

Get to Know the New National Center on Accessible Digital Educational Materials & Instruction

ROB CARR: --for joining us. We are really thrilled, as a team, to be able to introduce you all to the team and to our work. Welcome to today's webinar, Get to Know the New National Center on Accessible Digital Educational Materials and Instruction. Our acronym is NCADEMI, which we will pronounce n-cademy. We're really, really happy to have all of you here with us today. My name is Rob Carr. I am a Digital Accessibility Specialist NCADEMI. And I'm going to be serving as the moderator for our time together today.

A few more logistics in terms of communication. We do invite you to participate with us in the webinar. If you have a comment or a question for one of our panelists, for any of our presenters, please do use the Zoom Q&A. That will help us to keep questions front and center and keep them from dropping out of the chat, if you will. If you do want to communicate with other attendees or share resources, then we do invite you to use the Zoom chat for that conversation and contribution as well.

And we will have a Q&A at the end of the webinar. And if you want to ask a question live, just use the React button to raise your hand on Zoom. And one of the moderators here will unmute your microphone. We do have slide resources, the slide deck. And then, we will post a recording to this web page. The web page where this exists now is at [bit.ly, B-I-T-L-Y](https://bit.ly/B-I-T-L-Y), forward slash, G-T-K, hyphen-- excuse me-- NCADEMI. That's all caps, GTK, as in, get to know, and, all caps, NCADEMI. We also will drop the link into the chat so you can follow along as we move through the presentation. The webinar recording will be available on that same page tomorrow. And then, later this week, we will summarize everything from our Q&A that takes place at the end of the webinar. And we'll publish that as well.

As I mentioned, we do have, pretty much, our whole team here today. We're going to have these folks facilitate, NCADEMI's Principal Investigator, Dr. Brenda Smith, Project Director, Cynthia Curry, and our Technical Assistance Specialists, Christopher Phillips and Jena Fahlbush. Natalie Cardenas, our Program Assistant, is here on the back end, providing technical support. And, like I said, I'm Rob Carr, Digital Accessibility Specialist and the moderator for the day. And I also want to thank Rebecca Sheffield, who's our Project Officer, for being on with us today, as well.

In terms of our goals, what we aim to do, we have just a handful of objectives. We want you to leave knowing what and where NCADEMI is, why NCADEMI is needed, how NCADEMI can help you and your organization, and then how you can get involved right now. So, those are the things that we hope to send everyone away with, whether you're here, participating live, or you're watching the recording at a later date. Those are our goals.

And we do-- with that in mind, and for our purposes, to get a little bit more information, we appreciate those of you who are typing introductions into the chat. But we have a poll that we would like to put out through Zoom. So, before I hand this off to our facilitators, we want to get a poll going. And so, Natalie, if you can pull that up. We have questions, just to get some insight, again, for us, into who you are as an audience.

So, we've got option one, which is-- well, the question is, which option best describes your knowledge of NCADEMI? You've already started using resources. Keep them coming. You've explored NCADEMI's website but haven't dug in yet. And you can't wait to get started. You found NCADEMI on social media and have been wondering what it's all about. Or you were asked to register for today's webinar by someone in your organization.

And, maybe, you're wondering why you're here. And we'll give folks a few more moments to participate in the poll numbers coming in pretty consistently. And it's a decent spread. It looks like the majority of you have been asked to register for today, wondering why you're here. That's great. That's really what we want to do, is to help to inform you as to what NCADEMI will be doing and the work that it's already done. So, we've got a pretty even distribution.

If we go through, some of you all, about 15%, have already started using some of the NCADEMI resources. About a quarter have explored NCADEMI's website, but haven't really dug in yet. About 20%, 21%, found NCADEMI on social media and have been wondering what it's all about. And then, 38%, 39%, as people continue to participate, are here to find out more about NCADEMI and our work. So, thank you. That's really helpful for us, and insightful.

So, just a little bit about NCADEMI. Again, if you have a comment or a question for the presenters, please do use the Zoom Q&A. We'll be monitoring through there. And that'll make sure, like I said, that the question doesn't fall at the bottom of the chat. With that, I am going to cease moderating for a little bit and hand this off to Brenda to take over from here.

BRENDA SMITH: OK, thank you, Rob. And welcome, everybody. I am Brenda Smith. And I am the Principal Investigator for NCADEMI. And I am really excited to give you a little bit of an overview about NCADEMI, and really welcome you to our welcome and kick-off webinar. I was seeing a lot of familiar names in the participant list, but really happy to see a lot of folks whose names I didn't know, and see your responses to the poll, that you're like, someone asked me to be here. Why am I here? So, we're happy to give you some insight into that.

