

Future of SBE

- Speaking on behalf of the Board
 - How should the SBE coordinator respond during the legislative session
- Memos from the Board
 - How should memos from the SBE be developed and sent
- Funding for Board activities
 - How do we ensure that invoices are paid in a timely manner
 - Is there a process that needs to be instituted
- Working with WDE
 - Improving communication
 - Making requests of WDE
 - Responding to requests from WDE
- Developing priorities for Wyoming education
 - Topics
 - Graduation requirements
 - Attendance – entrance age, fines for non-attendance, drop-out age
 - Career-technical education
 - Customizing education for students
 - Others
 - Meetings with stakeholders
 - Gathering input
 - Developing action steps
- Proposed legislation – what is our response
 - Accountability measures
 - Other pre-filed legislation

WYOMING DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

State Board of Education

FY13 Budget

1 July 2012 thru 2 Jan 2013

DESCRIPTION	BUDGETED	EXPENDED	ENCUMBERED	REMAINING BALANCE
Personal Services (100 series)				
Salaries (0104)	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Employer Paid Benefits (0105)	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Supportive Services (200 series)				
Teleconference (0203.07)	2,500.00	1,786.50	0.00	713.50
Communications Direct Freight (0204.06)	4,025.00	178.98	0.00	3,846.02
Professional Development & Training (0207)	34,258.00	492.00	0.00	33,766.00
Advertising (0208)	2,000.00	0.00	0.00	2,000.00
State Board, In-State Travel Reimbursement (0221)	51,127.00	18,202.01	0.00	32,924.99
State Board, Out-of-State Travel Reimbursement (0222)	27,893.00	2,202.33	0.00	25,690.67
State Board, Out-of-State Travel Reimbursement (0227)	581.00	581.00	0.00	0.00
Supplies - Safety-Security-Law Enforcement (0230.24)	20.00	20.00	0.00	0.00
Supplies - Office, Printing, Reproduction & Stationery (0231.00)	3,411.00	2,649.31	0.00	761.69
Food & Food Service Supplies (0234.00)	1,000.00	41.96	0.00	958.04
Supplies - Education & Recreational (0236)	672.00	0.00	0.00	672.00
Intangible Assets (0240)	300.00	261.61	0.00	38.39
Office, Institutional & Household Equipment & Furnishings (0241)	200.00	179.00	0.00	21.00
Data Processing & Other Computer Equipment (0242)	5,000.00	263.55	0.00	4,736.45
Education, Recreational & Technical Equipment (0246)	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Conference Room Rental (0251.04)	500.00	240.00	0.00	260.00
Awards, Prizes (0257.01 Monetary/Taxable) (0257.02 Non Monetary/Not Taxable)	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Awards, Prizes (0271.0)	2,384.00	0.00	0.00	2,384.00
Data Processing Charges (0400 series)				
A&I Telecommunications (0420)	4,603.00	1,690.73	0.00	2,912.27
Professional Services (0900 series)				
Contract Services (0901)	59,571.00	1,788.00	7,691.00	50,092.00
TOTAL	200,045.00	30,576.98	7,691.00	161,777.02

WDE #	Division	SFDAC	Other
1 100 School Foundation Program Funding Worksheet	Finance	Recommendation	Jed will work with IM on voc ed reports
2 103 Reimbursible Pupil Transportation Expenditures			
3 104 Monthly Litigation Expenses		eliminate	AG's opinion
4 106 District General Fund Cash Flow		simplify the form	Jed to review
5 112 National Board Certified Teacher Paid			
6 140 Bonded Indebtedness Mill Levy Supplement etc		eliminate	
7 170 Cooperative Services Incentive Application			
8 401 Special Education Expenditures			
9 600 WISE Attendance and Membership			
10 601 WISE Annual District			
11 714 Post Secondary Enrollment Options Fiscal Info			needs statutory changes
12 901 School District Budget			
13 911 Charter Scholl Annual			
14 425 WISE Special Ed Fall Snapshot	IM		now in 684
15 427 WISE Special Education Collection-End of Year			now in 684
16 572 District Measures of Academic Progress			one time only, no longer collected
17 602 WISE School District Staff Member Collection			
18 614 Spring Reporting Certification Checklist		supt signature, not mandatory	
19 618 Fall Reporting Certification Checklist		supt signature, not mandatory	
20 633 Certified Staff Vacancy and Application Information		further study	
21 638A WISE Course Inventory - Next School Year		eliminate	
22 638B WISE Course Inventory - Current YR Fall Update		due in Oct	
23 638C WISE Course Inventory - Current YR Spring Update			
24 638D WISE Course Inventory - Current YR Final Update			
25 652 WISE School District Staff Member Collection -EOY		eliminate	
26 659 One Percent Alternate Assessment Cap Exception			
27 684A WISE Teacher/Course/Student Fall Data			
28 684B WISE Teacher/Course/Student Spring Data			
29 684C WISE Teacher/Course/Student End of Year Data			
30 685 WISE Teacher/Course/Student Uncertified Data		for district use only	
31 690 User Login and Security Right Requests			no longer exists
32 713 Post Secondary Enrollment Options			one time only, now in 684
33 890 Collection Detail - New Forms or Change			no longer exists

34453	Instructional Foundations for Kindergarten	Standards	
35539	Bridges - Application for Summer School & Ext Day		Julie to review comments with staff
36613	Gifted and Talented Summary	eliminate	Dianne to review comments
37626	Early Literacy - Longitudinal Data		if not required by statute
38637	AYP District Request for Review	want 30 days response time	Julie to review comments with staff
39639	AYP School Request for Review	want 30 days response time	
40663	WISE Student Proficiency on Body of Evidence		
41673	WY State Assessment Sytem Participation Exemption		
42950	Wyoming Transcript Center - Graduating Students		
43530	McKinney Vento Sub-grant	Federal Prog	
44527	Bridges - Summary of Extended day Programs	combine with 539	
45533	District Report of Homeless Children & Youth		now incorporated in 684
46537	Bridges - Summary of Summer Programs	combine with 539	
47549	School District October Caseload Count		
48568	District Title 1, Part D Annual Review		
49682	School Choice & Supplemental Services Offered		
50584	District Technology Survey	SSR	
51588	School Technology Survey		
52591	Distance Education Milestones		now incorporated in 684
53636	WISE Report of Student Disciplinary Actions et al		
54644	Wyoming Trust Fund Grant Application		
55608	School District Directory Data Collections	Other	
56609	School District Program Contacts		

WDE Data Collection Reports

Reducing the data collection requirements

There are more than 60 reports that school districts must complete for WDE data collection purposes. There should be an effort to determine if all the reports are still necessary or required by statute, if the data is already collected in another report, and if the data collected is used in any meaningful way. I would like to request that the WDE review the reporting requirements and report back to the SBE or the legislature with suggestions about how to reduce the reporting burden. Below is a list of reports that illustrate some of the issues:

- WDE103 All of the information requested on the reimbursable transportation report is contained on the 601 and 602
- WDE104 Do districts still need to report monthly litigation expenses or can this report be eliminated?
- WDE614 & 618 Districts do these reports to indicate the dates that they sent in their required reports.
- WDE633 This is the certified vacancy report. What is done with the information? What difference does it make if a district gets their second or third choice of candidates?
- WDE652 This is essentially a repeat of the WDE602. How is the information used?
- WDE602 What is the purpose of the Education Reporting Requirements portion of this report? Does it matter what someone's course of study, college, or GPA were? Does anyone use the data?
- WDE 638 The Success Curriculum Report duplicates the data in the Course Inventory form.
- WDE 663 Body of Evidence Report is complex. Has it ever been summarized or reported out?
- WDE 533 Homeless - duplicates the required fields designating homeless status in the WDE 684.
- WDE 950 Wyoming Transcript Center is it ever summarized or reported? Colleges and universities already receive these data directly from schools.
- WDE 613 Gifted and Talented Survey is it ever summarized or reported?

