

Inclusive Assessment Design, Development, Evaluation, and Data; Accessibility Strategies; and Voices from the Field

**Through Development and Field Testing
As of February 2015**



National Center and State Collaborative

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Purpose and use of this resource



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This collection of slides covers several different topics related to NCSC's approach for development of inclusive, accessible assessments. We will share information in this way until final reports on our development processes and outcomes are completed late in the project. We are also doing project presentations and papers at events like AERA, NCME, TASH, and CEC annual meetings, and the CCSSO National Conference on Student Assessment.

Our curriculum, instruction, and professional development resources are not covered in this set of slides. Please go to https://wiki.ncscpartners.org/index.php/Main_Page to view these resources. They are part of our accessibility strategy - by increasing opportunities to learn for both teachers and students.

Long-term goal:

To ensure that students with the most significant cognitive disabilities achieve increasingly higher academic outcomes and leave high school ready for post-secondary options.

A well-designed summative assessment alone is insufficient.

To achieve this goal, an AA-AAS system also requires:

- Curricular & instructional frameworks
- Teacher resources and professional development

NCSC Framework for Assessments, Curriculum and Instruction

- College and career readiness in the NCSC model also includes community readiness
- NCSC approach is to build assessments as a component of a broader system in which curriculum, instruction and assessments are closely linked
- NCSC has developed curriculum/instructional resources for teachers
- The framework is built on a foundation of communicative competence, so students have a reliable way to receive information from others and to show others what they know

College

Career

Community

Curriculum

Common Core State Standards
Learning Progressions
Core Content Connectors

Instruction

Grade-level Lessons
Accommodations
Systematic Instruction- carefully
planned sequence for instruction
(MASSIs/LASSIs)

Assessment

Formative (ongoing during school
year, monitors learning)
Summative (end of year or course,
evaluates learning)

