



NATIONAL ALTERNATE ASSESSMENT CENTER

Organization Partners:

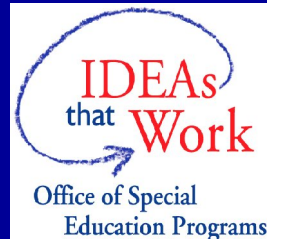
UKY, NCEO, UNC-Charlotte, CAST, UI-UC

State Partners:

Colorado, Connecticut, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky,
Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, North
Carolina, New Hampshire, New Mexico, South
Carolina

March 1, 2006

NAAC Advisory Board Meeting 2006



Collaborative Partners

- University of Kentucky
 - Principal Investigator
- National Center on Educational Outcomes
 - Technical Quality of Alternate Assessments
- University of North Carolina – Charlotte
 - Alignment of AA to Content Domains
- CAST
 - Universal Design
- University of Illinois-Urbana-Champaign
 - Evaluation

Federal Priority Requirements

- Convene and support expert work groups to summarize extant data and other information;
- Identify and discuss critical issues;
- Identify promising and best practices;
- Produce reports and recommendations on specific topics; and
- Produce guidelines and procedures aimed at ensuring the technical quality of alternate assessments.

Federal Priority Requirements

- Convene on an annual basis an advisory committee representing key perspectives and stakeholder groups:
 - including professionals working in special education, assessment, and
 - Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as amended; and
 - parents and individuals with disabilities.
- The primary purposes of this advisory committee are to review and advise on the plans for activities 3 through 5 and to provide liaison with significant stakeholder groups.

Federal Priority Requirements

- Coordinate with other technical assistance and dissemination resources to provide technical assistance and information to States in improving and implementing:
 - (1) alternate achievement standards aligned to grade-level achievement standards,
 - (2) alternate assessments based on alternate achievement standards and on grade-level achievement standards, and
 - (3) approaches to using alternate assessments in improving educational outcomes and access to the general curriculum.

Federal Priority Requirements

- Conduct research on the characteristics of alternate achievement standards and alternate assessments implemented in States, and their impact on student learning and access to the general curriculum.

Federal Priority Requirements

- Conduct development and demonstration projects with a small number of States on improving and implementing:
 - (a) alternate achievement standards aligned to grade-level achievement standards;
 - (b) alternate assessments based on alternate achievement standards and on grade-level achievement standards; and
 - (c) approaches to using alternate assessments in improving educational outcomes and access to the general curriculum.

Federal Priority Requirements

- (a) Maintain regular communication with staff of the U.S. Department of Education to obtain input and approval of project plans.
- (b) Budget for a two-day Project Directors' meeting in Washington, DC during each year of the project.
- (c) If the project has a Web site, include relevant information and documents in an accessible form on the project's Web site.

Three Research & Demonstration Areas

- Alternate Assessments
 - Define Technical Quality
 - Alternate Achievement Standards (AA-AAS)
 - Grade-level Achievement Standards (AA-GLAS)
 - Alignment with Grade-level Content Standards
 - Determine Effective Practices Assessment Development

NAAC Technical Assistance & Dissemination

- Develop technical assistance materials for use by states in the design and redesign of alternate assessments.
- Disseminate research findings.

Model Demonstration State Partners

- Colorado
- Connecticut
- Iowa
- Kansas
- Kentucky
- Massachusetts
- Maryland
- Michigan
- New Hampshire
- New Mexico
- North Carolina
- South Carolina

