

## Smarter Balanced Educational Testing Service Help Desk

The Smarter Balanced ETS Help Desk contact information should be made available to all staff that will need to contact the help desk during testing. Depending upon the protocol used in a district/school, District Test Coordinators (DTC) may share this information with Test Administrators (TA) and School Coordinators (SC). To ensure that the DTC is aware of all contact with the help desk, it is suggested that a protocol be established to inform the DTC if contact is made by a TA or SC.

1-855-833-1969

[smarterbalancedhelpdesk@ets.org](mailto:smarterbalancedhelpdesk@ets.org)

## Test Administration Manual Addendum

The [Connecticut Addendum to the Smarter Balanced Field Test Administration Manual](#) (TAM) is now available on the [Smarter Balanced Test Administration page](#) of the CSDE Web site and on the [Resources and Documentations page](#) of the [Smarter Balanced Field Test Portal](#). This addendum provides guidance on Connecticut testing policies that are different than policies in the TAM, or clarification of test administration policies described in the TAM.

## Extended Help Desk Hours and Online Chat

The Smarter Balanced Help Desk now has extended hours for Field Test support. Effective immediately, the help desk is open from 7 a.m. to 11 p.m.

Help desk support is now also available through live online chat. District and school personnel have access to a help desk agent through this live web chat feature during the regular business hours listed above.

Along with other Field Test resources, online chat will be found on the “[Contact Us](#)” section of the Field Test Portal. This provides another effective way to get the answers and assistance you may need quickly.

## Performance Task Topics Released

There was a slight delay in the posting of the performance task topics and classroom activity materials. The classroom activities will be made available today, Tuesday, March 11 on the [Field Test Portal](#). As a reminder the [Classroom Activity and Performance Task Administration Guidelines](#) were also recently released. This explains how to identify the performance task topic for each school and grade, download the classroom activity, and administer the classroom activity and performance task.

**NOTE: It is important for the person responsible for downloading the classroom activities to verify that the correct classroom activity is selected for each school, grade and content area.**

## New Test Administration Materials Release Dates

Test administration materials available on the [Resources and Documentation page](#) of the [Smarter Balanced Field Test Portal](#):

- An updated [Math Timing and Sequencing document](#): Graph paper is **required** beginning in sixth grade and can be used on **all** mathematics assessments. Students should also be provided with scratch paper for all mathematics assessments.
- The *Test Administration User Guide* will be made available by March 12, 2014.
- The *Accessibility Guide for Classroom Activities* will be made available this week. This resource provides educators with guidance indicating that any supports provided to students during instruction may be provided during the classroom activity. Note that the [Usability, Accessibility, and Accommodations Guidelines](#) provide guidance with respect to the universal tools, designated supports and accommodations that may be provided during the performance task

## Updated Policy on ELA/Literacy Performance Task Relating to Notes

An embedded notepad ("Global Notes") is available for ELA performance tasks (PT). During the ELA PT, the notes are retained from Part 1 to Part 2 so that the student may go back to the notes even though the student is not able to go back to specific items in Part 1. While the embedded notepad is the preferred mode for note taking students **may also use scratch paper to make notes**. The Guidelines and TAM currently indicate that "all scratch paper must be collected and securely destroyed at the end of each assessment session to maintain test security." To ensure that students using scratch paper for notes have the same allowance as students using the online notes, ***TAs should collect students' notes at the completion of Part 1 of the ELA PT and securely store them for students' use during Part 2 of the ELA PT.***

The retention of scratch paper is **only allowed** for the ELA PT. Updates will be made to the TAM and the ELA timing and sequencing document to reflect this change.

## Reminder about Updating Student Information in the Test Information Distribution Engine (TIDE)

It has come to our attention that all Grade 9 and 10 students were uploaded to TIDE, including students from districts that selected to not assess these grades. Please delete all Grade 9 and 10 students who are not participating in the field test before the end of the testing window.

TIDE must be maintained with accurate data, including any new students moving into schools or districts. You can change the school/district setting for a student in two ways:

- The new school/district can upload the student using the student file template or manually add the student with the new school/district code. As long as the SASID is the same, this will override the old school and district codes. This will maintain any student settings such as accommodations and designated supports that have already been entered into TIDE.

- The sending school/district can delete the student from TIDE. The new school/district can then upload the student using the student file template or manually add the student with the new school/district code. This method will delete all the student settings, so those settings would need to be re-entered.

### TA Practice and Training Site

District or school personnel can now use their TIDE login credentials to gain access to the [TA Practice and Training Site](#). The TA Practice and Training Site provides users with an opportunity to experience the features of the TA Interface.

The TA Practice Test can also be linked with the Student Practice Test to set up a live testing scenario. This can be done by creating a session on the TA Practice and Training Site. The Session ID should then be used with a “Guest” student through the Student Practice Site. This “Guest” student will then appear on the TA Practice Test.

Please note that the live [TA Interface](#) is not yet accessible. It will be opening on March 18, 2014, so that districts can manage their testers.

### Practice Test Update Test

Smarter Balanced had planned to update the Practice Test in late April and had announced plans to take the test offline to make those changes from April 26 to 29. In order to ensure that the items on the Practice Test are fully updated and that the full suite of accessibility resources is included, Smarter Balanced has postponed the release of the updated Practice Test until May 19. The downtime previously scheduled for late April has been cancelled and rescheduled for the weekend of May 17-18. Unfortunately, because the Practice Test and Training Test operate from the same platform, it also will be necessary to take the Training Test offline on May 17 and 18.

As a reminder, the Training Test currently includes all new item types and all accessibility and accommodations features that will be provided on the Field Test.

#### Timeline for Practice Test Update

Saturday, May 17 – Sunday, May 18	Scheduled downtime for the Training and Practice Tests
Monday, May 19	Release of the updated Practice Test

### Accessibility and Accommodations

Those District Test Coordinators receiving permission to use a scribe and/or a read aloud of reading passages through [Special Documented Accommodations Procedures](#) will receive an e-mail from the CSDE with further instructions.

## Upcoming Key Dates

### **March 10, 2014:**

Classroom activity materials available on the [Field Test Portal](#) for downloading  
[Online chat](#) launches on the Field Test Portal

### **By March 12, 2014:**

*Test Administrator User Guide* available on the [Field Test Portal](#)

### **March 18–June 6, 2014:**

Field Test administration window

### **April 10–13, 2014:**

Scheduled system downtime for Field Test

### **May 8–11, 2014:**

Scheduled system downtime for Field Test

### **May 17-18, 2014:**

Scheduled system downtime for Practice and Training Tests

### **May 19, 2014**

Release of updated Practice Test with new items and performance tasks

## iPad Air Available for Field Test

Based on functional tests performed by Apple and assurances from Apple that the Single App Mode in iOS 6 and Autonomous Single App Mode in iOS 7 work the same way on all models of iPad, Smarter Balanced has agreed to support the iPad Air for use on the Field Test.

## Measurement Incorporated Web Portal

To ensure that information regarding the Smarter Balanced Field Test is sent to the appropriate district staff member(s), please verify that the District Test Coordinator (DTC) and Second Contact information is accurate in the District Contact Verification (DCV) application of the [Measurement Incorporated \(MI\) Web Portal](#). Please contact the Measurement Incorporated Connecticut Help Line at 1-866-762-1060 or [Connecticut@measinc.com](mailto:Connecticut@measinc.com) for assistance with the MI Web Portal.

Contact the **Academic Office** at 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.