NATIONAL COMPREHENSIVE CENTER FOR TEACHER QUALITY

Using Student Growth to Evaluate Educators of Students with Disabilities: Issues, Challenges, and Next Steps

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Illinois Alliance of Administrators of Special Education
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Change Much?


STAGE 1 Preparation
STAGE 2 Evaluation
STAGE 3 Understanding & Action Planning
STAGE 4 Implementation
STAGE 5 Re-Evaluation
School Climate Improvement Process


Family Involvement


RESEARCH


positive behavior support


RATING
Exceptional
Exceeds Re
Meets Requi
Needs Imp


inclusion


Set
Common Core


STOP
Bullying


poor salary
lack of administrative support
classroom intrusions
discipline problems
SCHOOL'S OUT
little influence
inadequate time
poor student motivation
class size too large


ESEA Flexibility
Request


RESPONSE TO INTERVENTION


RACE TO THE TOP

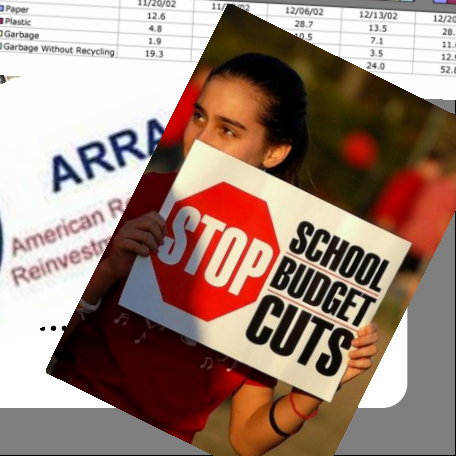

Fifth Grade Recycling Data
Kilograms
60.0
50.0
40.0
30.0
20.0
10.0
0.0
Paper
Plastic
Garbage
Garbage Without Recycling
11/20/02
12/06/02
12/13/02
12.6
28.7
13.5
4.8
1.9
7.1
19.3
3.5
24.0


Pay-for-Performance
Brandon Temple/AAFP


GROWTH


TEACHER RECRUITMENT FAIR

RECOVERY.GOV


STOP
SCHOOL BUDGET CUTS

Alignment and Coherence?

- Compliance vs. results-based accountability
- Zero tolerance vs. positive behavioral supports
- Collaborative practices vs. growth attributed to a teacher
- School-wide professional development days vs. targeted, sustained job-embedded professional learning and coaching
- Pay based on years of experience vs. rewarding the highly effective teachers.

Attention Mounts

- Policy
  - State Fiscal Stabilization Funds (4 assurances, Great teachers/leaders)
    - LEA's might use SFSF money to "[establish] fair and reliable evaluation systems that provide feedback, help educators improve, and ensure that poor performers are dismissed"
  - Race to the Top (4 assurances) went further ..
    - (D)(2) Improving teacher and principal effectiveness based on performance (58 points)
  - Teacher Incentive Funds/State Improvement Grants
  - ESEA Waiver Flexibility
  - ESEA Reauthorization Recommendations

