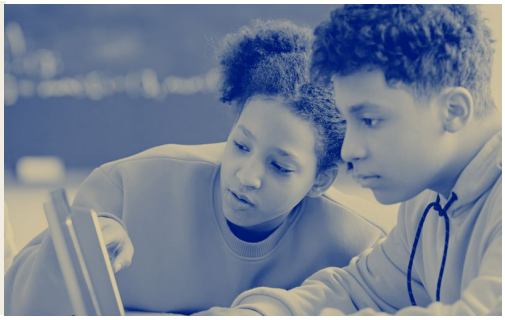
An Overview of NAEP

The Nation's Report Card

National Assessment of Educational Progress

What is NAEP?

The National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) provides essential information about academic achievement and learning experiences of students in public and private schools across the United States. Also known as The Nation's Report Card, NAEP has shed light on student achievement to inform education policy and practice since 1969.



Who conducts NAEP?

NAEP is required by Congress and carried out by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), which is part of the U.S. Department of Education's Institute of Education Sciences. The Commissioner of Education Statistics leads the organization and executes the measurement and reporting of NAEP.

An independent, bipartisan board—called the National Assessment Governing Board (Governing Board)—sets policy for NAEP. The board includes governors, state legislators, state school superintendents, teachers, researchers, and members of the general public.

How is NAEP different from state assessments?

NCES administers NAEP across the country, allowing for apples-to-apples comparisons of mathematics and reading achievement over time and for all 50 states and more than 20 urban districts that participate in the Trends in Urban Districts Assessment (TUDA). State tests measure how individual students perform on each state's specific content standards, and they vary across the country.

What subjects does NAEP assess?

NCES conducts NAEP to assess student performance in mathematics, reading, science, civics, U.S. history, and other subjects as resources allow and as specified by the National Assessment Governing Board.

How often is NAEP administered?

As required by Congress, NCES conducts the NAEP mathematics and reading assessments for students in grades 4 and 8 every 2 years. Assessments in other subjects and for students in grade 12 are administered periodically, often in 4-year intervals.

The NAEP long-term trend assessments in mathematics and reading are also administered periodically for students who are 9, 13, and 17 years old.

The Governing Board determines when each subject is tested, which grades are included, and if results will be available for the nation, states, and/or urban districts.

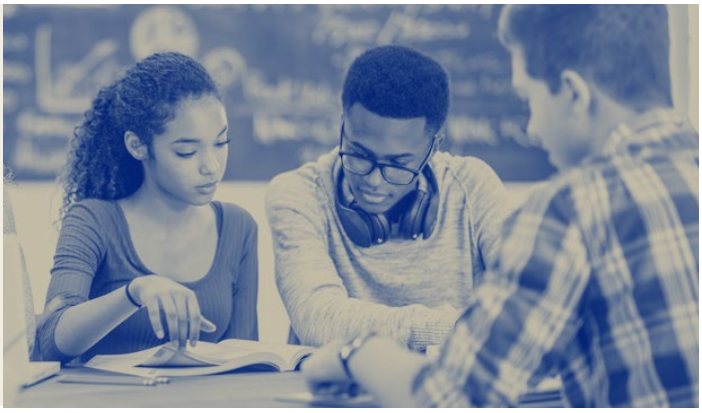
How does NAEP provide information about students' learning experiences?

Participating schools, teachers, and students answer survey questions as part of the NAEP assessments. Responses to these questions help educators, policymakers, and researchers better understand the context in which students learn.

- Student questionnaires ask about student demographics and how they learn in and outside of school.
- Teacher questionnaires ask about teacher demographics, school expectations and resources, professional development opportunities, and instructional practices.
- School questionnaires ask about school policies, resources, and characteristics.

Educators, researchers, and policymakers can use the data to answer questions such as:

- How have students' skills and knowledge in different subjects changed over time?
- How do student achievement and experiences in my state or district compare to other jurisdictions?
- Are there instructional, resource, or academic support differences between higher- and lower-performing students?



How are schools and students selected for NAEP?

NCES carefully selects schools for NAEP via a sampling process that ensures sampled students represent the characteristics of their district, state, or the entire nation. Students from each selected school are then randomly chosen to participate and represent similar students across the United States.

What is it like to participate in NAEP?

- Students complete NAEP assessments on digital devices, except for long-term trend assessments. Students complete long-term trend assessments in a paper booklet. NAEP representatives set up and supervise both types of assessments.
- The assessment is administered during regular school hours and lasts up to 120 minutes. During that time, students answer questions in one subject area and complete the student questionnaire.
- NCES provides accommodations, as allowed, for students with disabilities and English learners.

How does NCES report NAEP results?

Depending on the assessment, NCES reports NAEP results for the nation, states, and/or TUDA districts. NCES also reports results for various student groups, based on factors such as socioeconomic status, school type, and school location. These results allow for comparisons over time and between student groups. NCES does not report NAEP results for individual students or schools.

Achievement results are reported as average scale scores, selected percentile scores, and the percentage of students reaching the NAEP achievement levels—*NAEP Basic, NAEP Proficient,* and *NAEP Advanced.* NAEP achievement levels, set by the Governing Board, differ from those used on state assessments and do not represent grade-level performance.

Why should schools and students participate in NAEP?

Each school and student selected to participate in NAEP represents similar schools and students across the country. When schools and students participate in NAEP, they are contributing to an accurate and complete picture of academic achievement and students' learning experiences—providing valuable insights into the condition of education systems throughout the country.

How can principals and teachers use NAEP?

NAEP has tools and resources for educators to explore data about educational experiences and achievement in their state, district, or nationwide. Educators can use NAEP tools and resources to

- learn how many students in their jurisdiction performed at or above the *NAEP Basic* and *NAEP Proficient* achievement levels;
- create tests using questions from previous NAEP assessments to see how their students' performance compares with student performance in their state or nationwide;
- explore NAEP survey data to get a better understanding of their students' educational experiences in and outside of school; and
- see how students, on average, performed on specific NAEP questions.

See recent results, sample questions, and more on the NAEP websites.

https://linktr.ee/naep.nces

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