

REPORTING & DISSEMINATION COMMITTEE AGENDA



March 6, 2025

11:20 am – 1:20 pm EST

Space 2

11:20 – **Welcome and Overview**

11:30 am

Julia Rafal-Baer, Chair

11:30 am – **Review of Core Contextual Questionnaire Items**

12:15 pm

James Deaton, National Center for Education Statistics

Laura LoGerfo, Assistant Director for Reporting and Analysis

Attachment A

12:15 – **Comms Update & Debrief of 2024 NAEP Release**

1:20 pm

Michelle Lerner, Lerner Communications

Laura LoGerfo

Attachment B

Review of Core Contextual Questionnaire Items

March 6, 2025

Goal

The goal of this session is to fulfill the Reporting and Dissemination Committee's responsibility to review and approve survey items on the NAEP core contextual questionnaire.

Overview

Jamie Deaton, who leads NAEP survey work for the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), will describe the development and review process briefly – both generally and at this specific stage. Committee members then will view the electronic review package together, asking any questions and providing feedback on the items, which Laura LoGerfo, the Board's Assistant Director for Reporting and Analysis, will compile and send to NCES for their response. Note that Committee members already have received access to the electronic review package and may view the items on their own time prior to the committee meeting.

Background

The National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) collects contextual questionnaire data from students, teachers, and school administrators to meet the reporting requirements of federal legislation and to provide a context for the reporting of student performance on NAEP. Each contextual questionnaire includes questions that are included on all surveys, independent of the subject being assessed (referred to as "Core") and questions about the subject area being assessed, such as Reading or Mathematics (referred to as "Subject-Specific"). The Reporting and Dissemination Committee reviews the Core items.

As required by Congress, the contextual variables must be "directly related to the appraisal of academic achievement." In addition, the Governing Board set the following priorities for gathering contextual data:

1. Mandated reporting categories (e.g., race/ethnicity, gender, socioeconomic status);
2. Clearly related to academic achievement or to the fair presentation of achievement results; and
3. Based on previous research

The Governing Board also set limits on the time it takes for participants to complete the questionnaire. The allocated time for students is 15 minutes total. For teachers and school administrators, the expected total time needed to complete the Core and one subject-specific questionnaire is 30 minutes.

Communications Update and Debrief of 2024 NAEP Release

March 6, 2025

Goals

The goals of this session are for Reporting and Dissemination Committee members to (1) learn how the plan they and the Board approved for releasing the 2024 NAEP results in reading and mathematics for grades 4 and 8 was executed and received; and (2) determine lessons learned and best practices from this release to apply to upcoming releases for Grade 12 reading and mathematics as well as Grade 8 science.

Overview

Laura LoGerfo, Assistant Director for Reporting and Analysis, along with Michelle Lerner, the lead communications contractor for the Governing Board, will present data about the effectiveness of NAEP Day preparations and efforts.

The session will include a presentation summarizing highlights from the debrief report and allow ample time for questions and discussion. The complete debrief report follows below.

Introduction

The Governing Board planned an ambitious strategic communications plan for the 2024 Nation's Report Card release. In some instances, the Board succeeded in achieving the goals, including:

1. Preparing for the release across multiple workstreams, including new ones;
2. Receiving strong, broad coverage in media where the Governing Board was directly quoted and/or influential; and
3. Placing strong op-eds and arranging for a robust agenda of NAEP Day and post-release events.

At the same time, The Nation's Report Card was released in a tough media cycle, including a devastating plane crash that rightfully pushed NAEP off headlines and canceled booked TV appearances. Regardless of media cycles, the strategy is focused on the yearlong drumbeat of outreach to ensure stakeholders know what NAEP says and facilitate the use of NAEP in their work.

Goals

The Governing Board had four major goals in releasing the 2024 Nation's Report Card:

- **Ensure the greatest number of Americans** know the topline Nation's Report Card results and broadly understand how the nation and their communities are performing;
- **Elicit broad and accurate media coverage** of the 2024 Nation's Report Card results, nationally, at the state level, and locally;
- **Amplify NCES as a federal statistical agency** sharing the gold-standard, objective results of record; and
- **Empower stakeholders** to understand and use the key findings in the days, weeks, and months following the release.

