

Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium

Smarter Balanced Weekly Update

Issue 115

Week ending Friday, May 17, 2013

Top News This Week

- Accessibility and Accommodations Framework issued
- Career Readiness Task Force Nominations commenced

The Smarter Balanced 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.

Please note that embedded links in the Update sometimes direct readers to the Consortium's internal website. Access to this website is currently limited to Consortium state department of education officials and their delegates. For news and other important information related to Consortium activities, we encourage individuals to visit our public website at <http://www.smarterbalanced.org> and sign up for the monthly newsletter by clicking on the Stay Connected link located at the top of the homepage.

From the Executive Director

Greetings. There's a lot of interest from teachers, parents, media, and others regarding teacher involvement in the development of the Smarter Balanced Assessment System. So, I've decided to devote this week's comments to educator involvement in the development of the Smarter Balanced Assessment System and upcoming opportunities for educator involvement.

Teachers are a main ingredient in the development of the Consortium's assessment system, and Smarter Balanced member states are committed to working directly with them throughout the project. Teachers are engaged in the development of items and tasks, including: review and selection of passages used as stimulus materials, item writing, development of scoring guides, review of items for content alignment, bias and sensitivity reviews, and scoring of the assessments. During the Pilot and the Field Tests the Consortium has and will continue to collaborate with teachers in order to obtain feedback on how students are responding to the assessments. Approximately a hundred teachers from each member state will participate in "State Networks of Educators" to evaluate the formative tools and resources that are being developed and that will be part of the full assessment system. For all of these purposes, Smarter Balanced maintains ongoing recruitment efforts to support the development of the assessment system.

The following table shows upcoming opportunities for educators in Smarter Balanced states to participate in activities related to item/task development and the development of formative assessment supports. This table is excerpted from a more comprehensive list of Governing State activities provided to state leads to assist them in their planning for involvement in the Smarter Balanced work.

Upcoming Opportunities for Governing State Participation

Recruitment Activities	Start Date	End Date
Item Development Activities (Point of contact: State's "Teacher Involvement Coordinator")		
Pilot Test Range Finding	05/14/13	05/28/13
Field Test Item Authoring	05/16/13	05/30/13
Pilot Test Data Review	05/23/13	06/06/13
Field Test Stimulus Review	05/23/13	06/06/13
Field Test Item and Task Review	05/23/13	06/06/13
Committee Members for: Content; Bias and Sensitivity; and Accessibility	Mid-June	Mid-July

Digital Library and PD Focus (Point of contact: State's "State Leadership Team" lead)		
State Leadership Team (SLT) members recruited and selected (8-12 per state)	04/08/13	05/17/13
State Network of Educators (SNE) members recruited and selected (avg. of 100 per state, based on size)	05/01/13	06/03/13

The comprehensive list is updated every two weeks and is available to state leads on the Collaboration Site at: <https://sites.google.com/a/smarterbalanced.org/state-leads/>. JW

Announcements

Accessibility and Accommodations Framework issued—Smarter Balanced is making available its Accessibility and Accommodations Framework for broad consideration and review. The framework was distributed to K-12 state leads, Higher Education Leads, and member state Chiefs on May 14. We invite feedback from national organizations. Consolidated feedback on behalf of organizations is especially encouraged. Instructions for submitting feedback may be found below.

Grounded in current research and a deep understanding of the current diversity of accessibility policies and practices across state and national assessment systems, the Smarter Balanced Accessibility and Accommodations Framework provides the conceptual underpinning for accessibility approaches, accessibility tools and accommodation options, and implementation guidance for Smarter Balanced assessments.

Based on feedback provided by states, advisory panels on English language learners and students with disabilities, and national organizations such as the National Center for Learning Disabilities (NCLD), this revised version of the framework represents a significant step toward accessibility and accommodations policies that contribute to more accurate and valid measures of achievement and growth for all students, regardless of visual, auditory, linguistic, or physical needs.

