

National Assessment Governing Board

Reporting and Dissemination Committee

Report of December 6, 2013

JOINT MEETING WITH COMMITTEE ON STANDARDS, DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY (COSDAM)

NAEP Testing and Reporting on Students with Disabilities and English Language Learners

Please see meeting report for Committee on Standards, Design and Methodology.

REGULAR MEETING OF REPORTING AND DISSEMINATION COMMITTEE

Attendees: Committee Members – Acting Chairman Terry Mazany, Aniterre Flores, Rebecca Gagnon, Tom Luna, Tonya Miles and Father Joseph O’Keefe; Governing Board Staff – Larry Feinberg and Stephaan Harris; NCES – Commissioner Jack Buckley, Associate Commissioner Peggy Carr, Gina Broxterman, Angela Glymph, Arnold Goldstein, and Grady Wilburn; AIR – Victor Bandeira de Mello; ETS – Amy Drescher and Lisa Ward; HagerSharp – David Hoff and James Elias; Optimal Solutions Group – Rukayat Akinbiyi; Reingold – Amy Buckley, Erin Fenn, Sarah Johnson, and Valerie Marrapodi; Westat – Chris Averett; Education Writers Association – Lori Crouch; Education Week – Catherine Gewertz

1. Embargo Policy for National Assessment Reports

The committee discussed the embargo guidelines approved about two years ago regarding which media receive advanced access to NAEP data. Stephaan Harris, of NAGB staff, said the issue is coming up again because for the 2013 NAEP national/state reports, several online outlets affiliated with other groups requested access and were denied according to the current guidelines. Two outlets – a blog, Chalkbeat, and a website, Watchdog.org – posted public grievances about being denied access.

Mr. Harris said that currently outlets that are funded and/or coordinated by groups like unions and think tanks do not receive access. The challenge is that there are no standard best practices and various agencies have to make the decision on their own. Mr. Harris asked the committee consider how and if the guidelines should be expanded, and what criteria should be used for access.

NAGB Executive Director Cornelia Orr said the Education Writers Association is grappling with this issue as well, and asked the committee about advocacy groups. James Elias, of Hager

Sharp, said that many advocacy groups want embargo access to hold their own briefings, not necessarily to post it on their websites when the embargo lifts.

Committee member Anitere Flores said the Committee should think about broadening the policy because if various groups are going to report on NAEP anyway, the Board would want those outlets to have advanced access to produce accurate stories. Committee member Rebecca Gagnon said that access should be limited to eligibility posed by various professional organizations in media. Several attendees pointed out there were no standard best practices and various agencies, states, and assessment makers had their own rules.

NCES Commissioner Jack Buckley pointed out that PISA, for example, is different as it is coordinated worldwide, and other federal agencies have varying eligibility requirements for embargo access. Acting Chairman Terry Mazany said the Board needs to sharpen its message on why certain outlets could be denied access, and suggested that a focus on an outlet's editorial, rather than financial, independence might be a better pathway.

Ms. Orr said Board staff will do more research on how journalism organizations define media and present findings for discussion at the next meeting.

2. Board and Committee Input into NAEP Reports

The Committee continued its ongoing discussion on how big-picture, earlier Board input into NAEP report cards can be handled, keeping in mind the reporting/production schedule and the role of NCES in report development.

Mr. Harris said that NAGB and NCES staff got together before the meeting and came up with several ideas, including the committee having pre-data discussions on assessments being undertaken for that calendar year; suggesting topics within a subject committee members think the public might be especially interested in for website highlighting; suggesting ideas for the main questions on the interactive NAEP website through which performance summaries and charts and tables are structured; and contributing ideas for NAEP website graphics.

Ms. Flores said pre-data discussions can be especially instrumental in shaping report development. Ms. Gagnon said that input on reporting and release strategies should be made through the lens of non-experts in education, especially groups of parents. Fr. O'Keefe said that it was beneficial to think of ways to proactively answer common questions about NAEP, such as why it is needed and how it compares to existing state tests and the Common Core.

NCES Commissioner Buckley said NAEP reports cannot be an omnibus for a variety of education issues. Acting Chair Mazany said the Board does not want to interfere with the reporting process but just make sure multiple views are represented. He added that there is a need to operationalize when this feedback can be part of the process.

Associate Commissioner Peggy Carr said that from an analysis side, there could be an opportunity to accommodate this kind of feedback, pointing to TEL as an example of early and

detailed Board involvement. The Committee suggested that as increased Board feedback is put into practice, members should also focus on changes that can be made to post-release strategies and on ideas to better highlight contextual variables.

3. Review of NAEP 2013 Reading and Mathematics Release

The committee received a review of the November 7 release event for the 2013 NAEP Report Cards in Reading and Mathematics. Mr. Harris said the release marked the debut of the NAEP interactive website that will replace full reports with charts, graphics and data all online with only a slim, printed summary.

Amy Buckley, of Reingold, said there were record numbers of webinar registrants and journalists requesting access. She said there were nearly 200 original print and online stories nationally, and 360 local broadcasts on television and radio. Overall, Ms. Buckley noted that there was positive feedback from media, congressional staff, and the general public on the new website. Post-webinar surveys indicated an overwhelmingly positive response to the new format of the web-based NAEP report.

