

may include Indian children or adults as participants or that may benefit Indian children or adults and makes recommendations to the Secretary for filling the position of Director of Indian Education whenever a vacancy occurs.

This meeting of the Council is closed to the public to interview candidates for the position of Director of Indian Education and make recommendations to the Secretary for filling this vacancy. The Council will be discussing matters relating solely to the internal personnel rules and practices of an agency. Such discussion will disclose information of a personal nature where disclosure would constitute a clearly unwarranted invasion of personal privacy. The meeting will be closed under the authority of Section 10(d) of the Federal Advisory Committee Act (Pub. L. 92-463; 5 U.S.C. Appendix 2) and under exemptions (2) and (6) of the Government in the Sunshine Act (Pub. L. 94-409; 5 U.S.C. 552b(c) (2) and (6)).

A summary of the activities of the closed session and related matters which are informative to the public consistent with the policy of Title 5 U.S.C. 552b will be available to the public within fourteen days of the meeting. Records are kept of all Council proceedings, and are available for public inspection at the Office of Elementary and Secondary Education, U.S. Department of Education, 1250 Maryland Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20202, from the hours of 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Dated: November 22, 1996.

Gerald N. Tirozzi,

*Assistant Secretary, Office of Elementary and Secondary Education.*

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### **National Assessment Governing Board; Opportunity for Comment**

**AGENCY:** National Assessment Governing Board; Education.

**ACTION:** Notice of request for comments.

**SUMMARY:** The National Assessment Governing Board announces the opportunity for public comment on a proposed long-range schedule for the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP). The National Assessment, authorized by Congress, is our only continuing measure of student achievement providing both national and state-level results in academic subjects at grades 4, 8, and 12.

The subjects to be assessed are stated in the National Assessment legislation. These subjects are: "reading, writing, and other subjects listed in the third

National Education Goal" (i.e., mathematics, science, history, geography, civics, the arts, foreign language, and economics). However, the frequency of testing in each subject is not specified.

The National Assessment Governing Board sets policy for NAEP; this includes determining the schedule of assessments. On November 16, 1996, the Governing Board approved a proposed schedule for the purpose of obtaining public comment.

The Governing Board's intent is to provide the public with a predictable, reliable schedule of subjects to be assessed by the National Assessment. The Governing Board has conducted feasibility studies and, in conjunction with the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), prepared cost estimates for the proposed schedule. The Governing Board and NCES have concluded that the proposed schedule is achievable under conservative assumptions about costs, future appropriations, and continued legislative authority for the National Assessment. However, if resources permit, additions to the schedule may be made, with advance public notice. *The Governing Board will consider comments received by February 3, 1997 in developing a final schedule. The Governing Board intends to take action at its meeting on March 6-8, 1997.*

#### **Background**

The National Assessment tested annually, about three subjects per year, during its first decade (1970-1980). However, during the 1980s and into the 1990's, a period of growing demand for National Assessment data, the testing schedule became reduced by half. NAEP testing occurred only every other year and was limited to two or three subjects each time.

In November 1994, the Governing Board established a work group on planning to evaluate the current operating design of the National Assessment. The work group's goal was to identify options to improve the design of the National Assessment, so that more subjects could be assessed more frequently.

In August 1996, after 21 months of review and study, the Governing Board redesigned the National Assessment. Its redesign statement includes the following:

The National Assessment shall assess all subjects listed in the third National Education Goal \* \* \* according to a publicly released schedule adopted by the National Assessment Governing Board, covering eight to ten years, with reading, writing, mathematics and science tested more frequently than the other subjects.

The National Assessment shall be conducted annually, two or three subjects per year, in order to cover all required subjects at least twice a decade.

The NAEP redesign statement requires the Governing Board to adopt a long-range schedule for two primary reasons. First, to provide states and others with adequate time to plan for participation in the national and state assessments. Second, to enable NCES to include the schedule as a part of the requirements for new NAEP operations grants, the next of which is to be awarded during fiscal year 1998.

The redesign statement expresses six major principles intended to increase efficiency, permit the testing of more subjects more frequently, and control costs. These principles are to: (1) Focus the purpose of NAEP on measuring and reporting student achievement, (2) specify the main audience for reports, (3) limit activities that NAEP is not well-designed to carry out, (4) vary testing and reporting, (5) provide stability in the NAEP tests and predictability in the NAEP schedule, and (6) simplify the design of NAEP. (The full text of the NAEP redesign statement is available on the Governing Board's web site—<http://www.nagb.org>—or by request to the address below.)

Two of these principles bear directly on the schedule and have a large impact on costs. The first is "vary testing and reporting." The redesign statement calls for three kinds of testing and reporting: standard, comprehensive, and focused. Working definitions for standard, comprehensive, and focused reports are described in Attachment A. Beginning in the year 2000, the schedule provides for standard and comprehensive assessments in the various subjects. The schedule assumes that focused assessments will be approved on an "as-needed" basis and as resources permit. The second principle has to do with the "stability of tests." Under this principle, National Assessment tests in a subject would remain stable for at least ten years.

