

SMARTER Balanced Assessment Consortium

SBAC Weekly Update

Issue 26

Week ending Friday, July 29, 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. It's been a busy and productive week. First, I hope everyone had a chance to review the special edition of the *Weekly Update* that was sent out earlier this week. It reported on the Consortium meetings held July 21–22 with work group co-chairs, Governing State leads, and representatives from the vendor community. I won't take any more space other than to say the meetings were a great success!

Second, on Tuesday and Wednesday we met with our Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) for the second time. Because the TAC meetings are of such interest to our members, we once again made the meeting available to member states via a live conference feed. The discussion covered the full scope of our design for an integrated assessment system, allowing TAC members to share their expertise on a number of complex issues facing the Consortium.

I will provide a broader summary of the outcomes from the meeting later, but I do want to highlight the TAC's review of the status of our Content Specifications work. This effort is led by Linda Darling-Hammond, the Consortium's senior research advisor, and Karin Hess, who is under a contract with the National Center for the Improvement of Educational Assessment, in consultation with the lead authors of the Common Core State Standards

(CCSS). Linda and Karin are developing a treatment of the CCSS for ELA and math that includes:

- A description of the outcomes we should expect (i.e., “claims”) when students are proficient in the knowledge and skills described in the CCSS;
- A description of the types of evidence that would be necessary to support those claims; and
- The score reporting categories that the assessment could reliably provide for teachers and students.

The Content Specifications also describe possible test item types and provide examples of item prototypes that will help educators better understand how we might connect this document with the operational assessment.

The draft version of the ELA content specifications (with math not far behind) is almost ready for review. When released, we will strongly encourage states to identify a lead person who will facilitate broad engagement with their state department of education, institutions of higher education, and district and school administrators and teachers so that we can build consensus across all facets of the Consortium.

We hope that states will coordinate feedback, and we also recognize that some stakeholders may be more closely connected to professional associations than to their state-level agency. Therefore, we will simultaneously release the specifications to many professional groups (e.g., NEA, AFT, AASA, NCTE, NCTM) to gather input from a national perspective.

Please be aware that because we are on a very tight schedule to complete this phase of our work, the amount of time available for feedback will be constrained. Nevertheless, we are committed to providing two rounds of review and comment from the field. This process will ensure that the development of the assessment system is both transparent and enhanced by thorough external comment and review. Detailed announcements about these review and feedback activities will be provided through the *Weekly Update* and via direct communications to our various contacts. Keep posted! JW

[Back to Index](#)

Announcements

Executive Committee Member nominations—Today (Friday, July 29) is the deadline to nominate a candidate for the Executive Committee. You can find nomination information at <http://smarter.k12partners.org/content/election>.

Stakeholder Research—SMARTER Balanced is partnering with Hart Research to learn more about the needs of states as they implement Common Core State Standards and aligned assessment systems. In the next few weeks, Hart Research will reach out to a variety of state-level stakeholders to conduct 30- to 45-minute interviews. We encourage you to participate if you are contacted. Your insights will be extremely helpful as we seek to develop resources and tools to communicate our work.

New public website address—You can now direct people to our public website with the URL www.smarterbalanced.org. This will take them directly to our pages hosted by the Washington State Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction <http://k12.wa.us/smarter/>. A special thanks goes to Classroom Products, which owned the smarterbalanced.org domain name. Classroom Products, an Ohio-based company specializing in computer dividers (also known as privacy shields), worked with SMARTER Balanced to transfer ownership of the domain. We now own all domains associated with SMARTER Balanced, which certainly helps people find us easily.

[Back to Index](#)

Upcoming Events

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.

Innovative Item Types webinar—Save 1–3 p.m. Pacific on August 15 for the next SMARTER webinar. Dr. Kathleen Scalise, Associate Professor of Educational Methodology, Policy, and Leadership at the University of Oregon in Eugene, and Dr. Mark Wilson, Professor of Policy, Organization, Measurement, and Evaluation at the University of California at Berkeley, will discuss innovative computer-based test items, as well as new processes for developing items.

Chiefs meeting—Chief state officers from SMARTER member states are invited to a face-to-face meeting on Wednesday, August 31, in Chicago. The final agenda for the meeting will be available on Wednesday, August 24. Please save the date.

[Back to Index](#)

Resources

Updated summary presentation—The summary presentation has been updated to reflect Carissa Miller’s election as Executive Committee Co-Chair. You can find the new version at <http://smarter.k12partners.org/content/presentations>.

Documents for chiefs—Chief state school officers can find useful documents about the Consortium on the Documents page of the State Chiefs section on the member website, <http://smarter.k12partners.org/>.

[Back to Index](#)

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>.

[Back to Index](#)

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