

New Field Test Start Date

Please see the [March 17, 2014](#) Field Test Update regarding the new Field Test start date.

Classroom Activity Update

Classroom activities were made available March 11 on the [Field Test Portal](#). As a reminder, the [Classroom Activity and Performance Task Administration Guidelines](#) were also released. This explains how to identify the performance task topic for each school, grade and content area, download the classroom activity, and administer the classroom activity and performance task. The classroom activities posted to the Field Test portal on March 11 included a grade level designation in the title of some activities. As of March 12th, these grade level designations were removed from the title of each classroom activity to eliminate potential confusion for teachers who are assigned a classroom activity for an adjacent grade. Please be aware that this change in the classroom activity title does not impact the classroom activity in any material way and teachers can use their assigned classroom activities as originally posted (even with the grade level identified in the header.)

The content of the *Marine Animals* ELA classroom activity was changed effective March 12. Please use the updated version of this classroom activity.

Clarification on Paper Notes for the Performance Tasks

As noted in the March 11 DTC Update, 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.***

This is also allowed for the Mathematics PT if it is administered over more than one test session. Updates were made to the TAM and the ELA, and Mathematics Timing and Sequencing document to reflect this change.

As a reminder, students should be provided with scratch paper for **all** tests. In addition, students in Grades 6 – 11 should be provided with graph paper for all mathematics tests. Scratch paper and graph paper for non-performance task test sessions must be collected and securely destroyed after each test session and may not be used in subsequent test sessions.

Research Study—Grade 4 Calculator Use

As part of the Field Test research, a small number of randomly selected Grade 4 students will be administered mathematics items that will allow for the use of an embedded calculator. The remaining Grade 4 items will continue to prohibit calculator use. If a Grade 4 student encounters an item with an embedded calculator tool, the student should be encouraged to use it as needed to answer the question. This study will not affect all students within a class or grade.

Non-embedded Specialized Calculator and Multiplication Table

The embedded online calculator tool is available only for the test segment that allows for the use of a calculator, in Grades 6-11. For students that require a specialized calculator (e.g., a talking calculator), as a non-embedded documented accommodation, this calculator is used ONLY during the calculator allowable segment in Grades 6-11. This segment will include a calculator icon for student's use during the test.

The [multiplication table](#) is a non-embedded documented accommodation allowable for special education students or students with a Section 504 Plan, in Grades 4-11 who typically use this type of accommodation in class due to a disability. It should be printed from the Smarter Balanced Field Test Portal.

Capturing Participation in TIDE

Districts will be able to document students who are **absent**, **leave a test blank**, or are **ELL Exempt** in TIDE. This feature will not be available until after testing begins. District Test Coordinators should document these cases throughout the testing window and update TIDE when this feature is enabled.

The definitions for these categories are similar to those provided in the CMT/CAPT Test Examiner's and Test Coordinator's manuals.

Students Who Are Absent During the Entire Testing Window

The student is absent during the entire testing window (March 25 – June 6, 2014).

Students Who Leave a Test Blank

The student is present for a particular test but does not respond to any questions (the test is completely blank). The student should not be administered a make-up test session.

Students Identified as ELL Exempt

Some students identified as English language learners (ELL) may be eligible for exemption from the English Language Arts/Literacy tests. For a student to qualify as "ELL Exempt," the following conditions MUST apply:

- The student is identified as ELL and enrolled for the first time in a U.S. school after March 25, 2013; AND
- The student was administered an appropriate language proficiency assessment at least once since March 25, 2013.

Students who qualify as "ELL Exempt" must take the Mathematics tests with designated supports, if necessary.

Recent Additions to the Field Test Portal

Below are test administration materials that were recently released or updated. They are available on the [Resources and Documentation page](#) of the [Smarter Balanced Field Test Portal](#). It is recommended that a link to these documents be provided to school coordinators and test administrators, to ensure that they have access to the most current versions.

- **NEW! [Test Administrator User Guide](#)**: This resource supports individuals using the Test Delivery System applications to manage testing for students participating in the Field Test. This user guide provides information about the Test Delivery System, including the Test Administrator and student applications.
- **NEW! [Online Reporting System \(ORS\) User Guide](#)**: The Online Reporting System enables authorized users to view test progress information for students participating in the spring 2014 Smarter Balanced Field Test. The ORS User Guide provides information about the ORS features that are available to authorized district and school personnel.
- **UPDATE: [Online Field Test Administration Manual \(TAM\)](#)**: The TAM was updated on March 17. A complete list of updates is posted on the [Resources and Documentation page](#) of the Field Test Portal. As a reminder, the last page of the TAM lists all updates with relevant page numbers. As a reminder, the [Connecticut Addendum to the TAM](#) is also available on the Field Test Portal.
- **NEW! [Scribing Protocol for Smarter Balanced Assessments](#)**: This document will help staff, test administrators, and other educators ensure that when a student is supported by a human scribe, the process is standardized. Review of this document is required when granted approval for a scribe through the [Special Documented Accommodations Petition Procedure](#).
- **NEW! [Guidelines for Read Aloud, Test Reader](#)**: This document will help test administrators, and readers of the test to ensure that read aloud is standardized and contributes to valid measures of students' college and career readiness. The read aloud resource should be used when a student cannot access text-to-speech, an embedded resource available on the Smarter Balanced assessment. Review of this document is required when granted approval for a human reader through the [Special Documented Accommodation Petition Procedure](#).
- **NEW! [Frequently Asked Questions for Test Coordinators and Administrators](#)**: FAQs from Test Administrators, districts, and schools. This document is posted in the [FAQ](#) section of the Portal.
- **NEW! [Getting Students Ready for the Field Test —Information on Item and Response Types](#)**: This document catalogues the various item types that students may encounter on the Smarter Balanced assessment, describes how students will respond to each item type and lists where examples of each type can be found in the Practice and Training Tests.
- **NEW! [Accessibility Guide for Classroom Activities](#)**: This resource provides teachers with support options that may be implemented for students during the classroom activity, as needed, to ensure appropriate access to the information included in the Classroom Activities.
- **NEW! [Resources and Practices Comparison Crosswalk](#)**: The crosswalk lists the resources that are currently included in the [Usability, Accessibility, and Accommodations Guidelines](#) and assists educators and decision makers by providing a description of both the resource and its classroom equivalent.
- **UPDATE: [Usability, Accessibility, and Accommodations Guidelines](#)**: Updates to the Accommodations Guidelines are based on requests from states that do not impact policy. Updates are captured in the Revision Log located at the end of the Guidelines document. The first new update clarifies the availability of text-to-speech and read

aloud on ELA reading passages. The second update increases flexibility in the use of scratch paper as it can now be used across multiple performance task sessions in each content area. The [Smarter Balanced Usability, Accessibility, and Accommodations Guidelines FAQs](#) have been updated to reflect these revisions as well.

- **UPDATE: [Training and Practice Test Overview document](#):** This document is posted on the [Practice and Training Test page](#) of the Smarter Balanced Web site. An update has been made on page 2. Streamline was incorrectly noted as a designated support for both the Practice and Training Tests. Streamline is a documented accommodation.

Upcoming Key Dates

March 25–June 6, 2014:

Field Test administration window

June 9–June 13, 2014:

Field Test administration make-up 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

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 for assistance with the MI Web Portal.

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