Lessening the reporting demands—Schools and districts are regularly required to complete reports or plans that may or may not be collected, are seldom summarized, and for which schools and districts receive no feedback. Here are some examples:

Bridges Grant For the Bridges program, teachers have to develop and report on Individual Learning Plans (ILPs) for every student who receives remediation assistance after school and in the summer. These are required annually and have never been collected, reviewed, or summarized. If teachers or

leaders felt that these plans were useful, they should be encouraged to write and use them. But this should be optional and left up to districts to decide.

Early Literacy For the early literacy program, teachers have to develop Individual Reading Plans (IRPs) for any student that scores below the 40th percentile on one of two required assessments. These IRPs have never been collected, reviewed, or summarized. The question is whether this is the best use of teachers' valuable time or do districts already have a system in place to monitor these students? In addition, districts need to submit a literacy plan, including assessment information. How has the information from these reports been used to improve teaching and learning?

Distance Education For the distance education program, teachers have to create Distance Learning Plans (DLPs) and milestones for each course taken by a student "separated by time or place" from the teacher. This is a real disincentive for providing distance education. In a recent statewide report on distance education, the Department of Audit found the reporting requirements so hopelessly complex that they could not issue a report on the quality of programs or their costs.

Technology Plans and Reports Districts and schools have to submit annual technology reports in addition to the five-year Technology Plan. How is data from these reports used? Is it necessary to do a report on a yearly basis?



Smarter Balanced Assessments

The Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium is developing a system of valid, reliable, and fair next-generation assessments aligned to the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) in English language arts/literacy (ELA/literacy) and mathematics for grades 3-8 and 11. The system—which includes both summative assessments for accountability purposes and optional interim assessments for instructional use—will use computer adaptive testing technologies to the greatest extent possible to provide meaningful feedback and actionable data that teachers and other educators can use to help students succeed.

Smarter Balanced assessments will go beyond multiple-choice questions to include extended response and technology enhanced items, as well as performance tasks that allow students to demonstrate critical-thinking and problem-solving skills.

Performance tasks challenge students to apply their knowledge and skills to respond to complex real-world problems. They can best be described as collections of questions and activities that are coherently connected to a single theme or scenario. These activities are meant to measure capacities such as depth of understanding, writing and research skills, and complex analysis, which cannot be adequately assessed with traditional assessment questions. The performance tasks will be taken on a computer (but will not be computer adaptive) and will take one to two class periods to complete.

Smarter Balanced capitalizes on the precision and efficiency of computer adaptive testing (CAT). This approach represents a significant improvement over traditional paper-and-pencil assessments used in many states today, providing more accurate scores for all students across the full range of the achievement continuum.

Assessment System Components

A **summative assessment** administered during the last 12 weeks of the school year. The summative assessment will consist of two parts: a computer adaptive test and performance tasks that will be taken on a computer, but will not be computer adaptive. The summative assessment will:

- Accurately describe both student achievement and growth of student learning as part of program evaluation and school, district, and state accountability systems;

- Provide valid, reliable, and fair measures of students' progress toward, and attainment of the knowledge and skills required to be college- and career-ready; and

- Capitalize on the strengths of computer adaptive testing—efficient and precise measurement across the full range of achievement and quick turnaround of results.

More information about the development of summative assessment is available in the Summative Assessment Work Plan.

Optional interim assessments administered at locally determined intervals. These assessments will provide educators with actionable information about student progress throughout the year. Like the summative assessment, the interim assessments will be computer adaptive and includes performance tasks. The interim assessments will:

Help teachers, students, and parents understand whether students are on track, and identify strengths and limitations in relation to the Common Core State Standards;

Be fully accessible for instruction and professional development (non-secure); and

Support the development of state end-of-course tests.

Formative assessment practices and strategies are the basis for a digital library of professional development materials, resources, and tools aligned to the Common Core State Standards and Smarter Balanced claims and assessment targets. Research-based instructional tools will be available on-demand to help teachers address learning challenges and differentiate instruction. The digital library will include professional development materials related to all components of the assessment system, such as scoring rubrics for performance tasks.

More information about the development of formative assessment tools and resources is available in the Formative Assessment Work Plan.

A **secure, online reporting system** that provides assessment results to students, parents, teachers, and administrators. The reports will show student achievement and progress toward mastery of the Common Core State Standards. Learn more about the development of the Smarter Balanced reporting system.

Preliminary Test Blueprints

The Smarter Balanced preliminary test blueprints describe the content of the English language arts/literacy and mathematics summative assessments for grades 3–8 and high school—and how that content will be assessed. Developed with broad input from member states, partners, and stakeholders, the preliminary test blueprints reflect the depth and breadth of the performance expectations of the Common Core State Standards. Smarter Balanced Governing States adopted the preliminary summative test blueprints in November 2012.

The test blueprints include critical information about the number of items, score points, and depth of knowledge for items associated with each assessment target. They will guide the development of items and performance tasks, the Pilot and Field Tests, score reporting, standard setting, and ongoing research. These blueprints are “preliminary” because they establish assessment design features that may be subject to refinement and revision after the analysis of the Pilot and Field Tests.

Smarter Balanced Preliminary Summative Assessment Blueprints (PDF)

Supporting Document: Scoring Reporting and Estimated Testing Times (PDF)

Content Specifications

Smarter Balanced is developing content specifications in English language arts/literacy and mathematics to ensure that the assessments cover the range of knowledge and skills in the Common Core State Standards. Once finalized, the content specifications will serve as the basis for the Smarter Balanced system of summative and interim assessments and formative assessment support for teachers.

Dr. Linda Darling-Hammond, Smarter Balanced Senior Research Advisor and professor of education at the Stanford University School of Education, led the development of the content specifications in collaboration with experts in the field. The Smarter Balanced Technical Advisory Committee, Consortium work groups, and the lead authors of the Common Core State Standards also contributed to the documents. Hundreds of organizations and individual stakeholders provided feedback during two rounds of public comment.

