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Smarter Balanced logo

**Implementation Guide for States and Service Providers**

**Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium**

**October 31, 2023**

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Note: Sections highlighted in gray designate a change from the 2022-23 Implementation Guide for States and Service Providers.

Additional information about the changes is available in the Revision Log at the end of this document.

# 1.0 Document Overview

This document describes critical elements of Consortium policies and practices that states and service providers may consider in developing or responding to Requests for Proposals (RFP) regarding the Smarter Balanced Assessment System.

This document provides suggestions but is not intended to be comprehensive nor the sole source of information that addresses services needed to either deliver the Smarter Balanced assessments or to support their delivery. States should follow best practices for test delivery and administration outlined in the [*Operational Best Practices for Statewide Large-Scale Assessment Programs*](https://ccsso.org/resource-library/operational-best-practices-statewide-large-scale-assessment-programs) (ATP/CCSSO, 2013) and [*The Standards for Educational and Psychological Testing* (AERA/APA/NCME, 2014)](https://www.apa.org/science/programs/testing/standards).

# 2.0 Customer Support and Help Desk Services

## **2.1 Tiered Support**

States typically procure help desk and customer support services from their service provider. Smarter Balanced recommends that customer support and help desk services provide states with a unified, single point of contact for school-, district-, and state-staff to contact for information regarding everything from general inquiries such as password recovery to assistance with technical issues that will need to be handled by systems engineers.

To support the implementation of the Smarter Balanced assessment system components, a state’s customer support and help desk solution will require Tier 1, Tier 2, and Tier 3 services. States and their service providers will need to provide Tier 1 and Tier 2 support. Smarter Balanced provides Tier 3 support for the open-source Smarter Balanced Reporting System, Tools for Teachers, and Smarter Balanced Single Sign-On. States and their service providers will need to provide Tier 3 support for any service provider proprietary applications.

### 2.1.1 Tier 1 Support

Tier 1 offers the first line of customer support, addressing the most basic customer issues (e.g., general inquiries, non-technical questions, password recovery, website navigation assistance, basic procedural “how-to” questions). In general, Tier 1 support will provide information that may be found in manuals, with questions not found in manuals (generally more technical in nature) going to Tier 2 support. Smarter Balanced recommends that states determine what, if any, questions should be directed to the state instead of the Tier 1 help desk (e.g., policy questions).

### 2.1.2 Tier 2 Support

Issues not resolved by Tier 1 support are automatically sent to Tier 2, which offers more in-depth technical support than Tier 1. Tier 2 customer support personnel are typically technicians who can assist with common mid-level technical questions such as local system set-up, local network issues, or compliance with data and interoperability standards, as well as applying technical solutions to issues that have established resolution methods.

### 2.1.3 Tier 3 Support

Tier 3 requires the greatest level of technical expertise and addresses the most complex technical problems. Tier 3 issues are typically handled by systems engineers and other technical experts and may require multiple interactions with the customer before the issue is resolved. These issues may include bugs in the system that prevent a student from completing the test or otherwise prevent a user from using the system (e.g., producing student reports). These are not enhancement or change requests that are comprised of style or user preferences.

Smarter Balanced recommends that during the procurement process, states request that service providers name the resource that will be responsible for managing customer service for the project (e.g., name of customer service manager or program manager) and, if applicable, the software or system used to manage inquiries and issues.

## 2.3 States and Service Providers: Implementation Considerations

This section lists many aspects of help desk and customer services that states should consider during the procurement process. Each state must decide the levels of service that they wish to procure.

### 2.3.1 Centralized Versus Custom Help Desk Solution

Smarter Balanced recommends that during the procurement process, states ask service providers to describe their proposed help desk solution. Options include a centralized (e.g., requirements and services are shared across assessment programs) or customized (e.g., requirements and services are specific to English language arts/literacy (ELA) and mathematics summative assessments) help desk approach. Examples of centralized solutions:

* Customer service/help desk answers calls for more than one of the state’s assessment programs, such as Smarter Balanced ELA/literacy and mathematics, science, social studies, alternate assessments, and/or English language proficiency assessments.
* Customer service/help desk answers calls from more than one state that administers Smarter Balanced assessments for ELA/literacy and mathematics.

A centralized help desk may increase efficiency and decrease costs across states but may require additional coordination by the service provider. Conversely, excessive customization of the help desk may increase contract-related costs. States should carefully weigh the costs versus benefits of their requests.

### 2.3.2 Escalation Process

Smarter Balanced recommends that during the procurement process, states ask service providers to detail the process to be used to escalate issues from one tier of service to another. In addition, it is recommended that states request that service providers develop a mechanism for tracking issues that are escalated from one tier of service to another tier of service. This will allow the state to have visibility so that there is clarity as to who has responsibility for resolution. For any applications that Smarter Balanced provides Tier 3 support, the service provider will escalate an issue from Tier 2 to Tier 3 by submitting a support ticket to Smarter Balanced ([support@smarterbalanced.org](mailto:support@smarterbalanced.org)). States and their service providers are responsible for escalating issues to Smarter Balanced. Schools and districts do not contact Smarter Balanced directly.

### 2.3.3 Training Materials

Smarter Balanced recommends that states ask service providers to identify and develop the training materials necessary for preparing their help desk staff. It is recommended that states also identify any additional training materials that may need to be developed (e.g., state-specific policy/guidance on restricted use of designated supports and accommodations) and the subsequent review and approval of all training materials. See “[*Other Documentation*](#_Other_Documentation)” at the end of this section for a list of training materials provided by Smarter Balanced, that states and their service providers can use or customize to train their help desk staff.

### 2.3.4 Help Desk Metrics and Reports

#### Reports

Smarter Balanced recommends that the state’s help desk record and track the issues presented by all end users. This includes assigning a case number whenever an end user contacts the help desk to allow for the issue to be logged, tracked, and reported through to resolution. Using logs of cases, weekly metrics may be maintained and reported. Reports may include the total number of new tickets created by the help desk, total cases disaggregated by submission method, average reply and wait time, rate of case resolution by Tier 1 staff, average resolution time (i.e., amount of time from case creation to final resolution), customer satisfaction indices, rate of abandonment (i.e., persons who disconnect from the help desk before resolution is reached), rate of compliance with service level agreements, backlog of issues, and predicted backlog of issues.

States may consider requesting reports that examine the cases by the type of issue reported (e.g., lost password, adding users, and modifying users) disaggregated by different points in the testing cycle (e.g., registration, test administration, score reporting). These types of reports may identify potential areas of opportunity for improving different aspects of the testing system for future administrations (e.g., clarifying test administrator training materials).

Smarter Balanced recommends that states determine the frequency needed for reports (e.g., daily, weekly, monthly). States may consider changing report frequency based on key milestones in the testing cycle (e.g., during test administration, reports may be needed more frequently than other times of the year).

#### Final Summary Reports

Smarter Balanced recommends that states request a final summary report at the end of administration to identify lessons learned and opportunities for improvement the following year. This information may also be helpful evidence for peer review submissions.

#### Quality

States may require several protocols to enhance the quality and responsiveness of the help desk. Smarter Balanced does not prescribe the quality control protocols that states should require for their help desks. States will need to work with service providers to establish quality control protocols that meet their needs at a reasonable price.

#### Customer Satisfaction Surveys

Satisfaction surveys may be administered to all callers to measure the level of support provided by the help desk. Categories of questions on this survey could include Quality of Support, Speed of Resolution, and/or Knowledge of Agent.

#### Recording and Monitoring Communications

Smarter Balanced recommends that states determine whether all calls into any Tier help desk be recorded and made available for states to listen to as desired. All email, chat-based inquiries, and web-based inquiries should be saved. In addition, the state or help desk management may monitor calls. States should work with their service providers to determine the number of communications that will be monitored per week and any reports required for monitored communications.

#### Training on Multiple Devices

Smarter Balanced recommends that all tiers of help desk support be trained on and be familiar with a wide variety of commonly used platforms, devices, and laptops that will be used for assessment delivery.

### 2.3.5 Service Level Agreements

States may want to consider establishing service level agreements with their service providers to describe expectations for help desk services. This section outlines some (but not all) areas that may be found in a service level agreement for help desk services. States will need to work with service providers to establish service levels that meet state needs at a reasonable price.

#### Establishing Credentials for Access to Test Registration, Test Delivery, and Reporting Systems

To access test registration, test delivery, and reporting systems, state-level users typically establish login credentials for district-level users who in turn establish credentials for school-level users. School-level users establish credentials for test administrators and teachers.

Smarter Balanced recommends that states work with their service providers to develop a protocol for creating user credentials for the test delivery system. This protocol may follow the one described above, or it may be unique to the state.

Smarter Balanced also recommends that states and service providers establish the protocol for providing assistance to users who have issues related to credentialing (e.g., state agency or help desk resolves these issues).

#### Method of Contact

This section describes recommendations regarding how end users might contact the help desk. This will often include a toll-free number, email, web-based chat, and a web-based request form. Smarter Balanced recommends that states specify their expectations for help desk contacts (e.g., the use of an agency-specific phone number and email address as a method of contact).

#### Hours of Operation

Smarter Balanced recommends that states specify the coverage hours during which they expect help desk staff to be available for answering questions, and the dates associated with the hours of operation. The state may consider requesting reduced hours for help desk staff during dates outside of the test administration window. The state and service provider should also consider confirming any time when no coverage is expected (e.g., holidays and weekends) and the response times expected for help desk requests submitted during this timeframe.

#### Remote Desktop Support

Smarter Balanced recommends that states consider allowing for remote desktop support in which help desk staff can access the end-user’s system to diagnose local configuration problems.

#### Response Times

Smarter Balanced recommends that states specify expected response times for end users, based on each method of contact for regular-hours coverage, off-hours coverage, and non-coverage. For example, a state may expect end users who call the help desk to wait no more than 5 minutes to speak with a customer service agent during regular-hours coverage and 30 minutes during off-hours coverage. For requests submitted during hours where no coverage is expected, it is recommended that states specify the length of time these requests should be addressed once coverage resumes. Similarly, states should consider establishing wait times for email requests and web-based chat during hours of regular coverage, off-hours coverage, and no coverage. Smarter Balanced recommends that states establish agreements with their service providers that clearly delineate expectations for Tier 2 response time (for example, all inquiries to Tier 2 must be contacted within 24 hours of receipt).

#### Priorities

Smarter Balanced recommends that states ask service providers to identify priority issues and establish protocols for priority issues (e.g., testing system goes down). These protocols may include a priority communication mechanism in which urgent, critical messages are sent to appropriate end users immediately. For example, text messages or emails are sent to all school-level users within a school in which the assessment delivery system has gone down.

