

**Assessment and Accountability Content Center
Management Plan – Year 4
July 2008 – June 2009
WestEd/CRESST**

Based on needs assessments from Regional Comprehensive Centers (RCCs) and State Education Agencies (SEAs), the Assessment and Accountability Comprehensive Center (AACC) has identified our Year 4 priority issues, with the primary purpose of continuing our support of NCLB's challenging goals. Year 4 AACC 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 both appropriate and responsive to regional and state immediate and long-term needs
- *High utility* to RCCs and SEAs, keeping up with recent research developments in assessment and accountability, thereby supporting decision making and improvement of student performance

Our Year 4 work, designed to increase RCCs capacity to help their states meet NCLB requirements, consists of the following central activities:

- Review, analysis, and dissemination of evidence-based products, services, etc., linked to key NCLB initiatives and goals

- Collaborations with RCCs and the states they serve (“pilots”) to increase their capacity to implement key NCLB issues, and to share lessons learned from these pilots with the entire CC network
- 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 ED requests on high need NCLB areas
- Limited development on high need NCLB areas determined by both the AACC and ED as lacking in key information and products

Strand 1: Special Populations

Objective: To continue to provide information and resources to RCCs, and through the RCCs to SEAs, regarding the assessment and accountability of their special student populations (e.g., English language learners [ELLs], and students with disabilities [SWDs], including students with the most significant cognitive disabilities) with respect to the requirements of NCLB (e.g., Title I, Title III).

Year 4 work will continue to focus on aspects of assessment and accountability as they pertain to ELLs and SWDs. Ongoing needs assessments of RCCs and SEAs continue to support the focus of this strand as a key priority across the nation. As a result of these needs assessments and guidance from the U.S. Department of Education (ED), Strand 1 will address a number of areas including:

- Regulations and requirements per NCLB and other pertinent statutes and regulations
- Strategies for implementation/compliance

- Available resources
- Options and procedures for developing and implementing standards
- Accommodations to limit bias and maximize reliability and validity
- Strategies for addressing the access needs of ELLs, students with the most significant cognitive disabilities, and students eligible for alternate assessments based on modified academic achievement standards
- 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, plus formative assessment, to improve educational outcomes.

Our year 4 work draws on resources and capacity developed in years 1–3 to conduct pilot projects with participating SEAs and RCCs. In addition to providing models and capacity building for RCCs, the proposed work will be the context for further refining the data use website and its associated resources. Specific work includes:

1. State Guidance for Disseminating Data to Districts and Schools

We propose to partner with one state education department and its RCC to increase data access for school and district personnel, and, learning from this effort, to develop guidance for all states on effective ways to disseminate data to districts and schools.

2. Increasing State Capacity for Formative Assessment

We propose to partner with one state education department and its RCC to build capacity for formative assessment with application to all states.

3. An Online Program of Professional Development

We propose to continue to partner with one state and its RCC to develop an online program of professional development on the effective use of formative assessment.

4. Enhance Existing Website Tools

Having successfully launched the data use website in year 2, then adding new tools in year 3, we propose to enhance the existing web site in three ways: 1) expand the range of examples of effective data use, 2) increase the interactivity of the inventory; and 3) expand the formative assessment section to include video exemplars and guidance.

5. Building RCC Capacity for Data Use

In year 4, we propose to conduct four one-hour webinars for RCCs on data use or formative assessment with the goal of increasing RCC capacity to support their states.

6. Ongoing Updates to the Data Use Website Library of Resources

We will continue to add new research and guidance on data use to the website library as it becomes available and undergoes our vetting process.

Strand 3: Support for Quality State Assessment and Accountability Systems

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

The primary task for Year 4 will be to assist ED in planning and facilitating the LEP Partnership, designed to help states develop and implement Title I assessment methods for ELL students.

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 technical assistance 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
- Support the piloting and revision of the draft LEP Standards and Assessment Framework—the AACC was the lead author in developing the draft LEP Framework.

As in previous years, the AACC will allocate resources to support assessment and accountability issues identified by ED, both related to state peer review and good assessment practices.

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

Objective: *To support RCCs complex needs in their region, in an ongoing, collaborative fashion; all deliverables and learning from these “pilots” will be disseminated to the entire CC network.*

Increasingly, the AACC has received requests from regional centers for comprehensive, in-depth technical assistance 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 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 roles and responsibilities for all parties (with a limited role for the 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 requests, the AACC has embarked on the following types of joint activities:

- *One time big event*: e.g., support state/regional workshop
- *Short term big issue*: support the resolution of important NCLB technical issues 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 plan