A Toolkit and Strategies for Communicating with Parents about the NCSC Alternate Assessment and Related Curriculum and Instructional Resources

Ricki Sabia

edCount LLC

Senior Associate and NCSC Technical Assistance and Parent Training Specialist

ncsc

National Center and State Collaborative

Importance of Communication

- Encourage support for LEA and school role in the NCSC project
- Avoid unnecessary concern and possibly a backlash
- Gain goodwill from the parent community for transparency and efforts to raise expectations for students
- Encourage parent involvement and home-school collaboration

ncsc
National Center and State Collaborative

Review Parent Resources

- Review the Resources for Parents provided at http://www.ncscpartners.org/resources - designed for parents, but also useful for others interested in summaries and PowerPoints on the project

- The wiki main page also has a "Quick Link" to resources described above

- Review Parent Tips and Tools via link on main page of NCSC wiki at https://wiki.ncscpartners.org

Topics Covered by Parent Resources on NCSC Partners Website

- Introduction to NCSC Project
- NCSC Curriculum and Instructional Resources
- NCSC Assessment and IEP Team Guidance
- College and Career Readiness for Students with Significant Cognitive Disabilities
- Student Communication Skills
- Tools for sharing information about NCSC

NCSC Parent Resources on the Wiki

- **Parent Tips and Tools**: a one page wiki navigation tool, a more detailed wiki navigation guide, and a wiki tips series (eight short documents that help parents use the curriculum and instruction resource materials on the wiki)

- **Educator Professional Development and Parent Resources**: presentations and modules for both educators and parents, also has a link to resources on NCSC Partners website

- **NCSC Partners-Parent Resources**: link to resources page on NCSC Partners website

Wiki Resources

- **Curriculum Resources** - What to Teach; Curriculum Resources are reference materials created to reinforce educators' unders
- **Instructional Resources** - How to Teach; Instructional Resources are reference materials created to support classroom teach
- **Educator Professional Development and Parent Resources** – **Presentations** and **interactive modules** designed to supple and learning for students with significant cognitive disabilities, and provide broad coverage of topics of interest to educators an
- **Parent Tips and Tools.** - These documents include a one page wiki navigation tool and a more detailed wiki navigation guide. resource materials.

Quick Links

- **All Resources** - Browse curriculum and instruction resources in the wiki by category (CCCs, Element Cards, Content Modules
- **NCSC Partners - Parent Resources** ⧉ - The NCSC Partners website includes a wealth of information available to parents and descriptions of work related to the NCSC project. These topics of this work include: NCSC Project Descriptions, Curriculum and Assessment, College and Career Readiness for Students with Significant Cognitive Disabilities, Communicative Competence, a
- **NCSC Partners** ⧉ - Visit ncscpartners.org for more information about the National Center and State Collaborative.

Explain Changes to Expect in Instruction

- Can be handled in LEA/school-wide meeting, parent-teacher conference or in materials sent home

- Slides from PowerPoints on http://www.ncscpartners.org/resources can be used for a presentation

- Suggest providing a hard copy of the *NCSC Project Description, NCSC Discussion of College and Career Readiness for Students with Significant Cognitive Disabilities*, and the *NCSC Diagram and Explanation documents*

ncsc

National Center and State Collaborative

Additional Suggestions for Explaining Instructional Changes

- Emphasize that instruction on Common Core State Standards does not ignore functional goals – they are embedded in academic instruction (the most important one is communicative competence)

- Share how the NCSC wiki provides resources to support general/special educators, including instructional strategies and supports

- Direct parents to Parent Tips and Tools link on wiki

- Provide parents with printed materials from the wiki that reference instructional strategies

Explain Changes to Expect in Assessment PRIOR to IEP Meeting

- Can be handled in LEA/school-wide meeting, parent-teacher conference or in materials sent home

- Slides from PowerPoints on http://www.ncscpartners.org/resources can be used for a presentation

- Provide parents with *The NCSC IEP Team Guidance for Alternate Assessment Participation Decisions*

- Also suggest providing *Summary of NCSC Frequently Asked Questions regarding the Alternate Assessment, NCSC Answers to Common Parent Questions about Alternate Assessments,* and *NCSC Assessment Policies*

Assessment Discussion at IEP Meeting

- Respond to remaining parent questions or concerns

- Address any resistance to NCSC assessment due to LRE concerns: point out FAQ #4 of the *NCSC IEP Team Guidance for Alternate Assessment Participation Decisions*, which states that participation is not a reason for educating a student outside the general education classroom

- Inform parents whether participation in the NCSC assessment will impact their child's opportunity to earn a regular high school diploma and discuss options for addressing any disagreement about the assessment decision

Purposes of 2015 NCSC Alternate Assessment

- Understand how all the students perform on the full range of the expected content for a grade and on the full range of items, from easy to hard

- Collect data on how many students get each item right

- Use the data to design stage adaptive assessments that accurately show where students are in terms of learning the content they are expected to be learning

ncsc

National Center and State Collaborative

General Suggestions for Sharing Parent Resources

- Provide links to Parent Resources on NCSC Partners website and NCSC wiki
- Have a binder of all these materials available at each school for parents without internet access
- Provide accessible versions and versions in other languages, as needed
- Explain that some of the Parent Resources provide the minimum information that every parent should have (e.g. Project Description, IEP Team Guidance, Assessment Policies), while others provide additional details
- Provide LEA or school contact info for questions

ncsc
National Center and State Collaborative

Now We Will Explore the Parent Resources

http://www.ncscpartners.org/resources
https://wiki.ncscpartners.org