

STUDENT ASSESSMENT NEWS

June 23, 2014

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The Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) Academic Office will communicate information about the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium, the Connecticut Alternative Assessment (CTAA) developed with National Center and State Collaborative (NCSC), and CMT/CAPT Science. This newsletter replaces the *Smarter Balanced Field Test Update* and CMT/CAPT Updates.

SMARTER BALANCED NEWS

Smarter Balanced Field Test Completion

The Smarter Balanced Field Test is now complete. Over 1,000,000 tests were completed by Connecticut students by over 250,000 unique students. Over 12 million tests were completed by more than 4 million students across all Consortium states. Please see the [Field Test Report](#) for a summary of the testing experience and highlights of some initial lessons learned.

Timeline for the Delivery of the Core Components of the Smarter Balanced Assessment System

On June 6, 2014, the [Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium](#) released the timeline for the delivery of the core components of the assessment system, including the Digital Library of formative tools and practices, optional interim assessments, and the year-end summative assessments in English language arts/literacy and mathematics.

Following a successful Field Test this spring, the Consortium remains on track to deliver all components of the assessment system to member states during the 2014-15 school year. For more than three years, the CSDE assessment consultants and staff from other Smarter Balanced member state agencies have been working with teachers and content experts to develop a high-quality assessment system that provides tools and information to improve teaching and learning. "This unprecedented collaboration will culminate in an on-time launch of the assessment system in the 2014-15 school year," said Joe Willhoft, Ph.D., executive director of Smarter Balanced.

Smarter Balanced is developing a comprehensive assessment system for English language arts/literacy and mathematics aligned to the [Common Core State Standards](#). This balanced assessment system—with formative, interim, and summative components—will measure student achievement and growth toward college and career readiness.

- **Digital Library:** The Digital Library is an online collection of resources aligned to the Common Core State Standards that will support K-12 educators in their use of formative assessment strategies to adjust teaching to improve student learning. The Digital Library was developed by and for educators, and includes resources selected by educators through a quality review process that utilized consistent criteria. More than 1,500 educators across member states (62 from Connecticut) have contributed resources to the Digital Library that will enhance classroom instruction. Additionally, the Digital Library will include more than a hundred commissioned, interactive assessment literacy modules and exemplar instructional modules in English language arts/literacy and mathematics. The Digital Library incorporates collaboration features that allow users to rate materials and to share their expertise with educators across the country. Educators in all member states are able to preview the Digital Library from June through September, and it will be available to subscribing member states only beginning in October. District Test Coordinators received information about registering district users for access to the Digital Library via an e-mail on May 29, 2014.

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- **Interim Assessments:** Interim assessments provide educators with actionable information about student progress throughout the year helping teachers, parents, and students understand whether students are on track for success. The interim assessments will be administered at locally determined intervals. Two options are available to teachers and schools.
 - **The Interim Comprehensive Assessment (ICA)** will mirror the summative assessment, using the same design and requiring the same administration time. The English Language Arts and Mathematics ICA will each feature a computer adaptive component and a performance task. In addition, the ICA will report the same information as the summative assessment: overall composite scale score, achievement levels, and claim-level information. The ICA may be administered mid-year to benchmark performance for a class, or may be used to assess new students to better understand their skills and knowledge with regard to the summative assessment.
 - **The Interim Assessment Blocks (IAB)** will focus on a smaller set of skills and are designed to provide targeted information about student performance for teachers. Results will be reported in a manner consistent with the level of detail on the summative assessment. An IAB may be used at the end of a unit of instruction to check students' understanding, or a district could choose to administer an IAB to all schools.

The uses of the ICA or IAB may be established at the state, district, or school level. The interim assessments will be available to member states in late fall 2014. Additional information, including a *Statement of Purpose* and *The Structure and Understandings Tables*, is available on the [Interim Assessments page](#) of the Smarter Balanced Web site.

- **Summative Assessment:** The year-end assessment will be administered during the last 12 weeks of the school year, providing an accurate and fair measure of student growth and achievement for accountability purposes. The English language arts and mathematics summative assessments include a computer adaptive test and a performance task that require students to apply their knowledge and skills to respond to real-world problems. Students will participate in the first administration of the summative assessment in spring 2015.

Smarter Balanced Governing States recently voted to submit a request for a no-cost extension through December 31, 2014 to the U.S. Department of Education. The extension will allow the Consortium to finalize remaining projects (such as Achievement Level Setting), close-out financial reporting, and ensure a smooth transition to the University of California, Los Angeles. All components of the assessment system will be available in the 2014-15 school year, as originally specified in the 2010 Race to the Top Assessment Program.

Reporting System Overview

[The Smarter Balanced Reporting System Overview](#) is now available on the [K-12 Education page](#) of the Smarter Balanced Web site. This document provides a static view of the reports, with annotations to explain the different features that will be available when the system is released. Video demonstrations of the system functionality are in production and will be released for viewing in August 2014. The completed system will be provided to the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium in September 2014. Member states are able to utilize the system as hosted by the Consortium, utilize the open-source code to adapt the system to their needs, or utilize a different system.

Achievement Level Setting

Smarter Balanced is inviting up to a quarter of a million K-12 educators, higher education faculty, parents, and other interested parties to participate virtually in recommending achievement level scores. The online panel runs from October 6-17 and registration is now open. Please encourage educators, parents and other interested parties to register for this opportunity! [Learn More](#)

