

# National Assessment Governing Board

## Reporting and Dissemination Committee

Friday, March 1, 2019

10:20 am – 12:50 pm

### AGENDA

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10:20 – 10:25 am	Welcome and Information Items <i>Rebecca Gagnon, Chair</i>	Attachment A
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10:25 – 10:50 am	<b>CLOSED</b> Review of 2018 Technology and Engineering Literacy Report Card <i>Laura LoGerfo, Assistant Director for Reporting and Analysis</i>	
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10:50 – 11:10 am	Discuss 2019 Releases of the Nation's Report Card <i>Stephaan Harris, Assistant Director for Communications</i>	Attachment B
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11:10 am – 12:05 pm	Initial Discussions of Postsecondary Preparedness Dashboard <i>Robert Finnegan, ETS</i> <i>Eunice Greer, National Center for Education Statistics</i> <i>Laura LoGerfo</i>	
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12:05 – 12:45 pm	Achievement Level Interpretative Guide Review and Discussion <i>Laura LoGerfo</i>	Attachment C
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12:45 – 12:50 pm	Questions, Issues, Concerns, Follow-ups, Upcoming Topics	
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## Upcoming NAEP Reports as of January 2019

### Initial NAEP Releases

<b><i>2018 NAEP Technology and Engineering Literacy</i></b>	April 2019
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### Other NAEP Reports

<b><i>2015 Student Questionnaires: Classroom Instruction for Mathematics Reading and Science</i></b>	February 2019
<b><i>2015 National Indian Education Study: A Closer Look</i></b>	March 2019

### **Virtual Flash Cards**

At the August and November 2018 meetings of the Reporting and Dissemination Committee, the Committee discussed how access to concise messages about NAEP and the Governing Board could be helpful for Governing Board members.

The Committee requested brief and readily accessible answers to frequently asked questions—questions that may be posed by a member of ‘new’ media—a reporter for Chalkbeat or a freelancer for HuffPost. Or by parents who are curious about what the Governing Board is. Or in a meeting with policymakers who ask why they should care about NAEP.

This document presents what each flash card would contain: the question is underlined, the brief answer(s) bulleted. Please provide Laura LoGerfo with feedback on the scope, content, quantity, brevity (or lack thereof). These flash cards will be posted on the members’ website.

### **NAEP Generally**

#### **What is NAEP?**

- The National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP)—also known as The Nation’s Report Card—provides results for student achievement across the nation, for each state, in 27 select urban districts, and in U.S. Department of Defense schools.

#### **What does NAEP assess?**

- Subjects assessed by the NAEP program include: Reading, Mathematics, Writing, Science, U.S. History, Civics, Geography, and Technology and Engineering Literacy.

#### **How long does NAEP take?**

- Each assessment takes about one hour and is given to students by trained NAEP administrators on NAEP-supplied devices and materials. The student assessments include a test and a brief survey about activities and attitudes related to achievement.
- NAEP also gives short surveys about school resources, staffing, climate, and curriculum and instruction to school administrators and to teachers in the assessed subjects.

#### **Who takes NAEP?**

- Not every student in the U.S. takes NAEP. Only randomly selected samples of students take the assessments. Participating schools are selected by the National Center for

Education Statistics (NCES) to produce results that are nationally representative and also representative of participating states and 27 urban districts.

- NAEP is not designed to report school or student results, and scores by student or by school are never reported.
- No one student takes more than one assessment. This reduces the burden on students, but provides reliable, valid, accurate data on student performance.

#### Does NAEP track students?

- No. NAEP does not ever report student-level data, and no student is ever followed by NAEP. Student privacy is of utmost importance to the NAEP program, and strict confidentiality procedures are enforced.

#### So NAEP goes all the way back to the 1970s?

- The NAEP Long-Term Trend assessment has monitored student performance since 1971 in reading and 1973 in mathematics for students at ages 9, 13, and 17. Last reported in 2012, the next administration of Long-Term Trend will be in 2021.
- Main NAEP assessments measure fourth-graders' and eighth-graders' performance in mathematics and reading every two years and were last reported in 2017. The current trend lines for NAEP Reading began in 1992 and in 1990 for NAEP Mathematics.

#### With so much testing, why is NAEP still necessary?

- Because NAEP serves different purposes from other testing and is the only constant, consistent, national measure of student achievement.
- There's so much diversity in our decentralized education system; NAEP is a trusted measure of what students across the country know and can do.

