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Students on the Border Between the Alternate and General Assessments

Sheryl Lazarus, Andrew Hinkle, Linda Goldstone,
Jessica Bowman, Darrell Peterson, and Yi-Chen Wu
National Center on Educational Outcomes
University of Minnesota

Outline

- Learning Objectives
- Project Overview
- Activities
- Discussion

Learning Objectives

- Identify advantages and challenges for teachers for including students on the cusp of the alternate and general assessment for inclusion in the general education curriculum.
- Consider types of assessment data to inform potential professional development resources to inform instruction to advance students' learning of the general curriculum
- Identify strategies teachers can use when instructing students on the cusp between the alternate and general assessments.

Project Overview

Making Improved Decisions for Students on the Cusp of Alternate Assessment Participation Using Multiple Measures of Academic Achievement from Multiple Sources (MIDAS)

Funding source: Competitive Grants for State Assessments grant

Time: 4 years, 2022 - 2026



State Partners



Why The MIDAS Project?

- 2015 reauthorization of ESEA
 - 1% cap on student participation in the AA-AAAS (Alternate Assessment Based on Alternate Academic Achievement Standards – AA-AAAS)
 - Issue: States > 1% cap
- Challenge: Students' AA-AAAS transition to general state assessment
 - Issue: Educators unprepared

Purpose

- To inform instructional decision making for students with disabilities, including English learners (ELs) with disabilities, who move from the AA-AAAS to the general assessment.
- To create customizable templates, professional learning modules, and supporting materials for educators on the use of data from multiple measures of academic achievement

Project Goals

- To increase capacity of state education agencies (SEAs) to provide technical assistance (TA) to local education agencies (LEAs) on the use of multiple measures of academic achievement from multiple sources to improve instructional practices for students with disabilities who move from the alternate assessment based on alternate academic standards (AA-AAAS) to the general assessment
- To increase capacity of special education and general education teachers to successfully instruct students with disabilities who move from the AA-AAAS to the general assessment.

Project Activities

- Identify existing instructional resources and measures of academic achievement that could inform instruction of students who move from the AA-AAAS to the general assessment
- Conduct online focus groups with teachers
- Conduct classroom observations and follow-up teacher interviews
- Parent interviews
- Conduct targeted state data analyses

Multiple Means of Assessment to Inform Learning & Instruction



Interim Assessment

- Broad range of commercial products often embedded within curriculums
- Used for various purposes
- Make sure the assessment is appropriate for students with disabilities
- Ways they might inform instruction

Formative Assessment Practices

- Research supports positive impacts for *all* learners - whole class & individual students
- Integrating into instruction requires focused skill development by teachers
- May need to be adapted for students with disabilities, especially students with more extensive disabilities
- The principles of Universal Design should be applied to assessment (UDA) as well as learning (UDL)

Key Takeaways

- 1) High expectations for **all** students.
- 2) Use data from multiple data points and from multiple measures.
- 3) Ensure interim assessments are appropriately used.
- 4) Focus on formative assessment practices that are effective for entire classroom.
- 5) Integrate use of formative assessment cycle and Universal Design.
- 6) Pre-service and professional development on assessment participation and use of assessment data.