So, first, we are the National Center for Accessible Digital Educational Materials and Instruction, pronounced n-cademy. And we are a new technical assistance center. We have been funded by the US Department of Education's Office of Special Education Programs. And our goal is to improve the quality, availability, and timely provision of accessible digital educational materials and instruction for learners with disabilities, from preschool age, up through high school graduation.

And then, just a little bit about us. So, NCADEMI is hosted at Utah State University. And we are within Utah's University Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities. And our home base is at the Institute for Disability Research, Policy, and Practice here. And our staff and the NCADEMI team, we are a partnership between two existing projects at the Institute. One is the Web Accessibility in Mind program, WebAIM. And the other is TAESE, the Center for Technical Assistance for Excellence in Special Education.

And so, we have a really good team. If you've been able to click on the link in the chat and download the slides, you'll have the link on this slide to our website, where you can see all of our team members. But we have a leadership team, which has decades of experience in providing technical assistance to states and school districts, and who also have decades of experience with digital accessibility, meeting those requirements.

We have seven technical assistance specialists on our staff and three digital accessibility specialists. And we have a full administrative team, who are handling our project management, graphic design, instructional technology, communication and dissemination, technical writing, and our website development. In addition to this team, we also have our project director, or, excuse me, project officer at OSEP, who's on with us today, Rebecca Sheffield, who is very passionate about digital accessibility and is guiding us on our path. So, that is our brief intro. I'm going to go ahead and turn it over to Cynthia, our Project Director, to continue giving you some information.

ROB CARR: Thanks.

BRENDA SMITH: And that would actually be-- that would be no problem. That's Christopher.

CHRISTOPHER PHILLIPS: Thank you so much, Brenda. This next slide is just this question of, why a national technical assistance center dedicated to digital accessibility, especially in the PreK-12 space? What's the big deal? Why is this needed? Now, we had a very long answer to that question when we filled out our grant application. But the answer today we want to share with you is really pretty simple. Students with disabilities have a right to accessible digital educational materials and instruction, period, right? That is just absolutely a given, that students with disabilities, again, just to repeat, have a right to digital educational materials and instruction. That's really at the core of what we do. And, with that, I see, Beth says, preaching to the choir-- absolutely. So glad to have so many of you here who believe in that mission with us. But the key part of that is that state and local educational agencies are required to provide those accessible instructional materials in a timely manner.

And that's where there's a lot of you here on the video with us today, on the Zoom with us, are doing great work in this area. But there's a lot of work that's needed out there as well. And as we approach this challenge, there's a couple of different laws we want to mention that approach this challenge with the same goal, but with different approaches. The first one we want to mention is the Americans with Disabilities Act, Title II.

If you're interested in learning more about that, our first webinar from last month, we went into detail about ADA Title II. And it really requires that those educational materials be accessible from the get-go. Right from the start, when you procure a book or share a video, it should be accessible for all students. And that's under that ADA Title II provision. However, we also recognize that that's not always the case. And that's why it's so important to also acknowledge and recognize the importance of Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, or IDEA, that ensures that students with disabilities, who often have IEPs or other accommodation requests, that those needs are also met on the back end, or retroactively, if needed. And so, those are a framework, that we approach this challenge or opportunity, of ensuring that all digital education materials are accessible. And, with that, I'm going to turn it to Jenna.

JENA FAHLBUSH: Hey, this is Jenna. For the next handful of minutes, we're going to take a moment to improve your accessibility skills right now by sharing an element of accessibility that you can begin implementing or improving today. And that element is color contrast, which is essential for everybody's readability, or most people's readability.

What we're talking about here is making sure that we have sufficient color contrast for individuals with low vision, color blindness, or even those that might be viewing content in a bright outdoor setting, for instance. We want to make sure that those who are viewing your content can receive the information that might be otherwise lost or misunderstood. So I'm going to start here with your preferences and a quick survey with the chat.

So, if you would, please type in the chat a number 1 through 5 that corresponds with the text in the background color combination you prefer. So, I'm going to quickly just read through these options. I see lots of numbers coming in already, which is awesome. So, type 1, if you prefer light gray text on a white background. Type a number 2 if you like a yellow text on a black background. Type a 3 if you like red text on a white background, and number 4, if you prefer light blue text on a dark blue background, or, number 5, the standard black text on a white background.

So, as I'm looking through the chat, I see quite a few 5's 2's and 5's, maybe a few 3's in there, I think, yeah, definitely, lots of 5's. Yeah, 5, and number 2, the yellow text on the black background, those are going to have the highest contrast for viewing text on a background. I don't think I saw any number 1's. And I don't know how many of you would put your hand up to say, you've seen light gray text on a white background on some website, somewhere. It does exist.