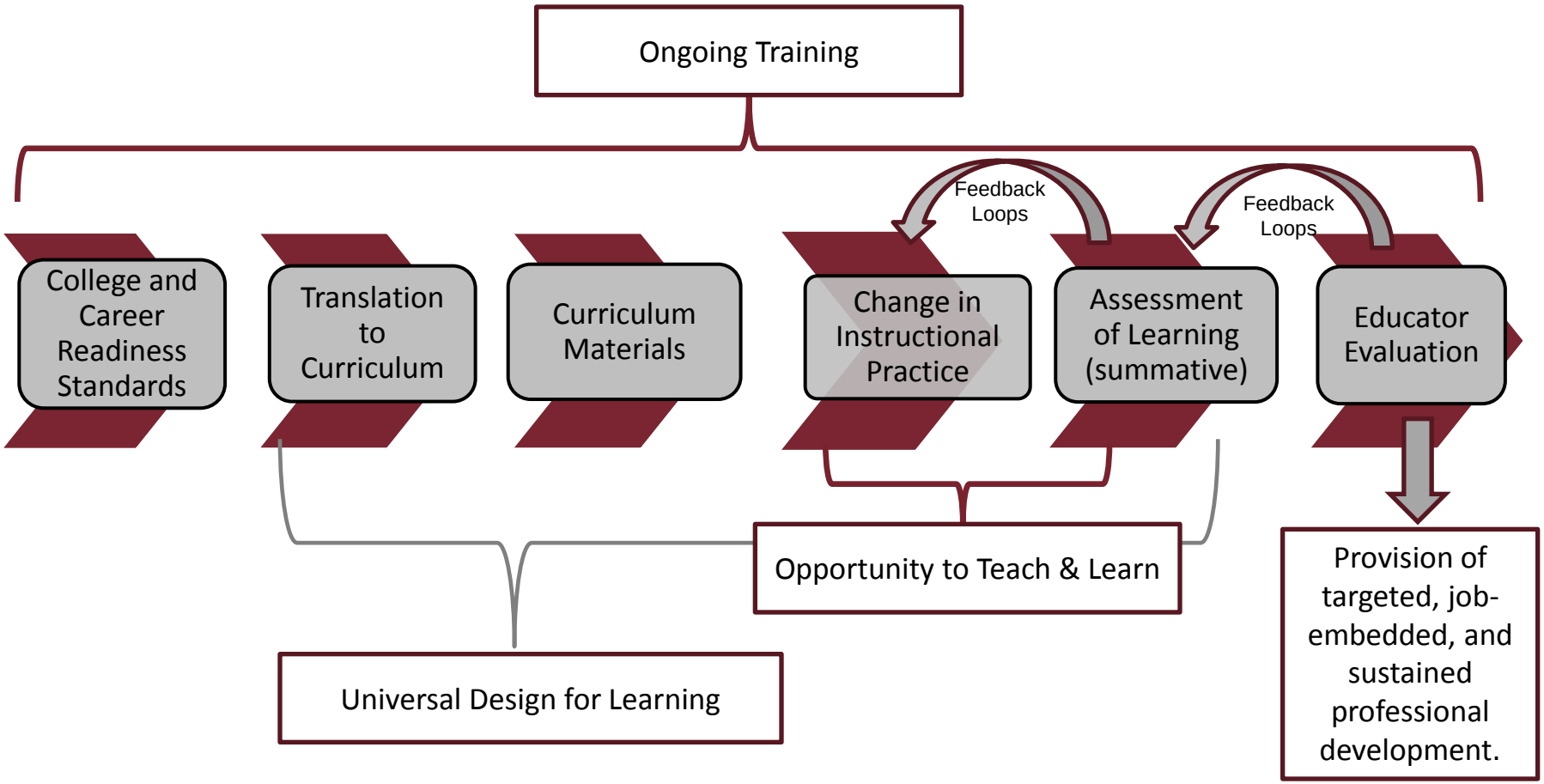
Considerations for States when Evaluating Teachers of Students with Disabilities

- Measuring growth of students with disabilities
- The appropriateness of existing measures of measures of instructional practice
  - evidence-based instructional practices for students with disabilities
  - specific roles and responsibilities of special educators
  - specific curricular needs.
- Designers must contemplate the distinct considerations for teachers (both general and special education) serving in a coteaching capacity.

Learning Targets

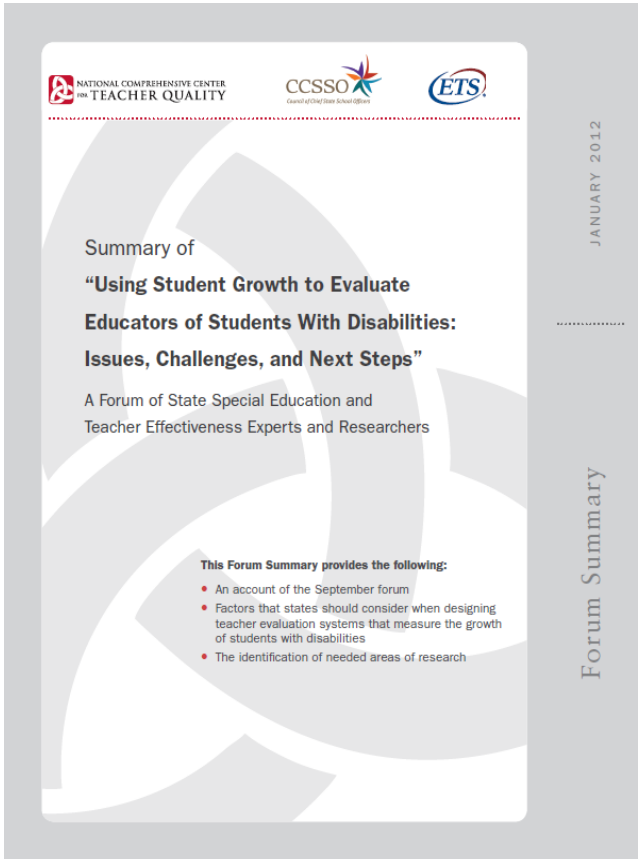
- Increase awareness of the challenges of using growth of students with disabilities in teacher and leader evaluations
- Review considerations states and districts should contemplate when designing systems that include the academic growth of students with disabilities to measure teacher effectiveness
- Highlight needed areas of research to validate state and district effort

