

# Meeting ESSA Regulation Requirements and Supporting Students on Alternate English Language Proficiency Assessments

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# Assessment of English Learners

{ With the Most Significant Cognitive Disabilities





Several new ESEA provisions took effect beginning in the 2017–2018 school year.

## New Statutory Provisions Pertaining to ELP Assessments





Under the ESEA, as revised by ESSA, ELP standards and assessments are now covered under Title I rather than Title III.

As a result, they are now subject to the same requirements that govern the State's academic content assessments and, therefore, they are subject to peer review by the Department and must meet all applicable requirements (34 C.F.R. § 200.2(d)).

## Several New Provisions Pertain to ELP Assessments



The Department does not require a State to submit its ELP standards as part of the peer review, consistent with ESEA sections 1111(b)(1)(A) and 1111(b)(1)(G)(i).

The assessment peer review focuses on the processes for assessment development employed by a State and the relevant documentation and evidence that confirm the technical quality of the State's assessment system.

## New Statutory Provisions Pertaining to ELP Assessments





The ESEA requires that each State submit evidence for peer review that its ELP assessments:

- provide valid and reliable results
- are aligned with the State's ELP standards
- are consistent with nationally recognized professional and technical testing standards (34 C.F.R. § 200.2(d)).

## Several New Provisions Pertain to ELP Assessments



The Department will notify States regarding the submission of evidence for the AELPA within eighteen months of the publication of the new Peer Review Requirements.

For all statewide assessments, a State should submit its assessment systems for assessment peer review approximately six months after the first operational administration of new or significantly changed assessments.

## Updated Peer Review Guidance





The new peer review guidance revised document will reflect changes made to the ESEA standards and assessment requirements due to the passage of the ESSA.

For the most part, the assessment provisions under the ESEA, as amended by the ESSA, remain similar to the prior assessment provisions under the ESEA, as amended by the No Child Left Behind Act.

# Updated Peer Review Guidance





The ESSA added several new provisions that pertain to English Language Proficiency Assessments:

The requirement that a State conduct meaningful and timely consultation with State leaders, when developing the challenging academic standards and assessment systems **and the English language proficiency (ELP) standards and assessment systems (ESEA section 1111(a)(1)(A))**

## Several New Provisions Pertain to ELP Assessments



The requirement that the State ensure that accommodations for all required assessments do not deny children with disabilities or **English learners (ELs)** the opportunity to participate in the assessment and any benefits from participation in the assessment (34 C.F.R. §§ 200.6(b)(3) and 200.6(f)(2)(i));

## Several New Provisions Pertain to ELP Assessments





If a State has adopted an alternate ELP proficiency assessment (AELPA) based on alternate ELP achievement standards, then it must be based on the State's ELP standards for the grade in which the English learner is enrolled and the State's alternate ELP achievement standards.

## Several New Provisions Pertain to ELP Assessments





Additionally, a State must improve the accessibility of assessments through appropriate accommodations for students with disabilities, and, to the extent practicable, by incorporating principles of universal design for learning (UDL).

Several New Provisions Pertain  
to ELP Assessments



ELs with disabilities must be provided accommodations so that States can ensure these students are afforded the opportunity to demonstrate what they know and can do, such as by developing an accessible assessment format to meet these students' individual needs.

## New Statutory Provisions Pertaining to ELP Assessments





- (3) If a State develops a computer adaptive assessment to measure English language proficiency, the State must ensure that the computer-adaptive assessment—
- (i) Assesses a student's language proficiency, which may include growth toward proficiency, in order to measure the student's acquisition of English

## New Regulatory Provisions Pertaining to ELP Assessments





An Alternate ELPA (AELPA) is for ELs who are students with the most significant cognitive disabilities in grades K-12 (34 CFR § 200.6(h)(5)).

## New Statutory Provisions Pertaining to ELP Assessments



States may choose to implement an AELPA based on the grade-level ELP achievement standards, or they may choose to implement the AELPA based on alternate ELP achievement standards.

## New Statutory Provisions Pertaining to ELP Assessments



(ii) If an English learner has a disability that precludes assessment of the student in one or more domains ...

A State must assess the student's English language proficiency based on the remaining domains in which it is possible to assess the student.

## New Regulatory Provisions Pertaining to ELP Assessments





Evidence for peer review supporting validity of ELP assessments:

- Include alignment with the State's ELP standards
- Consistency with nationally recognized professional and technical testing standards (34 C.F.R. § 200.2(d)).

Pertaining to Validity of ELP  
Assessments



Under 200.6 (j) (iii) For an English learner, as defined in section 8101(20)(C)(ii) of the Act,

the State ...

**provides appropriate services to enable him or her to attain proficiency in English**

**Pertaining to Validity of ELP  
Assessments**

# Contextual Considerations

Meagan Karvonen



What lessons can we learn and apply from assessing students with significant cognitive disabilities on academic assessments (AA-AAS)?

# The Domain

- What claims do we want to make about students?
- How is the domain defined?
- How is it structured?
- How do students learn?



# The Students

What characteristics might impact the definition of the domain?

- 23% of students with SCD do not use speech to communicate
- 6% use sign in place of or in addition to speech
- 4% have known hearing loss
  - 67% of those who use sign use ASL
  - 69% use one sign at a time to communicate for limited purposes



# Examples: Domain + Students + Claims

Speaking is oral expression of ideas.

- Domain not accessible to all students
- Claims about EL proficiency are based on no information about speaking (domain exemption)

Speaking is oral expression of ideas, or for students who do not speak, it is expression of ideas through their typical mode(s) of expressive communication

- Domain is assessed differently depending on students' modes of expression
- Claims about EL proficiency are based on full range of student performance

# The Students

What other (construct-irrelevant) characteristics could impact test design?

- 5% of students with SCD are blind or have low vision
- 13% have health issues that can interfere with instruction and assessment
- ~40% demonstrate fleeting attention during instruction and require repeated prompts or bids for attention
- 21% choose from  $\leq 2$  symbols at a time when communicating

# Assessment Design

- What design makes sense given the domain and the students?
  - How are flexibility and standardization conceptualized?
  - How do design decisions build on existing research?
- What evidence must be collected at various stages (conceptualization, early design, development, refinement) to meet professional standards including peer review requirements?