There was definitely a movement, design movement, to use that type of color combination. But that's not always very accessible at all. So, thanks for participating in that. And then, when we talk about high color contrast, while we obviously have our unique color contrast preferences, what we do know to be true is that, to be universally accessible, we have to have sufficient color contrast.

And what that means, when I say sufficient color contrast, in terms of web content and according to the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines, or the WCAG 2.1, we're talking about color contrast that is a 4 and 1/2 to 1 ratio of text color to background color. So, we need our text color to be 4 and 1/2 times darker than our background color. Additionally, when we start thinking about larger text, so 14 point in size and bold-- so, I'll say that again, 14 point in size and bold, or 18 point or larger, the color contrast ratio does decrease a little bit.

Now, we want a 3 to 1 ratio. So, the color of our text is three times darker than our background color.

When it comes to contrast, what also is super important is to remember that we have to think about contrast in our hyperlinks, and in our charts, our graphs, our forms, and our images as well.

So, in case you were like me, and those ratios just seemingly float in the stratosphere, because I'm not sure what 4 and 1/2 to 1 actually looks like, Webaim has an awesome color contrast checker. And, hopefully, some of you have seen this or used it before. The link's been dropped in the chat. And the URL is webaim.org/resources/contrastchecker.

So, if we go out to this resource here. I'll pull it up on my screen for you. Here we are. So I have here, on my split screen, with the Webaim contrast checker resource pulled up in the Chrome browser. Now, if you do view this page in Firefox, the interface may look a little bit different for you. But, here, from the Chrome browser, in the center of the screen towards the right center-- is where I am right now, you'll see that you can choose a foreground or a background color.

And one way to use this checker is to use the hex value, or the hexadecimal value, of the color that you want to check. Now, the hex value might be something, depending upon the program you're using, that's quick to find, or it might be a little bit more buried amongst the settings. So, what's great about this color contrast checker is that there is a color picker. So, I'm using my mouse. But you can also tab to it.

And if you navigate down to the color bar in the Color Picker section, I can click on that, or select that.

And, again, I can tab to or navigate to the eyedropper tool. So, there's this eyedropper tool here in the center bottom of the screen. And, if I select that, I get a floating tool that comes with me as I'm checking around my slides here on the left-hand side. Again, this is keyboard accessible. So you don't have to only use this with a mouse.

And, for instance, if I want to check the color of my slide text, I can select the dark blue here, in the word, Webaim, on the left. It automatically throws it into the color picker there on the right, and the Webaim tool. And then, actually, I don't even have to hit the Enter key. It just automatically checks it for me, which is great.

So, as I scroll down here on the right-hand side, you can see that my color contrast of that dark blue text passes the WCAG double A and triple A color conformance guidelines, depending upon whether that's normal text, or the large text, which, again, is 14 and bold, or 18 point and larger. So, the Webaim tool is a terrific tool to use to double-check your contrast and make sure that you're really meeting those conformance guidelines so that your text is readable to those who are viewing your content. All right, and, now, we're going to talk about who we serve.

CYNTHIA CURRY: All right. Thanks, Jenna. And thanks for that terrific demonstration of Webaim's excellent contrast checker. It's just so important. I love how that tool can be used, like you said, for something that we're creating, something that you self-created. And we can also use it for evaluating something that we might want to use with our learners.

So, speaking of our learners and who we serve NCADEMI, I've been experiencing a little bit of connection issues. So, out of an abundance of caution, I'm going to turn off my video before continuing. So, at NCADEMI, we don't serve students. But we do serve those of you who are serving students, and those of you who have roles and responsibilities related to the provision of accessible educational materials, in the case of NCADEMI, digital educational materials, for students with disabilities who are served from preschool through high school.

In short, we really are here for anyone who has a need, a responsibility, or any type of interest in accessibility by what we mean about technical assistance in general. You might be wondering what we mean by this term. You could think about our team sitting behind our computers with our headsets on and answering phone calls and emails.

And you wouldn't be wrong, because that is part of what we do. But our technical assistance really is much richer and more robust. Everything we do is evidence-based. We rely on implementation science to make sure that what we're doing is based in that evidence.

And at the heart of what we do is relationship building. We want to make sure that whatever we're providing through our technical assistance is going to be meaningful, is going to be relevant, is going to be useful. So, that relationship building is really important to us, and important for our recipients to know, all of you, and others who are related to this work, to know that we're, here, not just a one-way provider of information. But we want to make sure that we're working together with everyone who is working hard and making a difference to improve accessibility for students with disabilities.

