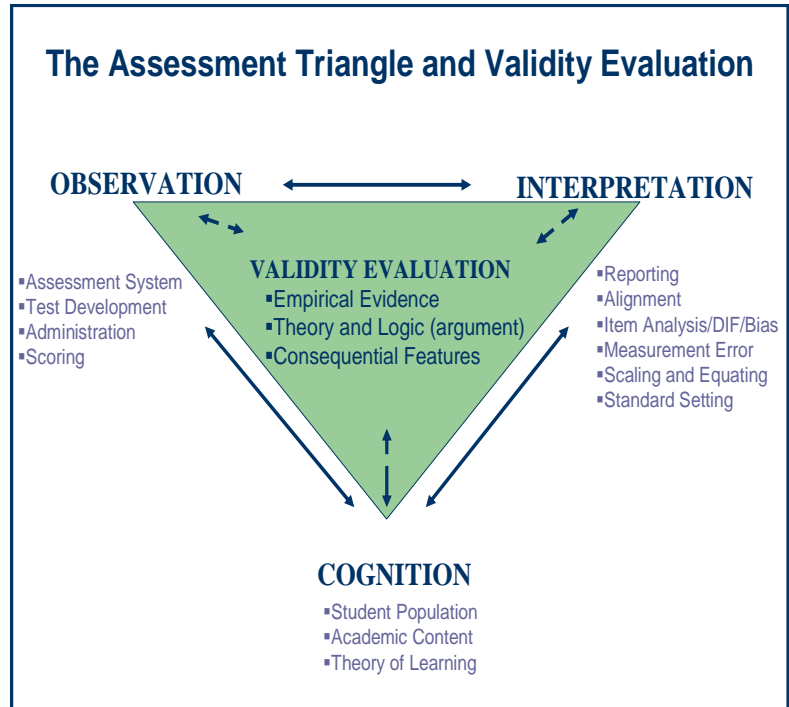


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Technical Adequacy of AA-AAS

The National Alternate Assessment Center (NAAC) conducts research using the theoretical model of the “assessment triangle” set forth by Pellegrino, Chudowsky, and Glaser (2001). This model has since been explicated to apply specifically to alternate assessments based on alternate achievement standards (AA-AAS). The assessment triangle with the vertices of cognition, observation, and interpretation has been expanded to develop a validity framework for documenting the technical adequacy of AA-AAS as can be seen in the figure to the right (Marion & Pellegrino, 2006). The refinement and continued clarification of this model for building the technical adequacy of AA-AAS is one of the most important goals for the Center. The remainder of the newsletter will share how the Center and its partners will continue to work toward this goal.



Learning from our Partner States' AA-AAS Systems

In February of 2006, the NAAC Expert Panel evaluated four partner states' technical documentation for their (AA-AAS). A year later, six additional partner states also went through the Expert Panel review. In the Fall of 2007, four additional partner states will also be evaluated by the Expert Panel. The data gathered from the states and experts during these review sessions will be used to

enhance the overall understanding of AA-AAS and ways in which to improve upon documenting the technical adequacy of these assessments. By the end of the project, NAAC hopes to publish a final set of four technical documents (with a user's guide) that help states to defend the technical adequacy of their AA-AAS.

Research Studies...To Be Continued

NAAC intends to continue and expand upon the current research studies it is conducting for the remainder of the project. Specifically, NAAC will continue to annually administer the Learner Characteristics Inventory (LCI) in partner states and is willing to share the inventory with other states who can provide alternate assessment scores for the students who also have LCI data. In addition, NAAC will continue to administer the Alternate Assessment Impact Survey (AAIS) for teachers and AAIS for principals in states willing to investigate the im-

pact of their assessment on students, teachers, and schools. These surveys are instrumental in understanding who the kids are taking AA-AAS and documenting the consequential validity of state assessment systems, both keys to building the technical adequacy argument for states' assessments. Furthermore, NAAC will continue to gather stories about teacher competencies related to the AA-AAS to improve pre-service training experiences to prepare teachers for instructing and assessing this population of students.



NATIONAL ALTERNATE ASSESSMENT CENTER NEWSLETTER

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UDL AA-AAS EVALUATION TOOL

Despite IDEA requirements that SEAs apply universal design principles in developing and administering assessments, there has been little consideration of what universal design means for AA-AAS. To support the application of UDL principles to AA-AAS development and administration by state education agencies and their test vendors so as to more accurately assess diverse learners, NAAC in collaboration with CAST has created an evaluation tool applicable to portfolio, performance event, and checklist assessments. The intent of the UDL AA-AAS EVALUATION TOOL is to identify potential gaps in a state's AA-AAS vis-

à-vis UDL and hence reveal opportunities for improvement. Review of a state's AA-AAS materials with the UDL AA-AAS Evaluation Tool provides a basis for discussion of how and where UDL is currently evident in state technical adequacy documentation. This can then serve as a springboard for discussion of expansion and refinement of state reference to UDL strategies and principles in subsequent updates to state publications which could assist with meeting the mandates of IDEA as well as facilitate teachers' understanding of how UDL principles can be included within classroom instruction and AA-AAS.

Alignment Models

Alignment methods are procedures used to describe the degree of intersection, overlap, or relationship among the content embedded in state standards, assessments, and instruction. Evidence from alignment studies have the potential to better support the validity of inferences made for scores of AA-AAS. Rather than being framed as instructional validity or opportunity to learn, the alignment of instruction with AA-AAS must be empirically investigated as an element of the

educational system. To date, NAAC has developed, validated, and implemented an alignment model for AA-AAS (Links for Academic Learning) which includes the Curriculum Indicators Survey, a teacher survey regarding instruction. Future NAAC research in alignment will focus on conducting a curricular summit and training teachers how to align grade level academic content standards in the development of instructional activities and assessments.

Important Update:

The long awaited release of the regulations on Alternate Assessments Based on Modified Achievement Standards occurred in April 2007 and can be found at:

<http://www.ed.gov/news/pressreleases/2007/04/04042007.html>