



Smarter Balanced Field Test

Participation Opportunities for Schools and Districts

The Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium is developing a robust, groundbreaking assessment system to provide high-quality information on learning—and ultimately help prepare all students to graduate high school college- and career-ready.

Multifaceted in design, the Smarter Balanced system includes computer-adaptive summative and interim assessments that provide accurate and effective measures of student achievement and growth, along with cutting-edge formative tools to help teachers better understand and support their students. A variety of assessment item types—including selected-response, constructed-response, and technology-enhanced items and performance tasks—ensure that students are assessed with rigor and fidelity across the full range of the Common Core State Standards.

Valuable Advance Exposure to the Assessment System

In the spring (mid-March to early June) of 2014, Smarter Balanced will conduct the Field Test of its innovative next-generation assessments. Schools in our state have the [opportunity to participate](#) in and experience an assessment that is closely aligned with the content, configuration, and length of the planned 2015 operational assessments.

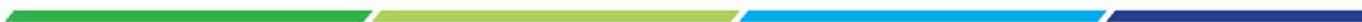
To submit your interest in participating in the 2014 Smarter Balanced Field Test, click on this link: <http://www.formstack.com/forms/fieldtest-recruitment>. Please submit your interest by **October 15, 2013**.

What is the Purpose of the Smarter Balanced Field Test?

Field testing is critical to ensuring that assessment items are accessible to all students and that the assessment produces results that are valid, reliable, and fair. The Field Test helps guarantee that the Smarter Balanced assessment items are placed on an accurate scale to determine final achievement level descriptors (i.e., cut scores).

The Field Test will include students in grades 3-8 and 11, engaging in online assessments in mathematics and English language arts (ELA)/literacy. (A small number of grade 9 and 10 students in our state will also participate in a special study to help develop the scale used in the operational test in 2015.)

Students will gain hands-on experience with the functionality of innovative items and newly designed performance tasks with related classroom activities.



Administrators will gain valuable exposure to administration logistics during this “trial run,” allowing them to better prepare for smooth and successful participation in the operational assessments in the 2014-15 school year.

State stakeholders will benefit by having the diversity of their student populations included in the development of achievement level descriptors and analysis of test quality.

Accessibility and Accommodations

A major advantage of these next-generation assessments is their improved accessibility features, which ensure that the assessments meet the needs of all students. The Smarter Balanced Assessment System offers a variety of accessibility tools and accommodations for students with disabilities and English language learners, including dynamic features such as videos of human signers using American Sign Language, Spanish translations, and customized pop-up glossaries. Early this fall, Smarter Balanced states will vote to adopt a set of Accessibility and Accommodations Guidelines. Once adopted, the guidelines document will be posted at <http://www.smarterbalanced.org>.

Test Administration Time

For scheduling purposes, participating schools should plan for approximately 3.5 hours of testing per grade and content area. (For more specific estimates, a detailed table of testing time estimates, per grade and content area, is provided in Appendix A on the last page of this document.) Testing is intended to be administered over multiple sessions of about 45 minutes each, but may be administered in shorter or longer session as appropriate for the students and the school. The Field Test will approximate the length of the 2015 operational assessments.

Technology Requirements

To promote ease of implementation, the online Smarter Balanced Assessment System was designed to operate within the technology infrastructures that currently exist in most schools and districts. Detailed information on the minimum necessary specifications to operate the assessment system can be found in the *Smarter Balanced Technology Strategy Framework and System Requirements Specifications* report, available on the Technology page of the Smarter Balanced website: <http://www.smarterbalanced.org/smarter-balanced-assessments/technology/#specifications>. For example, this report specifies that headphones are required to participate in some of the new multimedia items that assess listening activity.

Test Security

The spring 2014 Smarter Balanced Field Test is a secure test. Test administration training will be required, and states will be responsible for ensuring proper and secure test administration at each site.

Registration and Field Test Timeline

Activity	Dates
Smarter Balanced Field Test window	March 18–June 6, 2014
Test administrator training modules available	January 28, 2014
Help-desk email support – Practice Test	August 15, 2013 – June 6, 2014

Contact Information

Thank you for your support with this critical phase of the Smarter Balanced Assessment System development and implementation process.

If you have any questions, concerns, or comments, please contact <SEA representative> or the Smarter Balanced Help Desk at smarterbalancedenrollment@ets.org.

Practice Tests Are Now Available at:

<http://sbac.portal.airast.org/practice-test/>

The Consortium has released Practice Tests to give all interested students, teachers, and schools an early look at sample sets of Smarter Balanced assessment questions.