



THE STATE
of **ALASKA**
GOVERNOR MIKE DUNLEAVY

Department of Education & Early Development

OFFICE OF THE COMMISSIONER

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July 28, 2025

Superintendent Hanson
Craig City School District
PO Box 800
Craig, AK 99921

Dear Superintendent Hanson,

Thank you for your leadership. What you do matters every day for young Alaskans.

As we work together to raise student achievement across the state, it's important to reflect on the role assessments play in that effort. Whether it's a classroom quiz, a state benchmark, or a national measure like NAEP, every assessment gives students a chance to show what they've learned—and helps us better understand how to support them.

Craig Middle School has been selected to participate in the 2026 administration of the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP). NAEP is the largest nationally representative assessment of student knowledge in core academic subjects. Participation helps provide a clear, accurate picture of student performance across the nation and here in Alaska.

While NAEP doesn't provide individual student data, the results play an important role in public education. They inform national, state, and local conversations about student outcomes and help elected officials, communities, and policymakers make more informed decisions about educational policy and funding.

This is also an opportunity for us to reframe how we view assessments in Alaska. Past challenges with testing understandably left some educators wary. However, with positive changes to our state assessments and the early impact of the Reads Act, we now have a stronger, more aligned system that emphasizes meaningful instruction and growth. It's time to build a culture that sees assessments not as hurdles, but as opportunities—for students to shine and for schools to show progress.

When students take assessments seriously, they help tell Alaska's story. These results reflect real learning and can be used to advocate for the resources and support our schools need.

NAEP 2026 Program Overview

The NAEP 2026 administration will assess students between **January 26 and March 20, 2026**. The attached list shows which district schools have been selected and the assessment program for each. Students will respond to questions in mathematics or reading; each student will be assessed in only one subject.

- National- and state-level assessments
 - Grades 4 and 8: Mathematics and Reading
- National-level only assessments
 - Grade 8: Civics and U.S. History

State and national results will be released as *The Nation's Report Card*.

Pilot Tests

Pilot tests in mathematics and reading for grades 4, 8, and 12 will also be conducted within the same window (Jan 26–Mar 20, 2026). Results from pilot tests will not be released but will inform the development of future NAEP assessments.

Next Steps

- Please add the NAEP assessment window (January 26 to March 20, 2026) to your district test calendar.
- Schools will be notified soon so principals can schedule and integrate NAEP into school programs.
- NAEP representatives will contact schools or districts regarding use of school devices and internet access.

More information can be found in the attachments and at <http://nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard>. Raina Moulia, our NAEP State Coordinator, will reach out to your staff to provide additional details and technical support as needed.

Thank you again for your leadership, your commitment to educational excellence, and your help in empowering Alaska's students to demonstrate all that they know.

Cheers,



Deena Bishop, Ed.D.

Attachments: *Facts for Districts*

CC: Karen Melin, Assessment Administrator
Christy House, District Assessment Coordinator
Raina Moulia, NAEP State Coordinator

The National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) conducts the National Assessment of Educational Progress to evaluate federally supported education programs. All of the information you provide may only be

used for the purposes of research, statistics, and evaluation under the Education Sciences Reform Act of 2002 (ESRA; 20 U.S.C. § 9543) and may not be disclosed, or used, in identifiable form for any other purpose except as required 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 you in any unauthorized manner. Electronic submission of your information will be monitored for viruses, malware, and other threats by Federal employees and contractors in accordance with the Cybersecurity Enhancement Act of 2015.