#### **The Proposed Schedule: Overview**

The schedule for the years 1996-1998 is set. The proposed schedule begins in the year 1999 and provides for annual testing. The national and state assessments in reading, writing, mathematics, and science would be conducted once every four years and assessments at the national level in the other subjects once every eight years. This ensures at least two assessments in

a ten-year period in each subject, at a minimum. Reading and writing would be paired for testing, as would mathematics and science. Each pair of subjects would be tested in alternating even-numbered years. The state-level assessments in reading, writing, mathematics, and science would be in grades 4 and 8.

The long-term trend assessments would be conducted once every four years beginning in 1999. Long-term trend assessments report results in reading, writing, mathematics and science. These assessments provide trend data from as early as 1970. The tests used for long-term trends are based on conceptions of the curricula prevalent during the 1970s. They are markedly different from the more recently developed "main" NAEP tests in mathematics, science, reading and writing displayed in the schedule in 1996 and beyond. The schedule provides for three more administrations of the long-term trend assessments while the transition is being made to "main NAEP" for long-term trend reporting.

By the year 1998, "new" tests (i.e., developed since 1990) will be in use for the "main NAEP" in reading, writing,

mathematics, science, U.S. history, geography, civics, and the arts. A foreign language assessment will be developed for use in 2003 and world history and economics assessments will be developed for use in 2005. In planning for comprehensive assessments in mathematics in 2004, and in reading, the arts, science, U.S. history, and writing in 2006–2010, respectively, the Governing Board will decide whether to change the content of the tests.

**Instructions for Submitting Comments on the Proposed Schedule**

Comments on the proposed schedule should be submitted so they are received by February 3, 1997. Comments submitted by mail should be addressed to Ray Fields, Assistant Director for Policy and Research, National Assessment Governing Board, Suite 825, 800 North Capitol Street, NW, Washington, DC 20002–4233. Comments submitted by e-mail over the Internet should be addressed to Ray — Fields@ED.GOV with subject title "NAEP Schedule Comments."

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Ray Fields, Assistant Director for Policy and Research, Suite 825, 800 North Capitol

Street, N.W., Washington, DC 20002–4233. Telephone: (202) 357–0395.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** The National Assessment of Educational Progress is the primary means by which the public is able to know how students in grades 4, 8 and 12 are achieving nationally and state-by-state. The National Assessment Governing Board is established to formulate policy guidelines for the National Assessment. The National Assessment and its Governing Board are authorized under sections 411 and 412, respectively, of the Improving America's Schools Act of 1994. (Pub. L. 103–382).

At its November 14–16, 1996 meeting, the Governing Board gave approval to disseminate the proposed schedule for public comment. The public comment period closes on February 3, 1997. The Governing Board intends to take action on a final policy at its meeting scheduled for March 6–8, 1997, in Charleston, South Carolina.

Records are kept of all Board proceedings, and are available for public inspection at the National Assessment Governing Board, 800 North Capitol Street, N.W., Suite 825, Washington, DC, from 8:30 am to 5:00 pm, Monday through Friday.

**PROPOSED SCHEDULE FOR THE NATIONAL ASSESSMENT OF EDUCATIONAL PROGRESS**

Year	National	State
1996	Math Science Long-term trend* (reading, writing, math, science)	Math (4, 8). Science (8).
1997	Arts (8)	
1998	Reading Writing Civics	Reading (4, 8). Writing (8).
1999	Long-term trend* (reading, writing, math, science)	
2000	Math Science	Math (4, 8). Science (4, 8).
2001	U.S. History Geography	
2002	Reading Writing	Reading (4, 8). Writing (4, 8).
2003	Civics <b>FOREIGN LANGUAGE (12)</b> Long-term trend* (reading, writing, math, science)	
2004	<b>MATH</b> Science	<b>MATH (4, 8).</b> Science (4, 8).
2005	<b>WORLD HISTORY (12)</b> <b>ECONOMICS (12)</b>	
2006	<b>READING</b> Writing	<b>READING (4, 8).</b> Writing (4, 8).
2007	<b>ARTS</b> Long-term trend* (reading, writing, math, science)	
2008	Math <b>SCIENCE</b>	Math (4, 8). <b>SCIENCE (4, 8).</b>
2009	<b>U.S. HISTORY</b> Geography	
2010	Reading <b>WRITING</b>	Reading (4, 8). <b>WRITING (4, 8).</b>

**Note:** Grades 4, 8 and 12 will be tested unless otherwise indicated. Comprehensive assessments are indicated in **BOLD ALL CAPS**; standard assessments are indicated in upper and lower case.

\* Long-term trend assessments are conducted in reading, writing mathematics and science. These assessments provide trend data as far back as 1970 and use tests developed by the National Assessment at that time.

## Attachment A—Working Definitions

### Types of National Assessment Reports

The Redesign Policy Statement, adopted by the National Assessment Governing Board on August 2, 1996, provides for three types of National Assessment reports:

- Standard Reports
- Comprehensive Reports
- Focused or Special Reports.