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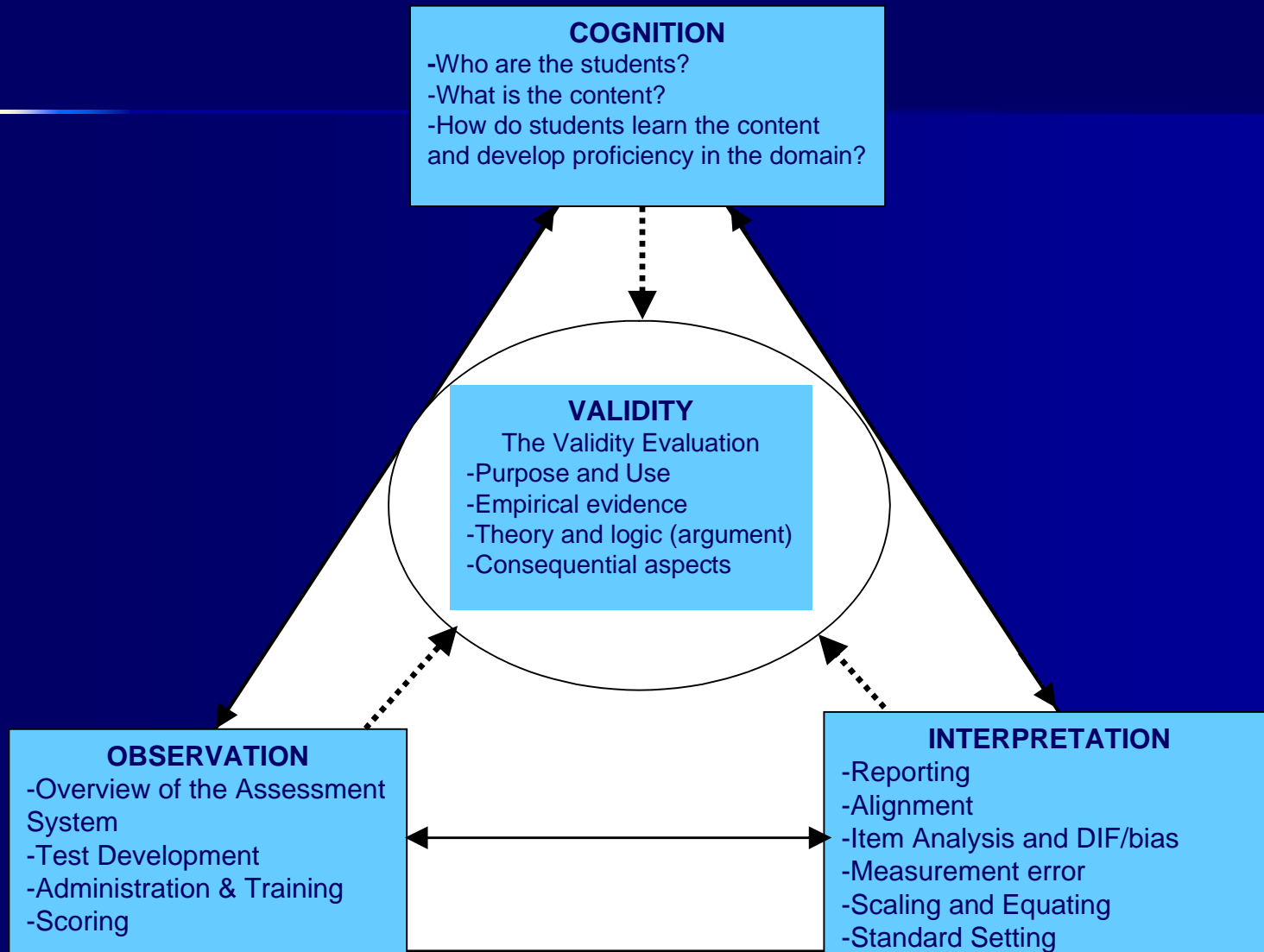
Features

- Prestigious Technical Experts
- Diverse Advisory Panel
- Multiple research methods
- Team of Investigators
- Theory Driven

Assumptions

- No single type of alternate assessment design is best.
- Validity (e.g., so what happens to instruction and learning?) is of prime importance.

