

National Assessment Governing Board

Executive Committee

Report of May 14, 2015

Executive Committee Members: Terry Mazany (Chair), Susan Pimentel (Vice Chair), Andrés Alonso, Lou Fabrizio, Rebecca Gagnon, Shannon Garrison, Tonya Miles, Fielding Rolston, Cary Sneider.

Other Board Members: Frank Fernandes, James Geringer, Andrew Ho, Terry Holliday, Tonya Matthews, Dale Nowlin, Joseph O’Keefe, Jim Popham, Chasidy White. Ex Officio Member: Sue Betka.

Governing Board Staff: Mary Crovo, Lily Clark, Michelle Blair, Stephaan Harris, Laura LoGerfo, Munira Mwalimu, Tessa Regis, Sharyn Rosenberg, Angela Scott, Anthony White. Incoming Executive Director: Bill Bushaw.

NCES Staff: Peggy Carr, Jamie Deaton, Arnold Goldstein, Michael Moles, Holly Spurlock.

U.S. Department of Education Staff: Jagir Patel.

Other Attendees: AIR: Kim Gattis, Fran Stancavage. CRP: Edward Wofford. ETS: Debby Almonte, Jonas Bertling, Jay Campbell, Amy Dresher, Andreas Oranje, Greg Vafis. Hager Sharp: David Hoff, Debra Silimeo. HumRRO: Steve Sellman, Laress Wise. Pearson: Connie Smith, Cathy White. Westat: Chris Averett, Keith Rust, Dianne Walsh.

1. Welcome and Agenda Overview

Chair Mazany called the meeting to order at 4:30 p.m. He welcomed the Executive Committee attendees to Columbus, Indiana and thanked them for arranging their schedules to travel to this meeting. Mr. Mazany provided an overview of the agenda and noted that a portion of the Executive Committee meeting would occur in closed session.

2. Updates

Congressional Activity

Lily Clark provided the Executive Committee with updates on the following Congressional activities of interest to the Governing Board:

- *Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) Reauthorization* - The Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions (HELP) Committee passed its bipartisan ESEA

reauthorization bill, called the “Every Child Achieves Act.” The HELP Committee report on the bill is expected in late May and Senate markup of the bill is expected in June. The House Education and the Workforce Committee has not yet voted on its ESEA reauthorization bill, which has a veto threat from the White House.

- *NAEP Reauthorization* – The reauthorization of the Education Sciences Reform Act (the “Strengthening Education Through Research Act”), which authorizes NAEP, is not on the Congressional schedules for action in either the House or Senate at this time.
- *Student Privacy* - Several draft bills relating to student privacy have been made public, signaling that Congress is interested in legislative action to put more limits on access to student data.
- *NAEP Appropriations* – The NAEP program is still awaiting its fiscal year 2016 appropriation. Congress’ non-binding budget resolution outlines significant cuts for non-defense discretionary budgets. Therefore, the U.S. Department of Education’s (ED) Budget Service and the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) have advised the Governing Board to be prepared to receive less than the \$149 million that the President requested for NAEP in fiscal year 2016.

Trial Urban District Assessment (TUDA)

Ms. Clark provided the Executive Committee with an overview of the timeline and process for the Governing Board to verify the participation of large urban districts in the 2017 TUDA in reading and mathematics. She referred the Committee to Attachment A, which included a list of the districts eligible to participate in TUDA. She further noted that TUDA would be expanded to include up to 10 new districts if NAEP is appropriated sufficient funds for fiscal year 2016.

3. Nomination Process for Board Vice Chair

Mr. Mazany began the Governing Board’s nomination process for its Vice Chair for the term extending from October 1, 2015 – September 30, 2016. He recused himself from the selection process and appointed Lou Fabrizio to poll Board members individually to determine the nominee. Mr. Mazany requested that this informal polling be completed in time for the Governing Board to vote on the nominee at the August 2015 Board meeting.

He concluded by thanking Sue Pimental for her excellent leadership as Vice Chair over the past three years and noted that Mr. Fabrizio and Ms. Pimental would not be eligible for the Vice Chair position as they are both completing their final terms on the Governing Board in September.