Communicative Competence

Accessibility as central to our test validity argument

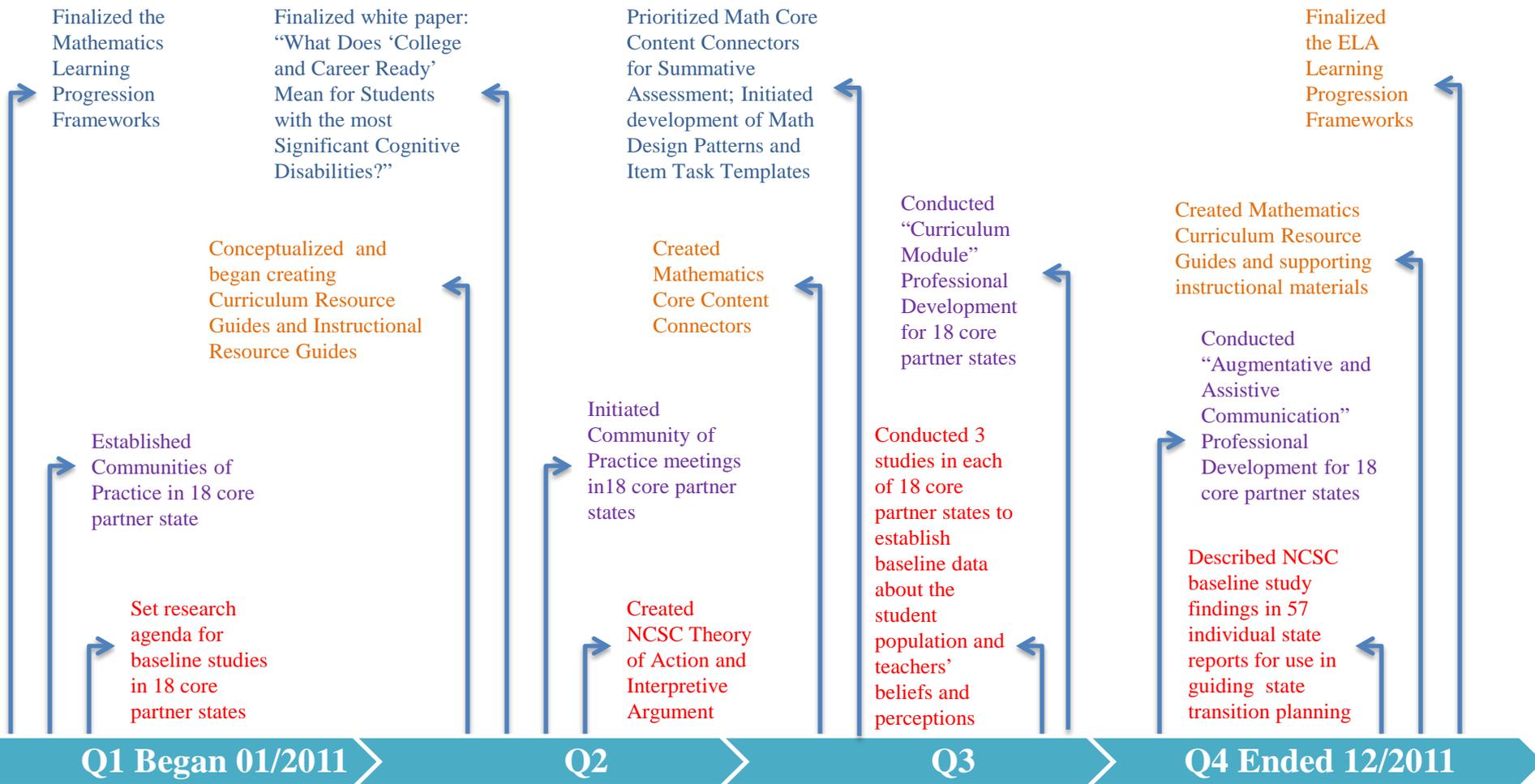


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- Accessibility to the academic content begins with rigorous curriculum/instruction resources and training for teachers
- A deep understanding of student needs informs design of NCSC resources to ensure inclusive accessibility and appropriately high expectations for learning, to mitigate “my kids can’t do that” excuses
- Reviews of extant literature and best practices inform what students can achieve with reasonable opportunity to learn, but additional small trials and pilots of resources were done where research is thin, as “existence proofs”
- Then, the NCSC assessments were based on same model of learning as reflected in the resources, building a path to success

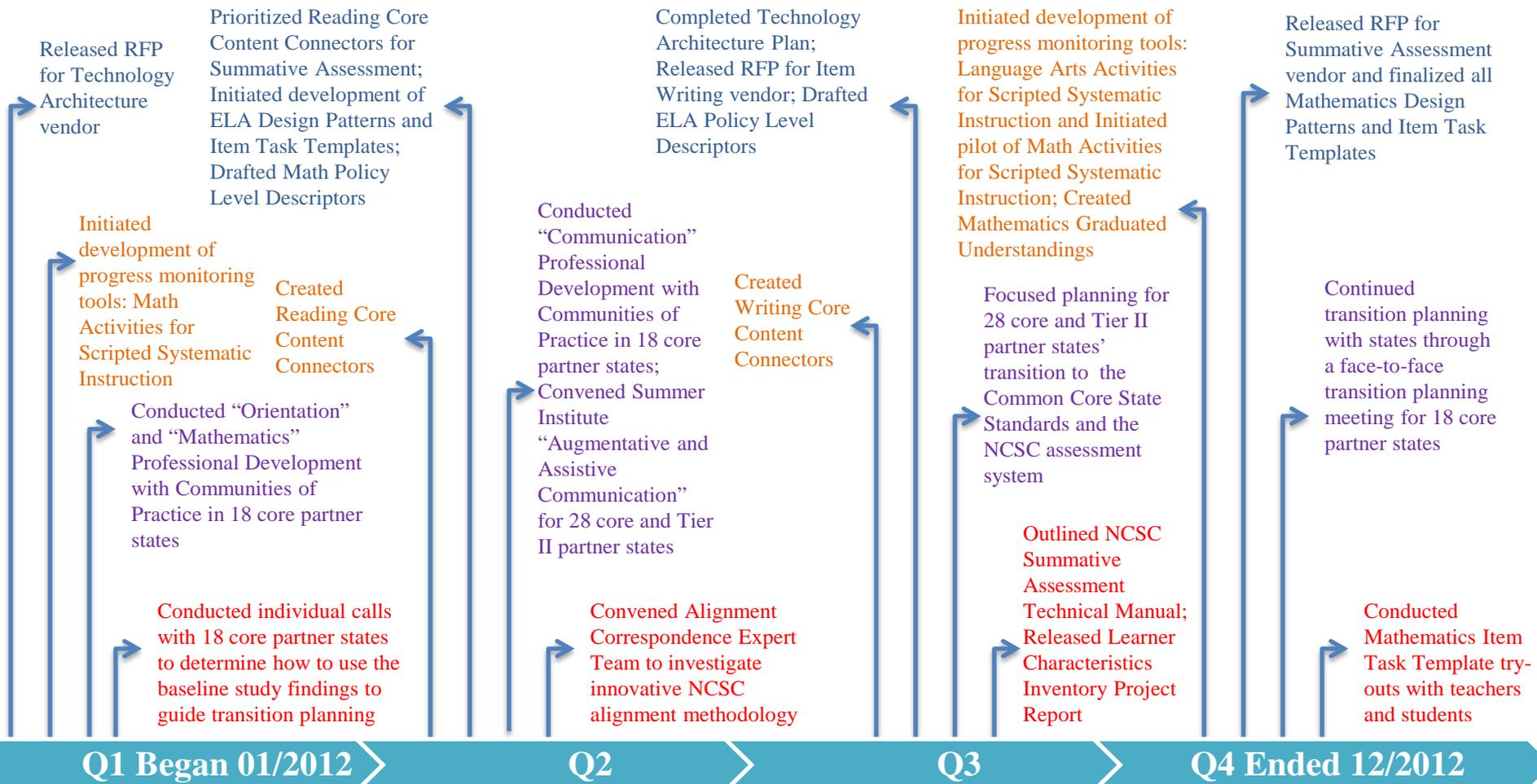
National Center and State Collaborative Major Activities in Year 1

The National Center and State Collaborative (NCSC) is building an assessment system based on a research-based understanding of: a) technical quality of the design of alternate assessments based on alternate achievement standards, b) formative and interim uses of assessment data, c) summative assessments including items derived through an Evidence-Centered Design process, d) academic curriculum and instruction for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities, e) student learning characteristics and communication, and f) effective professional development.



