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Assessment Consortium

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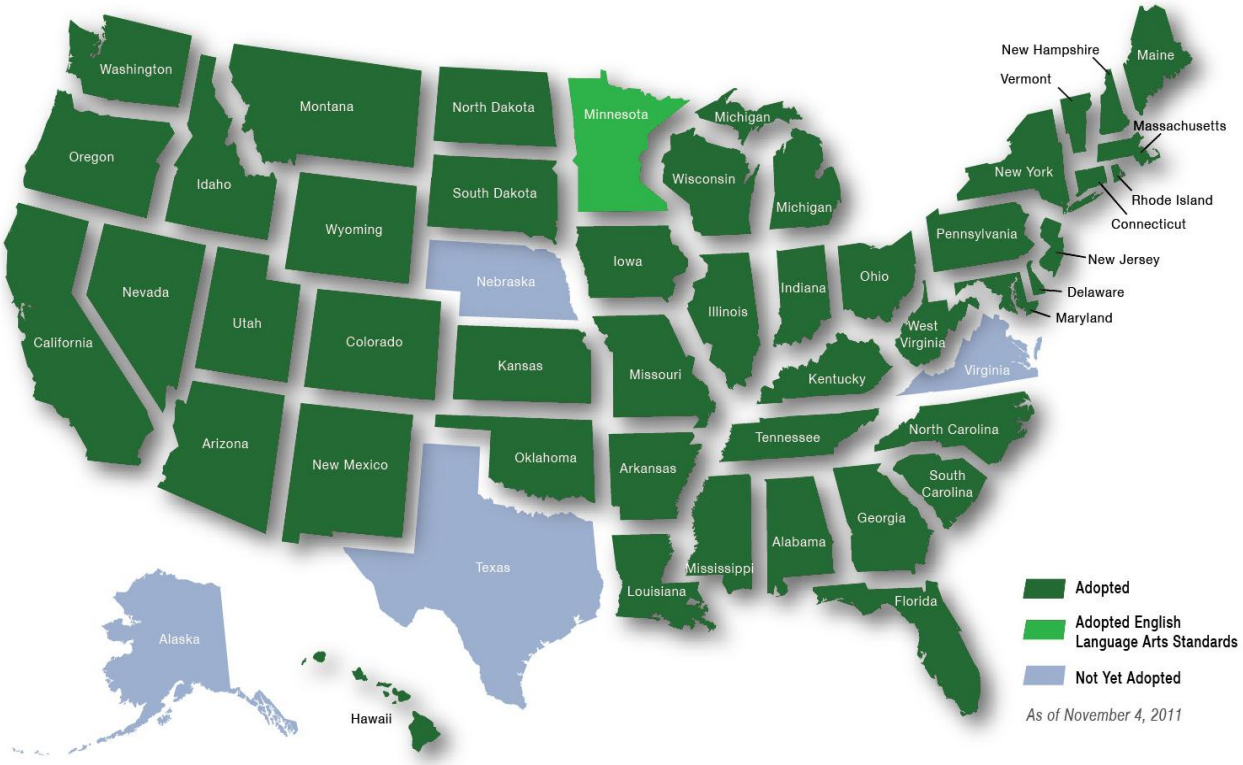
Common Core State Standards

- Define the knowledge and skills students need for college and career
- Developed voluntarily and cooperatively by states; more than 40 states have adopted
- Provide clear, consistent standards in English language arts/literacy and mathematics



Source: www.corestandards.org

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The Assessment Challenge

How do we get from here...

Common Core State Standards specify K-12 expectations for college and career readiness

...to here?

All students leave high school college and career ready

...and what can an assessment system do to help?

