



National Center and State Collaborative

National Center and State Collaborative General Supervision Enhancement Grant

About NCSC

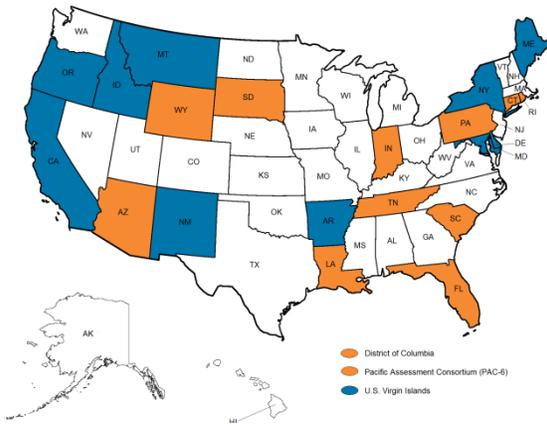
The National Center and State Collaborative (NCSC) is a project led by five centers and 24 states (13 core states and 11 Tier II states) charged with building an alternate assessment based on alternate achievement standards (AA-AAS) for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities. The goal

of the NCSC project is to ensure that students with the most significant cognitive disabilities achieve increasingly higher academic outcomes and leave high school ready for post-secondary options. A well-designed end-of-year test alone is not enough to achieve that goal. NCSC will also develop curriculum, instruction, and professional development support for teachers of students with significant cognitive disabilities. All partners share a commitment to the development of a comprehensive model of curriculum, instruction, assessment, and supportive professional development.

All partners share a commitment to the research-to-practice focus of the project, and to the development of a comprehensive model of curriculum, instruction, assessment, and supportive professional development.

The NCSC project represents:

- Best practices and lessons-learned from over a decade of research on assessment, academic instruction, communication, and learner characteristics of students with the most significant cognitive disabilities
- A collaborative effort that brings together experts and practitioners from a variety of fields including special education, assessment, curriculum and instruction, and communication sciences
- A practice-oriented approach designed to support administrators, teachers, and families
- An opportunity to ensure that students with the most significant cognitive disabilities benefit from the national movement toward Common Core State Standards designed to prepare all students for success in college and careers



Organizations

- National Center on Educational Outcomes
- National Center for the Improvement of Educational Assessment
- University of Kentucky
- University of North Carolina-Charlotte
- edCount, LLC

States *Core partner states are orange in color and Tier II states are blue in color

Arizona	Connecticut	District of Columbia	Florida
Indiana	Louisiana	Pacific Assessment Consortium (PAC-6)	Pennsylvania
Rhode Island	South Carolina	South Dakota	Tennessee
Wyoming			

Tier II Affiliated States (beta testing and evaluation partners) as of May 6, 2013

Arkansas, California, Delaware, Idaho, Maine, Maryland, Montana, New Mexico, New York, Oregon, and the US Virgin Islands

NCSC FAQs

Why do we need a new alternate assessment?

The national consensus around college and career ready standards based on real-world expectations presents an opportunity to raise expectations for all students, including students with significant cognitive disabilities. As states build common general assessments that measure college and career readiness, as defined grade by grade in the Common Core State Standards, we need an alternate assessment based on the same foundation of rigorous real-world content, while taking into account these students' unique learner characteristics.

What does “college and career ready” mean for students with significant cognitive disabilities?

The terminology of “college and career ready” as defined by educational experts and policy makers may seem out of reach for many students with the most significant cognitive disabilities, but the skill sets associated with these standards *are* important and meaningful for these students. For students with significant cognitive disabilities, we are only beginning to learn what is possible with the benefit of 12 years of systematic instruction in communication, reading, math, and other rigorous content. The NCSC project will work with key research and practice partners to rethink our ideas of what is possible for these students by operating on the principle of the “least dangerous assumption.”

How will my state’s participation in the NCSC project affect the way that my district serves and assesses students with the most significant cognitive disabilities?

Your district will have access to all of the curricular, instructional support, and professional development materials developed through NCSC for teachers of students with the most significant cognitive disabilities. The alternate assessment will be based on the best research available about how these students build competence in academics and how to prepare them for life after high school. NCSC will also design systems to ease the burden of administering the alternate assessment.

Will the Curriculum and Instruction (C&I) materials be accessible for all students who have the most significant cognitive disabilities, including those with the most complex challenges?

Yes. In order for any student to benefit from challenging curriculum and high quality instruction, they have to be able to communicate what they know and can do. In addition to intensive training for teachers and related service providers on communication strategies for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities, NCSC will produce materials at varying levels of complexity to meet students' unique learning needs, and will develop strong accommodations policies, procedures, and professional development.

When will the NCSC materials be available for use?

Teachers can start using the NCSC curriculum, instruction, and professional development resources as they are made available throughout the project. The final product will be a summative alternate assessment to be made available in the final year of the project.

Will the NCSC assessment be available to all states?

Yes. While only the partner states will have the opportunity to shape the design of the assessment system, all states will have access to all NCSC products after the project ends. You can find more information on the NCSC website at <http://www.ncscpartners.org> or by contacting Project Director Rachel Quenemoen at quene003@umn.edu or 612-708-6960.



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