

NAEP State Service Center at Westat

NAEP's Trial Urban District Assessment: Closing the Gaps, Analyzing, and Disseminating the Data

The TUDA program, which included 18 districts for the 2009 assessment, allows the selected urban districts to receive district-level data on NAEP. Districts included were New York City, Houston and Jefferson County (KY).

New York City Department of Education's (NYCDOE) analysis of NAEP strand-level results is as follows. Specifically, this analysis identified the skill strands where there were the largest gaps between New York City performance and national performance. By examining these gaps in 2007, and how they have changed since 2003, NYCDOE was able to identify specific strengths and areas for improvement in their schools. In addition, NYCDOE examined each strand for New York City's progress in closing the achievement gap and compared that to national trends. These findings were reported back to school-based staff, to drive instructional improvement and were influential in New York City's efforts to better understand the alignment between local, national, and international standards.

Houston Independent School District (HISD) analyzes NAEP data to monitor district performance in reading, mathematics, science and writing, as compared to other urban school districts. They analyze data to monitor demographic groups' performance. They also review the NAEP released reading passages, and items to monitor difficulty and writing item prompts, to monitor genres of writing being assessed. HISD reviews national data to determine broad areas of weakness and correlate that to strengthening HISD curriculum guides. The HISD curriculum department relies on the NAEP frameworks to inform district work on curriculum guides. Although not a subject for which HISD receives district-level results, they also intend to use the first administration of the NAEP economics assessment from 2006, as they revise their economics curriculum in 2010 to reflect a new state assessment.

Jefferson County (KY) participated in TUDA for the first time in 2009. The Jefferson County Public Schools (JCPS) applied to be a TUDA district for three main reasons. First, comparisons of state accountability results with other Kentucky districts are not "apple to apple" comparisons, since JCPS is unique in its demographics. JCPS is three times larger than the second largest district in the state, and has one-half the African American and Limited English Proficient student population in the state. Secondly, JCPS received an \$8 million dollar grant for reading improvement and a \$25 million dollar grant for math and science improvement. In both cases, generalizations about the program using the results from the state accountability tests were limited. Finally, the local chamber of commerce monitors the "competitiveness" of the area's education system. The district-level NAEP results will be one measure in a group of benchmarks.

Contact: Alka Pateriya, TUDA Program Leader, NAEP State Service Center at Westat, AlkaPateriya@westat.com