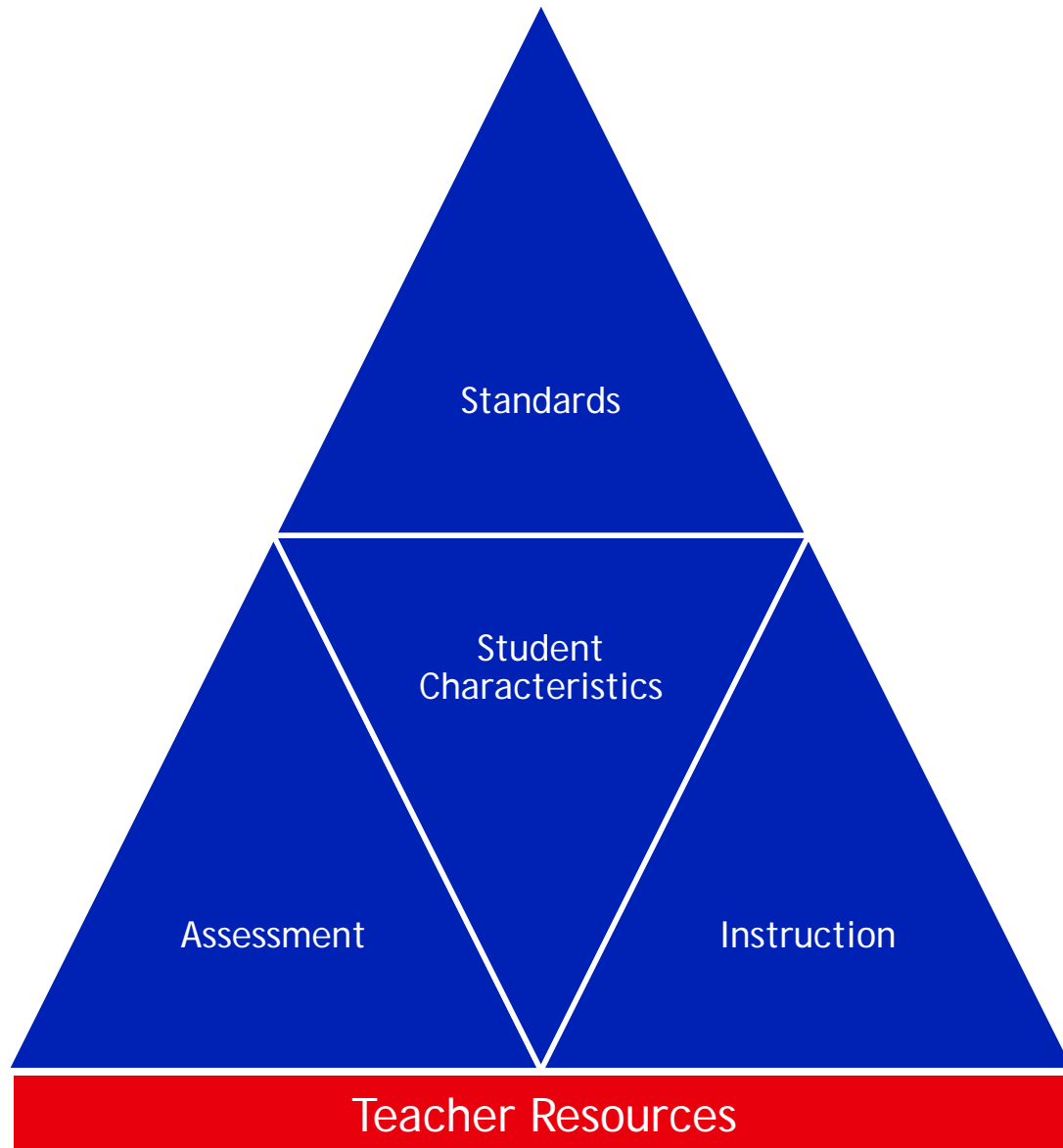


# Teachers Need an Expanded Toolbox

- How to identify students
- How second language development works, for the accessible domains (what does student progress look like?)
- How language and disability-related needs intersect for each specific student
  - How to design classroom instruction that meets those needs
  - How to talk to parents
- What other service providers can help

# Alignment

Whole system must be aligned to support claims and student progress toward high expectations



# Supporting English Learners with Significant Cognitive Disabilities and Informing Assessment Design

Melissa Gholson, Ed.D.

Researcher, University of Wisconsin-Madison



ALTERNATE ENGLISH LANGUAGE  
LEARNING ASSESSMENT PROJECT



# ALTELLA Project

The Alternate English Language Learner Assessment (ALTELLA) project aims to apply lessons learned from research on successful instructional practices, accommodations, and assessing English learners (ELs) and students with cognitive disabilities to inform alternate English language proficiency assessments.