#### Other Documentation

Smarter Balanced provides a number of resources that service providers can use to develop training materials and to train customer service staff, including the *Online Summative Test Administration Manual*, the Training Modules, the *Smarter Balanced Reporting System User Guide*, and the Tools for Teachers *Help Desk Manual*. These and other resources are located on the state portal, [SmarterApp](http://www.smarterapp.org/), and [Secure File Transfer Server](https://fx.smarterbalanced.org/login), as described in [*Section 13.0 Ancillary Materials*](#_13.0_Ancillary_Materials).

# 3.0 Test Registration Tool and Single Sign-On (SSO)

## 3.1 Test Registration Tool

During the development phase, Smarter Balanced developed an open-source Administration and Registration Tool (ART) for use with other Smarter Balanced open-source systems (e.g., test delivery system, Data Warehouse). ART allowed authorized users to create and manage records for students, users and entities, such as states, districts and institutions. Users could upload records in groups or manage them individually and also manage the assessment settings and accessibility resource information for students.

ART also served as a standard for proprietary test registration tools to ensure comparability across different systems. Service providers may use the [Test Registration Tool User Guide Template](https://portal.smarterbalanced.org/library/en/test-registration-tool-user-guide-template.docx) as a resource to ensure comparability and as a template for developing a user guide for a proprietary system.

States will need to procure a test registration tool to register students for the summative and interim assessments. Important registration tool features are described below.

### 3.1.1 Test Registration Tool Features

This portion of the tool should capture

* Test information, including testing windows, test opportunities, delay rules, and implicit eligibility rules;
* Institution information, such as information on schools, districts, and states;
* User and user role information;
* Student and student accessibility resources information; and
* Student group information.

Test administrator or teacher information may also be captured during test registration.

Smarter Balanced recommends that end users be able to upload data files with student, school, and district information into the test registration tool.

It is also recommended that users be able to add, modify, or delete information based on their level of access, as determined by their user role. For example, a test administrator may be able to add, edit, or delete students but may not have the necessary permissions to modify institution (school) information.

Smarter Balanced recommends that states work with their service providers to configure their systems to reflect the roles/permissions they want implemented in their organization for the summative and interim assessments. Roles such as adding/deleting students, adding/editing designated supports and accommodations, and editing student demographics should be configured to meet the state’s preferences. States will need to monitor their configuration options to ensure that the roles/permissions are appropriate and do not pose risk to the validity of the test. States should describe their requirements or process for monitoring appropriate user role access in their procurement.

#### Accessibility Resources

Smarter Balanced recommends that student accessibility resource information be captured in the test registration system. To facilitate the selection of specific student designated supports and accommodation needs, Smarter Balanced created an Individual Student Assessment Accessibility Profile (ISAAP) process and tool for states’ use. School staff may document one or more designated supports and/or accommodations for students prior to test administration. Furthermore, the ISAAP can include information about universal tools that may need to be turned off for an individual student. The ISAAP is available for state use, however, its use is not required. States may use their own processes or tools to perform this function. See [*Section 15*](#_15.0__) for additional information about accessibility resources for students.

#### Identifying Needs Prior to Test Administration

By documenting individual student accessibility needs prior to test administration, the state’s digital test administration delivery system will be able to activate the specified options when the student logs in to an assessment. In this way, the ISAAP allows educators and schools to focus on each individual student to document the designated supports and accommodations required to ensure that the assessed content is accessible for all students. Whether the state uses ISAAP or its own system, the state and its service provider still need to determine how the information identifying the accessibility resources needed by individual students will be entered into the state’s test registration system.

## 3.2 Single Sign-On

A Single Sign-On (SSO) and Access Management system provides centralized management of educator accounts and permissions across multiple applications. Centralizing access management services allows educators to use one login to access multiple services and lets states manage only one account per educator. In many cases, SSO services are among the services that states receive under contract from their assessment service provider. However, some states contract for SSO separately from their assessment services. This arrangement enables them to use the same SSO system for all their educator services and across student information systems, learning object repositories, and assessment platforms.

Smarter Balanced added a federated authentication system in July 2019 allowing its Tools for Teachers and Reporting Services to integrate with state provided SSO solutions. Service providers pass authorization information to Smarter Balanced for applications (Smarter Balanced Reporting System, Tools for Teachers) used by the state or district.

#### Other Documentation

* [*Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium: Accessibility and Accommodations Framework*](https://portal.smarterbalanced.org/library/en/accessibility-and-accommodations-framework.pdf)
* [*Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium: Usability, Accessibility, and Accommodations Guidelines*](https://portal.smarterbalanced.org/library/en/usability-accessibility-and-accommodations-guidelines.pdf)
* *[Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium: Usability, Accessibility, and Accommodations Implementation Guide](https://portal.smarterbalanced.org/library/en/usability-accessibility-and-accommodations-implementation-guide.docx)*
* [*Understanding* the Individual Student Assessment Accessibility Profile](https://www.youtube.com/watch?app=desktop&v=lF_StzhA3Ro)
* [*Individual Student Assessment Accessibility Profile: A Tool to Support Students*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1SZ2p1n2cgE)
* [Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium: Test Registration Tool User Guide Template](https://portal.smarterbalanced.org/library/en/test-registration-tool-user-guide-template.docx)

# 4.0 Online Test Delivery system

## 4.1 Test Delivery Components

The online test delivery system is responsible for the real time, interactive portion of a student assessment. The test delivery system stores a student’s assessment results for a test event until that event has been completed. Smarter Balanced recommends that states request vendors to describe the test delivery system solution in their proposal, including which entity produces it, operates it, and supports it. Smarter Balanced also recommends that states inquire about the number of concurrent examinees supported by the test delivery system to determine whether such capacity will, in turn, support the state during its testing window.

To deliver Smarter Balanced assessments, the test delivery system needs to include a student workstation component, proctor workstation component, and a response data store.

### 4.1.1 Student Workstation

The Student Workstation is a subcomponent that interacts with the student, delivering test items to the student and gathering the responses and response metadata. For Smarter Balanced assessments, it also needs to provide the embedded universal tools, designated supports, and accommodations assigned to each student. See the Smarter Balanced [*Usability, Accessibility, and Accommodations Guidelines*](https://portal.smarterbalanced.org/library/en/usability-accessibility-and-accommodations-guidelines.pdf) for a complete list of embedded and non-embedded universal tools, designated supports, and accommodations.

### 4.1.2 Proctor Workstation

The Proctor Workstation is a subcomponent that the test administrator uses to manage the test event. It allows the proctor to start, stop, suspend, and resume testing.

### 4.1.3 Response Data Store

The Response Data Store stores student response data until the test has been completed.

## 4.2 Functionality of the Test Delivery System

The test delivery system serves as the means for students and test administrators to engage in the testing event. States that administer the Smarter Balanced assessments are responsible for reviewing evidence from their service providers that the test delivery system meets all requirements necessary to successfully administer Smarter Balanced assessments as described below.

### 4.2.1 Universal Tools, Designated Supports, and Accommodations

Test delivery systems should incorporate embedded universal tools, designated supports, and accommodations for the presentation of the online assessment. Smarter Balanced details the required embedded universal tools, embedded designated supports, and embedded accommodations in the [*Usability, Accessibility, and Accommodations Guidelines*](https://portal.smarterbalanced.org/library/en/usability-accessibility-and-accommodations-guidelines.pdf)*.*

For the mathematics test, test delivery systems should incorporate the Desmos calculators which are licensed by Smarter Balanced on behalf of states using the assessment system. For details and samples of the calculators, please refer to the [Calculators page of the Smarter Balanced website](http://calculator.smarterbalanced.org/).

The specific universal tools, designated supports, and accommodations approved by Smarter Balanced may change in the future if additional resources are identified for the assessment based on state experience and research findings. If additional universal tools, designated supports, or accommodations are identified, then states will need to procure services to update their test delivery systems.

### 4.2.2 Item Rendering

The test delivery component must render assessment items to the student’s browser with authenticity. States may want to ask service providers to describe their experience in rendering the various item types employed by Smarter Balanced across various devices.

The service provider should provide *evidence* that the service provider’s test delivery systems do the following:

* Render test items correctly: They should look the same as the items hosted on the Smarter Balanced [Sample Items Website](http://sampleitems.smarterbalanced.org/).
* Render accessibility features correctly: Service providers should consult the [Usability Accessibility and Accommodations Guidelines](http://www.smarterbalanced.org/assessments/accessibility-and-accommodations/) and the [Item Types and Accessibility Features](http://www.smarterapp.org/documents/Item_Types_And_Features.pdf) document available in SmarterApp.
* Collect and score the student’s response correctly.
* Implement an effective computer adaptive testing algorithm.
* Score the test correctly.
* Require test-taking devices that can be secured and meet Smarter Balanced requirements. Refer to the [Student Device and Secure Browser Requirements](http://www.smarterbalanced.org/assessments/testing-technology/devices-and-browsers/).

Smarter Balanced released specifications and requirements needed to properly deliver the Smarter Balanced assessments. As part of this process, Smarter Balanced developed an Implementation Readiness Package of specifications, sample data, test harnesses, and other materials necessary to show compliance with Smarter Balanced specifications and requirements. Smarter Balanced recommends that states require their service provider to show evidence that they are able to accurately render Smarter Balanced items through their test delivery systems. Review the [Implementation Readiness Package](http://www.smarterapp.org/specs/ImplementationReadinessPackage.html) for more details.

### 4.2.3 Adaptive Engine

To administer the Smarter Balanced assessments, the test delivery system must engage an adaptive engine for the Computer Adaptive Test (CAT) portion of the summative assessment and linear testing for the Performance Task (PT) portion of the summative assessment and all interim assessments. Smarter Balanced recommends that states require their service providers to show evidence that the adaptive algorithm being implemented complies with Smarter Balanced open-source adaptive algorithm specifications and requirements. Review the [*Smarter Balanced Adaptive Item Selection Algorithm Design Report*](http://www.smarterapp.org/documents/AdaptiveAlgorithm.pdf) for more details.

Requirements for evaluating adaptive engines are included in the Implementation Readiness Package.