Focus Groups - Purpose

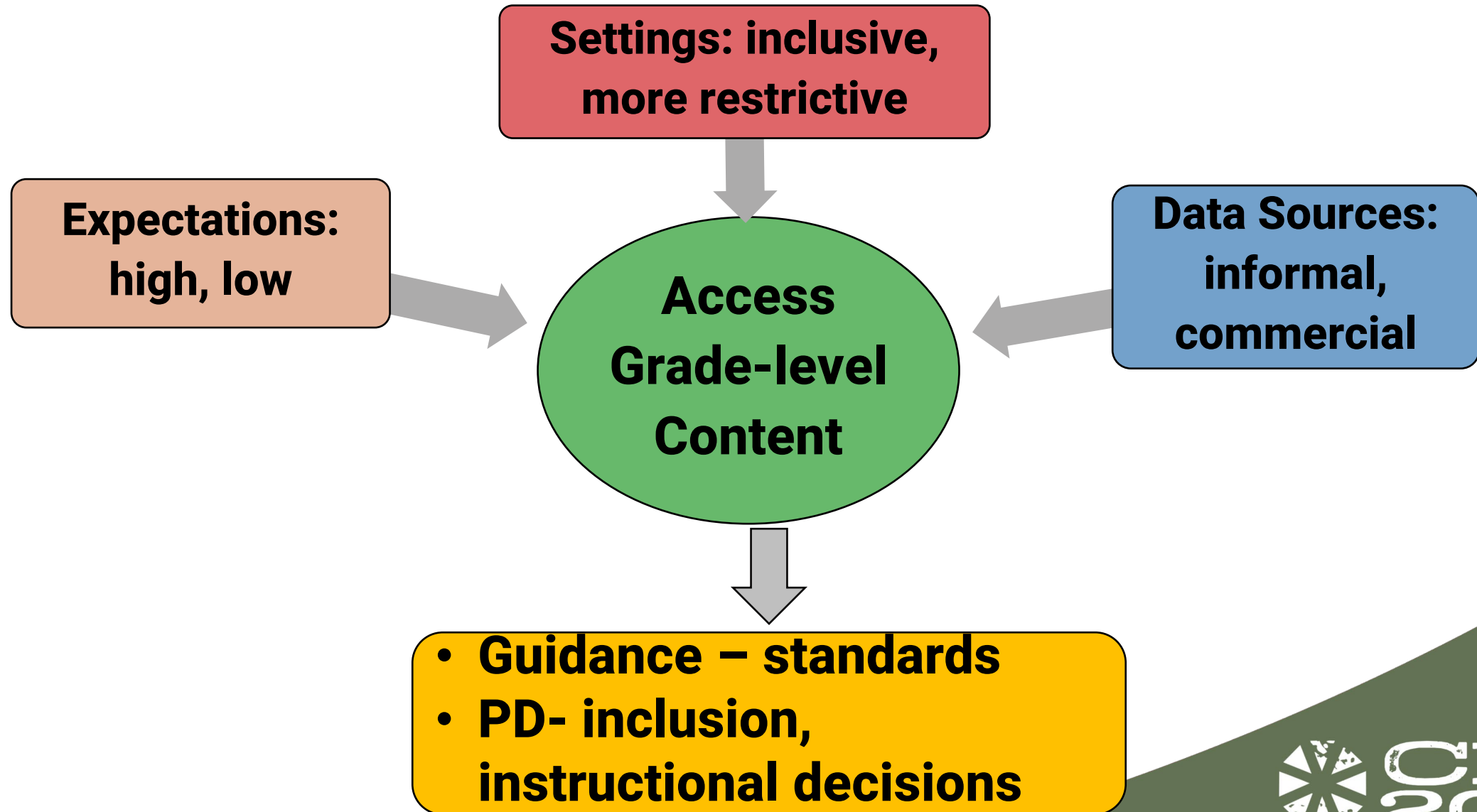
Learn about teachers' experiences:

- Successes and challenges related to the instruction of students on the cusp
- Identify resources in using a data-informed approach to instructional decision making
 - 14 special education and general education teachers
 - Asynchronous online focus groups

Research Questions

1. What factors influence teachers' instruction of students who transition from the AA-AAAS to the general assessment?
2. What types of materials are needed to support teachers in taking a data-informed approach to instruction for students who transition from the AA-AAAS to the general assessment?

Results and Recommendations



Teacher Interviews and Observations

The purpose of this study was to identify the successes and barriers that teachers face when educating students with disabilities who have moved from the AA-AAAS to the general state assessment.

Classroom Observation Tool

Time Sampling: Record observations for 15 seconds at the end of each 45 second interval for the focus student who has moved from the alternate to general assessment. Circle or highlight all that apply for each interval.

