

APPENDIX E

WORKING WITH PRIVATE SCHOOLS

E

Appendix E. Working With Private Schools

Private schools account for 24 percent of all schools in America and educate almost 11 percent of the nation's school children. Any attempt to report what America's youth know and can do in primary subject areas would be incomplete without the representation of the private school population. In order to report private school data, an overall participation rate of 70 percent of original schools is required. It is essential that the response rates achieved by NAEP's team of Gaining Cooperation Recruiters (GCRs) be maintained in order to meet our contract obligations and to ensure that private school data are valid and reportable.

Our goal for 2009 is to assess in all schools that initially agreed to participate. We can achieve this goal only with the complete support of every NAEP team member who comes in contact with private schools. Because private schools differ in so many ways from public schools, it is important for NAEP staff to be sensitive to the special needs, concerns, and requests of private schools and to customize their approaches to make participation as comfortable for schools as possible. This chapter provides you with the background for understanding the challenges associated with maintaining the participation of private schools and with guidelines for working successfully with the private schools in your assignment.

Understanding the Challenges of Securing and Maintaining Private School Participation

Bringing private schools onboard for NAEP and keeping them onboard is challenging for a variety of reasons:

- Private school participation is not easily obtained because participation is completely voluntary at both the school and student levels. Private schools are under no obligation to participate and can drop out of the assessment at any time. Every contact that field staff make with these schools, whether by phone or in person, is an opportunity for them to rethink and decline participation. Therefore, we cannot assume full participation until the assessment has been successfully administered. In reality, every field staff member who comes in contact with the school must be a recruiter.

- Private schools have little incentive to participate. They receive no school or student data reports. Except for Catholic schools, data for NAEP reports are not disaggregated by private school type or affiliation. While possible loss of Title I funding is a motivating factor for public school participation, it does not apply to private schools. Most schools choose to participate because they recognize an obligation to contribute to the common goal of ensuring that all children have access to educational opportunities that enable them to achieve healthy, productive, self-supporting lives regardless of the educational route their parents have chosen for them.
- Private schools have different approaches to the education of their students, different curricula, and differing programs and other characteristics that impact their decision about participation. Some have philosophies that do not include testing; others have customs that differ from those of mainstream society and are reluctant to participate because they fear testing personnel outside their own staff will not respect their customs.

Making the Transition From Supervisor to Assessment Coordinator (AC) a Smooth One

A team of GCRs began private school recruitment activities in May 2008 to secure the participation of as many private schools as possible and to lay the groundwork for the assessment teams that would continue the process.

Your NAEP supervisor made contact with each private school in mid-November to confirm participation, assessment dates, and sampling procedures. To make the transition to the AC as smooth as possible, they explained that you would be making contact in December to set up a visit to finalize assessment arrangements. The school coordinator was provided with your name and contact information.

Additionally, two “Save the Date” postcards were sent to each cooperating private school. The postcards included the assessment date, some informational material about the value of NAEP, and a message that the AC would be calling in mid-December to set the appointment for the preassessment visit. Your responsibility is to follow through by calling each private school as soon as possible after you complete your AC Training.

If the GCR wanted you to have additional information that could not appropriately be entered in the School Control System (SCS) or on the School Folder materials, they prepared and inserted in the folder a personal letter to you. Such letters are for NAEP staff eyes only and should not be shared with school staff. For those schools where there are special concerns—participation is tenuous, or special requests of our staff have been made—the GCR flagged the folder by placing a smiley-face label on the cover as a reminder that special attention is required.

Your supervisor will distribute the School Folders for private schools to you at the conclusion of your training in December. He/she will review each folder with you, devoting extra attention to those with smiley-face labels, and discuss any concerns or questions you may have. The original GCR is also available if you want to call for more information. The GCR's name is listed on the Private School Data Collection Form (PSDCF) and on the cover of the manila private School Folder.

Understanding Private School Recruitment Documents

The Private School Recruitment Folder

For each school in his/her recruitment assignment, the GCR assembled a School Folder to house the private-school-specific materials related to the recruitment process. Since official NAEP folders had not been printed at the time recruitment began, private School Folders are printed on generic manila stock. Your supervisor prepared the appropriate NAEP School Folder and placed the entire private School Folder inside. The cover of the folder contains a preprinted label with the school name and contact information, and information about the school's NAEP selection. You will find a Record of Contacts printed on the inside cover of the recruitment folder. The information here has been transferred to the SCS and can be viewed and printed from that source.

The PSDCF

The PSDCF is the central document for Gaining Cooperation recruitment activities and is available in hardcopy form inside the School Folder; it can also be accessed and printed from a link on the General tab of the SCS. The fields in the hardcopy PSDCF (described and shown on page E.4) mimic what is displayed online. You should familiarize yourself with the information contained in the PSDCF and note any specific requirements, requests, or arrangements made with the school.

Private School Data Collection Form

GC Recruiter: Mary Collins GC Territory: 1 GC Region: 11FA Territory: 3 FA Region: 51

NAEP 2008-2009 PRIVATE SCHOOL DATA COLLECTION FORM

PLACE PREPRINTED SCHOOL LABEL HERE	MAKE CORRECTIONS IN THIS COLUMN AND ENTER IN SCS AS APPROPRIATE*
<p>NAEP ID # 3421303 MySchool Registration ID # A9301586 School Principal William Dunn School Name Calvary Baptist School Address 1141 Anywhere Drive School Telephone 123-456-7890 Grade(s) Sampled 8 Assessment Date 02/12 Affiliation Baptist Estimated # of Sampled Students 25 Non Public School Survey (yes <u>no</u>) FA Territory/Region/Area 3/51/1 Endorsements: CAPE Participation History: Cooperated 2005</p>	

1. PRIOR TO MAKING INITIAL RECRUITING CALL, COMPLETE THE FOLLOWING:

- What is the study the school has been selected to participate in? **Circle one:**
 - Operational Mathematics/Reading/Science,
 - (Probe) Science Hands-on Tasks, Science Interactive Computer Tasks, or
 - Pilot: Reading, Mathematics, U.S. History, Civics, or Geography.
- Conduct Internet Research if appropriate.
- Determine if the Nonpublic School Survey Form is required and be prepared to ask those questions regardless of school's participation status.
- Have the appropriate *NAEP 2009 NAEP in Your Private School* brochure, copies of endorsement letters sent to school, and other NAEP materials on hand for reference and review.

2. DISCUSS THE FOLLOWING WITH PRINCIPAL/DECISIONMAKER:

- Confirm receipt of information package. If not received, track. If not located, resend, fax, or e-mail replacement materials.

The hardcopy version of the PSDCF was used by the recruiter to confirm participation, structure conversations with the school principal and school coordinator, and record specific information and session arrangements. The cover of the form contains a preprinted label listing the contact information, location, and other information from the SCS. Recruiters have made appropriate corrections to the label information and entered them into the SCS. Important information you need to review on this form include the following:

- the name and contact information for the school coordinator,
- the confirmed assessment date,
- the name and telephone number of the person who will assume responsibility for the Parent/Guardian Notification Letter, and
- any additional assessment arrangements or information you should know.

All recruitment materials must remain in the School Folder when it is returned to the home office. Following the field period, recruitment records and documents are analyzed by home office staff and used to refine materials and recruitment procedures for future recruitment efforts.

While hardcopies of the following forms may be found in some folders, they were designed to be accessed from links on the SCS. Review the SCS section of *Systems: The AC Guide to Using the NAEP Systems* to learn more about the information contained in the SCS that relates to private schools.

Materials Checklist

The Materials Checklist is located on the General tab of the school's page in the SCS. Gaining Cooperation staff used the Materials Checklist to document which materials were used with individual schools during the recruitment process. The information recorded on this checklist will allow the home office to evaluate which materials worked best with different kinds of schools.

The Internet Search Form

The Internet Search Form is a field located on the General tab of the SCS. GCRs recorded information in this field as they conducted Internet searches on the school in order to customize their recruitment approach. Introducing school achievements or highlighting relevant points in mission statements provided good segues into discussions about why schools should participate in NAEP. You may find it helpful to review this field for useful information as you work with the school.

Special Situation Form

The Special Situation Form documents any special sampling requests a school made and the statisticians approved. Examples of situations documented on this form include requests to assess all or fewer students in a grade. If a special situation was arranged for a school, it will be noted in the Sampling tab of the SCS. The form is also duplicated in the PSDCF that the recruiter used to record the information before transferring it to the SCS. Your supervisor used the information recorded on this form if sampling was conducted on site.

Working Successfully With Private Schools

No two private schools are alike. You may encounter large preparatory schools that function much like a large high school or college campus with unlimited operating funds. Most private schools are much smaller and operate on very limited budgets. Some utilize or have available little or no technology. The key to working successfully with private schools is sensitivity to, and respect for, their unique situations. You or your assessment administrators (AAs) may have no experience working with private schools. The suggestions in this section will assist you in making your contacts with private schools positive experiences.

Build a Relationship. Effective field staff always exhibit friendliness, courtesy, and a willingness to be flexible when working with any of their NAEP schools. Private schools appear to need and value these social aspects of working together even more so than public schools and will respond more positively to outsiders who take the time to practice them. Flexibility and organization are particularly essential. NAEP staff will want to assume any tasks they possibly can in order to minimize inconvenience to the school and staff. Strive to make the experience of participating in NAEP pleasant and unobtrusive, so that a school selected for future rounds of NAEP will recall the experience positively, be inclined to participate again, and encourage their associated schools to do likewise.

Always keep in mind that schools are gifting NAEP with staff and student time. We respond appropriately to their gift of participation when we are organized, flexible, understanding, and appreciative. Demanding behavior turns schools off to participating and has led in the past to schools backing out of the decision to participate. In this regard, you will want to set a positive example for your AAs to assist them in customizing their approaches to ensure a positive experience with each of the private schools in your assignment.

Taking the extra effort and time required to continue developing the relationship begun by the GCR and your supervisor will reward both our field staff and the school in the long run. Just as the supervisor began the process for you by providing your name and contact information to the school coordinator shortly before your AC Training, you will continue the process at the conclusion of the preassessment visit by introducing by name the AAs who will conduct assessment sessions in the school. If the school is a small, single-session school and you will not be present on assessment day, you should consider taking the AA who will conduct the assessment with you to the preassessment visit. Emphasize that the recruiter, supervisor, you, and your AAs are members of a team dedicated to making participation in NAEP a positive experience for the school.

