

Powering Access Through Systemic Action: Introduction to Quality Indicators & Readiness (2 of 6)

CHRISTOPHER PHILLIPS: OK. Welcome, everyone. We are delighted to have you with us today. My name is Christopher Phillips. We're going to get started promptly today. As people are joining, just, again, would remind anyone to just take a moment to introduce yourself in the chat. Some of you have already done so. Thank you. This helps us as we understand who's here, but just take a minute to share your role, where you're located, and, if you'd like, why you chose to be a part of this series.

With that, let's go ahead and go to the next slide. This is the second webinar in a series of six. Today it's titled Powering Access Through Systemic Action. We'll do a quick recap of webinar 1 in just a few slides for anyone who missed that or needs a refresher. But today, as we look at our logistics of the webinar on the next slide-- I would encourage anybody, as you go through to-- feel free to reach out to our program assistant, Natalie Cardenas, in the chat if you need any-- if you have any problems or need any help. Captions are provided for this session. You can find that in your Zoom bar there below to just click on the Show Captions and you'll see those.

And then also just to remind everybody to the-- you can go and download the slide deck. And then the recording will be available tomorrow at the URL bit.ly/qi-webinar2. There's also a QR code there on the screen if you want to go to that link that way. And, as mentioned, Natalie always does a great job with our recordings. Plan on seeing those hopefully later tomorrow or by Monday at the latest on that.

So-- and then as we see-- go forward, a couple things about our communication. Please do use the Zoom chat there to respond to any of our prompts throughout the session today. Communicate with other attendees or maybe you'll hear something that prompts you to share a resource, something you've been working on. The chat is there and available. We'll keep an eye on that throughout the session today.

And then also there is a React button in Zoom that we would encourage you to use to raise your hand. And you can come on mic if you want to ask any questions or can also ask any questions you have in the chat. We'll hopefully have some time at the end to address any questions we don't get to throughout the session. And then, of course, we'd also encourage you to think of any questions or concerns or additional conversations you'd love to bring to our office hours that we'll be having next week.

Today's facilitators. There's a bunch of us here today. You can see NCADEMI in front of all of our names in the chat or the participants list. Jena Fahlbush is our technical assistant specialist, myself also a technical assistant specialist. Cynthia Curry is our project director. Kristen Perez-Rickels is here as a technical assistance specialist. And then I don't think Rob is with us today, actually. But that's our crew who are here. We'll stand ready to answer any questions that you might have.

And just as a little bit of a recap as we go back, we went over this last week. This is a great presentation of the work that we're doing here. Again, this is webinar 2 in a series of six, really intended to help build you or your team's understanding of accessible digital education systems based on the NCADEMI Quality Indicators for the Provision and Use of Accessible Materials.

So last time, in webinar 1, we planted some seeds and just with an overview of the series and give a little bit of background around why this is so important. Today we'll be introducing the Quality Indicators as

well as going over a tool that can help you and your organization determine where you're at with your readiness to do this work.

And then looking ahead that-- we hope you'll join us for future webinars. In the next one, we'll be looking at Quality Indicators around accessible digital materials, really around-- looking at what we can do to make sure that digital content is accessible from the beginning.

Moving ahead to webinar 4, we'll look at Quality Indicators for accessible formats. What are those important things we can do to make sure we're providing high quality accommodations in a timely manner?

Webinar 5. We'll have a good foundation at that point. We'll be looking at some self-assessment tools that are there and available for you to help you on-- along this journey to look at and evaluate how you're doing. And then the final one, we'll bring everything together and talk about some future opportunities to participate in some targeted technical assistance for anybody who wants to continue along on that journey with us and continue to grow that plant, maybe creating a whole greenhouse full of beautiful flowers.

So that's where we're at and where we're headed with this. And with that, I'm going to go ahead and pass the microphone over to Jena, who's going to go over and review a little bit what we went over from webinar 1.

