



## Information about the NCSC Project and Parent Resources

In 2010, the National Governor's Association and the Council for Chief State School Officers introduced the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) in English Language Arts (ELA) and mathematics, which almost every state has adopted. The CCSS focus on the knowledge and skills students need to be ready for college and careers after high school.

The U.S. Department of Education awarded the National Center and State Collaborative (NCSC) a grant to develop a new alternate assessment based on the CCSS for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities. The assessments will be ready to use by the 2014-15 school year, although some states may have different timelines for implementation. NCSC is made up of 25 states and five national organizations. For a list see <http://www.ncscpartners.org/about>. Decisions by Individualized Education Program (IEP) Teams about which students will participate in these assessments in 2014-15 will begin to be made during the 2013-14 school year.

NCSC's framework for improved educational outcomes emphasizes the meaningful interaction of curriculum (academic content), instruction and assessment. In addition to a new alternate assessment for math and ELA, NCSC is developing curriculum and instructional resources. These materials will assist teachers in understanding the content and providing instruction on the CCSS for students who take the alternate assessments. These materials address the needs of students with significant cognitive disabilities, including those with limited communication skills or prior exposure to the academic content. The foundation of the NCSC framework is communicative competence. Therefore, NCSC is also providing professional development resources to assist teachers in identifying and developing the student communication and language development necessary to access the general curriculum. Communication can occur through oral speech and/or through the use of other methods of communication. The NCSC curriculum and instructional resources are being posted on a public website at <https://wiki.ncscpartners.org>. Educators and parents can use these resources, whether or not they are from a state that is currently partnering with NCSC.

In order to facilitate informed parental involvement, NCSC hired a parent training and technical assistance specialist to develop resources for parents that explain the NCSC assessments, the IEP Team guidelines for participation in the assessments, the curriculum/instructional resources and concepts related to the NCSC project, e.g. communicative competence and college and career (and community) readiness for students with significant cognitive disabilities. All of the parent resources have been developed with the input of state and parent advisory groups. You can find them under "Resources for Parents" at <http://www.ncscpartners.org/resources>. Resources may be added or updated, so it is important to check the site periodically. These resources have also been made available to states to assist their outreach to parents and guardians.

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