Respect That Most Private Schools Are Overly Concerned With Confidentiality. Many private schools do not allow student names to ever leave the building. Take care to listen for such concerns and offer options for working around them. In some schools, sampling was achieved by using student initials or arbitrary numbers that can be matched to names only from a school-maintained list. Staff should physically demonstrate that they are not removing identifiable information each time they leave the school. Stress that NAEP staff have submitted fingerprints for an FBI clearance and that staff who visit the school are mostly locally retired school teachers who signed an oath of confidentiality.

Respect School Customs and Special Requests. Where known, the recruiter has recorded such requests on the PSDCF and in the SCS. In previous NAEP years, some of these requests included matching the gender of the assessor to the gender of the students; female NAEP staff wearing head coverings; females refraining from wearing pants or blouses without sleeves; and staff honoring prohibitions against jewelry, makeup, and/or consumption of food/drink on campus. If not already documented in the SCS, you should inquire during the preassessment visit about any special requirements and observe how school staff are dressed, and pass this information on to the AAs. It is always prudent for NAEP staff going into private schools to dress modestly, avoid all food and drink on campus, and take care to express appreciation to students and staff they encounter.

Because private school participation has a high priority and every school is critical to the sample, NAEP staff are accountable for exhibiting the sensitivity necessary to retain participation. Some schools that have agreed to participate will drop out for reasons beyond our control before you can complete their assessment; however, we can greatly reduce that number by working effectively together to address the special issues associated with working with private schools. By doing so, we meet the conditions of our NAEP contract and ensure that NAEP reports are truly representative of the complete educational community.

INDEX

NAEP 2009

AC INDEX

NOTE: Page numbers followed by *fig*, *q*, or *t* indicates exhibits, quotations, or tables respectively.

A

AA

. See National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), assessment team

AA In-Person Training

. See National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), assessment team

AC

. See National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), assessment team

AC In-Person Training

. See National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), assessment team

AC Quick Checks, **AC1.20**, 3.1, 3.2, 3.3*fig*, 3.23

Accommodation Teacher Letter

. See letter types

accommodations, **AA5.1–5.21**; **AC2.1–2.28**; **IN2**, 5, 9–16

. See also Assessment Information Form; Inclusion Worksheet

accommodation session scripts, **AA1.17**, 1.17*fig*, 5.20; **IN17**

booklet assigning process, **AA2.4*fig*** (see also booklets)

chart types

Accommodations for NAEP Flip Chart, **AC2.3**, 2.4, 4.29, 4.30, 4.32

State Accommodation Chart, **AC2.3**, 2.15, 2.15*fig*

coding

. See SD/ELL Online Questionnaire Summary, Planning Codes

direct linguistic support, **AC2.4**

ELL Questionnaire

. See form types

special requests, **AC4.31**

Inclusion Worksheet

. See form types

making allowances based on students' needs, **IN17**, 18

map of administrative steps, **IN28**

materials used, **AC2.3**

modifications to the presentation of the test, **AC2.4**

modifications to the response format of the test, **AC2.4**

modifications to the timing, **AC2.4**

accommodations (*continued*)

monitoring sessions, **AA5.21**

most frequently used by NAEP, **AA5.1**; **IN10–16**

. See also *Accommodations for NAEP Flip Chart*

bilingual booklet, **AA2.5**, 2.8, 2.10, 5.4*fig*; **IN10**, 23

bilingual dictionary without definitions, **AA2.5**, 5.5*fig*; **IN11**, 23

Braille version of test, **AA2.5**, 5.8*fig*; **IN12**

breaks during test, **AA2.5**, 5.16*fig*; **IN16**

directions only signed, **AA2.5**, 5.5*fig*; **IN11**

directions read aloud in native language, **AA5.2*fig***; **IN10**, 11

extended time, **AA2.5**, 5.15*fig*, 5.21; **IN15**, 19, 20, 23

large-print version of test, **AA2.5**, 5.8*fig*; **IN12**, 18

magnification equipment, **AA2.5**, 5.9*fig*; **IN13**, 19

one-on-one, **AA2.5**, 5.13*fig*; **IN15**, 18, 19

other, **AA2.5**, 5.17*fig*; **IN16**

preferential seating, light, furniture, **AA5.14*fig***; **IN15**, 18, 19

read aloud – most or all, **AA2.5**, 5.7*fig*; **IN12**

read aloud – occasional, **AA5.6*fig***; **IN11**

responds in sign language, **AA5.9*fig***; **IN13**

responds orally to scribe, **AA2.5**, 5.10*fig*; **IN14**, 19, 20

responds using Braille typewriter, **AA5.10*fig***; **IN13**, 19

responds using computer or typewriter, **AA2.5**, 5.11*fig*; **IN14**, 19

school staff administers, **AA2.5**, 5.15*fig*; **IN15**

small group, **AA2.5**, 5.13*fig*; **IN14**, 19, 23

study carrel, **AA5.14*fig***; **IN15**

test items read aloud in native language, **AA5.3*fig***; **IN11**

test items signed, **AA2.5**, 5.6*fig*; **IN12**

uses special writing tool, **AA5.12*fig***; **IN14**

uses template to respond, **AA5.11*fig***; **IN13**

not allowed by NAEP, **AA5.18–19**, **AC2.5**; **IN16**

other accommodations, **AC2.4**

Planning Codes, **AA5.20**; **AC2.21*t***

process, **AC2.2*fig***

SD Questionnaire

. See form types

SD/ELL Online Questionnaire Summary

. See form types

special requests, **AC4.31**

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NOTE: Page numbers followed by *fig*, *q*, or *t* indicates exhibits, quotations, or tables respectively.

- accommodations (*continued*)
 - state-specific guidelines, **AC2.3**, 2.14, 2.14*fig*
 - test modification (understanding difference), **IN10**
- accountability, **L4–5**, 7, 19
- accuracy, **L5**, 26, 28
- adaptation
 - . See conflict management
- Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP), **AC1.16**
- administering sessions, **AA4.1–4.18**; **AC8.1–8.16**
 - . See also monitoring sessions
- accounting for all NAEP materials, **AA4.17**; **AC8.13**
- additional materials removal, **AA4.4**
- calculators (*see* ancillary materials)
 - collecting NAEP materials, **AA4.17**, 6.6; **AC8.12**
 - . See also booklets
- dismissing students, **AA4.17**; **AC8.13** (*see also* Assessment Information Form)
- ESBQ
 - . See Extended Student Background Questionnaire (ESBQ)
- handling
 - latercomers, **AA1.2*fig***, 4.3; **AC8.4**
 - student ID labels (*see also* student ID labels)
 - collecting, **AA4.15**; **AC8.11**
 - removing, **AA4.4**; **AC8.4**
- NIES Appointment Cards
 - . See Extended Student Background Questionnaire (ESBQ)
- recording numbers (school ID, teacher), **AA4.5**, 4.6
- timing, **AA4.1**, 4.9–4.10, 4.10*fig*
- verifying
 - locations, **AA4.1**; **AC8.2**
 - session scripts, **AA4.2**; **AC8.2**
- Administration Codes types, **AA6.2–6.3**
- Administration Schedule
 - . See form types
- age groups
 - . See characteristics by grade
- ancillary materials, **AA1.12**, 2.1, 2.5, 2.11, 2.14, 3.8, 3.9, 4.16, 4.17, 6.6, 6.12, 6.17; **AC 6.4**, 6.8, 6.14, 6.15, 8.7
 - . See also Session Box; **AC Appendix B**
- calculators, **AA1.13*fig***, 1.22, 2.11, 3.8, 3.13, 4.7, 4.8, 4.16, 4.17, 6.14, 6.17; **AC6.13**, 6.14, 8.6
- defective items, **AA4.14**
- grades 4, 8, and 12, **AA1.2**, 3.8; **AC6.13**
- answering students' questions
 - . See monitoring sessions
- asks to leave early
 - . See classroom management skills, handling student problems
- assessment day
 - activities to complete prior, **AC6.1–6.15**
 - activities before the session, **AC7.1–7.16**
 - activities during the session, **AC8.1–8.17**
 - activities after the session, **AC10.1–10.28**
 - activities after leaving the school, **AC11.1–11.14**, 12.8
- Assessment Information Form
 - . See form types
- Assessment QC Record
 - . See form types
- assessment schedule, **AA2.1**; **AC4.20**, 5.4, 5.6
- assessment team
 - . See National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP)
- assessment team meetings
 - . See location
- attention deficit (with and without hyperactivity), **IN8**, 20
 - . See also students with disabilities (SD)
- attire
 - . See dressing professionally
- avoidance
 - . See conflict management
- B**
- background questionnaires
 - . See questionnaire types
- behavioral styles (NAEP team members), **L21–22**
 - . See also conflict management
- behaviors
 - disruptive, **S7**, 8, 12, 14–15, 25 (*see also* Assessment Information Form; trauma, helping schools and students)
 - distracting, **S9**, 14
 - expectations, **S8**
 - inappropriate, **S6**, 7, 8, 15 (*see also* classroom management skills, handling student problems)
 - off-task, **S8**
 - problem, **S2**, 3, 11, 12, 14–17, 24–28
 - regressive, **S24** (*see also* trauma)
- Best Practices Guide*
 - . See Twelfth-Grade Student Participation
- body language, **L8**, 10, 20
 - classroom management skills, **S4**, 6, 7, 8, 28
 - cultural differences, **S2**, 3, 19, 20, 21, 22, 28 (*see also* cultural diversity)
- Booklet Cover Poster, **AA3.8**, 3.14, 4.5, 4.5*fig*; **AC6.13**, 7.13
- Booklet Preparation QC Record
 - . See form types
- booklets
 - accommodation, **AA2.5**, 2.8, 3.8, 6.12; **AC6.1**, 6.2, 6.2*fig*, collecting
 - Option 1, **AA4.16**; **AC8.12**
 - Option 2, **AA4.16**; **AC8.12**
 - colors by grade, **AA1.10**
- covers
 - accommodation, **AA6.8**
 - makeup session coding, **AA7.4**
 - writing explanations on, **AA6.8**
- distributing
 - Option 1, **AA4.3**; **AC8.3**
 - Option 2, **AA4.3**; **AC8.3**
- duplicating, **AA3.12**
- ESBQ
 - . See Extended Student Background Questionnaire (ESBQ)
- missing, **AC6.12**

Source Key: **AA** = AA Manual **AC** = AC Manual **IN** = Inclusion Magazine **L** = Leadership Magazine **O** = Overview Magazine **R** = Reporting Magazine **S** = Strategies Magazine

NOTE: Page numbers followed by *fig*, *q*, or *t* indicates exhibits, quotations, or tables respectively.

booklets (*continued*)

poster

. See Booklet Cover Poster

preparation, **AC12.7**

QC checks, **AA2.11**, 2.12, 3.9, 3.13, 3.18, 4.1, 6.10, 6.14;

