

NATIONAL SUPERVISOR MANUAL



NATIONAL ASSESSMENT OF EDUCATIONAL PROGRESS



NAEP 2000

National Assessment of Educational Progress

2000 NATIONAL NAEP SUPERVISOR MANUAL

Conducted for:

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Conducted by:

Educational Testing Service
Princeton, New Jersey

National Computer Systems
Iowa City, Iowa

Westat
Rockville, Maryland



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1. INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW

1.1 Summary Background of the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP)

For three decades, information on what American students know and can do has been generated by the Nation's Report Card, formally mandated by Congress as the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP). NAEP is a continuing, national survey of the knowledge and skill of young Americans in major learning areas usually taught in school. It is the first, ongoing effort to obtain comprehensive and dependable achievement data on a national basis in a uniform, scientific manner. The purpose of the national assessment is to gather information that will aid educators, legislators, and others in improving the education experience of youth in our country. Its primary goals are to measure the current status of the educational attainments of young Americans and to report changes and long-term trends in those attainments. Other goals include disseminating assessment methods and materials and assisting those who wish to apply them at local, state, and national levels.

Planning and development of the National Assessment of Educational Progress began in 1964 with the appointment by the Carnegie Foundation of an Exploratory Committee on Assessing the Progress of Education. The specific tasks assigned to the Exploratory Committee included the development and testing of an all-inclusive methodology to assess the knowledge and skills of **groups** of American young people rather than of **individuals**. With support from both the Fund for the Advancement of Education and the Ford Foundation, the Committee completed the developmental phase of the project in late 1968.

NAEP has always been a unique cooperative undertaking of the education community and the federal government. The program is funded by the U.S. Congress, directed by the National Center for Education Statistics of the Department of Education, and governed by an independent group. The Assessment Policy Committee governed NAEP until 1988, when the National Assessment Governing Board (NAGB) was created by new legislation.

The National Assessment Governing Board, made up of representatives of state and local education associations and the business community, makes policy decisions and provides overall direction to the program. The board is responsible for selecting the subject areas to be assessed, including adding to those specified by Congress; identifying appropriate achievement goals; developing assessment

objectives; developing test specifications; designing the assessment methodology; developing guidelines and standards for data analysis and reporting; and developing standards and procedures for interstate, regional, and national comparisons.

Each learning area assessment is the product of several years of work by a great many educators, scholars, and lay persons from all over the nation. Working in committee, these people propose general goals they feel Americans should be achieving during the course of their education. These goals are reviewed and discussed until a consensus is reached on objectives for each subject area. The objectives are then given to exercise (question) writers with the task of creating measurement instruments appropriate to the objectives. When the exercises have passed extensive review by subject-matter specialists, measurement experts, and lay persons, they are compiled into booklets to be administered to national probability samples of young people.

While the primary purpose of The Nation's Report Card is to document patterns and trends in student achievement, the project is also able to inform educational policy by collecting descriptive background information from students, teachers, and school administrators. The authorizing legislation for NAEP dictates a careful and extensive process of background questionnaire design and development. It states that the purpose of NAEP is **not** "to authorize the collection or reporting of information on student attitudes or beliefs or on other matters that are not germane to the acquisition and analysis of information about academic achievement." The law further provides that no data shall be collected "that are not directly related to the appraisal of educational performance, achievements, and traditional demographic reporting variables, or to the fair and accurate presentation of such information."

NAEP procedures guarantee the anonymity of participants, as **no student names are recorded on the assessment booklets or removed from the schools**. The results of the national assessment are reported on the national level and by region of the country, not by school district, school, or individual student. Only group statistics are reported, broken down by gender, race/ethnicity, and a host of variables that illuminate students' instructional experiences.

In addition to the national assessments, Congress authorized the expansion of NAEP to permit reporting at the state level in 1988. States volunteer for the state assessment component and assume responsibility for data collection. The state assessment component of NAEP initially surveyed eighth-grade mathematics in 1990, and various subjects since then, but math has been assessed most

frequently (Exhibit 1-1). In 2000, fourth graders and eighth graders will be assessed in both mathematics and science.

