

# NAEP 2021

## Facts for Principals

Grades 4 and 8



Mathematics



Reading

National Assessment of  
Educational Progress

### NAEP is an integral part of education in the United States.

- ▶ Elected officials, policymakers, and educators all use NAEP results to develop ways to improve education.
- ▶ NAEP is a congressionally mandated program administered by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), within the U.S. Department of Education and the Institute of Education Sciences.
- ▶ NAEP serves a different role than state assessments. While states have their own unique assessments with different content standards, the same NAEP assessment is administered in every state, providing a common measure of student achievement.
- ▶ Depending on the type of NAEP assessment that is administered, the data can be used to compare and understand the performance of demographic groups within your state, the nation, other states, and districts that participate in the Trial Urban District Assessment (TUDA). NAEP is not designed to collect or report results for individual students, classrooms, or schools.
- ▶ To provide a better understanding of educational experiences and factors that may be related to students' learning, students, teachers, and principals who participate in NAEP are asked to complete survey questionnaires.

*"NAEP is the only assessment providing half-a-century of performance data to measure what students know and can do. The state and national trends inform local, state, and national program and policy discussions that improve teaching and learning."*

– David Atherton, EdD, Principal, Clear Creek Middle School, Gresham, OR

**What is NAEP?** The National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) is the largest nationally representative and continuing assessment of what our nation's students know and can do in various subjects such as civics, mathematics, reading, and U.S. history. The results of NAEP are released as The Nation's Report Card.

**What can principals and schools expect?** NAEP representatives will provide significant support to your school on assessment day. As principals, you make an important contribution to the program by selecting and empowering a NAEP school coordinator, meeting with teachers and participating students, and encouraging your students to participate and do their best. You are essential partners in NAEP. When students participate and give their best effort, NAEP results provide the most accurate measure possible of student achievement across the country.

In 2021, the NAEP mathematics and reading assessments will be administered on sanitized tablets to students at grades 4 and 8. Results will be released at the national and state levels. Each student will be assessed in only one subject.

In addition to subject-area questions, students will complete NAEP survey questions that provide valuable information about participating students' educational experiences and opportunities to learn both in and out of the classroom. NCES is exploring the possibility of an online survey questionnaire for students participating in distance learning and will work closely with schools to administer the questionnaire to remote students.

NAEP representatives will bring all necessary materials and equipment, including tablets with keyboards, to schools on assessment day. Schools will only need to provide space for students to take the assessment, desks or tables, and an adequate number of electrical outlets in the assessment location—schools will not need to provide internet access.

Visit <https://nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/about/covid19.aspx> for more information about NAEP COVID-19 protocols.



For more information about NAEP,  
visit [nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard](https://nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard)

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NAEP was first administered in 1969 to measure student achievement nationally. In 1990, NAEP was administered at the state level for the first time. Students in grades 4 and 8 are currently assessed at the national and state level in mathematics and reading every two years and in other subjects periodically. The NAEP TUDA program, which measures student achievement in some of the nation's large urban districts, began in 2002.

**Why is NAEP considered the gold standard?** From the development of assessment frameworks and questions to the reporting of results, NAEP delivers high technical quality and represents the best thinking of assessment and content specialists, state education staff, and teachers from around the nation. NAEP is a trusted resource that measures student progress and helps inform policy decisions that improve education in the United States.

**How are NAEP results reported?** NAEP results are reported for different demographic groups rather than for individual students or schools. Within a school, just some of the student population participates, and student responses are combined with those from other participating students to produce the results.

**How are schools and students selected for NAEP?** A carefully designed sampling process ensures that NAEP-selected schools and students are representative of all schools and students in their district, state, and across the United States. To ensure that the sample represents all students in the nation's schools, a broad range of accommodations are allowed for students with disabilities and English language learners.

**What can teachers and students expect?** Including transition time, directions and tutorials, and completion of survey questions, it takes approximately 2 hours for students to complete the assessment. Teachers do not need to prepare their students to take the assessment but should encourage them to do their best. NAEP representatives provide significant support to your school by working with the designated coordinator in your school to organize assessment activities.

**How can educators use NAEP data to help students?** NAEP items can be used as a helpful educational resource in the classroom. Teachers and district staff can use the NAEP Questions Tool (<http://nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/nqt>) to see how students' performance compares nationally on specific items. Released NAEP items come with a scoring guide, sample student responses, and performance data.

Visit the NAEP website at <http://nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard> to access this information and more.

National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) is authorized to conduct NAEP by the National Assessment of Educational Progress Authorization Act (20 U.S.C. §9622) and to collect students' education records from education agencies or institutions for the purposes of evaluating federally supported education programs under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA, 34 CFR §§ 99.31(a)(3)(iii) and 99.35). 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 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.