AC8.5, 8.11

reading directions aloud, **AA4.7**; **AC8.5**

school ID number, **AA4.5**

security, **AA3.9** (*see also* security and confidentiality guidelines)

Take-All schools, **AA2.12**; **AC1.21**, 3.22

timing of sections, **AA4.9–4.10**; **AC8.8**

unassigned, **AA6.3**, 6.4, 6.6, 8.8; **AC8.7**

breaks

restroom, **S11**, 16, 28

"stretch," **S11**

bundle # (number), **AA1.9fig**, 2.6

bundle sizes, **AA2.6**

. *See also* **AC** Appendix C

Bundle Slip, **AA2.6**, 2.7*fig*, 6.12; **AC** 5.9, 5.10*fig*, 5.11

. *See also* **AC** Appendix C

Bureau of Indian Education (BIE)

. *See* school types

C

calculators, **AA1.13fig**, 1.22, 2.11, 3.8, 3.13, 4.7, 4.8, 4.16, 4.17, 6.14, 6.17; **AC6.13**, 6.14, 8.6

. *See also* ancillary materials

camaraderie, **L8**, 21, 22, 28

cerebral palsy

. *See* students with disabilities (SD), orthopedic impairment

certificate types (*see also* **AC** Appendices B and C)

Certificate of Community Service, **AC3.23**

School Certificate of Appreciation, **AC1.31**

Student Appreciation Certificate, **AA1.22**, 3.8, 3.9, 3.13, 4.16 **AC3.19**, 3.19*fig*, 3.23

chalkboards, **AA3.14**

. *See also* visual materials

characteristics by grade, **S6**, 9, 10–13, 24

eighth, **S6**, 9, 12, 24

fourth, **S6**, 9, 10–11, 24

twelfth, **S6**, 9, 10, 13, 24

child with disability

. *See* students with disabilities (SD)

childhood disability

. *See* students with disabilities (SD)

classroom management skills, **S2**, 4, 6–9, 12

. *See also* session scripts

being authoritative, **S4**, 5, 7, 14

being confident, **S4**, 5

being effective, **S4**, 5, 6, 9, 14

body language, **S4**, 6, 7, 8, 28

desk arrangements, **S6**, 7, 8, 10

eighth-grader characteristics, **S6**, 9, 12, 24

eye contact, **S4**, 6, 7, 8, 20, 22, 28

first impressions, **S5**

classroom management skills (*continued*)

fourth-grader characteristics, **S6**, 9, 10–11, 24

handling student problems, **S14–17** (*see also* trauma)

asks to leave early, **AA4.13**; **AC8.14**; **S16**, 4.15

becomes emotionally upset, **AA4.13**; **AC8.14**; **S11**, 16

diffusing situations, **S14**

disruptive behavior, **AA4.13**; **AC8.14**; **S6–9**, 14–15, 25 (*see also* behaviors)

illness, **AA4.13**; **AC8.14**; **S17** (*see also* trauma)

refusing to participate, **AA4.13**; **AC8.14**

reluctance to participate, **AC8.14**; **S13**, 15, 26

respect, **S5**, 10, 11, 17, 19, 22, 26, 28

seeking assistance, **S12**, 15, 16, 17

sleeping, **S17** (*see also* trauma)

interacting privately with students, **S5**, 6, 8, 12, 14

moving around the classroom, **S5**, 6, 7, 14

P.E.P. (proximity, eye contact, privacy) technique, **S8–9**

smiling at students, **S5**, 7

thanking students, **S7**

touching a student, **S17**

twelfth-grader characteristics, **S6**, 9, 10, 13, 24

Close-Out Procedures, **R38**

completing data entry, **R38**

Bulk Security Checklist, **R38**

Hours Tracking System, **AC12.8**; **R38**

Bulk Security Checklist, **R38**

Pearson Materials Tracking System (MTS), **R38**

returning sessions materials, **R38**

School Control System, **AC12.8**, **R38**

staff evaluations, **R38**

Westat Field Files Department, **R38**

clothing

. *See* dressing professionally

collaboration, **L5**, 6

. *See also* conflict management

collecting

NAEP materials, **AA4.7**, 416, 4.17 (*see also* booklets)

student ID labels, **AA4.15**, **AC8.8**

communication

blaming statements, **L21**

body language, **L8**, 10, 20

clarifying information, **L8**, 9

constructive criticism, **L12–13**

defensiveness, **L12**, 17, 22

differing opinions, **L20** (*see also* conflict management)

empathy, **L21**

eye contact, **L8**

hearing, **L8**, 15 (*see also* listening)

interpersonal skills, **L5**

listening, **L6**, 9, 21, 22

active, **L9**, 21

objective, **L22**

methods, **L5**, 9

e-mailing guidelines, **L8–10**

telephoning, **L8**, 9, 24, 25

reporting calls, **L6**, 10

Source Key: **AA** = AA Manual **AC** = AC Manual **IN** = Inclusion Magazine **L** = Leadership Magazine **O** = Overview Magazine **R** = Reporting Magazine **S** = Strategies Magazine

NOTE: Page numbers followed by *fig*, *q*, or *t* indicates exhibits, quotations, or tables respectively.

- communication (*continued*)
 methods (*continued*)
 telephoning (*continued*)
 voice messaging, L9
 miscommunication, L25
 open discussions, L6, 15
 with supervisor, AC12.5
- competition
 . See conflict management
- compromise
 . See conflict management
- concealing visual school materials, AA3.14; AC7.13
- condition of schools, S19, 24
- Confidentiality Agreement
 . See National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP),
 report results, National School Lunch Program
- Confirmation Call E-Mail Template, AC3.12
- Confirmation Calls, AC3.1, 3.9, 3.13, 3.15, 12.7
- conflict management, L20–22
 changing behavior styles, L21
 intimidation, L22
 manipulative behavior, L22
 mediation, L20, 22
 removing barriers, L20
 settling disputes, L20
 ways of dealing with conflict, L22
 adaptation, L22
 avoidance, L22
 collaboration, L22
 competition, L22
 compromise, L22
- consistency, L5, 18, 22, 26
- constructive criticism, L12, 13
- correct location (verifying), AA4.1
- criminal penalties
 . See Oath of Office; Pledge of Confidentiality
- crying in class, S11, 16
 . See also trauma
- cultural differences, IN22, 23
 . See also cultural diversity
- cultural diversity, S2, 3, 4, 18–22, 27
 . See also classroom management skills
- cultural backgrounds, S18, 19
- cultural differences, S19, 20–22
 body language, S19, 20–22
 discrimination, S19
 eye contact, S19, 20, 22
- cultural terminology, S19, 27
- population, S2, 18, 19, 27
 minority groups, S18, 19, 27
 schools, S2, 18
 United States, S18, 19
 U.S. Census Bureau, S18
- respect, S19, 22
- statistics, S18 (see also U.S. Census Bureau, U.S. Census [2000])
- cystic fibrosis
 . See students with disabilities (SD)
- D**
- data collection, L4, 24, 26; O7, 8, 13, 14, 16, 17, 21–22, 31; S4
- data integrity, L4, 15
 . See also statistical validity
- deadlines, L7, 18, 24
- decisionmaking, L6, 15, 16
- defective assessment materials
 . See handling unexpected situations
- demographic data, AC1.2–1.16
- demotion
 . See job performance
- desk arrangements
 . See classroom management skills
- desks
 classroom, AA3.13
 teachers', AA3.13
- Destroy by postcard, AC1.28, 10.17, 10.18 (see also AC
 Appendix A)
- developmentally delayed
 . See students with disabilities (SD)
- diffusing classroom situations
 . See classroom management skills, handling student
 problems
- disability
 . See special needs children, students with disabilities (SD)
- disciplinary action
 . See Oath of Office; Pledge of Confidentiality
- discrimination
 . See cultural diversity
- dismissing students, AA1.2*fig*, 2.2, 4.6, 4.17; AC8.13
 ESBQ, AA8.6
 NIES, AA2.2
 . See also Assessment Information Form
- disruptive behavior, AA4.13; AC8.14
 . See also Assessment Information Form, behaviors,
 classroom management skills
- district/school staff
 . See National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP),
 assessment team
- diversity
 . See cultural diversity
- documentation
 . See recordkeeping
- Documentation Log
 . See form types; job performance
- dressing professionally, S4, 5
- dyslexia
 . See students with disabilities (SD), developmental
- E**
- educational
 policy, L4

Source Key: AA = AA Manual AC = AC Manual IN = Inclusion Magazine L = Leadership Magazine O = Overview Magazine R = Reporting Magazine S = Strategies Magazine

NOTE: Page numbers followed by *fig*, *q*, or *t* indicates exhibits, quotations, or tables respectively.

