

Access to Test Information Distribution Engine (TIDE)

District Test Coordinators DTCs (including DTCs at Approved Private Special Education Programs) should have received an e-mail from “Smarter-DoNotReply@airast.org” providing access to the Test Information Distribution Engine (TIDE) as a District Administrator (DA). District Administrators are responsible for adding and managing district- and school-level users. Please refer to page 15 of the [TIDE User Manual](#) for a description of user access to tasks in TIDE. District Test Coordinators who wish to add additional DAs, or who do not have access to TIDE should contact Abe Krisst at 860-713-6894 or abe.krisst@ct.gov.

The CSDE uploaded student-level demographic data to TIDE based on the October 2013 Public School Information System (PSIS) collection. District Administrators should verify rosters and add/delete students to match current enrollment. All current and known participating students should be uploaded to TIDE by February 14, 2014. Additions or other revisions can still be made after this date, but students populated by February 14 will serve as the baseline roster for test assignments.

Smarter Balanced District Test Coordinator Workshops

The CSDE will be hosting four half-day workshops on February 24 and 26, 2014, at the Institute of Technology & Business Development (ITBD) in New Britain. Each DTC may register for the workshop along with **one** additional attendee. These workshops will provide an overview of the Smarter Balanced Field Test administration, as well as protocols to be followed prior to, during, and after testing.

Two workshop sessions are available each day:

- 8:30 a.m. – 11:30 a.m. (registration beginning at 8:00 a.m.)
- 1 p.m. – 4 p.m. (registration beginning at 12:30 p.m.)

Each session will provide exactly the same information. District Test Coordinators will have access to the workshop registration using the [Measurement Incorporated Web Portal](#). Registration for the workshops will open on February 17 and close on February 20.

Test Administration Manual (TAM)

The Smarter Balanced Test Administration Manual (TAM) was released on January 29, 2014, and is available on the Smarter Balanced Field Test Portal [Resources and Documentation](#) page.

Note: The online version of the TAM includes a Change Log on the last page that lists changes made to the document since the original posting. The Test Administration Manual includes checklists that will help all district and school coordinators prepare for the Field Test. These checklists are also available as stand-alone documents on the [Field Test Portal](#). Newly posted checklists are below:

- [District Test Coordinator Checklist](#)
- [School Test Coordinator Checklist](#)
- [Test Administrator Checklist](#)

Translated Parent/Guardian Letter Templates

Each school is required to send parents/guardians a letter informing them of their child's participation in the Smarter Balanced Field Test. Customizable parent letter templates are available on the [Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium](#) link on the Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) Web site under [Test Administration Materials](#). NOTE: Please use the CSDE letter rather than the parent letter posted on the Smarter Balanced Field Test Portal. The following translated versions of the Parent/Guardian Letter are now available:

- Spanish
- Arabic
- Polish
- Chinese
- Creole
- Portuguese

Additional Field Test Training Modules Now Available

The following Field Test Training Modules are now available on the Smarter Balanced Field Test Portal [Resources and Documentation](#) page.

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| Test Information Distribution Engine (TIDE) |
| What is a Field Test? |
| What is a CAT (Computer Adaptive Test)? |
| Let's Talk Universal Tools |
| Technology Requirements for Online Testing |
| Performance Task Overview |
| Student Interface for Online Testing |
| Smarter Balanced Test Administration Overview |
| Test Administrator (TA) Interface for Online Testing |
| Accessibility and Accommodations |

Accessibility and Accommodations Updates

Submission of Petition for Approval of Special Documented Accommodations for the Smarter Balanced Field Test

As shared in our [communication of October 25, 2013](#), in exceptional circumstances, there may be a student whose disabilities are such that the allowable accommodations would be insufficient to provide access to the Smarter Balanced Field Test. We are continuing to process these petitions. **All Petitions for Approval of Special Documented Accommodations for the Smarter Balanced Field Test begin following a call to the Academic Office by the District Test Coordinator (DTC) to initiate the process.** These special accommodations petitions **must** be submitted to Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) in writing, and approved **prior** to testing.

Smarter Balanced Documented Accommodation: Closed Captioning

The Documented Accommodation of Closed Captioning **will not be available** for the listening portion of the Smarter Balanced Field Test. It **will be available** for the operational test in 2015. Therefore, if a student requires closed captioning on the listening portion of the Field Test, please indicate this on the CSDE Test Accommodations Web site by February 21, 2014. These students will be presented a test form that does **not** include listening items.

Smarter Balanced Documented Accommodation: Streamline

The Documented Accommodation of [Streamline View](#) was recently added to those accommodations available for students with an Individualized Education Program (IEP) or a Section 504 Plan. This accommodation will be available for both the field test and the operational test in 2015. It allows students to select an alternate, more linear display of an item and stimulus. Our special populations' guidance was created and provided to DTCs and IEP vendors in October of 2013; therefore, this accommodation is not represented on the 2014 Smarter Balanced Test Support/Accommodation form. If the Planning and Placement Team (PPT) or Section 504 team determines the Streamline Documented Accommodation is appropriate for the student, this accommodation needs to be selected for the student in TIDE by district personnel.

Upcoming Key Dates

February 14, 2014:

Deadline for Initial TIDE file upload; additions or other revisions can still be made after this date

March 18–June 6, 2014:

Field Test administration window

April 10–13, 2014:

Scheduled system downtime for Field Test

April 26–29, 2014:

Scheduled system downtime for practice and training tests

May 8–11, 2014

Scheduled system downtime for Field Test

Field Test Reminders

FIELD TEST BROWSERS

The secure browser **must** be downloaded on each testing computer for the Field Test. This browser can be installed individually or deployed to all computers through a network. The secure browser is available for download at <http://sbac.portal.airast.org/browsers/>.

Along with the secure browser, the *Field Test Technical Specifications Manual* and *Secure Browser for Tablets User Guide* are available for download at <http://sbac.portal.airast.org/browsers/>. If you have questions regarding the secure browsers, please contact Educational Testing Services (ETS) at 1-855-833-1969 or SmarterBalancedHelpDesk@ets.org.

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.

It is important to ensure that the DTC is correctly identified for the upcoming registration for the February District Test Coordinator Training scheduled for February 24 and 26.

Updated Smarter Balanced Mathematics and ELA/Literacy Content Specifications and Item Specifications

Updated versions of the Smarter Balanced Content Specifications and Item Specifications for Mathematics and English Language Arts/Literacy are now posted on the [Smarter Balanced Assessments link](#) on the Smarter Balanced Web site.

Learn More about the Field Test

Smarter Balanced [Field Test](#) administration information for parents, teachers, students, and the community is available on the [Smarter Balanced Web site](#).

The Connecticut State Department of Education Web site also has a page dedicated to the [Smarter Balanced Assessment System](#). Previous updates are available on the [Recent Communications](#) page.

Contact the **Academic Office** at 860-713-6860 or SmarterBalancedCT@ct.gov with questions regarding the Smarter Balanced Assessment System.