

SMARTER Balanced Assessment Consortium

SBAC Weekly Update

Issue 4

Week ending Friday, February 25, 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'd like to be sure everyone is informed of the staffing developments that are taking shape for the Consortium.

On Tuesday the Governing States approved a staffing plan for the Consortium; you will find a chart attached to this week's Update showing the staff positions that are now funded and approved. The Executive Committee, WestEd, and I will now develop the job descriptions and recruitment/selection plans to fill these positions. We will keep you informed as the plans move forward, and will be asking your help in recruitment and selection activities.

It's important to recognize that these are all "Consortium-level" staff. That is, they are positions that report to the Consortium's Governing States through the Executive Committee and the Executive Director. These staff will not be part of a contract with one of our vendors.

Some of the positions in the graphic are in green and some in blue. Green represents positions included in the US Department of Education grant—either the main grant or the supplemental. The funding for those positions, of course, flows through the State of Washington, our lead fiscal state. Blue positions are being funded through grants we are securing from several foundations. Although the checks have not yet arrived in the mail, so to speak, we have verbal assurances from our funders sufficient to make us comfortable to move forward with our planning. Actual funding could be as soon as the beginning of March, and should be no later than early May. We have arranged a partnership with CCSSO to be the fiscal host for these independent grant funds. CCSSO played a similar role when we were developing our original proposal, by hosting grant resources we used for our contract with WestEd as interim PMP and for the several meetings we held to get the proposal designed and written.

Under this plan, I continue to report to the Executive Committee, with my most-direct reporting being to the Consortium co-chairs—Judy Park and Tony Alpert. The direct-reports to me are an executive assistant to help with details associated with my work, a deputy executive director with whom I can share many executive-level responsibilities, an IHE advisor who has full-time responsibility to develop and attend to our relationships with the higher education community, and the two part-time positions already filled by Sue Gendron and Linda Darling-Hammond. The foundation grants also support an assistant for the IHE advisor to assist with the details and coordination of that role.

The positions that report to the deputy executive director are in two categories: a content team and a communications team. The content team includes a psychometrician, who is the Consortium’s technical lead for measurement and adaptive testing issues, and an ELA and a mathematics specialist, who provide leadership for summative and interim/formative design and professional development. The communications team consists of a communications director who is responsible for day-to-day communications issues (such as monitoring and maintaining our website, releasing notices to the media, developing social media initiatives), a communications service provider—a contract with a communications vendor that is managed through the office of the Executive Director, and a national partnerships advisor—a part-time DC-based individual who represents the Consortium in the DC area and who monitors activities and fosters relationships with members of Congress, the US Department of Education, and other key stakeholder groups in DC.

So, stay tuned, and keep an eye out for official announcements of position vacancies, requests to help us recruit a quality team, and invitations to assist us with interviews and selection.

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Announcements

The SBAC Technical Advisory Committee had a very productive meeting in Denver this week. A number of Consortium members joined us online and in-person. All reading materials are available for review on the SBAC website: <http://smarter.k12partners.org/content/technical-advisory-committee>. Minutes of the TAC meeting will be forthcoming.

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Upcoming Events

All States Meeting—Thursday, April 7, 2011: Keep an eye out for details in future communications from CCSSO and SBAC

Plans are underway to convene an All States meeting of the Consortium’s 31 State Leads on April 7, 2011, directly following ICCS SCASS to be held on April 5–6, 2011. CCSSO will cover the travel and accommodation costs for all State Leads attending the ICCS-SCASS meeting. For State Leads not attending the ICCS SCASS, SBAC will provide for travel and accommodation to the All States meeting. Additional details are being coordinated by SBAC and CCSSO. We will communicate more information through this Update mailing list as soon as it becomes available.

SBAC State Leads and EC members, please “Save the Date”

- **ICCS SCASS:** Tuesday and Wednesday, April 5–6, 2011 (all day)
- **SBAC All States Meeting:** Thursday, April 7, 2011 (half-day, beginning A.M.)

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New Resources

Work Group members:

Please check your designated Work Group web page for new resources:

<http://smarter.k12partners.org/content/work-groups>

Reminder of resources posted in previous weeks

Reading materials for the recent TAC meeting are now available on the website:

<http://smarter.k12partners.org/content/technical-advisory-committee>

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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