

April 27, 2020

Dear Chief State School Officer:

In March, the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) reached out to you regarding the upcoming year of assessments and other activities planned for 2021, including details for the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP). The Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic continues to be one of the most consequential challenges that we face across the country. We recognize that this is affecting states agencies, districts, and schools, while also affecting us *all* personally. As we continue to respond to the COVID-19 crisis (e.g., the postponement of LTT age 17 until 2021), we wanted to provide you with an update on the assessment activities for NCES.

NCES believes that NAEP and the international assessments will provide important benchmarks to help us understand the impact of the health crisis and will be more important than ever to administer in 2021. Therefore, we intend to move forward with the administration of the 2021 NAEP assessments (i.e., state and TUDA mathematics and reading, national U.S. history and civics) and Progress in International Reading and Literacy Study (PIRLS). Preparations for these assessments are underway. As the situation with COVID-19 continues to evolve we will adapt our processes and procedures.

Within this context we've taken steps to reduce the burden on districts and schools, including: (1) postponing the distribution of NAEP 2021 school samples to state and TUDAs, from May to summer 2020; (2) delaying recruitment and scheduling of district and schools; and (3) delaying plans to implement a three-block design for NAEP, which means all students will participate in the traditional two-block design.

We will continue to keep your State Coordinator apprised of any updates. NCES understands the ongoing challenges of educating children in your schools and our hearts are with you as you try to meet these significant demands.

Sincerely,



Peggy Carr, Ph.D.
Associate Commissioner