JENA FAHLBUSH: Yeah. Thanks, Christopher. It is my pleasure to talk to you a little bit about what we talked about in webinar 1, which was a couple Thursdays ago now. So in that first session, as Christopher was talking about, we were planting the seeds for this series by providing an overview of the successions and optional office hours. And there's been a link shared in the chat to that webinar recording resources page. And there's a QR code on the right hand side of this screen as well, if you want to access that at any time or please share.

So in that first session we provided that overview of the series. We also define the term accessible. We talked about why digital accessibility matters by sharing a really impactful story of the barriers created by an inaccessible online science simulation for a blind high schooler named Rebecca. So I definitely recommend going back and listening to that or checking out the resources on the student stories that are shared on the resources page.

We also took a poll about who is responsible for ensuring accessibility, to ultimately understand that it is each and every one of our responsibilities here today, and in last week's webinar, and in our agency.

When we're really thinking about accessible spaces and digital content, we all have a part to play.

And last but not least, we provided participants some suggestions for getting that accessibility conversation started with colleagues and admin. So we will also continue to support your accessibility conversations today with some more calls to action.

Now, as we're moving this discussion into the Quality Indicators, we're going to start by looking at the legal foundations for accessible educational materials. And we want to take another poll. So I am thinking about, who here in this room is hearing about ADA Title II in your agency? So some answers are already starting to come in. We do know that there are some deadlines approaching as you're answering-- April 2026, so next year for state education agencies and larger school districts. We need to conform to the WCAG 2.1 level A standard. And then in April of 2027, there's a conformance deadline for your-- for the smaller agencies and school districts.

So we've got some great participation here. And I think we can go ahead and share out what we're seeing here. So you'll notice that about, a third of you aren't really hearing much, not a word at all. There's been 15% hearing some buzz or some hubbub. Discussions are beginning or conversations are picking up. That was 30%. And then about 22% say some changes are already being made, which is great to hear that you're-- near a quarter of those that participated, which was about 72%, did say you're seeing some changes already. So that's super exciting because what we know, as we've been providing technical assistance over the past year, it's clear that awareness of ADA Title II varies widely across states and school districts. So there's no judgment here. Thanks for being honest. We're just excited to have you here and to move forward.

All right, back to those laws. So we're talking about the ADA or the Americans with Disabilities Act Title II and the IDEA, or the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. We know that when a student needs accessible materials, there are two pathways by which they may be provided. So one pathway is to provide digital materials produced to be accessible from the very beginning. So that means digital accessibility is totally prioritized agency-wide from professional development and job responsibilities to your budgets and to your workflows.

And the other pathway is to provide materials rendered in one or more accessible formats. And when I say accessible formats, I'm talking about formats such as Braille, digital text, audio files, or large print for students with disabilities who IEP-- whose IEP teams determined that an accessible format or formats are needed for equal access to the student's educational materials.

And now for some more participation. I have a couple fill-in-the-blank questions for those of you who are here with some background knowledge. So, if you would, just use the chat to reply.

Legally speaking, when we provide materials that are accessible from the beginning for everyone, which law are we referencing? So thinking about digital accessibility from everyone is that ADA Title II to or Ida. I see some ADAs and Title II's coming in, and I appreciate that feedback. Awesome, that's right. ADA Title II is the law we're talking about here.

And then if we shift gears over to the right hand side of this screen, when we're adapting or retrofitting materials into an accessible format or more than one for our eligible students, which law are we talking about now? And by-- yep, there it is. IDEA. Thank you for those chats. I appreciate it. And so, yeah, just by process of elimination, we know that's the law that we're talking about.

So speaking of IDEA, it's probably what most of us here are the most familiar with as the nation's special education law. It is a law that mandates a free and public-- appropriate public education to eligible students with disabilities.

It's a law that requires State and Local Education Agencies, SEAs and LEAs, to provide accessible formats when needed by a student with a disability. And it also established the National Instructional Materials Accessibility Standard, or NIMAS, and the National Instructional Materials Access Center, NIMAC.

So for some more-- for more information on those two, we actually have a past webinar where there was an interview with two individuals from the NIMAC. And we've shared that link in the chat. I highly recommend it as a resource for learning more about how NIMAS and NIMAC support schools with providing accessible formats in a timely manner.

