SMARTER Balanced Assessment Consortium SBAC Weekly Update

Issue 23 Week ending Friday, July 8, 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. I hope your Independence Day was filled with fun and fireworks! This week, I want to provide an update on the status of the Master Work Plan review (the draft is posted online at http://smarter.k12partners.org/content/master-work-plan). We received responses from 8 work groups, 7 states, and 14 vendors at the end of June. In total, there were more than 1,100 separate pieces of feedback on the activities and related timelines.

The comments were thoughtful and substantive, reflecting the deep engagement of member states and partners. Although we continue to sort and analyze the feedback, a couple of themes have emerged. First, there was widespread recognition that we've included all of the necessary tasks and have placed them in the right order. It's great to know that we haven't overlooked anything big! Given that timelines are tight, many comments also suggested shifting milestones to allow for sufficient analysis (e.g., following the pilot test) while overlapping other projects so they can move more quickly.

I want to thank those who contributed and coordinated responses. We are considering all of these comments carefully. And while not every piece of feedback will be reflected in the revised work plan, they all provide valuable information for the Consortium and the work groups.

So what's next? On Tuesday, July 12, we'll provide the revised work plan to the Governing States; vendors will receive it on Friday, July 15. On July 21, we'll host an in-person meeting in Denver with the Governing States, work group co-chairs, and vendors to review the work plan and discuss the changes made based on the feedback. Our goal is to provide a final version of the plan to the U.S. Department of Education by early August, and we are on track to achieve it.

On July 22, we have planned a half-day working session for work group leads. Once the work plan is in place and the majority of the work group charters are completed, the pace of RFP development will accelerate. I hope the meeting in Denver allows work group leads to discuss outstanding questions with the Executive Committee and to make connections across groups.

I look forward to our time together in a couple of weeks. This is an exciting time for our work. JW

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Announcements

Executive Committee Co-Chair nominations—With Tony Alpert now serving as COO of the Consortium, we are seeking nominations to fill the vacancy of Executive Committee Co-Chair. Although any member can submit a nomination, an EC Co-Chair must come from a Governing State. You can find current nomination and election information at http://smarter.k12partners.org/content/election.

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Upcoming Events

Advisory States meeting—The next Advisory States meeting will be held on July 11. See email for agenda and log-in information.

Governing States meeting—The next Governing States meeting will be held on July 12. See email for agenda and log-in information.

TAC meeting—The next meeting of the Technical Advisory Committee takes place July 26–27 in Denver.

All States dinner during ICCS SCASS—SMARTER Balanced invites all SBAC state participants attending the ICCS SCASS meeting to join leadership for dinner at 6 p.m. on August 3. Please RSVP for the dinner when you register for the meeting using the CCSSO registration process.

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Resources

State lead list—The list of state leads has been updated to reflect changes in state membership and Tony Alpert's change of role to COO for the Consortium. You can find the updated list at http://smarter.k12partners.org/content/about-sbac.

Master Work Plan material—You can find materials related to our ongoing review of the Master Work Plan at http://smarter.k12partners.org/content/master-work-plan, including copies of the draft plan and a link to the recorded Master Work Plan teleconference of June 17.

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Archive

Weekly selections of news items relevant to the Consortium are available at http://smarter.k12partners.org/content/news-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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