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Concerns with Today's Statewide Assessments

Each state pays for its own assessments	• Each state bears the burden of test development; no economies of scale
Based on state standards	• Students in many states leave high school unprepared for college or career
Heavy use of multiple choice	• Inadequate measures of complex skills and deep understanding
Results delivered long after tests are given	• Tests cannot be used to inform instruction or affect program decisions
Accommodations for special education and ELL students vary	• Difficult to interpret meaning of scores; concerns about access and fairness
Most administered on paper	• Costly, time consuming, and challenging to maintain security

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Next Generation Assessments

The U.S. Department of Education has funded two consortia of states with development grants for new assessments aligned to college- and career-ready standards

- Rigorous assessment of progress toward **"college and career readiness"**
- **Common cut scores** across all Consortium states
- Provide both **achievement and growth information**
- **Valid, reliable, and fair** for all students, except those with "significant cognitive disabilities"
- Administer **online**
- Use **multiple** measures
- **Operational in 2014-15** school year

Source: Federal Register / Vol. 75, No. 68 / Friday, April 9, 2010 pp. 18171-85

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Background

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The Purpose of the Consortium

- To develop a **comprehensive and innovative** assessment system for grades 3-8 and high school in English language arts and mathematics aligned to the Common Core State Standards, so that...
- ...students leave high school **prepared for postsecondary success** in college or a career through increased student learning and improved teaching

[The assessments shall be **operational** across Consortium states in the 2014-15 school year]

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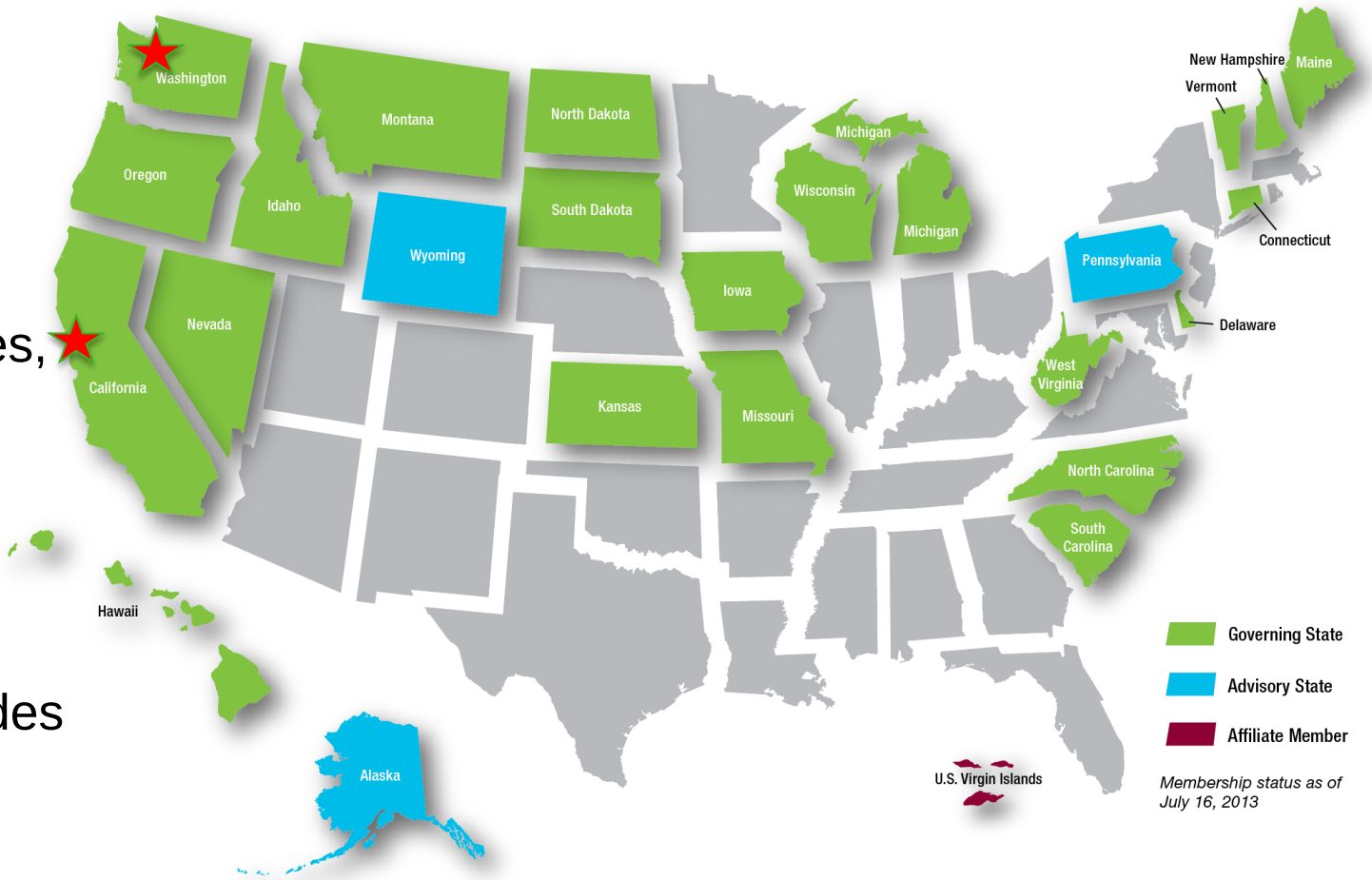
A National Consortium of States