Shifting gears over to that ADA Title II. So we know the ADA came into law in 1990 and it more broadly is a law against discrimination and protecting individuals from that discrimination. Now, the new rule under

Title II, which was signed into law just in April of '24-- this law is applying specifically to state and local governments, including our SEAs and LEAs, and it's taking things a bit further by requiring or mandating proactive digital accessibility in public education.

So some things to keep in mind about ADA Title II is that it does require that we follow a technical standard. And I mentioned this briefly a little bit ago. The technical standard is the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines-- or W-C-A-G, WCAG-- 2.1 Level AA.

There are also some compliance deadlines that I also talked about. And you can find the details of those compliance deadlines in the ADA fact sheet linked up here at the top of the screen in the title there and also shared in the chat.

And, finally, there are some exceptions to the mandate that you'll find in that fact sheet. And I highly recommend taking a peek at that to better understand where your agency falls in the compliance and what those exceptions are.

Some examples today of digital materials that are required to conform include, but are really not limited to the ones on this slide, but we wanted to highlight some examples that probably feel very familiar to you.

And that's websites and digital textbooks, online learning platforms, apps and tools, videos, and slide presentations, and teacher created and curated materials. So stop and think about that for a moment.

Because when we're talking about teacher created and curated, that means educators have to understand what makes digital materials accessible, both to create accessible content and to recognize it when selecting resources online.

For a quick comparison of these two laws side by side, I highly recommend taking a look at our resource ADA Title II and IDEA at a glance, shared in the chat and linked on this slide. It's something you can print out and maybe pass out to colleagues as well so that they can keep this information straight in their minds, especially if they're newer to their role in education or maybe are in gen ed and not as familiar with IDEA as a special educator. So bookmark that site or print it out and you'll, again, be seeing that this resource is part of this week's calls to action, which you'll learn more a little, learn more about in a little bit. And now that we've kind of gone through a quick overview-- high level overview of these two laws, I am going to turn the mic over to Cynthia to introduce us to these Quality Indicators.

CYNTHIA CURRY: Great. Thanks, Jena. And thanks for that superb overview of ADA and Title II and IDEA in 10 minutes. That was really comprehensive but succinct and organized. And I love all of the resources that are available to help further support people in understanding those two laws as they relate to accessible materials.

So with that backdrop of digital-- what digital accessibility means-- why-- so crucial in education and the related laws that apply to schools, it's my privilege to introduce the Quality Indicators for the Provision and Use of Accessible Materials in PreK-12 Systems, or will simply refer to them as the Quality Indicators So We have you all out of here by-- within-- rather than staying for an extra hour for every time we say the full title, we'll just refer to these as Quality Indicators. This resource is designed to help your agency or your school take specific actions to create more accessible digital learning environments based on the laws IDEA and ADA Title II.

Thinking about those at the same time as the floor, those are the requirements. You'll find that the Quality Indicators really incorporate a lot of additional actions that go beyond just compliance, which we know educators are striving for. We want more inclusive learning environments. We want to make sure that we

are paying attention to a lot more aspects than just technical access or functional access and accommodations and paying attention to the minimum accessibility standards.

So a little bit about the Quality Indicators-- a bit about the history and the background. There's a QR code to the quality indicator shown on this slide and there's a link to them in the chat to our website. So few level-- a few high level points to make that provide important history and background about the Quality Indicators.

First, for those of you who know QIAT, or the Quality Indicators for Assistive Technology, the Quality Indicators for providing accessible materials should be familiar to you or feel familiar because they were originally modeled after QIAT over 15 years ago. Two of the original authors of QIAT, Joy Zabala and Diana Carl, applied the framework-- the QIAT framework to the provision of accessible formats in the mid-2000s. They did that to help states meet the new NIMAS and NIMAC provisions of IDEA 2004. So when 2000-- IDEA 2004 was passed, the last time it was reauthorized-- award to Bruce Alter for putting the exact date of the reauthorization of IDEA in the chat when responding to Jena's question about ADA Title II versus IDEA.