The Impact of Common Core on Teacher Evaluation: Making the Connections



A Forum of State Special Education and Teacher Effectiveness Experts and Researchers

- To identify the challenges in using the growth of students with disabilities to evaluate educators
- To develop considerations for states when designing systems that include the academic growth of students with disabilities
- To identify needed areas of research



http://www.tqsource.org/pdfs/TQ_Forum_SummaryUsing_Student_Growth.pdf

The Goal of Teacher Evaluation

*The **ultimate** goal of all teacher evaluation should be…*

TO IMPROVE TEACHING AND LEARNING

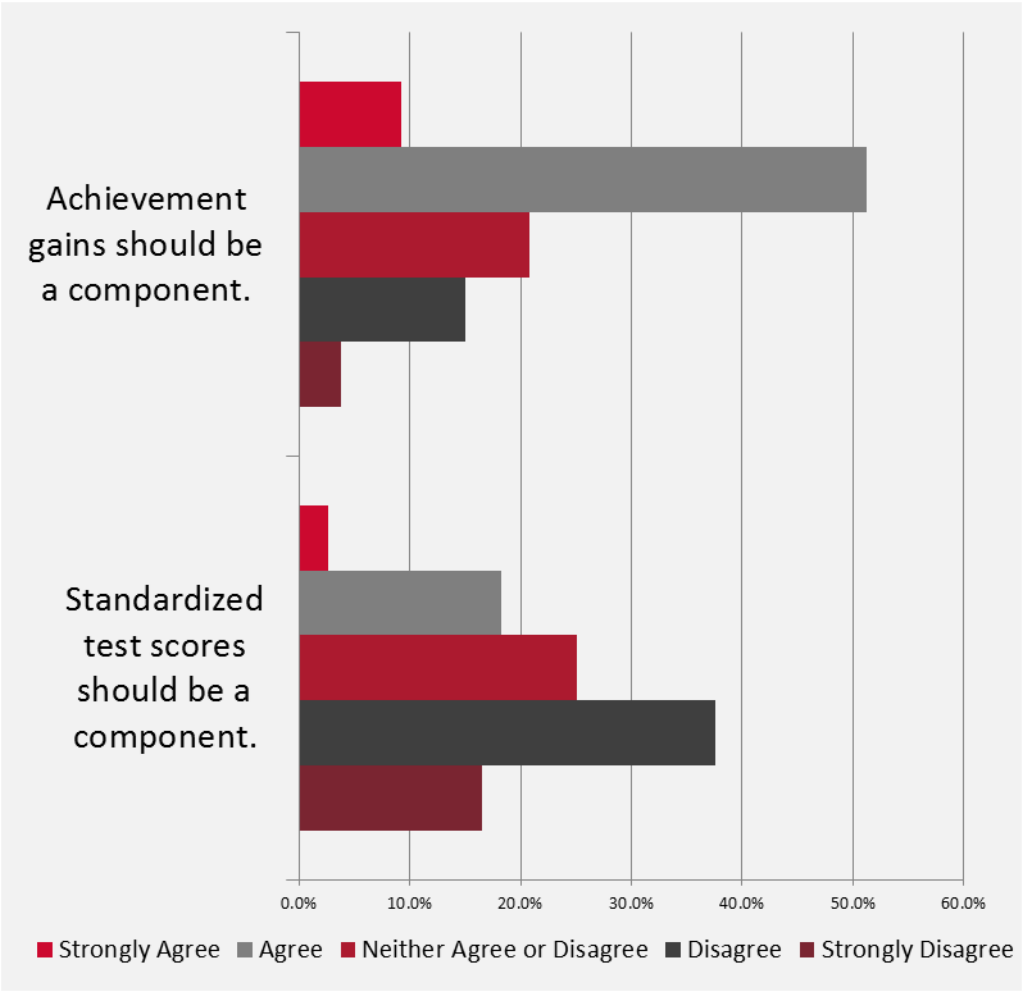
Promoting and Ensuring Accountability Using Student Growth