The Relationship between the Assessment Triangle and the Technical Manual Table of Contents



Research Focus 1

- *Define technical quality for the four major types of alternate assessment as to the impact on student learning and access to grade-level content*
 - *portfolios,*
 - *performance events,*
 - *checklists, and*
 - *multiple choice tests*
 - *based on*
 - *a) alternate achievement standards and*
 - *b) grade-level achievement standards*

Collaboration with NHEAI

- New Hampshire Enhanced Assessment Initiative (NHEAI) funded by OESE
- Mirrors research Focus I of NAAC-Technical Quality
- Convened Measurement, Severe Disabilities, and Curriculum experts to articulate a theory of learning for assessments based on alternate achievement standards

Research Focus #1: What we know...

- Validity is the most important technical criterion.
- A theory of learning within a content domain for students in the alternate assessment is not articulated well.
- Learning characteristics of the assessed population are reported to be highly variable.

Research Focus #1: What we proposed to do...

- Articulate the assessment triangle for AA-GLAS and AA-AAS
 - Confirm the learner characteristics of students who take alternate assessments.
- Develop a prototypical technical manual
- Develop state case studies
- Develop Technical Considerations Report
- Develop Technical Quality Rating Instrument
- Develop a Technical Quality Teacher Survey

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Accomplishments to date...

- Convened the Expert Panel 3 times.
- Developed Learner Characteristics White Paper and Inventory (Kleinert, Browder, & Towles-Reeves, 2006)
- Developed Technical Considerations Report (Marion & Gong, 2006)
- Developed four Case Studies
 - Three major types of AA- AAS
- Developed an Annotated Table of Contents for developing a Technical Manual for AA-AAS
- Developed a “work-book” for documenting the Annotated Table of Contents

We'd like your comments...

- Kleinert, Browder, & Towles-Reeves (2006)
- Gong & Marion (2006)
- Learner Characteristics Inventory

What's Next?

- Case Study Validation (Tier 1) with State Technical Advisory Committees (TACs).
- Replication with (Tier 2) states
 - Develop profiles
 - Conduct Expert Panel Review
 - State TAC Review
- Full implementation of LCI in one state
- Develop Technical Quality Guidance Document and Rating Instrument
- Develop a Technical Quality Teacher Survey

Research Focus 2

- *Identify grade-level content alignment methodologies and principles for alternate assessments based on grade-level achievement standards and alternate achievement standards.*

Research Focus 2: What we know...

- Alignment can be a powerful tool for focusing instruction, curricula, and assessment.
- Alignment methodology as applied to alternate assessment is limited.
- Most alignment models applied to general education assessments consider:
 - categorical concurrence,
 - depth-of-knowledge consistency,
 - range of knowledge correspondence, and
 - balance of representation.

What we know.... (cont)

- Findings from one study using traditional alignment methods suggested weak alignment to reading and mathematics content in AA-AAS.

Research Focus 2: What we proposed to do...

- Evaluate recommended alignment criteria using state case studies
- Develop guidelines for setting challenging learning standards
- Implement and evaluate alignment procedures
- Evaluate student access to the general curriculum
- Determine acceptability and feasibility of alignment procedures

Outcome

- Framework for alignment that is:
 - Developed by experts
 - Validated by teachers
 - Validated by states
- Development of model demonstration that can be used by teachers using portfolio assessments

Accomplishments to date...

Literature Review

- Conducted a literature review of alignment (manuscript in development)
- Literature written between 1985 and 2005
- Both general and special education instruments
- Coded for type of alignment, type of document, and purpose of document
- Total of 194 documents found

Accomplishments to date...

Access Manuscript

- Outlined criteria of access to the general curriculum (Browder et al, manuscript submitted for publication)
- Definition of the Concept: Linking to Grade Level Content with Alternate Achievement

Our Proposed Criteria

1. The content is academic and includes the major domains/strands of the content area as reflected in state and national standards (e.g., reading, math, science.)
2. The content is referenced to the student's assigned grade level (based on chronological age).