When NIMAS and NIMAC were added, that's when there needed to be some technical assistance provided to states and school districts to understand how do we provide accessible formats in a timely manner. So there was funding that was provided for that technical assistance. Joy Zabala and Diana Carl developed this concept of supporting states and school districts in understanding the law by providing the Quality Indicators. Having been leaders on QIAT for several years before that, they adopted that model and the first version of the quality indicator specific to accessible materials was born.

So, since then, 25 states in a series of technical assistance cohorts that have been federally funded by the Office of Special Education Programs have helped the Quality Indicators evolve over time, right up through the current version that NCADEMI published last month and that we're providing technical assistance in this webinar series is based on. If you know that your state has contributed to the use and the implementation of the Quality Indicators, would you please share that in the chat? Enter the name of your state and any additional comments you want to share. It's so important that we honor the history of the Quality Indicators.

And if you don't know if your state has been involved, there's a full history of the development process for the Quality Indicators as well as a timeline available on our website. And states that have participated in the development of the Quality Indicators over time, those are available in the glossary.

What I know, there are people here whose states have been involved in the development of the Quality Indicators over time. If you're in a state and you know that you have been involved or your state has been involved in the Quality Indicators, if you want to mention that in the chat-- yep, so it doesn't necessarily need to be the person. But if you know that your state has been involved, this may be something that your state was involved with.

I'm from Maine. I was on the Maine AIM community that was part of the first 15-state cohort of the AIM of the AIM coalition. So that was a long time ago. That was about 15 years ago.

Here they come. Ohio absolutely was part of the first part of the AIM cohort. Indiana. Oregon, absolutely. North Carolina. Some other states, I'll just-- Louisiana was there. Maryland, Michigan, if we have anybody Minnesota, New Hampshire, Utah, Vermont, Wisconsin, Wyoming, West Virginia. So a lot of states have been involved in the development of these Quality Indicators, which has really kicked the tires on them

and gives us confidence that here in the current version, which is about version 3 of the Quality Indicators, we know that they are-- that they've really been validated over time.

All right, so those of you who may have a history with the Quality Indicators, you may have looked at them in the past, over the years. Who has taken a look at the current version? A, if not yet. B, if you've skimmed them. And C, if you've take in a deep dive.

We can share the results of this poll at this point. So a little bit more than 50% of you have skimmed the Quality Indicators, but 42% have yet to take a look at them. And one of you has-- at least one of you of those who responded to the poll have taken a deep dive.

All right, so let's go ahead and go over to the NCADEMI website and take a look at these. We won't have a chance for deep dive today, but we'll skim them and I'll provide you with an overview of how to navigate the site. So I'm going to go ahead and screen share.

All right, well, here is NCADEMI's home page. If you're looking to get to the Quality Indicators from the home page, which is ncademi.org, you go to the resources and we have a dropdown that will take you right to the quality indicators landing page.

Here on the right on the landing page is the answer to the question, what are the Quality Indicators? Well, they explain the actions states and school districts take to ensure students with and without disabilities can use their learning materials. So really straightforward.

Also on this page is some information about why the Quality Indicators matter, with some personas of students who require accessibility in order to participate in the general education curriculum. And also on this page, you'll find a download to the resource as a PDF. So if you're old school and you like to have a downloadable PDF with all the information about the quality indicators that you could also navigate on our website, please take advantage of the PDF.

You can get to the two sets of Quality Indicators right from the landing page. I really like what our website team developed over on the right side with the side-- the sidebar navigation. It has the four different sections for navigating the Quality Indicator information on our website using the Quality Indicators. This provides some background information about what are the key foundations to keep in mind about using the Quality Indicators, and how they were developed, and the purpose for their use, adapting them for your setting.

So we were keeping in mind-- although the quality indicators, which is this next section-- who should use them, the audience for the Quality Indicators are state and school district teams. But we also know that even in those two categories there's a lot of variation. So under using the Quality Indicators, you will find some acknowledgment to how the Quality Indicators can be adapted for your own setting.

