

# REPORTING & DISSEMINATION COMMITTEE AGENDA



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**May 16, 2024**  
**4:00 – 6:00 pm EDT**  
**A Board Room**

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**4:00 – 4:15 pm**     **Strategic Communications Update**  
*Laura LoGerfo, Assistant Director for Reporting and Analysis*

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**4:15 – 4:55 pm**     **Private School Participation in NAEP**     Attachment A  
*Ron Reynolds*  
*William Ward, National Center for Education Statistics*  
*Grady Wilburn, National Center for Education Statistics*

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**4:55 – 5:00 pm**     **Break**

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**5:00 – 6:00 pm**     **Joint Meeting with Committee on Standards, Design and Methodology (COSDAM): Considering an Interpretive Guide**     Attachment B  
*Suzanne Lane, Chair, COSDAM*  
*Marty West, Chair, Reporting & Dissemination Committee*

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## Private School Participation in NAEP

### Goal

To understand the nature and extent of private school participation, or lack thereof, in the National Assessment of Educational Progress and to consider strategies to motivate participation.

### Overview

In this session at the May meeting of the Reporting and Dissemination Committee, members will learn about the scope of private schools' participation, attempts taken to motivate participation, and implications for data and reporting. Reporting and Dissemination Committee member, Ron Reynolds, the Board's non-public school administrator representative, will share his experiences with presenting to stakeholders in the non-public sector and moderate a discussion on how to generate more support among non-public, non-Catholic schools. Bill Ward and Grady Wilburn of NCES will provide further information about private school recruitment and approaches, taken and proposed, to improve participation.

### Background

The National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) samples students to assess from a nationally representative sample of schools, across regions, jurisdictions, and sectors. The NAEP contractors use the [Private School Universe Survey](#) to build a private school sampling frame, from which they select representative samples by Catholic/Non-Catholic and by region. [This one-page overview provides a clear explanation of the sampling process for private schools.](#)

However, the participation rates of private schools are dismal, thus preventing average scores of that sector from being reported. Thus, only comparisons between public and Catholic schools are feasible. This was not always true. Until 2013, private schools reliably participated in NAEP in sufficiently strong numbers to allow for reporting and comparisons. Since the 2015 NAEP administration, private school participation dropped below the reporting threshold. Over the last twenty years, data on private schools as a sector are reported only for 2003, 2007, 2009, 2011, and 2013.

To counteract this trend, the NAEP program has deployed several strategies to spur private school participation. For example, the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), which administers NAEP, gave sampled school names to five private school associations in 2019 (under a strict memo of understanding and contingent on extensive training to protect the data) so they could promote the importance of participating in NAEP to their member schools. This did not prove successful.

Catholic schools show a different pattern of participation. Catholic schools operate under a more formal governance structure, with a hierarchy which can urge participation more effectively. Catholic schools participate at a sufficiently robust rate to warrant reporting and comparing by their sector. Lutheran schools work similarly, but with fewer numbers, fall short of reporting criteria.

More generally, there is exceptionally wide diversity within the non-Catholic private school category, which can make an all-inclusive 'private school' category challenging to interpret. Additionally, the cell sizes for some private school subcategories can be so small that they become impossible to report while retaining confidentiality. All of these issues will be discussed in greater detail at the meeting.

## **Joint Meeting of the Committee on Standards, Design and Methodology and the Reporting and Dissemination Committee on Interpreting NAEP Results**

### Goal

At the May 2024 Governing Board meeting in Alexandria, Virginia, the Reporting and Dissemination (R&D) Committee will hold a joint meeting with the Committee on Standards, Design and Methodology (COSDAM). The purpose of this joint meeting is to discuss and develop an outline, scope, approach, and content for a guide to interpreting National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) results, which the Board would make public to aid in the initial release of 2024 NAEP data.

### Overview

Conversations with Board members, media, stakeholders such as those at policy research organizations and advocacy groups, as well as state and district task force members point to the challenge of interpreting NAEP data with accuracy, meaning, and ease. There is widespread appreciation for the value and integrity of the Nation's Report Card and the data the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) provides with robust, accessible visualizations. However, many have requested a guide on how to interpret the statistics and how to avoid misNAEPery—the misuse of NAEP data. Members of the two committees will convene together at this quarterly meeting to discuss a path forward on creating an interpretive guide.

### Background

Interest in an interpretive guide is not new, though the current scope of interest may differ from earlier conceptualizations. From 2014 to 2016, the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine evaluated the NAEP achievement levels in mathematics and reading, which are the responsibility of the Governing Board. In their evaluation, the National Academies' sixth recommendation urged guidance "to help users determine inferences that are best made with achievement levels and those best made with scale score statistics."

In May 2018, COSDAM and R&D met to discuss developing an "interpretative guide [which] shall accompany NAEP reports, including specific examples of appropriate and inappropriate interpretations and uses of the results" (Principle 3i).

The Academies' recommendations and this previous collaboration between R&D and COSDAM focused solely on achievement levels, but with the immense attention paid to the 2022 NAEP results, by those familiar with NAEP and by many unfamiliar with NAEP, guidance on how to interpret the statistics more broadly should prove useful.

The Board published documents intended to facilitate interpretability of NAEP Achievement Levels for the [2022 NAEP Reading and Math](#) and the [2022 NAEP U.S. History and Civics](#) releases. These documents present publicly-released items, to show example skills and knowledge that students at each achievement level likely know and can do. By connecting achievement levels to actual items, which reflect actual content, NAEP audiences can more readily distinguish the levels and interpret their meaning. These documents require revision, as they were developed quickly, and incorporate only some of the information R&D and COSDAM hope to include for the upcoming releases of 2024 NAEP data.