

# CHALLENGES TEACHERS EXPERIENCE IN MAKING DECISIONS ABOUT ACCESSIBILITY OPTIONS IN INSTRUCTION AND ASSESSMENT

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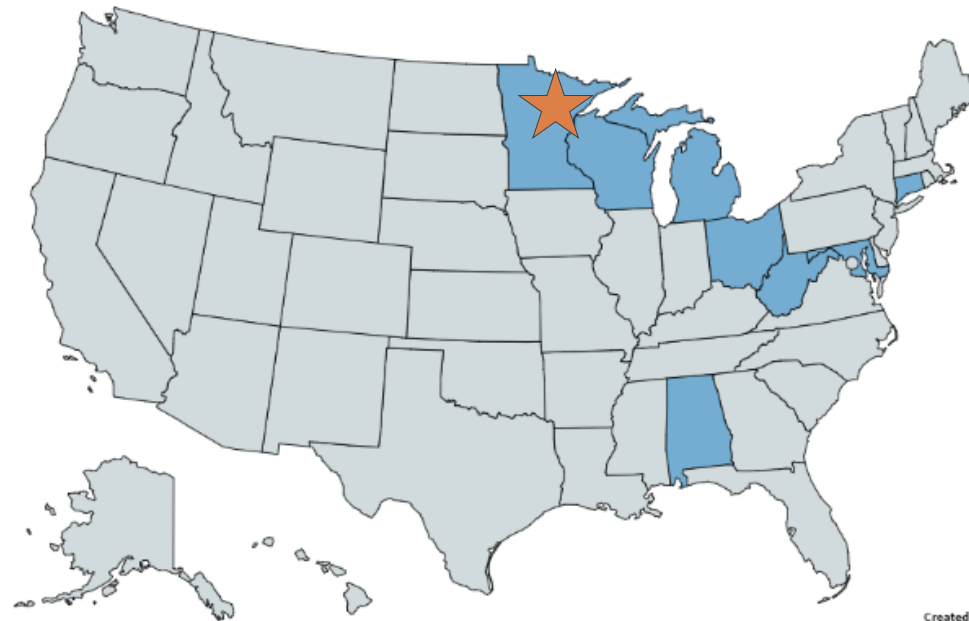
# Accessibility Paradigm Shift

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- The federal government funded consortia of states to develop a general assessment, alternate assessment, and English language proficiency (ELP) assessment
- These consortia used principles of universal design and opened up the concept of accessibility
- Accessibility means providing students with tools or supports that level the playing field

# DIAMOND Project - to improve the validity of assessment results and interpretations for students with documented needs by developing guidelines for educators to make informed decisions.

- Funded by a US Department of Education Enhanced Assessment Instruments Grant
- Collaboration between the National Center on Educational Outcomes and the departments of education of nine states



- Alabama
- Connecticut
- Maryland
- Michigan
- Minnesota
- Ohio
- West Virginia
- Wisconsin
- U.S. Virgin Islands

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# Online Focus Groups

**Purpose** - Teachers' experiences with accessibility features and accommodations

- 46 teachers in six online focus groups
- Special education, general education, and EL/bilingual education
- Rural, suburban, and urban districts
- All grade levels

# Theme 1: Decision Making

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- General education < special education; EL/bilingual teachers
- Varied teams: IEP; non-IEP; non-team
- Assessments > instruction
- Process?

# Theme 2: Data

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- Variety of types
- Teacher input across disciplines
- Monitoring
- Process – Collecting, documenting, disseminating?