Acting Chair Mazany said that in the review of NAEP releases there is value in comparing what was covered in the media versus the message we sought to communicate.

4. Release Plan for 2013 TUDA Report Cards

Mr. Harris reviewed the release plan prepared by Board staff for the NAEP 2013 Report Cards for the Trial Urban District Assessment (TUDA) in Mathematics and Reading. The plan calls for the release to be conducted as an online webinar in December 2013 with the two reports released together. The webinar will feature a data presentation by the NCES Commissioner, with moderation and comments by at least one member of the Governing Board and an additional panelist with expertise in education and assessment matters in large city school districts.

Mr. Harris said that the plan also calls for offering access to embargoed data via a special website to U.S. Congressional staff; senior representatives of the National Governors Association and the Council of Chief State School Officers; and members of the media in accordance with Board policy. A conference call will be held for journalists who sign embargo agreements. The Board's communications contractor, Reingold, will work with Board staff to coordinate a post-event communications effort to extend the life of the results.

ACTION: The Committee voted unanimously to recommend Governing Board approval of the release plan for the NAEP 2013 TUDA Mathematics and Reading Report Cards, as appended in Attachment A to this report.

JOINT MEETING WITH ASSESSMENT DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

Attendees: Reporting and Dissemination Committee Members – Acting Chairman Terry Mazany, Aniterre Flores, Rebecca Gagnon, Tom Luna, Tonya Miles and Father Joseph O’Keefe; Assessment Development Committee Members – Chair Shannon Garrison, Vice Chair Cary Sneider, Brent Houston, Hector Ibarra, Dale Nowlin, and Susan Pimentel; Governing Board Staff – Mary Crovo, Larry Feinberg, and Stephaan Harris; NCES – Commissioner Jack Buckley, Gina Broxterman, Ebony Walton Chester, James Deaton, Angela Glymph, Arnold Goldstein, Eunice Greer, Elvira Germino Hausken, Taslima Rahman, Suzanne Triplett, and Grady Wilburn; Education Consultants – Alan Ginsburg and Marshall S. (Mike) Smith; AIR – Victor Bandeira de Mello, Kim Gattis, Cadelle Hemphill, and Fran Stancavage; ETS – Jay Campbell, Jonas Bertling, Amy Dresher, Lonnie Smith, Greg Vafis, and Lisa Ward; HumRRO – Steve Sellman and Sheila Schultz; HagerSharp – Debra Silimeo, James Elias, and David Hoff; Optimal Solutions Group – Rukayat Akinbiyi and Craig Streit; Reingold – Amy Buckley, Erin Fenn, Sarah Johnson, and Valerie Marrapodi; Westat – Dianne Walsh and Chris Averett; Pearson – Connie Smith; CRP– Sondra Gaines and Edward Wofford; APS/ERI – Amy Yamashiro; Education Week – Catherine Gewertz

Contextual Information Framework

The committees reviewed the revised framework for the collection and reporting of contextual information by NAEP, which had been recommended to the Board by an ad hoc committee that completed its work in August 2013. The ad hoc committee also recommended that the term for these data be changed from background to contextual to avoid any impression that NAEP questionnaires are too intrusive.

The purpose of the framework is to provide general guidance on the collection, organization, and use of contextual information by NAEP. This information is used to give context to NAEP results and to track factors associated with student achievement that are of interest to policymakers and the public. The data are collected through survey questionnaires administered to students after they take NAEP’s cognitive assessments and to their teachers and school principals.

The framework, which was originally adopted in 2003, has been revised to make it conform to the Policy Statement on NAEP Background Questions and the Use of Contextual Data, approved by the Board in August 2012. Substantively, the changes from the 2003 framework are not major, but generally they make it somewhat more positive about the contribution of contextual variables to NAEP reporting and to the impact NAEP can have on understanding American education.

The revised framework is in the briefing materials for this meeting of the Reporting and Dissemination Committee, starting at page 149. It includes a new foreword explaining the key changes.

ACTION: After discussion, the two committees voted unanimously to recommend that the Governing Board approve the revised Contextual Information Framework, subject to minor editorial revisions.

Using NAEP for Key Education Indicators

The committees heard a presentation by Marshall Smith and Alan Ginsburg on their recommendations for using NAEP to obtain data for key education indicators. Smith, a former U.S. Under Secretary of Education, is a senior fellow in education policy at the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching. Ginsburg is the former director of policy planning and evaluation for the U.S. Department of Education.

Mr. Smith said the general thrust of their proposal is for the Board to choose issues and factors that are important elements of the education system, based on evidence and research. These would be used as the focus for preparing groups of questions to create composite indicators, showing how these conditions are distributed in the national, state and district-level samples on which NAEP reports. Mr. Smith and Mr. Ginsburg recommended three factors for initial consideration by the Board: teacher quality, technology use, and school climate. They gave examples of composite indicators in each area, using currently-available NAEP data, but said expert panels should be appointed to prepare additional questions, their justification based on research, and the specific methodology for creating the composites. Mr. Smith said a similar approach has been used by the TIMSS and PISA international assessments.

