July 28, 2009

**MEMORANDUM**

To: Shelly Martinez

From: Patricia Etienne

Re: NCES Response to OMB NAEP Questions Re: 2010 National Assessment of Education Progress (NAEP) Wave 2, OMB Control #1850-0790

1. The letter indicates a school testing coordinator, IEP coordinator, or an IEP/special education teacher should complete the form. Since most swds spend their time in a regular classroom, the student's subject-specific general education teacher should be eligible to complete the form. Who better know a swds math performance than her math teacher?

Response: Ultimately, it is up to the school to determine who should complete the worksheets. The directions indicate different individuals may complete the front and back of the worksheet. The questions on the back of the form ask about the student's NAEP-subject performance and may be best answered by the classroom/subject teacher. The questions on the front of the worksheet ask about how the student is tested on their state assessment. In many schools, the classroom teacher may not be the best person to respond to these questions, so we've provided some guidance on other individuals that may be the best person to respond. However, this does not preclude the classroom teacher from responding. To ensure this is adequately conveyed to the school personnel, we have changed the directions to include classroom teacher in the list. The bullet now reads: “This person may be a school testing coordinator, IEP coordinator, an IEP/special education teacher, or a classroom teacher.”

* Bill Knudsen is no longer at ED - the OSEP signatory needs to change.

Response: NCES will update the letter.

2. Instruction Sheet: We are not familiar with students that have IEPs for gifted/talented programs (column G). How prevalent is this?

Response: The broader term that most states use is exceptional children, which includes students with disabilities and gifted and talented students. GT students usually require differentiated instruction, so some states use an IEP for these students to provide the guidelines for differentiated instruction.

3. Column H: ED should know which states use approved modified/alternate state tests. If we know the state the student is in, we won't need to ask form completers for this information.

Response: The worksheets must be uniform for all respondents in order to minimize costs for printing and processing. Therefore, the option of selecting a modified or alternate state test must be available for all individuals, from all states.

4. Column I: How burdensome would it be for the contractor to create State-specific forms by approved accommodation? This would take the onus off the form completer to track down her state-approved accommodations and might help lessen confusion and increase response rates.

Response: The worksheets must be uniform for all respondents in order to minimize costs for printing and processing. The NAEP State Coordinators will be preparing state-specific guidelines which will be provided to the form completers with the worksheets. These guidelines will show how accommodations used on the state test correspond to accommodations offered on NAEP. A draft template of these guidelines is attached, for reference.

 \* How does ED define "occasional" vs. "most/all" in terms of test items read aloud in English? Clear definitions would be helpful.

 Response: "Occasional" is defined as occasional words or phrases read aloud. "Most/All" is defined as most or all of the directions, test items and responses read aloud. Schools are usually familiar with the difference and the NAEP representative can also provide additional clarification. Most states use this terminology too.

 \* A student could require many of the accommodations listed in the instructions. Rather than ask form completers to write this in to the box in column I, could the contractor supply a state-specific addendum with the approved accommodations? The completer would then just need to fill in a bubble.

 Response: Prior to NAEP 2010, the SD and ELL questionnaires provided a complete list of the accommodations provided by NAEP. Respondents tended to use the list to select all the accommodations they thought would help a student instead of just the accommodations the student used on the state assessment. We reviewed data from NAEP 2007 and identified the 5-6 most frequently used accommodations to list on the worksheets to avoid the "laundry list" effect. As mentioned in the response to #4, NAEP State Coordinators will be preparing state-specific guidelines showing how which accommodations are allowed by the state.

 Also, on NAEP, please ask NCES to describe for us what pretesting it did of the revised SD and ELL instructions sheets. We understand that they were designed to address deficiencies with the old way of collecting the data, but the new instructions look pretty daunting to us.

 These materials were developed in response to numerous complaints from states and schools about the burden of completing questionnaires for each student. Even though, over the years, NCES has reduced the number of questions in the questionnaires, the number of students for which questionnaires must be completed continues to grow, so complaints continue.

 Our intent is to pretest the worksheets and accompanying instructions in 2010, at which time the number of students and schools is smaller than the large NAEP years. While these materials have not been pretested in the field yet, they have been vetted by advisory groups including NAEP state coordinators, field directors and a select group of other field staff, who work directly with schools. The response to these materials has been very favorable.