What Do We Know about Students with Significant Cognitive Disabilities Who Are English Learners?

Overview

1	• Overview & Introduction
2	• DLM
3	• ALTELLA
4	• State Context: South Carolina
5	• Discussion

Overview

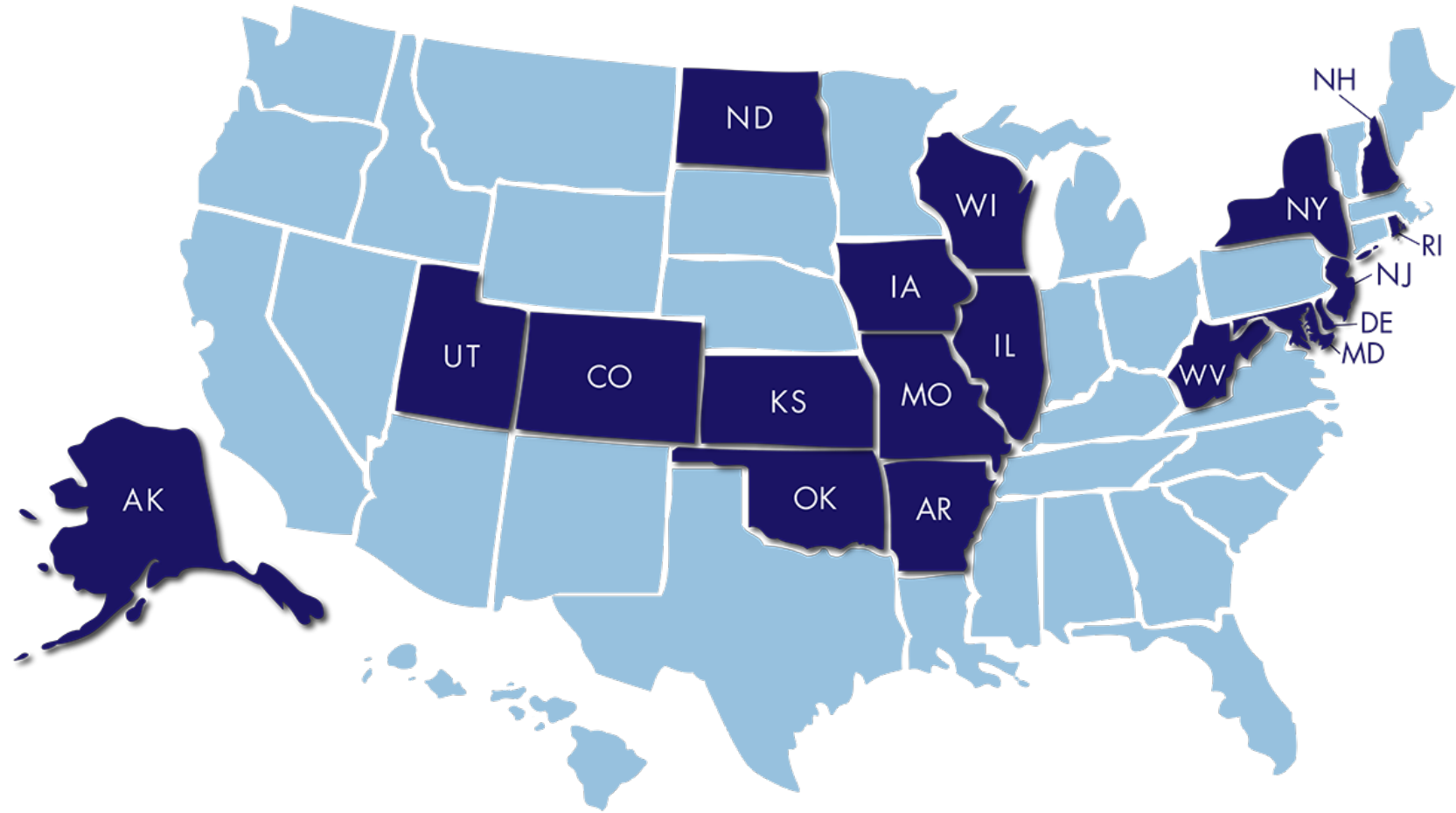|	
1	• Overview & Introduction
2	• DLM
3	• ALTELLA
4	• State Context: South Carolina
5	• Discussion