So, we provide training and coaching. We present information at every opportunity that we have. We facilitate critical conversations. And we conduct research. We'll introduce some of the research that we have underway. We're launching some research. And we'll announce that at the end of today's webinar. We release publications, from one-page fact sheets, to comprehensive policy reports. And we do lots of dissemination to continuously maximize our reach.

So, that's a broad overview of our TA. But, then, at NCADEMI, we can go a little bit more detailed, and explain that we provide two tiers of technical assistance. This is another characteristic of our TA, defined by the Office of Special Education Programs, our funder.

Universal technical assistance, meaning general TA and information that's provided to independent users through their own initiative, resulting in minimal interaction with TA project staff. So this means information that's available on our website, 24/7. You don't need to call us to access it. But we'd love to hear from you, if you're using our resources.

And then, targeted TA, the second tier, is defined as specialized TA services based on needs common to multiple recipients and not extensively individualized. It's a relationship that's established between the TA recipient and one or more TA project staff. So, at NCADEMI, we have five targeted TA groups. So this means, beyond the resources that we make available through our website, our publications, our recorded webinars that are freely available to everyone, we also have no cost, targeted TA, that is meant to meet the need-- state and local educational agencies, or SEAs and LEAs.

And that's another way to say, state departments of education and school districts. And, within the school district, every tier there, from individual schools, to teachers and parents and the students, Part C lead agencies, parent information centers, pre and in-service teacher, and administrator prep programs, and OSEP technical assistance and dissemination, or TA &D centers. So, let's look at each of these a little bit more closely, and what our targeted TA is intended to accomplish for each of these five groups.

For SEAs and LEAs, or state education agencies and local educational agencies, we're helping them to improve the provision and the use of digital educational materials and instruction through five innovations. You can think of these as areas of practice focus. Evaluate, being-- the five are, evaluate, procure, select, create, and use.

Evaluate really is about measuring or estimating the accessibility of a product or a material by applying accessibility criteria. To procure means to solicit-- [AUDIO OUT] --establish policies and guidelines. Think about procurement as accessible learning management systems or accessible curriculum.

Under, select, this gets a little bit closer to the student, where teachers and other practitioners need to know whether there's something, a website that, perhaps, is being curated for a-- [AUDIO OUT] --to helping teachers select accessible digital educational materials. Creating gets at those practices that ensure that what we're creating is accessible for individuals with disabilities, similar to the Webaim accessibility, the color contrast checker that Jena demonstrated, which could be used for either evaluate, or selecting, or creating.

And then, finally, to use [? these ?] best practices for supporting students with disabilities to use accessible digital educational materials with assistive technology to be independent, to participate, and make progress in general education. So, those are our outcomes for SEAs and LEAs, building capacity in those five innovations. For part C lead agencies, these are for our state agencies that support infants and toddlers with disabilities between the ages of 0 and 2.

Here, we're working to prepare infants and toddlers with disabilities and their families to use materials that will ultimately be provided in part B, early childhood education programs and preschools. So, for those early childhood education, that serves children between the ages of 3 and 5. So you can think about this as supporting that individualized family service plan to the individualized education program for young children with disabilities.

Parent information centers, building up their capacity to support parents and caregivers to communicate and advocate for their children with disabilities. Looking at state level, parent and training information centers and community parent resource centers, as well as the regional parent technical assistance centers. For pre and in-service prep programs, we're looking at, both, as it says, pre and in-service, for

teachers and administrators, making sure that we are covering the broad range of preparation that's happening so that candidates, as they're leaving their programs and going into induction, that they're prepared to provide accessible digital educational materials within their new roles.

And then, finally, for OSEP technical and dissemination centers-- and we know there are many of you here today. Thanks for being here. For you, OSEP has asked that this Center provide technical assistance related to helping you make your technical assistance products and services more accessible, so, from your websites, publications, videos, video conferences, web-based tools and apps. So, this would include OSEP Stepping Up Technology grantees. We're here as a service to OSEP-funded centers. So, let's take a look at some of these resources that are currently available. Jena?

JENA FAHLBUSH: Yeah, thanks, Cynthia. Yeah, absolutely. Let's take a look and talk about some training and technical assistance, or TA resources, that we have. And, right off the bat, those include some webinar recordings that we have. And, having just launched in October of last year, we hit the ground running with a two-part webinar and coaching session series back in December, the first of which was titled Act Now, Understanding New PreK-12 Digital Accessibility Requirements. And this was hosted by Christopher and Rob. And then, it was followed by a coaching session a couple days later.

The next week, Cynthia and I hosted The Intersection of Special Education and new PreK to 12 Digital Accessibility Requirements. Again, that was followed by a coaching session. And then, of course, we have today's session, Get to Know NCADEMI. And that recording will be coming soon on our Webinar Resources page. But, before I move on, I want to show you, quickly, a couple of great resources that were provided in both of those webinars.