#### Is NAEP required?

- The administration of the NAEP mathematics and reading assessments is mandated by Congress in the Every Student Succeeds Act—in grades 4 and 8 every two years and in grade 12 every four years.
- Results are reported six months after the last administration.

#### Is NAEP related to the standardized tests mandated by a state?

- No. NAEP is conducted and reported separately from any state-conducted tests. State tests are designed to provide information on individual students and schools. State tests are tied to the curriculum and academic standards of each state.

How is NAEP reported?

- Student performance on NAEP is presented as both NAEP achievement levels and average scale scores.
- Achievement levels are reported as the percentages of students performing at or above three performance levels (*NAEP Basic*, *NAEP Proficient*, and *NAEP Advanced*).

What do NAEP achievement levels mean?

- *NAEP Proficient* is an independent, rigorous, national standard for inspiring and documenting student achievement. *NAEP Proficient* represents solid academic performance for each NAEP assessment.
- *NAEP Basic* denotes partial mastery of prerequisite knowledge and skills that are fundamental for performance at the *NAEP Proficient* level. *NAEP Advanced* signifies superior performance beyond *NAEP Proficient*.

If students score at the proficient level on NAEP, does that mean they're on grade level?

- No. NAEP scores do not imply “grade level” performance. The *NAEP Proficient* achievement level does not represent grade level proficiency as determined by other assessment standards. *NAEP Proficient* means competency over challenging subject matter on NAEP, not grade level performance.

My state's percentage of proficient students is X. NAEP says Y%. Why?

- Differences in results between NAEP and other assessments may reflect differences in the content and purpose of the two assessments and does not imply that one is right and one is wrong. Thus, there can be two different percentages of proficient: (1) on NAEP; (2) on state assessments. The percentage of students deemed proficient on a state assessment may differ from the percentage of students considered *NAEP Proficient* in that same state.

Can we compare NAEP results across subjects?

- No. Achievement levels do not hold the same meaning for different assessments.

Can we look at achievement gaps with NAEP data?

- Results are reported for the nation, states, and districts as well as groups of students based on gender, race/ethnicity, free and reduced price lunch status, etc.
- Understanding changes in the percentage of students in a subgroup or in a state or district reaching *NAEP Proficient* is informative. However, examining that data alone

and/or ranking states and districts solely on performance ignores demographic variation, so thus should be considered with additional information.

### **National Assessment Governing Board Generally**

#### **What is the Governing Board?**

- The National Assessment Governing Board was [created by Congress](#) in 1988 as an independent, nonpartisan board to set policy for the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), also known as The Nation's Report Card.

#### **Who's on the Governing Board?**

- Teachers, school administrators, assessment experts, governors, state legislators, content experts, state school chiefs, district superintendent, both state and local school board members, business representatives, and members of the general public.
- Governing Board members serve staggered 4-year terms. They are appointed by the Secretary of Education in categories determined by Congressional law to ensure that the Board includes a wide range of viewpoints and interests. Members may serve a maximum of two 4-year terms.

#### **Are Governing Board members of the same political party as the current presidential administration?**

- The Governing Board is independent and bipartisan and not under the direction of administration officials. Congress established the Governing Board to ensure that decisions on the content, standards, and reporting of NAEP are made independently from Department of Education officials.

#### **What does the Governing Board do?**

- The Governing Board identifies which subjects are tested and how often, determines the content and achievement levels for each assessment, approves all assessment questions, and coordinates the release events for NAEP Report Card releases.

#### **Who gives NAEP?**

- Both the National Center for Education Statistics, or NCES, and the National Assessment Governing Board are part of the NAEP program. NCES and its contractors administer NAEP in schools nationwide, collect the data, and create the reports on The Nation's Report Card website.

### Discuss 2019 Releases of The Nation's Report Card

After the release of the 2018 National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) Technology and Engineering Literacy (TEL) Report Card in April, there will be two additional major NAEP release events scheduled for this fall. The first event will feature the results of the 2019 NAEP Reading and Mathematics Report Card, while the second will feature results of the 2018 NAEP Civics, Geography and U.S. History Report Cards.

Governing Board staff have worked with the Board's communications contractor, The Hatcher Group, to discuss preliminary ideas for each release event (see below). However, the Board staff seeks feedback from the Reporting and Dissemination Committee to these ideas and additional suggestions that will shape release plans and ongoing strategies for both events.