Identifying English Learners Who Take DLM Alternate Assessments

Amy Clark and Meagan Karvonen

DLM Alternate Assessment Consortium

Identifying EL Students in DLM Population

- Prior to 2016-2017 had just one demographic field
  - Optional, focused on ESOL service status
- Difficult to identify SWSCD who are ELs due to communication and related challenges
  - May receive only SPED services
- Beginning in 2017
  - Included a section about first language on First Contact survey
  - Demographic ESOL field now required
- Sharing preliminary findings today

EL Service Participation Item

Participation Type	n	%
Not monitored or eligible	84,620	94.2
Title III funded	3,244	3.6
State EL/Bilingual funded	263	0.3
Both Title III and State EL/Bilingual funded	811	0.9
Monitored EL student	128	0.1
Eligible but not currently receiving services	196	0.2
Received services not Title III or state funded	559	0.6

5,201 EL students identified

DYNAMIC® LEARNING MAPS

Responses to Language Items on First Contact Survey

Item	Yes		No		Unknown		No Response	
	n	%	*n*	%	*n*	%	*n*	%
Is English the student's **primary language**?	67,135	67.9	4,942	5.0	N/A	N/A	26,859	27.1
Is English the primary language spoken in the student's **home**?	58,861	59.5	9,804	9.9	3,426	3.5	26,845	27.1
Is English the primary language used for the student's **instruction**?	68,159	68.9	485	0.5	N/A	N/A	30,292	30.6

10,503 students with a *no* response for any English as primary language item

DYNAMIC® LEARNING MAPS

Combinations of Language Responses

Primary	Home	Instruction	*n*	%
●			572	5.4
	●		5,514	52.5
		●	26	0.2
●	●		3,932	37.4
●		●	101	1.0
	●	●	21	0.2
●	●	●	337	3.2

Overlap of Students:
Language Items and EL Participation

Language Subset	Total	EL Service Participation	
		n	%
English *not* student's **primary language**	4,942	1,718	34.8
English *not* the primary language spoken in the student's **home**	9,804	3,001	30.6
English *not* the primary language used for the student's **instruction**	485	226	46.6

30% of unique identified EL students from FC language items also EL service eligible or monitored

DYNAMIC® LEARNING MAPS

Identifying the Population

Goal: cast a wide net for any student who **may be** an EL

- Students who had a "no" indicated for any of the three FC English language items or services formed the EL group
- All other students in a non-EL group for comparison purposes
- Compared descriptives for First Contact bands, expressive and receptive communication items, Access profile selections, and overall assessment performance

DYNAMIC®
LEARNING MAPS

EL Students by State

State	EL		Non-EL	
	n	%	*n*	%
A	1,815	16.4	9,285	83.6
B	3,689	16.4	18,841	83.6
C	1,737	14.4	10,350	85.6
D	815	14.1	4,977	85.9
E	236	13.6	1,502	86.4
F	440	9.5	4,206	90.5
G	310	8.0	3,566	92.0
H	52	7.7	627	92.3
I	188	6.5	2,686	93.5
J	370	6.1	5,708	93.9
K	48	5.6	816	94.4
L	378	5.3	6,700	94.7
M	28	4.2	635	95.8
N	230	3.2	6,901	96.8
O	11	2.2	500	97.8
P	15	0.7	2,194	99.3
Total	10,362	11.5	79,494	88.5

DYNAMIC® LEARNING MAPS

First Contact Complexity Band

Complexity Band	ELA		Mathematics		Science		Expressive Communication	
	EL %	Non-EL %	EL %	Non-EL %	EL %	Non-EL %	EL %	Non-EL %
Foundational	19.4	14.3	19.9	15.1	21.7	17.0	10.4	7.6
Band 1	38.3	31.7	37.3	33.9	42.4	37.6	26.3	20.6
Band 2	33.1	37.8	33.3	38.6	26.0	31.0	25.9	21.5
Band 3	9.2	16.1	9.5	12.4	10.0	14.4	37.4	50.3

The distribution of students across bands tended to be lower for EL than non-EL students.