4. Governing Board Strategic Planning Initiative

Mr. Mazany provided an overview of the Strategic Planning Initiative documents included in Attachment B. He noted that the initiative is proposed to occur in three phases extending through the year 2020. He stated that he was pleased with the progress the Executive Committee has made on developing the Strategic Planning Framework document, which will sets the goals and priorities for the Governing Board’s work.

Mr. Mazany thanked the NCES staff for their feedback on the Framework document and noted the importance of deeper collaboration between the Governing Board and NCES on the development and implementation of the Governing Board’s Strategic Planning Initiative.

Mr. Mazany invited the Executive Committee members to comment on the revised draft documents in the Board materials, and a brief discussion in support of the drafts followed.

Tonya Miles emphasized the importance of the partnership and collaboration between the Governing Board and NCES.

Sue Pimental commented on her support for the Strategic Planning Initiative’s inclusion of research, particularly regarding the use of contextual variables.

Cary Sneider suggested modifying the typical Board meeting schedule structure at a future meeting to enable more time for brainstorming amongst Board members, staff, and contractors to further the ideas for the Strategic Planning Initiative.

Peggy Carr, Acting Commissioner of NCES, commented on areas of exploration in the Innovations Laboratory, which was created in response to a recommendation in the Future of NAEP paper. The Innovations lab is exploring the development of “virtual worlds” for NAEP, including two-dimensional scenario-based tasks (SBTs), on screen simulations of virtual worlds (such as science labs), and enabling students to manipulate objects shown on the screen. Ms. Carr commented that the infrastructure developed for one virtual SBT would be adaptable to other SBTs or virtual worlds, which enable development for the various subjects NAEP assesses. She further commented that she believes this work to potentially be groundbreaking for assessments.

CLOSED SESSION 5:00 pm – 5:45 pm

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5. NAEP Budget Request for Fiscal Year 2017

The Executive Committee met in closed session from 5:00 p.m. to 5:45 p.m. The Executive Committee schedule and budget discussion was conducted in closed session because the disclosure of technical and cost data would significantly impede implementation of the contract awards and negotiations for awards. Therefore this discussion is protected by exemption 9(B) of section 552b(C) of Title 5 U.S.C.

Chair Mazany began the closed session by commenting on the productive budget conversation at the March Board meeting, at which consensus was reached on the Governing Board's priorities for fiscal year 2016 and the Board unanimously approved a forward-looking Assessment Schedule. Mr. Mazany provided the Executive Committee with an overview of the following four goals for the Governing Board's discussions in the Executive Committee and full Board plenary closed sessions at the May 2015 Board meeting:

- Reaffirm the Governing Board's priorities for NAEP activities in fiscal year 2017 and beyond;
- Develop an understanding of when the Board will routinely be considering the NAEP budget and acting on the Assessment Schedule;
- Discuss the Governing Board's input on the NAEP budget request for fiscal year 2017; and
- Consider a resolution on the importance of fully funding NAEP.

Mr. Mazany highlighted the importance of the invitation from ED's Budget Service for the Governing Board to provide input on the President's Budget request. Though the Governing Board does not have final say on the budget amount the President requests for NAEP from Congress, Mr. Mazany noted that this is a critical opportunity for the Governing Board to convince ED and OMB of why the NAEP program needs increased funding. He further noted the presence of the ED Budget Service staff person, Jagir Patel, who travelled to Columbus, Indiana to observe the Governing Board's budget discussions, as a sign of ED's commitment to increase collaboration between NAGB, NCES, and ED's budget office on the NAEP budget.

Deputy Executive Director Mary Crovo presented the priorities for the Governing Board's NAEP activities. This presentation included a review of the priorities for fiscal year 2016 unanimously agreed to by the Governing Board at its March 2015 meeting. The priorities provide direction to the Governing Board and NCES staff regarding how to prioritize NAEP activities in the event the program does not receive its full funding request.