In preparation for each NAEP assessment, a field test is conducted in the preceding year to pretest new assessment items, materials, and procedures. In 2000, national, state, and field test components of NAEP will all be taking place; they are described separately in greater detail in Sections 1.2, 1.3, and 1.4 of this chapter.

The National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), part of the U.S. Department of Education, manages all components of NAEP. The primary contractors are Educational Testing Service (ETS) and Westat. ETS is responsible for the item development and reporting, while Westat is responsible for all sampling and field administration activities. National Computer Systems (NCS) is the materials distribution and processing subcontractor to ETS.

1.2 The National Assessment

Beginning in 1969, the national assessment has gathered information about levels of educational achievement across the country and reported findings at the national and regional levels. Refer to Exhibit 1-1 for the learning areas assessed in the various years. Reading, writing, math, and science have been surveyed most frequently. The 2000 national assessment will consist of mathematics and science assessments at the fourth, eighth, and twelfth grades. The fourth graders will also be assessed in reading.

Last spring, Westat selected a sample of approximately 3,200 public and nonpublic schools located in 94 geographic areas called primary sampling units (PSUs) throughout the United States. The PSUs were selected by Westat to represent the nation as a whole. The sample of nonpublic schools is larger than in past assessments, so that additional groups of nonpublic schools can be reported. In addition to Catholic schools, reports for 2000 will contain information about Lutheran, Conservative Christian, and Independent schools, as well as nonpublic schools falling into "other" categories.

Exhibit 1-1. Assessment Timetable¹

Assessment Year	School Year	Learning Area	Special Assessments
01	1969-70	Science Citizenship Writing	
02	1970-71	Reading Literature	
03	1971-72	Music Social Studies	
04	1972-73	Science Mathematics	
05	1973-74	Writing Career and Occupational Development	
06	1974-75	Reading Art	Basic Skills
07	1975-76	Citizenship/Social Studies	Basic Mathematics
08	1976-77	Science Adult Assessment (Health, Energy, Reading & Science)	Basic Life Skills
09	1977-78	Mathematics Consumer Skills	
10	1978-79	Writing Art Music	
11	1979-80	Reading/Literature	
13	1981-82	Mathematics Citizenship/Social Studies	
15 ¹	1983-84	Writing/Reading	
17	1985-86	Mathematics Reading Science U.S. History Literature	Computer Competence
19	1987-88	Mathematics Reading Science Writing Geography Civics	
21	1989-90	Mathematics Reading Writing Science	State Level Mathematics
23	1991-92	Mathematics Writing Reading	State Level Mathematics & Reading
25	1993-94	Reading History Geography	State Level Reading
27	1995-96	Mathematics Science	State Level Mathematics & Science
29	1997-98	Reading Writing Civics	State Level Reading & Writing
30	1998-99	Reading Mathematics Science Writing	
31	1999-2000	Reading Mathematics Science	State Level Mathematics & Science

¹ The long term trend sample began in Year 15 with tape administered sessions surveying reading, mathematics, and science. The reading/writing print administered sessions of Year 15 were added to the Long Term trend in Year 17, so that the trend always involves these same subjects and session types.

In order to reduce the burden on the participating schools, national assessment field staff do most of the work associated with the assessment. Introductory contacts and meetings are held in the fall to explain the assessment procedures to school and district representatives and to set a mutually agreed-upon assessment date for each sampled school. The assessment supervisor visits the school to select the sample of students a week or two before the assessment. Westat field staff, called exercise administrators, conduct the assessment sessions under the direction of the assessment supervisor. At the completion of the assessment in a school, field staff code the booklets and ship the completed materials to National Computer Systems.

The student sample will consist of up to 110 students per school to be assessed in sessions of 20-30 students. The assessments will last about 90 minutes. Half of the students taking the science assessment will be asked to stay an extra 20-30 minutes to perform a hands-on science experiment. Schools may keep any leftover materials from the science kits as a "thank-you gift" for participating in NAEP. A booklet will be left with the school that explains other science experiments that can be done with these science kit materials.