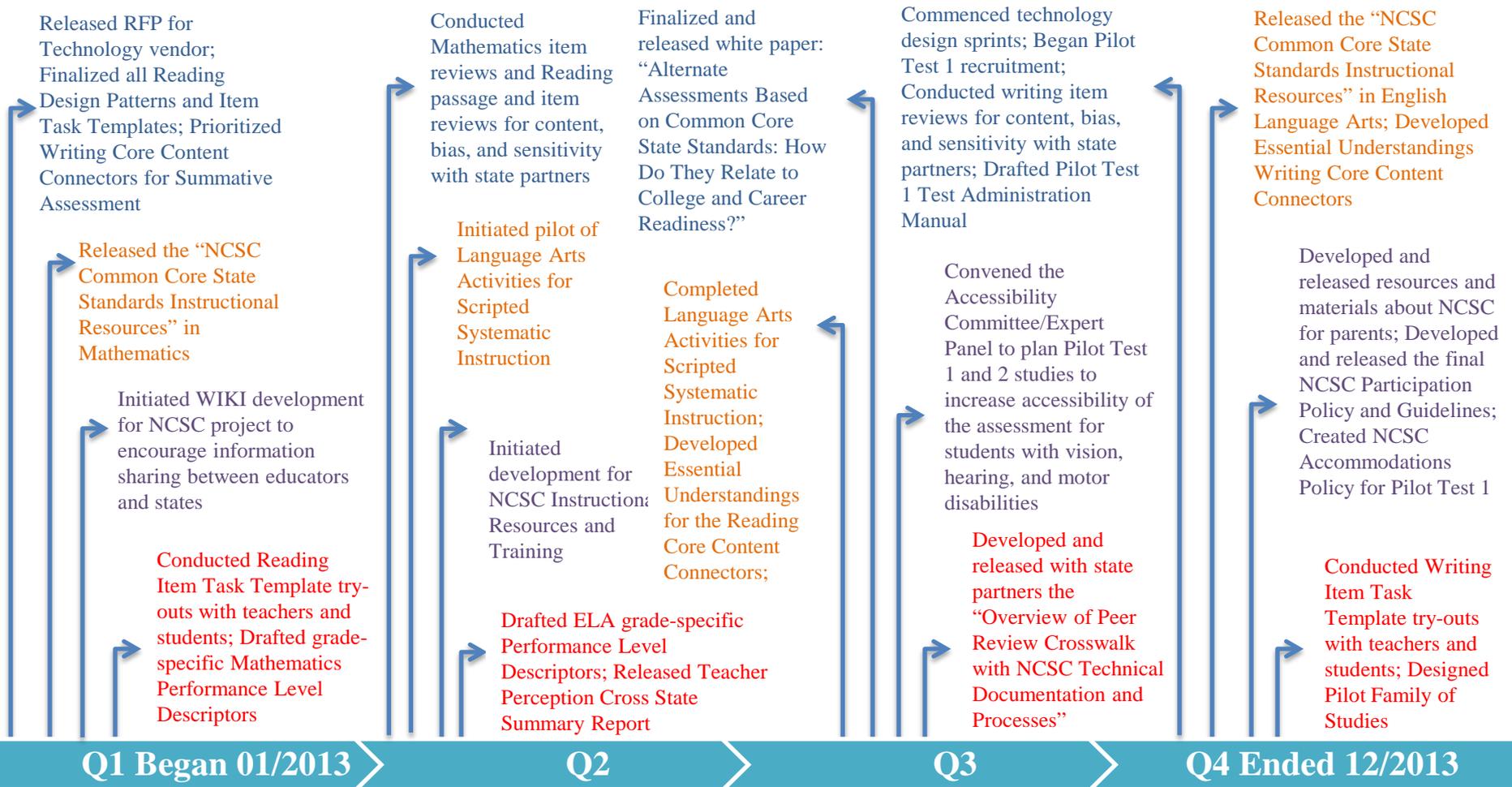
National Center and State Collaborative Major Activities in Year 2

The National Center and State Collaborative (NCSC) is building an assessment system based on a research-based understanding of: a) technical quality of the design of alternate assessments based on alternate achievement standards, b) formative and interim uses of assessment data, c) summative assessments including items derived through an Evidence-Centered Design process, d) academic curriculum and instruction for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities, e) student learning characteristics and communication, and f) effective professional development.



National Center and State Collaborative Major Activities in Year 3

The National Center and State Collaborative (NCSC) is building an assessment system based on a research-based understanding of: a) technical quality of the design of alternate assessments based on alternate achievement standards, b) formative and interim uses of assessment data, c) summative assessments including items derived through an Evidence-Centered Design process, d) academic curriculum and instruction for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities, e) student learning characteristics and communication, and f) effective professional development.



National Center and State Collaborative Major Activities in Year 4

The National Center and State Collaborative (NCSC) is building an assessment system based on a research-based understanding of: a) technical quality of the design of alternate assessments based on alternate achievement standards, b) formative and interim uses of assessment data, c) summative assessments including items derived through an Evidence-Centered Design process, d) academic curriculum and instruction for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities, e) student learning characteristics and communication, and f) effective professional development.

