Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium

Smarter Balanced and Teachers: Supporting Student Achievement Through Meaningful Feedback

The Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium is creating next-generation assessments aligned to the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) in English language arts/literacy and mathematics. Just as the CCSS describe the knowledge and skills students need to be prepared for college and career, the system of computer adaptive assessments—including summative and formative tests—will provide important information about whether students are on track, as well as resources and tools for teachers to help students succeed.

Key Features of Smarter Balanced

- **Innovative item types** go beyond multiple choice questions to include constructed response and performance tasks that measure critical thinking and problem solving.
- **Interim assessments** provide information about student progress throughout the year to help teachers differentiate instruction.
- **A digital library** of research-based formative assessment practices and tools.

Teacher Involvement

Smarter Balanced is committed to working with teachers to develop and test the new assessments. Teachers will be engaged in test item development, item writing and scoring the assessments. Teams of teachers from each state will also evaluate the formative tools and resources that will be available through the assessment system. During the Pilot and Field Tests, the Consortium will collaborate with teachers in order to obtain feedback on how students are responding to the assessments.

Training and Support

At the heart of the assessment system will be a digital library with research-based formative tools. The library will include examples of instructional best practices at each grade level, strategies for cross-classroom collaboration and professional development resources related to the assessment system, such as scoring rubrics for performance tasks. Educators will also be able to submit resources and engage in online discussions to share information and learn from colleagues—whether they are in a neighboring district or across the country.

Key Dates for Teachers

- Spring/Summer 2012—Teachers help write *Pilot* items and tasks, review for alignment with CCSS, and check for bias/sensitivity
- Summer/Fall 2013—Teams of teachers evaluate formative assessment practices and instructional resources; professional development cadres meet
- Winter/Spring 2013—*Pilot Testing* of items/tasks in a sample of schools
- Fall 2012–Fall 2013—Teacher teams write *Field Test* items and tasks, review for alignment with CCSS, and check for bias/sensitivity
- Spring 2014—Broad participation in *Field Testing* of summative and interim assessments
- 2014-15 School Year—Implementation of assessment system and launch of digital library

LEARN MORE AND GET INVOLVED

Smarter Balanced member states will work directly with teachers and teacher organizations throughout the project. For a full list of state contacts and to learn more about Smarter Balanced, visit SmarterBalanced.org.