- Electing to exclude the scores of students with disabilities within value-added modeling or other measures of student learning could greatly limit teacher accountability.
- When growth is not accurately measured for students with disabilities or performance expectations are not aligned with possible learning outcomes, teachers may be less likely to accept students with disabilities in their classrooms.

Race to the Top Definition of Student Growth

- **Student growth** means the change in student achievement (as defined in this notice) for an individual student between two or more points in time. A State may also include other measures that are rigorous and comparable across classrooms (p. 11).

Measuring Student Growth



- Teachers want to be confident that the measures used are a fair and accurate representation of both student growth and their contribution to that growth.

Two Broad Areas That Can Impact the Meaning of Value-Added Scores (Tested Subjects)

- Measurement challenges
  - Various threats to the validity of inferences about academic growth
- Complex instructional context
  - Can impact evaluation of both general education and special education teachers

Tested Subjects

- Challenges in Using Growth Models for Special Educators & SWD
  - A research-derived value-added model for special educators does not exist
  - Student learning trajectory
  - Students assessed with accommodations
  - Small student samples commonly associated with special education caseloads
  - Student mobility
  - Test Scaling

Instructional Context

- Shared responsibility between general education and special education teachers
- Time spent in the regular classroom learning content
- The performance of all students in a classroom may be impacted—positively or negatively—by the presence of a coteacher, extra funding support for special services, peer behaviors, or other factors not directly related to an individual teacher.

Considerations for States

- Use multiple measures and consider weights to reflect the amount of evidence in support of validity and accuracy for value-added scores
  - Based on transparent judgment initially; then empirically based
- Support accessible assessments that offer precise measurement along the entire score scale (e.g., multistage adaptive assessment, universal design)
- Create a standardized system to accurately assign, monitor, and record the use of testing accommodations
- Adopt a roster validation system; use full roster method to give 100 percent credit to all teachers in a coteaching situation

Measuring Teachers' Contributions to Student Learning Growth: A Summary of Current Models

Model	Description
Student learning objectives	Teachers assess students at beginning of year and set objectives and then assess again at end of year; principal or designee works with teachers to determine success
Subject and grade alike team models	Teachers meet in grade-specific and/or subject-specific teams to consider and agree on appropriate measures that they will all use to determine their individual contributions to student learning growth
Pretests and posttests model	Educators identify or create pretests and posttests for every grade and subject
Schoolwide value added	Teachers in tested subjects and grades receive their own value-added score; *all other teachers get the schoolwide average*

Potential Challenges for Students With Disabilities in the SLO Process

- Students with disabilities could be overlooked in the SLO process. Therefore, the growth (or lack thereof) could go unnoticed.
- Increased need for teacher capacity to collect, interpret, and monitor student performance data against standards-aligned, rigorous goals.
- The comparability of measurement and student growth is compromised because the process may not be standardized or objective.

Implementation Considerations

- SLOs for students with disabilities may become a responsibility of special education teachers only, minimizing the need for accountability.
- Teachers with little training in special education may struggle to establish rigorous yet achievable goals for students with disabilities.

Sampling of State Considerations

- Ensure that growth for all students, including students with disabilities, is accounted for in the SLO process.
- Encourage collaboration between general and special education teachers to construct SLOs to ensure alignment with the established standards AND to accommodate the specific learning needs.
- Encourage that SLOs can be tiered so that student targets can be differentiated according to the present levels of student performance.

Rhode Island Student Learning Objectives

Consistent messaging that special and general educators use the same process to establish SLOs for their students.