Completed Blueprint, Test Design, Test Administration Manual, Professional Development Modules, and all related materials for Pilot 1 Test

Continued revisions of online versions of materials for the Wiki

Launched the publicly facing Wiki for access to the NCSC AA-AAS Instructional Resources; Continued development of professional development resources for the Wiki

Revised NCSC AA-AAS Theory of Action; Finalized the Table of Contents for the NCSC AA-AAS Technical Documentation and Validity Evaluation; Continued organizing technical documentation evidence

Successful completion of Pilot 1 Test and data collection

Finalized and posted Wiki-based presentations and interactive modules designed to supplement written NCSC materials

Launched Administration Training portal for Pilot 1 Test; partnered with American Printing House to explore testing options for students who are blind

Developed and completed the Writing Evaluation Study for Pilot 1; Completed administration of the End of Test Survey for Pilot 1 Test

Completed Item Data Review for Pilot 1 Test; Completed Blueprint, Test Design, Test Administration Manual, Professional Development Modules, and all related materials for Pilot 2 Test

Continued revisions of online versions of materials for the Wiki

Successful completion of Pilot 2 Test and data collection; Completed Writing Range Finding; Set dates for 2015 Operational Test (14 states); Post-NCSC governance structure in place, with Arizona serving as the fiscal agent

Procedural Policy defined for Procedures for Assessing Students Who Are Blind, Deaf or Deaf-Blind: Additional Guidance for Test Administration; Convened state and expert partners for development of the Communication Toolkit

Revised the NCSC AA-AAS Performance Level Descriptors, Student Learning Expectations, Measurement Expectations, and Measurement Targets

Finalized the NCSC Curriculum and Instruction Resources with the Curriculum Resource Guide – Writing; partnered with Post-NCSC governance states to plan for continued improvement and sustainability of resources

Completed administration of the End of Test Survey for Pilot 2 Test; Continued organizing technical documentation evidence; Developed/disseminated Communication Tools-Supporting Research, References, and Talking Points for Media Coverage: Students with Significant Cognitive Disabilities and Alternate Assessments; Communicating with Parents (and Guardians) about NCSC: Suggestions for Administrators and Educators

Q1 Began 01/2014

Q2

Q3

Q4 Ended 12/2014

NCSC Assessment Timeline

January 2011-October 2015



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Year 1 (2011): Content Model Phase: Define model of domain learning in math/ELA for these students, identify prioritized content for assessment

Year 2 (2012): Principled Design Phase: Design Patterns, Task Templates, C/I/PD design and pilot; Technology architecture design

Year 3 (2013): Item and Test Development Phase: Task Template Tryouts, Item Specs/item development/item reviews, Draft grade level PLDs, finalize pilot/field design, Technology Platform

Year 4 (2014): Pilot, Field, Research Phase:

- **Pilot Phase 1: National Sample, generate item statistics Winter/Spring 2014; Item Evaluation Studies – Writing, Accessibility, Student Interaction Studies,** Finalize blueprints, revise items, assemble forms

- **Phase 2: Field Test Forms Fall 2014,** finalize administration training and supports

Year 5 (2015): Operational administration of NCSC assessments Spring 2015

- Summer 2015: Set Standards

- Fall 2015: Technical report complete

Year Five: Operational Administration of NCSC Assessments

Winter 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Training for Test Administrators➤ Alignment Study for Items Selected for Operational Forms
Spring 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Administer Operational NCSC Assessment March 30-May 15➤ Hand Score Writing Items
Summer 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Conduct Standard Setting➤ Release Scores for Operational Assessments➤ Standard Setting Study
Fall 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Complete Technical Manual➤ Complete NCSC Alternate Assessment Validity Argument

Overview of the NCSC AA-AAS



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- Assessments in Math and ELA, which includes both reading and writing, for grades 3-8 and 11
- Around 30-35 items for each subject, mostly selected response; one writing prompt per grade that accommodates multiple modes of expression
- Direct student interaction with online testing program or the teacher may print out testing materials and enter student responses into the computer
- Approximately 1.5 – 2 hours for each assessment (math and ELA), permitting smaller time slots over a 6-8 week period to meet the student's needs

Across all NCSC partner states, teachers reported that approximately 65% of students could read written text or braille:

- 4% of students across all NCSC partner states could read fluently with critical understanding in print or braille;
- 22% of students could read fluently with basic, literal understanding;
- 39% of students read basic sight words, simple sentences, directions, bullets, and/or lists in print or braille;
- 19% of students just beginning to build reading skills;
- 16% of students had no observable awareness of print or braille.

NCSC LCI BASELINE DATA

MATH



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In mathematics across all NCSC partner states, teachers reported that 66% of students are actively engaged in mathematics:

- 42% of students performed computational procedures with or without a calculator;
- 26% of students could count with 1:1 correspondence to at least 10, or made numbered sets of items;
- 17% of students just beginning to use numbers; and
- 15% of students reportedly had no observable awareness or use of numbers.