- educational (*continued*)
 progress, **L4**
 research, **L4**
 snapshots, **L4**
- eighth-grader characteristics, **S6**, 10, 12
- ELL Questionnaire
 . See questionnaire types
- e-mailing guidelines, **L8–10**
- emergencies in classrooms, **AA4.13**, 4.14
 . See also Assessment Information Form
- English language acquirers (ELA)
 . See English language learner (ELL)
- English language learner (ELL), **IN2**, 4, 5–6, 8–10, 22–25, 27
 criteria of state definitions, **IN10**
 cultural differences, **IN22**, 23
 data on SD and ELL students, **AA1.3**; **IN4**, 6, 21, 23
 establishing rapport, **IN23**
 impact of immigration, **IN8**
 input-processing-output model, **IN8**
 most common languages, **IN22**
 NAEP's inclusion goal, **IN4**, 8, 9
 profile, **IN8**
 showing respect, **IN24–25**
 student anxieties, **IN23** (*see also* special needs children)
 timespan of NAEP accommodations, **IN8**
 trauma, effects on, **S26**
 when to stop testing, **IN21**
 working with, **IN22–23**
- ensuring students work in correct section, **AA4.11**
- erasing visual school materials, **AA3.14**
- errors, **L4**, 5, 19
- ESBQ
 . See Extended Student Background Questionnaire (ESBQ)
- ESBQ Administration Schedule
 . See Extended Student Background Questionnaire (ESBQ)
- ethical standards, **L6**, 7
- ethnic/ethnicity, **S18**, 19, 27
 . See also cultural diversity
- ETS
 . See National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), organizational structure
- evaluating solutions
 . See problem-solving
- exceptional student
 . See students with disabilities (SD)
- Extended Student Background Questionnaire (ESBQ), **AA2.6**, 4.9, 7.1; **AC1.21**, 1.23, 4.8, 5.3, 6.8, 8.11, 10.6, 11.1, 12.8 (*see also* **AC** Appendix); **O9**, 10
 conducting session, **AA8.1–8.11**
 ESBQ Administration Schedule, **AA3.8**, 3.13, 6.12, 7.3, 7.4, 8.1, 8.2*fig*, 8.3, 8.6, 8.7, 8.8, 8.9, 8.11; **AC1.31**, 3.23, 4.8, 4.11, 4.24, 4.30, 4.57, 5.3, 5.14, 6.8, 6.9, 6.13, 7.12, 10.10–10.12, 11.8 (*see also* **AC** Appendix B)
- Extended Student Background Questionnaire (ESBQ) (*continued*)
 ESBQ booklets, **AC5.12**, 5.13, 5.14, 6.4, 6.8, 6.9, 6.13, 10.10, 10.11, 10.12, 8.11, 8.13
 ESBQ sessions
 conducting session, **AA8.1–8.11**
 makeup session, **AA7.1–7.4**, **AC10.25**, 11.1
 monitoring session, **AC6.8–6.9**
 ESBQ QxQs (grades 4, 8, and 12), **AC8.11**
 ESBQ Sample Questions Booklet, **AC3.22**, 3.24
 ESBQ Worksheet, **AC1.20**, 10.11
- eye contact, **L8**
 classroom management skills, **S4**, 6, 7, 8, 20, 22, 28
 cultural differences, **S19**, 20, 22 (*see also* cultural diversity)
- F**
- fatigue, **L25**
- Federal Information Processing Standard (FIPS) code, **AC1.7*fig***
- Federal Privacy Act, **AA3.12**; **AC6.11**
- FedEx
 contact information
 telephone number, **AC11.6**, 11.12
 website, **AC11.12**
 delivery services
 FedEx Express for session shipments, **AC11.3**, 11.6
 FedEx Ground for returning bulk shipments, **AC11.6**
 FedEx Overnight, **AC11.12**
 FedEx 2-Day, **AC11.12**
 package services
 dropping off packages, **AC11.6**, 11.12
 finding a location, **AC11.6**, 11.12
 scheduling a pickup, **AC11.6**, 11.12
 supplies
 remaining labels (destroying), **AC11.6**
 return shipping labels, **AC11.3**, 11.4*fig*, 11.7
 tracking number, **AC11.3**, 11.7
- feedback, **L11–13**, 18–21
 . See also Documentation Log
- field director
 . See National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), assessment team
- field manager
 . See also National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), assessment team
- fire drills
 . See handling unexpected situations
- 504 Plan
 . See Individualized Education Programs
- form types
 Administration Schedule, **AA1.1**, 1.6, 1.11*fig*, 1.30, 4.1; **AC1.2–1.3**, 1.4*fig*, 1.5, 1.6*fig*, 1.7–1.9, 1.10*fig*, 1.11*fig*, 1.12–1.17*fig*, 6.7, 6.8, 7.6, 10.2, 10.4, 10.6, 10.8, 10.10 (*see also* makeup session; **AC** Appendix B)

NOTE: Page numbers followed by *fig*, *q*, or *t* indicates exhibits, quotations, or tables respectively.

form types (*continued*)

Administration Schedule (*continued*)

columns (*see also* Administration Codes types)

A (Atten.), **AA1.7**; **AC1.9**

B (Student Name), **AA1.7**; **AC1.9**

C (Homeroom or Other Locator), **AA1.7**; **AC1.9**

D (Line # / Subject), **AA1.7**; **AC1.9**

E (Birth Date), **AA1.7**; **AC1.9**

F (Sex), **AA1.7**; **AC1.9**

G (Race/Eth.), **AA1.7**; **AC1.9**, 1.12, 1.13*fig*

H (School Lunch), **AA1.7**; **AC1.9**, 1.14, 1.14*fig*

I (SD), **AA1.7**; **AC1.9**

J (Final SD Code), **AA1.7**; **AC1.9**, 1.15, 1.15*fig*

K (ELL), **AA1.7**; **AC1.9**, 1.16, 1.16*fig*

L (Final ELL Code), **AA1.7**; **AC1.9**, 1.16, 1.16*fig*

M (New Enrollee), **AA1.7**; **AC1.9**

N (Planning Code), **AA1.7**; **AC1.9**, 1.17, 1.17*fig*, 7.6

O (Original Booklet ID #), **AA1.7**; **AC1.9**

P (Accommodation Booklet ID #), **AA1.7**; **AC1.9**, 2.21*t*

Q (Admin. Code), **AA1.7**; **AC1.9**, 1.11

R (Administration Codes), **AA1.7**; **AC1.9**

completing, **AA6.1–6.5**; **AC10.1–10.6**

features (of form), **AA1.5**, 1.5*fig*; **AC1.5–1.17**

missing data, **AC7.6**

process flow, **AA1.3**, 1.4*fig*; **AC1.2**, 1.4*fig*

role

after the assessment, **AC1.3**

on assessment day, **AC1.3**

during preassessment activities, **AC1.2**

school ID number, **AA1.5**, 1.5*fig*; **AC1.7**, 1.7*fig*

Session Number, **AA1.6**; **AC1.8**

Summary Box, **AA1.9**, 1.9*fig*, 6.4, 6.4*fig*; **AC1.11**, 1.11*fig*

Assessment Information Form, **AA1.2**, 1.2*fig*, 1.27, 2.2–2.3, 2.3*fig*, 2.5, 2.11, 2.13–2.14, 3.1, 3.8–3.9, 3.13, 4.9, 4.15–4.18, 5.1, 5.20, 5.21, 6.8–6.11; **AC1.23–1.24**, 1.25*fig*, 1.34, 4.34, 5.7, 5.8, 5.17, 5.20, 6.1, 6.9, 7.12, 8.13, 9.20, 9.26, 10.8, 10.26 (*see also* **AC** Appendix C)

makeup session, **AA7.1**, 7.5

NIES, **AA2.2**

Assessment QC Record, **AA1.13**, 1.13*fig*, 1.14, 1.27, 3.13, 3.18, 4.1, 6.10, 8.9; **AC7.7–7.8**, 7.9*fig*, 8.1; **R37**

Booklet Preparation QC Record, **AA1.13**, 1.13*fig*, 1.14; **AC6.5**, 7.13

Bulk Security Checklist, **AC5.14**, 5.15*fig*, 6.3 (*see also* **AC** Appendix C; Close-Out Procedures)

Documentation Log, **AC11.10**; **L18**, 19, 26, 27, 28

ESBQ Administration Schedule

. *See* Extended Student Background Questionnaire (ESBQ)

Field Sampling Line Numbers Form, **AC1.30**

Grade 12 Strategies Form, **AC4.43**, 5.17, 10.22–10.24, 11.8

Inclusion Worksheet, **AC1.24**, 1.31, 2.3, 2.16, 2.16*fig*, 2.17, 2.18–2.21*fig*, 2.22, 2.22–2.25*fig*, 3.23, 4.8, 4.11, 4.15–4.19, 4.28–4.30, 4.32–4.35, 4.47, 4.57, 4.60, 5.17, 10.16 (*see also* **AC** Appendix B)

Log of Schools, **AC12.6** (*see also* **AC** Appendix B)

form types (*continued*)

Materials Checklist

. *See* **AC** Appendix E

Materials Request Form, **AC5.18**, 5.19*fig*

NAEP 2009 Listing of Sampled Students, **AA3.8**, 3.9, 3.13, 3.19, 4.1; **AC1.31**, 3.23, 8.2 (*see also* **AC** Appendix B)

NAEP State Coordinator Observation Checklist, **AA3.5**, 3.6*fig*

New Enrollee Listing Form, **AC1.30**, 3.22, 4.7, 4.8, 4.57, 10.16 (*see also* **AC** Appendix B)

New Enrollee Sampling Line Numbers Form, **AC1.30**, 3.22, 3.23, 4.8 (*see also* **AC** Appendix B)

NIES Appointment Cards

. *See* National Indian Education Study (NIES)

NIES Administration Schedule

. *See* National Indian Education Study (NIES)

Original List of Students Submitted for Sampling, **AC1.30**, 3.23, 4.6, 4.57 (*see also* **AC** Appendix B)

Private School ID Data Collection Form

. *See* **AC** Appendix E

Quality Control Booklet, **AC1.19**, 1.19*fig*

Roster of Questionnaires, **AA1.1**, 1.23, 1.25, 1.26*fig*, 1.27, 3.8, 3.13, 3.14, 6.6

after the assessment, **AC10.13**, 10.16, 10.17, 10.19, 10.28

before preassessment visit, **AC3.10**, 3.15, 3.17, 3.17*fig*, 3.23

before session, **AC7.5**, 7.12, 7.14

preassessment visit, **AC4.8**, 4.15, 4.37, 4.57, 4.58, 4.60

prior to assessment day, **AC6.12**, 6.13, 6.15

role in NAEP process

. *See* **AC** Appendix A

roster types (*see also* **AC** Appendix A)

grades 4 and 8, and 12, **AA1.25**, 1.26*fig*; **AC1.28**; 1.31

grades 4 and 8 SD/ELL, **AA1.25**; **AC1.28**; 1.30, 3.23

NIES, **AA6.12**

School Folder Transmittal Form, **AC1.30**, 3.23 6.10, 11.9, 11.10*fig*, 12.2 (*see also* Appendices B and E)

School Folder Quality Control Checklist, **AC11.11**, 11.11*fig*

SD/ELL Online Questionnaire Summary, **AC2.26**, 2.26*fig*, 3.9 (*see also* **AC** Appendix B)

Session Debriefing Form, **AA1.19**, 1.19*fig*, 3.8, 3.10, 3.13, 3.19, 4.12–4.14, 6.2, 6.8, 6.16–6.17; **AC5.17**, 6.13, 7.1, 7.4–7.5, 7.10, 7.12, 8.7, 8.14, 9.36, 9.40, 10.2, 10.7, 10.21 (*see also* **AC** Appendix C)

Special Situation Form

. *See* **AC** Appendix E

State Information Form, **AC1.16**, 3.23, 4.16 (*see also* **AC** Appendix A and B)

The Internet Search Form

. *See* **AC** Appendix E

fourth-grader characteristics, **S9**, 10–11

Frameworks

. *See* **AC** Appendix B

frequently asked questions

. *See* National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP)

NOTE: Page numbers followed by *fig*, *q*, or *t* indicates exhibits, quotations, or tables respectively.

