SMARTER
Balanced Assessment Consortium

A Summary of Core Components

The SMARTER Balanced Assessment Consortium (SBAC) is one of two multistate consortia awarded funding from the U.S. Department of Education to develop an **assessment system based on the new Common Core State Standards** (CCSS). To achieve the goal that all students leave high school ready for college and career, SBAC is committed to ensuring that assessment and instruction embody the CCSS and that all students, regardless of disability, language, or subgroup status, have the opportunity to learn this valued content and show what they know and can do.

With strong support from participating states, institutions of higher education, and industry, SBAC will develop a balanced set of measures and tools, each designed to serve specific purposes. Together, these components will provide student data throughout the academic year that will inform instruction, guide interventions, help target professional development, and ensure an accurate measure of each student's progress toward career and college readiness.

The core components of SBAC are:

Summative assessments:

- Mandatory comprehensive accountability measures that include computer adaptive assessments and performance tasks, administered in the last 12 weeks of the school year in grades 3–8 and high school for English Language Arts (ELA) and mathematics;

- Designed to provide valid, reliable, and fair measures of students' progress toward and attainment of the knowledge and skills required to be college and career ready;

- Capitalize on the strengths of computer adaptive testing, i.e., efficient and precise measurement across the full range of achievement and quick turnaround of results;

- Produce composite content area scores, based on the computer-adaptive items and performance tasks.

System Features

- Ensures coverage of the full range of ELA and mathematics standards and breadth of achievement levels by combining a variety of item types (i.e., selected-response, constructed response, and technology-enhanced) and performance tasks, which require application of knowledge and skills.

- Provides comprehensive, research-based support, technical assistance, and professional development so that teachers can use assessment data to improve teaching and learning in line with the standards.

- Provides online, tailored reports that link to instructional and professional development resources.

Interim assessments:

- Optional comprehensive and content-cluster measures that include computer adaptive assessments and performance tasks, administered at locally determined intervals;

- Designed as item sets that can provide actionable information about student progress;

- Serve as the source for interpretive guides that use publicly released items and tasks;

- Grounded in cognitive development theory about how learning progresses across grades and how college- and career-readiness emerge over time;

- Involve a large teacher role in developing and scoring constructed response items and performance tasks;

- Afford teachers and administrators the flexibility to:
  - select item sets that provide deep, focused measurement of specific content clusters embedded in the CCSS;
  - administer these assessments at strategic points in the instructional year;
  - use results to better understand students' strengths and limitations in relation to the standards;
  - support state-level accountability systems using end-of-course assessments.

Formative tools and processes:

- Provides resources for teachers on how to collect and use information about student success in acquisition of the CCSS;

- Will be used by teachers and students to diagnose a student's learning needs, check for misconceptions, and/or to provide evidence of progress toward learning goals.