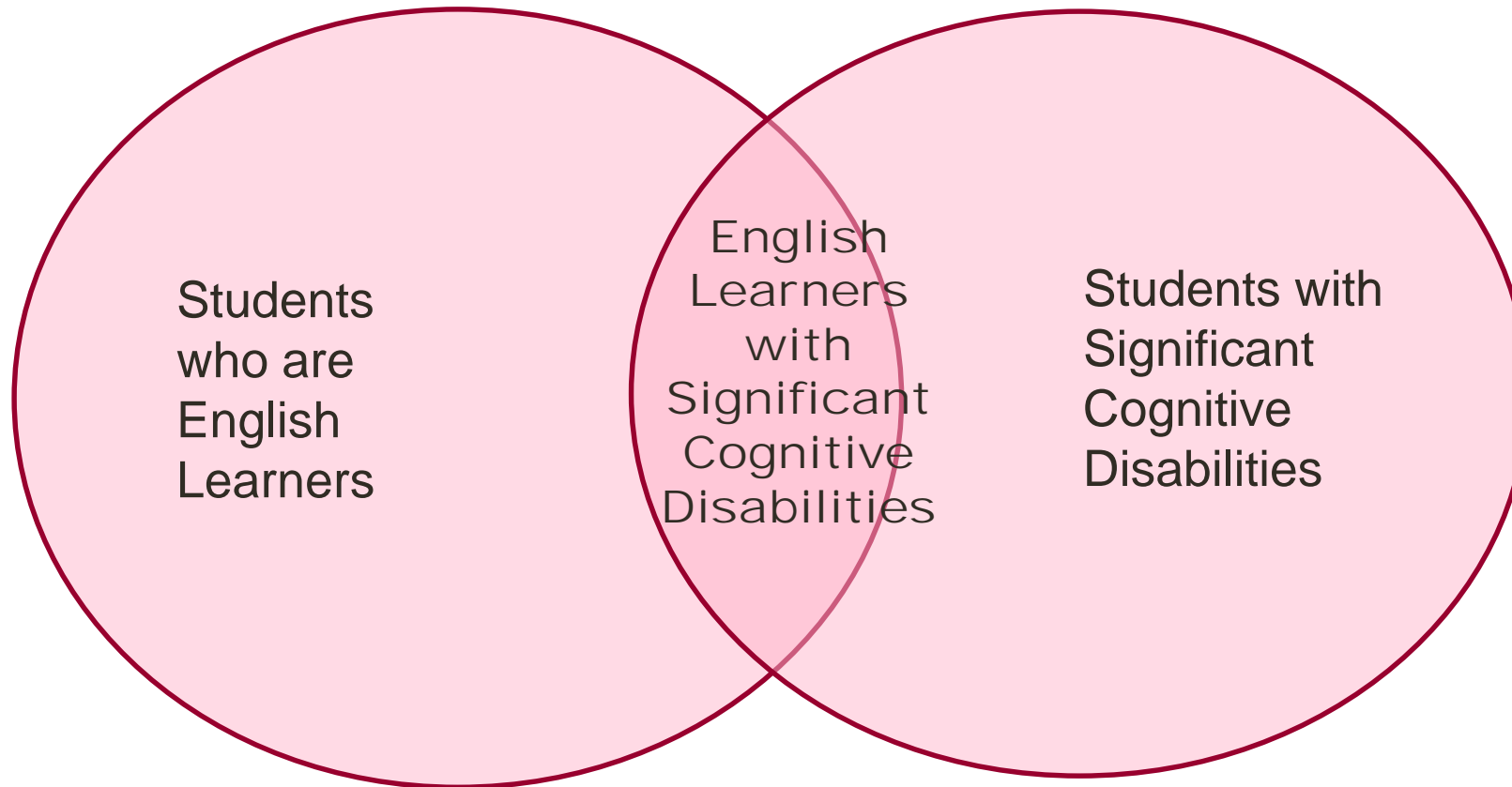


<http://altella.wceruw.org/>

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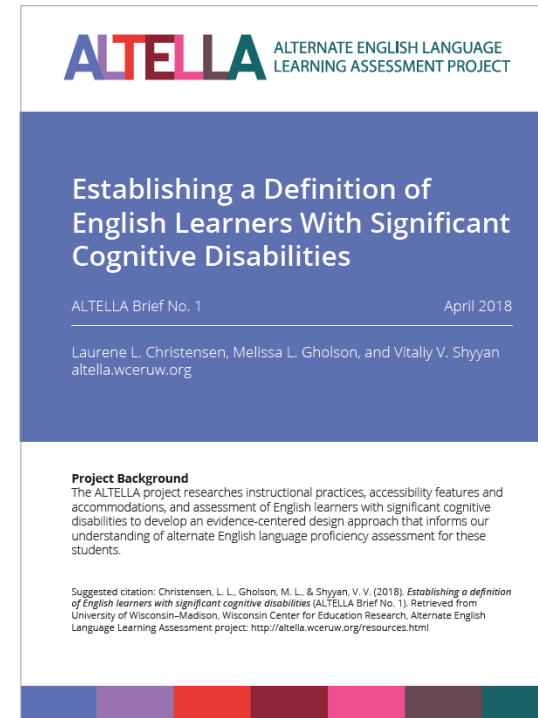
# Who Are English Learners with Significant Cognitive Disabilities?

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# Defining the Population

- To develop high quality alternate assessments of English Proficiency, developers will need to identify the population and the characteristics of English learners (ELs) with significant cognitive disabilities.
- Establish a definition for who is considered an EL with a SCD
- Establish consistent participation criteria



The ALTELLA Project–  
<http://altella.wceruw.org/>



# What makes this population different?

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- Students in this population are navigating across multiple languages (L1+L2+L?).
- The impact of a significant cognitive disability impacts learning, memory, judgement, and processing. All of which impact language acquisition.
- Students need more time for processing and to generalize language across multiple settings.
- Many students are navigating content, language and disability combined with a variety of communication impairments and sensory loss.
- Some students use augmentative and alternative communication (AAC) devices to supplement or replace speech or writing in the production or comprehension of spoken or written language.

# ALTELLA Findings

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- Many English learners with the most significant cognitive disabilities are not included in the required state English language proficiency (ELP) assessment.
- There are no English language development program models that support both the language and disability needs for English learners with significant cognitive disabilities.
- ELs with significant cognitive disabilities rarely receive English language development services.
- ELs with significant disabilities have unique learning needs because they are both students with disabilities and are multilingual (Christensen, Gholson & Shyyan, 2018).
- Educators and paraprofessionals have little to no expertise on English language development.

# Considerations

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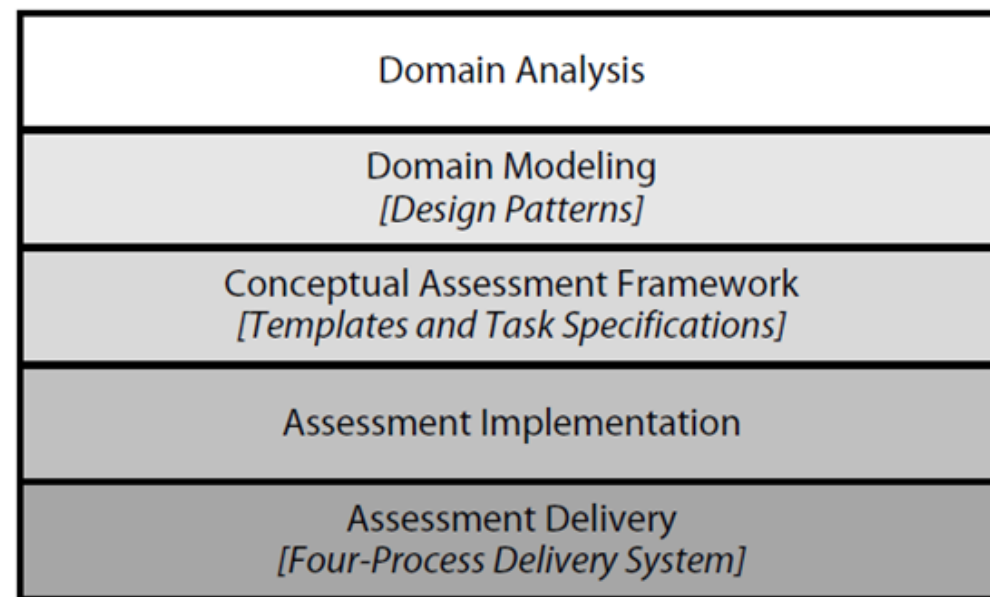
- Lack of coordinated practices between content, special education and EL professionals
- Need for English language service delivery models that support students who are EL with SCD
- Research is needed on considerations for domain exemption or examination of how we redefine domain participation for this population.
  - What does listening mean for a student who is deaf/hard of hearing?
  - What does reading mean for a student who is blind/visually impaired?
  - What does speaking mean for a student who has been deaf from birth, has a speech impediment or mutism?
  - What does writing mean for a student who has a fine motor disability?



