



Frequently Asked Questions Regarding the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP)

How often is NAEP administered?

NAEP is typically scheduled to be administered every other year to grades 4 and 8, and 12th grade every four years. The postponement of the 2021 NAEP assessment to 2022 caused changes in the NAEP schedule. On even numbered years starting in 2022, NAEP will administer Math and Reading to samples of students at the state-level, as well as other subjects such as civics, U.S. History, science, writing, and technology and engineering at to a national-level sample of students. Detroit Public Schools Community District also participates in the Trial Urban District Assessment Program which is delivered during the state sampling years. A long term-trend study is now administered to students by ages 9, 13, and 17 in odd numbered years starting in 2025 and are conducted every four years.

How are schools selected for NAEP?

Schools are selected by statistical selection survey methodology called probability sampling proportional to size. The goal of this sampling procedure is to get a representative sample of the nation and/or state. In order for the sample to be representative, NAEP uses this procedure to ensure that demographic and achievement characteristics of the sample are consistent and representative of the nation and/or state. In order to achieve the most accurate representation of the state during state sampling years, some schools with larger numbers of students may be selected more frequently than others.

How are the results used?

The results are released in the Nations Report Card (<https://nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/>) after the assessment period. These results are used to improve state and federal education policy. The results are often discussed in federal and state appropriations issues. A great deal of educational research is conducted with NAEP data.

How do NAEP results compare to state assessment results?

The methodology of the sampling, the methods of testing, the [assessment frameworks](#), and the criteria for performance levels of each subject are different than M-STEP, therefore there is no direct method for comparing results. The results are considered as one factor in the larger picture of student achievement measures.

How are the NAEP tests different than the M-STEP tests?

In each administration, students are matrix sampled to take only one subject. Within the subject area, they are given a sample of questions. The test is timed and the total actual time on the test is about an hour. About half of the test items are constructed response (mostly short answer fill-in the blank). NAEP also includes a background questionnaire which asks the students research based questions regarding their studying and learning activities. A questionnaire is also administered to the teaching and administrative staff.

What do school administrators have to do?

The Michigan Department of Education (MDE) in cooperation with the National Center for Educational Statistics strives to reduce the administrative burden on school staff and create a positive experience for the students. The process begins with the MDE State Superintendent notifying District Superintendents and District Assessment Coordinator of which particular schools have been selected in their district. This is followed by notification to the School Principal. In the fall, the NAEP State Coordinator (NSC) will contact the principal with detailed information. The principal will designate a school coordinator and fill out a Provide School Information Form (usually takes about 5-15 minutes). The NSC will use the state student database system to submit a list of students for each school. The duties of the School Coordinator are to coordinate a pre-assessment visit by the NAEP Assessment Coordinator which will include arranging for a testing room(s), handle local scheduling details, protocols for guest staff conduct, and for any student accommodations. Close to the testing date, the School Coordinator will send a parent notification letter home. The School Coordinator should be prepared to provide assistance on the test date, but NAEP assessment administrators will conduct the assessment and provide all assessment tables and materials. The NAEP Assessment Coordinator may request some assistance from the school if there is an unusually high number of accommodations or for special accommodation circumstances.

Who gets tested?

Depending on the test and subjects, students are selected from grades 4, 8, 12 or for the long term trends study ages 9, 13, and 17. Depending on the size of the school, all students may be selected, or if the school is large, NAEP may take a smaller probabilistic sample (this is defined by NAEP statisticians and depends on the study but usually around 50-100 students). This determination will be made at the time of the Assessment Coordinators pre-assessment visit.

How does NAEP handle accommodations?

NAEP encourages the participation of students with some limited English proficiency and students with disabilities. NAEP has a policy to provide for as many accommodations as reasonably possible. Most accommodations are very similar to M-STEP. A summary table is provided by the Michigan Department of Education. When School Coordinators are making accommodation decisions, they are expected to include students if they take M-STEP (or equivalent assessment) with or without accommodations. School Coordinators should discuss each student needing accommodations with the NAEP Assessment Coordinator and are especially invited to seek further assistance from the NSC if they have any questions.

How long does the NAEP assessment take?

The entire NAEP assessment process takes approximately two hours, including transition time, instructions, and completion of survey questions.

Can a school or student decline to participate?

The Michigan State School Code requires participation for all Michigan schools and the Federal No Child Left Behind law stipulates that Title I funds for districts will be withdrawn for failure of schools to participate in grade 4 and 8 NAEP assessments. NAEP will accommodate schools with a schedule conflict or snow day. If a school declines to participate, the schools accreditation may be withdrawn by the Michigan Department of Education in accordance with the Michigan State School Code. Student participation is voluntary. The School Coordinator must send home a parent notification letter prior to the NAEP assessment to inform the parents/guardians of the voluntary nature of the test.

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