English Language Arts/Literacy Content Specifications (1/6/12 draft)

ELA/Literacy Appendices D-F (9/19/11 draft)

ELA/Literacy Webinar (YouTube) (SchoolTube)

Mathematics Content Specifications (3/20/12 draft)

Mathematics Webinar (YouTube) (SchoolTube)

Item/Task Specifications

Item and performance task specifications provide guidance on how to translate the Smarter Balanced Content Specifications into actual assessment items. In addition, guidelines for bias and sensitivity, accessibility and accommodations, and style help item developers and reviewers ensure consistency and fairness across the item bank. The specifications and guidelines were reviewed by member states, school districts, higher education, and other stakeholders.

Item Specifications

General Item Specifications (PDF)

Smarter Balanced Bibliography (PDF)

English Language Arts/Literacy

ELA General Item and Task Specifications (PDF)

ELA Grades 3-5 (ZIP)

ELA Grades 6-8 (ZIP)

ELA Grades 9-11 (ZIP)

ELA Rubrics (PDF)

ELA Stimulus Specifications (PDF)

ELA Stimuli (ZIP)

Issues Related to Stimulus and Item Development (PDF)

Mathematics

Mathematics General Item and Task Specifications Grades 3-5 (PDF)

Mathematics Grades 3-5 (ZIP)

Mathematics General Item and Task Specifications Grades 6-8 (PDF)

Mathematics Grades 6-8 (ZIP)

Mathematics General Item and Task Specifications High School (PDF)

Mathematics High School (ZIP)

Technology Enhanced Items

Technology Enhanced Item Guidelines (PDF)

Technology Enhanced Item Supporting Materials (ZIP)

Performance Tasks

Performance Tasks Specifications (PDF)

Performance Tasks Writing Rubrics (PDF)

Guidelines

General Accessibility Guidelines (PDF)

ELA Audio Guidelines (PDF)

Mathematics Audio Guidelines (PDF)

ELL Guidelines (PDF)

Signing Guidelines (PDF)

Tactile Guidelines (PDF)

Bias and Sensitivity Guidelines (PDF)

Style Guide (PDF)



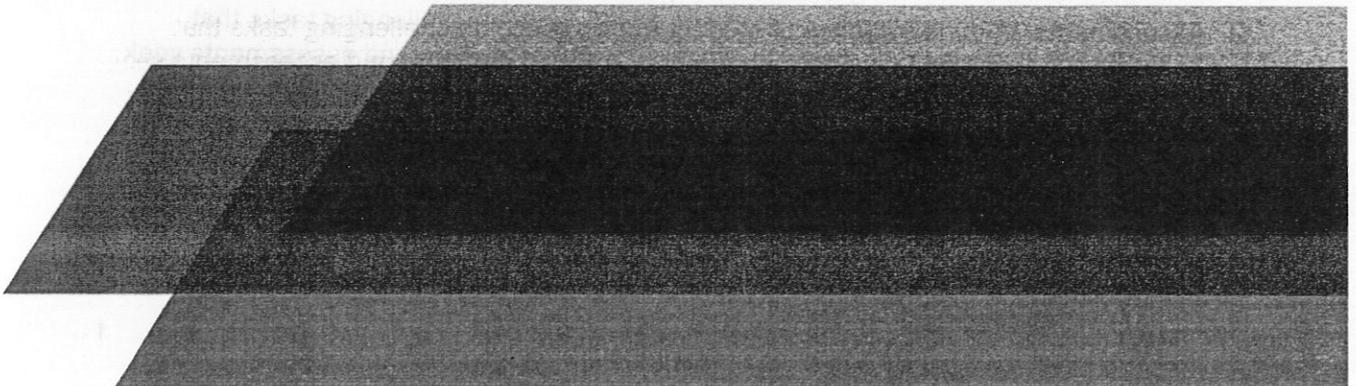
The Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium (Smarter Balanced) supports the development and implementation of learning and assessment systems to assess progress in the standards in participating states in order to improve student outcomes. Smarter Balanced believes that the current "do it for us" approach to educational testing is not effective for too many teachers and students. Through expanded use of technology and the system of assessment, the Consortium's Theory of Action calls for all aspects of the learning and assessment system, leading to more informed decisions regarding high-quality instruction, additional to increased numbers of students who are prepared for college and careers.

The Consortium's goal is to ensure that all students have the opportunity to prepare for postsecondary success. The Consortium's goal is to ensure that all students have the opportunity to prepare for postsecondary success. The Consortium's goal is to ensure that all students have the opportunity to prepare for postsecondary success. The Consortium's goal is to ensure that all students have the opportunity to prepare for postsecondary success.

Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium

Theory of Action
An excerpt from the Smarter Balanced
Race to the Top Application

June 2010



The Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium (Smarter Balanced) supports the development and implementation of learning and assessment systems to radically reshape the education enterprise in participating States in order to improve student outcomes. Smarter Balanced believes that the current “drop from the sky” approaches to educational testing are ineffective for too many teachers and students. Through expanded use of technology and targeted professional development, the Consortium’s Theory of Action calls for full integration of the learning and assessment systems, leading to more informed decision-making and higher-quality instruction, and ultimately to increased numbers of students who are well prepared for college and careers.

The overarching goal of Smarter Balanced is ***to ensure that all students leave high school prepared for postsecondary success in college or a career through increased student learning and improved teaching.*** Our approach is rooted in the belief that stronger learning will result from high-quality assessments that support ongoing improvements in instruction and learning, and that are educative for students, parents, teachers, school administrators, members of the public, and policymakers. Meeting this goal will require the reform and coordination of many elements across the education system, including, but not limited to, a quality assessment system that strategically “balances” summative, interim, and formative components (Darling-Hammond & Pecheone, 2010); provides valid measurement across the full range of common rigorous academic standards, including assessment of deep disciplinary understanding and higher-order thinking skills that are increasingly demanded by a knowledge-based economy; and by the establishment of clear, internationally benchmarked performance expectations. Other elements that are outside the Consortium’s direct scope of work, but not outside its influence, are comprehensive pre-service and in-service professional development and focused and valid systems of accountability.

Seven Principles Undergirding the Theory of Action

Our assessment proposal is shaped by a set of seven principles shared by both assessment systems in high-achieving nations and a number of high-achieving States in the U.S.

- 1. Assessments are grounded in a thoughtful, standards-based curriculum and are managed as part of an integrated system** of standards, curriculum, assessment, instruction, and teacher development. Curriculum and assessments are organized around a well-defined set of learning progressions along multiple dimensions within subject areas. Formative and interim/benchmark assessments and instructional supports are conceptualized in tandem with summative assessments—all of them linked to the standards and supported by a unified technology platform.
- 2. Assessments produce evidence of student performance** on challenging tasks that evaluate the Common Core State Standards (CCSS). Instruction and assessments seek to teach and evaluate knowledge and skills that generalize and can transfer to higher education and multiple work domains. They emphasize deep knowledge of core concepts and ideas within and across the disciplines—along with analysis, synthesis, problem solving, communication, and critical thinking—thereby requiring a focus on complex performances as well as on specific concepts, facts, and skills.