The content of these reports is described below. To provide the data needed for each report, the design of each assessment should be of high technical quality and cost-effective while not going beyond reporting requirements.

#### *Standard Report Card*

This shall be the primary vehicle for reporting the National Assessment of Educational Progress and shall present the principal results for grades 4, 8, and 12. Whenever state NAEP is conducted, the standard report card will include both national and state results. Data shall be reported in terms of both achievement levels and a scale score or percent-correct metric.

The standard report card will be prepared for a general public audience and written in understandable, jargon-free style with attractive charts, tables, and graphics. The report will be relatively modest in length—about 50 to 100 pages. In addition to key results, it will include a substantial sample of test questions and student responses—with item-level data—to illustrate performance standards and actual student work for each grade tested.

For each subject the standard report card will be based on the assessment framework and specifications approved by the Governing Board. However, the size of student samples may be more limited than in comprehensive assessments, described below. Also, special studies carried out in comprehensive assessments may be omitted.

The report card will be publicly released within six months after the end of student testing. This normally would be by the end of September of the assessment year.

Data shall be reported on a representative-sample basis for the nation, states, and demographic subgroups. Overall scores and achievement-level results must be strictly comparable to previous assessments based on the same NAEP framework so that trends in achievement may accurately be reported. However, the content-area subscales reported in previous comprehensive assessments may or may not be included, depending on the subject assessed.

Data in the standard report card shall be reported by the following categories, as required by law: sex, race/ethnicity, public and private schools, and factors bearing on socio-economic status. Such factors may include the education level of parents, type of community, and participation in Title I and subsidized lunch programs.

Any report with state-by-state results shall include information on demographic characteristics and resource inputs that may provide context for understanding results. In addition to data collected by NAEP, the contextual information may include data from other sources, such as per capita income, the poverty rate for school-aged children, current expenditures per pupil, pupil/teacher ratio, and average teacher salary.

States will appear in tables listed alphabetically. However, an overall rank order shall be prepared using average scores and indicating where differences are not statistically significant.

The report shall include information on a limited number of student background characteristics directly related to academic achievement, which may be obtained from student questionnaires or from data needed to draw samples of schools and students, such as census and Title I data. It will also include information on the proportion of students tested with disabilities and limited English proficiency. However, the standard report card will not include surveys of instructional practices or school policies, though these shall be included in comprehensive NAEP assessments.

#### *Comprehensive Reports*

These reports shall be based on large-scale assessments which implement fully the test frameworks and specifications adopted by the Governing Board. Normally, a comprehensive assessment shall be the first one done for a new test framework. Its results shall be issued in a series of reports, designed for general and specialized audiences, including national and state policymakers, educators, and researchers.

The first report—with key results for a general audience—shall be comparable to the standard report described above, though it may be somewhat more extensive and may be issued within nine months after testing rather than six months. Included in this series, though not necessarily in each report, shall be content area subscales and data on a wide range of school policies, instructional practices, and student work-habits and behavior, gathered from background questionnaires for students, teachers, and schools.

Comprehensive assessments and reporting shall be done for national samples in grades 4, 8, and 12 and for state-level samples in some subjects and grades.

#### *Focused Reports*

These reports shall be more limited and focused than the standard NAEP report. They may be targeted to a particular grade or group of students rather than being based on representative samples of the population. Generally, the cost would be less than that of a standard assessment, although focused

reports may also be used to assess in a particular subject, such as the performing arts, where testing costs are high.

The focused reports may extend the range of the National Assessment and permit the testing of new populations, e.g., out-of-school youth. They will also provide NAEP with the opportunity to develop new methods of assessment and reporting without the constraints of the standard report. Some may be financed by a particular organization, e.g., the Department of Labor for a test of work readiness skills, rather than from the regular NAEP appropriation.

In most cases the special reports will involve only national samples, although states that wish to participate may do so at their own expense.

Dated: November 25, 1996.

Roy Truby,

*Executive Director, National Assessment Governing Board.*

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## DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY

### **Waste Isolation Pilot Plant Disposal Phase, Draft Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement; Notice of Availability and Public Hearings**

**AGENCY:** U.S. Department of Energy.

**ACTION:** Notice of availability and public hearings.

**SUMMARY:** The Department of Energy (DOE or Department) announces the availability for public review and comment of the draft supplemental environmental impact statement (SEIS-II) for the proposed disposal of transuranic (TRU) radioactive waste at the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant (WIPP) near Carlsbad, NM, and the schedule for public hearings on that document.

**DATES:** DOE invites all interested parties to submit comments on the draft SEIS-II during a comment period ending on January 28, 1997. Written comments must be postmarked by January 28, 1997 to ensure consideration. Comments postmarked after that date will be considered to the extent practicable.

DOE will also hold several public hearings to receive public comments and suggestions on the draft SEIS-II. Public hearings will be held on the dates and at the locations given below.