Our Proposed Criteria

(cont)

3. The achievement expectation is linked to the grade level content, but differs in depth or complexity; it is not grade level achievement. It may focus on prerequisite skills or those learned at earlier grades, but with applications to the grade level content. When applied to state level alternate assessments, these priorities are accessible to IEP planning teams.

Our Proposed Criteria

(cont)

- 4 There is some differentiation in achievement across grade levels or grade bands.
- 5 The focus of achievement promotes access to the activities, materials, and settings typical of the grade level but with the accommodations, adaptations, and supports needed for individualization.

Our Proposed Criteria

(cont)

- 6 The focus of achievement maintains fidelity with the content of the original grade level standards (content centrality) and when possible, the specified performance (category of knowledge).
- 7 Multiple levels of access to the general curriculum are planned so that students with different levels of symbolic communication can demonstrate learning.

Criterion 1: The Content is Academic

- Source: USDOE, 2005, p. 17
 - Functional life goals are not appropriate achievement measures for AYP purposes
- *Although most alignment methodologies begin with assumption the focus is on academic content, this cannot be assumed in alternate assessment due to the historical context for curricular priorities for this population.*
- What we consider- whether alternate assessment, any extended standards, classroom instruction/ professional development focus on academic content

Criterion 2- The student's assigned grade level is the point of reference

- Source- USDOE, 2005, p. 26
 - AA should be “clearly related to grade-level content, although it may be restricted in scope or complexity or take the form of introductory or prerequisite skills”
- *Although alignment studies of general assessment can focus on assessments by grade level, how “grade level” links are established in AA needs to be tracked due to historical practice of ungraded classes*
- What we consider-alignment with grade level/grade band content

Criterion 3-The Achievement Level Differs from Grade Level

- USDOE, 2005, p. 16; 26-27
 - Alternate achievement expectations may reflect an expectation for learning a narrower range of content and content that is less complex while still challenging; may be prerequisite skills or those learned at earlier grade levels
- *The concept that students may learn some grade level content without grade level achievement is new for many educators*
- What we consider- DOK, balance, etc (Webb's criteria) expecting difference from general assessments alignment

Criterion 4- Differentiation in achievement across grade levels/bands

- Source- USDOE, 2005, p. 21
 - Achievement may focus on grade bands or grade levels
- *Defining outcomes for growth across grades is typical for academic content, but different than the “catalog” approach often used in functional life skills curricula*
- What we consider- how grade band/level distinctions are made; or whether expectations for growth across grades is evident in other ways

Additional Criteria

- FROM POLICY:

Criteria 1-4

- From USDOE Nonregulatory Guidance, August, 2005

- WE PROPOSE:

Criteria 5-7

- Based on unique characteristics of this population

Criteria 5- Promoting access to grade level activities, materials, contexts

- Source-concept of age appropriate partial participation extended to grade appropriate alternate achievement
- *The difference between young student and older student with SCD is in the application of early academic skills to be age and grade appropriate*
- What we consider- overall extent to which access to general curriculum promoted (e.g., whether materials, tasks are age/grade appropriate; do they include adaptations of grade level activities/materials; does training include examples of use in inclusive settings)

Criteria 6- Content centrality and when possible, performance centrality

- Sources- Achieve model of alignment; NAAC resources on "Is it plumb?/ is it square?"/ categories of knowledge
- *One of the most difficult challenges is selecting tasks for assessment and instruction that have fidelity with the original state standard*
- What we consider- content centrality; performance centrality; teacher training in near/ far alignment

Criteria 7- Multiple levels of access to general curriculum

- Source- Symbolic levels described in communication research; our own work on accessing curriculum by student's symbolic level; DOE regulations permit multiple alternate achievement standards (December 9, 2003)
- *Some students with significant disabilities rely on nonsymbolic communication or may have limited intentionality in communication; consideration needs to be given to expectations for these students*
- What we consider- symbolic level of tasks in alternate assessment and examples given in training materials

Accomplishments to date...

