

SMARTER Balanced Assessment Consortium

SBAC Weekly Update

Issue 14

Week ending Friday, May 6, 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 Weekly 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 Weekly Update with those interested in the Consortium's work.

Embedded links in the Weekly 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 weekend we engaged in significant collaboration with the mathematics community. I will start by thanking two new friends: Sol Garfunkel, executive director of a group called COMAP and Mike Shaughnessy, current president of NCTM. Sol and Mike coordinated a couple of events that brought the two consortia and the mathematics community together to talk about how we can best stay focused on a coherently aligned system.

COMAP sponsored a meeting over the weekend mostly of representatives from the NSF-sponsored mathematics curriculum developers. The 60–65 attendees were mostly math curriculum developers from academia, but there were also a few publisher representatives and others who have worked closely in the area of K–12 mathematics instruction. Tim Kurtz, SBAC representative from New Hampshire, and Mark Freed, co-chair of our Reporting Work Group, joined me for the whole conference. PARCC had some folks there, too, though their attendance across the entire conference was spotty. The Friday–Sunday conference had the two consortia describe our designs, and afforded lively large- and small-group discussions about our mutual desires to build an assessment system that is as coherent as possible with a well-designed curriculum. We also acknowledged the challenges to fully meet this goal, not the least of which are the timelines for the consortia to deliver

assessments and the fact that there is no single, national curriculum model for mathematics instruction. These constraints notwithstanding, the conference developed recommendations that included a call for the curriculum development community to identify a small group or panel that both consortia could turn to for advice as we move forward with our assessment designs. The attendees had loads of questions for SMARTER Balanced and PARCC; I was very impressed with their desire to collaborate with us on developing the best possible assessment system.

The following day, Monday, Mike Shaughnessy organized a meeting including me, Doug Sovde from PARCC, Carrie Phillips and Margaret Millar from CCSSO, David Wakelyn from NGA, and leadership from NCME, ASSM, NCMS, and AMTE. (That alphabet soup covers the various professional groups in mathematics, representing: math teachers, state supervisors, district supervisors, and mathematics pre-service educators.) Michael Lach and Patrick Rooney from the US Dept of Education joined later in the day. Briefly, this is the second meeting of a group that is starting to call itself “MC cubed,” which stands for “Mathematics Common Core Coalition.” The idea is to establish one-stop shopping where people can go to learn about the Common Core initiatives sponsored by all our organizations. As I said, this is only our second meeting, but we have developed a draft statement of principle that I will be taking to our leadership for approval.

I’ll close, as I opened, by thanking Sol and Mike for organizing these gatherings, but also by thanking all the leaders in mathematics I worked with across these events. Their support of our efforts and their true desire to help shape a quality assessment system are clearly evident. So, go hug a math teacher! JW

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Announcements

TAC meetings—The meetings for the remainder of 2010 have been scheduled and will be held on July 26–27 and Dec. 14–15.

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Upcoming Events

Governing states meeting—The next meeting of the Consortium's Governing States occurs on Tuesday, May 10, at 10 a.m. (Pacific). Watch your email for agenda and logon information.

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Resources

CAT webinar recording—The recording and presentation from the May 2 webinar on Computer Adaptive Testing is now available at <http://smarter.k12partners.org/content/webinars-0>

Work Group Co-Chairs meeting—The recording of the April monthly meeting of the Work Group Co-Chairs is now available at

<https://wested.webex.com/wested/lsr.php?AT=pb&SP=MC&rID=61480692&rKey=dc2703daa09f98de>

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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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