



Volume 2

April, 2006

The Prototypical Technical Manual and Associated Products

A major focus of both the New Hampshire Enhanced Assessment Initiative (NHEAI) and the National Alternate Assessment Center (NAAC) is the development of a framework and approaches for documenting the technical quality of alternate assessments on alternate achievement standards (AA-AAS). Our approach to documenting technical adequacy uses a construct validity framework relying on the National Research Council's important book, *Knowing What Students Know*.

The first product was a conceptual framework and table of contents (TOC) for our proposed prototypical technical manual. We used this TOC to structure much of our work for both the first and the second (March/August 2005) expert panel meetings. The TOC helped the experts conceptualize strategies for technical documentation where we have faced difficulty in doing so in the past, such as reliability and comparabil-

ity (equating).

The second product, the annotated TOC, grew out of our need to better explain the content of the various chapters and was designed to help us systematically compile states' existing information into the technical manual framework. It will also be used to explain what state leaders might need to produce for various sections. We have transformed this annotated TOC into more of a workbook to make it a better professional development tool.

The third major product will be the "user's guide", which is currently under development. The user's guide will expand on the work captured in the annotated TOC by providing technical guidance for states to use when evaluating the quality of their AA-AAS. This product will be available by late summer 2006.

Upcoming Activities:

- **Presentations/Invited sessions at AERA, NCME, and CCSSO from NHEAI and NAAC partners-** (Meagan Karvonen, Claudia Flowers, Rachel Quenemoen, and Scott Marion)
- **Fall Seminar Series-** stay tuned for dates, times, and locations

The Role of the Expert Panel in our Work

NAAC and NHEAI have shared a strong cross-disciplinary panel to shape and review our common work. The panel is intended to function in an analogous manner to state technical advisory committees (TACs). That is, the panelists are expected to vigorously discuss, debate, clarify, brainstorm, and provide advice to the core working teams. The focus of the expert panel's work is on the guide to the technical manual and the technical manual prototype. Although we work with specific information from specific state approaches to alternate assessment, the primary focus of the expert panel discussion is NOT to critique each state approach, but instead to contribute to our understanding on how to document technical adequacy of multi-

ple state approaches.

The panel's *measurement experts* think with rigor and flexibility on these unique state profiles, and provide enough context to allow curriculum and special education experts to contribute to the discussion. The panel's *curriculum experts* ensure that the measurement discussions are meaningful, firmly grounded in what linkage to grade level content means for students with significant cognitive disabilities. Finally, the panel's *special education experts* ensure that the measurement discussion doesn't inadvertently drift away from what is possible but that reflects high expectations for this group of students. Our *state partners* provide the "real world" test of the techni-

cal manual and our other supporting materials, and in the process, collect data about options for documenting and improving the technical adequacy of their states' alternate assessment systems.

Our NAAC and NHEAI organizational partners each have staff dedicated to carrying out the objectives and activities of these two projects, and they ultimately bear responsibility for development and refinement of all products and processes. Our staff could not do this without these important measurement, curriculum, special education, and state experts!

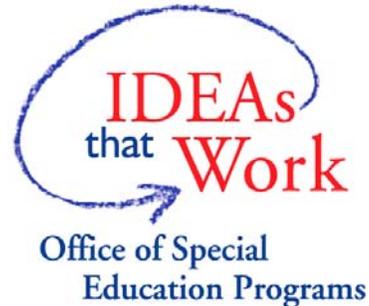


NATIONAL ALTERNATE ASSESSMENT CENTER NEWSLETTER

Human Development Institute
University of Kentucky
1 Quality St., Suite 722
Lexington, Kentucky 40507

Phone: 859-257-7672
Fax: 859-323-1838
www.naacpartners.org

VISIT OUR WEBSITE AT:
WWW.NAACPARTNERS.ORG



Second Annual NAAC Advisory Board Meeting: The Year in Review and a Look to the Future

In early March of 2006, members of the NAAC Advisory Board came together in Alexandria, Virginia for a two day working meeting. Day One consisted of updates and a review of materials produced over the course of the past year. Each research foci of the project was reviewed in terms of what we proposed to do, what we have conducted thus far, and what we will do over the next 3 years. Sample surveys, methodological concerns with future studies, and products completed thus far were shared with advisory board members for advice and consensus.

Day Two was a working session with NAAC's eight Tier 2 partner states. Participating state personnel provided

feedback and suggestions for usability and clarity of the annotated table of contents. The morning was spent highlighting particular approaches to alternate assessments on alternate achievement standards and the afternoon offered a time for small groups to work together and review, provide feedback, and explain usability and clarity of the annotated table of contents.

As suggested earlier in this newsletter, the multiple areas of expertise brought by the advisory board members to this work, and the time to integrate and share such knowledge in our meetings is an advantage of this project and one we hope to continue to support throughout the course of the project.

Important Update:

NAAC is supporting a strand at the Council for Exception Children's Annual Conference, April 5-8, 2006. The strand, entitled "Alternate Assessments: 1%, 2%, and All for Learning!", is Saturday, April 8, 2006, 9:45 am-4:45 pm and will be led by Martha Thurlow of NCEO and Jacqui Kearns of NAAC.