- 26 member states and territories representing 39% of K-12 students
- 22 Governing States, 3 Advisory States, 1 Affiliate Member
- Washington state is fiscal agent
- WestEd provides project management services



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State Led

Committed to Transparency

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State-Led Governance

States Join Consortium as Governing or Advisory State

- Governors
- Education Chiefs
- State Legislatures
- State Boards of Education

State Representatives Serve on Executive Committee

- 2 elected co-chairs
- 4 representatives elected by governing states
- Lead procurement state (WA)
- Higher education representatives

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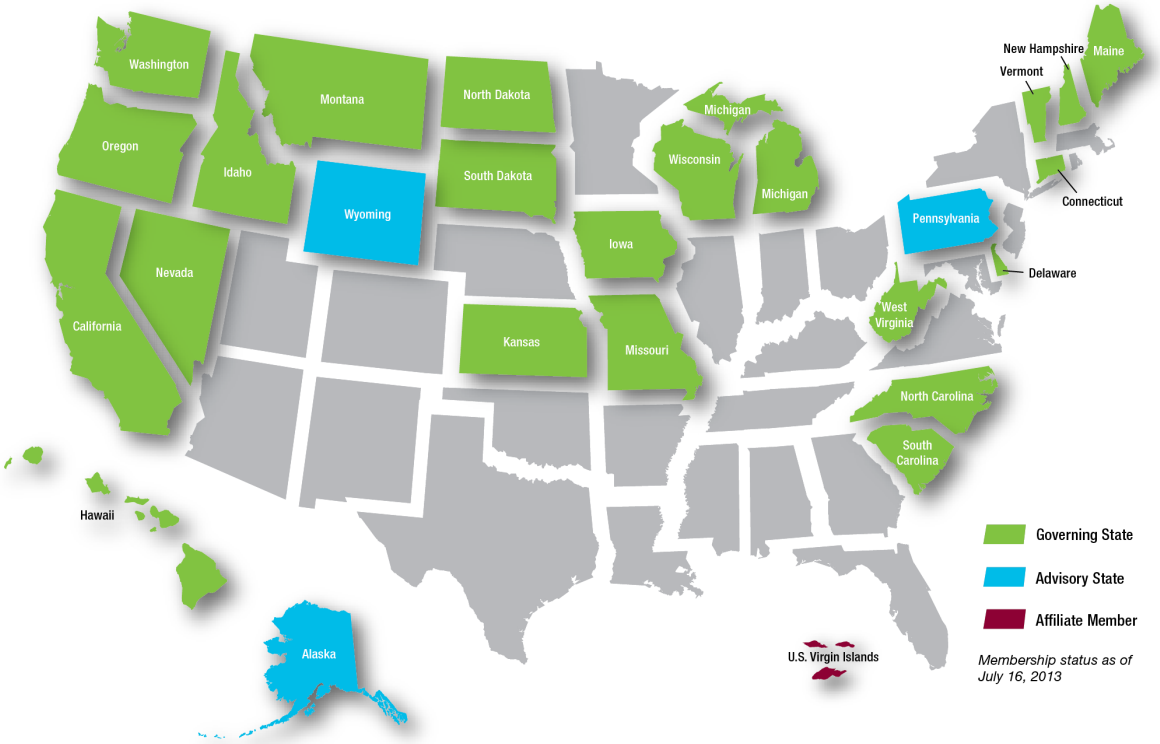
WestEd, Project Management Partner

