

## **Design Considerations**

### **Article 3**

**Quenemoen, R. F., & Lehr, C. A.** (2002). Access to computer-based testing for students with disabilities (Synthesis Report 45). Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota, Thompson, S. J., Thurlow, M. L., National Center on Educational Outcomes. Retrieved [January, 2006] from the World Wide Web: <http://education.umn.edu/NCEO/OnlinePubs/Synthesis45.html>

Called the “next frontier in testing,” computer-based testing is being promoted as the solution to many of states’ testing problems. With pressure to find more cost effective and less labor intensive approaches to testing, states are seeing computer-based testing as a way to address the increasingly challenging prospect of assessing all students in a state at nearly all grades. Computer-based testing is viewed with optimism as an approach that will make testing less expensive in the long run, and that will produce better assessments of the wide range of students who must now be included in state and district assessments. Unfortunately, most states and testing companies have not specifically considered the needs of students with disabilities as they pursue computer-based testing. Often, the approach has simply been to take the paper and pencil test and put it onto a computer. This is not enough. Poor design elements on the paper test will transfer to the screen, and there will be additional challenges created by the move as well, challenges that may reduce the validity of the assessment results and possibly exclude some groups from participation in the assessment. This paper recognizes both the opportunities created by the new frontier of computer-based testing, but also identifies the challenges. Research findings and accommodations considerations are also addressed, with the end result being a process and considerations for the initial transformation of paper/pencil assessments to inclusive computer-based testing.