Release Activities

The Governing Board shifted away from the traditional approach to a NAEP release (i.e., presentation and panel discussion at the National Press Club), with mixed success:

- **Video:** The focus of NAEP day shifted, so Dr. Carr, the NCES commissioner, presented the findings via video. This facilitated sharing of the results and created slices of videos that could be shared with TV news and embedded in presentations. For numerous reasons, however, the video was shown only at the town hall event.
- **Morning news shows:** A bipartisan pair of governors on the morning news would have fulfilled the goal to draw attention to the results among the general public. Governor Polis (D - CO) agreed to participate, and several Republican

governors expressed interest. Given the news that day, only Governor Polis [appeared on the PBS Newshour](#) .

- **High-profile op-eds:** The communications team prepared several op-eds for pitching on release day from Marty West, Mark White and Jared Solomon, Angélica Infante-Green, Danielle Gonzales, Anna King, and Lisa Ashe. The team also prepared an op-ed from Julia Rafal-Baer for Forbes, which was published a few weeks after the NAEP release. All but one op-ed was placed.
- **Editorial boards and columnists:** NCES does not grant embargoed access to opinion or editorial writers, but given their impact and readership, the Governing Board did proactive outreach to opinion writers, scheduling time on release day to walk through the results, including with *The New York Times*' Jessica Grose, *The Chicago Tribune*'s Hilary Gowens, and *The New York Times*' Nick Kristoff (which was cancelled ultimately due to competing news).
- **NAEP Day Townhall:** Shifting away from the usual release approach, the Governing Board hosted a Town Hall to focus on understanding the data. Moderated by NPR's Cory Turner, who was masterful at moderating the conversation, and featuring Dr. Carr and Marty West, this event was successful. The event featured 58 in-person attendees and 1,023 virtual attendees.
- **Policy Event:** After the Town Hall, CCSSO, the Council of the Great City Schools, and the National Governors Association hosted a policy-focused event about implications of the NAEP results. The event included opening remarks by Dr. Carr and Marty West and contributions to a panel by Angélica Infante-Green.

Press and Op-eds

Drafting and pitching press and op-eds proved very successful. In partnership with NCES, Board staff led an Education Writers Association (EWA) webinar on what to look for in the results and worked to get many Board members interviews with key media. The following are select media clips from the results:

Select media hits from 2024 NAEP release

Media articles highlighted in blue include quotes or background information due to the Governing Board's outreach

National Press:

- AP: [US Students fall Further Behind in Reading, Make Little Progress in Math](#) (Marty West, Lesley Muldoon)
- ABC: [New data highlights 'achievement gap' for students in the US](#) (Patrick Kelly)
- ABC Good Morning America: [A Look at the Nation's Report Card](#)
- NBC: [Nightly News](#)
- PBS: [Newshour](#)
- AP: [Test scores show schools further behind in reading, math](#) (Marty West)

- Bloomberg: [US Students' Reading Scores Drop to Worst in More Than 20 Years](#) (Marty West and Lesley Muldoon)
- NPR: [Students are still struggling since the pandemic hit, Nation's Report Card reveals](#) (Lisa Ashe)
- WSJ: [American Kids Are Getting Even Worse at Reading](#) (Mark White)
- The Hill: [Nation's Report Card shows further declines in reading, slight improvement in math](#) (Lesley Muldoon)
- Austin American Statesman: [Austin, US students see decline in reading test scores: NAEP test data](#) (Lesley Muldoon)
- Newsweek: [Map Reveals States with the Worst Reading and Math Scores](#) (Marty West, Scott Marion)
- NPR: [A Deep Dive on U.S. Reading and Math Scores, And What to Do About Them](#)
- Newsweek: [Teachers Pleas for Help from Parents and Kids Fall Behind in Reading](#)
- Politico:
- Rural Radio Network: [New data highlights 'achievement gap' for students in the US](#) (Patrick Kelly)