#### Reading and Mathematics (replication of last year's "NAEP Day")

- A Washington, D.C.-based event that concentrates on national and state data with a separate event in a school district which participates in the Trial Urban District Assessment. Both events will be live-streamed and telecast so that people in each city can participate virtually in the events.
- One-pagers that would describe each subject's NAEP assessment
- Live Tweeting at event and extensive social media promotion before and after event
- Post-release events – online or live – that would honor the breadth of material covered by the reports

#### Civics/Geography/U.S. History

- Separate videos for each subject that promote both the NAEP assessment and the importance of that subject in education, highlighting educators and students inside and outside of school who demonstrate teaching, learning and knowledge in these areas
- Invitations sent to Supreme Court Justices Sonia Sotomayor and Neil Gorsuch for their involvement in a civics video
- One-pagers that would describe each subject's NAEP assessment
- Live Tweeting at event and extensive social media promotion before and after event
- Creative programming that will balance the conversations and presentations across the three subjects
- Post-release events – online or live – that would honor the breadth of material covered by the reports

*Background to the Draft Achievement Levels Interpretative Guide*

From 2014 to 2016, the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine evaluated the NAEP achievement levels in mathematics and reading, which are the responsibility of the Governing Board. The evaluation recognized the usefulness and value of the achievement levels but made several important recommendations, two of which address the work of the Governing Board’s Reporting and Dissemination (R&D) Committee:

**RECOMMENDATION 5:** Research is needed to articulate the *intended* interpretations and uses of the achievement levels and collect validity evidence to support these interpretations and uses. In addition, research to identify the *actual* interpretations and uses commonly made by NAEP’s various audiences and evaluate the validity of each of them. This information should be communicated to users with clear guidance on substantiated and unsubstantiated interpretations.

**RECOMMENDATION 6:** Guidance is needed to help users determine inferences that are best made with achievement levels and those best made with scale score statistics. Such guidance should be incorporated in every report that includes achievement levels.

To address these recommendations, the Governing Board policy on developing student achievement levels (adopted by the Board in November 2018) establishes an

“interpretative guide [which] shall accompany NAEP reports, including specific examples of appropriate and inappropriate interpretations and uses of the results” (Principle 3h).

This guide is intended for inclusion on the Nation’s Report Card website and on specific report card webpages to facilitate the understanding, interpretation, and use of achievement levels.

*Guidance for the Guide*

At the November 2018 Governing Board meeting, members of both R&D and the Committee on Standards, Design and Methodology (COSDAM) discussed the scope and content of the interpretative guide. Committee members agreed that the interpretative guide should be relatively narrow in content scope but should apply to all the NAEP assessments for which achievement levels are set.



The guide should incorporate appropriate uses of achievement level results and distinguish what defines a correct use from an incorrect use. The guide's target audience should be a broad swath of stakeholders from diverse backgrounds who are engaged with NAEP but untrained in interpreting NAEP results. These include superintendents, chief state school officers, principals, parents, Congressional staff, journalists, advocacy organizations, and the general public.

The joint committee discussion yielded several important features of this guide:

- Balanced
  - Between excessive, prescriptive guidance that stifles interest and diminishes innovative uses and sufficient guidance to prevent misuse and to facilitate appropriate use
- Brief
  - One page as an aspirational goal
- Clear
  - Plain language
- Honest
  - NAEP sets high expectations for what students should know and be able to do at grades 4, 8, and 12. The expectations held by a state, a district, an organization, or an individual may differ.
  - The guide must acknowledge that there can be two different percentages of proficient: (1) on NAEP; (2) on state assessments. The guide should explain how both truths exist, why, and what that means.

### Use of Extant Resources

The Governing Board and NCES have explained the NAEP achievement levels over the years. The following resources were tapped in developing the Interpretative Guide:

- [A Closer Look](#)
- [2017 Achievement Levels One-Pager](#)
- Pop-up windows next to achievement level reporting on Nation's Report Card website
- Item maps on NCES website
- Governing Board website

### Timeline

At the March 2019 Board meeting, the R&D Committee will review a draft of the interpretative guide, already vetted by Governing Board staff and NCES staff, and provide feedback to staff for

revision and improvement. At the May 2019 meeting, R&D will reconvene with COSDAM to discuss the next draft and reiterate the review and revision process collectively.