So, I'm going to reopen this new page here. And I'm going to start with the Act Now webinar. So, this is that Webinar page on our website, at ncademi.org. And you can view that recording as you scroll down. There's also a great summary of the Q&A discussion there. We had lots of great questions. And while we didn't record that section of our presentation, because we wanted to make sure everybody felt comfortable and safe asking their questions, we did summarize those questions with answers.

So, definitely take a look at that. And as you scroll a little bit farther down, there's a Calls to Action section. So something to note here is that, in this Calls to Action, we talk about establishing a cross-disciplinary steering committee. And we have a great tool, which I'm going to show you in just a moment, that we called The Roadmap.

And, with this Call to Action, there is a sample email that you can just copy and paste to help your team better, or at least check in with them, to see if they know about the new Americans with Disabilities Act Title II final rule, and about the conformance deadlines that are coming up, either in the spring of 2026 or 2027, just depending upon the size of the community that you serve. So, know that that sample email is there. It's highlighted here on the screen towards the bottom. And there are some additional resources about addressing accessibility and purchasing decisions as well.

When it comes to the second part of that webinar series, which was, again, the Intersection of Special Education and New Pre-K to 12 Digital Accessibility Requirements, some resources I want to point out. Not only do we have the recording and that quick summary of the Q&A.

But, in the Resources section, there's going to be another tool that I'm going to show you here in a moment that is a comparison chart of the ADA Title II and IDEA, which was really at the crux of this session that we provided, talking about those similarities and differences and what they mean for your IEP teams. So, there's some great resources on those webinar pages.

And we'll continue to build today's page out with additional resources as, maybe, they can come up. And that leads me into those Resources and Publications. So I'm just flipping back into the slides here to mention that, on our website, on the Resources page, you'll find a link to finding your State Accessible Educational Materials, or AEM, contact. And then, we have three publications, one of which is titled, Meeting the ADA Title II Web and Mobile Accessibility Requirements, a Roadmap for State and Local Educational Agencies.

So, I mentioned that roadmap a moment ago. And then, we have, More to the Myths and Facts, Addressing Accessible Educational Materials in the 2024 Assistive Technology Guidance. And we also have the NIMAS and NIMAC, What SEAs and LEAs need to know. So I'm going to jump back out to that web page and show you some of those resources.

So, on the Resources page, ncademi.org/resources, you'll find each of those publications and the state AEM contact resource I mentioned. I'm going to click on, Meeting the ADA Title II Web and Mobile Accessibility Requirements. Here's that roadmap. So, as you scroll down, you'll find a tiered roadmap, tiers I through III, that help you build your team, help you with communication. Tier II is looking at evaluating your content for accessibility and adopting an accessibility policy.

And then, we get into tier III, where we're drafting and maintaining an organizational implementation plan, thinking about job descriptions and how we can review and edit those to include accessibility responsibilities, and so forth. So, know that that roadmap is a critical resource for helping you get your team together and steering you down that road of accessibility with that new Title II final rule.

There's also the, More to the Myths and Facts. And if you're familiar with OSEP, or the Office of Special Education Programs-- and it was tag-teamed, also, with the-- I might need somebody to throw it in the chat, the Office of Technology, something to that effect. It's escaping me at the moment. But, here, we have the More to the Myths and Facts, where we add in an AEM, or an accessible educational material, tie-in, to each of the assistive technology, or AET Myth and Fact.

So, you can scroll through and see how each of those myths and facts ties into accessible educational materials, and vice versa. And, thanks, Rebecca-- Office of Educational Technology. That's exactly what I needed. And one last resource I wanted to mention, because I said I would, is this comparison chart of the ADA Title II and IDEA, which is part of one of our Webinar Resources pages.

And, there, you can scroll through to see, again, exactly how the ADA Title II compares to the IDEA, and what that means for IEP teams in a quick resource there. So, I believe that takes us to some training and TA resources that are under development, coming up for you.

CHRISTOPHER PHILLIPS: Thank you so much, Jena. We're really excited to get these resources out there. And we have a number of new resources that are in development that I'm excited to talk about. Real quick, though, I'll just pause to mention. Thank you to Cindy for putting up the first question in the Q&A. We do have some time at the end of the webinar dedicated to answering any of your questions. So, anything that comes up, any questions that you have, we'd love to hear from you. Take a minute and go pop those questions into the Q&A.

With that, let's take a look at some of these resources that we are going to be working on in the coming months. The first one is an updated website. Our current website is really just intended to start getting some stuff out quick, and so people could access some of those resources.