	Y if evident N if not evident NA if not applicable to focus student														
	1 min	2 min	3 min	4 min	5 min	6 min	7 min	8 min	9 min	10 min	11 min	12 min	13 min	14 min	15 min
Communication supported	Y N NA	Y N NA	Y N NA	Y N NA	Y N NA	Y N NA	Y N NA	Y N NA	Y N NA	Y N NA	Y N NA	Y N NA	Y N NA	Y N NA	Y N NA
Instructional EBP	Y N	Y N	Y N	Y N	Y N	Y N	Y N	Y N	Y N	Y N	Y N	Y N	Y N	Y N	Y N
SDI	Y N	Y N	Y N	Y N	Y N	Y N	Y N	Y N	Y N	Y N	Y N	Y N	Y N	Y N	Y N
Opportunity to respond	Y N	Y N	Y N	Y N	Y N	Y N	Y N	Y N	Y N	Y N	Y N	Y N	Y N	Y N	Y N
Engaged in gen. ed. curriculum	ON OFF NO	ON OFF NO	ON OFF NO	ON OFF NO	ON OFF NO	ON OFF NO	ON OFF NO	ON OFF NO	ON OFF NO	ON OFF NO	ON OFF NO	ON OFF NO	ON OFF NO	ON OFF NO	ON OFF NO
Engagement/ Class routines	Y N	Y N	Y N	Y N	Y N	Y N	Y N	Y N	Y N	Y N	Y N	Y N	Y N	Y N	Y N
Interactions with whom	T P IA	T P IA	T P IA	T P IA	T P IA	T P IA	T P IA	T P IA	T P IA	T P IA	T P IA	T P IA	T P IA	T P IA	T P IA

T= Teacher P= Grade-level peer without disabilities IA= Instructional Assistant



Adapted from TIES Center, 2022
Updated : 12/19/22

Interview Protocol

General questions

- What are your thoughts on the lesson and how it went? Did it go as you planned/expected?
- Tell me how you know if the lesson went well? What did you expect to see?

Student-specific questions

- How long has the student been in your class?
 - Where were they receiving instruction before?
 - Where do you see them receiving instruction in the next school year?

