

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.

State members who join ASES include special education directors and staff who are responsible for assessment and instruction of students with disabilities, and assessment staff who are responsible for general assessment accessibility and alternate assessments. Members have a deep commitment to addressing the unique issues facing students with a wide range of disabilities, including support for English learners with disabilities.

2018-2019 Highlights:

In the 2018-2019 program year, explored resources to support state work primarily focused on serving students with disabilities. Equity considerations were embedded throughout our work as we explored policies and practices that facilitate improved outcomes of students with disabilities. In particular, the following commitments from [Leading for Equity](#) were addressed:

- Equity Commitment 2: Focus on the State Education Agency
- Equity Commitment 3: Create Accountability for Equity
- Equity Commitment 4: Engage Local Education Agencies (LEAs) and Provide Tailored and Differentiated Support
- Equity Commitment 8: Focus on Teachers and Leaders
- Equity Commitment 9: Focus on school Culture, Climate, and Social-emotional Development

In 2018-19, ASES met and engaged with a series of national experts in the field at their meetings. Some examples of these experts are:

- **Guest Speakers**
 - Ed Bosso, Perkins School for the Blind
 - Stephanie Cawthon, National Deaf Center on Postsecondary Outcomes
 - Lou Danielson, National Center on Intensive Interventions, AIR
 - Bryan Gould & Geoff Freed, National Center for Accessible Media at WGBH
 - Meagan Karvonen, ATLAS, University of Kansas
 - Don Peasley & Susan Weigert, U.S. Department of Education
- ASES utilized the collaborative meeting format to engage several groups in cross-collaborative work, examples include:
 - Accountability and Systems Reporting (ASR): Fostering Effective and Equitable Assessment and Accountability Systems for *All* Students
 - English Learners (EL): “CCSSO English Language Proficiency Standards for English Learners with Significant Cognitive Disabilities” and “Including English Learners and Students with Disabilities in Assessments: An Assessment Literacy Guide”
 - School and District Improvement (SDI): Supporting States in the Implementation of Multi-Tiered Systems of Support

2019-2020 Goals

CCSSO believes that it is incumbent on states to set high expectations for student success by creating opportunities and removing barriers. ASES is working towards this vision by leveraging the collective expertise of its state member and industry partners to work toward this goal. This year, the ASES Collaborative will:

- Learn from experts in the field and ASES members to effectively connect state efforts to support educators and the implementation of high standards in the classroom. (Equity Commitment 7: Monitor Equitable Implementation of Standards and Assessment)
- Offer opportunities for professional learning guided by nationally recognized experts in equity, special education, instruction, and assessment. (Equity Commitment 2: Focus on the State Education Agency)
- Support states with resources to develop state-level integrated systems of Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS) to improve social, emotional, and academic outcomes for all students, particularly those who struggle. (Equity Commitment 4: Engage Local Education Agencies (LEAs) and Provide Tailored and Differentiated Support)
- Develop resources for states on:
 - “Are the right students taking the right assessments?” – This resource will support state work on meeting the ESSA 1% participation cap in alternate assessments aligned with alternate assessments linked to alternate achievement standards. (Equity Commitment 3: Create Accountability for Equity)
 - “School Leader Guide to Equitable Inclusion of Students with Disabilities in Assessment and Accountability Systems” – This resource will provide strategies and resources to support school leaders in fostering school climates resulting in equitable inclusion of students with disabilities in assessment. (Equity Commitment 8: Focus on Teachers and Leaders; Equity Commitment 9: Focus on school Culture, Climate, and Social-emotional Development)

Biography of Advisor:

Sandra Hopfengardner Warren is the collaborative advisor for the ASES collaborative and 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 serves as Program Director for Special Education Outcomes at the Council of Chief State School Officers. She is responsible for leading the work supporting students with disabilities and helping to lead key elements within the strategic plan, primarily to “Ensure Each Student Benefits from

College and Career Ready Expectations”. Kathleen brings with her many years of educational experience, including working at the Tennessee Department of Education as a Deputy Commissioner. Prior to her time at the SEA, Kathleen served as a superintendent of schools in Tennessee and was named Tennessee Superintendent of the Year in 2011. She started her public education career as a special education high school classroom teacher and served as special education supervisor. Kathleen received her Ed.D. in Curriculum and Instruction from Tennessee State University and a Masters in Special Education from Tennessee Tech University. Kathleen has built her educational career on a firm belief that all students can be successful regardless of personal circumstance if optimistic adults provide for their potential.

2018-19 State Members Included:

AL, AZ, AR, CA, CT, DoDEA, DE, FL, GA, HI, ID, IA, KS, KY, LA, ME, MD, MI, MS, MO, NE, NJ, NM, NC, OH, OK, OR, PA, SC, SD, TN, UT, VT, WA, WV, WI, WY

2018-19 Partners Included:

AIR, CRESST (ELPA21), DRC, ETS, Measured Progress, Pearson, Questar, Reading Recovery Council, SmarterBalanced, University of Kansas, WIDA