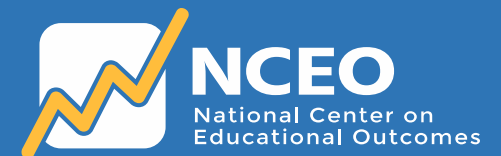




Using Online Modules to Learn about Accessibility Features and Accommodations

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Agenda

- Learn about the new accessibility framework
- Discuss educators' challenges with the accessibility framework
- Explore modules that aim to address those challenges
- Discuss how the modules can be used by EL teachers



Background

New Accessibility Framework

- In the past, accommodations were available to students with disabilities and English learners (ELs)
 - American Sign Language, braille, extra time
- Now a wide range of accessibility features are available to all students
 - Some (e.g., text-to-speech) are available if an educator identifies a need for them in advance
 - Some (e.g., glossaries, highlighters) are part of universal design and are available to all students who choose to use them

New Accessibility Framework



Universal Features

for all students

Designated Features

*for students who need them
as identified by an educator in advance*

Accommodations

for students with disabilities and ELs

Discussion Questions

- In your experience, what are the most pressing needs for EL educators related to accessibility features and accommodations?
- What resources could address these needs?

Educator Responsibilities

- Educators have to collect data from both assessment and instruction to make accessibility decisions
- Their decisions should account for students' individual needs and preferences
- Their decisions should be based on current policy

Problem

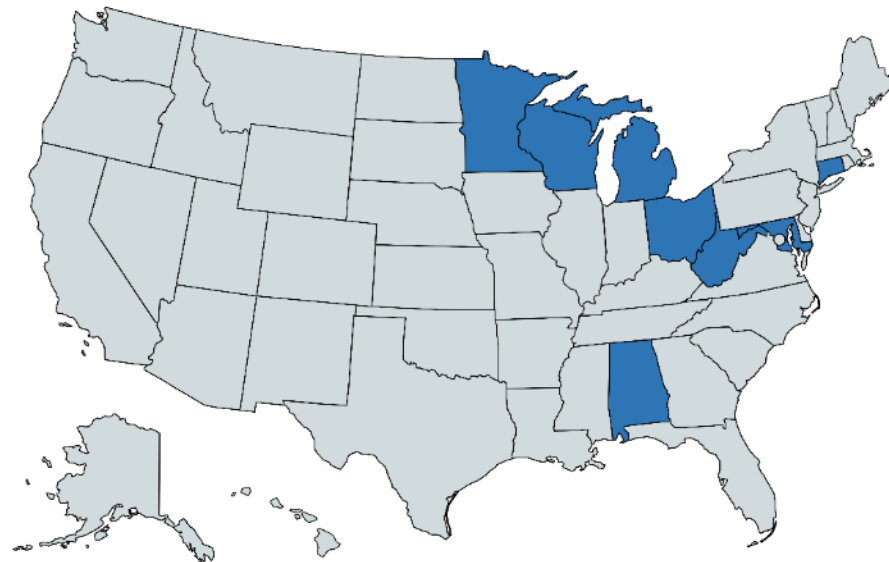
More accessibility
features and
accommodations
available

=

More decision
making by more
educators

DIAMOND Project

- Data Informed Accessibility – Making Optimal Needs-based Decisions
- Collaboration between the National Center on Educational Outcomes and nine state departments of education



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

DIAMOND Project

Research activities:

- white paper
- survey (n=2,250)
- focus groups (n=46)
- phone interviews (n=74)
- in-person interviews (n=28)

Goal:

- to create online professional development modules that help educators make decisions about accessibility features and accommodations



Challenges for Teachers

Accessibility Framework Is Hard to Understand

- States and tests do not use the same language for the accessibility framework (white paper)
- Teachers sometimes confuse the accessibility framework with other frameworks that are in use in schools (focus groups)
- Teachers are sometimes unclear about where certain accessibility features and accommodations belong in the framework (phone interviews)

Teachers Lack Clear Roles in Decision Making

- General education teachers are the most confused about timelines and criteria for making decisions (focus groups)
- Some teachers implement accessibility features and accommodations without having a role in choosing them (in-person interviews)

Connecting Assessment and Instruction Is Difficult

- Most teachers believe that students receive consistent accessibility features and accommodations across assessment and instruction (survey)
- However, some report that the accessibility features and accommodations used in class are not available on tests (in-person interviews)

Resources Are Scarce

- Making individualized decisions for all students with different needs and preferences is time consuming (phone interviews)
- Access to technology is sometimes limited, so students cannot use certain accessibility features and accommodations (phone interviews)



DIAMOND Professional Development Modules

Purpose & Audience

- Purpose: Improve decision making about accessibility features and accommodations for all students
- Audience:
 - General Education Teachers
 - Special Education Teachers
 - EL Teachers

Development

- Wrote the module content
- Collected feedback from panel of experts and states
- Assembled modules with audio and visuals
- Conducted usability studies in December 2018 and February 2019
- Will pilot modules in April 2019
- Will publish modules in June 2019

Responses to Feedback

- Follow fictional students through training
- Make tone more conversational
- Give feedback in response to correct and incorrect answers
- Include videos of experts
- Improve navigation

Module Structure

Four modules:

1. Start with students' needs
2. Choose accessibility features for instruction
3. Choose accessibility features for assessment
4. Review how well the accessibility features work





Exit

1

Thinking About
Student Needs



2

Making and
Implementing
Instructional
Support
Decisions



3

Making and
Implementing
Assessment
Accomodations



4

Putting It All
Together





Discussion

Discussion Questions

- In your experience, what are the most pressing needs for EL educators related to accessibility features and accommodations?
- What resources could address these needs?
- How could the DIAMOND modules address these needs?