Remembering that these are, which I don't think we've actually explicitly said during webinar 1 or webinar 2-- all of NCADEMI's resources-- or may have in webinar 1-- actually all of NCADEMI's resources are Creative Commons license. They're openly free for you to use. And what we want to happen is that you actually adapt them for your own purpose. So we know we've taken a pass. We're confident that what we've developed is valid and reliable. It's evidence-based. But we also know that your-- every setting is going to be different, so we're looking forward to finding out how you adapt them for your own purpose. Under the two sets of indicators section, you will find some background on the two different sets-- very similar foundation that Jena shared when she was talking about the overview of IDEA and ADA Title II and why you would want to choose either set of the quality indicators. And then there's this Quality

Indicators comparison table that Jena developed to help states and district teams think about to in a-- at a glance, what are the distinctions between these two laws specific to accessible materials?

We know you can find a lot of information on the web or asking AI what's the difference between ADA Title II and IDEA, but you won't necessarily get information that's specific to the provision of accessible materials. So that's what this table does.

And then there's a decision-making guide with three different paths to help you determine, in our setting, what are we going to prioritize? We know we need to do better in providing accessible materials for students with disabilities. Are we looking at providing accessible formats as an accommodation as a priority right now? Are we looking at providing accessible digital materials from the beginning and prioritizing that? Or do we want to take a comprehensive approach and try to work out-- working on both, provide the provision of accessible formats and digital accessible materials simultaneously and in parallel?

We know there's a sense of urgency for both. As Jena mentioned, there is a conformance timeline for states and school districts to meet regarding ADA Title II. And, of course, the provision of accessible formats has been part of IDEA since 2004. So we're here to help with how to manage that urgency and making sure that progress is being made. And that's the most important thing to keep in mind is progress and continuous improvement, which is how the quality indicators have been designed.

Under the development process, this is where you'll find the history of how the Quality Indicators originated many years ago and the contribution of many states-- cohorts of states over time, with the development timeline. In the PDF, there's actually a timeline that's a little bit easier to read. And there's also, within the glossary-- if there are new terms for you within the-- on our website related to the Quality Indicators, come to the glossary and see if you find it. In the PDF, there are actually links that jump to the glossary. If there's a term that you recommend that we add to the glossary, please let us know. And it's also in here that you will find for each of the cohorts of states-- technical assistance cohorts of states that have worked on the quality indicators-- you'll find a list of those states here in the glossary.

And then, in the menu, next-- after using the Quality Indicators, the quality indicators are listed. So AF that's the Quality Indicators for Accessible Formats. DM, that's the Quality Indicators for Digital Materials. And we gave those distinct notations because when we were first developing the quality indicators in partnership with a cohort of states, we weren't sure whether we wanted to combine the Quality Indicators into one set or whether to make them distinct.

We decided, in consultation with our technical assistance recipients, to go ahead and create two different sets. And so we've made the notation AF for those Quality Indicators that are specific to providing accessible formats. When you see DM, that's referring to our Quality Indicators for providing accessible digital materials.

Each set has seven quality indicators. These are the quality indicators for accessible formats. You'll recognize some of the terms here in our guidelines that really relate specifically to accessible formats. But there are-- in each set, there are four Quality Indicators that are the same. In both sets, you'll find commitment from leadership. You'll find training and support. Using data to inform continuous improvement. And the need for sustainability plan.

Then, within each set, there are these guidelines that are specific to the law or the practices that are specific to whether it's accessible formats or accessible digital materials. So we have guidelines for states and districts to coordinate with the NIMAC guidelines for including accessible formats as part of a

student's IEP and guidelines for acquiring accessible formats from accessible media producers or from other sources.

Then, under digital material Quality Indicators, very similar, very consistent setup. You'll see the same four Quality Indicators that mirror the accessible formats. Commitment from leadership. Training and support. Collecting data. Having a sustainability plan.