# Theme 3: Constraints

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- Knowledge
- Choices – online; math
- Practice opportunities
- Inclusion – teacher responsibility?
- IEP: request process; class vs. assessments, student ability
- EL: options; provision discontinued
- Inconsistency – different assessments

# Implications for Next Steps

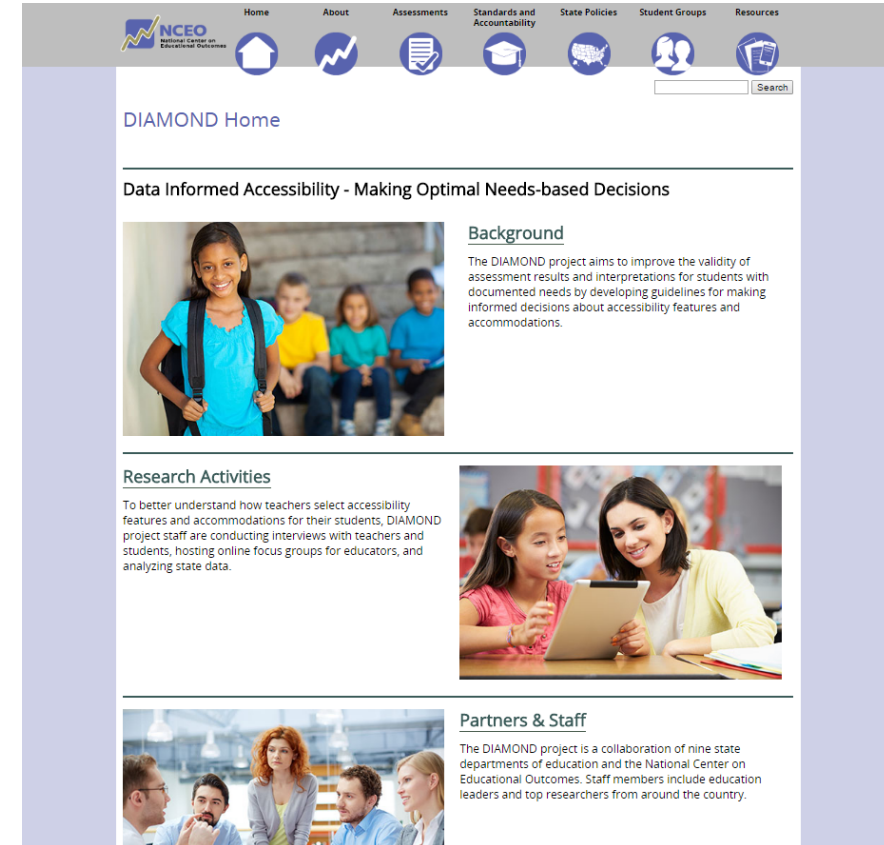
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- Need for Guidance:
  - Definitions – precise, clear
  - Team-based decision process – all teachers, all students
  - Data - identify, document, share
  - Implementation – other assessments, classroom, resource, practice, professional development



# For More Information

- Visit the DIAMOND webpage on the NCEO website: <https://nceo.info/About/projects/nceoprojects/diamond>



The screenshot shows the DIAMOND Home page on the NCEO website. The page features a navigation bar with links for Home, About, Assessments, Standards and Accountability, State Policies, Student Groups, and Resources. Below the navigation bar, the page title is "DIAMOND Home". The main content area is titled "Data Informed Accessibility - Making Optimal Needs-based Decisions". It includes a "Background" section with a photo of a young girl and text explaining the project's goal to improve assessment validity. There is also a "Research Activities" section with a photo of a teacher and student looking at a tablet, and a "Partners & Staff" section with a photo of a group of people in a meeting.

Home About Assessments Standards and Accountability State Policies Student Groups Resources

DIAMOND Home

Data Informed Accessibility - Making Optimal Needs-based Decisions

**Background**

The DIAMOND project aims to improve the validity of assessment results and interpretations for students with documented needs by developing guidelines for making informed decisions about accessibility features and accommodations.

**Research Activities**

To better understand how teachers select accessibility features and accommodations for their students, DIAMOND project staff are conducting interviews with teachers and students, hosting online focus groups for educators, and analyzing state data.

**Partners & Staff**

The DIAMOND project is a collaboration of nine state departments of education and the National Center on Educational Outcomes. Staff members include education leaders and top researchers from around the country.