

SMARTER Balanced Assessment Consortium

SBAC Weekly Update

Issue 36

Week ending Friday, October 7, 2011

Top News This Week

- Collaboration website launched
- Updated Consortium PowerPoint presentations available
- Lead mathematics and English language arts specialist positions posted
- Systems architecture workshops ongoing
- Release of revised mathematics content specifications delayed

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 who are interested in the Consortium's work.

Embedded links in the Update sometimes direct you to the internal SBAC website, <http://smarter.k12partners.org/>, available only to 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.

From the Executive Director

Greetings. This week, I traveled to southern California for a meeting with district assessment directors. Tony participated in a similar meeting in northern California last week. These events provided an opportunity for us to hear from the folks who make large-scale assessments run smoothly at the district and school levels, and we were able to provide a detailed update on the design process based on our Master Work Plan.

As a result, we now have an updated PowerPoint presentation that is suitable for state and district audiences who want to dive into the details of the next three years of our work. The presentation covers the Consortium's approaches to: accessibility and administration; technology; item and test design; and formative practices, professional learning, and implementation. We have also updated the summary PowerPoint presentation that provides a broad overview of the Consortium. Both presentations are posted on the collaboration site: <http://smarter.k12partners.org/content/presentations>

In addition, we are making a streamlined version of the overview presentation publicly available on the external SMARTER Balanced website:

http://www.smarterbalanced.org/pubdocs/SMARTERBalanced_WebPresentation_9-29.pdf

In California, I received a number of detailed and thoughtful questions about our work, many of which will be addressed in future Weekly Updates. While there are many decisions yet to be made about how SMARTER Balanced assessments will be administered, providing updates on our progress to local education agencies and other stakeholders is critical as we move forward. In the coming months, we will make available a number of new communications tools and resources, including a new website that will launch at the end of the year. JW

Announcements

Collaboration website launch—Consortium members: A new internal collaboration website is being rolled out to Consortium members. The new website is intended to replace the current internal website and extend capabilities to include calendar sharing and document collaboration. The website is currently

being piloted by four work groups and will be extended to include the remaining work groups over the next few weeks. All remaining Consortium members will receive access by the end of October. To support the transition, the PMP will host training webinars highlighting how to navigate within the site and utilize its new collaboration features. Additional details will follow regarding access and training.

Updated Consortium PowerPoint presentations available—Consortium members: Two updated SMARTER Balanced PowerPoint presentations are now available for external use. The “summary” presentation provides a detailed look at the assessment system design and the Consortium’s work to date. The “detailed” presentation focuses on the process for developing the assessments and is recommended for technical audiences, such as district assessment directors. Both presentations are available on the internal SMARTER website at <http://smarter.k12partners.org/content/presentations>

Lead mathematics and English language arts specialist positions posted—Positions for two new Consortium staff positions have been posted by Washington State. The positions are for a lead mathematics specialist and a lead English language arts specialist. The roles will have oversight responsibilities respective to their content areas regarding item writing, item quality, item alignment, item sensitivity, and bias and data reviews, as well as for the production of formative assessment and professional development materials. Both postings can be found at <http://www.k12.wa.us/SMARTER/Jobs-Contracts.aspx>

Systems Architecture Workshops update—The IT Systems Architecture vendor will hold the third week of our three-week Architecture Workshop series the week of October 10. The upcoming workshop will cover test creation, test delivery platform, adaptive testing, and integration framework. Members will have the opportunity to review the initial workshop deliverables via webinar-based showcases in the latter half of October. Additional details and information will follow.

Mathematics content specifications—The release of the revised math content specifications, originally scheduled for October 10, will be delayed until October 17. The additional time will allow the Consortium to incorporate feedback received during the first round of review and ultimately create a stronger document.

Upcoming Events

Governing States meeting—Governing State leads: The next meeting of the Consortium's Governing States will occur on Tuesday, October 11, at 10 a.m. (Pacific). Please see separate email for agenda and webinar information.

Resources

Relevant news items—State members: Weekly selections of news items relevant to the Consortium are available on the internal SBAC website at <http://smarter.k12partners.org/content/news-archive>

Prior versions of the Weekly Update—State members: Previous SBAC Weekly Updates are available on the internal SBAC website at <http://smarter.k12partners.org/content/sbac-weekly-update-archive>

SBAC meeting minutes—State members: Agendas and minutes from previously held meetings are available on the internal SBAC website at <http://smarter.k12partners.org/content/agendas-and-minutes>

Answering Open Questions

Each week, we will address a question or two on the minds of Consortium members. Send your questions to sbac@wested.org.

How can work group members and state leads keep track of RFPs as they are issued?

All RFPs developed by Consortium staff and work groups are posted on the SMARTER Balanced website, and registered vendors are notified through Washington’s Electronic Business Solution (WEBS). In addition, an RFP status report listing both the anticipated and actual release date for each contract solicitation associated with the Summative Assessment Master Work Plan is available on the

collaboration site at <http://smarter.k12partners.org/content/master-work-plan>

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