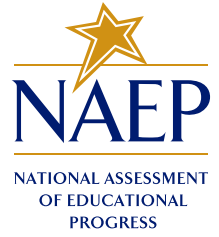




NATIONAL CENTER FOR  
EDUCATION STATISTICS

Institute of Educational Sciences



U.S. Department of Education  
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# An Overview of NAEP

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# What is NAEP?

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The National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), often called The Nation's Report Card, is the largest nationally representative and continuing assessment of what students in public and private schools in the United States know and are able to do in various subjects. Since 1969, NAEP has been a common measure of student achievement across the country in mathematics, reading, science, and many other subjects. Depending on the assessment, NAEP report cards provide national, state, and some district-level results, as well as results for different demographic groups.

NAEP is a congressionally mandated project of the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), located within the U.S. Department of Education's Institute of Education Sciences. NAEP data are also used in special studies conducted by NCES. These have included comparisons of proficiency standards across state assessments; insights from high school transcripts, including courses taken and credits earned; and in-depth looks at how different demographic groups perform across different types of schools.

The National Assessment Governing Board, an independent, bipartisan organization made up of governors, state school superintendents, teachers, researchers, and representatives of the general public, sets policy for NAEP.

## How is NAEP different from state assessments?

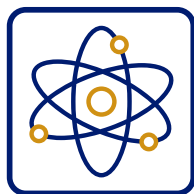
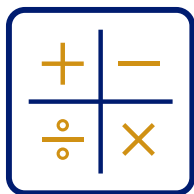
States have their own assessments, which are designed to provide individual student data about achievement based on different content standards, unique to each state. NCES administers the same NAEP assessment in every state, providing educators, policymakers, and parents with a common measure of student achievement that allows for direct comparisons among states and participating urban districts.



The NAEP website provides more extensive information about the assessment: <http://nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard>

NAEP results are available on The Nation's Report Card website: <http://nationsreportcard.gov>

The NAEP website features many tools and applications designed to provide quick and easy access to NAEP assessment data, examples of the types of questions students answer, performance comparisons, and more: <http://nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/about/naeptools.aspx>



## What subjects does NAEP assess?

NAEP includes a range of subjects at grades 4, 8, and 12 to provide a comprehensive look at the wide array of academic areas that are a part of a student's education. Subjects include civics, economics, geography, mathematics, music and visual arts, reading, science, technology and engineering literacy, U.S. history, and writing.

## How are NAEP results reported?

NAEP results are reported for the nation and, in most cases, for states, as well as for selected urban districts that participate in the Trial Urban District Assessment (TUDA). Results are reported as scores and as percentages of students reaching NAEP achievement levels—*Basic*, *Proficient*, and *Advanced*.

NAEP monitors overall educational progress for the nation, states, TUDA districts, and for different groups of students, including students with disabilities and English language learners. NAEP is not designed to provide results for individual students or schools.

## How is technology being used to measure and report student skills?

An increasing number of schools are making digital technologies an integral component of the learning environment. To assess students in more effective and engaging ways that mirror their classroom experiences, NAEP assessments have transitioned from traditional paper-and-pencil to a digital format.

To enhance the student experience, new interactive questions and features immerse students in the same types of activities they encounter in digital learning environments, which allow students to use multimedia to solve real-world problems. In a digital environment, helpful tools and features are built directly into the testing platform, making the assessment more accessible than ever for students. Digitally based assessments also provide new types of data that can deepen our understanding of what students know and are able to do in various subjects.

Learn more about digitally based assessments here: <http://nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/dba>

## How are NAEP results used?

Policymakers, researchers, and educators use NAEP results to inform educational improvements across the nation, within states and TUDA districts, and for various student groups. Parents, media, and the general public use NAEP results to monitor educational progress in their communities and compare performance with other regions of the country. NAEP also provides states with a benchmark to target important efforts that raise the bar for student achievement and ensure that students have equal opportunities to succeed.

Learn how NAEP data are used to inform policy and practice in different states: [https://nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/about/policy\\_practice.aspx](https://nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/about/policy_practice.aspx)

## Why is student participation important?

NAEP assesses a sample of students across the country to be representative of all students in the United States. Students who are selected represent the nation's geographic, racial, ethnic, and socioeconomic diversity. Each student's participation is critical for providing an accurate and complete picture of student achievement and ensuring that policymakers, researchers, and educators have reliable data to inform educational improvements.

## What is it like for students and schools to participate in NAEP?

- ▶ NAEP is administered to students during regular school hours. Each student is assessed in one subject area. Students spend between 90 and 120 minutes taking the assessment, including time to complete a survey questionnaire.
- ▶ NAEP representatives will bring all necessary materials, including tablets or laptops for digitally based assessments, to the schools on assessment day.
- ▶ Allowable accommodations are provided as necessary for students with disabilities and/or English language learners.
- ▶ Student responses on NAEP are private, and the privacy of each participating school and student is essential.

## What other data are collected during a NAEP assessment?

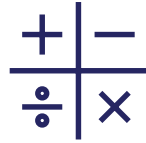
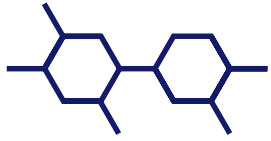
NCES includes survey questionnaires as part of NAEP to collect information that helps put the results into context. There are three types of survey questionnaires:

- ▶ Students complete questionnaires that provide information on their opportunities to learn in and outside of the classroom, educational experiences, and a variety of other topics, including socioeconomic status and technology use. Students may skip any question by leaving a response blank.
- ▶ Teachers responsible for the subject of the administered assessment complete questionnaires that gather information on teacher trainings and instructional practices.
- ▶ School questionnaires, usually completed by the principal or assistant principal, gather information on school policies and characteristics.

Learn more about these questionnaires here: <http://nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/bgquest.aspx>

All of the information provided by participants may be used only for statistical purposes and may not be disclosed, or used, in identifiable form for any other purpose except as required by law (20 U.S.C. §9573 and 6 U.S.C. §151). By law, every National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) employee as well as every NCES agent, such as contractors and NAEP coordinators, has taken an oath and is subject to a jail term of up to 5 years, a fine of \$250,000, or both if he or she willfully discloses ANY identifiable information about participants. Electronic submission of participant's information will be monitored for viruses, malware, and other threats by Federal employees and contractors in accordance with the Cybersecurity Enhancement Act of 2015. The collected information will be combined across respondents to produce statistical reports.





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