

SMARTER Balanced Assessment Consortium

SBAC Weekly Update

Issue 11

Week ending Friday, April 15, 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.

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From the Executive Director

Greetings. Last week and earlier this week the American Educational Research Association (AERA) and the National Council on Measurement in Education (NCME) held their annual meetings. Several sessions at these meetings concerned Consortium activities and I want to share those with you. I'd also like to take this opportunity to thank those involved in the presentations.

On Friday morning I had the opportunity to give an overview of both consortia, with some special emphasis on SBAC, to the National Association of Test Directors, the professional organization that serves local school district assessment directors. Also on Friday, Tony Alpert from Oregon, Liru Zhang from Delaware, and Patty Reiss from Hawaii were part of an AERA session in which they shared their recent experiences using the international PISA exam as a benchmark when setting cut scores on state exams.

A Saturday morning NCME session on growth models included a paper co-authored by Joseph Martineau from Michigan. Joseph, however, was unable to attend that session as he and I were part of an invited panel discussion between PARCC and SBAC, hosted by NCME president Wayne Camara of ETS. Over the past six months Wayne has led collaborative efforts between NCME and CCSSO to host parallel sessions such as those at the NCME meeting and at the CCSSO assessment conference at the end of June in Orlando. We owe a special thanks to Wayne for helping broaden the understanding of our efforts.

Saturday afternoon Tony Alpert and Stanley Rabinowitz were part of an NCME debate about computer adaptive testing, taking (of course) the “pro” side of that debate. A poll of the audience showed about 60% favoring CAT testing at the beginning of the session and about 85% favoring it at the end of the session. Great job, Tony and Stanley!

Joseph Martineau represented the Consortium at a Sunday evening NCME session, organized by Scott Marion from the Center for Assessment on the topic of the comparability of the results of the assessments across the two consortia. And Monday afternoon Linda Darling-Hammond and I were part of an AERA special session on PARCC and SBAC. This panel discussion was organized by AERA president Lorrie Shepard to whom we owe special thanks for her support of thoughtful dialogue about our efforts.

Both Lorrie’s AERA session and Wayne’s NCME session on Saturday were well attended with about 100-150 in each audience.

That’s all for now. This week’s comments are a bit longer than usual, but I wanted to give you a sense of the kinds of discussions emerging within the research community about our efforts. JW

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Announcements

Work group change process—The Consortium has published the “Work Group Change Process.” This document outlines the processes that govern changes to work groups including adding or removing members, changing the size of a group, and creating or dissolving a group. This document is considered an appendix to the “SBAC Work Group Structure & Governance”

document. Both documents can be found at <http://smarter.k12partners.org/content/document-library>.

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Upcoming Events

Webinar on Computer Adaptive Testing—Remember to 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](#).” You should have already received an email with instructions for joining the webinar. If you need the instructions resent, please contact sbac@wested.org.

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Resources

Presentation template—A PowerPoint template conforming the Consortium branding and design guidelines is now available at <http://smarter.k12partners.org/content/presentations>. Use this template to simplify creation of presentations about the Consortium, especially in conjunction with the summary presentation.

Technical Advisory Committee meeting materials—the PowerPoint presentation and notes from the Feb 22-23, 2011, meeting of the TAC are now available at <http://smarter.k12partners.org/content/technical-advisory-committee>.

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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>.

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