

# National Assessment Governing Board

## Reporting and Dissemination Committee

### Report of May 13, 2016

**Reporting and Dissemination Committee Members:** Rebecca Gagnon (Chair), Father Joseph O’Keefe (Vice Chair), Alberto Carvalho, Anitere Flores, Terry Mazany, Tonya Matthews, Ronnie Musgrove

**Governing Board Staff:** Bill Bushaw, Lily Clark, Stephaan Harris, Laura LoGerfo

**NCES Staff:** Halima Adenegan, Jamie Deaton, Dan McGrath, Holly Spurlock, Amiee Winchester

**Other Attendees:** AIR: Cadelle Hemphill. CCSSO: Nathan Olson. CRP: Edward Wofford. DCG: Meredith Davis, Chelsea Radler. ETS: Jonas Bertling, Robert Finnegan, Lisa Ward. Hager Sharp: Debra Silimeo, Kelle Wyatt. HumRRO: Hillary Michaels. Optimal Solutions: Sam Toriola. Pearson: Llana Williams. Reingold: Greg Orrison. Westat: Chris Averett. Widmeyer: Siobhan Mueller

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Reporting and Dissemination Chair Rebecca Gagnon called the R&D Committee to order at 10:15 am and turned to the Committee’s meeting agenda.

#### Release Plan for NAEP Science Report Card

The Committee reviewed a release plan proposed by staff for the 2015 NAEP Science Report Card, which will have results nationwide and for 47 states for grades 4 and 8, and nationwide results for grade 12.

Stephaan Harris, Board staff, discussed highlights of the plan, which includes having an in-person release event in a venue that complements the subject matter, either in or out of the Washington, DC area. The plan also calls for efforts to use strategies such as in-person meetings with partner organizations far in advance to build excitement for and interest in the report. The plan also calls for post-event activities such as infographics and online chats to extend the life of the report.

Mr. Harris said that staff is open to suggestions from Committee members on venues for the release. Committee members Sen. Anitere Flores and Alberto Carvalho both mentioned a science museum that was being built in Miami and slated to finish in the fall as a possibility.

**ACTION: R&D Vice Chair Father Joseph O’Keefe moved the release plan for the 2015 National Assessment of Educational Progress in Science for action by the full Governing Board, which Ronnie Musgrove seconded. The Committee unanimously approved the motion and recommended approval to the full Board on Saturday, May 14, 2016.**

## Revisiting Board Reporting Policy and Guidelines

Laura LoGerfo, Board staff, invited Dan McGrath of NCES to launch a ‘blue sky, green field’ conversation among the Committee about revising the 2006 *Reporting, Release, and Dissemination of NAEP Results Policy Statement*. Questions to prompt the conversation were included in the Board materials and offered a wide range of options from which to brainstorm big, bold, broad changes to the reporting policy.

One of these questions asked about the value of curating the overwhelming amount of data typically released to focus people’s attention on the most important NAEP results. This may improve user-friendliness of the Report Card site but sacrifice transparency. Posting all the data may be easier to accomplish than selecting results to highlight, but may mean that less is understood by the audience.

Another question considered the potential of linking to other data on a NAEP Report Card release site. Currently, each Report Card release site includes data from only the specific subject in the specific year that is being released. Instead, linking Report Card data by topic or across years may provide a new perspective on old data and enrich the reporting of new data. For example, the NAEP grade 12 results, released at the end of April, could have been displayed as part of a “Class of 2015” presentation—adjacent to results from NAEP grade 8 four years ago and NAEP grade 4 eight years ago. That presentation would have suggested that this Class of ’15, as eighth-grade students four years ago had posted the highest scores for NAEP grade 8, as had fourth-grade students eight years ago (again, today’s twelfth-graders). Such an aligned presentation may have sparked new questions about high school and what factors may be driving these results.

In addition, there are other federal education data sets that collect data from nationally representative groups of students which could provide depth and breadth to the NAEP results, as long as such data sets proved relevant to NAEP and reflected best practices of data collection and analysis.

Committee member Tonya Matthews inquired how, when, and why would NAEP link to other data? She explained that these other data may not be as “Teflon” as NAEP is, which might hurt the reputation of NAEP. Ms. Matthews supported the idea of releasing other findings at the same time as a NAEP release to develop a deeper, broader conversation with stakeholders.

R&D Committee Vice Chair Father Joseph O’Keefe warned that linking NAEP to the Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study is no facile task and involves many complexities, which were outlined to Committee on Standards, Design and Methodology in a report. Harking back to Holly Spurlock’s NCES update at the Friday morning plenary session, Father O’Keefe asked how NAEP can disseminate information coincidental to NCES’ annual *Digest of Education Statistics* release, especially among the reports published in the Digest that use NAEP data.

Tonya Matthews returned to the issue of selecting results to highlight—any curation of results means that the presentation necessarily rejects neutrality. Thus, the Governing Board must ask itself what level of policy setting and recommending by the Board is acceptable. A dump of all the data on a release site means that there is no agenda behind the release of those data. Highlighting some of the data, but not all the data, means that the presentation is not neutral. She suggested that the Board seek organizations,

such as Change the Equation, who are expert in how to package data thoughtfully and concisely, as a path to move forward.