State and Local Press:

- Chicago Tribune: [Editorial: The joy of reading and the Illinois crisis stealing it away](#)
- Boston Globe: ['The challenge is real': Nation's Report Card test shows little to no pandemic recovery in Mass. schools](#) (Gov. Jane Swift and Marty West)
- WGBH: [Massachusetts student test scores take top spot | GBH - WGBH](#) (Marty West)
- WBUR: [Mass. leads in reading and math scores, but still lags pre-pandemic levels](#) (Marty West)
- Tampa Free Press: [U.S. Students' Reading Scores Continue To Decline, Widening Achievement Gaps](#) (Gov. Bev Perdue, Marty West)
- News and Observer: [Nation's Report Card results are in and they're 'not good.' How are NC students doing?](#) (Lesley Muldoon)
- Commercial Appeal: [NAEP results: TN students buck grim national trends, but Memphis opts out of assessment](#) (Mark White)
- Arkansas Democrat Gazette: [2024 Nation's Report Card: Arkansas scores unchanged for reading, math](#) (Marty West)
- Detroit News: [Michigan drops in national reading ranking, improves in 4th grade math](#) (Gov. Bev Perdue, Marty West)
- The Advocate: [How Louisiana achieved 'historic progress' in reading, outranking other states on national test](#) (Scott Marion)

- KY ABC affiliate: [US children fall further behind in reading, make little improvement in math on national exam](#) (Marty West)
- CBS Local News: [Governor, Education Commissioner Kick off Math Matters Initiative.](#)
- AL.com: [Alabama Students are Improving in Reading and Math, What's next?](#)
- Charlotte Observer: [NC saw an increase in 2024 math scores, new data show. This state policy could be why](#)
- San Diego Fox affiliate: [San Diego Unified Students Outscored Districts in most Large Cities.](#)
- Axios: [Louisiana's Math and Reading Scores among the nation's most improved.](#)
- The Coloradoan: [Colorado students outperforming national average but still behind pre-pandemic levels](#)
- Milwaukee Journal Sentinel: [What to know about Wisconsin's change in state test scores and the GOP push to restore previous benchmarks](#)
- Arkansas Democrat Gazette: [Arkansas' education chief says students' scores started decline before pandemic](#)
- Oklahoma Watch: [Stuck at the Bottom: Oklahoma Reading and Math Scores Stagnate](#)
- Pittsburgh Post-Gazette: [U.S. children fall further behind in reading](#) (Marty West, Lesley Muldoon)
- Oregon Public Broadcasting: [Nearly 5 years after schools closed, the nation gets a new report card](#) (Lisa Ashe)

Trade publications:

- Education Week: [Big Cities See Bright Spots on NAEP, But Worry About Keeping Up Interventions](#) Education Week (Marty West)
- Education Week: [Reading Scores Fall to New Low on NAEP, Fueled by Declines for Struggling Students](#) (Lisa Ashe and Lesley Muldoon)
- Ed Week Market Brief: [4 Takeaways for Education Companies From the Underwhelming NAEP Scores](#) (Patrick Kelly)
- The 74: [New NAEP Scores Dash Hope of Post-COVID Learning Recovery](#) (Gov. Jane Swift and Julia Rafal-Baer)
- K-12 Dive: [Reading, math continue slide in 2024 NAEP results](#) (Lesley Muldoon)
- Chalkbeat: [NAEP: Reading scores fall as low-performing students' struggles intensify](#) (Marty West and Lesley Muldoon)
- Hechinger Report: [A dismal report card in math and reading](#) (Scott Marion and Marty West)
- K-12 Dive: [What Does NAEP Show for Special Ed Students?](#)
- Education Week: [The Reasons Behind the Poor NAEP Scores According to Teachers.](#)

- Education Next: [Hard Lessons from the New NAEP Results](#)

Podcasts:

- EdNext podcast with Marty West: Link [here](#).
- AEI podcast with Marty West: Link [here](#).
- PDK International podcast with Patrick Kelly booked, with date TBD.