3. **Teachers are integrally involved in the development and scoring of assessments.** While many assessment components are efficiently scored with computer assistance, teachers must also be involved in the formative and summative assessment systems so that they deeply understand and can teach in a manner that is consistent with the full intent of the standards, while becoming more skilled in their own assessment practices.
4. **The development and implementation of the assessment system is a State-led effort with a transparent and inclusive governance structure.** Since December 2009, Smarter Balanced has hosted weekly conference calls and several face-to-face meetings open to all States interested in establishing a Consortium of States for the development of assessments aligned to the CCSS. Those activities have resulted in a governance structure that has established a consensus decision-making model and clear leadership roles. Each State's commitment to our collaborative process and products will facilitate the development of our complex system and signal ongoing support for its implementation.
5. **Assessments are structured to continuously improve teaching and learning.** Assessment as, of, and for learning is designed to develop understanding of what learning standards are, what high-quality work looks like, what growth is occurring, and what is needed for student learning.
6. **Assessment, reporting, and accountability systems provide useful information on multiple measures that is educative for all stakeholders.** Reporting of assessment results is timely and meaningful—offering specific information about areas of performance so that teachers can follow up with targeted instruction, students can better target their own efforts, and administrators and policymakers can more fully understand what students know and can do, in order to guide curriculum and professional development decisions.
7. **Design and implementation strategies adhere to established professional standards.** The development of an integrated, balanced assessment system is an enormous undertaking, requiring commitment to established quality standards in order for the system to be credible, fair, and technically sound. Smarter Balanced is committed to developing an assessment system that meets all Critical Elements required by USED Peer Review, relying heavily on the Standards for Educational and Psychological Testing (AERA, APA, NCME, 1999) as its core resource for quality design. Other key sources of professional standards that will guide Smarter Balanced work include a reasoning-from-evidence approach (e.g., see NRC, 2001; Mislevy, Almond, & Lukas, 2004); Operational Best Practices in Large Scale Assessment (ATP, CCSSO, in press); and the ANSI-endorsed Student Evaluation Standards, Program Evaluation Standards, and Personnel Evaluation Standards (JCSEE, 2002, 1994, 2008, respectively).

Components of the Theory of Action

Presented below are the components of the Consortium's Theory of Action, including connections to other system components, the results to be produced, and some of the key related Consortium activities. A pictorial schematic of the Smarter Balanced Theory of Action is found in Appendix A2-1. While this figure presents the Theory of Action in a somewhat linear fashion, this is simply a limitation of representing a complex system in two dimensions

and on a single page. The actual Theory of Action is much more recursive and multidimensional than graphically depicted.

Consortium and State policies and practices support high expectations and increased learning opportunities for students.

A major working assumption of the Consortium is that assessment reform must operate within the context of State policies and practices that can either support or hinder realization of the overall goal to have students graduate from high school as college- and career-ready. Thus, Smarter Balanced has committed to creating a policy environment that can support the innovative systems described in the design section of this proposal. Supportive policies would include the development of accountability systems that incentivize the right behaviors for administrators and teachers, and avoid inadvertently rewarding behaviors that would run counter to the learning goals. Another example is policy for provision of ongoing professional development structures and support for teachers.

The assessment system is aligned to a common set of State standards that clearly specify college, career, and grade-level expectations.

A State policy that is fundamental to the Smarter Balanced Theory of Action is adoption of the Common Core State Standards (CCSS), which clearly specify college and career expectations as well as the knowledge and skills required at each grade level to meaningfully articulate progress toward these end-of-high-school expectations. These “fewer, higher, and deeper” standards—influenced by findings that high-achieving countries typically teach fewer topics more deeply—will serve as the basis for the comprehensive assessment system. And while it is critical that the assessment system validly reflects these standards, Smarter Balanced must interpret or translate these standards before they can be used effectively for assessment or instruction. Specific steps include the following.

1. Ensure that each member State adopts the CCSS by December 31, 2011.
2. Translate the standards into content/curricular frameworks, test maps, and item/performance event specifications to provide assessment specificity and to clarify the connections between instructional processes and assessment outcomes.

Smarter Balanced policies and standards are effectively communicated to districts and schools.

Enacting policies and having standards is not enough. A major lesson learned by Smarter Balanced member States is that clear and timely communication of policies and practices is essential for successful implementation of a new system. Effective communication is critical in the short term to signal change, and over the longer term to implement change. Specific steps include the following:

1. Develop a multimedia communications plan that is implemented by each member State to educate stakeholders about key aspects of college and career expectations.
2. Develop score reports that clearly communicate about the assessment system and the results to key stakeholder groups.

Teachers are provided with curriculum, instructional materials, rich professional development, and other supports and resources to effectively instruct students on the standards.

While effective communication with teachers is essential, the Smarter Balanced model calls for a fuller level of teacher engagement in an integrated learning and assessment system, which requires that teachers receive adequate supports and resources. This system component, central to the design of the Smarter Balanced system, encompasses many different teacher support features. Specific aspects include

1. Model curriculum and instructional modules that are aligned with the CCSS.
2. Training modules that help teachers focus their instruction on the CCSS and develop teaching practices that support more in-depth learning.
3. Training of teachers to use formative assessment tools and interim/benchmark assessments as well as to interpret results and use those results to determine next steps in instruction.
4. Teacher-moderated scoring of performance events as a professional development vehicle to enhance teacher capacity to evaluate student work aligned to the standards.
5. Online interpretable score reports at the student and classroom level that clearly show strengths and weaknesses and can be tailored to fit individual needs and circumstances.

Technology provides increased access and opportunities for students to fully engage in the learning and assessment systems and supports the design, delivery, scoring, and reporting of the assessment system.

Innovative and efficient use of technology is the hallmark of the Smarter Balanced model. The Smarter Balanced Theory of Action posits that technology solutions for test delivery will provide students with increased access to the assessment and will yield more accurate measurement of their acquisition of knowledge and skills. For example, use of computer adaptive testing (CAT) methodologies will ensure that students across the full range of performance have an assessment experience that presents them with items that are best suited to their skill level. Average-, very low-, and very high-performing students will be more likely to stay engaged in the assessment because they will be responding to questions targeted to their skill level.

The computer delivery system broadens the availability of the accommodations while establishing a less restrictive testing environment for students with special needs. The system will also support several formalized accommodations. For example, text-to-speech and aural native language translations can be supported if students are tested in isolation, or if they have access to headphones. Refreshable Braille can also be supported with online tests.