Governor Musgrove asked why dates for releasing reports are not predictable. The media need to anticipate when to dedicate attention and space to NAEP results, similar to when Labor Statistics are released each month and to Program for International Student Assessment (PISA) Day, a day—known years in advance—when PISA results are released. Tonya Matthews agreed and elaborated that stakeholder feedback indicates that the Governing Board’s impact is diminished by ad hoc scheduling of releases.

R&D Committee Chair Rebecca Gagnon concurred and suggested that staff can set dates for Report Card releases and back map from that point to determine what R&D must do by when to meet those established dates. Laura LoGerfo and Dan McGrath agreed to collaborate on building a list of recommended dates based on the NAEP data collection schedule.

Governing Board Chair and R&D Committee member, Terry Mazany, cautioned that a static portal with more data will not be useful. Instead, a portal that uses natural language so people know what data they need to access and how would facilitate decision-making and planning.

Governing Board staff explained that there is a procurement underway to hire experts in social media to help the Board reach audiences through Twitter and Facebook. Committee member Alberto Carvalho demurred and explained that an in-house expert who knows the Governing Board well should be used to infuse the Board more fully into the ongoing conversation and attract audiences. There are two primary means through which social media consultants suggest enhancing an organization’s profile: (1) Boost – a pay-to-play approach, in which the organization pays to appear on relevant feeds (and that sponsorship is evident); and (2) Tagging – tagging other relevant platforms through hashtags and @s. Mr. Carvalho advised against relying on these approaches to enhance the Board’s outreach.

Committee member Anitere Flores expressed concern that the Board should not push messages simply for the sake of outreach. Ms. Matthews explained that word-of-mouth remains the primary way of disseminating information, and the Board needs to give people the language to converse about NAEP, its results, and its potential impact. Social media should amplify this word-of-mouth.

To conclude the conversation, R&D Chair Gagnon reminded the Committee that the Guidelines and Policy Statement still need revision. The statement and guidelines should avoid operational concerns but clarify what each report should include. She also acknowledged that the bigger picture is distinguishing and cementing R&D’s purview in conversations about reporting once the Policy Statement and Guidelines cover the basic requirements. In summary,

- The Committee wholeheartedly agreed to pursue setting predictable dates for each release, so that media and stakeholders can know well in advance when to expect and disseminate results. Board staff and NCES staff will collaborate on tracing back the timeline to create a set calendar.
- Committee members also endorsed the idea of drawing in other approved, valid, well-considered, relevant data for a given Report Card release site. The Committee will explore the feasibility and potential liabilities of this approach at their next meeting in August.

- There was a unanimous call among the Committee to invite external experts in analyzing, presenting, and disseminating data in meaningful, accessible ways to share their lessons learned with the Committee. Names floated include Nate Silver from 538, Jim Clifton, the CEO of Gallup, and Amy Webb of the WebbMedia Group (now known as The Future Today Institute). This may become a plenary session for the August Board meeting.
- R&D Committee members also recommended following up with ideas to stagger and/or curate the release, given the caveats discussed throughout the conversation.
- Updating the Policy Statement and Guidelines will continue along with pursuing these bigger ideas, because any current document that refers to activities that no longer exist—such as paper reports—should be revised.

### Review of Assessment Literacy Work

Committee members reviewed research conducted by the Board’s communication contractor DCG on 35 major assessment literacy campaigns conducted by a variety of groups, including assessment consortia, education organizations and agencies, universities, and private companies.

Although the full Board’s official assessment literacy initiative was tabled, ongoing assessment literacy work informing audiences about NAEP in the context of other assessments remains a goal that R&D should pursue among the Board’s overall outreach and dissemination goals.

The research conducted by DCG, which focused only on assessment literacy campaigns specifically, found scant mentions of NAEP. Most assessment literacy campaigns were directed toward teachers and used a diverse range of strategies from policy reports to infographics and videos. Common messages included distinguishing between different types and uses of assessments (especially formative vs. summative).

Committee members reviewed and discussed DCG’s findings. Some members were not surprised that NAEP did not appear in these campaigns, because it is perceived as unique and differs in scope and intent from state assessments, which garner much interest. Overall, the DCG summary chart led to a conversation about which audiences should be the focus of the Governing Board’s efforts to optimize its influence. Members agreed to consider this research alongside both the findings of the assessment literacy working group as well as the lessons learned from the Frameworks Institute on translating education issues to the general public to discern how the Governing Board can inform stakeholders more strategically and effectively.

### Core Contextual Variables Review Process

Jamie Deaton of NCES and Jonas Bertling of ETS described the development and review process for the 2017 core contextual variables. In early June, the R&D Committee will review results from the 2016 core contextual questionnaire pilot. Committee members expressed eager anticipation for the new socioeconomic status variables and noted potential challenges in reporting an index variable entitled “self-control”. The Committee suggested that a general plenary session on these new variables and indices would prove valuable.

Information Items

Stephaan Harris and Laura LoGerfo updated the Committee on the Focused Reporting and Social Media contracts and shared updates on the plans to release results from the 2014 NAEP Technology and Engineering Literacy Assessment on May 17.

Adjourn

R&D Chair Rebecca Gagnon thanked everyone for their participation in a full meeting and adjourned the Committee at 12:15 pm.

I certify the accuracy of these minutes.



Rebecca Gagnon, Chair

5/31/16

Date