

## **SMARTER Balanced Assessment Consortium**

### **SBAC Weekly Update**

*Issue 3*

*Week ending Friday, February 18, 2011*

This is a weekly email update for the SMARTER Balanced Assessment Consortium. It is distributed to the Consortium's State Leads, Work Group chairs, and to Consortium and WestEd staff.

State Leads: Please feel free to share contents of this update with your colleagues, such as members of your SBAC team, with state leadership, such as your chief, public information official, director of assessment, and directors of curriculum and instruction, and with staff in the offices of your governor, your state board of education, and your legislature.

Work Group Co-Chairs: Please be sure to share this update with the members of your Work Group.

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### **From the Executive Director**

Greetings. This week, I'm sharing some notes about vendor requests and public disclosures.

We got an email last week from one of you asking, "When I am contacted by vendors, how would you like me to respond?" That's a great question. Early on, we did come to some agreement on what to do when asked about Consortium contracts. However, we are now a larger community, so it's probably a good idea to go over it again.

First, you should be consistent with whatever protocols you have in place in your State with regard to conversations with vendors. States differ quite a bit on this, and I don't want to give out advice that would be in conflict with your own State's policies.

If you're asked questions about the Consortium's procurement plans, you should refer the person to Mike Middleton. Mike is part of the assessment and student information division at Washington's Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI), and he also sits on the Consortium Executive Committee. Because Washington is the Consortium's "lead procurement State," all questions about Consortium plans to contract for products or services should be addressed to Mike. Please direct folks to Mike's email at [michael.middleton@k12.wa.us](mailto:michael.middleton@k12.wa.us). He will answer what questions he can, and he will see to it that the service provider is notified about the release of a relevant RFP for a Consortium contract.

In a related topic, I want to take a little time to discuss how we are handling requests for public records. Again, there is the "your State" part of this topic and the Consortium part. You need to first follow your State's procedures for public disclosure requests for records or files that you maintain. Please be consistent with your State's definitions of which kinds of records are subject to disclosure.

Also as above, requests needing a response from the Consortium will be handled by Washington's OSPI. To keep matters simple for you and other Consortium members, all requests for Consortium-level information, including public records requests, should go to Chris Barron at [chris.barron@k12.wa.us](mailto:chris.barron@k12.wa.us). Chris is OSPI's assessment communications manager and has been handling SBAC media relations for about a year. Chris will route the request within OSPI so that it's properly resolved. Washington has pretty liberal public records laws, and essentially any record maintained by the State is subject to being disclosed. (Naturally, individually identifiable student information is exempted.) Please note, according to the Washington definition of records "maintained by the State," all email transmissions to or from a State employee, not excluding yours truly, are included. So, I guess this means you can curse me only at your own peril, or you need to keep those thoughts to yourself and out of the email stream. ☺ Have a happy Presidents' Day weekend.

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### **Announcements**

The SMARTER Balanced Assessment Consortium has applied for funds from the Hewlett Foundation, in partnership with the Gates and Lumina Foundations, to provide for the development of the assessment frameworks and additional Consortium staff, increase Consortium resources for engagement with Higher Education, and support communications efforts.

The Executive Committee met on Tuesday, February 15, and discussed several important topics. Topics included the Technology System Architecture and the Technology Readiness RFPs, APIP Standards, Hewlett/Gates/Lumina Foundation support, Consortium staffing, and next week's Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) meeting agenda.

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### **Upcoming Events**

Judy Park will chair a brief, yet important, meeting with Governing States on Tuesday, February 22, beginning at 10 a.m. PST to discuss plans for additional Consortium staffing. Webinar and call-in information was sent to Governing State Leads in an email Thursday, February 17.

The Consortium's Technical Advisory Committee meets on February 22–23 in Denver. The schedule is as follows:

Tuesday, February 22, from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. MST

Wednesday, February 23, from 8:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. MST

Webinar and call-in information was sent in an email to Consortium representatives Thursday, February 17.

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## **Resources**

Pre-reading materials for the upcoming TAC meeting are now available on the website:  
<http://smarter.k12partners.org/content/technical-advisory-committee>

Work Group members:

Please check your designated Work Group webpage for new resources:  
<http://smarter.k12partners.org/content/work-groups>

## **Reminder of resources posted in previous weeks**

The following documents are available on the SMARTER website:

<http://smarter.k12partners.org/content/events>

- SBAC ICCS Survey Results
- USED Technical Assistance Meetings Possible Topics by SBAC Rank

Minutes from previously held meetings:

<http://smarter.k12partners.org/content/agendas-and-minutes>

The Consortium's Monthly Status report to USED:

<http://smarter.k12partners.org/content/communications>

The audio file and presentation for the SBAC Assessment System webinar held Monday, January 24:

<http://smarter.k12partners.org/content/webinars-0>

Previous SBAC Weekly Updates:

<http://smarter.k12partners.org/content/sbac-weekly-update-archive>

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