### 4.2.4 Student Testing Interface

To administer the Smarter Balanced assessments, the test delivery system should provide an interface for students to log in, begin and complete testing, and submit test responses. In addition, the test delivery system should:

* Verify student information.
* Provide a means for troubleshooting student login errors.
* Allow students to:
  + select their test
  + verify test information
  + provide an audio check for tests with text-to-speech
  + provide an audio check for the listening items
  + view test instructions and help
  + access universal tools, designated supports and accommodations, as applicable
  + mark items for review
  + review past or marked items
  + pause test
  + end test
  + submit test
  + review end/submit test page
* Provide confirmation of test submission.

The Smarter Balanced summative assessment is provided in segments. Students should not be able to go back to a submitted segment unless an appeal is approved to reopen the test.

**Note:** The Interim Comprehensive Assessments (ICAs) are also provided in segments. States should decide if the same rule applies to both standardized and non-standardized administration of the ICAs.

The test delivery system should meet all requirements specified by Smarter Balanced to provide options to support common test-taking strategies, such as:

* Visually eliminating one or more distractors,
* Highlighting and/or underlining key words or graphics,
* Flagging items as incomplete or in need of review prior to completing the test,
* Indicating which items have been answered/unanswered, and
* Using an online notepad.

### 4.2.5 Test Administrator Interface

To administer Smarter Balanced assessments, the test delivery system should provide test administrators with an interface to administer the assessment. Within this interface, test administrators can select tests they want to administer, approve/deny students for entry into the testing event, monitor students’ test progress, pause students’ tests, and stop students’ test sessions.

Smarter Balanced recommends that test administrators have an appeals or incident reporting process that will allow them to submit an appeal to have a test reset, re-opened, restored, or invalidated using the test registration tool.

### 4.2.6 Data Store

To administer the Smarter Balanced assessments, the test delivery system should capture student response information and store that information during the student testing event. The information that needs to be collected includes:

* Student item responses.
* Student item scores.
* Student item response times.
* Number of item visits (changes to response).
* Accessibility resources assigned to and used by the student (the latter for federal peer review evidence).

Once the testing event is completed, this data should be pushed to the appropriate response data store.

## 4.3 Configuration of the Test Delivery System

Service providers typically support client-specific customizations of their test delivery systems. Smarter Balanced recommends that states consider how configuring certain aspects of test delivery may impact test security and comparability with other Consortium members’ test results.

Questions to consider when defining configuration settings that may affect test security:

* Which user roles can add or edit student registration and eligibility?
* Which user roles can enter appeals?
* Must a proctor be associated with the school where he or she is administering the test?
* Who assigns roles and to whom are they assigned?
* When can students take breaks? How long do those breaks last? Under what conditions can students review questions presented before the break?

Questions to consider when defining configuration settings that may affect comparability:

* How is the computer-adaptive engine configured? How is it constrained to the blueprint?
* How are accessibility resources managed? Who can assign them to students?
* How are machine and human types of scoring managed? What processes ensure inter-rater reliability?

States are responsible for ensuring that test delivery system configurations support test security. Smarter Balanced recommends that states review configuration decisions annually and determine if they are still in accord with Smarter Balanced and local policy and guidelines.

## 4.4 Test and Item Management System (TIMS)

Smarter Balanced releases content and test packages to member service providers for use in a given school year. During the ingest and review of the test packages, service providers and members may provide feedback regarding the content of the packages and suggest revisions. Smarter Balanced receives and reviews requests for revisions via a process called Content Updates.

Feedback about the content of test packages is provided through the Test and Item Management System (TIMS). Smarter Balanced reviews the feedback and makes updates:

* as appropriate based on industry standards, and psychometric and content expert analyses; and
* when the changes can be made at a time that maintains the integrity of all state testing windows.

Updates to the content of packages are released on Thursdays.

Consistent with the practice of adhering to industry standards and for maintaining the integrity of testing windows, Smarter Balanced members set milestone dates that establish the period in which testing windows are not considered as a decision factor. After these milestone dates, only urgent and essential updates may be made for the current school year’s packages. These dates are:

* Practice & Training Tests: September 1, 2023
* Interim Assessments: September 1, 2023
* Summative Assessments: January 11, 2024

After the dates above have passed, Smarter Balanced will review any urgent feedback about items with member representatives to identify if the content updates should be made. All other non-urgent updates to content will be included in a future year’s test package.

## 4.5 Bring Your Own Device Option

To administer the Smarter Balanced assessments, states may allow schools and districts to adopt and implement a policy regarding Bring Your Own Device (BYOD). For states that allow this option, it is recommended that states define the state-specific policy for their districts and schools. The policy should include an explicit requirement that all devices used for testing must meet the Smarter Balanced [Student Device and Secure Browser Requirements](https://smarterbalanced.org/our-system/smarter-system/testing-technology/device-and-browser/) including the installation and use of a service provider-supported secure browser.

## 4.6 Implementation Readiness

As noted above, Smarter Balanced developed an Implementation Readiness Package. In support of states’ implementation efforts, Smarter Balanced is willing to assist states in reviewing any chosen platform to determine if it meets a core set of implementation protocols and requirements. This voluntary review would include an evaluation of correct item rendering, accommodations functionality, item scoring procedures, claim and overall score generation, the delivery of results to the data warehouse, and other essential functions. If the evaluation is associated with an RFP or other competitive bidding process, Smarter Balanced and the state should first determine that the assistance is in accordance with state procurement requirements.

## 4.7 Relationship of Other Components to Test Delivery System

To administer the Smarter Balanced assessments, the test delivery system must be able to successfully engage other components of the assessment administration system. This includes requiring that the test delivery system pull in administration and registration information so that student information (e.g., accessibility resources) and proctor information is available at testing time. The test delivery system must also engage an adaptive engine. Smarter Balanced recommends that states require the service provider to show evidence of the following:

* The adaptive algorithm being implemented complies with Smarter Balanced specifications and requirements. Requirements for evaluating adaptive engines are included in the Implementation Readiness Package.
* The test delivery system engages with the machine-scoring component and scores the items in real time to inform the adaptive algorithm.
* The test delivery system pushes out completed test events for hand scoring, test integration, and test scoring and reporting.
* The test delivery system has the ability to accurately match student data in the event that it is necessary for a student to restart a test.

States should ask service providers to explain how their test delivery systems will engage with the other components of the assessment administration system to ensure a smooth testing event for the students and test administrators.

#### Other Documentation

* [*Test Administrator User Guide Template*](https://portal.smarterbalanced.org/library/test-administrator-user-guide/)
* [*Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium: Usability, Accessibility, and Accommodations Guidelines*](https://portal.smarterbalanced.org/library/en/usability-accessibility-and-accommodations-guidelines.pdf)
* [*Smarter Balanced Implementation Readiness Package*](http://www.smarterapp.org/specs/ImplementationReadinessPackage.html)
* [*Item Selection Algorithm Design Report*](http://www.smarterapp.org/documents/AdaptiveAlgorithm.pdf)

# 5.0 Item Scoring

## 5.1 Item Scoring for the Summative Assessment

Item scoring comprises both machine and external scoring, including hand scoring. States will need to contract with service providers to obtain hand scoring and possibly automated scoring with artificial intelligence (AI) for items that cannot be machine scored. Smarter Balanced does not require the use of automated scoring. The computer adaptive testing (CAT) component for the ELA/literacy and mathematics assessments includes a variety of item types that are machine scored by the service provider’s test delivery system in real time. The CAT component for ELA/literacy in grades 6-8 and high school also includes short text items that may require hand scoring. The Performance Task (PT) component of each content area assessment requires both machine-scoring and hand scoring.

Table 1 shows the item types and typical scoring method for the summative assessment item pool by content area.

Table 1: Item Types by Subject Found in the Summative Assessment Item Pools

| Item Types | ELA/literacy | Mathematics | Typical Scoring Method |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Multiple Choice (MC) | Y | Y | Machine |
| Multiple Select (MS) | Y | Y | Machine |
| Evidence-Based Selected Response (EBSR) | Y |  | Machine |
| Match Interaction (MI) | Y | Y | Machine\* |
| Hot Text (HTQ) | Y |  | Machine |
| Short Answer Text Response (SA) | Y | Y | Hand-scored |
| Essay/Writing Extended Response (WER) | Y |  | Hand-scored |
| Equation Response (EQ) |  | Y | Machine\* |
| Grid Item Response (GI) |  | Y | Machine\* |
| Table Interaction (TI) |  | Y | Machine\* |

\* The test packages include MI, EQ, GI, and TI items that may require external scoring (hand scoring or automated scoring).

### 5.1.1 Machine-Scored Items

Most item types will allow for machine scoring. Items classified as “machine-scored” are those items that are scored by engines that match the student responses to a correct answer, answers, or characteristics of an answer. In ELA/literacy, these items include multiple choice with single or multiple correct responses, two-part multiple choice, and hot text response types. In mathematics, these items include multiple choice with single or multiple correct responses, matching tables, hot text, drag-and-drop, hot spot, grid items (graphing), and equation response types. The summative assessment test packages indicate which items can be machine scored and provides answer keys for multiple-choice items (single and multiple correct response) and machine scoring rubrics to score both graphic response and equation response items. Smarter Balanced provides machine scoring keys to facilitate scoring of these items. Service providers may use a proprietary engine for machine scoring.

### 5.1.2 External Scoring, Including Hand Scoring

There are ELA/literacy CAT and PT items and mathematics PT items which require external scoring. For example, text response items require external scoring. In addition, some equation response and graphic response items may require external scoring. External scoring may be accomplished by hand scoring or by automated scoring with artificial intelligence (AI). Table 2 shows the number of items in the 2023-24 summative assessment item pool that require scoring by human scorers or an automated scoring application. The entire pool of hand-scored items will be available for each administration. Multiple PTs will be randomly administered across each state/territory. It is unknown how many students will take each item within a state/territory.

There are no hand-scored items on the CAT portion of the mathematics assessment. Each student will be administered between zero and four items on the PT portion of the mathematics assessment that require hand scoring, depending on grade. Each student will be administered between zero and five short text items and one essay item on the ELA/literacy PT that require hand scoring, depending upon grade.

