

Accessibility Awareness As An Organizational Approach

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2023 OSEP LEADERSHIP AND PROJECT DIRECTORS' CONFERENCE





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Opening Activity

- When you hear the term accessible I D E A Data:
 - What do you think about?
 - What comes to mind?



Achieving Better Accessibility for All:

- The Rhonda Weiss Center for Accessible I D E A data is dedicated to promoting equity and inclusion for students and individuals with disabilities.
- Activities conducted on this center are in remembrance and in honor of Rhonda Weiss.
- Achieving better accessibility goes beyond Section 508 compliance, as the current base level of Section 508 compliance establishes minimum accessibility requirements.
- Our goal is to provide individuals with disabilities full and equal access to I D E A Part B and Part C dataset in accessible formats.



Organizational Change in Perspective on Accessibility of I D E A Data Reporting

- **Framework** - for managing impact and effect of a new technology or shifting landscape in organizational culture and structure with an enterprise
- **Process** - of shifting agency structure (or other significant elements) to improve operation to meet new challenges



State Website Accessibility Review



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State Website Accessibility Review (1 of 3)

- Scope of state websites conducted between December 2022 – January 2023
- Examined:
 - Agency/State accessibility policy
 - Special ED Child Count URL
 - Link to OSEP website
 - Ease or difficulty finding child count data
 - SPP/APR Webpage
 - OSEP link - APP/APR



State Website Accessibility Review (2 of 3)

- Examined state accessibility policy
 - Question: Does state specify in code or regulation what technology standards a department or lead agency must follow
 - Example: "...agency uses WCAG 2.0 Level AA standards to measure compliance and exceeds these standards wherever possible to deliver accessible content."
- Only a handful of states have an accessibility policy
 - Many have accessibility statements but not a policy the department must follow
 - Compared to states, many non-state entities do not have accessibility policies/statements



State Website Accessibility Review (3 of 3)

- Few states in both Part Band C had :
 - Child count data available beyond what is required by OSEP
 - SPP/APR data available beyond what is required by OSEP
- For both Part B and C:
 - 618 published data was difficult to find
 - Part C – Child Count data in Indicators 5 and 6
 - Stakeholder would have to know where to look
 - Most state child count data independent of SPP/APR as a PDF of EdFacts
- Little data visualization was available for Part B or C



Accessibility Options

Section 508 - WCAG



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Accessibility Options

- SECTION 508 COMPLIANCE – US federal requirement
 - Requires federal agencies ensure Information and Communication Technology (ICT) is accessible
 - Establishes standard for electronic documents to be accessible to everyone
 - Documents useable with assistive technologies



Accessibility Options (1 of 3)

- 508 website requirements:
 - Site is accessible and navigable using a keyboard
 - Alternative text for images
 - Use of transcripts or captions
 - Screen reader capable
 - Alternative text for videos
 - No time limits
 - Use of appropriate color and contrast
 - No flickering objects on screen



Accessibility Options (2 of 3)

- Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG)
 - International standard for web content accessibility
 - Guides web content accessibility for individuals with disabilities
 - Text, Images and Sounds
 - Code/Markup defining structure, presentation
- Guidelines to make web content accessible for individuals with:
 - Blindness and low vision
 - Learning disabled
 - Limited movement
 - Photosensitive
 - Deaf and hearing loss
 - Cognitive limitations
 - Speech disabled,



Accessibility Options (3 of 3)

WCAG has Four Principles of Accessibility

- **Perceivable** – user able to perceive the information
- **Operable** – user able to operate interface
- **Understandable** – user able to understand information and operation of user interface
- **Robust** – user able to access content as technologies advance



Second Activity

- Quick Simple Needs Assessment
- Consider the next sets of guidelines for accessible websites and content



Are your I D E A Data Reports Designed to Ensure (1 of 2)

- Information can be understood
 - Text alternatives for non-text content
 - Captions and other alternatives for multimedia
 - Content can be presented in different ways
 - Content is easier to see and hear
- Understandable information and user interface
 - Text is readable and understandable
 - Content appears and operates in predictable ways
 - Users are helped to avoid and correct mistakes



Are your I D E A Data Reports Designed to Ensure (2 of 2)

- Operable user interface and navigation
 - Functionality is available from a keyboard
 - Users have enough time to read and use the content
 - Users can easily navigate, find content, and determine where they are
 - Users can use different input modalities beyond keyboard



Discussion

- I. What is your state's current environment for accessible data reporting and inclusive access to your state's website?
- II. What is needed to make your state's data and website accessible?



Weiss Center



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Weiss Center Goals and Strategies

- To design an innovative accessible reporting tool to increase equitable data access and transparency for everyone, including persons with disabilities.
- To create a support system for technical assistance (universal, targeted, and intensive).
- To build a body of knowledge of content Accessibility, needs, requirements, tools, and technical products.
- To establish the Rhonda Weiss Center National Advisory Council.



Weiss Center Principles

Accessibility Driven

- We reinforce “accessibility from the start,” which enables us to effectively integrate necessary capabilities and offer meaningful services.

Tools Empowered

- We energize the field by improving data collection, reporting, analysis, and use in dynamic, accessible formats through open-source and innovative tool development.

Capacity Focused

- We prioritize developing and increasing stakeholder capacity to ensure the sustainability and progression of effort within and across states.

Continuously Improving

- We strive to increase the effectiveness of service delivery through formative and summative evaluation, alongside the ad hoc input of staff and stakeholders.



Weiss Center Outputs:

- Development of a reporting tool to make data visualizations and reporting accessible for everyone, including persons with disabilities.
- Plan to maintain the reporting tool over time.
- Tools and products that prioritize access and usability for everyone, including persons with disabilities.
- Development of a training curriculum.
- Strengthen knowledge base in the emerging field of data product accessibility and dynamic tools.



Weiss Center Activities

- Creating a system of technical assistance supports, including webinars, newsletters, peer discussion groups, and customized accessibility improvements
- Developing and designing an open license, accessible software solution and implementing continuous improvement processes
- Conducting community outreach with end users and engage partners in collaborative activities
- Measuring state readiness to determine the appropriate supports



Weiss Center Resources

- Sign up for our [Quarterly Newsletter](#)
- Join the upcoming Community of Practice (CoP): [CoP Sign-up Form](#)



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Questions



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Resource Spotlight

- Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) website
 - Brings together IDEA information and resources from the Department and its grantees.
 - <https://sites.ed.gov/idea/>
- IDEAS That Work
 - For information from research to practice initiatives funded by OSEP that address the provisions of IDEA and ESSA. This website includes resources, links, and other important information relevant to OSEP's research to practice efforts.
 - <https://osepideasthatwork.org/>





RHONDA WEISS CENTER
FOR ACCESSIBLE IDEA DATA



Thank you

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