

### Field Test Administration is Underway

For districts that started testing during the first testing window, **congratulations on a successful launch of field testing**. As of April 2, a total of 248,463 tests were started and a total of 218,551 tests were completed by Connecticut students. The current number of tests started and completed across all consortium states can be found on the [Smarter Balanced Web site](#). Each “test” included in these counts represents a PT or Non-PT within a content area.

### Test Security Breaches

Connecticut has experienced a large number of test security breaches during the first two weeks of testing. Students have had access to cell phones during testing and are posting pictures of test items to social media Web sites. Please direct all Test Coordinators and Test Administrators to review Section 3.1 “Security of the Test Environment” in the [Online Field Test Administration Manual](#) (TAM). Test administrators should be **actively monitoring** test sessions and should ensure that students **do not** have access to cell phones or other mobile devices during testing. Please note that the social media Web sites are being monitored by Smarter Balanced Communications staff members.

### Reminder: Scheduled Downtime for the Field Test

The Field Test will be down April 10-13, 2014. Please be sure to share these dates with your schools and districts.

### New “Lessons Learned” Document

Please share the information provided in [Lessons Learned from Week One](#) with all Test Coordinators and Test Administrators. This document was recently posted on the [Resources and Documentation](#) page of the [Field Test Portal](#). The document includes various tips and important reminders based on feedback and questions that were received during the first week of the Field Test.

### TIDE Appeals System

The Smarter Balanced TIDE Appeals system is now available. The Appeals functionality allows authorized users to submit and view requests for invalidating, resetting and restoring student’s tests. All requests must be approved by the Connecticut State Department of Education through the TIDE Appeals system. Appeals should be submitted only in extreme circumstances. Most requests for Appeals can be prevented with adequate training and by the TA verifying the settings in TIDE before testing starts.

Note - requests for reopens will also be available through the appeals system at a future date. At this time the ability to reopen a test that has expired or been submitted in error is not possible. AIR is working on resolving this issue.

### **Handling Potential Issues with Assessment Items**

Smarter Balanced and its Field Test vendors have done multiple quality control tests to ensure that the testing system and items perform as expected. Despite this testing, in rare cases an item may not view properly or work as intended. In these situations, please have the students answer the question as best they can and then move on to the next item.

### **Administration of Performance Task Prior to Classroom Activity – Protocol**

The Classroom Activity must be administered before the performance task.

If a student begins a performance task without being exposed to the assigned classroom activity, the student should continue with and complete the performance task. When a student takes a performance task without being exposed to the assigned classroom activity, the Test Administrator must report the incident to the District Test Coordinator as a testing irregularity via the Test Security Incident Log. This irregularity does not qualify for a reset or invalidation and should not be uploaded to TIDE.

### **Force Quit Command Test Session**

As a reminder, in the event that the secure browser or test becomes unresponsive TAs may use the “force quit” command noted on page 25 of the TAM. Scenarios include:

- A student cannot advance through the test
- A test cannot be paused or a test session ended
- The secure browser won't close

To force the browser to close, use the following keyboard commands. (Reminder: This will log the student out of the test he or she is taking. When the secure browser is opened again, the student will have to log back in to resume testing.)

The Force Quit Commands are:

- Windows: [Ctrl] + [Alt] + [Shift] + [F10]
- Mac OS X: [Ctrl] + [Alt] + [Shift] + [F10]
- Linux: [Ctrl] + [Alt] + [Shift] + [Esc]

### **Media Access Information**

Media coverage of the Field Test is an important tool to help parents, community members, and other stakeholders understand the value of the Smarter Balanced assessments. The challenge is to provide appropriate access that allows the media to report on the Field Test

while maintaining necessary test security. The guidelines below clarify the limits of media access and suggest alternative approaches to providing reporters with information on the Smarter Balanced assessments.

All districts and schools participating in the Field Test have designated staff and educators assigned to the roles of Test Coordinator and Test Administrator who are responsible for ensuring that testing is conducted in accordance with Smarter Balanced test security policies. For detailed information on these policies, see the Smarter Balanced TAM (Sections 3 and 4, and Appendix B).

Please follow these procedures as you work with the media during the Field Test:

- Only individuals who have been appropriately trained and whose presence is required may be present during the administration of the Field Test. Please do not allow reporters, camera crews, or photographers into a testing room while a test is in session. Doing so is considered a breach of test security.
- Consistent with your existing media access policies and procedures, reporters, camera crews, and photographers may enter into the testing room **before** or **after** test administration once students have logged off of the assessment and any paper forms, scratch paper, or other test materials have been collected and stored.
- Smarter Balanced has released a Practice Test with sample questions that are in the public domain and that may be photographed or filmed. Please ask that reporters make the source(s) of question(s) clear in their story. Also, please notify Smarter Balanced ([sbac@wested.org](mailto:sbac@wested.org)) if you know that a story will run with photos or video of Practice Test questions.
- Outlets such as school newspapers, school or district newsletters, and school or teacher Facebook pages and Twitter feeds are a great way to inform students, teachers, parents, and the local community about the Field Test. The procedures outlined above apply for these sources, as well as for the general press.

### Closed Captioning

As of Monday, March 31, all students starting the ELA non-PT with a TIDE test setting of Closed Captioning will receive an ELA non-PT without listening questions. Students with closed captioning who have submitted the ELA non-PT or already navigated through listening items with assistance from a test administrator do not need to reset the assessment. It is important

to note that on the operational assessment in spring 2015, closed captioning will be provided on ELA listening stimuli.

### **Online Reporting System**

As a reminder, The Online Reporting System (ORS) is now available through the Field Test Portal. This tool enables authorized users to view test progress information for students participating in the Field Test.

Contact the Academic Office at 1-860-713-6860 or [SmarterBalancedCT@ct.gov](mailto:SmarterBalancedCT@ct.gov) with questions regarding the Smarter Balanced Assessment System. View past Smarter Balanced Field Test Updates on the CSDE Web site.