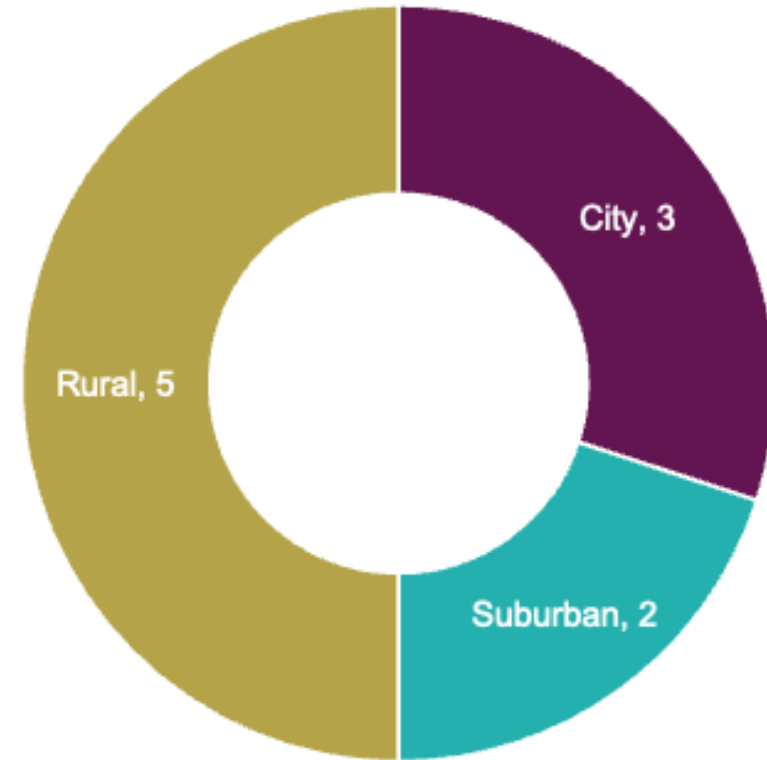
Interview Protocol

Successes and barriers

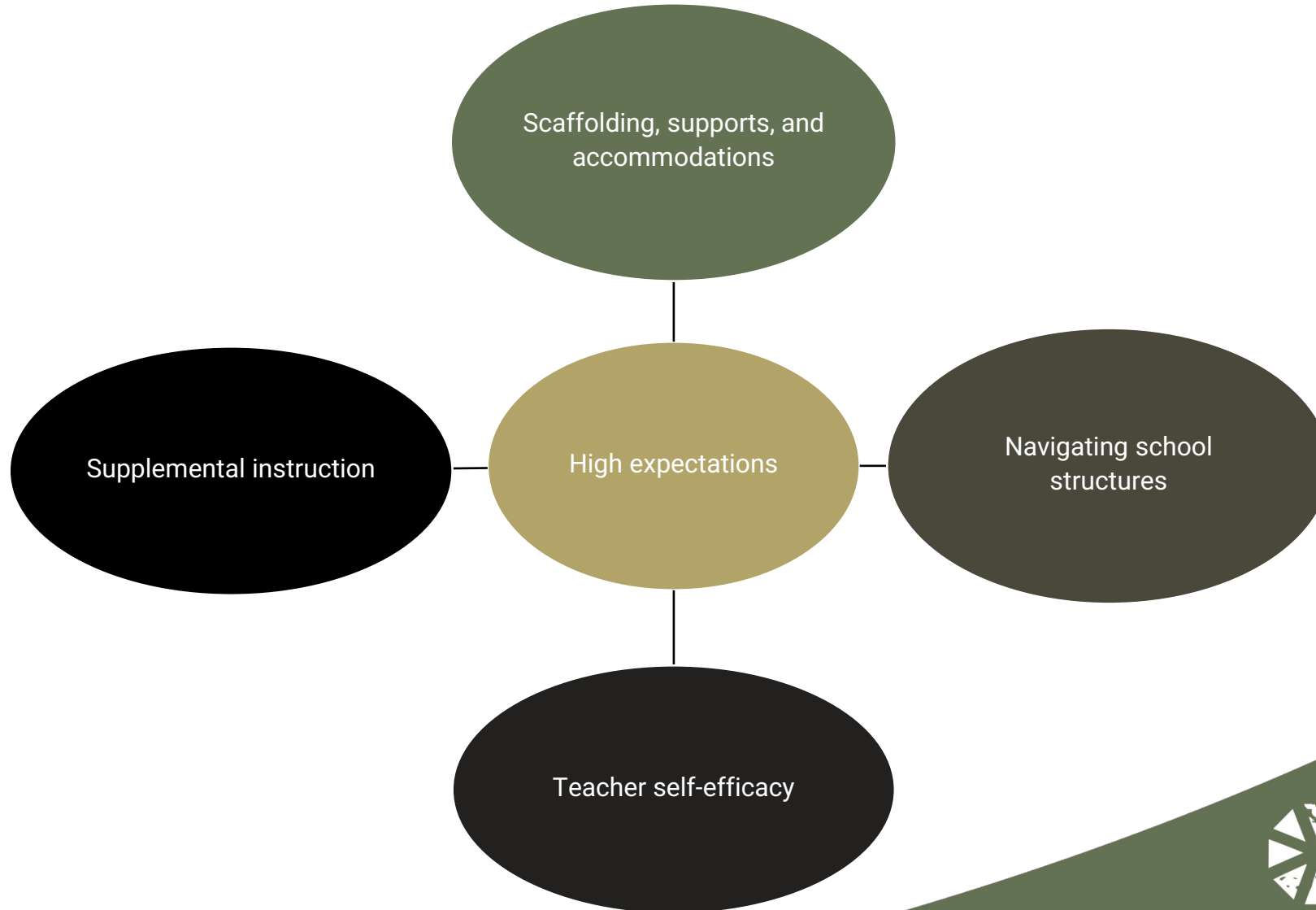
- How is it going?
- What are the successes you've had?
- What data, if any, do you find most helpful to plan instruction?
 - Pain points?
- Level of collaboration
- Follow up on classroom demographics form, if needed