Advisory Committees



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Who We Are

Executive Committee	• **Co-Chairs:** Deb Sigman (CA), Joseph Martineau, Ph.D. (MI) • **Committee:** Dan Hupp (ME); Michael Hock, Ph.D. (VT); Mike Middleton (WA); Lynette Russell, Ph.D. (WI); Luci Willits (ID); Charles Lenth, Ph.D. (SHEEO-Higher Education Representative); Beverly Young, Ph.D. (CA-Higher Education Representative)
Staff	• **Executive Director:** Joe Willhoft, Ph.D. • **Chief Operating Officer:** Tony Alpert • **Director of Strategic Communications and PIO:** Eddie Arnold, APR • **Lead Psychometrician:** Marty McCall, Ph.D. • **Chief Technology Officer:** Brandt Redd • **Director of Higher Education Collaboration:** Jacqueline King, Ph.D. • **Director of English Language Arts / Literacy:** Nikki Elliott-Schuman • **Director of Mathematics:** Shelbi Cole, Ph.D. • **Director of Support for Under-Represented Students:** Magda Chia, Ph.D. • **Director of Professional Learning:** Chrystyna V. Mursky, Ph.D. • **Director of State Services:** Dacia Hopfensperger
Advisors	• **Project Management:** WestEd (Stanley Rabinowitz, Ph.D., PMP Director) • **Policy Coordinator:** Sue Gendron, Ph.D. (former Maine Education Commissioner) • **Senior Research Advisor:** Linda Darling-Hammond, Ph.D. (Stanford University)

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Consortium Work Groups

Work group engagement of 100 state-level staff:

Each work group:

- Led by co-chairs from governing states
- 8 or more members from advisory or governing states and 3-4 higher education representatives
- 1-2 liaisons from the Executive Committee
- 1 WestEd partner

Work group responsibilities:

- Define scope and time line for work in its area
- Develop a work plan and resource requirements
- Determine and monitor the allocated budget
- Oversee Consortium work in its area, including identification and direction of vendors

1. Formative Assessment Practices/Transition to Common Core State Standards
2. Item Development/Performance Tasks
3. Technology Approach/Reporting
4. Test Administration/Student Access
5. Validation and Psychometrics/Test Design

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Technical Advisory Committee