DYNAMIC®
LEARNING MAPS

Expressive Communication

First Contact Item	EL %	Non-EL %
Expressive communication needs met with the following:*		
Spoken word	71.9	77.7
Sign language	6.6	5.4
Augmentative or alternative communication	23.2	20.5
Highest form of expressive communication*		
Regularly combines **3** or more spoken words, signs, or symbols	38.0	49.9
Usually uses **2** spoken words, signs, or symbols	29.0	23.9
Usually uses only **1** spoken word, sign or symbol	33.0	26.2

Lower percentage of EL students using spoken word and combining 3 or more words, signs, or symbols

Expressive Communication (cont.)

First Contact Item	EL %	Non-EL %
If the student does not use spoken word, sign language, or augmentative or alternative communication		
Uses **conventional** gestures and vocalizations to communicate intentionally	3.6	3.0
Uses only **unconventional** vocalizations, unconventional gestures, and/or body movements to communicate intentionally	1.8	1.2
Exhibits behaviors that may be **reflexive** and are not intentionally communicative but can be interpreted by others as communication	5.3	3.9
Not applicable	89.3	91.9
How many symbols does the student choose from when communicating?		
1 or **2** at a time	24.4	20.9
3 or **4** at a time	17.3	18.2
5 to **9** at a time	7.7	10.0
10 or more at a time	13.6	19.4
Not applicable	37.0	31.5

Biggest differences observed between groups

DYNAMIC® LEARNING MAPS

Receptive Communication

First Contact Item (Indicate percent of time for each) →	EL %				Non-EL %			
	0-20%	21-50%	51-80%	81-100%	0-20%	21-50%	51-80%	81-100%
Can **point to, look at, or touch** things in the immediate vicinity when asked	10.6	13.8	22.5	52.8	7.7	10.7	19.2	60.4
Can perform **simple actions, movements or activities** when asked	12.1	14.2	24.1	49.3	9.1	11.8	21.1	56.0
Responds appropriately in any modality when **offered a favorite item** that is not present or visible	14.0	17.4	25.9	42.2	9.9	13.9	23.5	50.4
Responds appropriately in any modality to **single words** that are spoken or signed	14.2	19.0	27.3	39.0	10.1	15.6	25.1	46.7
Responds appropriately in any modality to **phrases and sentences** that are spoken or signed	16.8	22.4	28.4	31.9	12.1	18.2	27.4	39.6
Follows **2-step directions** presented verbally or through sign	26.2	24.4	26.5	22.5	21.1	21.7	28.2	26.5

EL students tended to demonstrate each type of receptive communication less frequently than non-EL students

Classroom Setting

Classroom Setting	EL %	Non-EL %
80-100% of the day in regular class	5.2	4.6
40-79% of the day in regular class	9.9	17.0
<40% of the day in regular class	53.3	52.1
Separate school	30.3	24.4
Residential facility	0.6	1.0
Homebound/hospital environment	0.7	0.9

Biggest differences observed between groups

DYNAMIC LEARNING MAPS

Student Access Profile

- System designed to be accessible for all students
- Access profile selections include:
  - **System-provided** supports during test delivery
  - Supports requiring additional **tools and materials**
  - Supports provided **outside** the system

Access Profile Selections: System-Provided

Access Selection	EL		Non-EL	
	n	%	*n*	%
Audio Read Aloud	61	1.1	942	2.2
Magnification	719	12.4	4,371	10.1
Color Contrast	526	9.1	3,223	7.4
Color Overlay	366	6.3	2,392	5.5
Invert Color Choice	274	4.7	1,676	3.9

Generally only a slightly higher percentage of EL students using system-provided supports

DYNAMIC®
LEARNING MAPS

Access Profile Selections: Additional Tools or Materials

Access Selection	EL		Non-EL	
	n	%	*n*	%
Individualized Manipulatives	2,692	46.5	19,416	44.7
Calculator	1,289	22.3	10,511	24.2
Single-Switch System	404	7.0	2,374	5.5
Alternate Form - Visual Impairment	147	2.5	1,137	2.6
Two-Switch System	130	2.2	603	1.4
Uncontracted Braille	1	0.0	62	0.1

Use of additional materials consistent across groups

Access Profile Selections: Outside the System

Access Selection	EL		Non-EL	
	n	%	*n*	%
Human Read Aloud	5,152	89.0	38,764	89.3
Test Administrator Enters Reponses for Students	3,344	57.8	23,224	53.5
Partner Assisted Scanning	553	9.6	3,803	8.8
Sign Interpretation	161	2.8	653	1.5
Language Translation	450	7.8	322	0.7

Only around 8% of EL students receive language translation, but current method of identifying ELs does not account for over 300 students receiving translation.