But the guidelines here are different for digital materials. Guidelines for procuring accessible digital materials and technology to working with vendors. Quality indicators for supporting teachers and other staff with selecting accessible materials. And guidelines for helping educators and other staff create accessible materials.

So let's take a look at one of these. We'll go into commitment from leadership. So this is Quality Indicator 1 under digital materials. If we were in the accessible format quality indicators, this would be AF1. They're similar, but they're going to be different. So even though there's overlap with the same Quality Indicator 1, commitment from leadership, it's a little bit different context, a little bit different content for each set.

So the statement is very brief and to the point in each of these Quality Indicators. There's an intent that conveys what's the meaning and the purpose for the quality indicator. And then there's a series of critical components. And these help with understanding, what are the pieces that need to be in place in order for the team to support the agency in meeting the intent of the quality indicator?

So here under having a commitment from a leadership team, the need for a steering committee is made clear. There are some recommendations listed for who should be part of that steering committee, when this is-- we're talking about providing digital accessibility from the beginning.

And then I really like-- Christopher's idea here was to take our self-assessment tables that are part of our self-assessment tool, which is a topic of webinar 5-- this idea was to take that self-assessment table, the matrices, and to include them with each critical component so that people can see, as you're browsing and exploring the Quality Indicators, you can get a better sense of what the implementation of the critical component looks like in practice and just helps with illustrating the critical component beyond just the different factors that get incorporated.

Having a statement of commitment is included as a critical component under commitment from leadership. Followed by implementation stages. Clear role expectations. And this is for the steering committee. These clear role expectations are for staff and administrators across the system.

And then beyond the Quality Indicators for digital materials, we move into the implementation resources for these because we know we can provide quality indicators, but we don't provide some support with implementing them. How does this work in a system? It's not going to-- there won't be as much uptake and they won't have an impact. So we developed a readiness protocol, which Kristen is going to introduce in a moment, and a self-assessment tool, which is actually there are two self-assessment tools. There's one specific to the quality indicators for digital materials and the second for the quality indicators for accessible formats. Those will be topics in later webinars.

Let's go back to the slide deck. All right, so just a reminder, this is a couple of screenshots from the website. As you're thinking about those, we know that-- we knew that when we developed two different sets of quality indicators, helping and supporting teams with deciding how do you either merge these or how do you make-- how do you make a determination of what to focus on for continuous improvement, we knew that would be an area of need for technical assistance. So don't forget we have this quality

indicator comparison table to help you understand both sets of Quality Indicators and the decision-making guide that will help with informing, where do we want to start with making improvements in our system? And speaking of that, not to add any pressure to anyone in this moment, but if you know which set of quality indicators your agency is interested in working with, we'd love to know that via this poll. So is it that you're leaning toward or does the sense of urgency for your agency lean toward digital materials? That would be A. Is it accessible formats? Which is B. Are you thinking about a way to prioritize both sets or are you at the point that you're not sure? And there is no judgment here. We're just so glad that you're here and learning about the Quality Indicators and some steps that can be taken.

We can go ahead and share this poll. And we have a number. So the majority are looking at both, which is fantastic. And then about 25% of you are looking at digital materials, 5% accessible formats, and about a third of you are not sure where you're going to start. But you're here and we're really excited about that. So without further ado, I'm going to-- just delighted to pass the baton over to Kristen, who will introduce the readiness protocol.

KRISTEN PEREZ-RICKELS: Yes. Thank you, Cynthia. I am really happy to be here talking with you all. Before I move on, I just want to acknowledge Stacy's question in the chat around specific timelines for each state to show progress towards accessible materials. The question was, are there? And I will-- go ahead, Cynthia.

CYNTHIA CURRY: Oh, I was just going to-- Jena, do you want to repeat-- I think that was-- you may have mentioned that in the overview of ADA Title II and the IDEA.