The Path to the NCSC AA-AAS Design: Evidence-Centered Design (ECD)

- **Conceptual phase:** Defining how the students and the content come together, in order to design the observations of their learning and to understand the range of student performance, with goal of developing a “family of items” across the range for each content target in the blueprint
- **Design phase:** Development of design patterns and task templates that included extensive design information on content being measured for each item family; scripted administration protocols for each item within a family
- **Existence proof phase:** Tryouts and revisions of task templates with teachers and students, prior to developing items
- **Iterative data-based checks throughout:** Student interaction studies (SIS); survey research; action research model tryouts with partner teachers; large-scale piloting; observations

Stakeholder/Expert Procedures: Developing the item bank based on ECD design patterns and task templates

- Item Writing Guidelines Documents: i. Visual supports; ii. Graphic style guide; iii. Editorial style guide; iv. Alternative text
- Item development and stakeholder review: a. Item and passage development process; b. Item review process - i. Content, ii. Bias/sensitivity; c. APIP/UDL review
- Item data review: Pilot 1 (Spring 2014) generated item statistics, validating design model and fostering final item revisions
- Final comprehensive review: Pilot 2 (Fall 2014)

Policies and training on additional needs

- Accommodations Committee, policies, training
- Online system accessibility designed with Assistive Technology in mind
- Accessibility Committee:
 - a. Analysis of item bank for sensorimotor barriers
 - b. Expert panel with stakeholder input, redesign of items and item protocols
 - c. Design of Pilot 1 and Pilot 2 studies
 - d. Tryouts with teacher/school partners
 - e. Final *Procedures for Assessing Students Who Are Blind, Deaf, or Deaf-Blind: Additional Guidance for Test Administration*, special form, braille items

Purpose of NCSC Pilots



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Collect information necessary to support development and refinement of NCSC summative assessment design

- Pilot Phase 1 – Item tryout – Spring 2014
 - Generate student performance data
 - Investigate administration conditions
 - Understand how the items are functioning
 - Investigate the proposed item scoring processes and procedures
- Pilot Phase 2 – Test forms – Fall 2014
 - Investigate the “stage” design (mirror stage-adaptive summative)
 - Collect form and student performance data
 - Investigate IRT scaling options

Families of Studies

Simultaneous to Pilot 1



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- Pilot 1 large-scale administration – Accessibility Addendum plus event log for test administrators to flag barriers, propose alternatives, survey;
- Pilot 1 Technology User Testing, including Assistive Technology compatibility testing;
- Pilot 1 small-scale tryouts – i. Item revisions (e.g., tactile graphics, object substitutions, braille), ii. Test administrator protocols for students with sensorimotor disabilities

Supporting Data for Pilot Analyses



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- Student Interaction Studies – investigate student and teacher interaction with the items through the technology platform (cognitive labs – see quotes from cognitive labs later in this slide deck)
- Data analyses as part of Pilot 1 and 2 revisions, recommendations on forms construction
- Pilot 2 Accessibility studies: a. Forms construction and piloting; b. Fidelity of administration; c. Teacher surveys to identify unmet needs

Key findings from Pilot Phases 1 and 2



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- Pilot Phase 1 and 2 item statistics suggest that the range of item difficulty was generally as expected from easy to hard items, with higher success rates than anticipated across the full range of items, controlling for learner characteristics, supporting our item development model.
- Classical item analysis and IRT indicate that math and ELA items are generally appropriate and accessible to students.
- Pilot data on early stopping of testing thus far varies across states, but on average is consistent with baseline learner characteristics data for students who do not as yet have a consistent mode of communication (i.e., consistent response modes have not yet been identified).
- Learner Characteristics Inventory data support the representativeness of the overall Pilots 1 and 2 samples.

Key findings from End of Test Survey



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- When asked how much instructional focus was spent on various content domains, teachers mostly spent time on common content across the grades:
 - In math, Numbers and Operations in base 10 in Elementary, The Number System in MS, and Numbers and Quantities in HS with little time focused on fractions, geometry, or probability.
 - In reading, TAs overwhelmingly focused on foundational skills which drop out of the CCSS at grade 6.
 - In writing, TAs overwhelmingly focused on English language conventions.
- When asked if students were actively engaged in instruction based on the concepts assessed by the math/reading/writing test, TAs reported:
 - 55% strongly agreed/agreed the student was engaged with math instruction, 70% with reading instruction, and 54% with writing instruction.
- 60% of students in reading and math responded to the test items using the mouse and computer; only 53% used the mouse and computer for the writing SR items and 42% for the writing CR items.

Access for Students Who Are Blind, Deaf, or Deaf-Blind Study



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- NCSC developed numerous activities to examine item accessibility for all students. These activities address two essential questions:
 - Are NCSC items/assessment accessible for all students?
 - If not, how does NCSC produce items that are accessible while maintaining the construct and test specification?

Stakeholder Input



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- Formed a workgroup with NCSC organizational and state partners.
- Convened expert panel to gather information on best practices.
- Consulted with American Printing House for the Blind and had sample tactile graphics made.
- Created a guidance document.
- Conducted three onsite visits to schools for the blind and deaf to tryout guidance, sample items, and tactile graphics.
- Received feedback on guidance, sample items, and tactile graphics from two additional schools.

Accessibility Action Research

Partner Teacher Review



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- The reading passages are long and students would benefit from strategies to engage and comprehend. For example:
 - Repeating a phrase
 - Cueing to look at sign with explanation
- Some math items and graphics are visually and tactilely complex
- Students who have vision impairments:
 - require familiar symbols and objects and
 - need objects, tactile symbol, or some other way to respond to the answer options.