Jamal Abedi, Ph.D.
UC Davis/CRESST

Randy Bennett, Ph.D.
ETS

Derek C. Briggs, Ph.D.
University of Colorado

Gregory J. Cizek, Ph.D.
University of North Carolina

David T. Conley, Ph.D.
University of Oregon

Linda Darling-Hammond, Ph.D.
Stanford University

Brian Gong, Ph.D.
The Center for Assessment

Edward Haertel, Ph.D.
Stanford University

Joan Herman, Ph.D.
UCLA/CRESST

G. Gage Kingsbury, Ph.D.
Psychometric Consultant

James W. Pellegrino, Ph.D.
University of Illinois, Chicago

W. James Popham, Ph.D.
UCLA, Emeritus

Joseph Ryan, Ph.D.
Arizona State University

Martha Thurlow, Ph.D.
University of Minnesota/NCEO

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Approach

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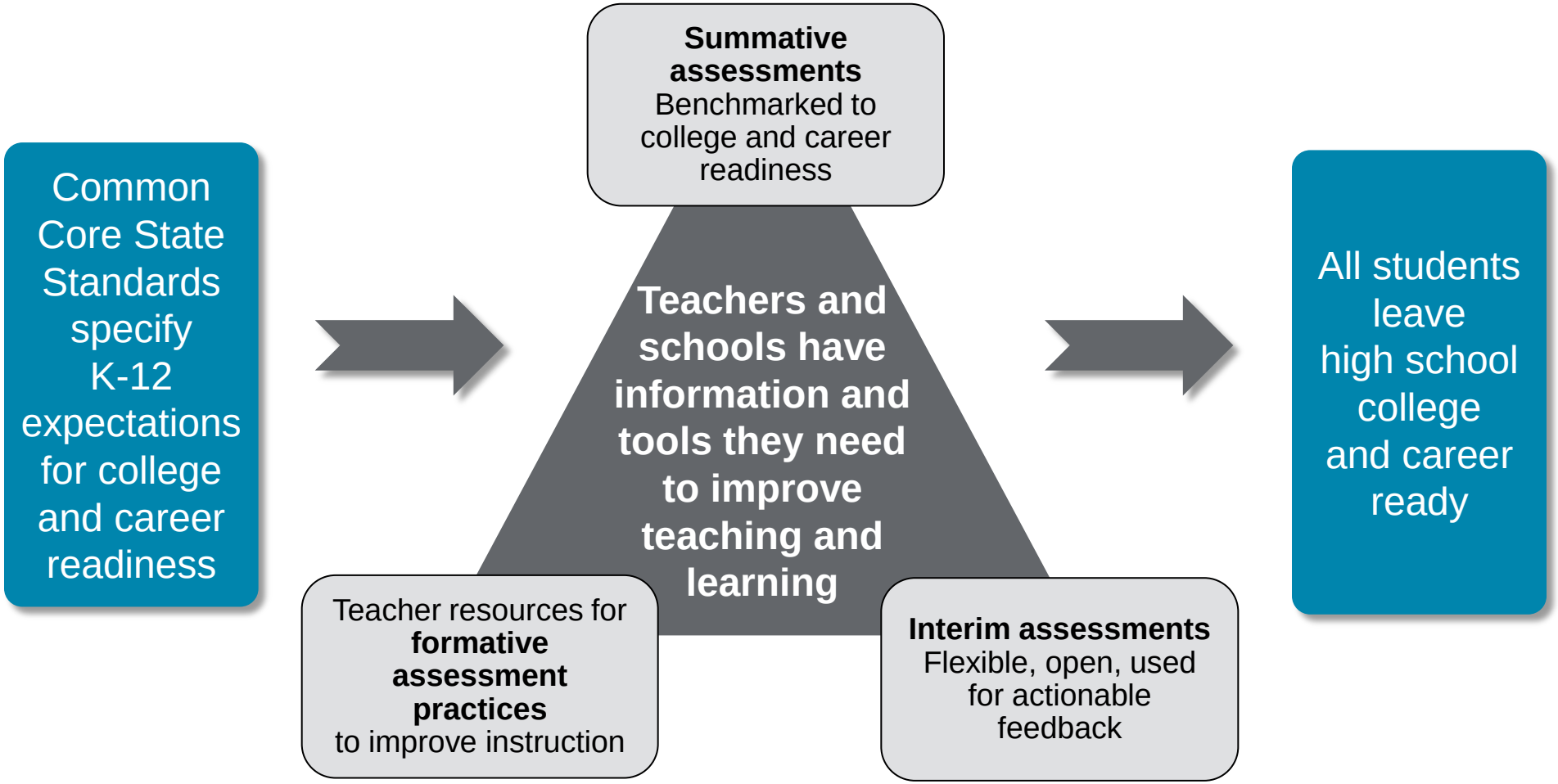
A Balanced Assessment System



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A Balanced Assessment System

ELA/Literacy and Mathematics, Grades 3-8 and High School

School Year

Last 12 weeks of the year*

DIGITAL LIBRARY of formative tools, processes and exemplars; released items and tasks; model curriculum units; educator training; professional development tools and resources; scorer training modules; and teacher collaboration tools.

Optional Interim Assessment

Computer Adaptive Assessment and Performance Tasks

Optional Interim Assessment

Computer Adaptive Assessment and Performance Tasks

Summative Assessment for Accountability

Performance Tasks

- ELA/literacy
- Mathematics

Computer Adaptive Assessment

- ELA/literacy
- Mathematics

Scope, sequence, number and timing of interim assessments locally determined

Re-take option available

*Time windows may be adjusted based on results from the research agenda and final implementation decisions.