Table 2 Estimated Total Number of Items in the 2023-24 Summative Assessment Item Pool that Require Hand Scoring

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Content Area** | **Component** | **Total Number of Hand-Scored Items Across All Grades** |
| ELA/literacy | CAT | 373 |
| ELA/literacy | Performance Tasks | 308 |
| Mathematics | CAT | 0 |
| Mathematics | Performance Tasks | 381 |

#### Hand Scoring Process

1. For operational items that require hand scoring, Smarter Balanced provides the following materials in each year’s summative test package. The materials are available to member states and service providers in the Scoring Materials folder of the [Secure File Transfer Server](https://fx.smarterbalanced.org/login).
   * Training materials
   * Qualification sets
   * Scoring rubrics
   * Training papers
   * Validation papers
   * Specifications for condition codes and alerts
2. The state and its service provider are responsible for training and scoring for operational items that require hand scoring. Smarter Balanced has no consortium-wide requirements for number and location of scoring sites or hiring requirements for scorers. Each state will determine:
   * Any constraints around hand scoring, including preference for on-site, distributed (remote) and/or automated scoring.
   * Whether service providers will use existing hand scoring sites and raters.
   * If automated scoring with an artificial intelligence (AI) scoring application is used, whether the state allows the score derived from the automated scoring system to be the score of record.
   * Whether it will allow scoring activities (including hand scoring) to take place outside of the United States.
   * If any scoring will be done in-state/territory by teachers (e.g., professional development opportunity), states should be explicit regarding the distribution of student data to locations, people, or machines inside or outside of the United States.
   * Minimum qualifications for raters: States should be mindful of the importance of including teachers with backgrounds in teaching diverse student populations (e.g., low socio-economic status, English language learners, and students with disabilities) from different geographic locations.
   * How much and how often the state requires monitoring of statistical feedback from the service provider’s hand scoring process.
3. The service provider will deliver field test responses for scoring by another party, managed by Smarter Balanced. The transfer of student responses may pass through the state to the Smarter Balanced field test scoring contractor.
4. Smarter Balanced has established minimum qualification standards for qualifying and monitoring external scoring. States are expected to maintain traditional item-level hand scoring statistics, such as rater agreement rates and inter-rater reliability, and to meet these standards for consistency, but may also establish stricter standards for external scoring.
5. Smarter Balanced does not have any consortium-wide requirements for the rate of double-scoring (percentage of responses for an item that are scored twice), however, Smarter Balanced recommends that 10% of student responses be the minimum level of double scoring allowed. Each state will determine the percentage of its student responses that will be double scored.
6. Smarter Balanced recommends following the guidelines described in the [*Operational Best Practices for Statewide Large-Scale Assessment Programs*](https://ccsso.org/resource-library/operational-best-practices-statewide-large-scale-assessment-programs).
7. Scoring Spanish Responses for Mathematics—Students who use dual language supports in the classroom and for whom Dual Language Translations is a provided support, may respond to items in English, Spanish, or a combination of the two for the mathematics assessments. Allowing this option is a state-level decision. States allowing this option need to be sure their service providers are prepared for flagging and hand scoring mathematics items with Spanish responses.
8. States will need to work with their service provider to establish procedures to be followed when sensitive responses are received for items that require hand scoring.

#### Training

**ELA.**To score ELA items, Smarter Balanced recommends that raters receive training at the level of the task model.Smarter Balanced provides “Baseline” anchor and training sets as well as rubrics by writing purpose (e.g., informational, opinion) for essay items. Qualification and validation sets are provided for each essay. Anchor and training sets are also provided for the task models associated with the ELA short text items in the CAT and PT sections. For the ELA short text items in the CAT and the PT sections, Smarter Balanced recommends that raters receive training by grade span (grades 3-5, 6-8, and high school) instead of by grade level.

Even though training is at the task-model level, Smarter Balanced recommends that qualification occur on an item-by-item basis for all ELA hand-scored item types. Smarter Balanced provides qualification and validation sets for each ELA item. For those item types where raters are trained by grade span, Smarter Balanced recommends that raters qualify on each item within a specific grade.

**Mathematics.** For Mathematics, Smarter Balanced provides anchors and training sets for the task models. Smarter Balanced provides item-specific rubrics and item-specific validation sets for all Mathematics items. To score mathematics items, Smarter Balanced recommends that raters receive training and qualify on task models for almost all items.

#### Special Cases

**Condition Codes.** Along with other training materials for scoring of operational responses, Smarter Balanced provides specifications for condition codes and alerts. Smarter Balanced has defined special cases of student responses to hand-scored items. The following condition codes are used during hand scoring:

B: Blank

I: Insufficient

L: Non-scorable language

T: Off topic (essay only)

M: Off purpose (essay only)

In addition to condition codes, Smarter Balanced recommends that service providers train raters for sensitive papers/alerts, including watching for troubled students and/or cheating. Examples of troubled student alerts include (but are not limited to) suicide, criminal activity, bullying incidents, and/or extreme depression. Indications of cheating may include (but are not limited to) evidence of assistance/intervention by an adult during the testing process. Smarter Balanced recommends that states and their service providers have a process in place to handle alerts as soon as they arise, including notifying both the state/territory where the alert originated.

#### Double Scoring

Smarter Balanced recommends that each state determine the percentage of its student responses that will be double scored, and the method for double scoring (e.g., items can be double scored using a combination of automated scoring and hand scoring). Percentages for double scoring will vary by content area and possibly by grade(s). Smarter Balanced recommends that 10% of student responses be the minimum level of double scoring allowed. Smarter Balanced expects states to collect item-level, hand-scoring statistics (e.g., inter-rater reliability) for each hand-scored item for all item responses that receive two reads.

Service providers may score Smarter Balanced student responses from multiple states; thus, states may want to request item-level, hand scoring statistics aggregated across all states scored by the service provider as well as item-level, hand scoring statistics for an individual state.

#### Quality Monitoring

Smarter Balanced has established minimum qualification standards for qualifying and monitoring external scoring. Before hand scoring any operational student responses, raters must meet the qualification standards described below:

Table 3 Exact Agreement Standards for Rater Qualification

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Score Point Range** | **Qualification Standard** |
| 0-1 | 90% (no non-adjacent scores) |
| 0-2 | 80% (no non-adjacent scores) |
| 0-3 | 80% (no non-adjacent scores) |
| 0-4 | 70% (no non-adjacent scores) |

Smarter Balanced provides validity papers for all hand-scorable items. Smarter Balanced requires that service providers use these papers to monitor scoring accuracy. Raters are expected to maintain these quality standards (Table 3 above) during the qualification and validation process. It is recommended that during hand scoring, raters score a minimum of ten validity responses for each item. Scorers that do not meet the exact agreement standards should be retrained or disqualified from scoring.

Service providers are responsible for providing inter-rater reliability (IRR) and validity reports to states. IRR reports indicate agreement rates among readers and provide a picture of readers’ scoring patterns. Validity reports indicate agreement rates between a reader and a set of papers with predetermined scores and provide a picture of readers’ adherence to or drift from the correct scoring procedures. Analysis of the inter-rater reliability and validity reports is an excellent source to determine team or reader drift and team-leader influence. The supervisor can re-anchor readers or teams with live papers, relevant training materials, and scoring guidelines. For monitoring inter-rater reliability, a minimum 10% second-read rate is required. The inter-rater reliability standards and validity standards are provided in this table.

Table 4 Inter-Rater Reliability (IRR) and Validity Standards

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Score Point Range** | **IRR Standard (Exact Agreement)** | **Validity Standard (Exact Agreement)** |
| 0-1 | 80% | 90% |
| 0-2 | 70% | 80% |
| 0-3 | 70% | 80% |
| 0-4 | 60% | 70% |

The Hand Scoring Rules are posted in the [Summative Scoring Materials Folder](https://fx.smarterbalanced.org/) on the Smarter Balanced Secure File Transfer Server (FX) site. States are expected to meet these standards but may also establish stricter standards for external scoring.

States should request the frequency with which they desire their service provider to provide quality scoring reports. The reports should include the following quality checks:

* Inter-rater reliability (item level and reader level with exact, adjacent, and non-adjacent agreement rates);
* Validity or check-set results (item level and reader level with exact, adjacent, and non-adjacent rates);
* Third read adjudication results (reader level comparisons to third read score);
* Item-level and reader-level reports on item score point frequencies, including non-scorable codes;
* Item-level reports showing mean scores; and
* Rater drift.

## 5.2 Automated Scoring of Text Response Items

If a state elects to use automated scoring of text response items using an artificial intelligence (AI) scoring application, then the state must decide:

* What content area(s), grade(s), and item types will be scored using automated scoring?
* Will automated scoring produce the single score of record?
* Will automated scoring be used as a second read for human scorers?
* Will human hand scoring be used to validate automated scoring?

If a state elects to include the use of automated scoring of text response items in its RFP, then it should ask service providers to describe their:

* Scoring method (i.e., will automated scoring be used in addition or in place of site-based and/or distributed hand scoring?);
* Filtering process (e.g., business rules for filtering/flagging irregular responses);
* Modeling process (i.e., how the operational scoring model was developed);
* Framework for evaluating the correct functioning of the scoring model;
* Scoring process (e.g., percent of items monitored by humans; resolution of discrepant scoring between human and AI system, including condition code, alert, and/or gamed papers; detection of alert, gamed, or condition code papers); and
* Experience with automated scoring (e.g., assessments previously scored, item types).

## 5.3 Field Test Scoring

The Smarter Balanced online summative assessments include embedded field test items. Smarter Balanced will assume responsibility for the scoring of all Smarter Balanced field test items. The state’s service provider will provide the student responses for scoring by the Smarter Balanced field test scoring contractor. The interim assessments and paper-based summative assessments do not include any field test items.

#### Other Documentation

* *Smarter Balanced Hand Scoring Rules* located in the Scoring Materials folder on the [Secure File Transfer Server](https://fx.smarterbalanced.org/).
* [*Technical Report on Automated Scoring with Artificial Intelligence*](http://www.smarterapp.org/documents/FieldTest_AutomatedScoringResearchStudies.pdf)

# 6.0 Test Integration and Test Scoring

## 6.1 Test Integration and Summative Assessment Test Scoring

Test Integration and Test Scoring are two separate components of the assessment delivery system. Both are discussed here.

### 6.1.1 Test Integration

Smarter Balanced recommends that states request verification from service providers that the procured assessment delivery system has the capability to integrate test data from the CAT and PT portions of the assessment. In addition, the service provider should verify that the assessment delivery system will send some item responses to external scoring systems while holding other item results that are machine-scored in real time. The system will then need to re-merge the item-level scored data once externally scored results are available. Once the item-level scored data are available, the system will need to assign test scores for each student.

### 6.1.2 Summative Assessment Test Scoring

In addition to scoring individual items, service providers are responsible for producing test scores for individual students. Test scores are produced in accordance with the [Smarter Balanced Scoring Specifications](https://technicalreports.smarterbalanced.org/scoring_specs/_book/scoringspecs.html). Test scores are based on a combination of item scores from the CAT and PT portions of the assessment.

