



STATE OF CONNECTICUT

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION



TO: Connecticut Parents and Community/Business Leaders

FROM: Joseph Di Garbo, Connecticut's Teacher Involvement Coordinator

DATE: April 30, 2014

SUBJECT: Smarter Balanced In-Person Panel for Setting Achievement Levels Opportunity

The [Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium](#) is developing a common assessment system for mathematics and English language arts/Literacy aligned to the Common Core State Standards to ensure all students are prepared to succeed in college and/or career. This next generation assessment system incorporates a variety of testing methods, including written and verbal responses. It has been developed by a team that includes educators, researchers, parents, and community members.

On behalf of the Connecticut State Department of Education and Smarter Balanced, CTB/McGraw-Hill invites parents and community leaders as well as qualified educators to participate in an In-Person Panel for determining the achievement levels for the assessments. The purpose of the panel is to set common expectations for student readiness/proficiency on the Smarter Balanced assessments through a transparent, consensus-driven process with extensive input from parents, business and community leaders, educators, researchers, and policymakers. Participants in the workshop will make recommendations to Smarter Balanced about the minimum test scores aligned to four defined achievement levels. Input from an inclusive panel (i.e. educators, researchers, parents and the community) will be a key factor in the development of these achievement levels.

The process of determining achievement levels will rely on parent and community knowledge of students in addition to the professional judgment and experience of educators in order to develop performance standards that are rigorous, fair, and accurate.

Participants in the In-Person Panel will make recommendations to Smarter Balanced. Other technical and policy groups will also make recommendations. Smarter Balanced leadership and the chief state school officers of Smarter Balanced states will consider this panel's recommendations carefully in arriving at final achievement levels.

Committees will meet on-site for the In-Person Panel. Each panelist will participate in only one segment of the panel. The dates of each segment can be found below:

Key Dates for In-Person Panel

Activity	Start Date	End Date
High School English Language Arts/Literacy and Mathematics	October 13	October 15
Grades 6–8 English Language Arts/Literacy and Mathematics	October 15	October 17
Grades 3–5 English Language Arts/Literacy and Mathematics	October 17	October 19

Interested candidates may apply by accessing the [online application](#) to provide contact information and a statement of interest. Please complete the online application by Tuesday, May 13, 2014.

Smarter Balanced will select participants to serve as panelists from among the nominations submitted by Smarter Balanced states. The distribution of participants will represent a balance of geographic regions, grade levels, and other relevant factors. A limited number of parents and community members from Connecticut will be selected to participate.

Smarter Balanced will pay for travel, lodging, meals, and other allowable expenses for participants. A stipend may be provided as applicable. For additional information and answers to frequently asked questions, visit the Connecticut State Department of Education Web site (www.ct.gov/sde/SmarterBalanced) or contact me at 860-713-6863 or by e-mail at Joe.DiGarbo@ct.gov.