The Executive Committee affirmed that they had no changes to the priority order for the planned NAEP activities as it applies to fiscal year 2017 and beyond. The priorities for NAEP activities are:

1. Transition to digital-based assessments (DBA) and maintain trend; state validation studies
2. Assessing broad-based curricular areas with a priority for science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM)
3. Providing state level data in curriculum areas beyond reading and mathematics
4. Including more Trial Urban District Assessments (TUDA)

Ms. Crovo provided the Executive Committee with an overview of the proposed calendar for when the Board will review the NAEP budget and take action on the Assessment Schedule. She proposed that the Governing Board adopt the following schedule as a general guideline for when these items will be discussed at future Board meetings:

- *March Board meetings* – no budget review or Assessment Schedule action anticipated;
- *May Board meetings* – consider the NAEP budget request for the next fiscal year;
- *August Board meetings* – review the NAEP budget in light of the Assessment Schedule and discuss cost saving proposals, if needed; and
- *November Board meetings* – review revised costs and estimates for NAEP, review the Assessment Schedule, and take action on the schedule if needed.

Ms. Crovo noted that while this approach will serve as the general guidelines for NAEP budget and Assessment Schedule discussions, there are items that cannot be scheduled in advance but which the Governing Board must address when they arise. Most notably, in any given year the timing of Congressional appropriations cannot be anticipated, yet the Governing Board must be prepared to promptly consider the impact of new NAEP funding on the Assessment Schedule.

Acting NCEC Commissioner Peggy Carr presented additional detail regarding the timeline to implement the NAEP Assessment Schedule, highlighting when critical decision points for the Governing Board typically arise. Ms. Carr’s presentation of the timelines for critical decisions points synchronized with Ms. Crovo’s presentation of the proposed Governing Board calendar for budget review and Assessment Schedule decisions.

As a result of the information provided by Ms. Crovo and Ms. Carr, there was consensus amongst the Committee that each November Board meeting would be the ideal time to review the NAEP budget and take action on the Assessment Schedule, if necessary. Decisions at the November Board meeting would maximize the time the Governing Board has to make the difficult decision of postponing or cancelling any component of an assessment, while simultaneously providing NCEC sufficient notice prior to drawing the NAEP sample and notifying schools.

Ms. Carr provided the Executive Committee with an historical review of NAEP’s funding levels over time. Her presentation highlighted that as the expectations for the scope of NAEP increased, so did its funding from Congress. For example, when the No Child Left Behind Act required biennial NAEP assessments at the state level in reading and mathematics, the program received a substantial and sustained increase in funding.

Ms. Carr presented the Executive Committee with revised NAEP budget costs and projections, reflecting the estimated cost of implementing the Assessment Schedule adopted at the March 2015 Board meeting, which includes assessments through the year 2024.

The Executive Committee members engaged in a discussion regarding the NAEP budget, including the desire for full funding from Congress to implement the Assessment Schedule.

Mr. Mazany proposed the Governing Board pass a resolution regarding the imperative for full NAEP funding as a part of its communications strategy to garner more funds.

Andrew Ho noted the important precedent of funding increases for NAEP as the program has expanded, particularly as the Governing Board seeks support for the shift to digital-based assessments. He noted that it is costly to maintain the gold standard of NAEP and more statistically significant progress could be identified within NAEP results with larger samples. Executive Committee members thanked Ms. Carr for the clarity of her budget presentation.

OPEN SESSION 5:45 pm – 6:05 pm

6. NAEP Budget Request for Fiscal Year 2017, Continued

The Executive Committee reconvened in open session at 5:45 p.m. and continued its discussion regarding the imperative of increasing NAEP’s funding levels to implement the Assessment Schedule and fulfill the Governing Board’s priorities.

Terry Holliday commented on the criticality of the Governing Board maintaining reading and mathematics trends and the comparative analysis of NAEP to state achievement levels in these subjects.

Andrés Alonso supported the comment of Mr. Holliday and added that TUDA is also a critical NAEP activity with tremendous impact on large cities across the country.

Shannon Garrison commented that she would be disheartened if Congress did not support the need to know how students in the nation are doing and provide adequate funding for NAEP to provide this information. She further stated that it is not enough to only assess in reading and mathematics because it is important to know what our nation's students know in all subjects.

Mr. Mazany concluded the Committee discussion by noting that the conversation would be continued in a full Board closed session on Saturday, May 16.

Mr. Mazany adjourned the Executive Committee meeting at 6:05 p.m.

I certify the accuracy of these minutes.



Terry Mazany, Chair

May 23, 2015

Date