# How Does It Fit Together?

- Grounded theory approach to support future development of an ALT-ELP using Evidence Centered Design.
- The first step is to gather information about the population to examine how information is learned and communicated.
- This information supports claims about how knowledge in each domain is acquired and used as well as how competence is defined.

**Figure 3. Graphic Representation of ECD Layers**



Mislevy & Riscosente 2005

# ALTELLA: Individual Characteristics Questionnaire (ICQ)

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- The ICQ gathered key information about the characteristics of ELs with significant cognitive disabilities:
  - Diversity of languages
  - Languages used across settings
  - Born in the U.S.; Length of time in the U.S.
  - Primary and secondary IDEA disability category
  - Comparisons of content and language proficiency scores
  - Expressive and receptive language in English and in languages other than English
- Future use of the instrument

# Key Issues

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- Policies lack a formal definition for identifying ELs with SCD.
- Assessing language versus disability.
- Limited inclusion in both policy and guidance documents.
- LEA and schools have informal interpretations for supporting students.
- English language development program supports are not established.
- Lack of access to general curriculum and non-disabled peers.
- Home language survey limitations
- Lack of a screener



# Identification and Data

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- No monitoring system to examine equitable outcomes for this population.
- Existing state data systems do not identify this population across K-12 grades.
- Participation guidelines and/or test administration manuals for alternate ELP should include participation criteria, accessibility considerations, test administration practices, interpretation of score reports and recommendations for exit criteria.
- Identify data elements that support ways to capture validity evidence, measure growth or other assessment improvements.
- Possible data elements: language codes, special education codes (primary disability), placement, EL service delivery, country of origin, length of residence in U.S., home language, proficiency in home language where possible, and periods of interrupted schooling, content assessment results, etc.

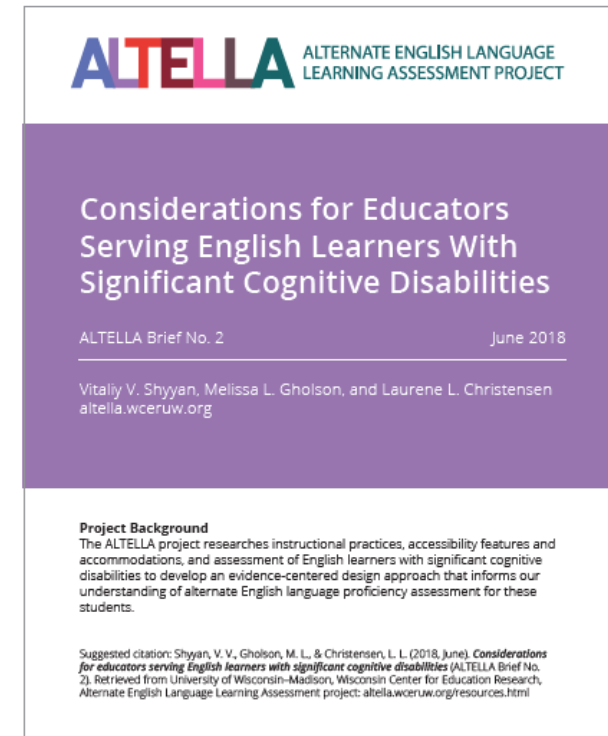
# Thinking About the Future

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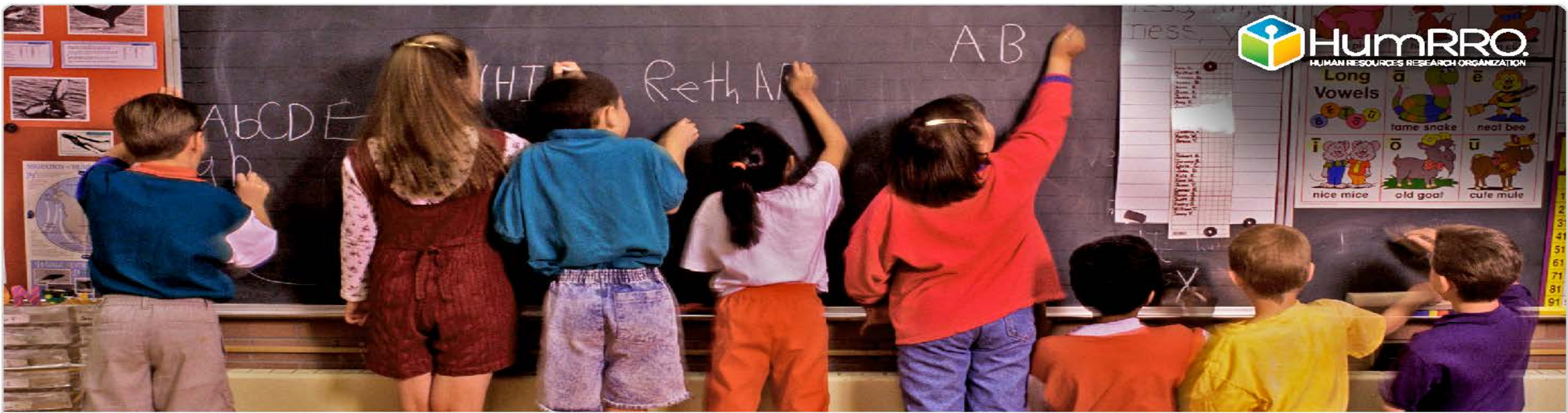
- How do IEP teams determine when an alternate ELP assessment is appropriate?
- What are informal and formal ways to assess language?
- Will services facilitate the student's involvement and progress in the general education curriculum and participation in extracurricular activities? If yes, how?
- How will the IEP team monitor the student's progress in respect to language and disability-based goals?
- How will the student's language development plan address the student's transition needs?
- What language supports are needed for the student to succeed in college, community, and career settings?