Alignment Protocol

- Developed and piloted an alignment protocol with one state that included the Curriculum Indicators Survey (CIS)
 - Convened Expert Panel
 - Defined differences in alignment approaches between traditional and alternate assessments (manuscript in development)

Alignment Method

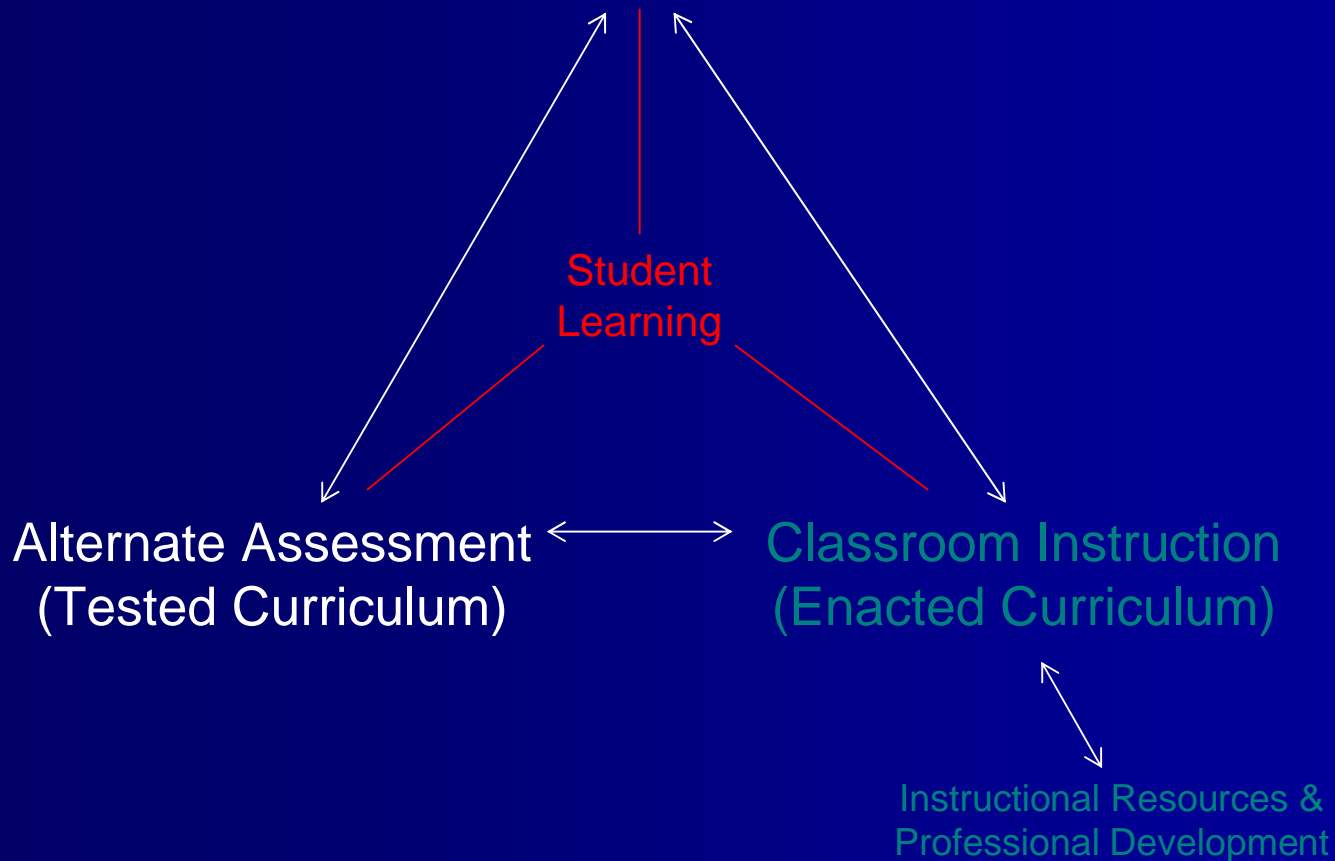
- Using methods from previous alignment procedures
 - Webb
 - Survey of Enacted Curriculum
 - Achieve
- Modification of some of the rating scales to make more sensitive for the population of students (DOK)