NAEP provides various accommodations including a bilingual booklet (Spanish) for mathematics, a bilingual glossary for science, and a booklet that can be enlarged. NAEP permits almost all accommodations except those that change the nature or meaning of the text or those that jeopardize the security of the text.

NAEP also collects data from teachers and school administrators. Teachers of selected students, and the school principal will be asked to complete questionnaires about their teaching practices, and about school characteristics, respectively. There is also a questionnaire about SD/LEP students that the teachers most knowledgeable about a student with disabilities or limited English will be asked to complete.

1.3 The State Assessment

While the national assessment component of NAEP reports information for the nation as a whole and for geographic regions of the country, many people have maintained that more detailed information than is currently available from the national assessment would assist efforts to improve

American education. Because states have the primary responsibility for public education, state-level data is seen as being particularly useful.

As mentioned earlier, Congress responded to these concerns in April 1988 by adding a new dimension, the Trial State Assessment Program, to the NAEP legislation. Under this then new federal project, states could volunteer to participate in the program and would assume responsibility for administration of the assessments within their states. The program began in 1990 as a trial. As of 1996, the authorizing legislation no longer considered the program a trial, therefore it is now known as the state assessment program. The grades and subjects assessed are a subset of those in the national assessment. After the assessments, states exercise the option to compare the knowledge and skills of their students with students in other states and in the nation.

In each state volunteering to participate, the 2000 state assessment involves:

- A sample of about 225 public schools per state (100 for eighth grade; 125 for fourth grade).
- A sample of about 60 students per school (30 students per subject). Schools will be assessed at either the fourth grade level OR the eighth grade level. Per state, this will yield approximately 5,000 students assessed at each grade level (2,500 for math and 2,500 for science).
- State or local staff trained in assessment procedures by NAEP.
- Assessments conducted during February with schools spread evenly throughout this four-week period.
- Assessments conducted by state/local staff with a subsample of the assessment sessions monitored by NAEP staff.

In 2000, the state NAEP school sample does **not** include any nonpublic schools. Instead, the national sample size of nonpublic schools has been increased as noted earlier.

1.4 The Field Test

The 2000 field test for the 2001 national assessment will be conducted from January through early February 2000. Fourth, eighth, and twelfth graders will be assessed in history and geography. The items tested will replace items released publicly after previous assessments in these subjects.

1.5 Special Study

There will be a special study associated with the conduct of the national assessment in 2000. The study is a transcript study, conducted in most of the grade 12 schools. It will be similar to the transcript study that took place in 1998. All grade 12 public schools and a sample of the nonpublic schools will be asked to participate. In this study, final high school transcripts are gathered at the end of the school year for grade 12 students selected for NAEP. At the time of the sampling visit, the assessment supervisors will collect copies of course catalogs, examples of student transcripts, and additional information about course and credit requirements. At the end of the school year, the actual transcripts for the NAEP students will be collected. In all cases, the students' names and all other identifiers will be removed from the transcripts before they are taken from the schools. Schools will be reimbursed at their regular rate for all transcripts obtained.

1.6 NAEP-TIMSS Link

Shortly after the 2000 NAEP assessments are completed, a linking study will be conducted to establish a link between NAEP results and TIMSS assessment data. TIMSS is the Third International Mathematics and Science Study, which has been conducted periodically since 1995.

The NAEP-TIMSS Link Study will be conducted **only at the eighth grade level**, and TIMSS data will be collected from April to early May 2000. This study involves returning to a subset of the NAEP eighth grade schools to conduct the grade 8 TIMSS assessment with approximately 2,000 of the students assessed in NAEP mathematics and 2,000 students assessed in NAEP science. The NAEP eighth grade schools will be asked to volunteer for the Link Study. At the time that NAEP assessments are conducted, NAEP supervisors will invite eighth grade schools to participate and will set a TIMSS assessment date for those schools that agree to participate.