G

gaining cooperation
 . See private schools
goals
 . See supervising
Grade 12 Strategies Form
 . See form types
grades
 . See also Session Box
 4, 8, and 12, **AA1.6**
 NAEP results by subgroups, **AA1.3**
guidelines for viewing assessment materials, **AA3.12**; **AC6.10**,
6.11; **O14**
*Guide for Completing the Student With Disabilities (SD) and
English Language Learner (ELL) Questionnaires*, **AC2.3**,
2.15, 5.17 (see also **AC** Appendix A)

H

handling difficult situations, **AA4.13**; **AC8.14–15**
 . See classroom management skills
handling latecomers
 . See booklets
handling unexpected situations
 . See also classroom management skills
 defective assessment materials, **AA4.14**; **AC8.15**
 school alarm fire, **AA4.14**; **AC8.15**
 school lockdown, **AA4.14**; **AC8.15**
 writing notes on Session Debriefing Form, **AA4.13–4.14**;
 AC8.14
handwriting styles
 . See scannable documents guidelines
hearing aids
 . See students with disabilities (SD), physical
Help Desks
 NAEP, **AC12.5**, 12.8
 Pearson, **AC15.18**
High School Transcript Study (HSTS), **AC1.21**; **O9**, 12, 28
home office, **L23**
Hours Tracking System, **AC12.8** (see also Close-Out
Procedures)
HumRRO
 . See National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP),
 organizational structure

I

identification badge
 . See NAEP ID Badge
IEP
 . See Individualized Education Programs (IEPs)
illness in class
 . See Assessment Information Form; classroom
 management skills
impaired development
 . See students with disabilities (SD)
Indian Education Survey
 . See National Indian Education Study (NIES)

Individualized Education Programs (IEPs), **AA5.1**; **AC1.15**,
8.10; **IN5**, 10, 14, 17; **S26** (see also accommodations)
Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), **IN7**
Instructions for School Staff Administering Accommodations
 . See **AC** Appendix C
Instructions for the School Coordinator Brochure, **AC1.28**, 3.6,
3.7, 3.8, 3.9, 3.25, 4.6, 4.10, 4.13, 4.14, 4.17, 9.2, 9.4 (see
also **AC** Appendix A)
interacting privately with students, **S5**, 28
interpersonal skills, **L5**
intimidation, **L22**

J

job performance, **L11**, 12
 AAs, **AC12.6**, 12.8
 additional training, **L19**
 boundary setting, **L19**
 defining parameters, **L20**
 demotion, **L18**
 Documentation Log (see form types)
 factors affecting, **L18**, 19
 goals, **L19**, 20
 improving job performance, **L12**, 18
 NAEP-specific guidelines for rating individual performance
 categories, **AC12.73-12.76**
 problems, **L18**
 problem-solving, **L6**, 15–16, 20
 reassigning team members, **L19**
 restructuring workload, **L19**
 setting clear expectations
 giving feedback, **L11–13**
 giving instructions, **L5**, 18
 termination, **L18**
job requirements, **L11**, 19
job satisfaction, **L24**

L

Lavole, Richard, **IN6q**
leadership characteristics, **L5**
learners of English as a Second Language (ESL)
 . See English language learner (ELL)
learning disabled
 . See students with disabilities (SD)
learning from experience, **L17**
leaving class early, **S16**
letter types
 Accommodation Teacher Letter, **AA1.21**, 1.21*fig*, 4.1, 5.21,
 7.1; **AC5.6**, 5.17, 6.12, 7.11(see also **AC** Appendix C)
 Office of English Language Acquisition (OELA) and the Office
 of Special Education Programs (OSEP), **AC2.7fig**
 Parent/Guardian Notification Letter, **AC1.28**, 3.9, 3.23, 4.37,
 4.38, 4.39, 5.2, 5.20, 7.5, 9.5 12.2 (see also **AC** Appendices
 A, B, and E)

Source Key: **AA** = AA Manual **AC** = AC Manual **IN** = Inclusion Magazine **L** = Leadership Magazine **O** = Overview Magazine **R** = Reporting Magazine **S** = Strategies Magazine

NOTE: Page numbers followed by *fig*, *q*, or *t* indicates exhibits, quotations, or tables respectively.

letter types (*continued*)

Teacher Notification Letter, **AC**.20, 3.21*fig*, 3.23, 4.49, 4.57, 4.58, 5.17, 9.21 (*see also* **AC** Appendix B)

Teacher Observer Letter, **AA**1.20, 1.20*fig*, 1.27, 4.1, 7.1; **AC**4.51, 5.17, 6.12, 7.11, 7.16, 9.28 (*see also* **AC** Appendix C)

U.S. Department of Agriculture Letter, **AC**1.28, 3.24 (*see also* **AC** Appendix A)

Levine, Mel, **IN**26*q*

limited English proficient (LEP)

. *See* English language learner (ELL)

lip readers

. *See* students with disabilities (SD)

Locating Private School Results on the Web, **AC**3.24, 4.50, 5.17 (*see also* **AC** Appendix B)

location

assessment room (verifying), **AA**4.1; **AC**7.6

assessment team meetings, **AA**2.1, 3.1

lodging

allowance, **R**22–23

hotel, **R**20

staying with family or friends, **R**24

Log of School

. *See* form types

Logistics Questionnaire

. *See* questionnaire types

lunch periods, **S**12, 16

M

magazines

Leadership, **R**37 (*see also* quizzes)

Overview, **AC**1.23, 3.22

Strategies, **AC**8.7

makeup session, **AA**7.1–7.5; **AC**4.51, 5.6, 9.36, 9.38, 9.39, 10.2, 10.6, 10.14–10.15, 10.17, 10.22, 10.25, 10.26, 10.27, 10.28, 11.1, 11.2, 11.3, 11.7, 11.8, 11.9, 11.13, 11.14, 12.8

Accommodations Teacher Letter (*see* letter types)

Administration Schedule, **AA**7.1, 7.2, 7.3*fig*, 7.4

Administrative Codes, **AA**7.3*fig*; **AC**10.2

Assessment Information Form, (*see* form types)

conducting, **AA**7.2

ESBQ

. *See* Extended Student Background Questionnaire (ESBQ)

meeting school coordinator, **AA**7.2

NAEP Storage Envelope, **AA**7.1, 7.2, 7.4

process, **AC**11.2*fig*

Quality Control Booklet, **AC**1.20, 10.14, 11.7

Roster of Questionnaires (*see* form types)

scheduling, **AA**2.1, 7.1

securing materials, **AA**7.1

Session Box, **AA**7.1, 7.4, 7.5; **AC**10.26–10.27

Session Debriefing Form (*see* form types)

Teacher Observer Letter (*see* letter types)

Makeup Session Worksheet

. *See* *Quality Control Booklet*

Materials Ordering Site (MOS), **AC**5.18

Materials Request Form

. *See* form types

Measure Up Newsletters, **AC**3.24 (*see* **AC** Appendix B)

mediation

. *See* conflict management

miscommunication

. *See* communication

misunderstandings

. *See* cultural differences

monitoring sessions, **AA**4.9–4.14; **AC**8.10–8.17

. *See also* administering sessions; handling difficult situations; handling unexpected situations

answering students' questions

cognitive block (subject-area) sections, **AA**4.9, 4.11; **AC**8.8, 8.9

general background sections, **AA**4.9, 4.12; **AC**8.8, 8.9

recording answers, **AA**4.11; **AC**8.9

subject-area background sections, **AA**4.9, 4.11, 4.12; **AC**8.8, 8.12

QxQs, **AA**4.9

ending session, **AA**4.15–4.17

ensuring students work in correct section, **AA**4.11; **AC**8.2

monthly calendar

. *See* time management strategies

morale, **L**12, 18

MOS

. *See* Materials Ordering Site (MOS)

moving around the classroom, **S**5

. *See also* classroom management skills

MTS

. *See* Pearson, Pearson Materials Tracking System (MTS)

MySchool, **AA**3.11, 3.12; **AC**6.10, 6.11, 12.2; **O**11

N

NAEP

. *See* National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP)

NAEP 2009 Listing of Sampled Students

. *See* form types

NAEP ID Badge, **AA**1.13*fig*, 3.1, 3.1*fig*

NAEP materials, **AA**1.1, 1.13*fig*, 3.4, 3.11, 3.13*q*

collecting, **AA**4.16, 4.17

returning to AC, **AA**6.1

NAEP observers, **AA**3.2–3.4; **AC**7.1–7.5

actions by ACs and AAs, **AA**3.3; **AC**7.3

actions by observer, **AA**3.3, 3.3*t*; **AC**7.3

HumRRO, **AA**3.4; **AC**7.1, 7.3

NAEP State Coordinators, **AA**3.5, 3.6; **AC**7.1, 7.3,

NAEP State Coordinator Observation Checklist, **AC**7.4*fig*

NAEP publications

. *See* **AC** Appendix B

NAEP report results by subgroups

. *See* National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP)

NAEP State Coordinator

. *See* National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), assessment team

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NOTE: Page numbers followed by *fig*, *q*, or *t* indicates exhibits, quotations, or tables respectively.