#### Types of Scores

Smarter Balanced scores in English language arts/literacy and mathematics are reported as a content area-level overall scale score and a corresponding achievement-level. In each content area, claim level scores are also reported.

#### Overall Score

An individual student’s overall performance in each content area is reported in terms of a scale score and error band. Service providers will compute the overall scale score and standard error of measurement in accordance with the [*Smarter Balanced Scoring Specifications*](https://technicalreports.smarterbalanced.org/scoring_specs/_book/scoringspecs.html). The scale ranges from approximately 2000 to 3000 for both the interim and summative assessments.

The Smarter Balanced scale is a vertical scale, which means that student performance in all grades is reported on the same scale; however, the overall score range for each grade steadily increases, and the threshold scores between each performance level increase across grade levels. Figure 1 below shows the range of scale scores for each grade and content area.

Figure 1. Smarter Balanced Vertical Scale

Figure on the left: The range of scale scores for each grade level are included in the Smarter Balanced vertical scale for Math. For grades 3 through 8 and high school, each grade’s lowest possible scale score is greater than the previous grade’s. Each grade’s highest possible scale score is also greater than the previous grades. The scale scores range from 2400 to 3000.
Figure on the right: The range of scale scores for each grade level are included in the Smarter Balanced vertical scale for ELA. For grades 3 through 8 and high school, each grade’s lowest possible scale score is greater than the previous grade’s. Each grade’s highest possible scale score is also greater than the previous grades. The scale scores range from 2400 to 3000.

The standard error of measurement (SEM) provides the range of scores the student is likely to earn if that student were to take the test multiple times, or a test of parallel construction and similar difficulty, without receiving further instruction.

#### Achievement Levels

A student’s overall performance in each content area is classified into one of four achievement levels: Level 4 (Standard exceeded), Level 3 (Standard met), Level 2 (Standard nearly met), Level 1 (Standard not met). The Smarter Balanced achievement-level cut scores are available in the [Smarter Balanced Scoring Specifications](https://technicalreports.smarterbalanced.org/scoring_specs/_book/scoringspecs.html). The achievement levels and the Reporting Achievement Level Descriptors are also available on the [Reporting Scores page of the Smarter Balanced website](http://www.smarterbalanced.org/assessments/scores/). The achievement level labels, and achievement level descriptors are customizable by state.

#### Claim-level Scores

Claim scores (sub scores) are calculated for each content area summative assessment.

The ELA/literacy claims are:

* Claim 1 – Reading
* Claim 2 – Writing
* Claim 3 – Listening
* Claim 4 – Research and Inquiry

The mathematics claims are:

* Claim 1 – Concepts and Procedures
* Claim 2 – Problem Solving
* Claim 3 – Communicating Reasoning
* Claim 4 – Modeling and Data Analysis

**NOTE:** For ELA/literacy, claim scores are calculated and reported for each claim. For mathematics, claim scores are calculated and reported for Claim 1, Claims 2 and 4 combined, and Claim 3.

For each claim, individual student performance is reported as “Below Standard,” “Near Standard,” or “Above Standard” related to the overall scale score cut point between achievement levels 2 and 3.

If composite claim scores are available for a member state, please refer to the composite score information in the [*Smarter Balanced Scoring Specifications*](https://technicalreports.smarterbalanced.org/scoring_specs/_book/scoringspecs.html#calculating-claim-scores).

#### Target Scores

For each ELA/literacy claim on the summative assessment, student scores are calculated for each ELA/literacy assessment target. Assessment target scores are calculated for mathematics Claim 1 only.

#### Other State-specific Scores

States **are not permitted** to produce and report individual student test scores on Smarter Balanced tests other than those scores specified by Smarter Balanced without prior written approval of Smarter Balanced.

#### Combining Performance on the PT and CAT

An individual student’s overall score is based on the student’s performance across the PT and CAT portions of the assessment as described in the [*Smarter Balanced Scoring Specifications*](https://technicalreports.smarterbalanced.org/scoring_specs/_book/scoringspecs.html). Student performance on the individual PT and CAT portions of the assessment are not calculated and **are not** reported separately.

#### Computing an Overall Score

The Smarter Balanced Scoring Specifications provides the algorithm, or scoring model, needed to compute Smarter Balanced scaled scores from an individual student’s raw scores on the items that were administered to the student. Smarter Balanced provides item parameters and all information needed for computing the overall score and conditional standard error of measurement. Smarter Balanced utilizes the two-parameter logistic (2PL) model and the generalized partial credit model (GPCM) to calibrate selected-response and polytomous items, respectively.

#### Lowest Obtainable Scale Score (lOSS)/Highest Obtainable Scale Score (HOSS)

The method of combining item scores to produce test scores and sub-scores is presented in detail in the Smarter Balanced Scoring Specifications. Scores are calculated using maximum likelihood estimation (MLE) applied at the overall and sub-score levels. No special weights for claims, item types or performance tasks are applied. Desired domain representation is achieved by the numbers of items specified in the blueprints by claim and target.

A maximum likelihood procedure will not produce estimates of proficiency for students with extreme raw scores. An extreme raw score occurs when a student either gets full credit for all items taken (a perfect score) or gets no credit on any items taken (zero). Scale scores were established for these extreme cases following a non-maximum likelihood but logical procedure. These scale scores are called the Lowest Obtainable Scale Score (LOSS) and the Highest Obtainable Scale Score (HOSS).

Options for Lowest Obtainable Scale Score (LOSS)/Highest Obtainable Scale Score (HOSS) values have been set in policy. Implementation of the option desired by each state needs to be negotiated with the service provider. States have the following options:

**Option 1:** States may choose to retain the LOSS/HOSS values defined during the first test administration (SY 2014-15) which are shown in Table 5.

Table 5: 2014-15 Lowest and Highest Obtainable Scores

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Subject | Grade | Theta Metric | | Scale Score Metric | |
| LOT | HOT | LOSS | HOSS |
| ELA | 3 | -4.5941 | 1.3374 | 2114 | 2623 |
| ELA | 4 | -4.3962 | 1.8014 | 2131 | 2663 |
| ELA | 5 | -3.5763 | 2.2498 | 2201 | 2701 |
| ELA | 6 | -3.4785 | 2.5140 | 2210 | 2724 |
| ELA | 7 | -2.9114 | 2.7547 | 2258 | 2745 |
| ELA | 8 | -2.5677 | 3.0430 | 2288 | 2769 |
| ELA | HS | -2.4375 | 3.3392 | 2299 | 2795 |
| Math | 3 | -4.1132 | 1.3335 | 2189 | 2621 |
| Math | 4 | -3.9204 | 1.8191 | 2204 | 2659 |
| Math | 5 | -3.7276 | 2.3290 | 2219 | 2700 |
| Math | 6 | -3.5348 | 2.9455 | 2235 | 2748 |
| Math | 7 | -3.3420 | 3.3238 | 2250 | 2778 |
| Math | 8 | -3.1492 | 3.6254 | 2265 | 2802 |
| Math | HS | -2.9564 | 4.3804 | 2280 | 2862 |

**Option 2**: States may choose to use other LOSS/HOSS values as long as the revised LOSS values do not result in more than 2% of students scoring below the LOSS level and the revised HOSS values do not result in more than 2% of students scoring above the HOSS level.

**Option 3:** States may choose to eliminate LOSS/HOSS altogether.

#### Additional Considerations

* All-wrong/All-right tests:
  + For all incorrect tests, score by adding 0.5 to an item score with smallest a-parameter among the administered operational items (CAT and PT) for a test.
  + For all correct cases, score by subtracting 0.5 from an item score with smallest a-parameter among the administered operational items (CAT+PT) for a student.
* States will need to provide Smarter Balanced with the calculated theta score and the reported scale score for students whose scores fall into HOSS/LOSS ranges.
* If using Option #1 or #2 above:
  + When the scale score corresponding to the estimated theta is lower than LOSS or higher than HOSS, the scale score will be assigned associated LOSS and HOSS values. The theta score will be retained as originally computed.
  + LOSS and HOSS scale score rules will be applied to all tests (Summative, ICA, and IAB) and all scores (total and sub scores).
* The standard error for LOSS and HOSS will be computed using theta ability estimates given the administered items. For example, in the formula in Section 5.1 of the [*Smarter Balanced Scoring Specifications*](https://technicalreports.smarterbalanced.org/scoring_specs/_book/scoringspecs.html), =theta for the LOSS or HOSS, a and b are for the administered items
* If using Option #3, the scale score is calculated directly from estimated theta.

## 6.2 Participation and Performance Calculations

States may calculate participation and performance according to their federally approved accountability plan or waiver. States have established complex accountability systems, databases, web-applications and reports that use assessment data to calculate participation rates, achievement rates and to make accountability determinations based on these calculations. These systems have evolved over time through agreements with stakeholders and to comply with applicable state and federal laws. Further, states document their approach to calculating participation and achievement rates as part of their Accountability Workbooks and Flex Waivers. For these reasons, changing the manner in which states calculate participation and achievement rates will take time.

***Therefore, states may elect to implement the Consortium rules regarding calculating participation and achievement rates but are not required to do so.***

#### Policy Objectives

The procedures regarding how to calculate participation and achievement rates must be considered in a policy context and must be aligned to the Consortium’s goals.

#### Make Valid Claims about What Groups of Students Can Do

The validity of conclusions one can derive about assessment results is partly dependent on the percent of students who participated in the assessment. For example, one cannot make generalizations about a school’s performance if a large number of eligible students did not participate in the test.

#### Make Valid Claims about What Individual Students Know and Can Do

The Consortium intends to make claims about what students know and are able to do regarding the Common Core State Standards. The validity and reliability of these claims are dependent on the number of questions that a student answers. Although students’ knowledge and skills in a content area tend to be highly correlated, depending on the correlation to infer knowledge and skills is a risky proposition. For example, if a student were to only answer questions that measure their ability to read, we should limit the degree to which reading data are used to describe the student’s achievement in English language arts/literacy given that the student did not demonstrate skills in writing, listening or research.

#### Promote Equity

Smarter Balanced provides a variety of accessibility resources on assessments to ensure equitable access for students with diverse accessibility needs and preferences. Additionally, assessment content undergoes bias and sensitivity reviews to be inclusive, equitable, and representative of diverse student populations across the Consortium.

Assessment can be a powerful tool to help identify gaps in student achievement. Toward that end, creating incentives for all eligible students to participate helps to make data available that can describe achievement gaps and whether we can observe progress in closing the gaps.