Just as technology will support student access and engagement, it will also lead to more valid and timely reporting of assessment results, and lead to efficiencies and enhancements for professional development and resource tools. Specifically, Smarter Balanced will

1. Ensure that all students are provided with the technology needed for all aspects of the Smarter Balanced assessment system (summative, interim/benchmark, and formative).
2. Support research on how best to increase access for all students through the use of technology.
3. Use technology to efficiently deliver training programs, resources, score reports, data, etc., including interactive Web-based social networks designed for teacher use in the development and dissemination of effective curriculum and instructional practices.
4. Create innovative and real-world item types that rely on technology platforms.
5. Use adaptive item selection engines, drawing on a broad item pool, to ensure that accurate measures of student achievement are possible across a wide performance continuum without undue burden.
6. Establish accommodation protocols that capitalize on technological capabilities to support broader access to assessments for all students, including those most at risk.
7. Standardize member State accommodation policies through a coordinated Enhanced Assessment Grant.

A high-quality summative assessment system establishes high expectations and provides relevant information on achievement and growth to teachers, students, and others.

Assessments must be carefully structured to improve teaching and learning. This means establishing summative assessments that reflect the challenging CCSS content, emphasizing not just students' "knowing," but also "doing." Smarter Balanced envisions a summative assessment system composed of interactive selected-response and constructed-response items and simulations as well as teacher-developed performance events that measure the full range of student abilities on the CCSS. The incorporation of CAT is based on member States' positive experiences with this methodology (e.g., Oregon) and the many benefits it affords, such as precision of measurement and timely results (Kosty, McBride, Poggio, Wise, & Way, 2006; Lilley, Barker, & Britton, 2004; Rabinowitz, 2005). The summative assessment will accomplish the following:

1. Signal high expectations to students, parents, teachers, administrators, and policymakers.
2. Provide efficient, reliable, and valid information across the full range of achievement.
3. Engage IHEs at the high school level to ensure that assessments truly reflect a measure of readiness for college and careers.
4. Provide explicit measures of student progress toward college- and career-readiness through growth models and criterion-validity studies.
5. Promote policy alignment by establishing internationally benchmarked achievement standards that are common across Consortium States and that are comparable across multiple consortia.

Interim/benchmark (I/B) assessments and formative tools and strategies are integrated with the summative assessments to provide instructionally useful information to teachers, students, and administrators.

While a rigorous summative assessment is essential, Smarter Balanced believes that it is insufficient to drive positive change in teaching and learning. Informed by the recent experiences in England and Hong Kong, Smarter Balanced posits that I/B and formative assessments are the other necessary assessment ingredients to drive teaching and learning (Darling-Hammond & Pechone, 2010). As such, I/B and formative assessments will be developed and implemented directly under the purview of the Consortium—not simply adopted from external sources. Grounded in cognitive development theory about how learning progresses across grades and competence develops over time (NRC, 2001; Pellegrino, 2006; Stiggins, 2002), the assessments will (a) work in concert with the summative assessment, (b) allow for more innovative and fine-grained measurement of student progress toward the CCSS (Shepard, Hammerness, Darling-Hammond, & Rust, 2005), and (c) provide diagnostic information that can help tailor instruction and guide students in their own learning efforts. Besides its close connection to the summative component, this component will also operate in tandem with the teacher resources and supports component as well as the teacher engagement component (see below). The main features that Smarter Balanced will incorporate into its comprehensive system include

1. I/B assessments on the same scale as the summative assessments to measure within-year student achievement and provide teachers and students with information on the degree to which students are on track to succeeding on the summative assessments.
2. Interpretative guides, using the publicly released I/B assessment items and performance events to illustrate how Smarter Balanced assessments are manifestations of the CCSS.
3. Formative tools that teachers can use throughout the year to better understand where students are in their learning and determine any misconceptions, allowing for quick adjustment to instruction as well as differentiated instruction.

Teachers are engaged in the design, development, and scoring of assessment items and in the reporting of results.

The Smarter Balanced model envisages an integral role for teachers in an integrated learning and assessment system. This means teachers must be meaningfully engaged in all aspects of assessment. To that end, the Smarter Balanced model incorporates the following features:

1. Work with teachers and policy stakeholders to develop test maps that assess the full range of the CCSS and that articulate within and across grade levels.
2. Involve teachers in specifying, writing, reviewing, and range finding test items/performance events.
3. Use teacher-moderated scoring of performance events as a professional development vehicle to enhance teacher capacity to evaluate student work aligned to the standards.

Teachers, students, and administrators use information from instructionally useful assessments to improve teaching and learning.

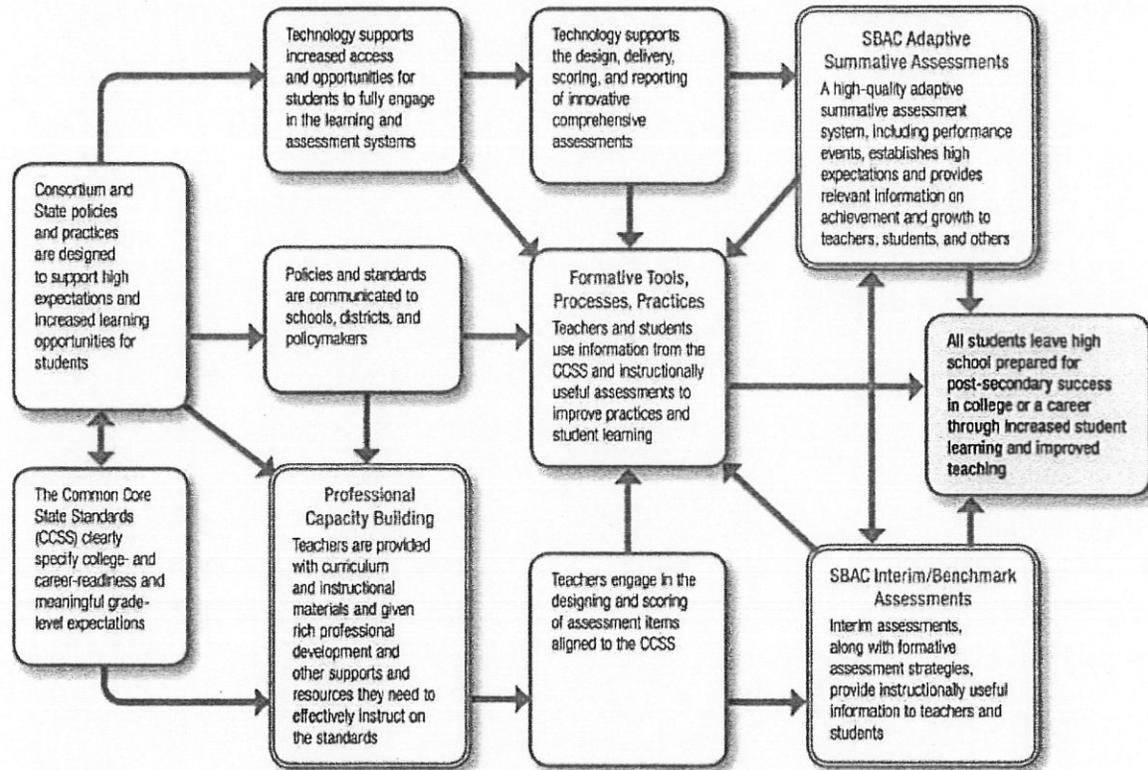
Information from assessment results must be delivered in ways that are instructionally useful for schools and teachers as well as meaningful and actionable for students (Popham, 2006). Making optimal use of technology, Smarter Balanced will

1. Fully involve teachers (and other end-users) in designing different score reports and web-enabled tools and services to maximize their communication value and usefulness.
2. Provide interactive reports and resources so that teachers fully understand performance for each student and the class as a whole.
3. Allow students to more fully engage in the learning process through ongoing interim/benchmark assessments that can be self-administered and reports that allow students to compare where they are to where they need to be.