On a parallel path, at the March 2019 meeting, COSDAM is developing a statement of the intended and appropriate uses of NAEP. This document and the guide are related in terms of content and purpose. COSDAM and R&D members will discuss how to connect the two at the May 2019 joint meeting.

Questions for Discussion

- (1) Does the draft interpretative guide adhere to the recommendations that emerged from the November 2018 joint meeting of COSDAM and R&D?
- (2) Does the subject-specific item map matrix make sense and offer value?
- (3) How can we improve this draft for the next round of review?

There are two primary, complementary ways through which NAEP performance is presented:

- [average scores on the NAEP subject scale](#), and
- percentages of students performing at or above the NAEP achievement levels.

Achievement levels describe student performance beyond scale scores. NAEP achievement levels were developed to:

- Define what U.S. students should know and be able to do for each NAEP assessment;
- Establish benchmarks for attaining competency over challenging subject matter for each NAEP assessment; and
- Measure the extent to which U.S. students are reaching these benchmarks, which calls attention to areas for improvement.

The *NAEP Proficient* achievement level is an independent, rigorous standard for inspiring and documenting student achievement. Achievement level results are reported in reference to the goal of *NAEP Proficient*:

- *NAEP Proficient* level represents solid academic performance for each subject of NAEP assessment. Students reaching *NAEP Proficient* have demonstrated competency over challenging subject matter, including subject-matter knowledge, application of such knowledge to real world situations, and analytical skills appropriate to the subject matter.
- *NAEP Basic* denotes partial mastery of prerequisite knowledge and skills that are fundamental for performance at the *NAEP Proficient* level.
- The *NAEP Advanced* level signifies superior performance beyond *NAEP Proficient*.

These general achievement level definitions, which apply to all NAEP assessments, are translated into each subject and grade assessed by NAEP through [achievement level descriptions \(ALDs\)](#). The ALDs can be understood better through item maps displaying subject-specific assessment questions which students at each level are likely to answer correctly.

### Subject-Specific Assessment Item Map Chart

Students whose performance is at the achievement levels presented below are likely to answer the following sample assessment questions, or items, correctly. This matrix shows the increasing knowledge and skills represented across the range of student performance. Note these examples are taken from NAEP Item Maps and the released item pool for NAEP Mathematics Grades 4 and 8 (2017) and Grade 12 (2015). These examples are presented for illustrative purposes only. The [complete item maps are on the Nation's Report Card website](#).

**Note: Draft prototype for discussion only**

	<b>Grade 4</b>	<b>Grade 8</b>	<b>Grade 12</b>
<b>NAEP Basic</b>	Can compose 4-digit number using place value	Find the midpoint between rational numbers on a number line	Use a model to predict cost (calculator available)
<b>NAEP Proficient</b>	Interpret and complete a pictograph given a table	Compare the means of two sets of data (calculator available)	Use trigonometric identity to solve problem
<b>NAEP Advanced</b>	Identify multiple correct solution methods to addition problem	Estimate the radius of a circle given the area	Complete a proof of the Pythagorean Theorem

*Insert placeholder text here for if/when work is completed on how NAEP achievement levels relate to other external indicators of student performance*

NAEP sets expectations for what students should know and be able to do for each NAEP assessment. The expectations held by a state, a district, or an organization may differ. NAEP achievement levels refer only to the expectations set by the National Assessment Governing Board. Differences in results between NAEP and other assessments may reflect differences in the content and purpose of the two assessments and does not imply that one is right and one is wrong.

Thus, there can be two different percentages of proficient: (1) on NAEP; (2) on state assessments. The percentage of students deemed proficient on a state assessment may differ from the percentage of students considered *NAEP Proficient* in that same state.

#### Inappropriate Uses and Interpretations of NAEP Achievement Levels

- NAEP results cannot be compared across subjects; achievement levels do not hold the same meaning for different assessments.
- The *NAEP Proficient* achievement level does not represent grade level proficiency as determined by other assessment standards. *NAEP Proficient* means competency over challenging subject matter on NAEP, not grade level performance.
- NAEP achievement levels, as they do not describe grade-level proficiency, do not imply any letter grade equivalence. NAEP cannot be compared to grades given by teachers, thus *NAEP Advanced* is not considered an A, similarly, *NAEP Proficient* is not a B, etc.