Member Cary Sneider said the approach recommended would move NAEP in the right direction as a useful database for educational improvement. Member Hector Ibarra suggested an indicator be developed on chronic absenteeism and said this and other indicators, based on NAEP data, could add greatly to our knowledge of how the American education system is functioning.

Jack Buckley, Commissioner of the National Center for Education Statistics, questioned the need for additional data from NAEP on school conditions. He said an enormous amount of data was already collected in other surveys conducted by his agency, but he said some composite indicators might be useful to report on concepts that are not typically captured in one question.

Mr. Smith said NAEP had unique capabilities as a survey providing both achievement and contextual data. He said it also could link achievement in school with reports on out-of-school conditions that affect learning.

The two consultants will submit their final report next month. They suggested appointing panels of experts to work out the details for each topic to be considered. This fits in well with the provision of the Contextual Information Framework that calls for creating clusters of questions on topics of continuing interest. The committees intend to follow up on this proposal at the next meeting of the Governing Board in March 2014.

I certify the accuracy of these minutes.



Terry Mazany, Acting Chair

January 20, 2014

Date



**NATIONAL ASSESSMENT GOVERNING BOARD
RELEASE PLAN FOR THE
NATIONAL ASSESSMENT OF EDUCATIONAL PROGRESS (NAEP)**

***The Nation's Report Card: Trial Urban District Assessment in
Mathematics and Reading 2013***

The 2013 NAEP Trial Urban District Assessment (TUDA) Mathematics and Reading Report Cards will be released together to the general public during December 2013 in one event, as approved by the Board at the December 2013 meeting. Following a review and approval of the report's results, the release will be arranged as an online webinar. The release event will include a data presentation by the Commissioner of Education Statistics, with moderation and comments by at least one member of the National Assessment Governing Board and an additional panelist with expertise in education and assessment matters in large city school districts. Full accompanying data will be posted on the Internet at the scheduled time of release.

The 2013 NAEP TUDA Report Cards in mathematics and reading will present findings from a representative sample of about 365,000 4th-grade and 330,000 8th-grade public school students in 21 urban districts: Albuquerque Public Schools, Atlanta Public Schools, Austin Independent School District, Baltimore City Public Schools, Boston School District, Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools, Chicago Public Schools, Cleveland Metropolitan School District, Dallas Independent School District, Detroit Public Schools, District of Columbia Public Schools, Fresno Unified School District, Hillsborough County (FL) Public Schools, Houston Independent School District, Jefferson County Public Schools (Louisville, KY), Los Angeles Unified School District, Miami-Dade County Public Schools, Milwaukee Public Schools, New York City Department of Education, San Diego Unified School District, and School District of Philadelphia.

Results will be compared to those of the nation and to a large-city average that includes public schools located in the urbanized areas of cities with populations of 250,000 or more. Data will be presented for all students by such factors as race/ethnicity, achievement gaps, and eligibility for the National School Lunch Program. Contextual information (i.e., student, teacher, and school survey data) with findings of interest will also be reported. Main findings will be included in a brief report summary, with the majority of trends and findings posted in charts and graphs on the new Nation's Report Card website.

DATE AND LOCATION

The release event for the media and the public will occur in December 2013. The release date will be determined by the Chair of the Reporting and Dissemination Committee in accordance with Governing Board policy, following acceptance of the final report.

EVENT FORMAT

- Introductions and opening statement by a National Assessment Governing Board representative
- Data presentation by the Commissioner of Education Statistics
- Comments by at least one Governing Board member
- Comments by at least one expert in the field of education and assessment matters in large-city school districts
- Questions from the webinar audience
- Program will last approximately 75 minutes
- Event will be broadcast live over the Internet, and viewers will be able to submit questions electronically for panelists. An archived version of the webinar, with closed captioning, will be posted on the Governing Board website at www.nagb.org along with other materials such as the press release and panelist statements.

EMBARGOED ACTIVITIES BEFORE RELEASE

In the days preceding the release, the Governing Board and NCES will offer access to embargoed data via a special website to approved U.S. Congressional staff in Washington, DC; approved senior representatives of the National Governors Association and the Council of Chief State School Officers; and appropriate media as defined by the Governing Board's Embargo Policy. A conference call for journalists who signed embargo agreements will be held to give a brief overview of findings and data and to answer questions from the media.

REPORT RELEASE

The Commissioner of Education Statistics will publicly release the report at the NAEP website—<http://nationsreportcard.gov>—at the scheduled time of the release event. An online copy of the report, along with data tools, questions, and other resources, will also be available at the time of release on the NAEP site. An interactive version of the release with panelists' statements, a Governing Board press release, subject frameworks, and related materials will be posted on the Board's web site at www.nagb.org. The site will also feature links to social networking sites and audio and/or video material related to the event.

ACTIVITIES AFTER THE RELEASE

The Governing Board's communications contractor, Reingold, will work with Board staff to coordinate a post-event communications effort to extend the life of the results and provide value and relevance to stakeholders with an interest in student achievement and assessment in the nation's large, urban school districts.