

SMARTER Balanced Assessment Consortium

SBAC Weekly Update

Issue 9

Week ending Friday, April 1, 2011

The SBAC Weekly Update is an email sent each Friday to keep Consortium members and collaborators informed of new developments and upcoming events. The Update is widely distributed to Consortium State Leads, Work Group members, Consortium and WestEd staff, and Consortium advisors, partners, and service providers.

State members should feel free to share information in the Update with those interested in the Consortium's work.

Embedded links in the Update sometimes direct you to the website, <http://smarter.k12partners.org/>, designed for use by Consortium members. If you are a state employee in a Consortium state and need access to material on this website, please click the "Create new account" link on the website to register. If you are not a state employee in a Consortium state and need material from this site, please ask your state lead to forward it to you.

Index

[From the Executive Director](#)

[Announcements](#)

[Upcoming Events](#)

[Resources](#)

[Archive](#)

From the Executive Director

Greetings. This week I'm so thrilled that my Maryland Terrapins and the Washington Huskies are in the Final Four . . . oops, Happy April Fool's Day!

Actually, we should tell you about a recent state membership change. On Wednesday the Executive Committee formally approved Oklahoma's request to be removed as a Consortium Advisory State. Our belief is that they will be joining PARCC as a Governing State, although we have not heard officially from either Oklahoma or PARCC.

I wanted to draw attention to this change not only to announce it, but also to discuss membership dynamics among states in both consortia. Within the past couple of months Stanley, Sue, Linda, and I have been asked by many states to talk to them about membership—some for the purpose of joining SMARTER Balanced, some to change to become a Governing State, and some because they are considering leaving the Consortium. At least two dynamics appear to be at play here, making me think that this spring we'll see quite a few states change their membership status or shift from one consortium to the other.

First, there's the issue of changing leadership in states. Last fall's elections brought about changes in many governorships and chief school officers. Newly seated officials took office in January, with some new chiefs not being appointed until quite recently. It's only natural to assume that new officials would want to review whether or not they are in agreement

with decisions made by their predecessors. Of course, this is even more evident where there was a party shift in the office.

Second, there will be increasing movement of states from an advisory status to a governing one. Since the two grants were awarded, neither consortium has had a state change from being a Governing State to an Advisory State. There have, however, been several instances of states migrating from advisory status to governing status. This trend is likely to continue as we move closer and closer to 2014, as states find they want to become engaged in the decision-making within one of the two consortia.

So, while it's unfortunate to lose Oklahoma as a partner, I think it's one of several changes we are probably going to see over the next few months—in both directions. There are now 14 advisory/participating states: 9 in both consortia, 2 in PARCC only, and 3 in SBAC only. Just as March Madness concludes, a new opportunity for bracketology presents itself! JW

[Back to Index](#)

Announcements

Webinar on Computer Adaptive Testing—Please save 1-3 p.m. Pacific on May 2 for a Consortium webinar on computer adaptive testing (CAT). CAT is at the heart of our assessment approach, and is one of the key differences between the Consortium and the PARCC designs. Dr. David Weiss, Professor of Psychology at the University of Minnesota, will be our guest speaker. Dr. Weiss is a leading expert in CAT. He has published widely on the topic of computers and testing, and maintains the website "[C.A.T. Central](#)." Next week you will receive an email with further details and registration information.

Website updates—In response to Oklahoma's request to leave the Consortium, maps and membership lists on the external and members' websites have been updated.

[Back to Index](#)

Upcoming Events

The ETS Center for K-12 Assessment & Performance Management is co-hosting a webinar with the Alliance for Excellent Education (AEE). It is scheduled for Monday, April 4, from 11 a.m. to 12 noon Pacific. This webinar provides an overview of the two assessment consortia, with Laura Slover presenting for PARCC and Sue Gendron presenting for SBAC. Registration is required, and can be found [here](#).

U.S. Department of Education public meetings—USED is hosting a series of public meetings to provide technical assistance and support to the Consortium and PARCC. The first meeting is scheduled for April 15 in Washington, DC. It will feature a panel of invited experts, along with representatives from both consortia, to discuss the technology infrastructure needed to support the new assessment systems. According to a recent agency announcement, the first meeting will be held at the Education Department's Potomac Center Plaza Auditorium, 550 12th St SW, 10th floor, from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. Eastern. Due to high-level security requirements at this location, all participants must register by April 8, 2011. To register, go to <http://www.mikogroup.com/login.aspx>. If you have problems accessing the registration site, contact Kathie.Nicoletti@MikoGroup.com, 877-645-6477.

Work Group Co-Chairs meeting and webinar—The Project Management Partner (PMP) invites Work Group Co-Chairs and EC Liaisons representing all 10 work groups, as well as the PMP Liaisons and staff members supporting those work groups, to join a Work Group Co-Chairs meeting and webinar scheduled for Friday, April 29, 2011, from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. Pacific. An agenda, meeting materials, and dial-in codes will be sent under separate cover prior to the meeting. In the interim, please save this date and time on your calendars.

Vendor support meetings—CCSSO is hosting a pair of meetings for vendors in support of both the Consortium and PARCC. The first of these two meetings will be on April 18, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. in Detroit, and will focus on measurement issues that the vendor community would like to bring forward for consideration. CCSSO intends to limit each presentation to less than 20 minutes, and will be collecting written copies of each presentation. They are not requiring attendance at this meeting from either consortium, and will be assembling the presentations into a collection to be shared with each consortium. The second meeting will be on April 22, and will focus on policy and implementation issues. Consortium leadership will be available for response and dialogue at this meeting. This meeting is scheduled for 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. in DC; Joe Willhoft and Mike Middleton are currently registered to attend. Information about these meetings is available through Bob Olson at CCSSO at roberto@ccsso.org.

[Back to Index](#)

Resources

Summary presentation—The summary PowerPoint presentation has been updated to reflect Oklahoma's exit from the Consortium. You can find the updated version at <http://smarter.k12partners.org/content/presentations>.

[Back to Index](#)

Archive

Previous SBAC Weekly Updates are available at <http://smarter.k12partners.org/content/sbac-weekly-update-archive>.

Minutes from previously held meetings are available at <http://smarter.k12partners.org/content/agendas-and-minutes>.

[Back to Index](#)

SMARTER Balanced Assessment Consortium
WestEd—Project Management Partner
sbac@wested.org