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Using Computer Adaptive Technology for Summative and Interim Assessments

Increased precision	• Provides accurate measurements of student growth over time
Tailored for Each Student	• Item difficulty based on student responses
Increased Security	• Larger item banks mean that not all students receive the same questions
Shorter Test Length	• Fewer questions compared to fixed form tests
Faster Results	• Turnaround time is significantly reduced
Mature Technology	• GMAT, GRE, COMPASS (ACT), Measures of Academic Progress (MAP)

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K-12 Teacher Involvement

- Support for implementation of the Common Core State Standards (2011-12)
- Write and review items/tasks for the pilot test (2012-13) and field test (2013-14)
- Development of teacher leader teams in each state (2012-14)
- Evaluate formative assessment practices and curriculum tools for inclusion in digital library (2013-14)
- Score portions of the interim and summative assessments (2014-15 and beyond)

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Higher Education Collaboration

- Involved 175 public and 13 private systems/institutions of higher education in application
- Two higher education representatives on the Executive Committee
- Higher education lead in each state and higher education faculty participating in work groups
- Goal: The high school assessment qualifies students for entry-level, credit-bearing coursework in college or university

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Assessment System Components

Summative Assessment (Computer Adaptive)

- Assesses **the full range of Common Core** in English language arts and mathematics for students in grades 3–8 and 11 (interim assessments can be used in grades 9 and 10)
- Measures **current student achievement and growth across time,** showing progress toward college and career readiness
- Can be given **once or twice a year** (mandatory testing window within the last 12 weeks of the instructional year)
- Includes a **variety of question types:** selected response, short constructed response, extended constructed response, technology enhanced, and performance tasks

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Assessment System Components

Interim Assessment (Computer Adaptive)

- Optional comprehensive and content-cluster assessment to help **identify specific needs of each student**
- Can be administered **throughout the year**
- Provides **clear examples** of expected performance on Common Core standards
- Includes a **variety of question types:** selected response, short constructed response, extended constructed response, technology enhanced, and performance tasks
- Aligned to and reported on **the same scale as the summative assessments**
- **Fully accessible** for instruction and professional development

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Assessment System Components

Performance Tasks

- Extended projects demonstrate real-world writing and analytical skills
- May include online research, group projects, presentations
- Require 1-2 class periods to complete
- Included in both interim and summative assessments
- Applicable in all grades being assessed
- Evaluated by teachers using consistent scoring rubrics

"The use of performance measures has been found to increase the intellectual challenge in classrooms and to support higher-quality teaching."

- Linda Darling-Hammond and Frank Adamson, Stanford University

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Assessment System Components

Formative Assessment Practices

- Research-based, **on-demand tools and resources for teachers**
- Aligned to **Common Core,** focused on increasing student learning and enabling **differentiation of instruction**
- **Professional development** materials include model units of instruction and publicly released assessment items, formative strategies

> **"Few initiatives are backed by evidence that they raise achievement. Formative assessment is one of the few approaches proven to make a difference."**
>
> **- Stephanie Hirsh, Learning Forward**

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Assessment System Components

Online Reporting

- **Static and dynamic reports,** secure and public views
- Individual **states retain jurisdiction** over access and appearance of online reports
- Dashboard gives parents, students, practitioners, and policymakers access to **assessment information**
- **Graphical display** of learning progression status (interim assessment)
- **Feedback and evaluation** mechanism provides surveys, open feedback, and vetting of materials

> **"Data are only useful if people are able to access, understand and use them… For information to be useful, it must be timely, readily available, and easy to understand."**
>
> **- Data Quality Campaign**

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Support for Special Populations

- Accurate measures of progress for students with disabilities and English Language Learners
- Accessibility and Accommodations Work Group engaged throughout development
- Outreach and collaboration with relevant associations

"Common-Core Tests to Have Built-in Accommodations"

- June 8, 2011

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Technology Strategy Framework and System Requirements

(February 2013)

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 1 GHz processor 1 GB RAM 80 GB hard drive or at least 1GB of hard drive space available
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+ 1GHz processor 1GB RAM 80 GB hard drive or at least 1GB of hard drive space available
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 1 GB RAM 80 GB hard drive or at least 1GB of hard drive space available
iOS	iPads 2 running iOS6	iPads 3+ running iOS6
Android	Android-based tablets running Android 4.0+	Android-based tablets running Android 4.0+
Windows	Windows-based tablets running Windows 9+ (excluding Windows RT)	Windows-based tablets running Windows 9+ (excluding Windows RT)
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. Tablets may require the use of a mouse.

