

Author Full Name : Madie Spartz**Received Date :** 06/13/2025 12:29 PM**Comments Received :**

As a non-profit organization dedicated to improving academic outcomes for students in Minnesota, EdAllies urges the Department of Education to maintain the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) in its current form. NAEP data is invaluable in our work to improve Minnesota's public education system. NAEP scores allow us to track how Minnesota students are performing over time and in comparison to students in other states. NAEP allows us to see how our education policy is working, and importantly, it allows us and other advocates in Minnesota to look to other states for effective practices to emulate in education policy, curriculum, and instruction. Without NAEP data, our ability to pursue educational excellence for all students would be threatened. NAEP is the only nationwide tool we have to measure American students' academic skills. For decades, NAEP has allowed us to track student achievement over time, measure differences between student demographic groups, and make meaningful comparisons between states' academic progress. Ironically, 2024 NAEP scores were what the President pointed to in his executive order demanding the closure of the Department of Education. Without NAEP data, the administration would not have evidence to support their claim that USED is failing. Without a robust assessment tool like NAEP, how can we meaningfully measure how much American students are learning? NAEP results have always been useful, but never more so than in the post-COVID period. NAEP scores allowed us to see how much learning U.S. students had lost, and more importantly, inform strategies to help them make up for that learning loss. States across the country, including Minnesota, looked to emulate the "Mississippi Miracle," where Mississippi emerged as a national leader in learning gains, as a model for how to improve student literacy in the wake of COVID-19 school closures and beyond. Mississippi's policy choices influenced the design and passage of science of reading legislation in several states, including Minnesota's own Read Act in 2023. Without NAEP data showing their progress, other states may have never known how successful Mississippi had been. Furthermore, disaggregated NAEP scores are a civil rights tool: they allow us to see how different student groups are performing so we have more information about how they're being served in public schools. Without NAEP, we would not have the robust cache of evidence that shows how students living in poverty, students of color, and those learning English consistently perform behind their peers. This important data drives policy change at the national, state, local, and school level to better serve those students and improve their outcomes. The reductions in staffing at USED put NAEP and its status as the "gold standard" in assessment in jeopardy. NAEP requires complex and advanced statistical knowledge and analysis: creating representative samples of American students, developing test questions and testing their validity and reliability, analyzing enormous datasets, and publishing reports and analysis for all 50 states is a behemoth task. Reducing the workforce that delivers NAEP will not increase efficiency; it will create roadblocks and more human error when limited numbers of staff are stretched thin. These reductions will erode the infrastructure that we count on to measure what American students know and use to improve their outcomes.