

May 2013 Board Blue Sky Discussion – Staff Proposals for Next Steps

Category: Understanding Educational Assessment and Defining NAEP's Unique Role in the Assessment Landscape

Board Member Ideas:

- Explain different types of tests and the purposes served by each.
- Explain the role and importance of NAEP in the “assessment landscape”—how NAEP’s unique mission complements the contributions of other kinds of assessments.
- Develop an assessment literacy initiative for a general public audience (particularly parents and grand-parents of school-age children), and students.

Staff Proposal for Next Steps:

1. Appoint a small working group of Board members (e.g., 3-4 individuals from various NAGB standing Committees) to oversee the assessment literacy initiative.
2. Identify goals and strategies for the assessment literacy initiative.
3. Define the intended audiences and develop initial outreach strategies, including effective ways to reach parents (e.g., through their children’s teachers)
4. Explore creative, effective ways to use technology to advance the assessment literacy goals including TED talks, interactive website materials, etc.
5. Work with the Board’s communications contractor (under the new contract, beginning in the fall of 2013) to develop an assessment literacy outreach plan.
6. Coordinate the assessment literacy initiative with planning for the Board’s January 2014 Parent Summit.
7. Obtain input and feedback on the plan from various groups including NCES, the Governing Board’s CCSSO Policy Task Force, the Board’s Business Policy Task Force, and others.
8. Determine effective ways the Board can collaborate with NCES and their contractors on this initiative.
9. Present a revised outreach plan to the full Board for discussion in December 2013. The plan should include a timeline, priorities for implementation, and ways to evaluate the effectiveness of various components before, during, and after the outreach initiative.
10. Begin to implement the plan and monitor its effectiveness using various measures.

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Category: Assessing Affective Skills (AKA Work Readiness Skills, 21st Century Skills, and Soft Skills)

Board Member Ideas (from May 2013):

- Measure important affective attributes.
- Add affective skills survey questions to measure important determinants of academic success.
- Make NAEP as relevant as the U.S. Census.

Definition: Although there is no universal definition of these affective skills, the National Academy of Sciences has been exploring strategies for assessing these skills. Their Committee on the Assessment of 21st Century Skills initially identified five skill areas and later collapsed them into the following three clusters.

- **Cognitive skills:** nonroutine problem solving, critical thinking, systems thinking
- **Interpersonal skills:** complex communication, social skills, teamwork, cultural sensitivity, dealing with diversity
- **Intrapersonal skills:** self-management, time management, self-development, self-regulation, adaptability, executive functioning

Staff Proposal for Next Steps:

Explore the current state-of-the-art in assessing or conducting surveys on affective skills before making a determination about how or if NAEP can/should be used to collect and report information for this area.

1. Have staff or a consultant prepare a “white paper” summary or issues paper about the research and publicationsⁱ related to assessing affective skills for Board review/discussion.
2. Invite a panel of the experts (identified via the process of preparing the “white paper”) to discuss with the Board the state-of-the-art of assessments or self-report surveys on which affective skills can be reported, as well as the viability for NAEP to utilize these methods.
3. If warranted, establish an expert panel or ad hoc Board committee to examine what NAEP already collects in the area of affective skills (e.g., the cognitive skills area as defined above) and to make recommendations to the Governing Board about how NAEP could provide nationally representative information on affective skills, and whether implementation should be considered by the Board.
4. If warranted, begin planning for how NAEP could collect and report information on affective skills, possibly including the reporting of existing data, development of a framework, designing and scheduling a special survey (assessment and/or background questions) and reporting these results.

ⁱ Examples might include: The monographs *Assessing 21st Century Skills: Summary of a Workshop* (2011), *Education for Life and Work: Developing Transferable Knowledge and Skills in the 21st Century* (2012), and *Exploring the Intersection of Science Education and 21st Century Skills: A Workshop Summary* (2010) all published by the Board of Testing and Assessment, Division of Behavioral and Social Sciences and Education, National Academy of Sciences; the book *Teaching & Assessing 21st Century Skills* by Robert J. Marzano and Tammy Heflebower; the article, Motivation Matters, published in *Inside Higher ED*; information about the *Success Navigator™ Assessment* published by ETS and other published assessments; publications the organization Assessment and Teaching of 21st Century Skills headquartered at the University of Melbourne and sponsored by Cisco, Intel, and Microsoft.

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Category: Information for Educators about NAEP Data and Resources

Board Member Ideas:

- Focus on educator preparation about NAEP (along with parental education) for future teachers and administrators.
- Create a presentation to send to schools of education for pre-service teachers about how to use NAEP tools.
- Help teachers inform their practice, thinking of NAEP as a summative assessment in relation to teachers' use of formative assessments.
- Add more content to the NAEP website for teachers to use.
- Do more outreach to principals and school systems.
- Develop a campaign to make NAEP more relevant to all stakeholders.

Staff Proposal for Next Steps:

Board members Shannon Garrison and Father Joseph O'Keefe, working with other Board members as a small planning group, will develop proposals for providing information to pre- and in-service teachers and administrators on using NAEP data and resources, including a presentation that will be piloted at Boston College.

1. Appoint planning group.
2. Identify extant pre-service and in-service professional development programs that use NAEP data and resources.
3. Identify extant pre-service and in-service professional development programs that address data-based instructional decision making.
4. Identify extant courses for teachers and leaders that include topics on classroom and/or formative and summative assessment.
5. Identify the target audience for the pilot at Boston College.
6. Design and conduct a needs analysis of the target pilot audience to determine the NAEP data and resources of greatest relevance and various print and on-line media for dissemination.
7. Develop the pilot presentation.
8. Conduct the pilot at Boston College.
9. Evaluate the results of the pilot, the applicability to other venues, and conduct one or more tryouts in other settings.
10. Develop recommendations about the potential for broader use and dissemination of NAEP data and resources to the target population for Board consideration.