Instructions for Submitting Feedback (feedback is requested by June 14)

1. **Download** the draft Accessibility and Accommodations Framework here: <https://wested.box.com/smarterbalanced-aa-framework>
2. **Annotate** the Framework document using the Comments feature in MS Word.
3. **Save** your annotated file with you first and last names appended to the end of the file name (e.g., A&A Framework_JohnSmith.docx)
4. **Upload** your feedback via the form located here: <https://www.smartsheet.com/b/form?EQBCT=aa6233fe1d524544a7a56643de9f9bf8>

If you need assistance accessing or uploading the file, please contact sbac@wested.org.

Career Readiness Task Force Nominations commenced—To assist the Consortium in establishing a plan for describing student performance on the Smarter Balanced Assessment in relation to academic readiness for further career education and training, Smarter Balanced is seeking nominations for a small task force to be composed of experts in career and technical education at the secondary and postsecondary levels. The task force will include representatives of K-12 and higher education as well as members of the business community. The goal is for the task force to deliver a set of recommendations, which will be thoroughly vetted by the Consortium prior to a vote at the spring 2014 Collaboration Conference. Nominations are due to Jaci King (Jacqueline.King@smarterbalanced.org) by close of business (local time) on Friday, May 31.

CTB selected for Field Test Item & Task Writing and Pilot & Field Test Scoring contract—CTB has been selected as the item development and scoring management contractor that will be responsible for the development and scoring of all items and tasks for the Field Test; the completion of all studies for peer review of the item development and scoring for the Field Test event; the scoring of Pilot Test items and

tasks; and the completion of a data review of Pilot and Field Test items and the revision of items as necessary to be included in the item pool. CTB will be assisted in this work through subcontracts with a number of additional assessment service providers.

In The News

Oregon Department of Education, 5/16/2013

News release: "Smarter Balanced selected to replace OAKS starting in 2015"

<http://www.ode.state.or.us/news/Announcements/announcement.aspx?ID=9099&TypeID=5>

Thomas B. Fordham Institute, 5/14/2013

Andy Smarick blog on Smarter Balanced

<http://www.edexcellence.net/commentary/education-gadfly-daily/common-core-watch/2013/by-the-company-it-keeps-smarter-balanced.html>

Ed Source, 5/9/2013

John Fensterwald interview with Executive Director, Joe Willhoft

<http://www.edsource.org/today/2013/common-core-test-is-on-track-state-board-told/31768#.UYudybXktyx>

Resources

Contacting Smarter Balanced—The Smarter Balanced external website (www.smarterbalanced.org) showcases the innovative work of the Consortium and provides frequent updates on activities, milestones, and events. Visitors can submit questions or reach Smarter Balanced staff at <http://www.smarterbalanced.org/contact-us/>. Consortium members may contact sbac@wested.org for information on upcoming meetings and events.

Collaboration Site—Consortium members: The Consortium uses an internal collaboration site hosted by Google Apps to enable information sharing and collaboration among the member states. If you are a state employee in a Consortium state and need access to material on this website, please contact sbac@wested.org.

Follow Smarter Balanced on Twitter—Follow @SmarterBalanced for resources and links to the latest news about the Consortium.

Prior versions of the Weekly Update—State members: Previous Smarter Balanced Weekly Updates are available on the internal Smarter Balanced website at <https://sites.google.com/a/smarterbalanced.org/home/communications/weekly-update-archive>.

Smarter Balanced meeting minutes—State members: Agendas and minutes from previously held meetings are available on the internal Smarter Balanced website at <https://sites.google.com/a/smarterbalanced.org/home/meetings>.

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

If states administer a paper-and-pencil version of the assessment, will scores be comparable with the computer adaptive test?

Smarter Balanced will make a paper-and-pencil version of the summative assessment available during a three-year transition period as schools and districts upgrade their technology. Smarter Balanced will conduct research and will perform equating studies to ensure that results are comparable across the two modes of assessment and to put the paper-and-pencil forms onto the scale used for the online testing. To improve the precision of the paper-and-pencil version, Smarter Balanced may develop a short "locator" test that will help target an appropriate longer form of the assessment for individual students.

Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium

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