- There is a requirement that all students are covered under an SLO:
  - General education teachers are responsible for the progress and mastery of all students on their rosters, including students with disabilities.

Rhode Island Student Learning Objectives

- Teachers are encouraged to set tiered goals so that targets are differentiated according to students' present levels of performance and needs.
- General education and special education teachers are encouraged to work collaboratively to construct objectives that are in alignment with those of the general education class but accommodate the specific learning needs of students with disabilities.

Rhode Island Student Learning Objectives

- Partnered with special education teachers in early adopter districts and local institutions of higher education to draft sample SLOs.
- Example SLOs for students with disabilities are located at http://www.ride.ri.gov/EducatorQuality/EducatorEvaluation/SLO.aspx.

Rhode Island Student Learning Objectives

- Guidance document that provides recommendations on SLO development across context
  http://www.ride.ri.gov/EducatorQuality/EducatorEvaluation/Docs/SPED_FAQ_revised.pd
  - The special education teacher who coteaches as part of a grade level or content team (coplanning, instructing, and assessing)
  - The special education teacher who does not fully coteach with a general education teacher but who works with students with disabilities across several classrooms
  - The special education teacher who works with students with disabilities across several grade levels who are not also assigned to a general education teacher

Potential Research Questions

- What is the relationship between SLOs and value-added scores for teachers in tested subjects, with a specific focus on students with disabilities?
- What is the quality of SLOs, including comparing SLOs developed with a strong alignment to state standards using a standardized measurement process to those that are not?
- Does the SLO process ensure that the learning trajectory is appropriately established and growth adequately measured for students with disabilities?

SLOs + "Ask a Teacher" (Hybrid model)

- Concerns about SLOs are 1) rigor, 2) comparability, and 3) administrator burden
- A "rigor rubric" helps with first concern
- Combining SLOs with aspects of the "Ask A Teacher" model will help with all 3 concerns
  - Teachers discuss and agree to use particular assessments and measures of student learning growth, ensuring great rigor and comparability
  - Teachers work together on aspects of scoring which improves validity and comparability and lightens the administrator burden

Assessments Used to Determine Growth

- Training! The success of assessment is largely dependent on the quality of the assessments—their alignment to the standards, the fidelity of implementation, and the interpretation of the data.
- Ensure that assessments are accessible and that student learning can be accurately measured.
- Ensure that these assessments account for students working below or above grade-level standards.

Using evidence of student learning growth in teacher evaluation

- Teacher preparation for measuring student learning growth is limited or non-existent
- Most principals, support providers, instructional managers, and coaches are poorly prepared to make judgments about teachers' contribution to student learning growth
- They need to know how to
  - Evaluate the appropriateness of various measures of student learning for use in teacher evaluation
    - Work closely with teachers to select appropriate student growth measures and ensure that they are using them correctly and consistently

Developing and Selecting Student Growth Measures for Use in Teacher Evaluation
(Assessment and Accountability Comprehensive Center)

- Essential claims of argument that need to be substantiated

  - The assessment instruments accurately and fairly measure what students are expected to learn
  - The assessments measure accurately and fairly what students have learned over the course of the year
  - Student growth based on the assessments can be accurately and fairly attributed to the contributions of an individual teacher.
  - Validity – quality of educational measurement
    - ✓ measures what it is intended to measure
    - ✓ provides sound evidence for decision making
    - ✓ psychometric and other technical qualities that are defensible

Groupwide Value-Added Challenges

- Teachers may be held accountable for students they have never taught or had the opportunity to influence.
- Accountability for the growth (or lack thereof) of students with disabilities may not be captured or monitored if students with disabilities are not included in the value-added scores.
- Teachers may not be as motivated to improve student mastery of state standards if there is no direct accountability for their content areas.

Schoolwide Value-Added Considerations

- Ensure that schoolwide scores are used in combination with other measures of student learning more directly tied to instruction.
- Include students with disabilities in schoolwide results so that teachers are held accountable for growth of all students.

Measuring the Growth of Students Participating in the Alternate Assessment

What are the challenges to measuring growth using an alternate assessment?