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Technology Strategy Framework and System Requirements

(February 2013)

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
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.
Chrome OS	Chromebooks running Chrome OS (v19)+

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

Minimum Requirements for Other Devices

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.

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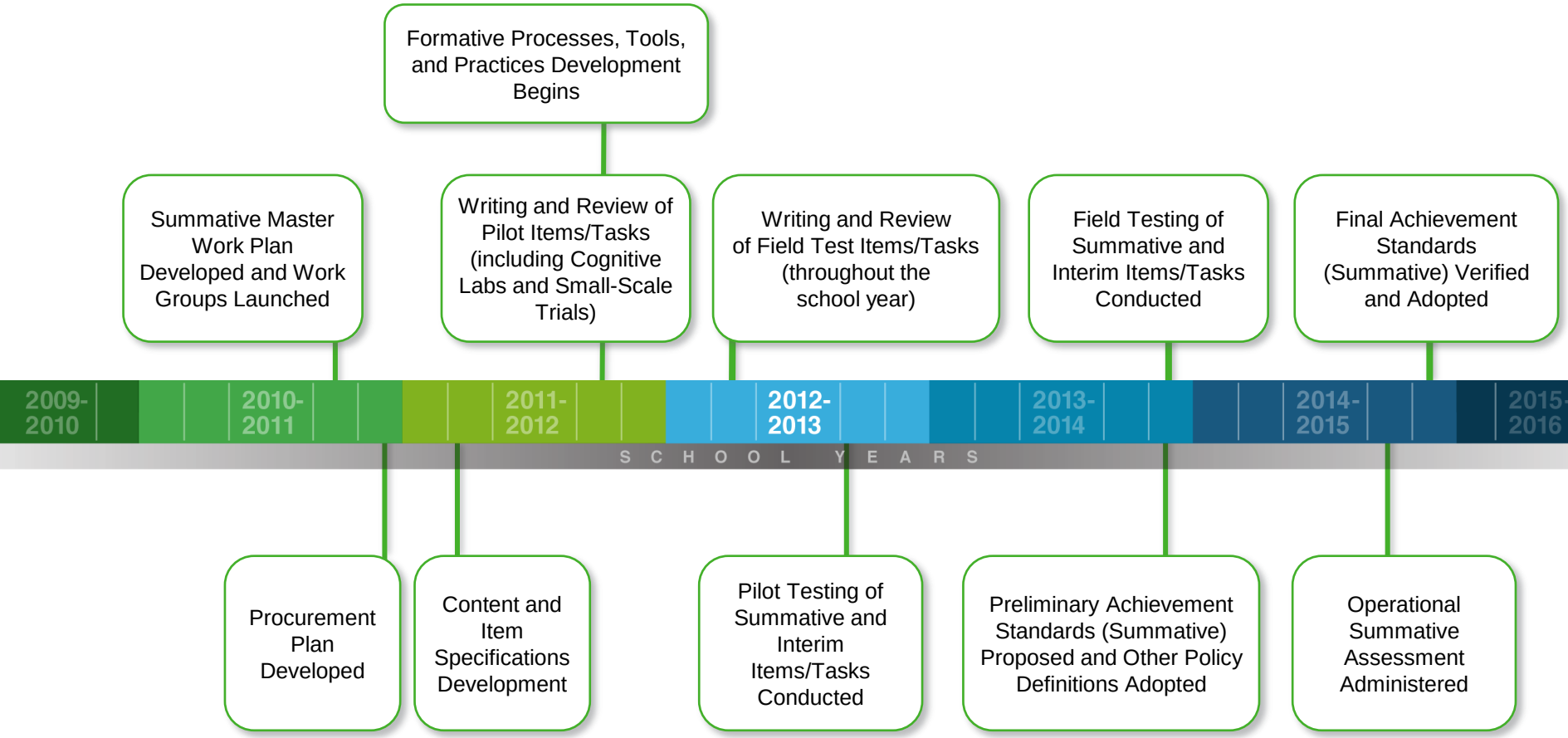
Timeline