Accessibility Action Research

Teacher Advice on Protocol



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- General guidance for students with vision and hearing impairments is helpful.
- Examples of how to enhance graphics and suggested signs would be helpful.
- Specific guidance on the types of enhancements is needed to maintain validity.
- Some items may need specific guidance for administration fidelity and full accessibility for students with visual impairments.
- Materials list and directions on how to provide additional enhancements to items would also be helpful.
- Allow students to be exposed to passages and explore materials several days prior to being asked the questions.

Procedures Guidelines from Action Research



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- Keep tactile graphics simple if they are provided.
- Provide contracted and uncontracted braille for grades 3 and 4 open-response words and allow masking of braille when appropriate for the student.
- Provide directions for the test administrator on how to orient the student to the braille.
- Provide clear parameters for sign language interpretation.
- Review the instructional materials and revise to help teachers better prepare for the AA-AAS.
- Continue evaluating methods for item development and providing access.

Final Procedures



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Created:

- Test form that provided the greatest accessibility.
- Braille for grades 3 and 4 open-response words.
- Guidance document:
 - Protocol for reviewing passages and math materials prior to testing the items.
 - Directions on ways to enhance the materials with tactile enhancements or with representative objects.
 - Specific guidance on enhancing materials and signing items in order to maintain validity.
 - Directions to augment or replace Directions for Test Administration for open-response words for grades 3 and 4.
 - Suggested replacement objects and suggested signs for open-response words at grades 3 and 4.
 - Content area/grade band guidance for enhancing materials.

What about students for whom no consistent expressive communication modes have been identified?



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- 12—15% of students are reported by their teachers to have no consistent expressive communication mode to participate in classroom or large-scale assessments.
- On the NCSC AA-AAS, Test Administrators complete a Student Response Check to determine how best to support student participation in the testing.
- Then, the first four items of the test are administered.
- If there is no discernable methods for the student to respond, the TA ends testing.

What happens when testing results flag inconsistent expressive communication?



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- The NCSC states and partner organizations are developing a “Communications Toolkit” for classroom use with all students the Test Administrator reports have no consistent modes of expressive communication.
- The Toolkit will be posted on the NCSC Wiki by August, 2015.
- States believe that by providing a toolkit to plan communication interventions, we will increase access not only to the NCSC assessment but also to the general curriculum.

Communication Toolkit Design



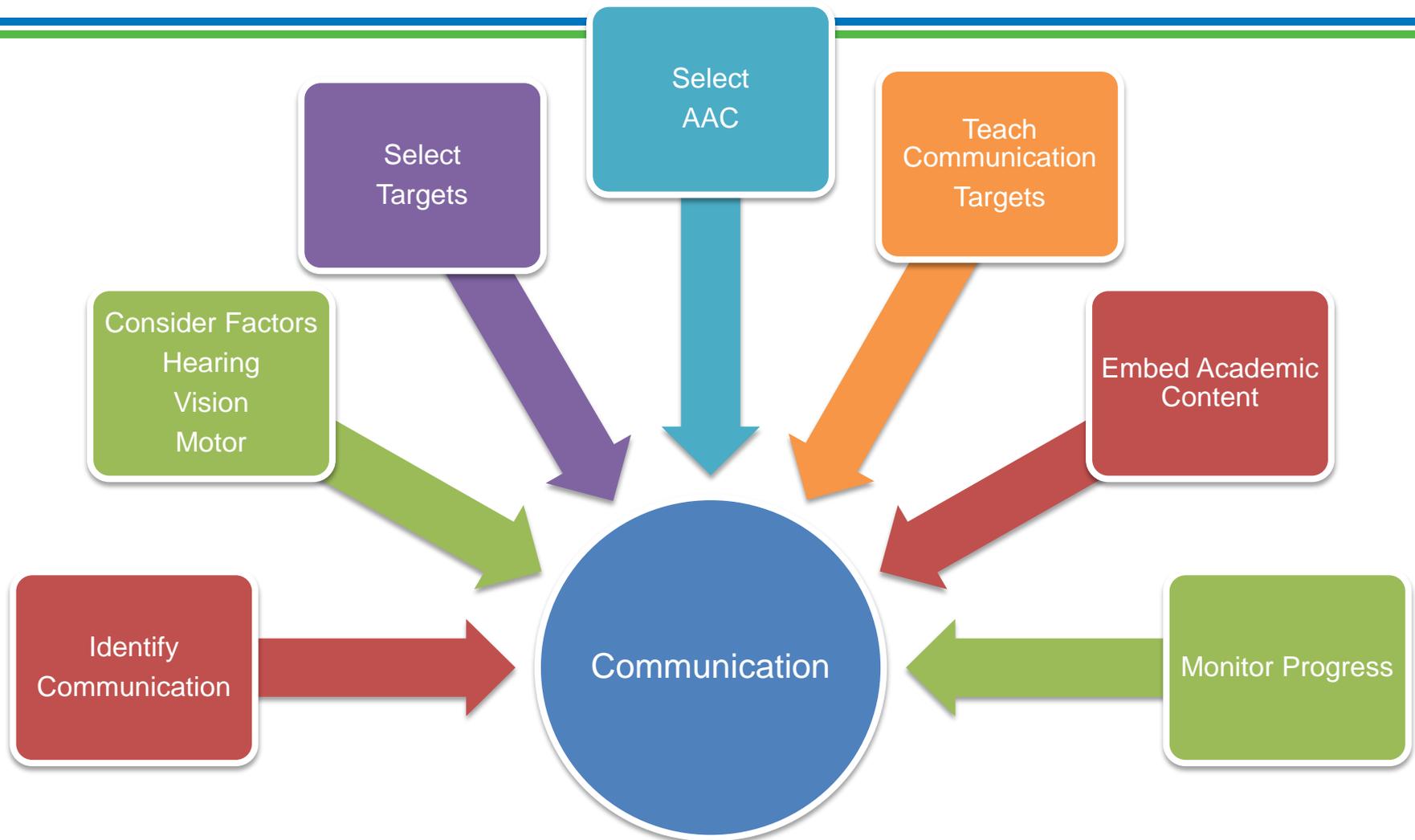
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- **Primary Purpose and Use**
 - Professional Development for teachers, related service team members, parents. Materials will be focused, readily available, with links to additional information as appropriate.
- **Summary of Focus and Format**
 - Includes asynchronous video Modules, readily available to users along with written materials with links to additional resources, appropriate to the range of age groups – with Pre-K to High school examples.
- **Module Materials**
 - Relevant materials will be included with each module. These materials include work sheets, resource links, and evidence base citations.