- State alternate assessments are often portfolio based; therefore, comparability between measures is a significant challenge.
- State alternate assessments may vary in their technical quality; therefore, using alternate assessment results for the purpose of measuring student growth may not be a viable option.
- Subjectivity may be more prevalent in portfolio reviews.
- The heterogeneity of students with significant cognitive disabilities makes it difficult to identify and/ or develop a standardized measure that takes into account the variance in learning trajectories.

State Considerations

- Recognize the heterogeneous nature of this group of students and that the expected learning trajectory will vary from student to student.
- Ensure students with significant cognitive disabilities are provided a range of opportunities for accessing the assessment and providing responses.
- Ensure students with disabilities have equal access to the curriculum, instruction, and opportunities to learn.
- Take into consideration that static growth for some students with significant cognitive disabilities may be considered growth. This is particularly true for students with degenerative conditions.

State and School District Considerations Regarding AA-AAS (cont)

- Consider whether or how student scores can be attributed to educators other than the special educator (e.g., general educators, other licensed educators, and related service providers).
- Consider methods (e.g., discrete responses, chained responses, and permanent products) used in research to capture student learning for students with significant cognitive disabilities.
- Recognize the heterogeneous nature of this group of students and understand that the expected learning trajectory will vary from student to student.

Alternate Assessments Aligned to the Common Core

- Dynamic Learning Maps Alternate Assessment System
  - 13 states
- National Center and State Collaborative
  - 24 states
- American Institutes for Research: Multistate Adaptive Alternate Assessment Consortium
  - 6 states

Dynamic Learning Maps

Center for Educational Testing and Evaluation
University of Kansas

- Common Core Essential Elements
- Instructionally-embedded (and summative) assessments
- Instructionally-relevant tasks
- Learning maps
- Dynamic assessment
- Professional development
- Technology platform to tie it all together
- Reporting: status and growth

DLM Potential Advantages for Measuring Growth

- Many measurements (helps with good day/bad day and low reliability)
- Dynamic testing (helps with low reliability)
- High granularity (opportunity to show slow growth)

AA-AAS School Accountability Models: Growth at the Student Level

- Standards-based progress monitoring data within year, on high priority academic content
- Increased depth, breadth, and complexity of academic profile from AA-AAS and from within-year progress monitoring, increasingly near links to grade-level academic standards
- Communicative competence
- UDL grade-level instructional opportunities that encourage full participation – social and academic – in a community of learners, with typical peers

National Center of State Collaboratives

NCSC Project Components

- Summative assessment
- Curriculum development resource materials
  - Universally Designed Units (UDL)
  - Curriculum guides
  - Model lessons that scaffold instruction on difficult to teach content
  - Formative assessment tools
- Communities of Practice in each partner state
  - Webinars
  - LCI state profiles/Communication Triage Summit
  - Orientation to CCSS
  - Overview & implementation of project C&I materials
  - Training on test administration

What Will NCSC Ensure:

- Maximized communicative competence
- Full access to the academic content for life-long learning
- Development of appropriate social skills
- Development of independent work behaviors
- Development of support access skills

(NCSC discussion based on Kearns, Kleinert, Harrison, Shepard-Jones, Hall, & Jones, 2011)

Advantages of the AIR Test Design Used by the Multistate Adaptive Alternate Assessment Consortium

- Task-based (standardized administration, which allows scores from the test to be comparable)
- Test difficulty adapted to student ability
- Administered and scored by teachers
- Vertical scale using Item-Response Theory models
- High reliability and validity of the scores
- Aligned to extensions of Common Core State Standards (CCSS)
  - Delaware is completely aligned with the CCSS
  - Remaining states are transitioning to the CCSS

Advantages of the AIR Test Design Used by the Multistate Adaptive Alternate Assessment Consortium

- Meets the same technical requirements as assessments of the general population
- NCLB-approved (New Mexico and South Carolina)
- The same growth models that apply to the general assessment can be applied to the alternate assessment
- School and teacher effectiveness indices can be calculated, and value-added models can be used
- Measures growth from year to year and/or from fall to spring
- Score reports for alternate assessment look exactly like the score reports for general education

Thoughts?

Who will determine whether I did my job with these students? More importantly, what administrator will realize how much progress a child has made when they read 6 words, when that child finally looks you in the eye if you say hello to them, when that child is only hitting once a day instead of 9 times a day, or when that child learns to use a spoon?

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