But we have a new website that's already in progress that will have some audience-specific content. It'll be searchable-- things like, if you're a teacher, you could come and see what resources are going to be

helpful for me. Or, maybe, I'm in procurement. What resources would be helpful for a procurement officer, for example?

Another big project that's going to be really exciting is, so, micro-credentials, or learning modules, on specific accessibility topics. Now, these will be available from our website through a learning management system. But all of that content will also be available for you to take and use in whatever way you would like to use it. And so, that's another resource we're really excited to be able to share. Another one that, the need has come up a lot, is that it's so difficult often to-- when you're looking for, maybe a new textbook, or a new chat platform in a class, or whatever it might be, to determine, is this product accessible or not?

Now, we may not be able to answer that question directly for you. But we do plan to create a vendor product accessibility clearinghouse, where we'll gather information about a number of the top ed-tech products, about the accessibility of those products, and give you some tools that you can use to go and ask the right questions. What is that process to help you determine whether a tool will work for your school district or for your state? So that's another product we're really excited about.

And then, another one we'll just mention briefly, is some quality indicators for providing accessible digital educational materials and instruction. There has been a previous version of this available that we're completely revamping. We've already gathered some great feedback on this that'll give you some useful tools that you can take to know, where are we at on this roadmap or journey to make our content more accessible, our digital educational materials and instruction more accessible?

Now, with all of these resources, one of the challenges, and part of the reason they're not there yet, is because we really need your help to understand exactly what is needed and the ways that we can provide it to you that are going to be the most helpful. So, with that, I'm going to turn it over to Cynthia, who's going to talk about some of the upcoming research opportunities to help us understand how we can best help you.

CYNTHIA CURRY: Excellent segue there, Christopher. Thanks so much. So, what Christopher is referring to is our National Digital Accessibility Needs Assessment initiative. As we said at the beginning of this webinar, where we were describing what we mean by, technical assistance, what makes it technical assistance is not just that it's resources and services, products, but that it's really informed by our technical assistance recipients, those that we are designing and developing the materials for, because we are developing everything at NCADEMI for you to pick up and to use in your settings. So, this is not owned by NCADEMI. This is your federal dollars at work, through the US Department of Education's Office of Special Education Programs. So, we are here to serve you, to make sure that what we're developing is high quality. It's relevant. And it's useful. And we're just starting out. NCADEMI launched on October 1st.

So, we just finished our first quarter. We've been getting some information out there. We've been getting resources. We've been recording webinars. And we're pretty sure that what we've developed, to date, is high-quality, relevant, and useful, based on limited information that we have, and, also, our own collective decades of experience in this field.

As we go forward, we want to make sure that we're phasing in resources that are really targeted at your needs. So, our National Digital Accessibility Needs initiative has two parts to it. We have a series of surveys. There are six surveys. You choose the survey category that matches most closely to your area of interest, expertise, representation-- state education agencies, a survey for local educational agencies.

That includes schools. That includes teachers under the LEA category-- part C lead agencies and early intervention programs We want to know. We're pioneering what this looks like, preparing infants and toddlers with disabilities to be able to fully participate in childhood education. What do we need to know to make sure that what we're developing for supports is going to be really implementable?

Parent centers, we need to hear from OSEP-funded parent centers. PTIs, CPRCs. What are the resources that are necessary that can help build your capacity and facilitate information, getting to parents and caregivers of children with disabilities? Pre-service programs. What is it that your candidates need?

If you have a general education pathway, special education pathway, if your pathways are merged, where are the gaps that NCADEMI can help fill? And, OSEP centers, what would be most helpful for guides and supports to create more accessible content that you're designing for your own technical assistance recipients?

So, there are six surveys, one targeted at each one of our technical assistance recipient groups. And then, we also have a virtual listening tour, again, for state education agencies and local educational agencies. The listening tour is specific to this group because that is our primary target area. That's where we're going to reach the most students, is within SEAs and LEAs, particularly LEAs that also have preschools associated with them. We have three-- [AUDIO OUT] --with three different sessions, February 6th, February 11th, and February 19th.

So, if you work within a state, a Department of Education, or a school district, or a school, feel free. We encourage you. Please sign up for one of those listening sessions, to share with us what your priorities are related to making sure that what we're developing is going to meet your needs. All right, and, now, we're moving back to Rob, right? Close us out before we get to the Q&A. So, don't go anywhere, everyone. Thanks, Rob.

ROB CARR: Sure, yeah. We just want to let you all know about some opportunities to connect with us. Before we do get into the Q&A, just a couple of quick notes. Members of the NCADEMI team will be at a couple of upcoming conferences. One is the ATIA Conference, Assistive Technology Industry Association in Orlando. That's just next week. So, if you're going to be there, we have a handful of sessions throughout the week and would love to connect with you all outside of those as well.