Factors covered in Toolkit



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Modules



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Identify Communication

- Define Communication
- Differentiate Communication and Language
- Expressive Communication
- Receptive Communication
- Intent + Mode = Communication
- Provide examples
 - Multiple Disabilities Motor
 - Multiple Disabilities Sensory
 - Autism

Consider Hearing, Vision, Motor Challenges

- Transdisciplinary Team including parent
- Selecting tangible symbols or tactile representations
- Parent interview for how the student requests, refuses, chooses, comments, preferences.
- The importance of positioning

Select Communication Targets

- Use ASHA National Joint Committee Checklist
 - request, refuse, choose, comment
- Choosing Receptive targets
- Choosing Expressive targets
- Use a matrix to identify opportunities to practice the targets.
- identify student interests and preferences

Modules Continued

Select appropriate AAC

- Why use AAC
- Aided/Unaided
- Access -
 - direct
 - Scanning
 - Encoding
 - Representations
 - Tech - no, low, high
 - Placement: grid vs visual display
 - Output: visual auditory print
- Myths related to AAC

Teach Communication

- Identify communication
- Assume Competence
- Respond as if meaningful
 - acknowledge
 - honor (reinforce)
- Leverage preferences
- Present tangible symbols/AAC
- Use of Peers
- Create authentic conversations

Embed Communication into Academic Content

- Universal Design
- Identify language/content
- Select tangible symbolic representations
- AAC use
- Adapt content for complexity
 - smart board switch access

Monitor Progress

- Review the communication matrix
- Collect data on the targets
- Chart the data
- Determine data decision rules
- Use team problem solving

NCSC Technology: Customized Open Source



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- Compliant with commonly used AT/AAC devices
- Paper & pencil alternative delivery
- Hand scoring/interaction for teachers
- Keyboard only navigation
- Accessibility features (e.g., Text to speech, magnification, high contrast)
- Upload evidence for an item feature
- PD training, survey, practice tests
- Federally funded and open source system/content available to all schools and states without licensing fees

Standards Used in Development of the NCSC Delivery Solution

- QTI APIP – Item and accessibility content
- SEDS – Data standard for student and results data
- HTML5 – Web standard for cross-browser and platform support
- SQL – Data standard to allow other systems to access student performance data
- LTI – could be used in the future to launch formative tests from the platform

VOICES FROM THE FIELD: Results from NCSC Cognitive Labs with Teachers and Students (Student Interaction Studies, SIS)

“They were very easy for him to follow along. In fact I thought a couple of them he probably could have read [himself]... I felt like it was pretty much on target. You’ve got some that are kind of easy, so that to me was helping him build his confidence. I’m sorry, I get so emotional, I’m just thinking – this is what I want for my kids! Then you have something that’s a little harder, a little more challenging, and he was willing to keep rolling with it. Whereas if you hit them right off with something hard, our kids will get discouraged and they may not put forth the effort, and we want them to put forth the effort to finish the test, because we want to see where they are so we can meet those needs. So I thought it was a great variety... You all saw, when he walked away he was feeling good.”

SIS teacher on the cognitive processes targeted by the items:

“What [the test] asked was really reinforcing what he’s learning and the way that he’s learning throughout the year in all of the classes with reading. I felt like it was right on target with how he processes information and how he’s being taught.”

“I think the responses were good, because they weren’t confusing. They stuck to the text... I think the pictures helped. You know it’s hard for our kids who don’t read. They need the pictures.”

SIS teacher on student engagement with the passages:



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- “She was real engaged. She did really well. She followed along as I was reading, she was really engaged the whole time... [Interviewer: What did she say about the photo of the Lincoln Memorial?] She said, ‘he’s dead now.’ We did a unit back in January about Lincoln – she made that connection.”
- “With her it can be difficult to tell. I don’t know if I could say whether she was engaged but she did pick up on certain words and relate those to her life.”

