

Adopted: August 3, 2002



National Assessment Governing Board

Review of the National Assessment of Educational Progress

Policy Statement

It is the policy of the National Assessment Governing Board to require rigorous review of the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP). The review of NAEP shall be subject to guiding principles adopted by the Governing Board and shall include the participation of highly qualified experts in relevant disciplines, teachers, principals, policymakers, curriculum specialists, local school administrators, parents, and concerned members of the public. The review of the assessment shall ensure that the technical quality, public credibility, and customer service of the NAEP are of the highest order.

Introduction

The No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (the Act) amended Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA) and the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) authorizing legislation. The Act requires all states, beginning in 2003, to participate biennially in reading and mathematics assessments conducted by NAEP in grade 4 and grade 8 as a condition of receiving Title I funds. Previously, state participation in these subjects was voluntary. However, with regular, mandatory participation in the NAEP, public attention to the results will be heightened. The importance of assuring that NAEP is valid, reliable, and credible was never greater.

Consequently, the NAEP authorizing legislation (P.L. 107-110, as amended by P.L. 107-279) adds a new duty to the list of Governing Board responsibilities:

“[The Governing Board shall] develop a process for review of the assessment which includes the active participation of teachers, curriculum specialists, local school administrators, parents, and concerned members of the public.”

No testing program in America has been subject to more review and evaluation over the years than NAEP. This has served the public and the NAEP program well. The

action of Congress in assigning the Governing Board responsibility for developing a process for review of the assessment moves this to the next logical step—providing explicitly for systematic oversight of all aspects of the NAEP program, under criteria established by the Governing Board. Implementation of review procedures shall be carried out by the Governing Board in consultation with the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), as appropriate.

The duty to develop a process for review of NAEP encompasses and complements other responsibilities of the Board:

- formulating policy guidelines
- developing test objectives and test specifications
- developing appropriate student achievement levels
- approving all questions used in the assessment
- designing the methodology of the assessment
- measuring student academic achievement in grades 4, 8, and 12
- developing guidelines for reporting and disseminating results
- obtaining expert advice
- taking appropriate actions needed to improve the form, content, use, and reporting of NAEP

To carry out the responsibility to review the assessment, the National Assessment Governing Board hereby adopts guiding principles. Full implementation of this policy will require the development of standards and procedures by the Governing Board in consultation with NCES regarding aspects of the assessment for which each, respectively, is responsible.

This policy complies with the documents listed below which express acceptable technical and professional standards. These standards reflect the current agreement of recognized experts in the field, as well as the policy positions of major professional and technical associations concerned with educational testing. This policy also acknowledges that the NAEP legislation authorizes the Secretary of Education to “provide for continuing review of [NAEP]” and that section 303(f)(1)(B) identifies the issues that such continuing review shall address. The reviews conducted pursuant to this policy shall be conducted without prejudice to such authority of the Secretary.

Standards for Educational and Psychological Testing. (1999). Washington, DC: American Educational Research Association (AERA), American Psychological Association (APA), and National Council on Measurement in Education (NCME).

Code of Fair Testing Practices in Education. (2004). Washington, DC: Joint Committee on Testing Practices.

National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) Statistical Standards, September 2002.

Guiding Principles

Principle 1

The purpose of the review of the assessment is to ensure that NAEP is conducted in a manner that meets the highest standards of accuracy, fairness, technical quality, and service to the American public.

Principle 2

Procedures shall be established for the review of each of the key areas of NAEP, including

- a. assessment development and sample design
- b. assessment administration (e.g., training, data collection, and scoring)
- c. analysis and reporting

Principle 3

Review procedures shall be comprehensive, rigorous, systematic, and objective; be documented in writing; and address both ongoing processes and end-products of such processes.

Principle 4

External expertise used for reviews shall include highly qualified experts in relevant disciplines, teachers, principals, policymakers, curriculum specialists, local school administrators, parents, and concerned members of the public, and shall collectively reflect a broad and diverse range of perspectives.

Principle 5

Review procedures, the conduct of reviews, and findings shall be documented in writing, as appropriate, under the auspices of the Governing Board in consultation with NCES and shall be available to the public upon request.

Principle 6

A long-range plan providing for the review of the assessment shall be presented to the Governing Board by its March 2003 meeting and shall be periodically updated thereafter.