

## Facts for Principals

### NAEP is an integral part of education in the United States.

- ▶ Elected officials, policymakers, and educators all use NAEP results to develop ways to improve education.
- ▶ NAEP is a congressionally mandated project administered by the National Center for Education Statistics, within the U.S. Department of Education and the Institute of Education Sciences.
- ▶ NAEP serves a different role than state assessments. States have their own unique assessments with different content standards. The same NAEP assessment is administered in every state, providing a common measure of student achievement.
- ▶ Depending on the type of NAEP assessment that is administered, the data can be used to compare and understand the performance of demographic groups within your state, the nation, other states, and districts that participate in the Trial Urban District Assessment (TUDA).
- ▶ To provide a better understanding of educational experiences and factors that may be related to students' learning, students, teachers, and principals who participate in NAEP are asked to complete contextual questionnaires.

“As an assistant principal and school assessment coordinator who has experienced NAEP at two schools, I enjoyed working with the NAEP representatives. Their professionalism, responsiveness, and guidance made life simple for me and my students.”

– Timothy Fifer, Assistant Principal, Delta Middle School, Delta County, CO

**The National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP)** is the largest nationally representative assessment of what our nation’s students know and can do in subjects such as the arts, mathematics, reading, and writing. The results of NAEP are released as The Nation’s Report Card.

NAEP is designed to be minimally disruptive to schools, and NAEP representatives will provide significant support to your school on assessment day. As principals, you make an important contribution by selecting and empowering a NAEP school coordinator, meeting with teachers and students who will participate in the assessment, and encouraging your students to participate and do their best. You are essential partners in NAEP. When students participate and give their best effort, we get the most accurate measure possible of student achievement across the country.

**In 2016, NAEP will continue its transition to digitally based assessments at grades 4, 8, and 12.** Your school has been selected to participate in a mathematics, reading, or writing pilot assessment administered on tablets with keyboards. Students will be assessed in only one subject. Results from the pilot will not be released but will be used to prepare for the full transition to digitally based assessments by the end of the decade. NAEP representatives will bring all necessary materials and equipment to schools. Schools will only need to provide space for the assessment, desks or tables, and an adequate number of electrical outlets in the assessment location; schools will not need to provide Internet access.



## It's important to know that...

NAEP was first administered in 1969 to measure student achievement nationally. In 1990, NAEP was administered at the state level for the first time. Students in grades 4 and 8 are currently assessed at the national and state levels in mathematics and reading every 2 years and in other subjects in alternating years. Grade 12 students are assessed in a variety of subjects, and results are typically released at the national level. In 2002, NAEP began the TUDA program, which measures what students know and can do in some of the nation's large urban districts. NAEP is not designed to collect or report results for individual students, classrooms, or schools.

**Special studies are also conducted periodically.** They are administered as part of NAEP and require no additional effort from schools and students. These studies often involve special data collection procedures in the field, secondary analyses of NAEP results, and evaluations of various technical procedures.

**NAEP is considered the gold standard of assessments because of its high technical quality.** From the development of frameworks and questions to the reporting of results, NAEP represents the best thinking of assessment and content specialists, state education staff, and teachers from around the nation. NAEP is a trusted resource that measures student progress and helps inform policy decisions that improve education in the United States.

**NAEP is designed to cause minimal disruption of classroom instruction.** It takes approximately 120 minutes for students to complete NAEP assessment activities, including transition time and directions. They are also asked to complete the student questionnaire, which provides contextual information such as the amount of reading students do and what types of classes they take. Teachers do not need to prepare their students to take the assessment but should encourage them to do their best. NAEP representatives provide significant support to you school by working with the designated coordinator in your school to organize assessment activities.

**NAEP reports on results for different demographic groups rather than for individual students or schools.**

NAEP uses a carefully designed sampling process to ensure that the schools and students selected are representative of schools and students across the United States. To ensure that the sample represents all students in the nation's schools, NAEP allows a broad range of accommodations for students with disabilities and English language learners.

**Released NAEP items can be used as a helpful educational resource in the classroom.** Teachers can use the NAEP Questions Tool at <http://nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/nqt> to see how students' performance compares nationally on specific items. Released NAEP items generally come with a scoring guide, sample student responses, and performance data.

School staff can also:

- ▶ view results for the nation over time,
- ▶ compare results for various demographic groups, and
- ▶ access information designed for teachers, students, and parents.

Visit the NAEP website at <http://nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard> to access this information and more.



Get NAEP on the go with the NAEP Results mobile app!