In summary, the proposed Smarter Balanced learning and assessment system is grounded in a sound Theory of Action—taking advantage of current research and lessons from current practice—and incorporates a new generation of technology tools, innovative assessments, and state-of-the-art classroom support mechanisms to improve teacher and student capacity to meet the challenges in ensuring that all students are college- and career-ready.

SMARTER
Balanced Assessment Consortium

Overview of the Theory of Action



The Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium brings together states to create a common, innovative assessment system for Mathematics and English Language Arts that is aligned with the Common Core State Standards and helps prepare students for college and careers. The Consortium involves educators, researchers, policymakers, and community groups in a transparent and consensus-driven process to help all students thrive in a knowledge-driven global economy. The Consortium's projects are funded through a four-year, \$175 million grant from the U.S. Department of Education, comprising 99% of activity resources, with the remaining support provided through generous contributions of charitable foundations. Membership is open to any interested U.S. state. For more information, please visit SmarterBalanced.org.

The Smarter Balanced Technology Strategy Framework and System Requirements Specifications

The Smarter Balanced Technology Strategy Framework and System Requirements Specifications

This report presents a framework for collective technology planning among the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium member states. The plan emphasizes the critical need for technology to support student learning with the Smarter Balanced Assessment System minimum requirements as context and milestones. Key data was acquired and reviewed from a variety of sources including the Technology Readiness Tool and related survey information, state stakeholder discussions, Smarter Balanced advisory meetings and related research, and district interviews from across the Consortium.

Key Findings:

1. States implementing online, computer-adaptive assessments similar to the proposed Smarter Balanced Assessment System have done so effectively while adhering to tight budgetary provisions and implementation timelines.
2. Districts and educators within states that have made the transition to online, computer-adaptive tests find considerable value in the increased amount and specificity of performance data available, the expediency in which the data is accessible, and the cost-savings associated with online distribution and management of the assessment and the related data.
3. Much of the existing hardware devices currently deployed across school sites will effectively support the Smarter Balanced Assessment System; however, districts must focus on ensuring ample bandwidth provisions to support larger populations of students participating in testing through strategic scheduling and rotations throughout administration windows.

This report, as commissioned by the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium, provides minimum recommended hardware specifications and basic bandwidth calculations required to successfully administer the Smarter Balanced assessment solution. Districts are urged to review the following tables along with the full document, as well as reference the Smarter Balanced website (<http://www.smarterbalanced.org>) regularly for up-to-date information. Taken together, these materials, and the approaches contained within them, will help all districts strategically prepare for a full and successful implementation of the Smarter Balanced assessment.





Hardware and Software Requirements Overview

Operating System	Minimum Smarter Balanced Requirements for Current Computers ^{1,2,3}	Recommended Smarter Balanced Minimum for New Purchases
Windows	Windows XP (service pack 3) Pentium 233 MHz processor 128 MB RAM 52 MB hard drive free space	Windows 7+ 1GHz processor 1GB RAM 80 GB hard drive
Mac OS X	Mac OS X 10.4.4 Macintosh computer with Intel x86 or PowerPC G3 (300 MHz) processor, 256 MB RAM, 200 MB hard drive free space	Mac OS X 10.7+ 1 GHz processor 1GB RAM 80 GB hard drive
Linux	Linux (Ubuntu 9-10, Fedora 6) Pentium II or AMD K6-III 233 MHz processor 64 MB RAM 52 MB hard drive free space	Linux (Ubuntu 11.10, Fedora 16) 1 GHz processor 1GB RAM 80 GB hard drive
iOS	iPads 2 and 3 running iOS6	iPads running iOS6
Android	Android-based tablets running Android 4.0+	Android-based tablets running Android 4.0+
Windows	Windows-based tablets running Windows 8+	Windows-based tablets running Windows 8+
Chrome OS	Chromebooks running Chrome OS (v19)+	Chromebooks running Chrome OS (v19)+

Minimum Computer Requirements

Minimum requirements represent a low compliance threshold. Districts should attempt to exceed these requirements as many machines operating at these levels could struggle with sufficient on-board memory and processing to run secure browsers as well as other simultaneous running programs accumulated on the device over time.

¹ The minimum Smarter Balanced requirements are generally equivalent to the minimum requirements of the associated eligible operating system. Users should refer to the minimum requirements of the operating system as a means of resolving any ambiguities in the minimum Smarter Balanced requirements.

² These guidelines do not supersede the minimum requirements of the operating systems.

³ All hardware choices should consider the individual needs of students. Some students may need hardware that exceeds these minimum guidelines, and some students may require qualitatively different hardware.

The Smarter Balanced Technology Strategy Framework and System Requirements Specifications

Additional Requirements Applicable across Operating Systems:

Device Requirements	Minimum Smarter Balanced Requirements for Current Computers	
Screen Size	10" class or larger 1024 x 768 resolution	
Headphones/earphones	Available to students for use during the English language arts test and for students who require text-to-speech features on the mathematics test	<p><i>Minimum Requirements for Other Devices</i></p> <p>Minimum requirements represent a low compliance threshold. Ultimately, districts should attempt to exceed these requirements as many machines operating at these levels could struggle with sufficient on-board memory and processing to run secure browsers as well as other simultaneous running programs accumulated on the device over time.</p>
Security	The device must have the administrative tools and capabilities to temporarily disable features, functionalities, and applications that could present a security risk during test administration.	
Keyboards	Mechanical keyboards must be available unless students use alternative input devices as part of their classroom instruction.	
Form Factors	No restriction as long as the device meets the other stated requirements. These forms include desktops, laptops, netbooks, virtual desktops and thin clients ⁴ , tablets (iPad, Windows, Chromebooks, and Android), and hybrid laptop/tablets.	
Network	Must connect to the Internet with approximately 10–20 Kbps available per student to be tested simultaneously	

⁴ The resources (e.g., memory and processors) available to each client need to be equivalent or greater to the requirements for standalone hardware.



Additionally, Smarter Balanced anticipates projected dates by which various operating systems will be deemed insufficient support for the Smarter Balanced Assessment System. The table on the next page shows anticipated Smarter Balanced end of support dates for various operating systems in use across districts.

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Please refer to the full Smarter Balanced Technology Strategy Framework and Systems Requirements Specifications document on the Smarter Balanced website for a comprehensive reporting of all related information.

<http://www.smarterbalanced.org>.

