

disseminated by NCES are of high quality and are not subject to political influence. In addition, ACES is required to advise the Commissioner of NCES and the National Assessment Governing Board on technical and statistical matters related to the National Assessment of Education Progress (NAEP). The meeting of the Council is open to the public.

The proposed agenda for the full Council includes the following:

- A status report from the NCES Commissioner on the condition of NCES;
- A presentation and discussion of legislated cost and market basket studies contained in the Higher Education Act; and
- The presentation of Committee reports. Individual meetings of the three ACES subcommittees will focus on specific topics:
 - The agenda for the Management Committee includes discussion of the Education Statistics Services Institute's (ESSI) evaluation, the Commissioner's management report, a briefing on customer service activities, and a discussion of the IPEDS redesign.
 - The agenda for the Statistics Committee includes a discussion of the response probability convention in assessment scales, a briefing on NAEP and international assessments, a discussion on NAGB's perspectives on the future of NAEP, a report on the total survey error project, a joint session with the Policy Committee to discuss the NAEP/SASS research activity, and a discussion on NAEP technical and policy issues.
 - The agenda for the Strategy/Policy Committee includes a report on teacher licensure, a progress report on instructional practices, and a report from NECS's taskforce on life long learning.

Records are kept of all Council proceedings and are available for public inspection at the Office of the Executive Director, Advisory Council on Education Statistics, 555 New Jersey Avenue, NW, Room 400J, Washington, DC 20208-7575.

Dated: May 3, 1999.

C. Kent McGuire,

Assistant Secretary for Educational Research and Improvement.

[FR Doc. 99-11701 Filed 5-7-99; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4000-01-M

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

National Assessment Governing Board; Public Forum

AGENCY: National Assessment Governing Board; Education.

ACTION: Notice of information collection activity.

SUMMARY: This notice announces that the National Assessment Governing Board (NAGB) will submit an Information Collection Request (ICR) to the Office of Management and Budget for approval.

The ICR is: An Investigation of Alternative Methods for Scale Anchoring and Item Mapping in the National Assessment of Educational Progress.

DATES: Public comments must be submitted on or before June 9, 1999.

ADDRESSES: Written comments should be submitted by June 9, 1999. Mail to Patricia Hanick, NAEP ALS Project Manager, ACT, Inc., 2255 North Dubuque Road, P.O. Box 168, Iowa City, IA 52243-0168. Copies of the complete ICR and accompanying appendices may be obtained from the NAEP ALS Project Manager at the address above.

Comments may also be submitted electronically by sending electronic mail (e-mail) to Hanick@ACT.org. Electronic comments must be identified by the title of the ICR. No confidential business information should be submitted through e-mail.

Information submitted as a comment concerning this document may be claimed confidential by marking any part or all of that information as confidential business information (CBI). Information so marked will not be disclosed except in accordance with the procedures set forth in 40 CFR part 2. A copy of the comment that does not contain CBI must be submitted for inclusion in the public record. Information not marked confidential may be disclosed publicly by NAGB without prior notice.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Patricia Hanick, NAEP ALS Project Manager, ACT, Inc., 2255 North Dubuque Road, P.O. Box 168, Iowa City, IA 52243-0168, Telephone: (319) 337-1452 or (800) 525-6930, e-mail: Hanick@ACT.org.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Electronic copies of this ICR can be obtained from the contact person listed above.

I. Information Collection Request

NAGB is seeking comments on the following Information Collection Request (ICR).

Title: An Investigation of Alternative Methods for Scale Anchoring and Item Mapping in the National Assessment of Educational Progress.

Affected Entities: Parties affected by this information collection are persons who served as panelists for pilot studies, achievement levels-setting (ALS) meetings, and validation research for the 1998 Science NAEP.

Abstract. The purpose of this information collection activity is to gather research information for NAGB to be used in evaluating the procedures for the selection of exemplar items to represent student performance on NAEP. Exemplar items are used as one of the primary means of communicating student performance on NAEP. The criteria for selecting exemplar items is critical to the "message" portrayed by the items when reporting the outcomes of NAEP to the public.

Two statistical criteria currently guide the selection of exemplar items: One based on item difficulty, and the other on item discrimination. Part One of the study will examine that statistical criteria used to select exemplar items by comparing various scale anchoring and item mapping methodologies. The results of these systematic comparisons will be judged not only statistically, but also according to the degree to which they agree with informed judgments about item difficulty. Collecting responses from informed judges is Part Two of the study. Because these individuals have participated in the process of setting achievement levels for the 1998 Science NAEP, they are likely to be keenly interested in the research study.

In Part One of the study, several technical aspects of the anchoring process will be investigated:

- (1) Stringency of difficulty criterion (response probability criterion);
- (2) Point versus interval-based estimates;
- (3) Empirical versus model-based estimates;
- (4) Type of discrimination criterion.

Before conducting the data analysis of the anchoring process, cross validation analyses of random half-samples of the data will be done. Four methods of analyzing the student data are planned:

- (1) Empirical/interval estimation;
- (2) Empirical/point estimation;
- (3) Model-based/interval estimation;
- (4) Model-based/point estimation.

Three factors will be considered as the criteria to determine which anchoring/mapping method is best:

- (1) Consistency of results across subsamples;
- (2) The degree to which the results are supported by informed judgment;

(3) The number of exemplar items produced by the method.