Participants

- 16 educators



Instructional Successes



Successes by Classroom Type



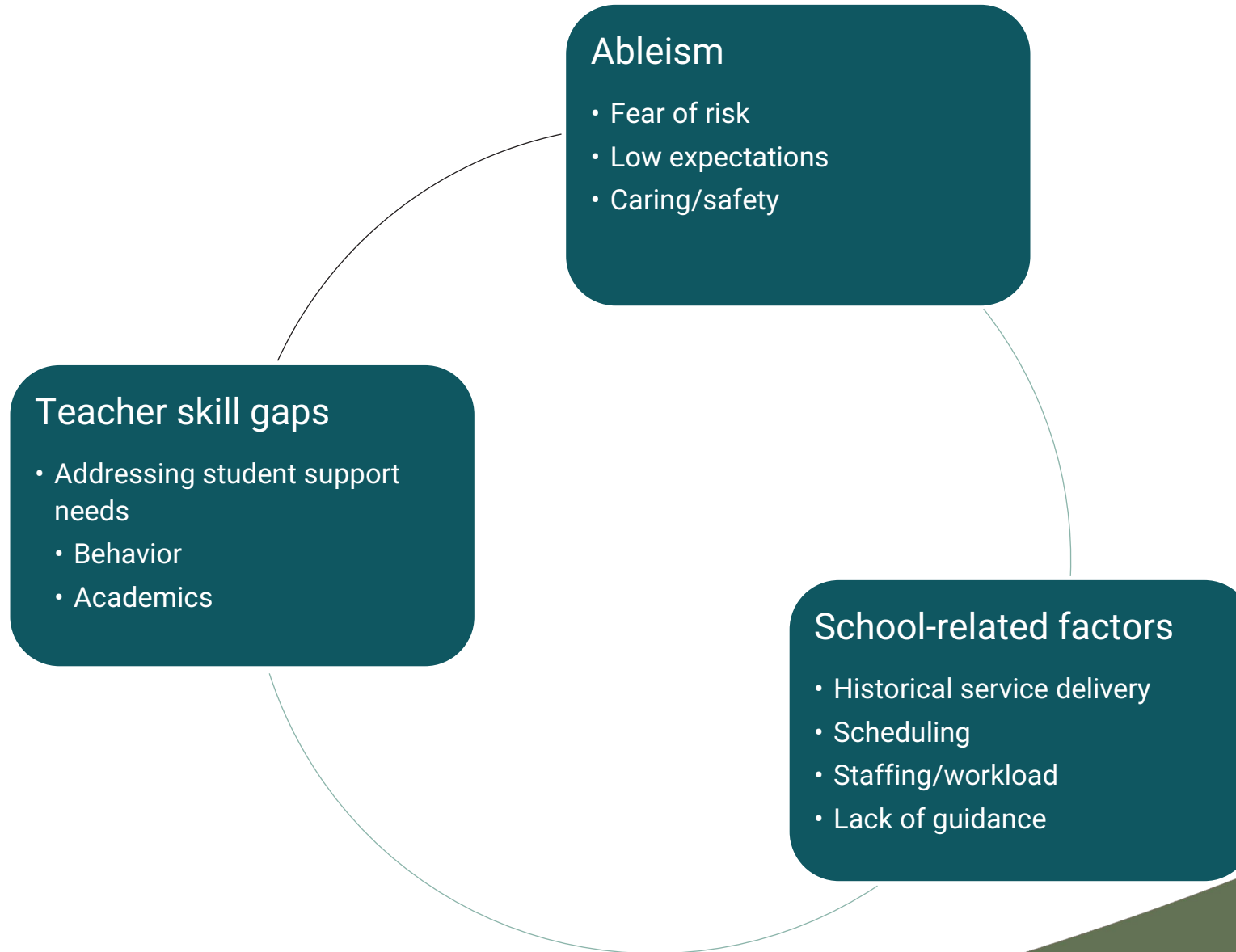
General
education

- General education curriculum
- Flexibility
- Engagement with peers

Special
Education

- Evidence-based practices
- Data collection/progress monitoring
- SDI
- High engagement with teachers

