing. The Nation’s Report Card has told a grim story the past several years, and we must remain vigilant against student achievement sliding even further backward.”

The appointees’ terms officially began on Oct. 1, 2020, and will end on Sept. 30, 2024.

The new Governing Board appointees are:

- **Suzanne Lane, Testing and Measurement Expert:** Lane has been a faculty member in the research methodology program at the University of Pittsburgh’s School of Education since 1986. She is a former president of the National Council on Measurement in Education and former vice president of Division D of the American Educational Research Association. She has served on numerous national

and state assessment committees and advisory panels and on the editorial boards of leading academic journals of educational research and measurement.

- **Alice Peisch, State Legislator – Democrat (reappointed):** Peisch joined the Governing Board in 2016. She has served as Massachusetts' state representative for the 14th Norfolk District since 2003 and as House chair of Massachusetts' Joint Committee on Education since 2011. Her accolades include receiving the 2019 Reformer of the Year Award from the Massachusetts chapter of Democrats for Education Reform and the 2012 Walter G. Turner Award from the Association of Educational Service Agencies for her work in education collaboratives.
- **Julia Rafal-Baer, General Public Representative:** Rafal-Baer has been the chief operating officer of Chiefs for Change – a bipartisan network of state and large-district education chiefs – since 2016. Prior to joining Chiefs for Change, Rafal-Baer was assistant commissioner of the New York State Education Department, where she provided policy and strategic leadership to the commissioner and the Board of Regents and was responsible for teacher and leader initiatives under the state's Race to the Top grant, Teacher Incentive Fund grant, and others. Rafal-Baer began her career as a special education teacher. She holds a Ph.D. from the University of Cambridge, where she was a Marshall Scholar.
- **Ron Reynolds, Non-Public School Administrator or Policymaker:** Reynolds has been the executive director of the California Association of Private School Organizations since 2002. Reynolds was previously the director of school services at Builders of Jewish Education. He has held teaching and leadership roles at Jewish private schools and served as a lecturer at American Jewish University in Los Angeles.
- **Mark White, State Legislator – Republican:** White has been Tennessee's state representative for District 83, which contains part of Shelby County, since 2010. He chairs Tennessee's House Education Committee. White is a former teacher, principal, and small-business owner. He co-founded the Global Children's Educational Foundation, which provided financial assistance and educational opportunities to impoverished children in Panama.

Secretary DeVos also named former Mississippi Gov. Haley Barbour, who was appointed to the Governing Board in 2019 and is the current chair, as chair of the Board for the 2020-2021 year.

“We welcome the new and reappointed members of the National Assessment Governing Board. At a time of unprecedented disruption in our nation's schools, we look forward to working together to ensure NAEP remains the gold standard of assessment, providing valuable information to improve American education,” said Lesley Muldoon, the executive director of the Governing Board.

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The National Assessment Governing Board is an independent, nonpartisan board whose members include governors, state legislators, local and state school officials, educators, business representatives and members of the general public. Congress created the 26-member Governing Board in 1988 to set policy for the National Assessment of Educational Progress. For more information about the Governing Board, visit www.nagb.gov.