# Recommendations

- Establish a standardized definition
- Establish clear policies for participation in an ALT ELP.
- Develop a data system that supports monitoring.
- Integrate services to improve better outcomes for students.
- Establish rigorous research and validity studies.







# ALTELLA Standards Prioritization Process and Evaluation

**Presenter:** Hillary Michaels, HumRRO

June 27, 2018



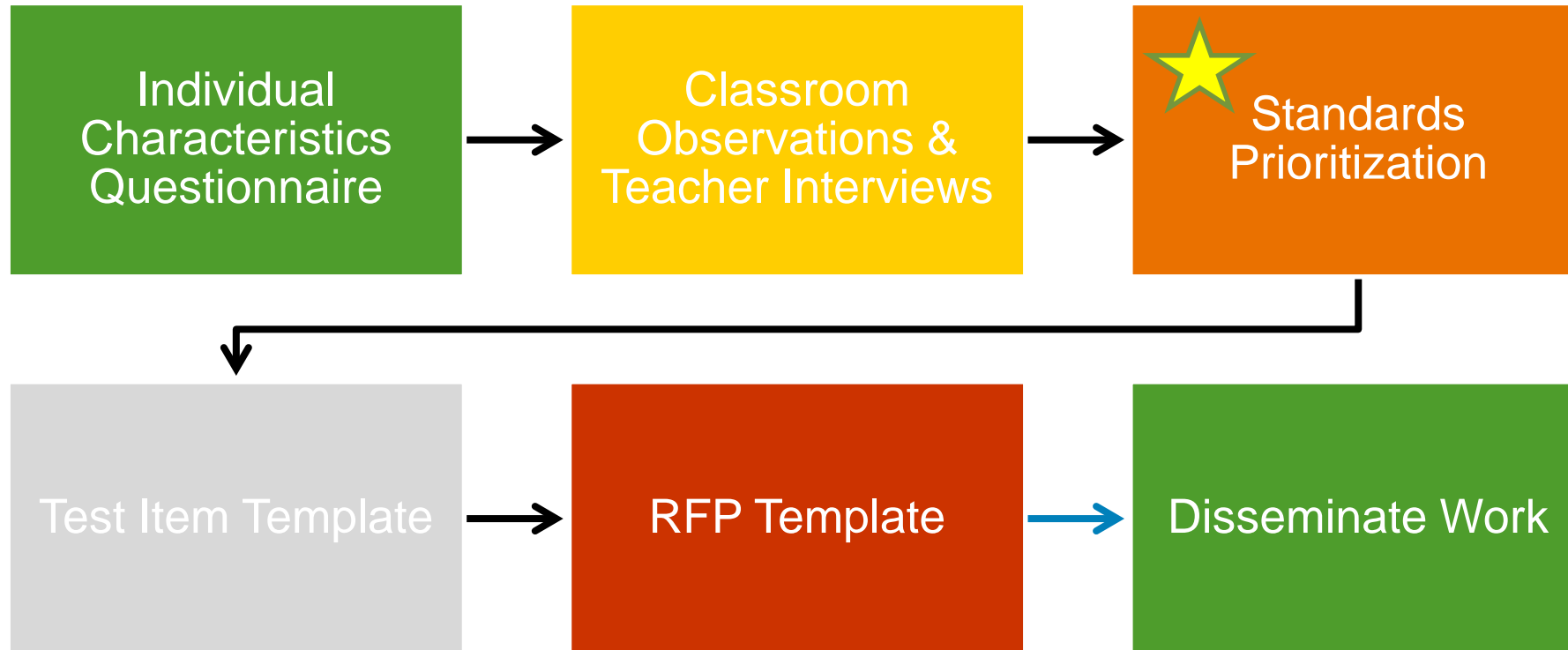
# Target Student Population

- Have one or more disabilities that significantly limit their intellectual functioning and adaptive behavior
- Are progressing toward English language proficiency:
  - reading
  - writing
  - speaking
  - listening
  - understanding the English language



# ALTELLA Components

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# Formative Evaluation to Identify Common Standards