Op-eds

Published:

- Mark White and Jared Solomon: [Don't Let Partisan Politics Stop Us from Helping Children Excel in School](#)/Governing Magazine
- Marty West: [What the Nation's Report Card says about Massachusetts](#)/The Boston Globe
- Angélica Infante-Green: [Don't Blame 'Science of Reading' for Low Scores](#)/Education Week
- Danielle Gonzales: [New Dismal NAEP Scores Should Be a Wakeup Call for District School Board Members](#)/The 74
- Julia Rafal-Baer: [The Latest Nation's Report Card is Bleak, but Business Leaders can Help](#)/Forbes
- Anna King: [Let's Remove Barriers to Student Success and Lift up Things Promoting Progress](#)/One Voice Blog

Pending Placement:

- Lisa Ashe: Nation's Report Card Can Serve as Roadmap for What to do Next in Math (Submitted to Kappan)

Digital: Social Media, Emails, and Website

Email blasts

As part of the release, the Board sent several emails to the newsletter list, which received high open and click rates. Each of the three emails around the release significantly outperformed the 2024 average open rate (13.2%) and click rate (1.7%).

January 22 - One week out email with Town Hall registration (11,091)

- **Subject:** What will the 2024 NAEP results show?
- **Opens:** 2,742 (24.7%) | **Clicks:** 400 (3.6%)

January 29 - Day of Release (10,724)

- **Subject:** 10 Takeaways from the Just Released 2024 NAEP Results
- **Opens:** 2,008 (18.2%) | **Clicks:** 518 (4.8%)

February 3 - Reading Scores and event (1,747)

- **Subject:** How to READ the latest NAEP reading scores.
- **Opens:** 1,650 (15.4%) | **Clicks** 156 (1.5%)

Website

To prepare for the 2024 Nation's Report Card, the communications team redesigned information on nagb.gov's math and reading pages, adding interactive graphs that showed trendlines by state and jurisdictions. For NAEP Day, the Board posted a [Top 10 Takeaways blog](#) to capture a snapshot of the topline results along with the press release and other resources related to NAEP 2024.

Pages related to the NAEP release and the nagb.gov home page received a total of **9,351 pageviews**.

Data for January 29 - February 3

NAEP-Related Pages	Pageviews	Total Users
Top 10 Takeaways Blog	3,107	2,861
2024 Nation's Report Card Page	2,290	2,019
Press Release	1,916	1,771
NAEP Reading Page	804	631
Homepage	699	550
NAEP Math Page	535	409
Grand Total	9,351	8,241

The following section highlights social media activity (including an increase in LinkedIn engagement). Nearly a third (31%) of website traffic in those first few days came from LinkedIn (808 sessions).

Social Media

Data for January 29-February 3 (compared to previous week)

<p>Total Governing Board Account Impressions: 9,406</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LinkedIn: 3,551 (+243%) • Twitter: 4,830 (+73%) • Facebook: 1,025 (+185%) 	<p>Total Governing Board Account Engagements: 326</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LinkedIn: 79 (+227%) • Twitter: 196 (+214%) • Facebook: 51 (+220%)
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Top Posts from Governing Board and Partners [here](#).

Events

Immediately prior to NAEP Day, the Governing Board added graphic design to the Lerner Communications team. Working with designer Alli Wachtel beginning in late January, staff developed a new template for slides and tailored slides for presentations. Wachtel's support will continue through March 31, and the team is building out additional slides for future presentations.

Sample slides of the new look:

NAEP Proficient is the goal — and a high bar

Grade 4 Math

- NAEP Basic:** Locate whole numbers on a number line. Example: 3 on a number line from 0 to 10.
- NAEP Proficient:** Add and subtract multi-digit whole numbers, fractions, and decimals in single and multi-step problems. Example: $186.3 - 44$, $\frac{3}{8} + \frac{7}{16}$.
- NAEP Advanced:** Compare and order whole numbers, fractions, and decimals to hundredths. Example: $249.98 > 310$, $\frac{2}{15} < \frac{5}{12}$.