What's New

- Examination of the prioritized/transformed standards for student
 - Maintain integrity of state content standards
- Other alignment criteria
 - Age/grade appropriate
 - Differentiate across grades
 - Training/resources of teachers
 - Accessibility to students at multiple levels of symbol use
- What is acceptable levels?

Accomplishments to date... CIS (adapted from SEC)

Grade Level or Extended Standards
(Intended Curriculum)



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Measuring the Enacted Curriculum in General Education

- Surveys of Enacted Curriculum (Porter & Smithson)
- Very detailed surveys about assignments, materials, extent of coverage, cognitive demand for a target class in a particular academic area
- Allows mapping of alignment between pairs of the three elements

What is different for this population?

- Extended/transformed standards
- Individualized nature of curriculum
- More intensive instruction on narrower range of curriculum
- Range of cognitive demand needs to be sensitive to full range of the population
- Special education teachers - not content experts in all academic areas
- Accessibility for full range of population, access to/adaptation of grade level materials, activities, contexts

The Curriculum Indicators Survey (CIS)

Part I: General information about classroom practices and teacher background

- Demographics
- Certifications
- ELA and Math materials
- Instructional influences
- Resources
- Professional development

Part II: Detailed questions about what an individual student is taught this year

- ELA and Math
- Intensity of coverage
- Highest expectation (cognitive demand)
- Grade level adaptation
- Instructional activities

Potential uses of CIS Data

- Map against Standards and alternate assessment to identify gaps
 - Help states plan for professional development
 - Self-assessment tool for teachers

Accomplishments to date...

Student Profile Survey

- About 100 teachers rating familiar high and low functioning students who participate in alternate assessment
- Part 1= 10 items
- Indicators of symbolic communication
- Part 2= 2 items
- Symbolic category of students
- Statistical analyses (e.g., cluster) of indicators and relationship between Part 1 & 2

What's next?

- Implement alignment protocol with 3 states
- Present finalized papers at NCME/AERA (April, 2006)
- Submit manuscripts for publication: alignment literature review, alignment conceptual, and student profile survey

Research Focus 3

- *Identify and describe best practices for:*
 - *a) developing, and designing alternate AA-AAS and AA-GLS using the principles of universal design as a guiding theory, and*
 - *b) administering AA-AS and AA-GLS considering effective practices in the development and administration of materials, teacher training/communication and management of state-wide scoring of student assessment.*

Research Focus 3: What we know...

- Universal design (multiple means of expression, representation, recognition) has been applied to item development to improve accessibility.
- Most alternate assessment require administration manuals, teacher training, and scoring procedures.
- Fidelity of administration, training and scoring procedures is difficult to determine.
- The management of alternate assessment administration is complex.

Research Focus 3: What we proposed to do...

- Identify and describe administration procedures, training and scoring practices.
- Measure instructional impact via teacher survey.
- Identify design features/practices that improve fidelity of administration.
- Develop guidelines for the administration of alternate assessments
- Consider UDL practices in assessment design in terms of impact on student access to the general curriculum.
- Conduct an analysis of scoring procedures for different types of alternate assessments.
- Develop recommended practices for implementing scoring procedures.
- Develop and administer training package on effective practices in design and implementation of alternate assessments.

Accomplishments to date...