In Part Two of the study each prospective respondent will be sent a selection of items from the 1990 Science NAEP Physical Science item pool. All of the items have been "released" for public review. Respondents will be asked to rank order the items according to the perceived level of difficulty. The ranking task will involve four overlapping sets of 8–9 items per set. Each item will be displayed on a separate card. Item sets will include obtained and bogus clusters. Participants will be asked if the items appear to cluster together, and if so, what are the common tasks or content areas that form the basis of the cluster. They will be asked to determine if the clusters reflect Basic, Proficient, or Advanced performance, based on the NAGB policy definitions of achievement levels. Finally, participants will be asked the following question:

If you were told that American students can do item N, what would you assume this meant? Specifically, what percent of students would need to be able to answer correctly in order for you to agree that students can do the item? (40%, 50%, 60%, 70%, 80%, (90%, 100%).

The results of Part One will then be evaluated according to the degree to which they agree with the informed judgments about item difficulty.

The response rate for the survey used in Part Two is expected to be 80% or higher. Only persons who served as panelists for pilot studies, achievement levels-setting meetings, and validation research for the 1998 Science NAEP will be invited to participate. These individuals have shown keen interest in NAEP by their participation in the ALS process. The mailing list for these individuals is being updated, and those who can be contacted will be asked in advance if they will agree to participate in the survey. Only persons who consent will receive the survey and accompanying materials. Follow-up procedures will include mailing reminder postcards, making telephone calls, and sending replacement materials.

No third party notification or public disclosure burden is associated with this collection.

Burden Statement: The estimated total respondent burden is 228 hours, and the average burden per respondent is 1.5 hours. This is a one-time survey. Neither small business nor other small entities are included in the survey.

II. Request for Comments

NAGB solicits comments to:

(i) Evaluate whether the proposed collection of information is an appropriate method to determine the "message" portrayed by the items regarding student performance on NAEP reported to the public.

(ii) Enhance the accuracy, quality, and utility of the information to be collected.

(iii) Evaluate whether the design of this survey maximizes the response rate, i.e. the number of selected persons who will respond.

Records are kept of all public comments and are available for public inspection at the U.S. Department of Education, National Assessment Governing Board, Suite 825, 800 North Capitol Street, NW, Washington, DC from 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Dated: May 5, 1999.

Roy Truby,

Executive Director, National Assessment Governing Board.

[FR Doc. 99–11660 Filed 5–7–99; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4000–01–M

DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY

Environmental Management Site-Specific Advisory Board, Kirtland Area Office (Sandia)

AGENCY: Department of Energy.

ACTION: Notice of open meeting.

SUMMARY: This notice announces a meeting of the Environmental Management Site-Specific Advisory Board (EM SSAB), Kirtland Area Office (Sandia). The Federal Advisory Committee Act (Pub. L. 92–463, 86 Stat. 770) requires that public notice of these meetings be announced in the **Federal Register**.

DATES: Wednesday, May 19, 1999: 5:30 p.m.–9 p.m. (MST).

ADDRESSES: North Valley Center, 3825 4th, NW, Albuquerque, New Mexico 87110, (505) 761–4025.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Mike Zamorski, Acting Manager, Department of Energy Kirtland Area Office, PO Box 5400, Albuquerque, NM 87185, (505) 845–4094.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Purpose of the Board: The purpose of the Board is to make recommendations to DOE and its regulators in the areas of environmental restoration, waste management, and related activities.

Tentative Agenda

5:30 p.m.

DOE Quarterly Report

6 p.m.

- Call to Order/Roll—Diane Terry, Acting Chair

- Public Comments (10 minutes)
- Opening Comments from Acting Chair (Including brief overview of retreat, any update information and incorporation deadline)
- Facilitated Check-in
- Review Agenda
- Approve Minutes from Last Meeting
- Committee Reports

New Business

Vote on Tobi for Monthly Meeting Facilitator 7 p.m.

- Process Work lead by Tobi
 1. Including information on important issues that need to be discussed, as identified by the CAB at Retreat
 2. Consensus Building Process
 3. Ground Rules
 4. Vision Statement

Break (15 Minutes)

8:15–8:55 p.m.

- Group Discussion:
 1. Leadership Criteria
 2. Process for Electing New Officers

Public Comments (5 Minutes)

9 p.m.

Adjourn

A final agenda will be available at the meeting Wednesday, May 19, 1999.

Public Participation: The meeting is open to the public. Written statements may be filed with the Committee either before or after the meeting. Individuals who wish to make oral statements pertaining to agenda items should contact Mike Zamorski's office at the address or telephone number listed above. Requests must be received 5 days prior to the meeting and reasonable provision will be made to include the presentation in the agenda. The Designated Federal Officer is empowered to conduct the meeting in a fashion that will facilitate the orderly conduct of business. Each individual wishing to make public comment will be provided a maximum of 5 minutes to present their comments. This notice is being published less 15 days before the date of the meeting due to programmatic issues that needed to be resolved prior to publication.

Minutes: The minutes of this meeting will be available for public review and copying at the Freedom of Information Public Reading Room, 1E–190, Forrestal Building, 1000 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20585 between 9 a.m. and 4 p.m., Monday–Friday, except Federal holidays. Minutes will also be available by writing to Mike Zamorski, Manager, Department of Energy Kirtland Area Office, PO Box 5400, MS–0184, Albuquerque, NM 87185, or by calling (505) 845–4094.