

Assessment and Accountability Comprehensive Center

Management Plan – Year 7

July 2011 – September 2012

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 7 priority issues, with the primary purpose of continuing our support of federal goals to improve learning and assessment. Year 7 AACC work focuses on research, products, and services that emphasize 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 immediate and long term regional and state needs; and
- *High utility* to RCCs and SEAs. By keeping up with recent assessment and accountability research developments, the AACC will continue to support decision-making and improvement of student performance.

Our Year 7 work, which is designed to increase RCCs capacity to help their states meet federal requirements, consists of the following central activities:

- Review, analysis, and dissemination of evidence-based products, services, etc., linked to key federal initiatives and goals;
- Collaboration with RCCs and the states they serve (“pilots”) in order to increase their capacity to implement key accountability issues as well as to share lessons learned from these pilots with the entire Comprehensive Center (CC) network;
- Synthesis of evidence in a few selected, high-need federal accountability priorities;
- Strategic responses to requests from RCCs on high-need accountability topics, both for one-time requests and longer term needs (collaborative pilots);
- Response to U.S. Department of Education (ED) requests on high-need accountability areas; and
- Limited development on high-need accountability topics determined by both the AACC and the 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 the RCCs, and consequently through the RCCs to the 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 federal requirements of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA).

Year 7 work will continue to focus on aspects of assessment and accountability as they pertain to special population students, particularly ELLs and SWDs. Consistent with regional needs, the work of this strand in Year 7 will focus on:

- Update and refine materials that can support states' transition to the Common Core State Standards (CCSS), particularly in terms of supporting the inclusion of special student populations;
- Develop an English Language Proficiency (ELP) assessment and standards implementation and evaluation framework, which is an extension of the *Framework for High-Quality English Language Proficiency Standards and Assessments* (AACC, 2009);
- Collaborate with the Mid-Atlantic Comprehensive Center (MACC) to address an information and resource gap identified by a consortium of states convened by the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO). The AACC and MACC will develop common ELP expectations that correspond to the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) as well as conduct a systematic examination of participating states' current ELP/ELD standards to identify similarities/differences across these standards and to inform states' considerations for "common" or "coordinated" ELP/ELD state standards and assessments that correspond with the CCSS.
- Integrate new research and best practices related to ELL access and accommodations, as well as academic language into existing tools that can be used by RCCs and states;
- Collaborate with a national panel of invited symposium members to examine emerging research related to learning models (e.g., learning progressions, learning maps) and produce white papers that discuss the implications of this research on assessment (e.g., formative assessment practice), including the assessment of special student populations; and
- Continue support of the ELL Collaborative in partnership with the Southwest Comprehensive Center.

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, in order to improve educational outcomes.

Year 7 builds on work undertaken in Year 6, and includes ongoing partnerships from three RCCs: the Mid-Atlantic Comprehensive Center (MACC), the Northwest Comprehensive Center (NWCC) and the North Central Comprehensive Center (NCCC). Joint projects include:

- Partnership with the Mid-Atlantic Comprehensive Center (MACC) to assist the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) with the selection and development of student growth measures;
- Partnership with the North Central Comprehensive Center (NCCC) for development of a formative assessment professional development program;
- Partnership with the Northwest Comprehensive Center (NWCC) and the Washington Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (WOSPI) to pilot professional development modules on formative assessment;
- Partnership with the NCCC and the NWCC to develop a practice profile/coaching tool for formative assessment;
- An AACC mini-conference for RCC liaisons. In Year 6, we held a mini-conference for RCCs on the development and use of high quality assessment systems. In Year 7, we will host another small conference focused on current and future assessment and accountability issues, especially related to preparing states for Race To The Top (RTTT) assessments systems;
- Ongoing updates to the Data Use Website Library of Resources. We will continue to add new data use research and guidance to the website library after each resource passes our vetting process.

Strand 3: Support for Quality State Assessment and Accountability Systems

Objective. To assist states in meeting the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA), RTTT and ESEA accountability as well as practice requirements.

The primary task for Year 7 will be to assist ED in planning and facilitating the ARRA and RTTT related activities and supports. Strand 3 activities include:

- Dissemination of best practices and research findings;
- Webinars on developing, benchmarking, and implementing rigorous, college-ready standards and assessments;
- Facilitating workgroups of RCCs and states grappling with technical issues for specific assessment and accountability methods, including a summary of acceptable practices for ESEA accountability waiver requests;
- Direct technical assistance with states;
- Research papers to expand the knowledge and procedural basis for ELL assessments; and;
- Brief RCCs and other content centers on LEP Partnership activities and disseminate resources.

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

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 lessons from these “pilots” will be disseminated to the entire CC network.

Increasingly, the AACC has received requests from RCCs for comprehensive, in-depth technical assistance to help address important ARRA- and ESEA-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:

- *ED Initiatives:* Is the request central to the goals and requirements of ARRA, RTTT, and/or ESEA?
- *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., supporting state or regional workshop);
- *Short-term big issue:* (e.g., supporting the resolution of an important ARRA, RTTT and/or ESEA technical issue, such as setting performance standards for a state assessment); and
- *Longer term big issue* (e.g., a *pilot* supporting the development and implementation of a district-wide or statewide formative assessment plan).

The major collaborations already planned for Year 7 are embedded within the most appropriate work strands. Many represent continued activities that build upon previously successful collaborations. As with other strands, the AACC anticipates additional requests from RCCs during Year 7 and will, with approval of ED, add those efforts that meet the aforementioned criteria (resources permitting) to its approved scope of work.