We will also have team members at South by Southwest EDU in Austin, Texas. That's March 3rd through the 6th. And if you're at either one of those events, please drop into our sessions. Like I said, connect with us. Say, hello. We really look forward to being able to get out and connect with people in-person.

In addition, a number of ways that you can get a hold of us, that you can connect with us, keep up with the work that we're doing. Like Christopher mentioned, our current website is really a placeholder while the official, full site is under construction. The URL will remain, ncademi.org. That's not going to change. But, when we're ready for the new site, will have that rollout to that same address.

You can reach us via email at ncademi@usu.edu. That's N-C-A-D-E-M-I at usu.edu-- again, Utah State being our home institution. Our phone number for voice and text is (435) 554-8213. You can also find us on LinkedIn. We'll be expanding into other social media channels over time as well.

And you can really stay informed and keep up with what is coming out of NCADEMI and what we have planned for the future by signing up for email notifications and our newsletter at [bit.ly, B-I-T, dot, L-Y, forward slash, NCADEMI, hyphen, notifications](https://bit.ly/B-I-T-dot-L-Y-forward-slash-NCADEMI-hyphen-notifications). That is NCADEMI, in all caps, and notifications in lowercase. We'll also drop that link into the chat. So it'll be there, handy, as well.

And, now, as we've discussed, we are going to move on to Q&A. Just, remember, if you do have a question at this point, if you want to come on and ask live, then just use the React button to raise your hand. You can also continue to put questions into the Q&A panel. I know we've got a few in there right now.

And so, with that, we'll turn it over to the team to start fielding questions from you all. And thank you, by the way, for contributing those. It looks like the first one, I'll put up for the team, is, how is accessibility for non-English speakers or readers addressed through NCADEMI?

CYNTHIA CURRY: It's Cynthia, Rob. I will answer that with a question for Cindy. And, Cindy, if you would clarify whether you're referring to accessibility for non-English speakers and readers with disabilities who are students in PreK-12, or if you are referring to accessibility for non-English speakers and readers who are recipients of NCADEMI Technical Assistance.

AUDIENCE: Mostly, it would be for the students, but support for educators to teach those students.

CYNTHIA CURRY: Excellent. And are you specifically asking about English, English language learners with disabilities, or English learners without disabilities?

AUDIENCE: No, I'm from a PTI, so, definitely, students with disabilities.

CYNTHIA CURRY: OK, great. Thank you for clarifying that. So, currently, that is one of our questions that we will be out there asking, related to, what are the needs? The expertise of NCADEMI staff, and under the Office of Special Education programs notice, inviting applications for the Center, really focused on individuals with disabilities. We will certainly partner with others who have expertise related to English language acquisition, and teaching English as a second or third language.

But our primary area of expertise and technical assistance will be digital, making digital content accessible for individuals with disabilities under ADA Title II and the IDEA. So, I know that's a very technical answer. But I hope it's helpful, while, at the same time, collaborating to make sure that we're meeting broader needs as they come up.

CHRISTOPHER PHILLIPS: Rob, if I could just real quick call out some of those questions in the Q&A that we did answer in the Q&A itself. The question was asked about, if we're able to link to any of these resources we shared today on your SEA websites. I just want to make sure that, absolutely, we would be super grateful for any links to the NCADEMI website, in general, or to any of those resources we shared. Any help in sharing the word about those is super appreciated. And then, just a quick question from Courtney around where the registration is for those [? SEA ?] listening sessions. And just a reminder that, for all of those research opportunities, you can find those links at ncademi.org/input.

ROB CARR: Thanks, Christopher. And then, yeah, that link is the most recent comment in the chat as well that will get you over to those opportunities, research opportunities, that we have talked about. We've got another couple questions open in the Q&A. We'll go in chronological order. And, Heather, this is a good question. Do we have ETAs for the resources to look forward to? I think that that's a little bit to be determined. But I'll certainly pose that for the team and see if anyone else wants to chime in with thoughts on that.

CYNTHIA CURRY: This is Cynthia. I'll jump in, Rob, and explain that, we will be phasing in these resources. So you can think about them as minimum viable products. So we will be, in parallel, releasing resources, and then adding to them over time. So, for example, the clearinghouse that I know many people are interested in, and eager to have access to, our clearinghouse of accessibility information related to common ed-tech products.

So, we will begin that particular clearinghouse with information that's publicly available. We will scrutinize and scour for information. And-- [AUDIO OUT] --add additional information that is maybe more related to accessibility testing that's conducted by the NCADEMI team, but to provide more information that is available through public sources-- same thing with the micro-credentials.