#### Honor Students’ Effort

The Common Core State Standards require students to be able to demonstrate many challenging skills. In some cases, students will complete most of the test, but for reasons outside of an individual student’s control (e.g., illness, scheduling problems, etc.) they are not able to complete an entire assessment. The Consortium seeks to honor students’ work to the greatest extent possible while at the same time not compromising the validity of conclusions that stakeholders make based on the results of partially completed assessments.

#### Incentivize Desirable Outcomes

The Consortium should create policies that Members can use as incentives for adults to encourage students to complete the assessment. These incentives are particularly important as Members consider how assessment data can help promote equity in education.

## 6.3 Procedures

#### Attempted Tests

Attempted tests for the online administration are tests for which a student logs into the computer adaptive test (CAT) session and the performance task (PT) session in a content area. Attempted tests for the paper-pencil administration are tests for which a student provides an answer to one question in the test booklet for a content area.

Once a test is invalidated, the Consortium will not count a test as an attempt.

#### Partial Tests

Partial tests are attempted tests for which a student omitted a response to one or more items.

#### Complete Tests

Complete tests are attempted tests for which students provide an answer to every question on the CAT and Performance Task PT components.

Note: Those student responses to items that cannot be scored because the student did not provide sufficient information will be treated as an incorrect response and will also contribute to a complete test.

#### Valid Tests

Valid tests are attempted tests that are administered in a manner consistent with the test administration manual. This includes but is not limited to:

* Using only allowable tools, resources and accommodations;
* Adhering to test security requirements including appropriate proctoring; and
* Adhering to standardized test administration policies and procedures (e.g., reading test directions, maintaining a suitable testing environment).

## 6.4 Calculating Participants, Assigning Achievement Levels and Calculating Scores

For purposes of reporting, Consortium level information and conducting Consortium wide research, the following procedures will be used:

### 6.4.1 Participants

The Consortium will count students with attempted English language arts/literacy tests that are valid as participants in English language arts.

The Consortium will count students with attempted mathematics tests that are valid as participants in mathematics.

### 6.4.2 Assigning Achievement Levels

The Consortium will assign achievement levels based on the achievement levels adopted by Consortium Members and the scale scores calculated for the tests.

### 6.4.3 Calculating Scale Scores

For Complete Tests, the Consortium will score tests based on the students’ responses to the items in the CAT and PTs.

For Partial Tests for which students answer at least 10 CAT items, the Consortium will derive a score based on the students’ actual responses to items and will consider as incorrect any item to which students do not provide a response. The difficulty of a student’s omitted items from the combination of online CAT and PTs will be estimated based on the average difficulty of the items in the item pool. For fixed form tests, the difficulty of omitted items will be based on the difficulty of the actual omitted items.

For Partial Tests for which students answer 0-9 CAT items, the Consortium will assign the Lowest Obtainable Scale Score (LOSS) for the grade and content area.

A student who answers every question incorrectly will receive the lowest scale score for the grade and content area. A student who answers every question correctly will receive the Highest Obtainable Scale Score (HOSS) for the grade and content area.

### 6.4.4 Assigning Achievement Levels

The Consortium will assign Achievement Levels based on the scale scores derived for the assessment.

## 6.5 Confirming the Accuracy of Test Scoring

Smarter Balanced released specifications and requirements needed to properly deliver the Smarter Balanced Assessment. As part of this process, Smarter Balanced developed an *Implementation Readiness Package* of specifications, sample data, tests, and other materials necessary to show compliance with Smarter Balanced specifications and requirements. States should require their service providers to show evidence that they are able to accurately apply scoring specifications provided by Smarter Balanced to produce Smarter Balanced test scores from raw scores across individual items, including demonstrating that the software and procedures used to implement Smarter Balanced scoring algorithms produce comparable Smarter Balanced test scores.

#### Other Documentation

* [*Smarter Balanced Implementation Readiness Package*](http://www.smarterapp.org/specs/ImplementationReadinessPackage.html)
* [*Smarter Balanced Scoring Specifications*](https://technicalreports.smarterbalanced.org/scoring_specs/_book/scoringspecs.html)
* [*Reporting Achievement Level Descriptors*](https://portal.smarterbalanced.org/library/en/achievement-level-descriptors.pdf)
* [*Test Results- Data Dictionary and Logical Data Model*](http://www.smarterapp.org/documents/TestResults-DataModel.pdf)
* [*Test Results Transmission Format*](http://www.smarterapp.org/documents/TestResultsTransmissionFormat.pdf)

# 7.0 Summative Assessments

## 7.1 Online Summative Test Packages

All item content and test administration specifications for Smarter Balanced assessments are delivered in test packages and are available to members and service providers in the Test Packages folder of the [Secure File Transfer Server](https://fx.smarterbalanced.org/login). Separate Test Package files are provided for mathematics and ELA/Literacy.

#### Resources

* [Assessment Package Types](http://www.smarterapp.org/documents/AssessmentPackageTypes.html)

## 7.2 Computer Adaptive Test and Performance Tasks

Each ELA/literacy and Mathematics summative assessment consists of two parts, a computer adaptive test (CAT) and a non-computer adaptive Performance Task (PT).

### 7.2.1 Computer Adaptive Test (CAT)

The use of CAT methodologies helps ensure that students across the range of proficiencies have an assessment experience with items well targeted to their skill level. Adaptive testing allows average-, very low-, and very high-performing students to stay engaged in the assessment because they respond to items specifically targeted to their skill level. Computer adaptive tests are more efficient in that they provide a higher level of score precision than fixed form tests with the same number of items, particularly for very high achieving and very low achieving students. For the CAT component, there are both content constraints (e.g., a long reading passage in ELA/literacy must be administered) as well as psychometric criteria that must be optimized for each student.

The CAT delivers blueprints in a manner that efficiently minimizes measurement error and maximizes information. Smarter Balanced developed an open-source adaptive algorithm as described in the [*Smarter Balanced Adaptive Item Selection Algorithm Design Report*](http://www.smarterapp.org/documents/AdaptiveAlgorithm.pdf).

To assert that test results are comparable across states, Smarter member states **must** adopt the open-source algorithm or a service provider’s adaptive algorithm that complies with Smarter Balanced specifications and requirements described in the Smarter Balanced Adaptive Item Selection Algorithm Design Report.

### 7.2.2 Performance Tasks

Non-adaptive performance tasks (PTs) measure a student’s ability to integrate knowledge and skills across multiple standards in a coherent task that requires use of integrated skill sets— a key component of college-and-career readiness. Performance tasks measure capacities such as essay writing, research skills, and complex analysis, which are not as easy to assess with individual, discrete items. Performance tasks are used to better measure capacities such as depth of understanding, research skills, and complex analysis, which cannot be adequately assessed with stand-alone selected or constructed-response items. Some of the items contained in the PTs require students to provide an extended written response that will be hand scored.

## 7.3 Content Specifications

The Smarter Balanced summative assessment was developed using an evidence-centered design (ECD) approach used to develop educational assessments in terms of reasoning about evidence (arguments) concerning the intended constructs. The first step in this process was the identification of claims, or inferences users want to make concerning student achievement for each content area. Each claim is a summary statement about the knowledge and skills students are expected to demonstrate on the assessment related to a particular aspect of the CCSS for ELA/literacy or mathematics. Evidence needed to support those claims is then specified, and finally, items/tasks capable of eliciting that information are designed.

The [*Smarter Balanced ELA/Literacy Content Specifications*](https://portal.smarterbalanced.org/library/en/english-language-artsliteracy-content-specifications.pdf)and the [*Smarter Balanced Mathematics Content Specifications*](https://portal.smarterbalanced.org/library/en/mathematics-content-specifications.pdf) describe the ECD approach used by Smarter Balanced and describe the ELA/literacy and mathematics claims.

The ELA/literacy claims are:

* Claim 1 – Reading
* Claim 2 – Writing
* Claim 3 – Listening
* Claim 4 – Research and Inquiry

The mathematics claims are:

* Claim 1 – Concepts and Procedures
* Claim 2 – Problem Solving
* Claim 3 – Communicating Reasoning
* Claim 4 – Modeling and Data Analysis

Each claim is accompanied by a set of assessment targets that provide more detail about the range of content and Depth of Knowledge levels. The targets are intended to support the development of high-quality items and tasks that contribute evidence to the claims.

## 7.4 Item and Task Specifications

Item and performance task specifications provide guidance to item writers on how to translate the Smarter Balanced Content Specifications into actual assessment items. Each item specification document includes the claim, assessment target, Common Core State Standards, Range Achievement Level Descriptors (ALD), evidence required, accessibility guidance, task models, and other information that inform the development of high-quality items. The performance task specifications guide the development and review of performance tasks.

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 ELA/literacy and mathematics item and task specifications are available on the [Test Development and Design Page of the Smarter Content Explorer](https://contentexplorer.smarterbalanced.org/test-development).

## 7.5 Summative Assessment Test Blueprints

The [*Smarter Balanced ELA/literacy Summative Assessment Blueprint*](https://portal.smarterbalanced.org/library/en/elaliteracy-summative-assessment-blueprint.pdf), [*Smarter Balanced Mathematics Summative Assessment Blueprint*](https://portal.smarterbalanced.org/library/en/mathematics-summative-assessment-blueprint.pdf)*,* [*Smarter Balanced ELA/literacy Adjusted Form Summative Blueprint*](https://portal.smarterbalanced.org/library/en/elaliteracy-summative-assessment-blueprint.pdf), and [*Smarter Balanced Mathematics Adjusted Form Summative Blueprint*](https://portal.smarterbalanced.org/library/en/mathematics-adjusted-blueprint.pdf) define the knowledge, skills, and abilities intended to be measured on each student’s test event. Member States may choose whether to administer the full summative or adjusted summative assessment. The blueprints also specify how skills are sampled from the content standards. Other important factors such as Depth of Knowledge (DOK) indicate the complexity of item types for each claim and assessment target.

The test blueprint is a formal document that guides the development and assembly of an assessment by describing the following types of essential information: content (claims and assessment targets) that is included for each assessed subject and grade, the relative emphasis of content standards indicated as the number of items per claim and assessment target, and the number of items from each part of the summative assessment (CAT or PT). The ELA/literacy blueprint also describes the number of machine-scored short text, and full write (essay) items per claim and assessment target.