DYNAMIC® LEARNING MAPS

Students by Performance Level

Level	ELA		Mathematics		Science	
	EL %	Non-EL %	EL %	Non-EL %	EL %	Non-EL %
Emerging	50.6	40.8	58.5	54.4	71.8	59.6
Approaching	22.2	23.6	22.6	26.3	19.8	23.3
At Target	21.5	27.1	12.6	13.2	7.4	14.5
Advanced	5.7	8.4	6.3	6.0	1.0	2.6

The distribution of students across performance levels tended to be lower for EL than non-EL students, particularly in English language arts and science.

DYNAMIC® LEARNING MAPS

Preliminary Teacher Interview Findings

- Interviewed 10 teachers of students identified from EL participation and FC language items
  - Teachers describe identifying their own students as EL from responses to home-language survey
- Teachers often described the disability and language-related needs of their students with SCD-EL as overlapping
- Many teachers indicated students only receive SPED and speech language services

DYNAMIC® LEARNING MAPS

Next Steps

- Within "EL" analyses
  - Comparing for those receiving services and students who are likely ELs based on other characteristics
  - Exploring whether additional characteristics should be included in definition
- Continue analyzing teacher interview data around approaches to instruction and assessment for these students
- Discussing findings with state partners, including any needs for additional guidance on eligibility or Access Profile selections

Overview

1	• Overview & Introduction
2	• DLM
3	• ALTELLA
4	• State Context: South Carolina
5	• Discussion

Melissa Gholson, Ed.D., Researcher, University of Wisconsin-Madison

What Do We Know About English Learners with Significant Cognitive Disabilities?

ALTELLA

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.

ALTELLA

ALTERNATE ENGLISH LANGUAGE
LEARNING ASSESSMENT PROJECT

ALTELLA Project (cont.)

- The ALTELLA project is an Enhanced Assessment Instruments grant from the U.S. Department of Education awarded to the Arizona Department of Education in a partnership between the Wisconsin Center for Education Research, located at the University of Wisconsin–Madison and a collaboration of states including Arizona, Michigan, Minnesota, South Carolina, and West Virginia.
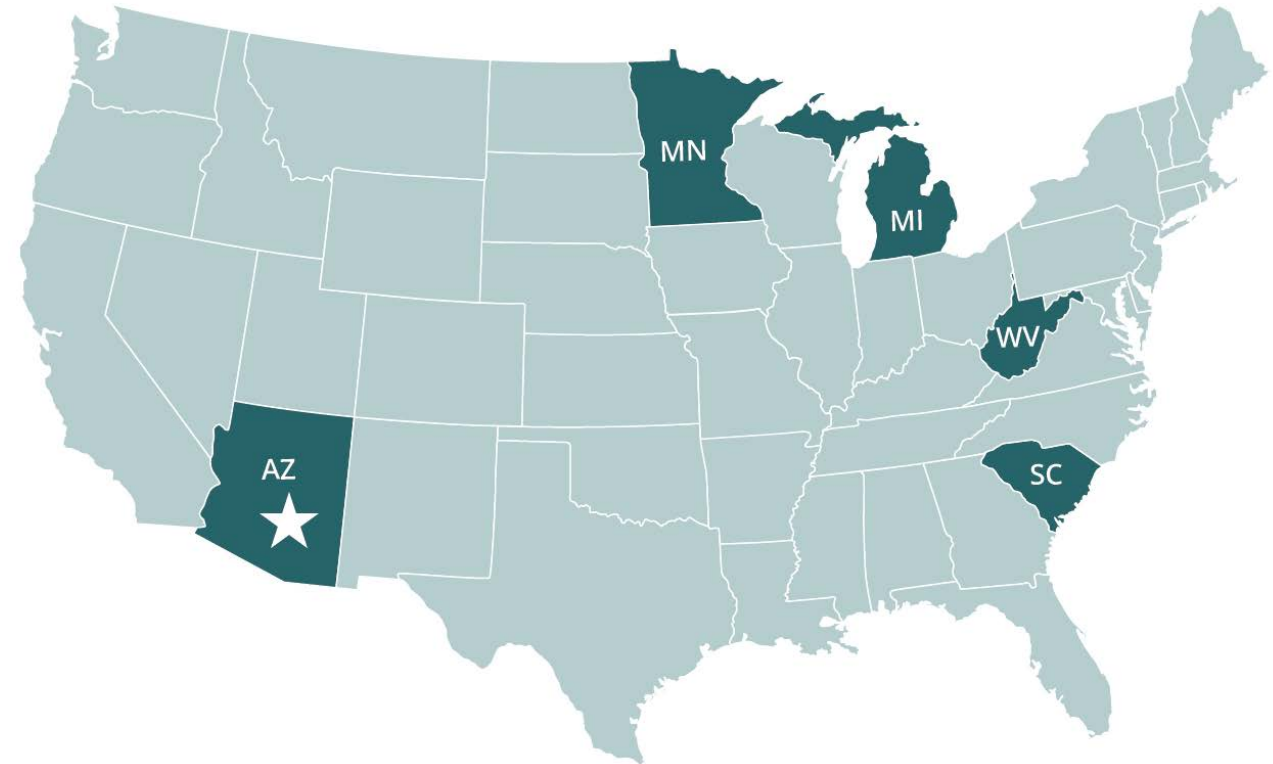
How Does It Fit Together?