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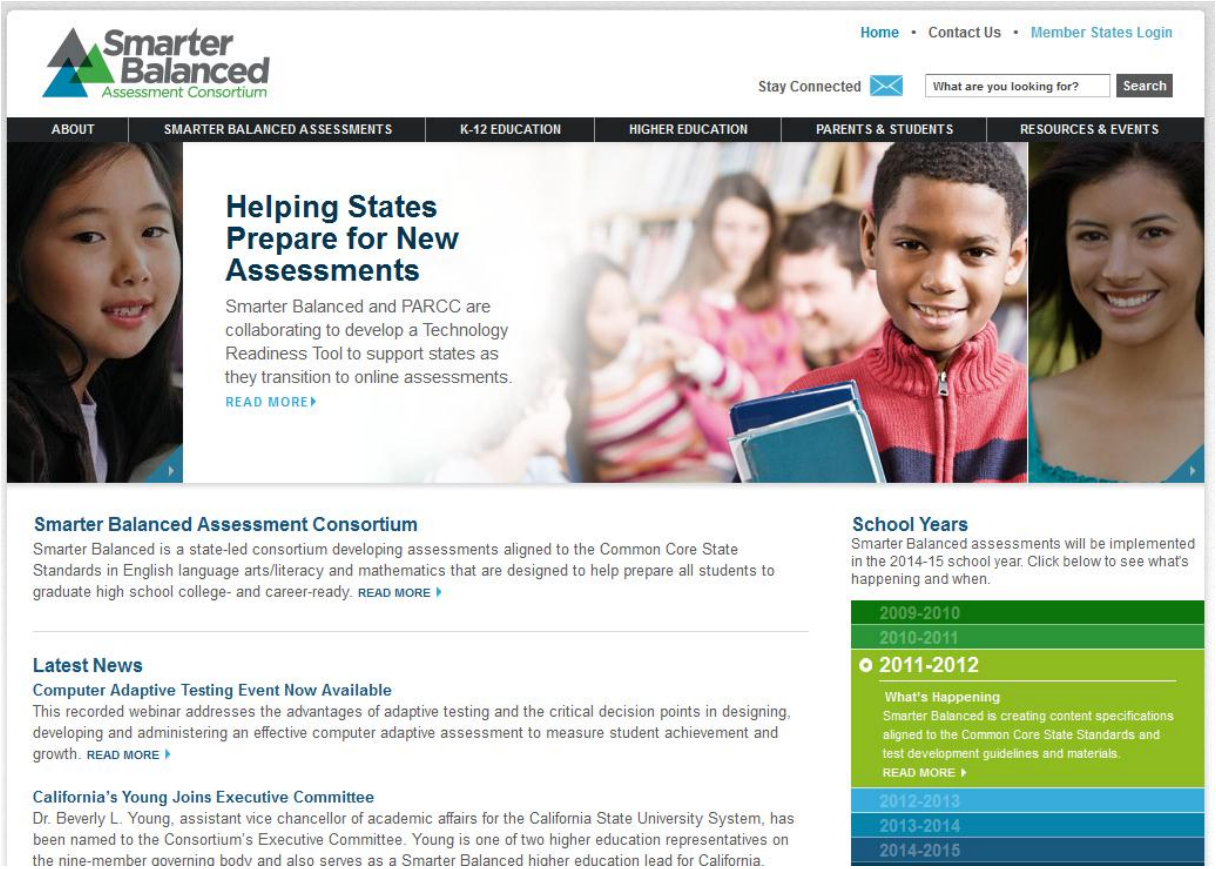
Find Out More

Smarter Balanced can be found online at:

SmarterBalanced.org



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