

**Assessment and Accountability Content Center
Management Plan – Year 3
July 2007 – June 2008
WestEd/CRESST**

The Assessment and Accountability Content Center (AACC) has identified priority issues that represent the most compelling needs of regions and states to meet NCLB’s challenges and therefore warrant immediate action by the AACC. Our third year of work focuses on research, products, and services emphasizing the following high-leverage indicators:

- *High quality* in terms of grounding in sound technical theory, research, and practical experiences
- *High relevance* that is appropriate for states and regional comprehensive centers (RCCs) and responsive to their immediate and long-term needs
- *High utility* to RCCs and state educational agencies (SEAs), keeping up with recent research developments in assessment and accountability and thereby supporting decision making and improvement of student performance

The AACC work, primarily designed to increase the capacity of RCCs to work with their states to meet important NCLB goals, consists of the following key activities:

- Review, analysis, and dissemination of evidence-based products, services, etc. linked to key NCLB initiatives and goals
- Synthesis of evidence in a few selected, high need NCLB areas
- Strategic responses to requests from RCCs on high need NCLB areas, both one-time and longer term (collaborative pilots)
- Response to U.S. Department of Education requests on high need NCLB areas

- Limited development on high need NCLB areas determined by both the AACC and U.S. Department of Education as lacking in key information and products

Strand 1: Special Populations

Objective:

To continue to provide information and resources to Regional Comprehensive Centers (RCCs), and through the RCCs to state education agencies (SEAs), regarding the assessment and accountability of their special student populations (i.e., English language learners [ELLs], and students with disabilities [SWDs], including students with the most significant cognitive disabilities) with respect to the requirements of NCLB (i.e., Title I, Title III, 2 Percent Flexibility).

Year 3 work will continue to address aspects of assessment and accountability as they relate to ELLs and SWDs. Generally, based on needs assessments of RCCs and SEAs, and guidance from the U.S. Department of Education, year 3 deliverables will present information on special student populations related to the following:

- Regulations and requirements per NCLB and other pertinent statutes and regulations
- Strategies for implementation/compliance
- Available resources
- Options and procedures for developing content standards
- Options and procedures for developing assessments
- Accommodations to limit bias and maximize reliability and validity
- Accountability systems and policies

Strand 2: Data Use and Formative Assessment

Objective:

To identify and share resources with RCCs that will expand state and local capacity to effectively use state, district, school, and classroom data to improve educational outcomes.

In year 2 we successfully launched the data use website which includes:

- A guide to the process of data use showing the steps necessary for the effective use of data for educational decision-making
- A map that shows key capacities needed at each level of the system to provide a sound foundation for the process of effective data use
- Criteria for selecting data tools
- Criteria for selecting and using diagnostic tools
- A library of research and guidance about data use

In year 3 we are developing a framework that incorporates all the processes necessary for successful implementation of each step of the Data Use Process Map, and provide access to a range of existing and appropriate resources. In response to feedback from RCCs, we are assembling a range of examples of effective data use from around the country that illustrate the process at work at all levels of the system: state, district, school and classroom.

In the area of formative assessment, we are developing guidance on research-based formative assessment practices and how to support their implementation. A second part of this work is collaboration with a single regional RCC to build their capacity for statewide formative assessment. This activity will serve as a professional development model for other RCCs.

Strand 3: Support for Quality State Assessment and Accountability Systems

Objective:

To assist states to meet the NCLB assessment and accountability requirements.

For year 3, our primary task in this strand is to assist the U.S. Department of Education in planning and facilitating the LEP Partnership, designed to assist states in developing and implementing Title I assessment methods for ELL students. AACC support to the LEP Partnership focuses on the following assessment methods:

- Title I/Title III Crossover
- Accommodations
- Plain English Assessments
- Native Language Assessments
- Portfolios/Alternative Assessments

Specific LEP Partnership activities include:

- Dissemination of best practices and research findings
- National workshops on ELL assessment issues for state assessment teams
- Facilitating workgroups of states grappling with technical issues for specific assessment methods
- Direct TA with states
- Research papers to expand the knowledge and procedural basis for ELL assessments
- Brief RCCs and other content centers on LEP Partnership activities and disseminate resources.

As in previous years, the AACC is allocating additional resources to support Title I and Title III assessment and accountability issues, both related to state peer review and good assessment practice.

Strand 4: In-Depth Support to Regional Content Center Initiatives

Objective:

To assist RCCs address complex needs in their region, in an ongoing, collaborative fashion; all deliverables and learning from “pilots initiatives” will be disseminated to the entire CC network.

Increasingly, the AACC has received requests from regional centers for comprehensive, in-depth technical assistance and support to help address important NCLB-related assessment and accountability issues confronting their regions. The AACC has developed (and shared with the CC network) the following criteria in deciding if and how to enter into a collaboration:

- *NCLB:* Is the request central to the goals and requirements of NCLB?
- *Need:* Is the request related to an important need in the region **and** nationally?
- *Capacity:* Does the AACC have the expertise and resources to support the request?
- *Support:* Does the request have the full support of the RCC and regional partners (e.g., SEAs, local consortia)?
- *Dissemination:* Will there be deliverables/artifacts that can be disseminated efficiently to the CC network?

To ensure that these criteria are understood, implemented, and subject to evaluation, the AACC, upon embarking on one of these joint activities, begins with the development of a detailed project plan that includes activities and timelines. Related directly to this plan is a “partnership agreement” that specifies the specific roles and responsibilities for all parties (with a limited role for AACC related primarily to capacity building for the RCC and state). Finally, each major collaborative includes a dissemination and evaluation plan.

Based on the nature of RCC earlier requests, the AACC anticipates the following joint activities:

- *One time big event*: e.g., support state/regional workshop
- *Short term big issue*: support the resolution of an important NCLB technical issue, such as setting performance standards for a state assessment
- *Longer term big issue (“pilot”)*: support the development and implementation of a district-wide or state-wide formative assessment