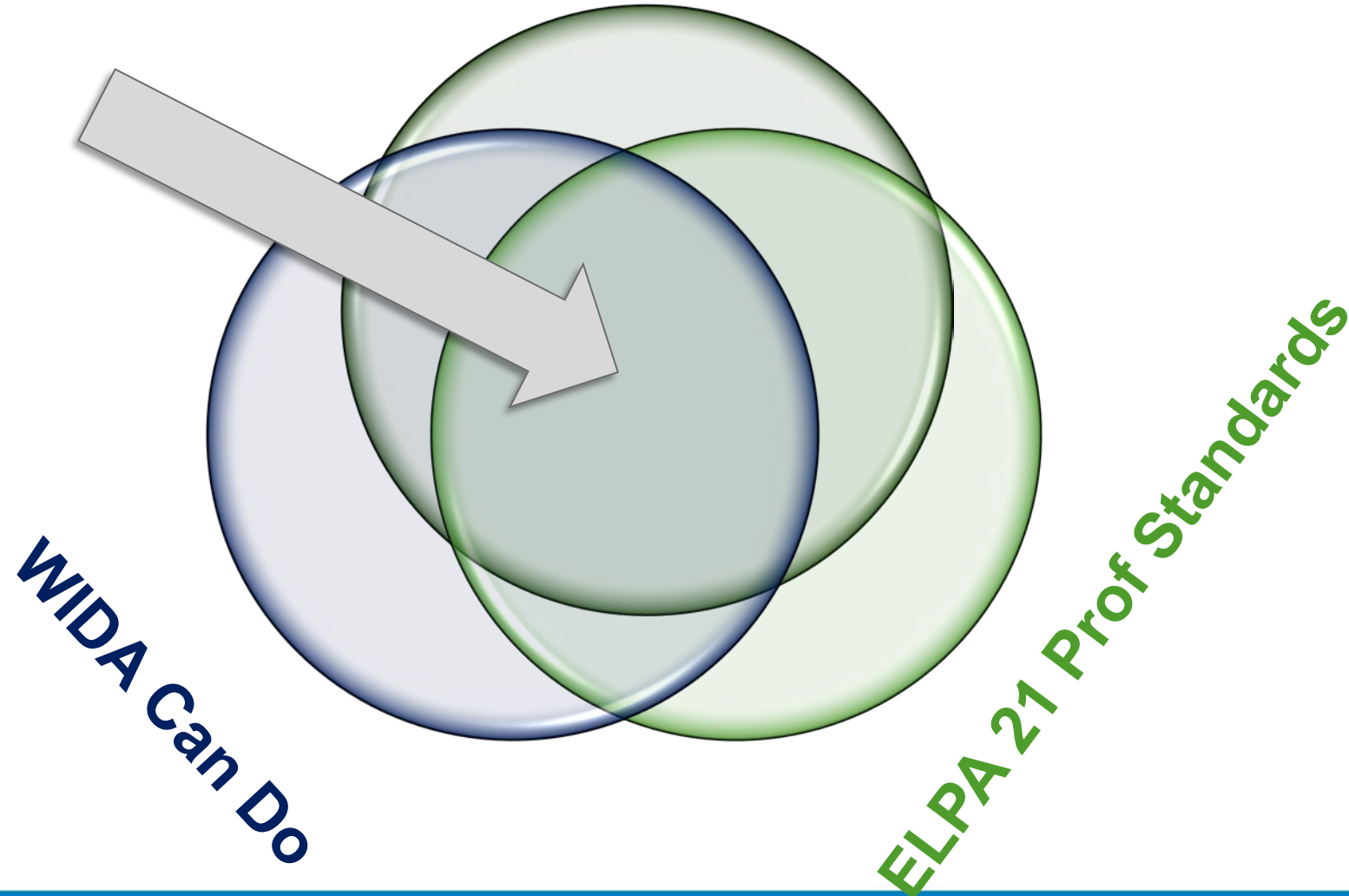
- Evaluate processes
  - During
  - After
- Conduct think aloud protocols
  - Crosswalks
  - Workshop
- Observe workshop



# Standards Commonalities

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## AZELLA Strand III



Innovative. Responsive. Impactful.

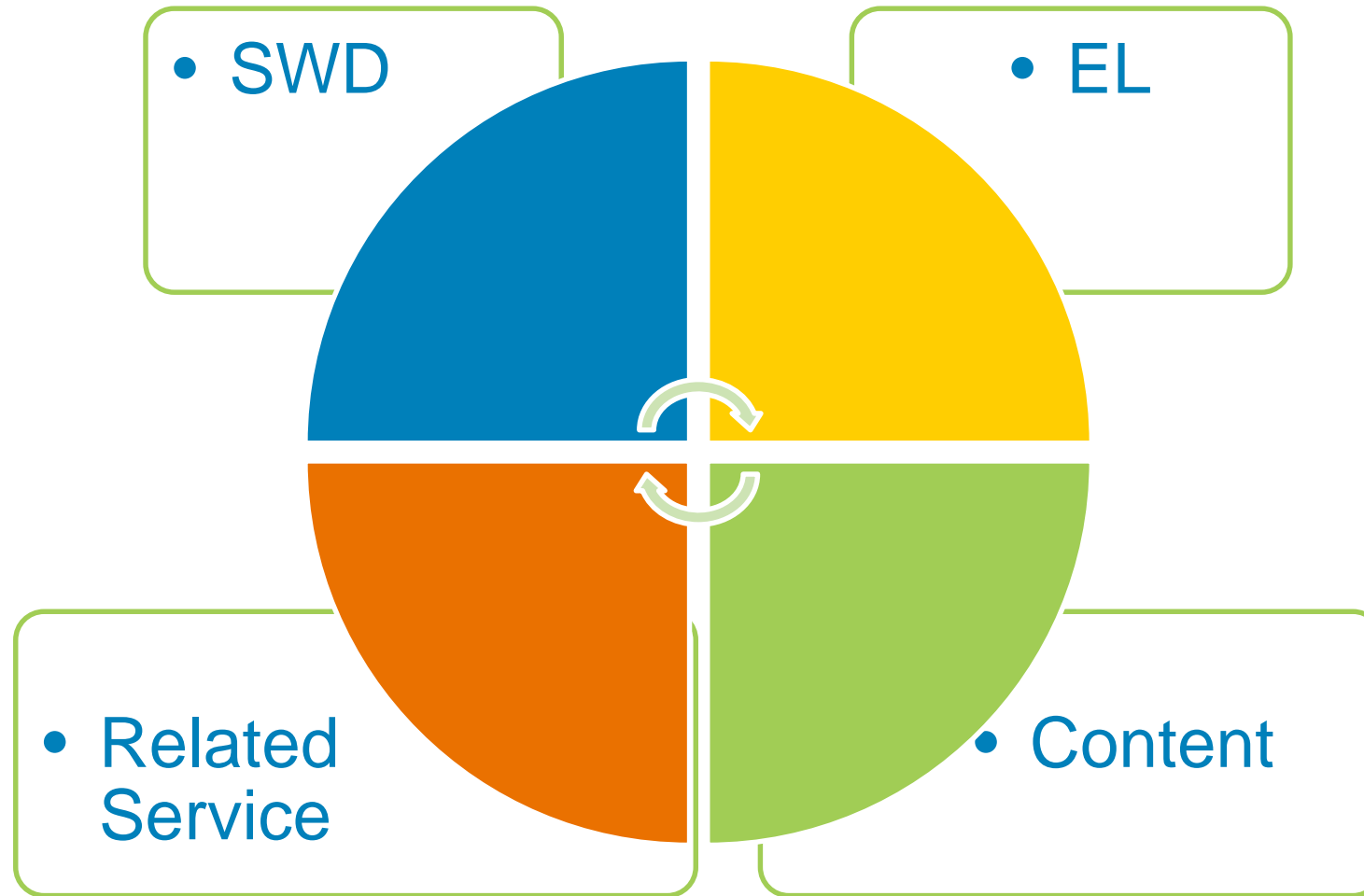


# Attendees

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- Represent three sets of ELP standards
- Panelists had expertise in
  - SWDs and Related Services
  - English Language Acquisition
  - Academic Content
  - Supporting Service Providers
- Available experts
  - Facilitators
  - VI, HI, Speech Language Pathologist
  - Assistive Technology Specialist

