Moving Forward and Reaching the Next Level

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Assessment Information Meeting
Sacramento, September 27th, 2011
By 2018, 63 percent of job openings will require workers with at least some college education.

Source: Georgetown University Center on Education and the Workforce
• 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 and mathematics

Source: www.corestandards.org
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?
Next Generation Assessments

- More rigorous tests measuring student progress toward “college and career readiness”
- Have **common, comparable scores** across member states
- Provide **achievement and growth information** to help make better educational decisions and professional development opportunities
- **Assess all students**, except those with “significant cognitive disabilities”
- Administer **online**, with timely results
- Use **multiple** measures

Source: Federal Register / Vol. 75, No. 68 / Friday, April 9, 2010   pp. 18171-85
Background
The Purpose of the Consortium

- To develop a set of comprehensive and innovative assessments for grades 3-8 and high school in English language arts and mathematics aligned to the Common Core State Standards.
- 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.
• 29 states representing 48% of K-12 students
• 21 governing, 8 advisory states
• Washington state is fiscal agent
**Consortium Work Groups**

**Work group engagement of 90 state-level staff:**

Each work group:
- Led by co-chairs from governing states
- 6 or more members from advisory or governing states
- 1 liaison 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
Higher Education Partners Involved in Application

• 175 public and 13 private systems/institutions of higher education
• Representing 74% of the total number of direct matriculation students across all SMARTER Balanced States
• Higher education representatives and/or postsecondary faculty serve on:
  • Executive Committee
  • Assessment scoring and item review committees
  • Standard-setting committees
Seven Key Principles

1. An integrated system
2. Evidence of student performance
3. Teacher involvement
4. State-led with transparent governance
5. Continuously improve teaching and learning
6. Useful information on multiple measures
7. Adheres to established professional standards
A Balanced Assessment System

**Interim assessments**
are flexible, open, and provide actionable feedback

Teachers and schools have information and tools to improve teaching and learning

**Summative assessments**
are benchmarked to college and career readiness

Teachers can access formative assessment practices to improve instruction

All students leave high school college and career ready

Common Core State Standards specify K-12 expectations for college and career readiness
### Benefits of Computer Adaptive Testing

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Benefit</th>
<th>Advantage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Faster results</td>
<td>• Turnaround in weeks compared to months today</td>
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<tr>
<td>Shorter test length</td>
<td>• Fewer questions compared to fixed form tests</td>
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<td>Increased precision</td>
<td>• Provides accurate measurements of student growth over time</td>
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<td>Tailored to student ability</td>
<td>• Item difficulty based on student responses</td>
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<td>Greater security</td>
<td>• Larger item banks mean that not all students receive the same questions</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mature technology</td>
<td>• GMAT, GRE, COMPASS (ACT), Measures of Academic Progress (MAP)</td>
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Teacher Involvement

TEACHERS PARTICIPATE IN
• Test item development
• Test scoring
• Formative tool development

TEACHERS BENEFIT FROM
• Professional development
• Formative tools and processes
• Data from summative and interim assessments
Timeline

2010-2011 School Year
- Master Plan Developed and Work Groups Launched

2011-2012 School Year
- Formative Processes, Tools, and Practices Development Begins
- Common Core Translation and Item Specifications Completed

2012-2013 School Year
- Item Writing and Review Activities Completed (Summative and Interim)
- Common Core State Standards Adopted by All States
- Pilot Testing of Summative and Interim Assessments Conducted

2013-2014 School Year
- Field Testing of Summative Assessment Administered
- Preliminary Achievement Standards (Summative) Proposed and Other Policy Definitions Adopted

2014-2015 School Year
- Final Achievement Standards (Summative) Verified and Adopted
- Operational Summative Assessment Administered
How it Fits Together

Accessibility and Administration

Technology

Item and Test Design

Formative Practices, Professional Learning and Implementation
Accessibility and Administration