JENA FAHLBUSH: So when it comes to conformance timelines, there are guidelines-- well, conformance timelines, beyond guidelines. For larger state agencies or school districts, the conformance date is April of 2026. And for smaller agencies or more rural school districts, we're looking at April of 2027. And if you're thinking about accessibility regarding quality indicators progress, there will be some targeted technical assistance provided by NCADEMI that will be explored later in this webinar series as well, where we'll talk more about how to work with us and how to maybe target your progress within your own agency.

STUDENT: Thanks.

CYNTHIA CURRY: Yeah. And I'll just follow up-- I was just I was just writing it in the chat. But it's easier to talk. I'm not a very fast typer. So that-- to quantify that, I think it's up to for state governments and local governments with a census of up to 49,999 people, it's April of 2026. For smaller school districts, that would be or would probably be relatively not small, but-- I'm sorry, so up to 4,000-- up to 49,999, that is-- those are the districts that have until 2027. 50,000 people and over in the census, that is 2026. 2026.

CHRISTOPHER PHILLIPS: And just one quick note on that, that it already-- existing laws already require accessibility. This is just referring to some additional guidance from the Justice Department that will likely come to your question, Susan, with some additional conformance. That question, what are the repercussions of being out of compliance? I think that's a question that we don't exactly know the answer to other than-- we've just heard that it will open the door for more complaints and potential litigation. And so it's all about risk management. That may be something we can return to either later today or in an office hours.

KRISTEN PEREZ-RICKELS: Yes, thank you so much, Christopher. And thank you, everybody, for the questions in the chat. We will get to those either at the end of this webinar or during office hours-- we can

discuss more fully, as Christopher mentioned. And, Heather, thank you for your response to your colleague in the chat as well regarding having at least one district sued due to compliance issues in 2024. So the readiness protocol is something-- thank you, Christopher-- it was added into the chat, so you all have access to it. The readiness protocol is our way of supporting you all and determining whether or not your agency or organization has the essential foundational readiness, or capacity, or support, or funding in order to actually dig deep and do implementation of the quality indicators well, in a way that will be sustained.

So both IDEA and ADA Title II are things that you have to implement and you have to implement based on conformance timelines. And so the readiness protocol is not telling you whether or not you should or should not implement the Quality Indicators, it is really an opportunity for you to explore where maybe your agency needs additional support or where you all need to access additional individuals, or resources, or funding in order to make your implementation really meaningful.

So just a little bit about the implementation readiness tool. You will hear it called a few different things. On the website, it is called the readiness assessment readiness tool and the hexagon tool. The reason it is partially called the hexagon tool is because it was adapted from NIRN hexagon tool that was developed. The National Implementation Research Network is NIRN, and they developed this hexagon tool to help organizations evaluate their readiness to implement a wide array of initiatives.

What we have done at NCADEMI is split the hexagon tool into practice indicators, which include evidence, usability, and supports. And agency indicators, which will encompass the need, the fit, and the capacity of the agency to implement.

Because this was adopted with a very specific set of practices or practice in mind, the Quality Indicators, there is already a large amount of information for you in the areas of evidence, usability, and supports. The ones that will require maybe additional data, or resources, or for you to dig into more fully and contextualize for your agency will be those agency indicators. And we'll talk a little bit more about the structure very quickly.

So, like I said, evidence, usability, and supports includes information preloaded for you, so to speak. It is embedded within each of those sections already. The goal in the discussion and the review of each of those sections is really to ensure consistent team understanding and consistent team agreement around the evidence, usability, and available supports, and whether or not you all need additional supports or additional information on evidence and usability, how you and your agency are communicating the evidence and the usability to appropriate stakeholders. And so this is really around consistent team understanding. It is my recommendation that this would be the part that you start with to get everybody level set on the same page and you can identify any misunderstandings or misconceptions really early on.

The agency indicators, including population need, fit, and capacity, do not have information preloaded for you because it is very contextual to your agency. We do include outlined prompts for discussion and you have the criteria for scoring. That's also in the practice indicators as well. But this is really an opportunity for your agency and your team to identify and define contextual areas for readiness improvement. If you find that you do not have all of the capacity needed right, you don't have all of the resources needed in order to do implementation really well, even with the support from NCADEMI and from other organizations, this is an opportunity for your agency to identify some mitigating strategies. What other

information do we need? What other individuals do we need at the table with us? And how can we access those additional supports?