- NAEP Storage Envelope, **AC1.28**, 4.51, 4.55, 4.57, 4.58, 7.5, 9.21, 9.40 (see also makeup session; Appendices A and D) after the assessment, 10.16, 10.17, 10.18, 10.20, 10.22
- National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP)
assessment team, **AA2.1**, 3.1; **O2**, 17, 17*fig*, 19, 24, 25, 32
AAs, **AC1.24**, 7.1, 7.2, 7.5, 7.6, 8.2, 10.1, 10.26; **O2**, 17, 17*fig*, 19, 20, 22, 23, 25, 27, 30, 31
in-person training, **AC12.4**; **O9**, 16, 17, 17*fig*, 23, 27
roles and responsibilities, **O20**
ACs, **AA1.2**, 1.27, 3.2, 3.3; **L26**; **O2**, 15, 16, 17, 17*fig*, 19, 20, 22, 23, 25, 27, 30, 31
in-person training, **AC12.6**; **O30**, 31
after training activities, **AC12–12.8**
roles and responsibilities, **O20**
district/school staff, **O10**, 17, 17*fig*, 18, 24, 25, 31
role of classroom teacher, **O24**
role of instructional facilitator, **O24**
role of principal or leader, **O24**
role of school coordinator, **O24**
field directors, **O17**, 17*fig*, 19, 30
roles and responsibilities, **O19**
field managers, **AA3.2**, 3.11, 3.19; , **L16**, 22; **O15**, 17, 17*fig*, 18, 19, 25, 27, 30
roles and responsibilities, **O19**
NAEP State Coordinator, **O7**, 8, 17, 17*fig*, 18, 25, 29
roles and responsibilities, **AA3.3**, 3.5, 3.6, 3.12; **AC2.3**, 2.14, 2.15, 4.49, 6.11, 7.1, 7.3, 7.4, 7.5; **O18** (see also Appendices A and B)
supervisors, **L26**; **O2**, 4, 15–17, 17*fig*, 18–20, 22, 23, 25, 27, 29, 30–31
gaining cooperation
. See **AC** Appendix E
in-person training, **O30**
roles and responsibilities, **O19**
Westat home office, **L22**; **O17**, 17*fig*, 23
assessment team meetings, **AA2.1**, 3.1; **L10**
assessment types, **O9–10**
High School Transcript Study, **AC1.21**; **O9**, 12, 28
long-term trend, **O5**
national, **O5**, 6, 9
National Indian Education Study
. See National Indian Education Study (NIES)
pilot tests, **O9**
special studies, **O5**, 9
state, **O5**, 6, 9
Trial Urban District Assessment (TUDA), **O9**
- Code of Ethics, **O2**, 3, 13, 14, 31, 32
Oath of Office, **AA3.11**; **O31**
criminal penalties, **AA3.11**
disciplinary action, **AA3.11**
violations, **AA3.11**
principles of test administration
accuracy, **O5**, 13, 18, 20, 22, 31
integrity, **O13**, 18, 20, 22, 31
respect, **O2**, 12, 13, 18, 31
educational policy role, **O9**
- National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP)
(continued)
educational progress, **L4**
frequently asked questions, **O23**, 26–29
history, **O4–8**, 28
inclusion goals, **IN4**, 8, 9 (see also accommodations)
methodology, **O6**
organizational structure
Human Resources Research Organization (HumRRO), **AA3.3**, 3.4; **AC7.1**, 7.3
NAEP Alliance, **O5**, 7, 8*fig*, 19, 25
Educational Testing Service (ETS), **AA1.3**, 1.4*fig*, 3.2; **AC1.3**, 1.4*fig*; 7.1; **O8**
Fulcrum (IT), **O8**
Pearson, **AA1.3**, 1.4*fig*, 1.7, 1.11, 2.11, 3.2, 3.3, 6.1, 6.5, 6.6, 6.12, 6.13, 6.14, 7.4, 7.5; **AC1.3**; 1.4*fig*; 111.3; **O8**
Westat, **AA3.2**, 3.3, 3.9, 3.10, 6.8, 6.15; **AC7.1**; **O5**, 7–9, 15–19, 21–23, 25, 27
National Assessment Governing Board (NAGB), **AA3.10**; **O5**, 7, 8, 10
National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), **AA1.20*fig***, 3.2; **O5**, 7, 8, 10, 12, 28
Pledge of Confidentiality, **AA3.11**; **AC1.9**, 6.12; **O27**
primary goals, **O6**
procedures, **L4**, 5, 7, 12, 16, 17, 19, 21, 28
quality control measures, **O5**, 7, 16, 19, 20, 22, 25, 30, 31
report results, **O32**
date of birth, **AC1.2**
English language learners (ELL), **AA1.3**; **AC1.2**
gender, **AA1.3**; **AC1.2**
grade, **AA1.3**; **AC1.2**
National School Lunch Program (NSLP), **AA1.3**; **AC1.2**
. See also **AC** Appendix B
race/ethnicity, **AA1.3**; **AC1.2**
students with disabilities, **AA1.3**; **AC1.2**
sample for 2009, **O9**, 12
schedule for 2009, **O9**, 25
subjects, **O6**, 9, 17, 26, 29
"The Nation's Report Card," **IN4**; **O4**, 6, 25, 28
National Indian Education Study (NIES), **AA3.8**, 4.7, 4.17, 6.1; **AC1.23**; 3.2, 9.1–9.42; 12.6; **O9**, 12, 27
Instructions for School Coordinator Brochure (see also **AC** Appendix A)
Listing of Sampled NIES Students, **AC1.31**
NIES Envelope, **AC1.28**, 3.9 (see also **AC** Appendix A)
NIES Materials **AC3.25** (see also **AC** Appendix D)
Listing of Sampled Students for NIES, **AC9.5**, 9.21, 10.16
NIES Administration Schedule, **AC1.31**, 3.7, 3.24, 4.30, 4.58, 5.3, 5.14, 6.13, 7.12, 9.2, 9.5, 9.7, 0.8, 9.14–9.16, 9.21–9.24, 9.26, 9.28–9.30, 9.35, 9.36, 9.38–9.40, 9.42
NIES Appointment Cards, **AA4.15**; **AC5.17**, 8.12, 9.20, 9.26(see also **AC** Appendix B)
NIES Brochure, **AC3.9**
NIES Roster of Questionnaires, **AC1.31**, 3.17, 3.24, 4.58, 6.13, 9.2, 9.5, 9.11, 9.13, 9.17, 9.18, 9.21, 9.40

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NOTE: Page numbers followed by *fig*, *q*, or *t* indicates exhibits, quotations, or tables respectively.

National Indian Education Study (NIES) (continued)

NIES Materials (continued)

NIES *Sample Questions Booklet*, **AC3.9**

NIES School Questionnaire, **AC1.31**, 3.24, 5.14, 9.5, 9.12

NIES Storage Envelope, **AC10.15**, 10.16

NIES Student ID Labels, **AC5.12**

NIES Student Information Report, **AC1.28**, 3.9, 3.12, 4.3, 4.58, 9.2, 9.5–9.8, 9.10, 9.18, 9.21–9.23, 9.40

NIES Student Questionnaire, **AA4.10**; **AC5.12**, 6.13, 9.24–9.25, 9.28–9.29, 9.34–9.36, 9.38–9.40, 9.42

NIES Student Survey QxQs

NIES Survey Scripts, **AC9.31**, 9.31*fig*

NIES Teacher Questionnaire, **AC1.31**, 3.24, 5.14, 9.11, 9.13

NIES Parent /Guardian Notification Letter, **AC3.9**, 9.5

Nie Questionnaire, **AA3.8**, 4.17

NIES Survey Session, **AC9.1–9.40**, 11.9 (*see also* assessment day)

activities to complete after session, **AC9.36–9.40**

conduct Confirmation Call, **AC9.4**

meet school coordinator, **AC9.14**

NIES Student Surveys, **AC9.24–9.26**

administer, **AC9.31–9.35**

prepare, **AC9.24–9.28**

session scripts, **AC9.28–9.30**

update NIES Administration Schedule, **AC9.22–9.23**

work Independently, **AC9.5**

NIES Worksheet, **AC9.38**

NCES

. See National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), organizational structure

New Enrollee Listing Form

. See form types

New Enrollee Sampling Line Numbers Form

. See form types

NIES

. See National Indian Education Study (NIES)

NIES Survey

. See National Indian Education Study (NIES)

No Child Left Behind legislation, **AC4.37**; **O6**, 26

nondisclosure statement, **AA1.21** (*see also* Accommodation Teacher Letter)

nondiscrimination, **L6**

nonverbal cues, **S5**, 8, 28

NSLP

. See National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), report results

O

Oath of Office

. See National Assessment of Education Progress (NAEP), Code of Ethics

observations

. See NAEP observers

office

. See home office; Westat home office

Office of Indian Education, **O12**, 28

organizational skills, **L7**, 23, 24, 25

Original List of Students Submitted for Sampling

. See form types

Overview

. See magazines

P

Pearson

. See National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), organizational structure

Pearson Materials Tracking System (MTS) **AC12.3**, 12.4

Close-Out Procedures, **R38**

P.E.P. (proximity, eye contact, privacy) technique, **S8–9**

performance evaluation

. See Staff Evaluations

performance issues

. See job performance

personnel issues, **L22**

. See also job performance

Pledge of Confidentiality

. See National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP)

politeness, **L10**

population

. See also cultural diversity

minority groups, **S18**, 19, 27, 28

schools, **S2**, 18

United States, **S18**, 19

U.S. Census Bureau, **S18**, 19

Preassessment Packet, **AC1.1**, 1.26, 1.27*fig*, 3.1, 3.7, 12.2

assembly (with School Folder), **AC12.2**

contents, **AC1.1**, 1.28*t* (*see also* **AC** Appendix A)

preparing, **AC12.2**

preassessment visit

activities to complete after, **AC5.1–5.21**

before, **AC3.1–3.23**

conducting, **AC4.1–4.60**

overview before the visit, **AC3.1–3.24**

preparing the room

. See room preparation

Private School Folder, **AC1.30**

private schools

. See school types; **AC** Appendix E

problem-solving, **L6**, 15–16, 20

procrastination, **L25**

professionalism, **L6**, 10, 11, 13

proximity, **S6**, 7, 8

. See also P.E.P.

psychosomatic symptoms

. See trauma, signs of

Public Law 107-110, **AA3.12**

Q

Quality Control Booklet, **AA1.13fig**; **AC1.19**, 1.19*fig*, 1.21, 1.21*fig*, 1.30, 3.1, 3.23, 4.1, 5.1, 5.17, 6.5, 6.9, 7.5, 8.1, 9.2, 10.2, 10.11, 11.7, 12.6 (*see also* Booklet Preparation QC Record, **AC** Appendix B)

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NOTE: Page numbers followed by *fig*, *q*, or *t* indicates exhibits, quotations, or tables respectively.

Quality Control Booklet (continued)

makeup session, **AC1.20**, 10.14, 11.7
Makeup Session Worksheet, **AC1.20**, 10.14, 10.15*fig*
organizational structure, **AC1.20**
Record of Preassessment Contacts, **AC5.1**
reviewing label, **AC3.22**
role in NAEP process, **AC1.20**
School Coordinator Debriefing Interview, **AC10.21–10.22**
quality control (QC) procedures, **AA1.13** (see also supervising)
QC checks, **AA2.11**, 2.12, 3.9, 3.13, 3.18, 4.1, 6.10, 6.14
questionnaire types
background, **AA1.24fig**, 3.11, 3.12
debriefing questionnaire, **AC10.22** (see also School Certificate of Appreciation)
ELL Questionnaire, **AA1.23**, 1.25; **AC1.28**, 1.30, 2.3, 2.5, 2.6, 2.8, 2.10, 2.12–2.15, 2.17–2.19, 2.22, 2.26–2.28, 3.9, 3.12, 3.24, 4.3, 4.8, 4.15, 4.17–4.19, 4.23, 4.27–4.30, 4.32, 4.60, 5.3, 5.13, 5.17, 5.21, 10.12 (see also Inclusion Worksheet; **AC Appendix A**)
ESBQ
. See Extended Student Background Questionnaire (ESBQ)
Logistics Questionnaire, **AC1.28**, 3.9, 3.12, 4.3, 4.20, 4.21, 4.52, 4.53, 4.54, 4.60 (see also **AC Appendix A**)
NIES Questionnaire, **AA3.8**, 4.17 (see also National Indian Education Study [NIES])
NIES School Questionnaire
. See National Indian Education Study (NIES)
NIES Student Questionnaire
. See National Indian Education Study (NIES)
NIES Teacher Questionnaire
. See National Indian Education Study (NIES)
School Questionnaire, **AA1.23**, 1.25; **AC1.28**, 3.13, 3.14*fig*, 3.23 (see also **AC Appendices A and B**)
SD Questionnaire, **AA1.23**, 1.25, 3.12; **AC1.28**, 2.22, 2.23, 2.24, 2.25, 4.31, 5.3 (see also Inclusion Worksheet; **AC Appendix A**)
Teacher Questionnaire, **AA1.23**, 1.25, 4.6; **AC1.31**, 3.10, 3.13, 3.15, 3.16*fig*, 3.17, 3.18*fig*, 3.23, 3.24, 3.25, 4.36, 4.37, 5.13, 8.5 (see also **AC Appendices A and D**)

quizzes

Inclusion, **IN5**, 18, 21, 27
Leadership, **L27–28**
Overview, **O31–32**
Reporting, **R39–40**
Strategies, **S27–28**
Test Your Knowledge, **AA1.27**, 2.14, 3.19, 4.18, 5.22, 6.17, 7.5, 8.11; **AC1.34**, 2.28, 3.25, 4.59, 5.21, 6.15, 7.16, 8.17, 9.42, 10.28, 11.14