We will start with series I, and release that through Canvas. And then, we will subsequently introduce additional modules and series of micro-credentials over time. I hope that helps.

ROB CARR: We had a good question here. With the recent changes and pending deadlines under Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act, do we know what repercussions school districts will face if they're not in compliance with the new regulations by the determined date, 2027, for your district? I know I get this question from district stakeholders. And I share this information and the awesome roadmap you've provided. And I think, Christopher, maybe you want to jump in and address this one?

CHRISTOPHER PHILLIPS: Absolutely, Rob. This is a great question asked by someone anonymously. I might wish I could answer it anonymously as well. But part of the challenge is, we don't know exactly yet what all of those repercussions will be, and certainly would recommend that you talk with your own legal counsel. And with that, though, I think it is a great opportunity to reach out to your legal counsel, whether that's at the local education agency or state education agency.

However, I think we can just assume that there will be some repercussions, whether that's additional compliance. These are more specific requirements than we've ever had before in this specific area. And so, the repercussions can come from this, from either private litigation, or from government investigations. There's a lot of different things and ways that that can happen.

So, while we're not able to give you an exact answer of what those repercussions would be, I think it's an important question that all of us should be asking. And it's even something where, you may reach out to us with an individual email. And we can look at some of your specific circumstances. Often, there's a combination of different risk factors that have to be considered in determining what is acceptable for your institution.

ROB CARR: Awesome, Christopher. Thanks. We have one more open question in our Q&A. What supports do you have to help larger LEAs that have robust digital content repositories, to help them make decisions and work on making more content accessible?

CYNTHIA CURRY: Well, this is Cynthia. I'll jump in. Thanks, Aaron, for this question. We have, regardless of the extent of your digital material inventory, whether you're a small school district or you're a large school district-- I'm from Maine. We didn't mention that, actually. Our team is spread out across the country, all dedicated and committed Aggies of Utah State University, but in various places. And we also represent various geographic regions. So, I'm in Maine, small school districts-- to Houston, Texas, HISD, a large school district.

So, NCADEMI really is designed to meet you where you are. The process of going through any type of inventory for determining what is your inventory of materials, it could be very small. It could be very large. The process is going to be the same. Obviously, it'll be more labor-intensive, more time-consuming, for larger school districts. However, smaller school districts may not have a level of staff that's necessary. So they could be at a disadvantage in that way.

So, we understand what we think we understand. We are looking forward to getting some data from our digital accessibility needs, surveys, and listening for a better idea. But we do have an appreciation that all state educational agencies, all school districts, have unique challenges in this process. Regardless, our

five innovations will really help guide our steps and our processes, starting with, for example, the ADA Title II road map, with the three tiers.

Regardless of the size of your school district, that is a good roadmap. The Department of Justice actually also just released its own guidance related to meeting the conformance timeline. And somebody from the team might grab that. We'll include it on the Resources page as well. But, evaluation, procurement, selection, creation, and use those five innovations, around providing and using accessible digital education materials, will guide all of our resources. And our goal is to design them so that they can be adapted across multiple contexts.

ROB CARR: Very good. It looks as if that's all the questions we have, at least currently. I'll give folks another opportunity here, if you do want to type a question into the Q&A, or raise a hand via Zoom, to ask a question live. That is fine as well. Let's give folks another few moments. And thanks, Christopher, for putting the State and Local Government First Steps Toward Complying from the Department of Justice into the chat there.

CHRISTOPHER PHILLIPS: One quick comment while we wait for any additional questions to come in. To that question from Aaron that we really hammered in our first webinars is, how much this responsibility to make all of this digital content accessibility has to be a shared responsibility for everyone, right? And many of you are here today from a special education background and have a specific interest and the motivation to make this happen. But we can't do this work alone, right? We have to get IT involved, and procurement involved, and administration. It has to be felt everywhere across your organization. And so, we're anxious to provide resources for all of those different roles as they do that work.

ROB CARR: I've not seen any questions come in to our Q&A. I haven't seen anybody raise a hand. So, we really just want to wrap up just by saying, thank you. We really appreciate your participation, your attendance today. We look forward, like we've talked about, to learning just a ton here over the next several weeks, and months, and on, really, through the duration of the project, about what needs all of you have in this conversation and how we might be able to actually help to meet those needs for you. As a reminder, the recording for the webinar will be available tomorrow on the Resources page. That link is available in the chat. We can drop that in one more time. And it shouldn't take us too long to get that published.

Again, thank you all so much for your interest, your enthusiasm. We are really thrilled to have this opportunity. And we look forward to being able to put work out that does help you to get where you need to be with digital accessibility. So, thank you all so very much. And everybody have a great day.