# At the Table



# Purpose of Workshop

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- Not to develop standards
- Present process for developing alternate/extended standards
  - Provide experience with all domains
  - Think about what pre-symbolic students show what they know and can do

# Workgroups

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- Each table focused on a domain
  - Prioritized
  - IALDs
  - Examples
  - AALDs
- Work at tables
- Share across tables
- Input to each domain
  - Horizontal alignment
  - Vertical alignment



# Panelist Tasks

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- Key Concept
  - Examine Commonalities to identify each Key Concept
- Prioritize
  - Prioritize Key Concepts for English Learners with Significant Cognitive Disabilities
- IALDs
  - Determine skills leading to the ALT-ELP Key Concepts
- Examples
  - Determine and describe a range of examples related to each IALD
- AALDs
  - Develop ALT-ELP Assessment Achievement Level Descriptors

# Example: Listening and Speaking Key Concepts

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## Listening

- Determine meaning of frequently occurring words or phrases
- Respond to “wh” questions
- Identify the topic from content presented orally
- Identify the beginning, middle and end after listening to content presented orally
- Identify supporting details for the main idea from content presented orally

## Speaking

- Identify the meaning of key words or phrases related to a topic
- Ask and answer questions related to a topic.
- Communicate the main idea of a given topic.
- Recount sequence of events/ procedures.

## Example: Listening IALDs

Key Concept	Level	IALD	Example
Determine meaning of frequently occurring words or phrases	4	Determine meaning of content words and phrases frequently occurring in a text read aloud.	Student matches at least three content words or phrases to their definitions after listening to text read aloud.
	3	Determine a content word from a text read aloud, given the definition.	Student listens to a text read aloud and then matches given definitions to at least two content words.
	2	Choose an attribute of a concrete content word.	Student sees a picture of a moon and provides the shape or location, etc.
	1	Identify an object when give a concrete content word.	Student identifies the moon when provided a picture of moon and plant and asked aloud which is the moon.

# Example: Speaking IALDs

Key Concept	Level	IALD	Example
Identify the meaning of key words or phrases related to a topic.	4	Determine and apply the <b>meaning</b> of key words related to a topic/content area.	When presented a tactile map, student identifies meaning of north, south, east, west.
	3	Communicate key words related to a topic/content area.	Using a word bank of key words, students communicate related words (e.g. four sides, angles).
	2	Identify key words or phrases related to a topic/content area.	Using picture symbols, student identifies picture of animals that live in the ocean by appropriate means of expression.
	1	Identify one-word vocabulary based upon representations.	Student correctly sorts pictures (weather-related vs. non-weather-related).



# Draft Listening AALDs

Level	Achievement Level Descriptors
4	Determine/apply the meaning of content vocabulary words or phrases Respond to four or more different “Wh” questions Retell/identify main idea and supporting details across content areas Sequence/recount four or more major events/procedures
3	Determine a content vocabulary word given the definition Identify or respond to three different “Wh” questions Identify main idea/topics and supporting details Sequencing three events (beginning, middle and end)
2	Choose an attribute of a concrete content word Respond to two different “Wh” questions Identify/locate one to two details from content/supplied topic Identify the beginning and end
1	Match a given word to an object Respond to one “Wh” question Identify a detail or an event

# Draft Speaking ALDs

Level	Achievement Level Descriptors
4	Determine meaning and apply key vocabulary with correct meaning Develop and respond to 4 or more wh- questions Determine main idea by using supporting details and examples Recount order or sequence of events/procedures
3	Use key vocabulary with correct meaning Ask and answer different wh- questions Identify main ideas based upon explicit supporting details Order given sequence of events or procedures
2	Identify key vocabulary related to content Respond to wh- questions related to content Identify facts or key details related to main idea or topic Identify beginning/end or first/last in a sequence of events/procedures
1	Identify one word vocabulary based upon representation and related content Respond to a wh- question Identify from given choices an event or detail Identify an event/procedure

# Summary and Recommendations

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- Supportive approach
- Have to have the right people at the table
- Streamlined process for States
- Alignment

# Questions?

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For additional information,  
contact me at  
[hmichaels@humrro.org](mailto:hmichaels@humrro.org)

Thank you





# English Learners with Significant Cognitive Disabilities: What is Happening in Minnesota

Tracy Montez Lindner | English Learner Project Specialist

June 27, 2018

# 2017–2018 Minnesota English Learners

**73,743** Students indicated as English learners

**11,139** English learners indicated as receiving special education services

**920\*** English learners participated in the English language proficiency alternate assessment

\*Preliminary data

# Minnesota Standards and Alternate Assessment

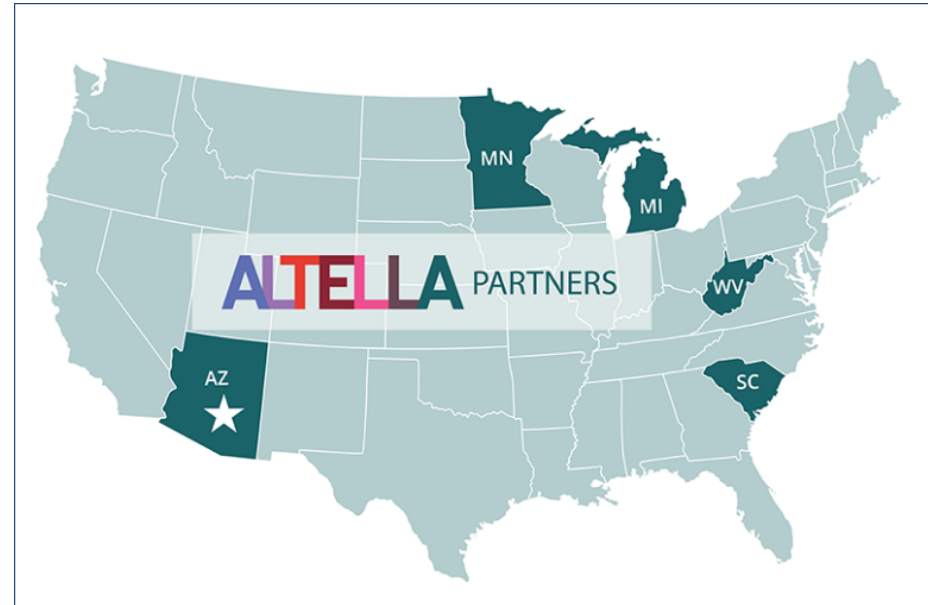
- WIDA English Language Development Standards
  - Alternate Model Performance Indicators
- WIDA Alternate ACCESS for ELLs Assessment