SIS teacher on difficulty of items:



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“I do think that questions vary in difficulty. I also noticed that some questions had more answer choices than others. Some had two answer choices, and some had three answer choices, and that alone makes some things more difficult than others. And then I also noticed that if a child was listening and following through the question, that they would be able to identify the answer, because they had all the tools there needed to do that. And then I noticed that with others, they would have to bring some prerequisite skills with them to be able to solve for the answer, and—so, I mean, that's—that's obviously a greater gap than what the student had to know.”

SIS teacher on the cognitive processes used and exposure to testing (paper/pencil administration):



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“I think that the structure of the problems themselves allow for that cognitive process to occur, but once again I think the reason why... he struggled was because he had not been exposed to this type of testing or how the questions were laid out, so if he had some exposure, I think that... his cognitive process would have been a lot stronger.”

SIS teacher on whether content was age and grade appropriate:

“I definitely think it was age and grade appropriate. [Pause] I try very much in my classes to keep it age and grade appropriate, and make sure that it is rigorous enough, and make sure that they are comfortable and confident in it, because if they’re doing anything that they think is baby work, they won’t do it at all. So I think when it’s presented in a way and the content is age appropriate, I think they feel very good about themselves... So I think the problems [items] reflected those things that they would also address in regular classes.”

SIS teacher on student's familiarity with content:



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“I feel like we’ve touched on everything that was presented, particularly the mean - maybe I’ve presented it in a different way... because I know that he knows that. And maybe it’s just that he relies on certain visual cues in the worksheets that I give him or something like that, but as far as exposure to line graphs and mean, maybe not so much line plots, um, or the number lines, data on the number lines.” ... “We’ve done things like line plots, and graphing that way and obviously he uses number lines when he does computations sometimes, but having a question revolved around a number line, I’ve never taught anything about that, so I think that was kind of foreign to him.”

VOICES FROM THE FIELD: The curriculum and instruction side of our NCSC Theory of Action!

Functional, social, and academic goals merged



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- NCSC professional development and materials have encouraged bridging the gap between a traditionally exclusively functional curriculum to providing my students with more opportunities to access the general education curriculum. Teacher comments taken From 2014 External Evaluation of NCSC Classroom Resources
- I just need to share some successes with *The Pearl* and *Marcelo in the Real World* LASSIs [Language Arts Activities for Scripted Systematic Instruction]. A non-verbal freshman student came to us with functional goals: matching, identifying common objects. She is not only doing those things, but is answering all of the questions on both LASSIs using the visuals with 80-100% accuracy with no prompting. I have never been so happy to rewrite an IEP in my life. Submitted by teacher in NCSC state
- One of the students for whom I kept data was going home and talking about *The Pearl* so the family bought the book and they all read it. They were able to have conversations about the book and their son with Down syndrome participated. Submitted by teacher in NCSC state
- I like how the standards and activities that are being developed tie in real world activities and examples. Teacher comments taken From 2014 External Evaluation of NCSC Classroom Resources

Higher expectations, higher achievement



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- Through the initial training I received I have changed my whole classroom philosophy. I have always set high expectations for my students and this training just raised the bar.
- Gives the students a sense of achievement when they do well and are able to answer the questions.
- I expanded my professional knowledge, including the impact of challenges that could be faced by some of my students when they get older and make slower progress in the general curriculum.
- Students are now being challenged with higher curriculum.
- Students performed better during the alternate assessment exams. They were more focused during the lessons and were able to monitor their own progress to some extent.

Teacher comments taken From 2014 External Evaluation of NCSC Classroom Resources

Learning how to learn



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- As I read *The Pearl* and *now Marcelo in the Real World*, I have been stopping when I get to one of the vocab words and saying "I don't know that word. I wonder what it means!" If they remember from the vocab introduction we talk about it and keep reading. If they don't, the students go to dictionary.com and we look it up. Then we refer back to the vocab and picture to make a connection. Many of the students are now stopping and asking "What does that word mean" when they are reading independently or when listening to someone else read and will say "We better look it up". That has never happened before. Submitted by teacher in NCSC state

Motivation and engagement



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- Another student who has difficulty saying 2 syllable words, was able to say "geographical order" perfectly after we practiced it a few times. His speech therapist was in the room at the time and was blown away. He was so motivated to keep trying to say it. The students also understand what it means and we now talk about passing out papers in "geographical order." Submitted by teacher in NCSC state
- I taught a couple sessions in a Teaching Language Arts Class to interns working on their teaching credentials in Spec. Ed. One of them teaches Grade 1-3 and took the blank LASSI template I created and went home after class on Thursday night and made visuals for the book *The Boy with Pink Hair*. She has a class of students with autism: some low functioning, some behavioral issues. She was able to keep them engaged for almost an hour and every one of her students was responding at a higher level than ever before. Submitted by teacher in NCSC state (LASSI: Language Arts Activities for Scripted Systematic Instruction)

Raising the System's Bars!



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- Something else happened today that you will be interested in. XXX, which is the accreditation team, was visiting our school. My class is operated by the County, but I am on a district school campus. In their report, XXX stated that the county special education program (us) had a much more rigorous curriculum than the district program. It was all because of the LASSI. One of the team members was director of special education from a county in [Northern part of state] and he was amazed at the vocabulary and the content the students were able to handle. All of your hard work is paying off big time. Just wait until more teachers have access. Submitted by teacher in NCSC state (LASSI: Language Arts Activities for Scripted Systematic Instruction)