

Assessing Special Education Students (ASES) Collaborative

The Assessing Special Education Students (ASES) collaborative supports states as they enhance their assessment, accountability, and curriculum and instruction systems to provide full equity for students with disabilities. ASES is the only national collaborative that brings together experts in the fields of assessment and special education from the state education agency, industry sector and higher education, to identify challenges and find solutions for the inclusion of students with disabilities through policy and practice.

ASES hosts three in-person meetings per program year supplemented periodically by online webinars, resources, and tools that sustain and extend work. State members who join ASES include special education directors, special education staff, and assessment staff who are responsible for alternate assessments. Members have a deep commitment to addressing the unique issues facing students with disabilities, including support for English learners with disabilities.

2017-2018 Achievements:

In the 2017-2018 program year, ASES met with a series of national experts, engaged with other CCSSO groups in cross-collaborative work, and finalized resources to support state work primarily focused on serving students with disabilities. Examples include the following:

- **Guest speakers**
 - Melissa Gholson, *Researcher, Alternate English Language Assessment (ALTELLA) Project*
 - Deb Ziegler, *Director, Council for Exceptional Children*
 - Lynn Holdheide, *Managing TA Consultant, Center on Great Teachers and Leaders, American Institutes for Research (AIR)*
 - Martha Thurlow, *Director, National Center on Education Outcomes (NCEO)*
 - Don Peasley, *Supervisory Education Research Analyst, U.S. Department of Education*
- **Cross-collaborative work**
 - Joint Session with Science collaborative: “Science Alternate Assessment Accessibility Considerations”
 - Joint Session with English Learner (EL) and TILSA collaboratives: “Alternate English Proficiency Assessments”
 - Joint Session with FAST and Math collaboratives: “Formative Assessment and Equitable Mathematics Classrooms: Probing the Intersection”

2018-2019 Goals:

CCSSO is committed to ensuring every child, across all backgrounds, graduates ready for college, careers, and life. ASES is working toward this vision by bringing states together with experts to find solutions, share best practices and create resources so states can make sure students with disabilities have access to the resources and supports they need to succeed and graduate.

- Identify standards and develop resources supporting the alternate English language proficiency assessments in collaboration with the English Learner (EL) collaborative and other partners.

- Develop Issue Briefs on:
 - Growth modeling and alternate assessments linked to alternate achievement standards. (AA-AAS)
 - Technology enhanced assessments and accessibility considerations
- Refine professional development resources addressing formative assessment and students with disabilities, including those with significant cognitive disabilities in collaboration with Formative Assessment for Students and Teachers collaborative.
- Explore and initiate collaborative work with partners addressing college and career readiness including students with disabilities.
- Share updates from national partners including the U.S. Department of Education, industry partners, assessment consortia representatives, and funded research projects (e.g., Enhanced Assessment Grants, Institute for Educational Sciences projects).
- Share trends, evidence-based practices, and research by state and industry partners.

Spotlight on Equity

A focus on equity is central to CCSSO's 2017-2020 strategic plan and our work with our members. CCSSO and state chiefs are committed to each child—regardless of background—graduating ready for college, careers, and life. In 2017, CCSSO and the Aspen Institute Education & Society Program released [Leading for Equity: Opportunities for State Education Chiefs](#), which set forth a series of actions state chiefs can take to advance equity. Each of CCSSO's collaboratives is a venue for working with national experts and collaborating with peer states to identify concrete strategies for advancing relevant commitments found in the report. Equity will play a major role in the agenda of the collaboratives over the next membership year. Examples of equity commitments from [Leading for Equity](#) the ASES collaborative addresses through its work are:

- **Equity Commitment Number 1, Part B)** Proactively initiate and lead conversations about equity.
- **Equity Commitment Number 3, Part B)** Set ambitious and achievable interim and long-term goals for English learners and ensure they are making adequate progress achieving English language proficiency
- **Equity Commitment Number 3, Part C)** Ensure that all students have access to high-quality instructional materials
- **Equity Commitment Number 3, Part D)** Analyze and publicly report rates of identification for special education services
- **Equity Commitment Number 7, Part G)** Ensure students with disabilities and English learners have access to accommodations in instruction and assessment.



Anchor documents

[Formative Assessment for Students with Disabilities \(December 2017\)](#)
[How to Select, Administer, and Evaluate Use of Accessibility Supports for Instruction and Assessment of All Students \(August 2016\)](#)

Biography of Advisor

Sandra Hopfengardner Warren is the collaborative advisor for ASES. Sandra consults with the U.S. Department of Education and a variety of federally funded technical assistance centers. Dr. Warren is a professor at East Carolina University (Greenville, NC) where she directs the graduate special education degrees and certificate programs, co-directs the North Carolina Deaf-blind Project, and directs a U.S. Department of Education funded personnel development grant. She received her PhD (special education and disability policy) from the University of Maryland, College Park.

CCSSO Liaison:

Kathleen Airhart is CCSSO's Program Director, Special Education Outcomes. In this role, Kathleen leads CCSSO's work supporting students with disabilities and as liaison, she will work closely with ASES advisor Sandra Warren to make connections across CCSSO. Kathleen brings with her many years of experience, including working at the Tennessee Department of Education for the past seven years, most recently as a Deputy Commissioner. Prior to her time at the state education agency (SEA), Kathleen was the superintendent in Putnam County in Tennessee and was named Tennessee Superintendent of the Year during her time there. She started her career as a special education high school classroom teacher and served as a special education supervisor for several years.

2017-18 State Members:

AZ, AR, CA, CO, CT, DoDEA, DE, FL, GA, HI, ID, IN, IA, KS, KY, ME, MD, MI, MS, MO, NE, NC, OH, OK, OR, PA, SC, SD, VT, WA, WI, WY.

2017-18 Industry Partners:

American Institutes for Research (AIR) Data Recognition Corporation (DRC), Education Testing Service (ETS) Measured Progress, Pearson, Questar, National Center for Research on Evaluation, Standard, and Student Testing (CRESST) (ELPA21), Smarter Balanced, WIDA Consortium, University of Kansas.