Instructional Barriers



Barriers by Classroom Type



General
education

- Less SDI
- Student inexperience with class norms/behaviors
- Abrupt transitions
- Shifting roles in providing special education services

Special
Education

- No access to grade-level curriculum
- Limited knowledge of grade-level content standards
- Limited buy-in about teaching standards
- Rigidity in how to provide special education services when students are in general education

Objective 2c. Parent Interviews

- Conduct interviews with parents to identify needs related to changes in assessment and instruction for their children
- State role to recruit participants
 - Urban, suburban, and rural settings.

Process

- Interview protocol was drafted
- IRB approval was received
- Invitations were sent out by states to parent groups before winter break
- Second notice was sent out after winter break
- Overwhelming response to second notice

Process

- Received 100+ responses from parents interested in being interviewed
- Screened responses to ensure they met our requirements; most did not
- So far:
 - Interviewed 2 parents from Arkansas
 - Interviewed 5 parents from North Carolina
 - Scheduling interviews with 4 additional parents

Conclusions

- Interesting data came up during the screening process and initial interviews
- A great deal of confusion regarding assessments in general
- Confusion between alternate assessment and placement in Special Education
- Confusion between alternate assessment and placement in general education or regular education classrooms

Next Steps

- We are still gathering data
- We will include data from screening process in our results

Research Questions

- **Consistency of AA-AAAS participation**
- Performance
- Relationship between AA-AAAS participation and performance
- Relationship between movement of test participation and performance
- Student characteristics

How **consistently** are individual special education students taking AA-AAAS for each content area (reading, mathematics, and science) over time?

Sample

2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22
X	X	X	X	X			
	X	X	X	X		X	
		X	X	X		X	X

- Data selection
 - Students (grades 3-8 and HS) with test records **for five consecutive testing years** at any grade level
 - It included students **retained** at the same grade level(s)
 - Students with test records for **more than five** continuous testing years were also included in the analyses
 - Students with multiple records within a year
 - Same test (either AA-AAAS only or general assessments only)
 - Select the highest score for the same tests)
 - Different test (took both AA-AAAS and general assessments)
 - Deleted because students with same achievement level cannot pick which test record is better (ranges from 1-13 students depending on year and content)

1st Year	2nd Year	3rd Year	4th Year	5th Year	n	%
AA-AAAS	AA-AAAS	AA-AAAS	AA-AAAS	AA-AAAS	4141	0.89
AA-AAAS	AA-AAAS	AA-AAAS	AA-AAAS	General	118	0.03
AA-AAAS	AA-AAAS	AA-AAAS	General	AA-AAAS	10	<.01
AA-AAAS	AA-AAAS	AA-AAAS	General	General	150	0.03
AA-AAAS	AA-AAAS	General	AA-AAAS	AA-AAAS	12	<.01
AA-AAAS	AA-AAAS	General	General	AA-AAAS	5	<.01
AA-AAAS	AA-AAAS	General	General	General	141	0.03
AA-AAAS	General	AA-AAAS	AA-AAAS	AA-AAAS	14	<.01
AA-AAAS	General	AA-AAAS	AA-AAAS	General	1	<.01
AA-AAAS	General	AA-AAAS	General	General	2	<.01
AA-AAAS	General	General	AA-AAAS	AA-AAAS	18	<.01
AA-AAAS	General	General	General	AA-AAAS	10	<.01
AA-AAAS	General	General	General	General	152	0.03
General	AA-AAAS	AA-AAAS	AA-AAAS	AA-AAAS	201	0.04
General	AA-AAAS	AA-AAAS	AA-AAAS	General	17	<.01
General	AA-AAAS	AA-AAAS	General	AA-AAAS	3	<.01
General	AA-AAAS	AA-AAAS	General	General	23	<.01
General	AA-AAAS	General	AA-AAAS	AA-AAAS	1	<.01
General	AA-AAAS	General	General	AA-AAAS	2	<.01
General	AA-AAAS	General	General	General	21	<.01
General	General	AA-AAAS	AA-AAAS	AA-AAAS	187	0.04
General	General	AA-AAAS	AA-AAAS	General	25	<.01
General	General	AA-AAAS	General	AA-AAAS	2	<.01
General	General	AA-AAAS	General	General	24	<.01
General	General	General	AA-AAAS	AA-AAAS	294	0.06
General	General	General	AA-AAAS	General	33	<.01
General	General	General	General	AA-AAAS	121	0.03
General	General	General	General	General	461957	98.78

