

What Do Teachers Know and What Do Data Say About Accommodations and Accessibility Features?

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Introduction

Nine state departments of education and the National Center on Educational Outcomes are collaborating on a project (Data Informed Accessibility – Making Optimal Needs-based Decisions – DIAMOND) that is conducting several studies to inform the development of modules for educators to make decisions about accessibility and accommodations for all students.

Partners

National Center on Educational Outcomes
Minnesota (lead state)
Alabama,
Connecticut,
Maryland
Michigan
Ohio
West Virginia
Wisconsin
US. Virgin Islands.



Research Activities

1. Literature Review Educator Survey
2. Online Focus Group
3. Teacher Phone Interviews
4. In-person interview & Student Demonstration (Ongoing)
5. State Data Analysis
6. On-line Training modules (Developing)

Highlighted findings

Educator Survey (n = 2,250)

Purpose: To collect current information from educators on their **experiences** with accessibility features and accommodations and their **attitudes** toward them

Findings:

1. SPED teachers tend to be more familiar with accessibility features and accommodations and are more likely to contribute to decision making.
2. A low percentage of educators, especially EL teachers, believe they have received adequate training on accessibility features and accommodations.

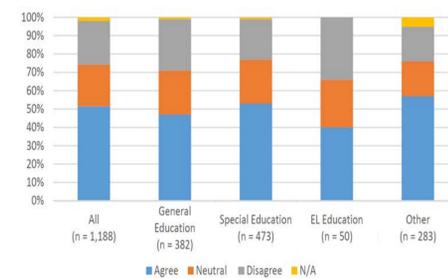


Figure 1. Received Helpful Professional Development on Accessibility Features and Accommodations as a Teacher

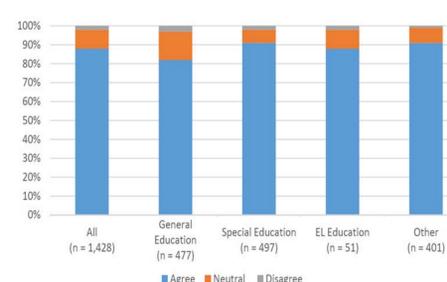


Figure 2. Accessibility Features and Accommodations Have a Positive Impact on the Education of Those Who Use Them

Online Focus Group (n = 46)

Purpose: To collect information on **strategies** teachers used related to accessibility features and accommodations through discussion

Process: About 60 minutes per day for four days

Findings:

1. Decision-Making Process

- A process was rarely articulated beyond identifying team members.
- Input from all team members was not always included.

2. Types of Data Used for Decision-Making

- Data generally were not documented, shared, and used by all educators, especially for the classroom.
- Data were more about accommodations and rarely about accessibility features.

3. Constraints

- Teachers lacked knowledge and understanding about accessibility features and accommodations, which students can have them, who should make the decisions, and how to make decisions.
- Practice time with online tests was insufficient.

Teacher Phone Interview (n = 40)

Purpose: To better understand how educators employ accessibility features and accommodations during instruction and on assessments

Findings:

1. Generally, educators were **unclear** about the differences between accessibility features and accommodations.
2. **Text to Speech/Read Aloud** was the most popular accessibility feature or accommodation for all student populations, followed by Extended Time, Highlighter, Calculator, and Scribe.
3. For instruction and classroom tests, several respondents identified accessibility features and accommodations **not consistent** with their states' policies for statewide assessments

In-Person Interview & Student Demonstration (n = 16)

Purpose: To collect data from classrooms where accessibility features and accommodations are being used.

Findings (ongoing):

1. Some teachers were not involved in making decisions about accessibility features and accommodations because they had been made in earlier grades.
2. Teachers generally characterized the implementation of accessibility features and accommodations as a success.
3. Students generally had a positive response to the accessibility features and accommodations they were using.

State Data Analysis

Purpose: To showcase how data can inform decisions about accessibility features and accommodations.

Data Sources:

1. State-level data from Data Annual Performance Review
2. Two states provided student-level data for grades 3-8 and high school from 2012-13 to 2015-16 for both ELA and Math assessments.

General Results:

1. **Variation:** Percentage of students receiving accessibility features and accommodations varied due to different state policies
2. **Negative Relationship:** Negative relationship between students receiving accessibility features or accommodations and performance were consistently evident