- Identified and described administration practices and training.
- Conducted an analysis of scoring procedures for different types of alternate assessments.
- Measure instructional impact via teacher survey – one State
- Designing a more comprehensive teacher survey instrument.
- Consider UDL practices in assessment design in terms of impact on student access to the general curriculum.

We'd like your help...

- Application of Universal Design
- Teacher Survey

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Universal Design of Alternate Assessment: What's Been Learned...

- Universal design principles cited in IDEA and NCLB but expectations unclear.
- Application of universal design principles still vague to general assessment.
- Application of universal design principles to alternate assessment is a new concept but may not be a new practice.

Universal design paper

- Describes basis and process for consideration of UD in alternate assessment.
- Raises issue of whether UD in alternate assessment increases concerns for variability and validity.
- Describes how alternate assessment practices may inherently include UD principles.

Questions to Consider...

- Does the nature of AA population (i.e. need for flexibility in representation, expression and engagement) necessitate use of UD and acceptance of the accompanying variability?
- Do emerging technologies increase opportunity for UD of AA assessment?
- What role does Universal Design for Learning play in the Assessment triangle?
- Should the focus of an additional paper focus on the Universal Design of Assessment Systems that include alternate assessments?

Online Teacher Survey

- History of the teacher survey
 - From a teacher's perspective, what degree of influence did:
 - the alternate assessment have on daily instruction
 - the alternate assessment have on IEP development
 - How could we focus future training to:
 - improve instruction and alternate assessment results

Questions to consider...

- What are the essential items we want to investigate on this online survey?
- Currently have two versions based on the Surveys of Enacted Curriculum (Porter and Smithson):
 - Version 1: All encompassing with full survey is 566 + questions.
 - Version 2: Bare bones is 141 questions that may still be able to be pared down.
 - What are the number of items and level of detail we need to consider?

Technical Assistance and Dissemination Activities

- Developed and conducted presentation materials for NCEO Technical Assistance Conference Call on Alignment of Alternate Assessments on Alternate Achievement Standards
 - Research
 - Practice
 - Demonstration

Technical Assistance and Dissemination Activities

- CCSSO Pre-session Workshop (125 participants)

<http://www.naacpartners.org/Products/Pre/slide1.htm>

Technical Assistance and Dissemination Activities

- In folder, "Extra" section includes:
 - Yellow sheet with a list of the NAAC presentations conducted as of February 2006.
 - Copy of the most recent NAAC newsletter.
 - Copy of the NAAC Brochure.
 - Please visit our website at www.naacpartners.org.

Questions to consider...

- Given that we are not a technical assistance and dissemination grant but a research grant, are there still venues for technical assistance and dissemination that we are missing?

NAAC Evaluation

- View evaluation as an integral, ongoing informative and reflective process.
 - Formative/Summative
 - Evaluation Meeting in Year II
 - Internal/External
 - Multiple Methods
 - Consumer Oriented
- Flexible to accommodate changing workscope of the project.

NAAC Evaluation

(cont)

- Evaluation Foci
 - Integrity of Work Plan
 - Quality of Products
 - Responsiveness to State Needs
 - Use of Products by States, Universities, test developers, policy makers
 - Impact on state and federal policy and practice

NAAC Evaluation (cont)

- Data Sources
 - Stakeholder Interviews
 - Expert Review Of Products and Instruments
 - Surveys
 - Observations/Site Visits
 - Document Review (e.g. policies and practices)
 - Direct Assessment of Use and Impact
 - Progress Monitoring

Accomplishments to Date...

- Evaluation of Major Events
 - Work Group Meetings
 - Workshops
 - State meetings
- Progress Monitoring

Future Directions...

- Continue Event Evaluations
- Prepare for 3+2 Evaluation
- Conduct Product Reviews
- Evaluate Case Study Validation Process and Replication
- Evaluate Use and Impact

We'd like your help...

- What should be the priorities for evaluation in the next year?
- Based upon what you have heard today, what are indicators that NAAC is successful in the next year and beyond?