- The project used a grounded theory approach to support future development an alternate assessment of English language proficiency for English language learners with the most significant cognitive disabilities.

- The first step is to gather information about the domain that will have direct implications for assessment, including how that information is learned and communicated.

Figure 3. Graphic Representation of ECD Layers

| Domain Analysis |
| Domain Modeling *[Design Patterns]* |
| Conceptual Assessment Framework *[Templates and Task Specifications]* |
| Assessment Implementation |
| Assessment Delivery *[Four-Process Delivery System]* |
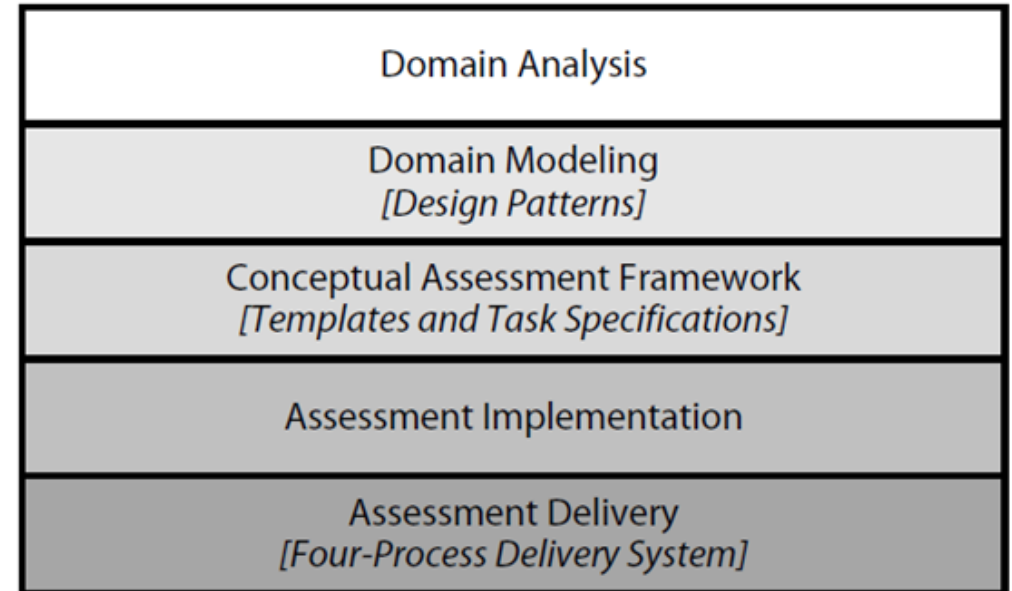
Mislevy & Riscosente 2005

ALTERNATE ENGLISH LANGUAGE
LEARNING ASSESSMENT PROJECT

What Do We Know From Research?

- The impact of a significant cognitive disability impacts learning, memory, judgement, and processing. All of which impact language acquisition.
- Population needs:
  - more time for processing.
  - opportunities to generalize language.
  - time to learn and process language across registers.
  - Alternate ways to communicate including augmentative and alternative communication (AAC) devices to supplement or replace speech or writing in the production or comprehension of spoken or written language.