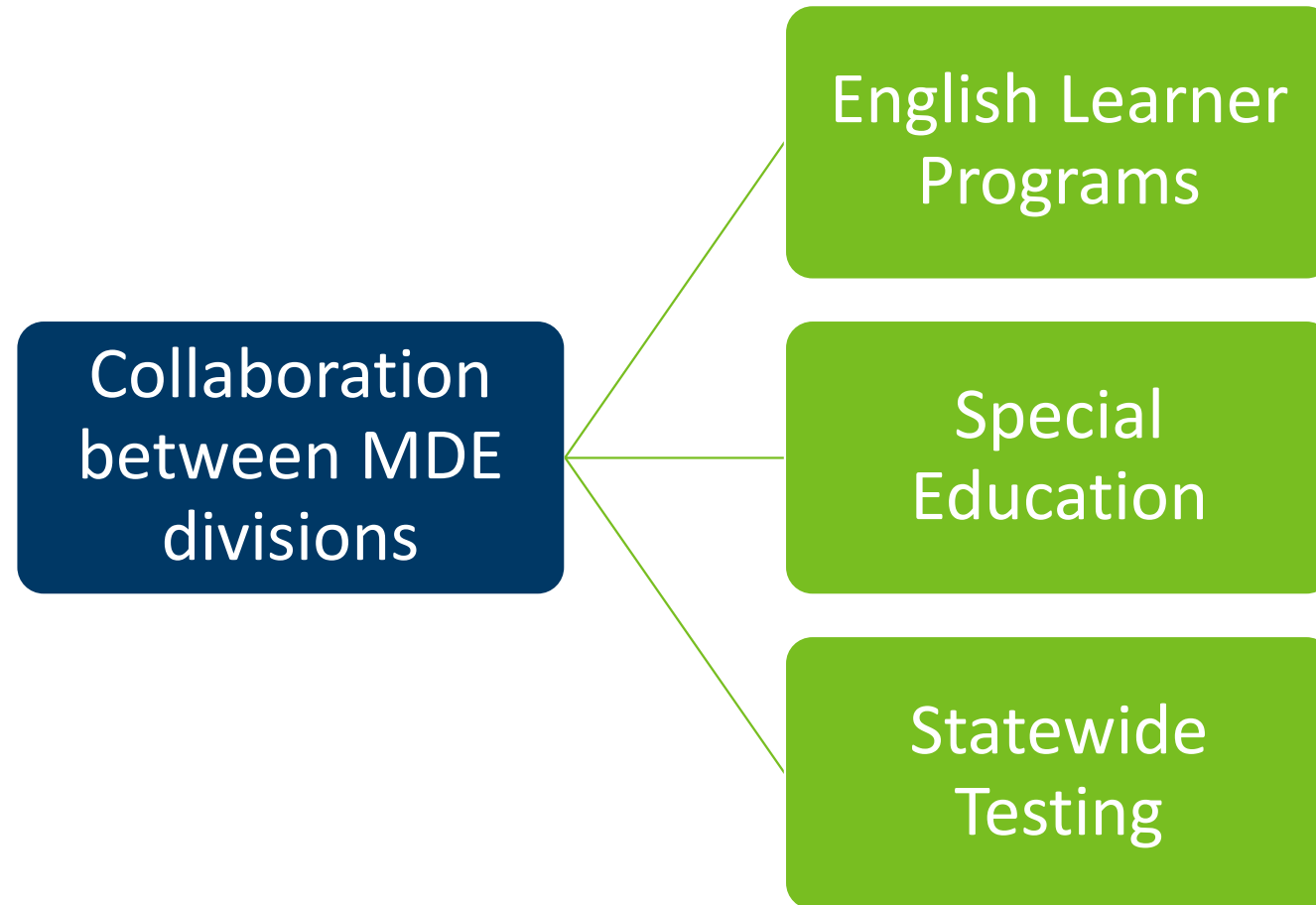


# Staying Involved

- Alternate English Language Learner Assessment (ALTELLA)
- WIDA Executive Committee
- CCSSO work groups
- National Center for Educational Outcomes (NCEO) DIAMOND Project



# What Is Happening at the State Level?



# Who Might Need Training?

Who  
might  
need  
training?

English learner educators

Special education educators

General education educators

Educational assistants

Administrators

Curriculum and instructional leaders

# What Training is Needed?

What training is needed for educators that work with English Learners with significant cognitive disabilities?

- Identification and exiting
- Effective instructional practices
- Aligning instruction to ELP standards
- Second language acquisition for special education staff
- Informal and formative assessment

# Providing Opportunities to Learn

- English learners with significant cognitive disabilities have a right to both English learner and special education services
- IEP team should include:
  - Educators knowledgeable in English language development
  - Educators and family members familiar with the student's language abilities and needs
- IEPs should include language instruction objectives





# Providing Opportunities to Learn



- English language instruction should:
  - Be aligned to the English language development standards
  - Be based on the language instruction objectives in the student's IEP
  - Involve co-planning and co-teaching

# Providing Opportunities to Learn

- What are effective instructional practices that support English learners with significant cognitive disabilities?
- How does primary language support fit in when possible?
- How do we implement culturally and linguistically appropriate instruction?



# Success Stories: Grey Cloud Elementary



- “Our success stories stem from collaboration between the ASD teacher and EL teacher.”
- “We have personal experience with various cultures, languages and English language development.”
- “We have on-going discussions about what strategies can be used to allow our students to maximize their language growth.”
- “Much of our success comes from knowing the student well.”
- “We strongly believe our students CAN make language gains.”

L. Balderrama, email, June 2018

# Next Steps in Minnesota