The Smarter Balanced Technology Strategy Framework and System Requirements Specifications

Operating System (OS)	OS Release Date	Anticipated Smarter Balanced End of Support Date
Mac 10.4.4	January 2006	Spring 2015 ⁵
Mac 10.5	October 2007	Spring 2017
Mac 10.6	August 2009	Spring 2019
Mac 10.7	July 2011	Spring 2021
Mac 10.8	July 2012	Spring 2022
Windows XP (SP 3)	October 2008	Spring 2015 ⁵
Windows Vista	January 2007	Spring 2017
Windows 7	October 2009	Spring 2020
Windows 8	October 2012	Spring 2022
Windows Server 2003	April 2003	Spring 2015
Windows Server 2008	October 2009	Spring 2019
Linux (Fedora Core 6 (K12LTSP 4.2+))	November 2007	Spring 2017 ⁶
Linux Ubuntu 9-12	October 2009	Spring 2019 ⁶
iOS 6	June 2012	TBD ⁶
Android 4.x	October 2011	TBD ⁶
Windows 8	October 2012	TBD
Chrome OS	Rolling Release	TBD ⁶

⁵ While the entire end of support plan will be reviewed annually with the Architecture Review Board, these particular OS versions will be emphasized and may require more detailed conversations.

⁶ This operating system may have a lower cost to update than do traditional operating systems and will be placed on an expedited end of support cycle until the new operating system version becomes incompatible with legacy hardware that is otherwise considered eligible by Smarter Balanced.



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National Center and State Collaborative (NCSC)

Link to NCSC GSEG Web site:
<http://www.ncscpartners.org/>

General Supervision Enhancement Grant (GSEG)

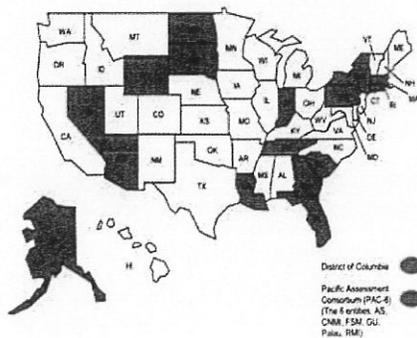


Developing a system of assessments supported by curriculum, instruction, and professional development to ensure that students with significant cognitive disabilities achieve increasingly higher academic outcomes and leave high school ready for post-secondary options.

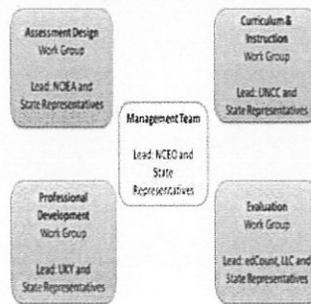
Who We Are

The organizational partners include the National Center on Educational Outcomes (NCEO) as the host and fiscal agent, along with the National Center for the Improvement of Educational Assessment (NCIEA), the University of Kentucky (UKY), University of North Carolina at Charlotte (UNCC), edCount, LLC, and 19 state partners: Alaska, Arizona, Connecticut, District of Columbia, Florida, Georgia, Indiana, Louisiana, Massachusetts, Nevada, New York, North Dakota, Pacific Assessment Consortium (PAC-6)*, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, South Carolina, South Dakota, Tennessee, and Wyoming.

* The PAC-6 includes the 6 entities (American Samoa, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Guam, Republic of Palau, Republic of the Marshall Islands) that partner as 1 state, led by the University of Guam Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities Education, Research, and Service (CEDDERS).



NCSC Work Group Structure



Materials and resources for more information - more will be posted as project products are developed - check back!

Note: Some of the files below require Acrobat Reader. If you don't have this software, go to [Acrobat Reader](#) for a free download.

- a. [NCSC Kickoff handout](#)
- b. [NCSC Proposal Narrative](#)
- c. [NCSC Theory of Action](#)
- d. [NAAC/NCEO Alternate Assessment Online Bibliography](#)
- e. [NAAC Proposed Typology of AA-AAS Approaches](#)
- f. [NAAC Proposed Typology of AA-AAS Scoring Methods](#)
- g. [Common Misperceptions and Research-based Recommendations on AA-AAS](#)
- h. [NCSC Tier II affiliated state option](#)

E-mail Project Director Rachel Quenemoen at atquene003@umn.edu for more information.

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**COLLEGE OF EDUCATION
+ HUMAN DEVELOPMENT**

UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

NCEO is supported primarily through a Cooperative Agreement (#H326G050007, #H326G110002) with the Research to Practice Division, Office of Special Education Programs, U.S. Department of Education. Additional support for targeted projects, including those on LEP students, is provided by other federal and state agencies. The Center is affiliated with the [Institute on Community Integration](#) at the [College of Education and Human Development](#), [University of Minnesota](#). Opinions expressed in this Web site do not necessarily reflect those of the U.S. Department of Education or Offices within it.

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This page was last updated on January 03, 2013

NCSC THEORY OF ACTION - DRAFT 3.31.11

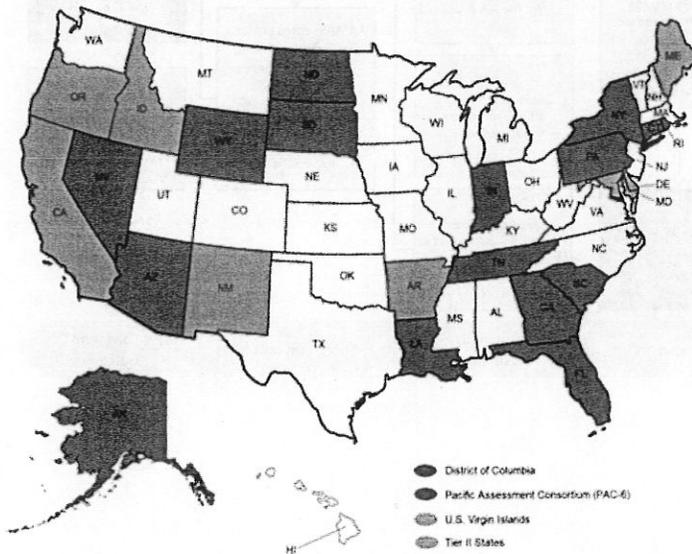
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NCSC PARTNERS

Partner States

Mar 5 2012 2:57 PM

Our eighteen state partners include: Alaska, Arizona, Connecticut, District of Columbia, Florida, Georgia, Indiana, Louisiana, Nevada, New York, North Dakota, Pacific Assessment Consortium (PAC-6), Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, South Carolina, South Dakota, Tennessee, and Wyoming. Note: The 6 entities (American Samoa, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Guam, Republic of Palau, Republic of the Marshall Islands) partner as one state, led by the University of Guam's Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities Education, Research, and Service (CEDDERS).



Tier II Affiliated States

As of September 2012, the Tier II affiliated states with NCSC include Arkansas, California, Delaware, Idaho, Maine, Maryland, New Mexico, Oregon, and the US Virgin Islands. If NCSC products and processes are to be sustainable past the grant life, other states must be able to implement them without intensive support from project staff. Tier II states will provide usability and sustainability tests to refine our products before releasing them for broad dissemination in 2015. These states must agree to implement the final NCSC resources into their current training and dissemination mechanisms. They will provide feedback on usability and outcomes using NCSC provided tools and protocols for each product and process that we release for Tier II use. For more information, click [here \(PDF\)](#).