R

race/ethnicity
. See cultural diversity; National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), report results
reassigning team members
. See job performance

recording

school ID numbers, **AA3.14**, 3.17, 4.5, 6.6, 8.9, 8.11; **AC8.5**
teacher numbers, **AA1.13fig**, 3.14, 3.16*fig*, 4.6, 6.6, 6.17; **AC8.5**

recordkeeping, **L6**, 12, 18, 26

. See also Documentation Log; time management strategies
refusing participation, **S15**, 25

. See also classroom management skills

reluctance to participate, **S13**, 15, 26

. See also classroom management skills, handling student problems

report types

Student Information Report, **AC1.28**, 3.9, 3.12, 4.10, 4.13, 4.14, 4.24, 4.57, 4.60, 7.5, 9.7, 9.9, 9.18, 9.22, 10.16 (see also **AC Appendix A**)

Student Sampling Summary Report, **AC1.21**; 1.31, 3.22, 3.23, 4.21, 4.25, 4.26, 12.7 (see also **AC Appendix B**)

reporting calls, **L6**, 10

respect, **L6**, 11, 15, 4, 18, 21, 22, 28 (see also classroom management skills)

restroom breaks, **S11**, 16, 28

restructuring workload

. See job performance

RM

. See session types

RN

. See session types

role modeling

roles and responsibilities

AAs, **O20**

ACs, **O20**

classroom teacher, **O24**

field directors, **O19**

field managers, **O19**

instructional facilitator, **O24**

NAEP State Coordinators, **AA3.2**; 3.3, 3.5, 3.6, **O16**, 23

principal or leader, **O24**

school coordinator, **O24**

supervisors, **O19**

Westat home office, **O17**, 17*fig*, 23

room preparation, **AA3.13**, 3.18, 7.2; **AC7.12**

materials out for easy access, **AA3.13**; **AC7.12**

materials ready for distribution, **AA3.13**; **AC7.12**

Roster of Questionnaires,

. See form types

RS

. See session types

S

Sample Questions Booklet, **AA3.11**, 3.12; **AC1.28**, 3.23, 4.21, 4.49, 5.17, 6.10, 6.11

. See also Session Box; **AC Appendix B**)

scannable documents guidelines, **AA1.1**; **AC1.18**

handwriting styles (acceptable/unacceptable), **AA1.1**; **AC1.18fig**

sampling activities, **AC12.1**

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NOTE: Page numbers followed by *fig*, *q*, or *t* indicates exhibits, quotations, or tables respectively.

- scheduling, **L7**, 16, 25
 - . See also deadlines
- Scheduling Call Sample E-Mail Template, **AC3.6**
- Scheduling Telephone Call, **AC3.1–3.6**; 12.7
- School Certificate of Appreciation
 - . See certificate types
- school coordinator
 - . See *Instructions for the School Coordinator Brochure*; Preassessment Packet; preassessment visit; School Coordinator Debriefing Interview
- School Control System (SCS), **AC3.2**, 4.7, 5.3, 7.5, 9.8, 10.11, 11.8–11.9, 12.7, 12.8 (see also user's guides, **AC Appendix E**)
- School Coordinator Debriefing Interview
 - . See *Quality Control Booklet*
- school fire alarm
 - . See handling unexpected situations
- School Folder, **AC1.29**, 1.29*fig*, 1.30–1.32, 3.2, 3.13, 3.17, 3.22, 3.23, 4.6, 4.26, 4.27, 4.57, 5.2, 5.20, 6.8, 6.10, 6.12, 7.5, 7.11, 9.2, 9.5, 9.24, 9.40, 10.16, 11.7–11.14, 12.2, 12.6, 12.7 (see also **AC Appendices B and E**)
 - contents, **AC1.30–1.31t**, 1.32*fig*
 - finalizing, **AC11.8–11.10**, 11.10*fig*
 - recording shipping information, **AC11.7**, 11.7*fig*
- School Folder Transmittal Form
 - . See form types
- School Folder Quality Control Checklist
 - . See form types
- school ID numbers, **AA1.11**, 1.11*fig*; **AC7.13** (see also administering sessions)
 - booklet covers, **AA3.14**, 3.17, 4.5, 6.6
 - ESBQ, **AA8.9**, 8.11
 - chalkboards, **AA3.17**
- school lockdown
 - . See handling unexpected situations
- school populations
 - . See cultural diversity, populations
- school protocols, **AA1.2**, 1.13*fig*, 3.4, 4.14, 4.17
 - . See also Assessment Information Form
- School Questionnaire
 - . See questionnaire types
- school types
 - Bureau of Indian Education (BIE), **AA1.6**; **AC1.8**
 - private, **AA1.6**; **AC1.8**, 12.7
 - public, **AA1.6**; **AC1.8**
- SD Questionnaire
 - . See questionnaire types
- security and confidentiality guidelines, **AA3.11**
- sensory input, **IN7**
- session
 - administering, **AA4.1–4.8**; **AC8.1–8.10**
 - monitoring, **AA4.9–4.14**; **AC8.10–8.16**
- Session Box, **AA1.11**, 2.5, 2.12; **AC11.3**
 - packing, **AA6.12–6.13**; **AC10.20**
 - purple label completion, **AC11.5**, 11.15*fig*
- Session Debriefing Form
 - . See form types
- session location, **AA4.1**
 - session materials, **AA1.15fig**, 3.7, 3.8, 3.13, **AC7.10**
 - by grades, **AA3.8**; **AC6.13–6.14**
 - ready for distribution, **AA3.13**; **AC7.12**
 - ready for easy access, **AA3.13**; **AC7.12**
- Session Number, **AA1.6**, 1.11, 2.8, 2.12, 2.14, 4.12, 6.12, 7.2, 8.1
- session scripts, **AA1.13fig**, 1.16, 1.16*fig*, 1.18, 1.27, 2.13, 4.2, 4.9, 4.12; **AC5.12**, 6.12, 8.2, 8.7, 8.11, 12.5; **S5**, 12
 - . See also **AC Appendices C and D**
- accommodation, **AA5.20**
 - practice using, **AA2.2**
- Question-by-Question Specifications (QxQs) types
 - . See also **AC Appendix C**
- ESBQ
 - . See Extended Student Background Questionnaire (ESBQ)
 - general background, **AA1.18**; **AC8.8**, 8.9
 - NIES QxQS
 - . See National Indian Education Study (NIES)
 - subject area background, **AA1.18**; **AC8.8**, 8.9; 8.10
- script types
 - accommodation sessions, , **AA1.17**; **AC8.2**, 8.10(see also **AC Appendix C**)
 - regular sessions, **AA1.16**; **AC8.2**
 - verifying correct version, **AA4.2**; **AC8.2**
- session types
 - . See also bundle sizes
 - reading/mathematics (RM), **AA1.6**; **AC1.8**
 - reading/mathematics/science (RN), **AA1.6**; **AC1.8**
 - reading/mathematics/science (RS), **AA1.6**; **AC1.8**
- setting clear expectations
 - . See supervising, basic principles
- settling disputes
 - . See conflict management
- sign language interpreter
 - . See accommodations, most frequently used by NAEP
- sleeping
 - changes in pattern, **S24** (see also trauma, signs of)
 - in class, **S17** (see also classroom management skills, handling student problems)
- special education services, **IN7**
- special equipment for testing
 - . See accommodations
- special needs children, **IN4**
 - addressing anxiety, **IN21**
 - being "mainstreamed", **IN7**
 - criteria of state definitions, **IN10**
 - "disabled" usage, **IN21**
 - "handicapped" usage, **IN21**
 - NAEP's inclusion goal, **IN4**, 8, 9
 - success stories, **IN26–27**
 - testing
 - environment, **IN7**, 9, 17
 - fairness, **IN6**
 - tracking educational progress, **IN4**

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NOTE: Page numbers followed by *fig*, *q*, or *t* indicates exhibits, quotations, or tables respectively.