#### Other Documentation

* [*Smarter Balanced Adaptive Item Selection Algorithm Design Report*](http://www.smarterapp.org/documents/AdaptiveAlgorithm.pdf)
* [*Smarter Balanced ELA/Literacy Content Specifications*](https://portal.smarterbalanced.org/library/en/english-language-artsliteracy-content-specifications.pdf)
* [*Smarter Balanced Mathematics Content Specifications*](https://portal.smarterbalanced.org/library/en/mathematics-content-specifications.pdf)
* [*Smarter Balanced Item and Task Specifications*](http://www.smarterbalanced.org/assessments/development/)
* [*Smarter Balanced ELA/literacy Summative Assessment Blueprint*](https://portal.smarterbalanced.org/library/en/elaliteracy-summative-assessment-blueprint.pdf)
* [*Smarter Balanced ELA/literacy Adjusted Summative Assessment Blueprint*](https://portal.smarterbalanced.org/library/en/elaliteracy-summative-assessment-blueprint.pdf)
* [*Smarter Balanced Mathematics Summative Assessment Blueprint*](https://portal.smarterbalanced.org/library/en/mathematics-summative-assessment-blueprint.pdf)
* [*Smarter Balanced Mathematics Adjusted Summative Assessment Blueprint*](https://portal.smarterbalanced.org/library/en/mathematics-adjusted-blueprint.pdf)

# 8.0 Online Summative Assessment Test Administration

## 8.1 Overview of Online Summative Assessment Test Administration Protocols

The ELA/literacy and mathematics summative assessments are each comprised of two components: a computer adaptive test (CAT) and a performance task (PT).

Smarter Balanced recommends that students take the CAT and PT sections on separate days to minimize the effect of student fatigue. For each content area, Smarter Balanced also recommends that students begin with the CAT portion followed by the PT. Districts/schools may opt to administer in a different order if needed.

Each student is randomly assigned one PT per grade and content area. Performance task assignment information must be entered into the service provider’s test registration system.

Smarter Balanced recommends that the ELA PT be completed over two sessions and that the mathematics PT be completed during a single session.

Each student completes one PT for each content area in which they are participating in the summative assessment.

Refer to [*Section 9.1.5*](#_9.1.5_Field_Test) of this guide for information on assigning PTs when administering the PT embedded field test. Students who receive an embedded field test PT will also receive an enhanced CAT that includes additional items.

## 8.2 Summative Assessment Test Security

Members of the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium have a vested interest in ensuring that assessments are supported by security protocols that establish both fairness for student engagement and validity in the interpretation of results. With regard to the Smarter Balanced assessment system, security needs are amplified due to the increased consequences associated with broader membership.

Disclosure or dissemination of secure assessment items or other secure materials associated with the test will adversely affect the validity of the assessment results across the Consortium. The confidentiality of assessment items and corresponding student responses is paramount in maintaining the integrity and validity of any assessment. The action or inaction of one state may have consequences for the Consortium as a whole. For these reasons, states administering assessments provided by Smarter Balanced are expected to take appropriate steps to assure the security of the assessments.

### 8.2.1 State Responsibility

Prior to beginning any secure Smarter Balanced assessment, states must have processes in place to support test security for both online and paper-pencil administrations of the summative assessments (as applicable).

Each state will be required to have in place:

* Comprehensive protocols to respond to possible security breaches (including test and/or item exposure). Minimum standards describing how to discriminate security breaches from improprieties and irregularities are included in section 4.0 of the *Smarter Balanced Online Summative Test Administration Manual (Online TAM)* and the *Test Security Chart* at the end of this section.
* Plans supporting adequate training on test security procedures for Test Administrators, Test Coordinators, and other district/school staff such as principals, teachers, and test administrators. Such training should include, but not be limited to, training on item security and adherence to Online Summative TAM policies. Smarter Balanced developed nine training modules (available in the Assessment Training and Operations folder of the [Secure File Transfer Server](https://fx.smarterbalanced.org/)) that address various topics and support processes that those involved in administration will need to know.

With regard to overall test security, each state should have in place a process and associated training for ensuring that:

* Test Administrators (and any other individuals who will be administering any secure Smarter Balanced assessments) have read the *Smarter Balanced Online TAM*, understand the supports available to students as described in the [*Smarter Balanced Usability, Accessibility, and Accommodations Guidelines*](https://portal.smarterbalanced.org/library/en/usability-accessibility-and-accommodations-guidelines.pdf), and viewed the associated Smarter Balanced training modules (available in the Assessment Training and Operations folder of the [Secure File Transfer Server](https://fx.smarterbalanced.org/login)).
* Test Administrators communicate test security information to students.
* There are clearly defined protocols that describe which individuals (staff or otherwise) may be designated as Test Administrators or in other roles related to administering a secure Smarter Balanced assessment. See Section 1.3 of the Online TAM for user roles and responsibilities.
* There is a process in place for monitoring social media for the posting of any secure assessment materials. See [*Appendix A: Guidance for Social Media Summative Assessment Monitoring*](#_Appendix_A:_Guidance) for more information.

Table 6: Test Security Chart

Thetest security chart shows the test security incident levels and examples of types of issues.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Level of Severity & Potential Effect on Test Security** | **Types of Issues** |
| LOW  Impropriety | Student(s) making distracting gestures/sounds or talking during the test session that creates a disruption in the test session for other students. |
| Student(s) leave the test room without authorization. |
| Disruptions to a test session such as a fire drill, school-wide power outage, earthquake, or other acts. |
| MEDIUM  Irregularity | Student(s) cheating or providing answers to each other, including passing notes, giving help to other students during testing, or using hand-held electronic devices to exchange information. Student(s) accessing the Internet or any unauthorized software or applications during testing. |
| Student(s) accessing or using unauthorized electronic equipment (e.g., cell phones, smart watches, PDAs, iPods, or electronic translators) during testing. |
| Administrator or Coordinator leaving related instructional materials on the walls in the testing room. |
| Administrator or Coordinator failing to ensure administration and supervision of the Smarter Balanced assessments by qualified, trained personnel. |
| Administrator giving incorrect instructions that are not corrected prior to testing. |
| Administrator or Coordinator giving out his or her username/password (via email or otherwise), including to other authorized users. |
| Administrator allowing students to continue testing beyond the close of the testing window. |
| Administrator or teacher coaching or providing any other type of assistance to students that may affect their responses. This includes both verbal cues (e.g., interpreting, explaining, or paraphrasing the test items or prompts) and nonverbal cues (e.g., voice inflection, pointing, or nodding head) to the correct answer. This also includes leading students through instructional strategies such as think-aloud, asking students to point to the correct answer or otherwise identify the source of their answer, or requiring students to show their work. |
| Administrator providing students with non-allowable materials or devices during test administration or allowing inappropriate designated supports and/or accommodations during test administration. |
| Administrator allowing anyone other than a student to log in to the test unless prescribed as an allowable accommodation in the student’s Individualized Education Program (IEP). This includes Test Administrators (TAs) or other staff using student information to log in or allowing a student to log in using another student’s information. |
| Administrator providing a student access to another student’s work/responses. |
| HIGH  Breach | Administrator or Coordinator modifying student responses or records at any time. |
| The live Student Interface or TA Interface being used for practice instead of the Interim, Training or Practice Tests. |
| Adult or student posting items or test materials on social media (Twitter, Facebook, etc.). |
| Administrator allowing students to take home printed test items, reading passages, writing prompts, or scratch paper that was used during the test or failing to otherwise securely store test materials. |
| Adult or student copying, discussing, or otherwise retaining test items, reading passages, writing prompts, or answers for any reason. This includes the use of photocopiers or digital, electronic, or manual devices to record or communicate a test item. This also includes using secure test items, modified secure test items, reading passages, writing prompts, or answer keys for instructional purposes. |
| Secure test materials being shared with the media (such as the writing prompts, test items, or reading passages), or allowing the media to observe a secure test administration. |
| Adult or student improperly removing secure testing materials such as test items, stimuli, reading passages, writing prompts, or scratch paper from the testing environment. |

#### Other Documentation

* *Online Summative Test Administration Manual* (Customizable version available in the Assessment Training and Operations folder of the [Secure File Transfer Server](https://fx.smarterbalanced.org/))
* [*Test Administrator User Guide Template*](http://www.smarterapp.org/manuals/TestAdministrator-UserGuide-Template.html)
* *Online Training Modules* (Assessment Training and Operations/Training Modules folder in the [Secure File Transfer Server](https://fx.smarterbalanced.org/login))

## 8.3 Remote Administration of Summative Assessments for 2023-24

Member states may authorize Local Education Agencies (LEAs) to administer summative assessments remotely during the 2023-24 school year according to the following policy.

LEAs will administer tests consistent with the established policies for in-person test administrations, as described in the *Member Procedures Manual* and *Online Summative Test Administration Manual (TAM)*. Two important requirements to highlight, that apply to in-person and remote test administration are:

* Tests must be proctored in real time with a trained Test Administrator, who is an employee of the Local Education Agency (LEA). In lieu of LEA proctors, the state may allow for proctoring by a remote proctoring contractor; and,
* The test must be administered in a secure environment, where students have access to allowable resources.

While a primary obligation of Test Administrators is to support students during in-person testing, extra effort is necessary to support students during remote test administration; therefore, tests may be administered remotely only when there are **additional provisions to assist the student while the student is testing, as determined by the state**.

If a member state allows LEAs to administer summative assessments remotely, the LEA must attempt to make available opportunities for all eligible students to test. This may include the following options:

* **In-person testing:**The Test Administrator and students are in the same room, traditional in-person testing centers in schools or other secure facilities; testing resources brought to students at the students’ homes or other location (e.g., library) by LEA staff for in-person testing; or,
* **Remote Testing**: The Test Administrator and students are in different locations and the test is administered consistent with this policy.

More detailed guidance for remote test administration is provided in the [*Remote Summative Testing Implementation Guidance*](https://portal.smarterbalanced.org/library/en/remote-summative-testing-implementation-guidance.pdf) document and the Supplement: Online Summative Test Administration Manual – For the Remote Administration of the Test of English Language Arts/Literacy and Mathematics.

# 9.0 Field Testing New Items

## 9.1 Field Testing of New Items Overview

To maintain the item pool for the assessment, Smarter Balanced will field test newly developed items during each test administration cycle. For the computer adaptive test (CAT) portion of the assessment, field test items will be embedded in the item pool and administered during the operational test administration. The field test items will appear seamless as there will be no distinction between operational and field test items for test administrators and students. All Consortium members are expected to participate in the field testing of new items.

There will be no field test items on the paper-pencil forms or the interim assessments provided by Smarter Balanced.

### 9.1.1 CAT Field Test Items

Items will be field tested during the computer adaptive portion of the assessment. Items to be field tested will be embedded in the item pool with operational items and included in the test package delivered to members and service providers for each administration cycle. Field test items will be flagged in the item pool for service providers.

