

Facts for Principals



The Nation's Report Card can help us do a better job of educating our students.

- The President, Congress and the United States Department of Education use NAEP to inform education policymaking.
- State leaders and educators use NAEP to compare their own state results with both national and state data.
- NAEP data can be used to compare student groups within your state, the nation and other states, and show where groups of students need improvement with certain concepts or subject areas.
- Teachers can use sample NAEP questions and scoring guides in their classrooms.

The Nation's Report Card can help us fulfill our nation's promise of equal educational opportunities for everyone.

“Before my students participated in The Nation's Report Card, I told them that by doing so, they were helping the bigger cause. They really responded to that. They said it felt good to become part of what the nation knows about kids their age.”

CAMILLE AGONE, PRINCIPAL, EATON MIDDLE SCHOOL, EATON, CO

The National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) is an essential measurement of student achievement in America.

NAEP—also known as **The Nation's Report Card**—is the only nationally representative assessment of what American students know and can do in core subjects such as math, reading, writing, science, U.S. history and civics.

As principals, you are partners in this effort. You make an important contribution by working closely with your teachers and encouraging your students to do their best. When students participate and try hard, we get the most accurate look at what American students know and can do.

It's important to know that...

The Nation's Report Card has measured student achievement nationally since 1969 and by state since 1990. NAEP assesses 4th, 8th and 12th grade students in reading and math every two years, and other subjects in alternating years. The No Child Left Behind Act requires all states and school districts that receive Title I funds to participate in biennial mathematics and reading assessments in 4th and 8th grades.

The Nation's Report Card is the only representative comparison of student performance across states.

A state's own assessment is a valuable tool for providing information on student performance in that particular state. Because state-level assessments vary from state to state, the results cannot be used to compare student performance across states. However, students in all 50 states and the District of Columbia take a portion of the same NAEP test and are measured in the same way so that comparisons can be made.

The Nation's Report Card can be used in the classroom as a helpful educational resource. Teachers can apply sample questions from The Nation's Report Card when designing lesson plans. Each question comes with a scoring guide and sample student responses.

NAEP is considered the gold standard of assessments.

NAEP is an important assessment because of its impeccable technical quality. The assessment's frameworks are developed with input from state education officials, education experts, teachers and content specialists from around the country.

The Nation's Report Card includes results for special-needs students.

To ensure that sample results represent all students in the nation's schools, The Nation's Report Card allows a broad array of accommodations for students with disabilities and English language learners during the assessment.

“I was very impressed with its (NAEP's) implementation. It was well-prepared and thought out. All the parents, teachers and children at the school felt very comfortable.”

LINDA COBB, PRINCIPAL, WESTMORELAND ELEMENTARY SCHOOL, FAIRLAWN, NJ

NAEP is confidential and does not assess the performance of individual students or schools.

Instead, NAEP tests samples of students that represent the geographic, racial and ethnic, and socio-economic diversity that is America's student body today.

NAEP is designed to cause minimal disruption of instruction.

It is not necessary for teachers to prepare their students to take NAEP. Students only spend 90 minutes on the assessment and are asked questions on subjects they encounter every day. Contractors with the U.S. Department of Education administer the test, and they work with a school staff representative to schedule the test, distribute questionnaires, and inform parents, teachers and students about the assessment.

More information is available online.

On the NAEP web site—
<http://nationsreportcard.gov>—you can:

- Find sample questions
- Review scoring guides
- Compare state data
- Compare student groups
- View results by scores and achievement levels



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