1.7 Overlap Among the National and State Assessment, and the Field Test

The components of each assessment—state NAEP, national NAEP, and the field test—all affect each other to the extent that all components are conducted in many of the same states and in some of the same districts. Furthermore, a small number of schools will be participating in both the national

assessment and the state assessment—either at the same grade level or at different grade levels—but there is no school-level overlap with the field test. Because all three components affect each other to some extent, coordination of the three programs is very important. Most states have been very supportive of the national assessment in the past, and this support has aided school-level participation. After the state is notified and the district is contacted, Westat staff are authorized to contact the schools to secure their cooperation and schedule their assessments.

For districts and schools in more than one program, confusion may arise about the differences among the programs and the role of the school in each. It is important that districts and schools are fully aware that the state is responsible for all data collection in the state assessment, while Westat is responsible for all activities related to the national assessment and the field test.

For 2000, 47 states and the District of Columbia are involved in the national assessment, 47 states and 6 jurisdictions have volunteered for the state assessment to date, while there are 31 states in the field test. With so many jurisdictions involved in each of the NAEP components, there is substantial overlap. Exhibit 1-2 illustrates the overlap of state and national NAEP for 2000.

The national assessment and field test school samples are selected from geographic areas (known as PSUs). By contrast, the geographic areas for the state assessment sample are the participating states, so if a state has volunteered to participate, the sampled schools are scattered throughout the state. To the extent possible, overlap of specific schools among the components is minimized. Currently there are 60 schools selected for both the state and national assessments. Special procedures will be applied in these schools. Exhibit 1-3 summarizes and compares the features of the national and state assessments and the field test for 2000.

1.8 The Security of Assessment Materials and Confidentiality Issues

In order to protect the confidentiality of **all** NAEP materials, you must strictly observe the following rules and guidelines at all times.

Exhibit 1-2. States/jurisdictions in various NAEP components

45 States/Jurisdictions in Both the National and State Assessments:

Alabama	Iowa	Nebraska	South Carolina
Arizona	Kansas	Nevada	Tennessee
Arkansas	Kentucky	New Hampshire	Texas
California	Louisiana	New Jersey	Utah
Connecticut	Maine	New Mexico	Vermont
Delaware	Maryland	New York	Virginia
District of Columbia	Massachusetts	North Carolina	Washington
Florida	Michigan	Ohio	West Virginia
Georgia	Minnesota	Oklahoma	Wisconsin
Hawaii	Mississippi	Oregon	
Illinois	Missouri	Pennsylvania	
Indiana	Montana	Rhode Island	

8 States/Jurisdictions in the State Assessment Only:

Idaho	Wyoming	DoDDS	Virgin Islands
North Dakota	DoDEA	Guam	American Samoa

3 States in the National Assessment Only:

Alaska	Colorado	South Dakota
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Exhibit 1-3. Comparison of 2000 data collection activities

	National Assessment	State Assessment	Field Test
School Sample:	National sample of 3,200 public and nonpublic schools	State-level sample; approximately 125 schools per grade per state, public schools only	300 schools, public and nonpublic
Students Assessed:	Fourth grade Eighth grade Twelfth grade	Fourth grade Eighth grade	Fourth grade Eighth grade Twelfth grade
Subjects:	Mathematics Science Reading (fourth grade only)	Mathematics Science	History Geography
Assessment Time Period:	Jan. 3 – March 24, 2000 (includes make-up week)	Jan. 31 – March 3, 2000 (includes make-up week)	Jan. 3 – Feb. 11, 2000
Reporting Level:	National and regional	State	N/A
Primary Responsibility:	Federal government/contractors	State	Federal government/contractors

1.8.1 Requests to See Assessment Booklets

Within the limits of staff and resources, NAEP will work with school administrators and parents who would like to see assessment booklets. A demonstration booklet that contains the background questions and sample items for each subject in the assessment will be included in the informational materials distributed to school officials along with a letter confirming assessment dates. Generally speaking, the assessment supervisor will take care of any requests from principals, teachers, and the parents of students to be assessed who wish to view the assessment materials. If these requests cannot be handled on an informal basis, you should make arrangements to have a meeting, at which time any of these groups can view the materials.