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NCSC PARTNERS

About the NCSC

Mar 5 2012 12:19 PM

The National Center and State Collaborative (NCSC) is applying the lessons learned from the past decade of research on alternate assessments based on alternate achievement standards (AA-AAS) to develop a multi-state comprehensive assessment system for students with significant cognitive disabilities. The project draws on a strong research base to develop an AA-AAS that is built from the ground up on powerful validity arguments linked to clear learning outcomes and defensible assessment results, to complement the work of the Race to the Top Common State Assessment Program (RTTA) consortia.

Our long-term goal is to ensure that students with significant cognitive disabilities achieve increasingly higher academic outcomes and leave high school ready for post-secondary options. A well-designed summative assessment alone is insufficient to achieve that goal. Thus, NCSC is developing a full system intended to support educators, which includes formative assessment tools and strategies, professional development on appropriate interim uses of data for progress monitoring, and management systems to ease the burdens of administration and documentation. All partners share a commitment to the research-to-practice focus of the project and the development of a comprehensive model of curriculum, instruction, assessment, and supportive professional development. These supports will improve the alignment of the entire system and strengthen the validity of inferences of the system of assessments.

- Our Partner States
- Our Partner Organizations

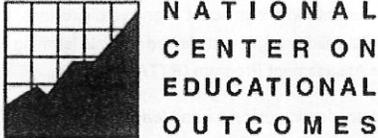


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NCSC PARTNERS

Partner Organizations
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The National Center on Educational Outcomes (NCEO) is the fiscal host for NCSC and leads the management team, technical advisory committee, and all project management functions.



The Center For Assessment leads the summative assessment team and will provide content and assessment design expertise across the other curricular/instructional resources and capacity building teams.



The University of North Carolina at Charlotte leads the curricular/instructional resources team while providing severe disabilities, content, and curricular development expertise to the summative assessment and capacity building teams.



The University of Kentucky leads the capacity building team and provides expertise in severe disabilities, communication strategies, and learner characteristics to the other teams.



edCount, LLC leads the validity evaluation work providing formative and summative validity evaluation findings and feedback to each team and project management. Additionally, edCount provides direct oversight to the external project evaluator and hosts the vendor contracts for the components of assessment implementation.



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Frequently Asked Questions

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Why do we need a new alternate assessment?

The national consensus around college and career ready standards based on real-world expectations presents an opportunity to raise expectations for all students, including students with significant cognitive disabilities. As states build common general assessments that measure college and career readiness, as defined grade by grade in the Common Core State Standards, we need an alternate assessment based on the same foundation of rigorous real-world content, while taking into account these students' unique learner characteristics.

What does 'college and career ready' mean for students with significant cognitive disabilities?

The terminology of "college and career ready" as defined by educational experts and policy makers may seem out of reach for many students with the most significant cognitive disabilities, but the skill sets associated with these standards are important and meaningful for these students. For students with significant cognitive disabilities, we are only beginning to learn what is possible with the benefit of 12 years of systematic instruction in communication, reading, math, and other rigorous content. The NCSC project will work with key research and practice partners to rethink our ideas of what is possible for these students by operating on the principle of the "least dangerous assumption."

How will my state's participation in the NCSC project affect the way that my district serves and assesses students with the most significant cognitive disabilities?

Your district will have access to all of the curricular, instructional support, and professional development materials developed through NCSC for teachers of students with the most significant cognitive disabilities. The alternate assessment will be based on the best research available about how these students build competence in academics and how to prepare them for life after high school. NCSC will also design systems to ease the burden of administering the alternate assessment.

Will the C&I materials be accessible for all students who have the most significant cognitive disabilities, including those with the most complex challenges?

Yes. In order for any student to benefit from challenging curriculum and high quality instruction, they have to be able to communicate what they know and can do. In addition to intensive training for teachers and related service providers on communication strategies for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities, NCSC will produce materials at varying levels of complexity to meet students' unique learning needs, and will develop strong accommodations policies, procedures, and professional development.

When will the NCSC materials be available for use?

Teachers can start using the NCSC curriculum, instruction, and professional development resources as they are made available throughout the project. The final product will be a summative alternate assessment to be made available in the final year of the project.

Will the NCSC assessment be available to all states?

Yes. While only the original 18 partner states will have the opportunity to shape the design of the assessment system, all states will have access to all NCSC products after the project ends. In addition, other states can apply through September 2012 to become official beta tester/evaluation partners, as a Tier II affiliated partner.



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ASSESSMENT OPTIONS: 2015 AND BEYOND

	Build		Buy	
	ETS	Other	SBAC	Off the Shelf
Procurement Process	Contract amendment	RFP & Contract	RFP & Contract	RFP & Contract
Alignment	CCSS	CCSS	CCSS	CCSS
Vendor Familiarity with State Context	Good	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown
Cost	\$7.5 - \$8.5M	Unknown	Unknown ¹	Unknown
Reporting Detail	Determined by WY	Determined by WY	Unknown	Determined by Vendor
Time in Testing	5:40 - 7:10 ²	Determined by WY	7:00 - 8:30	Determined by Vendor
Ability to Customize Specs/Blueprint	Yes	Yes	No	No
Integrated Instructional Resources	No	Unknown	Yes	Unknown
Administration Mode	Paper/Pencil	Determined by WY RFP	Online Only	Determined by WY RFP
Integrated Interim Assessments	No, but Possible	Determined by WY RFP	Yes	Determined by WY RFP
Comparison to Other States	No	No	Yes	Unknown
Content	Rdg, Wr, Math, Sci	Determined by WY	Rdg, Wr, Math	Unknown
Item Types	Determined by WY	Determined by WY RFP	Determined by SBAC	Unknown
Instructionally Supportive	Yes	Determined by WY RFP	System - Y; Summative - N	Determined by WY RFP
Accessibility -- Spanish	Yes	Determined by WY	Yes	Unknown
Accessibility--Alternate Assessments	Yes	Determined by WY	No	Unknown
Technology Issues: Hardware/Bandwidth	No	No	Unknown ³	No
Testing Window	Determined by WY	Determined by WY	Determined by SBAC	Determined by WY
Integrated Formative Assessment Tools	No	Determined by WY RFP	Yes	Determined by WY RFP
Involve WY Teachers	Yes	Determined by WY	Yes	No

¹ SBAC currently estimates the cost of the entire assessment system at approximately \$30/student, but this hasn't been verified and is subject to additional costs by the vendor who would deliver the assessment to the state. It does not include the price for alternate assessments.

² This does NOT include writing, since it is separately administered per state statute. However, the SBAC time includes writing.

³ SBAC released minimum technology requirements on Dec. 4th, 2012; it is possible that not all WY districts meet these requirements.