- special needs children (*continued*)
 - working with, **IN4**, 22–23
- spina bifida
 - . See students with disabilities (SD), physical
- spinal cord injury
 - . See students with disabilities (SD), physical
- Staff Evaluations, **R32–37**
 - . See also Close-Out Procedures
 - Guidelines for Individual Performance Categories for NAEP Fieldworkers, **R34–37**
 - NAEP Fieldworker Employee Guide, **R32**
 - Westat Data Collector Form, **R32**, 33, 37
- standardized tests, **S6**, 13
- statistical validity, **IN2**, 4, 18, 23; **L4**, 15, 19
- Strategies* magazine, **AA2.2**, 4.9, 4.13
 - . See also quizzes
- "stretch" breaks, **S11**
- Student Appreciation Certificate
 - . See certificate types
- student characteristics by grade, **S9**, 10–13
- Student Data System, **AC12.1**
- student ID labels **AA1.10**, 1.11, 1.13*fig*, 2.5,
 - collecting, **AA4.15**; **AC8.11**
 - removing, **AA4.5**, 6.5, 8.9
- Student Information Report
 - . See report types
- student participation, **S7**, 13, 15, 25
- Student Sampling Summary Report
 - . See report types
- students with disabilities (SD), **IN2**, 4, 7, 9, 10
 - characteristics, **IN17**
 - disability types
 - developmental, **IN4**, 7, 8
 - autism, **IN7**, 20
 - learning disabilities, **IN7**, 8, 18, 20
 - mental retardation, **IN7**, 19
 - speech or language impairment, **IN7**, 19
 - traumatic brain injury, **IN19**, 20
 - emotional, **IN4**, 19
 - bipolar disorder, **IN7**, 19
 - depression, **IN7**, 19
 - obsessive compulsive disorder (OCD), **IN7**, 19
 - phobias, **IN7**
 - psychological disabilities, **IN7**
 - schizophrenia, **IN7**, 19
 - physical, **IN4**, 19
 - hearing impairment, **IN7**, 18
 - mobility-related disabilities, **IN7**, 19
 - orthopedic impairment, **IN7**, 19
 - visual impairment, **IN7**, 18
 - establishing rapport, **IN17**
 - NAEP results by subgroups, **AA1.4**
 - outputting information difficulties
 - verbal expression, **IN7**
 - visual-motor coordination, **IN7**
 - students with disabilities (SD) (*continued*)
 - processing information difficulties
 - auditory, **IN7**
 - memory, **IN7**
 - visual, **IN7**
 - profile, **IN7–8**
 - showing respect, **IN24–25**
 - student anxieties (*see* special needs children)
 - trauma, effects on, **S26**, 27
 - when to stop testing, **IN21**
 - subject indicators
 - . See session number
 - subjects (for NAEP 2009)
 - . See also session types
 - reading/mathematics (RM), **AA1.6**
 - reading/mathematics/science (RN) (grades 4/8/12), **AA1.6**
 - reading/mathematics/science (RS) (grades 4/8), **AA1.6**
 - Summary Box, **AA1.9**, 1.9*fig*, 6.4, 6.17
 - ESBQ, **AA8.8**
 - . See also Administration Schedule
 - supervising, **L4–7**, 11–18, 20–22, 25, 28
 - basic principles
 - being a role model, **L4**, 6
 - being knowledgeable, **L5**
 - communicating openly, **L6** (*see also* communication)
 - having leadership characteristics, **L5**
 - leading with confidence, **L6**
 - setting clear expectations, **L5**, 18
 - giving feedback, **L11–13**, 21
 - giving instructions, **L5**
 - being available, **L25**
 - common challenges of NAEP supervisors, **L17**
 - conflict management, **L20–22**
 - improving job performance (*see* job performance)
 - investing in team, **L28**
 - keeping written records (*see* recordkeeping)
 - problem-solving, **L6**, 15–16, 20
 - solutions
 - evaluating, **L16**
 - identifying, **L15**, 16
 - implementing, **L15**, 16
 - win-lose approach, **L20**
 - win-win approach, **L20**
 - quality control, **L4**, 17, 19
 - self care, **L28**
 - setting limits, **L20**, 22
 - Supervisor In-Person Training
 - . See NAEP assessment team
 - supervisory traits, **L7**
 - supplies
 - bulk, **AC5.13–14**, 5.17
 - Pearson, **AC5.12–5.13**, 12.4
 - Systems: The AC Guide to Using NAEP Systems*
 - Pearson Materials Tracking System (MTS), **AC11.8–11.9**, 12.4
 - School Control System (SCS), **AC10.25**, 11.8–11.9

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T

- Take-All option, **AA**2.12; **AC**1.21, 3.22
- teacher introduction, **AC**7.10
- teacher names, **AA**3.14, 3.15; **AC**7.14, 7.14*fig*
- Teacher Notification Letter
 - . See letter types
- teacher numbers, **AA**3.14, 3.15, 4.6; **AC**7.14
- Teacher Questionnaire
 - . See questionnaire types
- Teacher's Guide to NAEP*, **AC**3.24 (see also **AC** Appendix B)
- Teacher Observer Letter
 - . See letter types
- Teacher Questionnaire
 - . See questionnaire types
- team
 - interactions, **L**5
 - investing in, **L**28
 - members, **L**5–11
 - progress, **L**6, 8
 - resources, **L**5, 15
 - respect for, **L**6, 15, 21
 - responsibilities, **L**6, 18
 - strengths, **L**5
- team building, **L**8
- team leader, **L**4–6, 8, 11, 15, 17, 19, 20, 22, 24
- teamwork, **L**6, 8, 10, 26
- telephoning, **L**8, 9, 24, 25
 - reporting calls, **L**6, 10
- termination
 - . See job performance
- Test Your Knowledge
 - . See quizzes
- "Testing In Progress - Do Not Disturb" sign, **AA**3.8, 3.14, **AC**7.13
- "The Nation's Report Card"
 - . See National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP)
- Time and Expense (T&E) Report, **R**4, 6, 11, 17, 19
 - approving, **R**15, 17
 - completing, **R**10–15
 - direct deposit, **R**4, 5, 11, 19
 - expenses, **R**6, 8, 22–23
 - frequently asked questions, **R**18
 - payroll
 - cycle, **R**5*fig*
 - office, **R**5, 18
 - report types
 - Exempt Fieldworker II Time and Expense Report, **R**6
 - Non-Exempt Fieldworker I Time and Expense Report, **R**6, 6*fig*, 17*fig*
 - reviewing, **R**16
- time management strategies, **L**7, 23–25
- timer, **AA**4.10*fig*
 - . See also Session Box, grades 4, 8, and 12 materials
- instructions
 - during school fire alarm, **AA**4.14
 - during school lockdown, **AA**4.14
- timer (*continued*)
 - Types A and B, **AA**4.10*fig*
 - Voices of Experience, **AA**4.11*q*
- timing of sections, **AA**4.9–4.10
 - . See also session scripts
- Title I, **O**6, 26
- touching a student
 - . See classroom management skills
- trauma
 - effect on schools, **S**23–26
 - absentee rates, **S**25
 - overcrowded classrooms, **S**23, 26
 - relocation, **S**23, 24
 - strained resources, **S**23
 - helping schools and students, **S**2, 23–26
 - active listening, **S**26
 - dismissing disruptive students, **S**23
 - displaying emotional reactions, **S**24
 - English language learner (ELL), **S**26
 - flexibility, **S**25, 26
 - patience, **S**26
 - reactions to events, **S**23, 24, 27
 - sensitivity terminology, **S**2, 24, 25
 - students with disabilities (SD), **S**26, 27
- post-trauma recovery, **S**26
 - signs of, **S**23–24, 25
 - types of, **S**24
- travel guidelines, **R**19–24
 - airfare, **R**27, 31
 - airline reservations, **R**20
 - car
 - gasoline, **R**24, 31
 - intercity travel, **R**24
 - mileage allowance, **R**13, 24, 27, 31
 - parking, **R**24
 - personal use of, **R**24
 - insurance requirements, **R**24
 - rentals, **R**22, 24, 27, 31
 - tolls, **R**31
 - day trips, **R**24
 - government rate letter, **R**21
 - lodging, **R**21–22, 27, 30
 - allowance, **R**22–23
 - hotel reservations, **R**20–21
 - staying with family or friends, **R**24
 - meal allowances and incidentals, **R**23, 23*t*, 24, 27, 30
 - parking meter fees, **R**31
 - per diem rates, **R**23, 23*t*, 24
 - personal belongings, **R**24
 - public transportation, **R**24, 27, 31
 - reimbursements, **R**4, 19, 22–23
 - taxis, **R**24
 - telephone-business, **R**27, 31
 - travel advances, **R**24
 - Trip Expense Receipt, **R**14*fig*
 - Trip Expense Reports (TERs), **R**25–31, 25*fig*, 26*fig*, 27*fig*

Source Key: **AA** = AA Manual **AC** = AC Manual **IN** = Inclusion Magazine **L** = Leadership Magazine **O** = Overview Magazine **R** = Reporting Magazine **S** = Strategies Magazine

NOTE: Page numbers followed by *fig*, *q*, or *t* indicates exhibits, quotations, or tables respectively.

travel guidelines (*continued*)
 approving TERs, **R29–30**, 29*fig*
 completing TERs, **R26–28**
 receiving payment, **R28** (*see also* travel guidelines reimbursements)
 submitting for approval and payment, **R28**
 supporting receipts, **R28**
 Westat Accounts Payable, **R28**, 29
 Westat Travel Office, **R19**, 20, 22, 24
Trip Expense Receipt
 . *See* travel guidelines
Twelfth-Grade Student Participation, **AC12.7**, 12.8; **O10–11**
 Best Practices for Improving Twelfth-Grade NAEP Participation (Best Practices Guide), **AC3.4**, 3.10, 3.24; 12.7; **O11** (*see also* **AC** Appendix B)
twelfth-grader characteristics, **S6**, 9, 10, 13, 24

U

United States population, **S18**, 19, 27
 . *See also* cultural diversity; population
Urion, David, **IN26q**
U.S. Census (2000), **S18**, 27
U.S. Census Bureau, **S18**
U.S. Congress, **O5**
U.S. Department of Commerce, **IN8**
U.S. Department of Education, **IN7**, 12, 22, 23, 25; **O5**, 12, 25, 28
U.S. National Library of Medicine, **IN21**
user's guides
 . *See* *Systems: The AC Guide to Using NAEP Systems*
Utah State University, **S9**

V

Veatch, Chauncey (Teacher of the Year, 2002), **IN27q**
viewing assessment materials, **AA3.12**; **AC6.10–6.11**
violations
 . *See* Oath of Office, Pledge of Confidentiality
visual materials
 concealing, **AA3.14**; **AC7.13**
 erasing, **AA3.14**; **AC7.13**
visual processing disorders
 . *See* students with disabilities (SD)
voice messaging, **L8**
Voices of Experience, **AA2.2q**, 2.12*q*, 3.13*q*, 3.14*q*, 3.15*q*, 4.2*q*, 4.8*q*, 4.9*q*, 4.11*q*, 4.12*q*; **AC4.35q**, 6.5*q*, 7.12*q*, 7.13*q*, 7.14*q*, 12.5*q*

W

websites
 MySchool, **AA3.11**, 3.12; **AC6.10**, 6.11, 12.2; **O11**
 NAEP, **AA3.11**, 3.12; **AC6.10**, 6.11; **IN21**, 24; **O6**, 27
 National Institutes of Health, **IN21**
 School Control System, **O18**, 25
Westat
 . *See* National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), organizational structure
Westat Field Files Department
 . *See* Close-Out Procedures
Westat Travel Office
 . *See* travel guidelines
Westat Trip Expense Report
 . *See* travel guidelines
wheelchair etiquette, **IN20**
 . *See also* students with disabilities (SD)
win-lose approach, **L20**
win-win approach, **L20**
withdrawn, ineligible, and students not enrolled, **AC4.10**, 4.23

Z

Zilbert, Suzie, **S8**

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

HELP DESK FOR SCHOOLS:

1.800.283.NAEP (6237)
naephelp@westat.com
Hours: 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. EST

NAEP DESK FOR STAFF:

1.888.499.NAEP (6237)
naepstaff@westat.com
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