Requests from state legislatures, school boards, other interested groups, or the parents of students who are not part of the assessment should be directed to Steve Lazer at ETS (1-800-223-0267).

1.8.2 Requests from News Media

Superintendents or school principals may wish to publicize participation in NAEP, either in the local press or in a school newsletter. A press release explaining NAEP has been prepared (see Appendix B). If a district or school official requests a copy of the press release, it will be noted on the School Control Form. As assessment supervisor, you can then provide copies when you make your sampling visit. There is also the possibility that representatives of local news media will ask for information about the national assessment and the local school's involvement. **All such inquires should be referred to school officials who are responsible for handing out any press releases.** If a reporter wants more information than is provided in the release, they should be referred to the name and telephone number on the press release. **UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES ARE SUPERVISORS TO MAKE COMMENTS REGARDING THE NATIONAL ASSESSMENT FOR PUBLICATION OR BROADCAST.** This is to ensure that a uniform statement on the national assessment is being presented in all parts of the country.

Generally, NAEP's policy has been not to show actual assessment booklets to anyone except the participating students. This is because even though NAEP releases approximately one-half of the items administered each year, security of the unreleased items, which are used to measure change over time, is of utmost importance. Further, in order to preserve the students' confidentiality, under no circumstances will materials with students' answers be shown to anyone. However, "security is not secrecy." A demonstration booklet that contains example background questions and sample items for each subject in the assessment has been developed. Each assessment supervisor will be supplied with copies of this booklet and will give one copy to the school coordinators as they make their sampling visits. Generally speaking, this should take care of any requests from principals, teachers, and parents who wish to see examples of the kinds of questions that will be asked. If any individual or small group of individuals insist on seeing the actual booklets to be used in the assessment, notify your field manager. Within the limits of staff and resources, NAEP will make arrangements to have a meeting, at which time any of these groups may view the materials. During the assessment, school officials may look at unused booklets, but they may not keep or photocopy the booklets.

Requests from state legislatures, school boards, or other community groups, should be directed to your field manager. The field manager may call upon the home office for support in responding to these requests. State officials, Westat, and/or ETS may hold a meeting with the concerned community members to discuss NAEP.

Occasionally, district/school personnel or the media have requested to photograph or videotape NAEP sessions. **UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES WILL NAEP PERMIT VIDEO-TAPING OR PHOTOGRAPHS TO BE TAKEN OF ANY PART OF AN ACTUAL ASSESSMENT.** Also, newspaper or broadcast reporters and photographers are not permitted to observe a NAEP session. These restrictions are based on the following concerns:

- A key strength of NAEP is that the assessment procedures are standardized; that is, the assessment is administered under uniform procedures. Obviously, television lighting, zooming camera lenses, or journalists arriving for interviews would alter this uniform setting.
- NAEP booklets contain items to be used in future assessments. Just as these booklets may not be removed from the room or photocopied, they may not be photographed.
- Last and certainly not least in importance, the confidentiality of students participating in NAEP is guaranteed, and the presence of cameras would seriously jeopardize that guarantee.

The bottom line is: **NO ASSESSMENT SESSION MAY BE HELD IF MEDIA ARE PRESENT AT THE SESSION.** Media coverage of NAEP after the assessment is completed is the prerogative of local school officials. You should leave all arrangements and/or interviews to the school officials who grant the media permission to enter the school.

Before, during, and after the assessment, NAEP booklets must remain confidential; items should neither be photographed nor copied by hand. To accommodate the needs of the media without disrupting the assessment, ETS will make available both a video tape and photographs simulating the assessment, upon request.

NAEP field staff faced with the unannounced presence of film crews or reporters should reason with reporters, note the availability of the simulated photos and videotape, and explain the above-mentioned reasons media are not permitted to attend the NAEP sessions. Reporters should be referred to Steve Lazer at ETS (1-800-223-0267) for further information.