ALTELLA: Individual Characteristics Questionnaire (ICQ)

- 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

ALTELLA Observation Findings

- Students are primarily served in self-contained classrooms with special education teachers and para-professionals.

- Students in this population are navigating across multiple languages (L1+L2+L3…).

- Little or no attention to language development or awareness of existing levels of native language proficiency.

- Disabilities lens precedence over language development.

- Limited understanding or considerations of native language and culture.

- EL specialists, part of the formal IEP team, rarely provide service or interacts in any meaningful or consistent way with students.

ALTELLA Interview Findings

- Special education teachers lack expertise in second-language acquisition and culturally and linguistically responsive educational practices.

- Belief that the focus is on communication, not language or opportunity to learn or bridge strategies for language learning.

- Unawareness that native language and culture bring anything different to the academic table.

ALTELLA

ALTERNATE ENGLISH LANGUAGE
LEARNING ASSESSMENT PROJECT

Key Issues

- Policies lack a formal definition for identifying ELs with SCD.

- Limited inclusion in both policy and guidance documents.

- LEA and schools have informal interpretations for supporting students .

- Existing state data systems do not identify this population across K-12 grades.

- No monitoring system is in place to examine equitable outcomes for this population.

Recommendations

- Establish Standardized (state/national) definition of English language learner with significant cognitive disabilities.

- Establish clear policies for participation in an ALT ELP.

- Develop a data system that supports monitoring.

- Consider how to integrate services to improve better outcomes for students.

- Establish rigorous research and validity studies to examine the assessment development, delivery and outcomes that support and inform the theory of action.

ALTELLA Website

altella.wceruw.org

Overview

1	• Overview & Introduction
2	• DLM
3	• ALTELLA
4	• State Context: South Carolina
5	• Discussion

South Carolina

- South Carolina Alternate Assessment (SC-Alt)

- Alternate ACCESS for ELLs

South Carolina English language learner (ELL) Data

- 416 students took Alternate ACCESS for ELLs

- 11% of students who took the regular SC-Alt were identified as ELL

SC-Alt Proficiency levels

- 33% of ELLs who take SC-Alt scored proficient in math
- 28% of ELLs who took SC-Alt scored proficient in ELA

Native Language of Students who take Alternate ACCESS for ELLs

- Spanish: 80%
- Russian: 2%
- Mandarin: 2%

Disability Categories

- Intellectual Disability: 40%

- Autism: 23%

- Developmental Disability: 8%

ELL Students with No Mode of Communication

- 64 students were identified as having "no mode of communication" on the SC-Alt

- 13 of the students were identified as ELL

Individualized Education Programs (IEPs)

- All speak another language at home

- Two students receive ESOL services

- Ten receive Speech Services

- Working on skills such as recognizing letters, recognizing numbers

Growth Over Three Years

- 170 students took the Alternate ACCESS in 2015, 2016, and 2017

- From 2015 to 2016: 0.11% change

- From 2016 to 2017: 0.10% change

- From 2015 to 2017: 0.21% change

Overview

1	• Overview & Introduction
2	• DLM
3	• ALTELLA
4	• State Context: South Carolina
5	• Discussion

WHAT DO WE KNOW ABOUT STUDENTS WITH SIGNIFICANT COGNITIVE DISABILITIES WHO ARE ENGLISH LEARNERS?
Discussion

Phoebe Winter

National Conference on Student Assessment, June 28, 2018

Keep Addressing

- Initial Identification
  - *Potential under-identification*
  - *Until a reliable, valid identification procedure*
    - Use procedures that may over-identify?
    - Move more cautiously?

- Understanding individual student characteristics -- communication
  - *Receptive communication*
  - *Learning needs*

ELP Expectations for EL/SCDs

- Defining expectations
  - *Language of instruction?*
  - *Include communication/accessibility tools and devices?*
  - *What does English language mean for non-EL SCDs?*

- Supporting proficiency
  - *Identification*
  - *Identification of needs*

Developing Assessments

■ Know the students

■ Define the domain – What does ELP mean for EL/SCDs?

■ Model the domain – What claims do we want to make, and how do we expect them to function?

■ Conceptual assessment framework – How will we know the level of ELP students have, given the definition and claims? What tasks and items, in what contexts, will provide that evidence?

■ Assessment implementation

■ Assessment delivery

■ Build in mechanisms for change

} These follow from the (harder) work in the earlier stages