Enhance the Vision

Provide guidance to SMARTER Balanced work groups

Inventory Current Practices

Survey SMARTER Balanced states’ practices, rules and laws: January 2012

Build Consensus and Systems

Determine Consortium ELL and SWD definitions and test administration practices: 2012

Support Professional Learning

Disseminate documents and training materials for field test: 2013
Enhance the Vision

• Support the Technology, Item Development and Test Design work groups as they incorporate the principles of accessibility and universal design into the design of the SMARTER Balanced system
• Identify the variables, attributes and components of tests that need to be dynamic to address the full range of student needs
Inventory Current Practices

- Released RFP requesting a thorough review of literature review and SMARTER Balanced member state policies, rules and laws regarding ELLs and SWD
- Identified the manuals and materials that will be necessary to support state implementation of the pilot and field test as well as the operational test
Build Consensus and Systems

• Facilitate consensus among member states regarding common definitions of ELL and SWD, and common accommodations for ELL and SWD
• Draft manuals and materials to support state implementation of pilot and field test as well as operational test
• Materials will be used as part of an iterative design, build and revise approach to technology called agile development
• They will also be used to support the development of professional learning modules and other formative tools
Accessibility and Administration

Support Professional Learning

- Initial materials will contribute to the body of work to support high-quality instruction and student learning
- State monitoring and consortium-wide research will improve and enhance the systems
- Deep connections with higher education will bring the knowledge to new teachers through teacher preparation programs
- Ongoing professional learning for state staff will increase state capacity
Technology

- Identify Tech Needs
  - IT readiness survey: Available January 2012

- Design the Technology System
  - System architecture: Available January 2012

- Build the Systems
  - Vendors start building the system: February 2012

- Pilot and Field Test
  - Improve the technology throughout pilot and field test: 2012 and 2013
Design the System

- System architect will create blueprints that allow vendors to build the system
  1. Create prototype user profiles that clarify the various roles of people who need to use the various systems
  2. Member states and vendor community will give feedback on profiles and flows to ensure system meets broad requirements
  3. Architect will design more detailed specifications and technology governance structures, and recommend interoperability standards
Technology

Identify Technology Needs

- Technology readiness application available for states, districts and schools to enter data regarding hardware, software, bandwidth, staffing, electrical systems and other infrastructure required for online testing
  - Data will be compared against minimum and recommended requirements
  - Application will support progress tracking
  - Data useful for state and national policymakers considering total cost of ownership of a high-quality assessment system
Build the System

- Provide the system based on the system architecture
- Applications will include (subject to architecture):
  - Item authoring bank (based on Michigan Item Bank)
  - Test delivery
  - Reporting / hub
  - Digital library with formative assessment practices resources, curriculum resources and interactive collaboration for SMARTER Balanced users
### Technology

#### Pilot and Field Test the System

- Pilot and field test will incrementally improve the technology used to support the system
- Pilot test a limited test of some of the components
- Field test a more comprehensive test and will include some integration of components
- Full system will be thoroughly quality controlled in advance of 2014-15
Item and Test Design

- **Organize the Content**
  - Content Specifications: October 2011

- **Design the Items**
  - Item Specifications: January 2012

- **Design the Tests**
  - Test Specifications: February 2012

- **Write the Items**
  - Item Writing for Pilot Test: 2012-2013
Organize the Content

- Use Evidence Based Design (EBD) as a disciplined approach to assessing the Common Core State Standards
  - Test developers use specific outcomes for students (e.g., claims) as the starting point to ensure the test will meet the purposes for which it was designed (and therefore directly enhance validity)
- Once claims are established, build into test design the types of items that will create the evidence necessary to make claims
Design the Items

- Item specifications will guide item writing to ensure items are of high quality, consistent in appearance and able to be written in an efficient manner.
- Item specifications will focus on five different areas:
  - Selected responses
  - Universal design and style guidelines
  - Technology enhanced constructed response
  - Traditional constructed response
  - Performance tasks
- RFP to write the specifications recently released; responses being reviewed by panel led by Item Development work group.
Design the Test