Grade 8 Math

- NAEP Basic:** Simplify expressions involving integers. Example: $(5 + 3) + 12 + (-2)^4$.
- NAEP Proficient:** Apply strategies to solve Pythagorean Theorem problems. Example: $a^2 + b^2 = c^2$.
- NAEP Advanced:** Solve problems involving area, including composing and decomposing complex figures. Example: Area of a composite shape.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Statistics, National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), Mathematics Assessment (Grade 4 and 8), 2024.

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2022 to 2024: Some improvement amid stagnation and further decline

In 15 states, 4th grade math scores increased

10 states declined in at least one grade and subject

Legend:
■ No statistically significant change
■ Increase in 4th grade math
■ Declined in at least one grade and subject

* Significantly different ($p < .05$) from 2022.
 SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Statistics, National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), Reading and Mathematics Assessments (Grade 4 and 8), 2022 and 2024.

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4th grade math scores by percentiles

Alabama and National (Public)

Alabama is the only state to surpass its pre-pandemic (2019) 4th grade math scores. It's important to understand how higher- and lower-performing students are doing.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Statistics, National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), Mathematics Assessment (Grade 4), 2000 to 2024.

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Declines did not start with the pandemic

In 2024, just 39% of students are at or above NAEP Proficient — the same percentage as in 2009

Legend:
■ Below NAEP Basic
■ At NAEP Basic
■ At NAEP Proficient
■ At NAEP Advanced

* Statistically significant difference ($p < .05$) from the national percentage of students scoring at each proficiency level in 2022. Values may not sum due to rounding. Accommodations were not permitted for the assessments in 1990 and 1992.
 SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Statistics, National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), Mathematics Assessment (Grade 4), 1990 to 2022.

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The release strategy suggested a six-week sprint of post-release events, which was met with eager participation among partner organizations. Ultimately, given the rapid changes happening federally, the Board hosted two of the events, one on reading (285 attendees tuned into the event) and one on high- and low-performing students. However, Board members and staff participated in nearly 20 events total:

Governing Board members and staff have presented at the following events:*Events highlighted in blue originated from the Governing Board*

Organization	Event	Board Member(s) and Staff
Governing Board	NAEP Day Townhall event	Mary West
Council of the Great City Schools, CCSSO, and NGA	2024 Nation's Report Card: Reflecting on the Results	Marty West, Angélica Infante-Green
Collaborative for Student Success	2024 Nation's Report Card: Focus on Math	Julia Rafal-Baer, Laura LoGerfo
Governing Board (and Johns Hopkins School of Education)	The Nation's Report Card Reading Panel	Carey Wright, Carol Jago, Laura LoGerfo
U.S. Chamber of Commerce	2024 Nation's Report Card Briefing	Julia Rafal-Baer, Reginald McGregor, Lesley Muldoon
Education Commission of the States	2024 Nation's Report Card: A "How To" Guide for States	Lesley Muldoon, Mark White
National Council of State Legislators	2024 Nation's Report Card Briefing	Marty West
AEI/CERN	2024 Nation's Report Card Discussion	Laura LoGerfo
Accelerate	2025 State of High-Dosage Tutoring Convening	Lesley Muldoon
WhiteBoard Advisors	2024 Nation's Report Card Briefing	Jane Swift, Lesley Muldoon
PIE Network	2024 Nation's Report Card Briefing	Patrick Kelly
Walton Family Foundation Education	2024 Nation's Report Card: Overview, Implications	Julia Rafal-Baer
National Math Improvement Project/Whiteboard Advisors	NAEP Math Trends and Algebra Concepts	Laura LoGerfo
Education First	National Forum on the Future of Assessment and Accountability	Lesley Muldoon
Grantmakers for Education	2024 Nation's Report Card Briefing	Julia Rafal-Baer, Laura LoGerfo

SXSW EDU	Great Expectations: Why High Standards Are Key to Success'	Angélica Infante-Green, Carey Wright
Governing Board (and Fordham Institute and EdTrust)	High- and Low-Performers	Laura LoGerfo

Assets and Links

- [2024 Nation's Report Card Release Strategy](#)