Consistency of Reading AA-AAAS Participation

*5,728 students had at least one score from the Reading AA-AAS (1.22%) for five consecutive testing years.



Consistency of Math AA-AAAS Participation

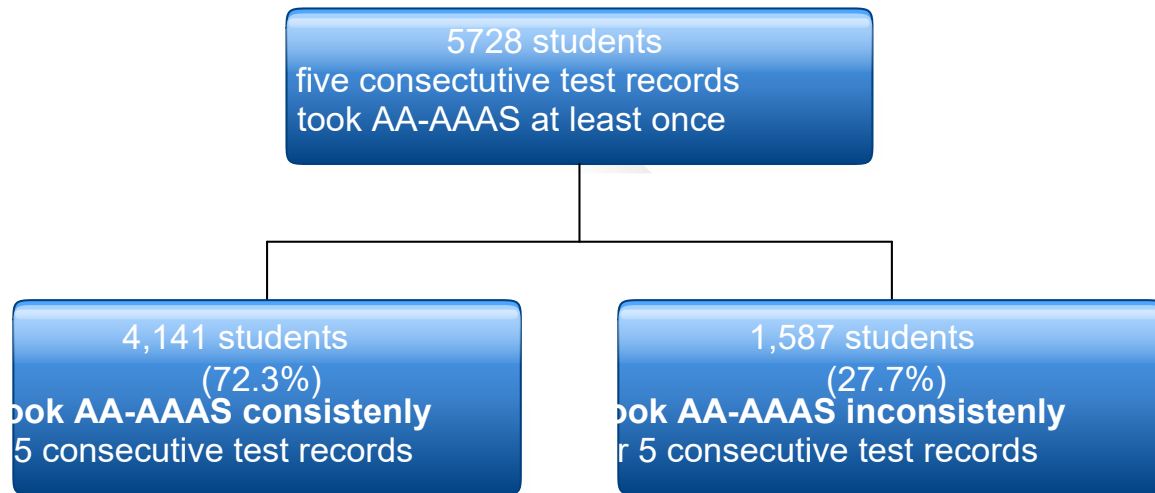
1st Year	2nd Year	3rd Year	4th Year	5th Year	n	%
AA-AAAS	AA-AAAS	AA-AAAS	AA-AAAS	AA-AAAS	4132	0.662
AA-AAAS	AA-AAAS	AA-AAAS	AA-AAAS	General	126	0.02
AA-AAAS	AA-AAAS	AA-AAAS	General	AA-AAAS	11	<.01
AA-AAAS	AA-AAAS	AA-AAAS	General	General	160	0.026
AA-AAAS	AA-AAAS	General	AA-AAAS	AA-AAAS	11	<.01
AA-AAAS	AA-AAAS	General	AA-AAAS	General	1	<.01
AA-AAAS	AA-AAAS	General	General	AA-AAAS	5	<.01
AA-AAAS	AA-AAAS	General	General	General	161	0.026
AA-AAAS	General	AA-AAAS	AA-AAAS	AA-AAAS	13	<.01
AA-AAAS	General	AA-AAAS	AA-AAAS	General	1	<.01
AA-AAAS	General	AA-AAAS	General	General	2	<.01
AA-AAAS	General	General	AA-AAAS	AA-AAAS	18	<.01
AA-AAAS	General	General	General	AA-AAAS	10	<.01
AA-AAAS	General	General	General	General	174	0.028
General	AA-AAAS	AA-AAAS	AA-AAAS	AA-AAAS	204	0.033
General	AA-AAAS	AA-AAAS	AA-AAAS	General	19	<.01
General	AA-AAAS	AA-AAAS	General	AA-AAAS	3	<.01
General	AA-AAAS	AA-AAAS	General	General	27	<.01
General	AA-AAAS	General	AA-AAAS	AA-AAAS	1	<.01
General	AA-AAAS	General	General	AA-AAAS	2	<.01
General	AA-AAAS	General	General	General	23	<.01
General	General	AA-AAAS	AA-AAAS	AA-AAAS	190	0.03
General	General	AA-AAAS	AA-AAAS	General	28	<.01
General	General	AA-AAAS	General	AA-AAAS	1	<.01
General	General	AA-AAAS	General	General	26	<.01
General	General	General	AA-AAAS	AA-AAAS	294	0.047
General	General	General	AA-AAAS	General	35	<.01
General	General	General	General	AA-AAAS	125	0.02
General	General	General	General	General	618029	99.07