- Test specifications will describe what each student’s test event will look like, including:
  - Total number of items
  - Allocation of content by grade based on content specifications
  - Number of each type of item a student will likely see
  - Number of items with each required level of Depth of Knowledge
- Will also include information about the adaptive algorithm and how it will create a test for each student
Write the Items

- Item and test specifications will be used to drive item writing
  - Item specifications: ensure items are accessible and in the right form and format
  - Test specifications: ensure the right number of items will be written so the pool is sufficient
- Item writing led by vendors, states and SMARTER Balanced
- Balance of item-writing burden will likely change from short-term to the long-term
  - Item writing in short-term needs to be aggressive to build the initial pool; time and volume will be a driving factor
  - Long-term, other priorities can take precedence
Formative Practices, Professional Learning and Implementation

**Design the Approach**
Create the vision of the digital library: August 2011

**Understand the CCSS**
Webinars on CCSS implementation and content specifications: 2011-12

**Understand the Test**
Professional learning on assessment literacy: Summer 2012

**Improve Teaching and Learning**
Formative assessment practices, exemplars and curriculum products
Design the Approach

- Theory of action hinges on improving teaching and learning
- Identified current practices and gaps, and what the needs are likely to be before and after the SMARTER Balanced system is implemented
- Leveraging initiatives and resources that are already in place
- Interim and summative assessments will:
  - Ensure validity of the assessment by providing opportunities for teachers to be involved in the scoring of student work
  - Serve as opportunities for professional learning
Understand the CCSS

- Teams of teachers from each state will:
  - Participate in identifying formative assessment practices and curriculum resources to put in Digital Library
  - Participate on a committee to complete voluntary alignment review of publishers’ materials to the content specifications and develop a “Consumers Report” to upload to the Digital Library
- National content experts to develop 54 (3 ELA and 3 math per grade) formative assessment practices exemplar modules that provide model products for SMARTER Balanced teachers (housed in Digital Library)
- Existing CCSS curriculum projects are adapted to align with the SMARTER Balanced content specifications (and uploaded to the Digital Library)
Understand the Test

- Produce high-quality test manuals that include administration guidelines and supports for teachers and students
- Support administration of test consistent with its purpose and intended use of data
- Offer trainings on how to administer the test, provide accommodations, use reporting system and other applications
- Enhance assessment literacy by providing well articulated training on interpreting assessment results
- Support connections with pre-service teachers
Formative Practices, Professional Learning and Implementation

Improve Teaching and Learning

• Provide comprehensive support for formative assessment, including instructional modules aligned with CCSS
• Training modules help teachers focus their instruction on the CCSS and develop teaching practices that support more in-depth learning
• Enhance assessment literacy by training teachers to use formative assessment tools and interim assessment to determine next steps in instruction
• Provide supports for students to manage their own learning
## Addressing State Concerns

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<th>Details</th>
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| **Technology**         | - PARCC and SMARTER developing technology assessment tool to identify infrastructure gaps  
                         - Paper/pencil option locally available during a 3-year transition  
                         - 12-week administration window reduces pressure on computer labs |
| **Compatibility**      | - Common, interoperable, open-source software accommodates state-level assessment options  
                         - Test-builder tool available to use interim item pool for end-of-course tests |
| **Cost**               | - On average, SMARTER states pay $31 per student for current assessments  
                         - Third-party cost estimate for SMARTER Balanced: Summative assessment $19.81/ student; Optional interim assessments $7.50/ student |
| **Adoption of best practices** | - Common protocols for item development: accessibility, language/cultural sensitivity, construct irrelevant variance  
                         - Common accommodation and translation protocols |
| **Long-term Governance** | - Developing a business plan for post-2014  
                         - Seeking additional funding for ongoing support  
                         - Member states will be actively involved in determining the future of the Consortium |
To find out more...

...the SMARTER Balanced Assessment Consortium can be found online at

www.smarterbalanced.org