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The National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) remains the most comprehensive and empirically driven education tracker, providing long-term data on student achievement across grades 4, 8, and 12 in subjects including civics, mathematics, science, and reading. As education champions in Nevada, Opportunity 180 supports the resources that NAEP and the Nation's Report Card provide for a sustainable approach to national education data equity. It is critical that NAEP modernization also continues, to ensure the assessment remains a cornerstone of national benchmarking. Furthermore, it will be paramount to have these national benchmarks in place to select and drive programs for academic excellence (i.e., evidence-based literacy support, high-frequency tutoring, etc.), especially as the Department considers additional autonomy to states and providing funding to states using evidence-based, data-driven methodology. NAEP is an already existing tool that could be used to evaluate need, growth, sustainability, and scalability of state programs, aligned with the Department's proposed priorities. NAEP remains a critical tool to measure, evaluate, and capture student achievement, and we urge the Department to consider its historical - and future - value to students, schools, and states.

Is collection necessary to the proper functions of the Department?

Data collection is necessary for the continuous and ongoing measurement of student achievement, and as a benchmark to quantify the effectiveness of initiatives to improve student outcomes. We strongly support continued testing through NAEP in 2026 for all states, not only for its historical significance but also for its unique ability to track large-scale district performance, particularly that of the Clark County School District (CCSD), the largest district in the state of Nevada, with a student population of 304K. CCSD's inclusion in NAEP ensures fair comparisons with national standards (e.g., compared to similar-sized districts such as Miami-Dade County) and contributes to a standardized approach to educational benchmarking.

How might the Department enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information to be collected?

Nevada will benefit from NAEP participation, given its demographic diversity and large-scale district representation. NAEP's standardized assessment structure enables cross-district comparisons and the longest-running historical trend analysis for the State of Nevada, ensuring the state's education policies can be data-driven.

Timely use of the data is also critical to ensuring states, districts, schools, educators, and parents have the data they need to make informed decisions about where changes and additional support may be required, as well as what policies and practices have been proven to have a positive impact on student achievement and could potentially be scaled.

Providing additional tools and resources for schools, parents, and other stakeholders to disseminate and evaluate their NAEP results would also be beneficial, to ensure data is at the center of decision-making at all levels, from schools to states and the federal government.