When you-- in order to access the protocol, there was the link in the chat for you. And then just as Cynthia showed on the website, when you go into implementation on the resources page, it will have for you the hexagon readiness tool. And you can download it in a Word document. The intent of it being in a Word document is so that you all can take your notes and provide your score directly on the page. And it can be a useful tool for you in conversation with others and in your team meetings.

So before you dig into the readiness tool, we do recommend that you determine which need will be addressed as you're evaluating readiness to implement that area. So you all said-- most of you said that you have an idea of where your agency would like to move, either in accessible digital educational materials through Title II, provision and use of accessible formats in IDEA, or both. For those of you who are not sure, I highly recommend you also access that decision-making guide and have conversations-- continued conversations with others in your agency to discuss what the priority or essential needs are within your agency.

Please keep in mind that you can assess readiness for both ADA Title II and IDEA implementation-- Quality Indicator implementation. You are not committed-- if you assess readiness in both areas, this is not committing you to immediately jumping into implementation in both areas. It's just good data for you to see, where do we have better readiness? Where could we start? Where is maybe the low-hanging fruit while we mitigate some of these readiness concerns for the other implementation area?

As you prepare to use the readiness protocol, we encourage you to look at all of the questions within each of the sections, all of the discussion questions. Identify what data you need to gather in order to have really quality discussions, and to make determinations, any other resources, and then any team members you might need, particularly those that you have not thought of before.

So this is just an example of a couple of questions within the agency indicators-- no, within the practice indicators for need. So what accessibility challenges are currently affecting students with disabilities?

What data do you have that could speak to this question? Make sure you bring that to the table.

What other individuals in your agency might have an additional perspective relevant to this question?

Those people should be part of the conversation with you. And so make sure you are taking an opportunity to read through the readiness, gather any needed materials to have really meaningful discussions prior to your scoring of readiness. And I think we will just go ahead and jump ahead in the his-- in honor of your time.

CHRISTOPHER PHILLIPS: Thank you, Kristen. So as we look ahead, we just want to mention a couple of things. So glad to have everybody here in this webinar, but the real work obviously happens in between the webinars. And if you'll take a look at that link that'll be coming shortly on-- just on that same webinar page towards the bottom there are some call to actions. We would encourage you to look at some ways that you can share some of that with colleagues and just, yeah, some things you can do to, as far as takeaways with this webinar, as you go forward.

We do really want to just make sure to remind everybody about the office hours. I will just mention we didn't get as much participation as we hoped last week. And so if you do sign up for those or take a minute to show up, you will have a lot of us at the ready to talk about any specific questions you have or even look at how we might implement and talk-- discuss some of these ideas from the webinar today in your specific setting, whatever that might be. And, again, we'll send out the link to the office hour

registration and a couple other reminders in a follow-up email. Those are coming up on Tuesday, October 28, 4:00 PM Eastern, and then Wednesday, October 29 at 6:00 PM Eastern, whatever time would work best for you.

I would remind you just coming up, webinar 3, digital educational materials quality indicator-- sorry, digital educational material quality indicators coming up on November 6 at 2:00 PM Eastern. And then, lastly, just to go over a few just ways to make sure you keep in touch with NCADEMI, our website ncademi.org. Always you're welcome to reach out to us, ask any questions about this or other things related to this topic-- ncademi@usu.edu. Call us at 435.554.8213. And that's voice or text. Follow us on LinkedIn. That link is in the chat and also be sure to sign up for our newsletter.

Lastly, these are just a couple of slides that we'll leave as they are just to mention background information. We've taken up most of our time today, so we won't have a lot of time for Q&A. We'll stick around a little bit later for anyone who wants to or has follow-up questions, but, again, really would encourage everyone to sign up for those office hours next week and bring any of your questions there. Thank you so much for being with us today, really appreciate your involvement and participation on this journey with us. Thank you.