

Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium

Smarter Balanced Weekly Update

Issue 128

Week ending Friday, August 16, 2013

Top News This Week

- High school testing task force solicitation
- Accessibility and Accommodations Guidelines ready for review

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 the 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. I am pleased to announce that each of our Governing States has formed State Leadership Teams (SLTs) and State Networks of Educators (SNEs), numbering nearly 2,000 teachers and other practitioners from across the country. This milestone reflects our continued commitment to engaging educators in designing all components of a balanced assessment system.

Each SLT is composed of eight to twelve K-12 educators and higher education faculty in positions of state leadership. SLT members have expertise in the [Common Core State Standards \(CCSS\)](#), formative assessment practices, curriculum and instruction, adult online learning, and the needs of English language learners, students with disabilities, and students with gifts and talents. These teams will build capacity within their states by training and supporting the SNEs to contribute to the Smarter Balanced Digital Library, where numerous teacher-support materials will be housed. They will also provide feedback on the online software applications being developed for the Digital Library.

The SLTs recruited and selected K-12 educators and higher education faculty to serve on their state's SNEs. The SNEs represent diverse expertise and backgrounds—including the CCSS for mathematics and English language arts (ELA)/literacy, science, social studies, general education, gifted and talented students, English language learners, and students with disabilities. The SNEs include about 75 to 100 educators per state, with state-by-state numbers varying according to the state's student enrollment.

The SLTs and SNEs will help develop the Smarter Balanced Digital Library, an online collection of professional learning and instructional resources, focused on classroom-based assessment resources that teachers can use as they implement the CCSS. Providing teachers with formative assessment tools and resources is an integral component of the Smarter Balanced assessment system, which also includes a year-end summative assessment and optional interim assessments. The Digital Library will focus on the classroom-based formative assessment processes and will contain differentiated resources aligned to the CCSS for educators with varying interests and professional learning needs. These resources are to include a series of assessment literacy modules and exemplar instructional modules in ELA/literacy and mathematics.

In addition, the library will include professional learning and instructional materials contributed by SLTs and SNEs. The library will be interactive, allowing users to rate materials and to share their expertise with educators across their own states or across the country.

SLTs and SNEs will have early access to the Digital Library over the course of the next seven months, to

populate it with resources. The library will then be open to all registered users in Governing States in April 2014.

With initial training for the SLTs kicking off next week, we are very energized about this development, and I want to give a special acknowledgement to Chrys Mursky, our Director of Professional Learning, and to the state staff from across the Consortium who have been part of the Formative Assessment Practices and Professional Learning/Transition to Common Core Work Group. JW

Announcements

High school testing task force solicitation—The Consortium is forming a task force among its Governing States to devise a strategy and approach to meet state needs for secure high school testing beyond the grade 11 Smarter Balanced summative assessment. On August 14, Governing State Leads were sent a link through which they may express interest in joining the task force.

Accessibility and Accommodations Guidelines ready for review—The Test Administration/Student Access Work Group invites state leads to provide input on the draft Accessibility and Accommodations Guidelines. The draft was sent to state leads, along with a survey link by which they may provide input. Feedback may be provided through August 27, and changes made to the document based on feedback received will be presented via webinar on September 4.

USED seeks input on assessment systems evaluation (Repeat)—Last December, the USED paused its facilitation of peer reviews of state assessment systems as it considers how to revise its evaluation practices to better gauge whether the assessment system is a high quality system that measures college and career readiness. To that end, the ED released this blog post—

<http://www.ed.gov/blog/2013/08/help-ed-improve-how-we-evaluate-state-assessment-systems/>

—that solicits input on how they should reconsider peer review. They are taking comments through the end of September and all Consortium members are encouraged to weigh in.

Executive Committee co-chair nominee solicitation (Repeat)—Nominations are now being accepted for the position of Executive Committee co-chair, to fill the seat that will become vacant upon the expiration of Deb Sigman's term on September 30, 2013. The term of this position runs through September 30, 2014. All nominees must come from a Governing State and have approval from their Chief State School Officer indicating support for participation. Anyone can nominate a candidate and individuals can nominate themselves. Nominations close on Wednesday, August 21, 2013. Once the slate of nominees is finalized, the Governing State leads will vote to select the new EC co-chair.

Following the co-chair election, Governing States will have the opportunity to elect two Executive Committee members to fill the seats that will become vacant on September 30, 2013.

Mathematics Assessments webinar recording available (Repeat)— On August 5, Shelbi Cole and William McCallum presented a webinar titled "Making Progress in Measuring Math: Updates on the Smarter Balanced Mathematics Assessments". The webinar recording and slides are posted for State Leads on the Collaboration Site under the Webinars tab.

Governing States are invited to attend a series of Accessibility and Accommodations webinars (Repeat)—As part of the Consortium's ongoing efforts to develop a common set of accessibility and accommodations guidelines, a series of webinars have been planned for Governing States to discuss the following topics:

- *Reading and Listening: held August 1*
- *Scribe and Calculator Use: held August 8*
- *Accessibility and Accommodations Manual Walkthrough: held August 13*
- *Review of Changes to Manual Based on Feedback: September 4*

Call-in information was sent to State Leads on July 15, 2013.

In The News

Ed Week, 8/15/13

Article: "The New Dropouts? The States Divide on Testing and Accountability"

http://blogs.edweek.org/edweek/top_performers/2013/08/the_new_dropouts_the_states_divide_on_testing_and_accountability.html?cmp=ENL-EU-VIEWS2

Ed Week, 8/13/13

Article: "Relief Tally for Undocumented Youths After One Year of Deferred Action"

http://blogs.edweek.org/edweek/learning-the-language/2013/08/relief_for_young_undocumented.html

The Quick & the Ed, 8/9/13

Article: "Perspective on Smarter Balanced Assessment Costs"

<http://www.quickanded.com/2013/08/perspective-on-smarter-balanced-assessment-costs.html>

Ed Week, 8/1/13

Article: "PARCC Sees Dip in Confidence Poll of Washington 'Insiders'"

http://blogs.edweek.org/edweek/curriculum/2013/08/parcc_sees_dip_in_confidence_p.html

Resources

Key Facts About the Common Core State Standards—Alliance for Excellent Education publications on the CCSS can be found at the following links: <http://www.all4ed.org/files/CCSSFacts.pdf> and <http://www.all4ed.org/files/CommonCore101.pdf>.

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>.

--

Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium

WestEd - Project Management Partner

sbac@wested.org

www.smarterbalanced.org