*5,803 students had at least one score from the Math AA-AAS (0.93%) for five consecutive testing years.

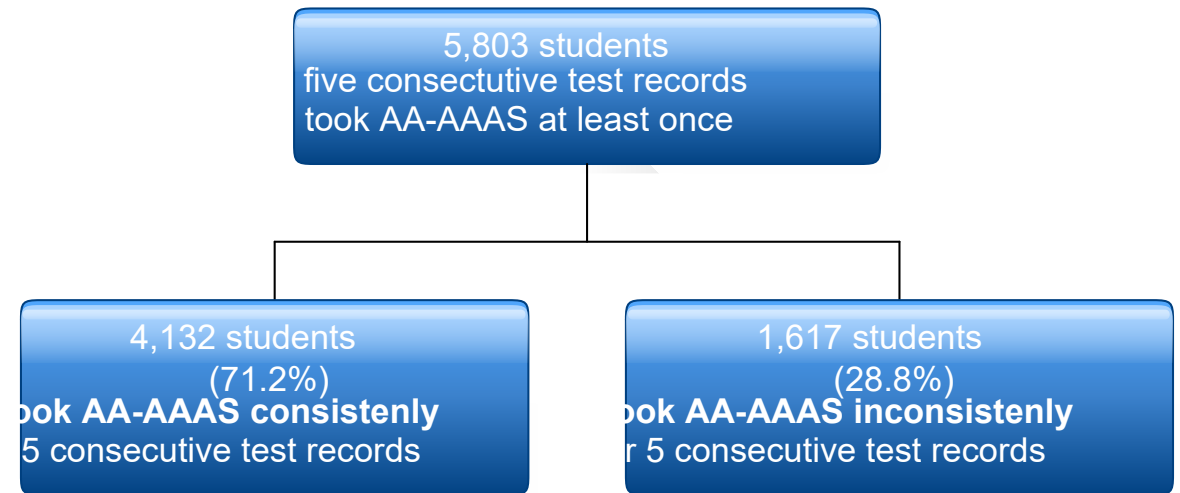


Summary

Reading AA-AAAS



Math AA-AAAS



- There is a need to look at the performance level and student characteristics for students who are in the cusp.

Discussion

- What advantages and challenges from the activities resonate in your experience with students on the cusp of the alternate and general assessment for inclusion in the general education curriculum?
- What types of assessment data have you found useful to inform instruction to advance students' learning of the general curriculum?
- What professional development topics and types of materials would help teachers when instructing students on the cusp between the alternate and general assessments?



Planning next steps for MIDAS

- Stakeholders' input (January 2024)
 - Prioritize topics
 - Identify types of materials
- Develop materials (2024)
 - Review and refine
- Pilot (2024)
- Publish (2025)

For more information, contact NCEO!

- Sheryl Lazarus, laza0012@umn.edu
- Andrew Hinkle, ahinkle@umn.edu
- Linda Goldstone, gold240@umn.edu
- Jessica Bowman, bowman@umn.edu
- Darrell Peterson, pete2620@umn.edu
- Yi-Chen Wu, wuxx0207@umn.edu

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