Field test items include all item types. The types of items used by Smarter Balanced will continue to evolve throughout the lifespan of the assessment.

### 9.1.2 CAT Item Selection Algorithm

The administration of field test items will be controlled through the CAT item selection algorithm. The CAT item selection algorithm will determine which field test items are administered, when they are administered, and which students receive field test items. States and their service providers are not responsible for determining which students are administered field test items.

### 9.1.3 Number of Students

The number of students administered field test items within a particular state or territory will be based on the number of students in the state or territory and the number of items field tested within a particular administration. The assignment of field test items to students will follow the same procedure in all member states.

### 9.1.4 Scoring

Smarter Balanced will be responsible for scoring all field test items. Members will not be asked to score student responses for either machine-scored or hand-scored items.

The CAT field test items are randomly administered to all students. No embedded mathematics field test items in the CAT require-hand scoring. For ELA, Smarter Balanced field tests items in alignment with the blueprint, which includes ‘short text’ items in the CAT for grades 6-8 and high school which the field test scoring vendor may need to hand-score. Smarter Balanced uses approximately 1,500 responses per item for computing item statistics and calibration.

Smarter Balanced will assume responsibility for the scoring of all Smarter Balanced field test items. The amount of field testing per student is minimal—no more than 6 items per student—and is not expected to impact the overall testing time.

### 9.1.5 Field Test Performance Tasks

States will administer PTs from the operational pool, as well as PTs that need to be field tested. States, in collaboration with their service providers, will randomly assign the field test PTs to a small percentage of students throughout the testing window. To support the reporting of claim results without requiring the rapid calibration cycle of field test PTs, students who are administered a field test PT will be presented with a small number of additional items on the computer adaptive portion of the test. Students who are assigned to a field test PT in English language arts/literacy (ELA/literacy) will not receive writing trait scores for the ELA/literacy full write from their operational test. Smarter Balanced provides states with these writing trait scores for ELA/literacy field tested PTs after they are subsequently scored and calibrated.

Each PT requires approximately 2,000 student responses across the Consortium. Each state will collaborate with their service provider to ensure the field test PT is delivered to the appropriate number of students consistent with the identified sampling plan for reporting purposes.

States and their service provider are responsible for:

* Administering the field test PTs in a manner consistent with the test administration manual;
* Sensitive responses (a.k.a. crisis papers) until they are handed off to the Smarter Balanced field test scoring contractor; and
* Providing the student responses associated with the uncalibrated tasks as well as the student responses to all other items to the Smarter Balanced scoring contractor.

Smarter Balanced is responsible for:

* Developing the PTs;
* Range finding, assigning scores to student responses, conducting data reviews, and calibrating the embedded field test PT items;
* Producing anchor papers to support operational scoring; and
* Screening responses after receiving them from states and alerting members of sensitive responses per the guidance about topics that may require action in the *Smarter Balanced* *Online Summative Assessment Test Administration Manual*.

## 9.2 Field Test Data Submitted to Smarter Balanced

Student field test response information and item information (with the exception of scores) will be submitted to Smarter Balanced and used to calibrate field test items.

# 10.0 Interim Assessments

## 10.1 Interim Assessment Overview

Interim assessments are optional flexible assessments that can serve a variety of educator needs. To better support the range of possible uses consistent with member education agency policies, educators may establish the timeframe, administration policies, and scoring practices for interim assessments. The Smarter Balanced interim assessments allow teachers to check student progress throughout the year, giving educators information they can use to improve instruction and help students meet the challenge of college- and career-ready standards. The interim assessments may be administered at multiple points throughout the school year and are available in English language arts/literacy and mathematics in grades 3–8 and high school; however, teachers may administer individual assessments at any grade level. Out of grade-level administration is a local decision (e.g., administration of a grade 4 assessment to students in grade 3, or a grade 3 assessment to students in grade 4).

There are three types of Smarter Balanced interim assessments: The Interim Comprehensive Assessments (ICAs), the Interim Assessment Blocks (IABs) and the Focused IABs (FIABs). All interim assessments draw from the same bank of items and PTs (there are overlapping items in the IABs, FIABs, and ICAs in each grade-level content area). The IAB PT for each grade and content area is the same as the PT portion of the ICA for that grade and content area.

The interim assessments are designed to be administered as computer-based assessments to allow students access to the same accessibility resources available for the summative assessments. The interim assessments are not available in paper-pencil format. Unlike the Smarter Balanced summative assessments (which are adaptive), the interim assessments are fixed-form tests, which means the tests are static and do not adapt according to student responses. The fixed form for the interim assessments allows teachers to better manage hand scoring since all students respond to the same constructed response questions. The [*Interim Assessments Overview*](https://portal.smarterbalanced.org/library/en/interim-assessments-overview.pdf) provides more detailed information about the Smarter Balanced interim assessments.

Consortium member states have the flexibility to allow teachers to administer, and students to take interim assessments remotely under the following conditions:

* An authorized employee (e.g., teacher, test administrator) in a school administers the test consistent with the district or school policies for in-person interim assessment administration.
* The test administrator monitors the test activity such that tests are open only for the minimum amount of time necessary for students to complete and submit their responses.
* The test administrator uses established test administration practices to support students accessing the interim assessments; this may be a phone call or chat with a parent in advance of starting the test.
* The test administrator maintains student data privacy with student State-wide Student Identifiers (SSID) and other Personally Identifiable Information (PII), which are required to take an interim assessment. (Do not send PII over email, chat or text or other non-secure transmission methods. Please refer to local policies regarding communicating PII.)
* The test administrator follows state and local policies regarding test security and immediately escalates to the test coordinator any suspected item security issue;
  + A state or territory may establish a policy that allows for interim assessments to be administered without the use of a secure browser provided that the applicable test security protocols from [*Section 10.6.5*](#_10.6.5_Interim_Test) are followed.
  + A state’s policy must include procedures to address item security as described in [*Section 10.6.5 Interim Test Security*](#_10.6.5_Interim_Test) (e.g., posting on social media).

Interim Assessment at a Glance

Interim Comprehensive Assessments: Assess a borad range of targets, similar to the summative.

Interim Assessment Blocks: Assess 3-8 targets in ELA/literacy or Math

Focused Interim Assessment blocks: Assess 1-3 targets in ELA/literacy or Math

## 10.2 Types of Interim Assessments

### 10.2.1 Interim Comprehensive Assessments

The Interim Comprehensive Assessments (ICAs) are assessments that measure similar content to the summative assessments. Therefore, the ICAs may be helpful for purposes such as determining the knowledge and skills of students who are new to the district or the state and providing student performance information after a significant period of instruction.

There is one ICA per grade and content area. The ICAs take about the same amount of time to administer as the Smarter Balanced summative assessments when administered under standardized conditions.

### 10.2.2 Interim Assessment Blocks

The Interim Assessment Blocks (IABs) are assessments that teachers may use throughout the school year to check students’ understanding. Since the IABs are more granular than the ICA, teachers may be better able to administer the assessments during the school year in a manner more consistent with the sequence of their curricula. Each IAB has an associated Tools for Teachers Connections Playlist that provides educators with instructional next steps based on student performance on the IAB.

### 10.2.3 Focused Interim Assessment Blocks

Focused IABs assess no more than 3 assessment targets and provide educators with a deeper understanding of student knowledge and skills. Each Focused IAB has a corresponding Connections Playlist available in Tools for Teachers, which provides aligned resources teachers can use for instructional next steps to support student learning.

## 10.3 Interim Assessment Item Portal

The Interim Assessment Item Portal (IAIP) provides educators with the ability to use interim assessment items in more flexible ways that support student learning using the formative assessment process. The IAIP includes all live items on the available Interim Assessment Blocks (IAB), Focused IABs and the Interim Comprehensive Assessments (ICA). The IAIP may be used by educators to view and select or deselect individual assessment items to tailor content covered by an interim assessment so it better aligns with the sequence of their instruction. Educators may use the IAIP in addition to the fixed form IABs, Focused IABs and ICAs for remote and in-person instruction, as determined by the member state. The IAIP is available for integration into Tools for Teachers by member service providers.

## 10.4 Interim Assessment Blueprints

The interim assessment blueprints provide additional information about the content measured by each assessment, including which claim(s), assessment target(s), and depth of knowledge level(s) are addressed by the items, as well as the number of items by target or target group.

The ICA blueprint describes the assessed content for the comprehensive assessments, which is the same content assessed on the summative assessment. The IAB and Focused IAB blueprints can be used by educators to plan how to integrate the IABs effectively within classroom instruction or to better understand results that are reported. The IAB and Focused IAB blueprints can be used to determine which assessment targets are addressed in a specific IAB or Focused IAB and the emphasis of each target relative to the other targets in the IAB or Focused IAB.

The interim assessment blueprints are available for download from the [Test Development and Design Page of the Smarter Content Explorer](https://contentexplorer.smarterbalanced.org/test-development).

## 10.5 Test Registration

States need to procure test registration services for the interim assessment. The registration system will be used to ensure that each student receives items with the appropriate accessibility resources. States may elect to use the same registration system for both the interim and summative assessment.

## 10.6 Test Administration

### 10.6.1 Test Delivery System

Interim assessments may be administered online through a proprietary test delivery system. The ICAs use the same specifications as the Summative Assessments. The specifications for the IABs and Focused IABs will have additional content constraints. The test delivery system should interact with other components of the assessment delivery system to ensure that each student is provided with appropriate accessibility resources.

### 10.6.2 Multiple Administrations

The interim assessments may be administered multiple times within an academic year. Smarter Balanced does not limit the number of times that an interim assessment may be administered. States will need to work with service providers to determine contractual expectations related to the maximum number of administrations per interim assessment. Since the purpose of the interim assessments is to inform instruction, ideally, decisions regarding interim assessment administration should be determined locally.

Despite this allowance, educators should be made aware of considerations associated with administering these assessments multiple times within an academic year.

* Item over-exposure: Testing multiple times a year limits the item pool available to students, which will increase the possibility of students encountering the same item several times. Over-exposed items are unlikely to hold their original parameters and may skew performance results. To prevent this, schools and classrooms may want to limit their testing program to either a judicious use of ICAs or to coordinated use of IABs.
* Testing time: Educators should consider the value of additional time spent testing versus instructional time when making decisions about multiple test administrations.

### 10.6.3 Grade-Levels

The interim assessments are available in Grades 3 through 8 and high school. The high school interim assessments are constructed to be consistent with the Grade 11 blueprint; however, high school interim assessments may be administered in Grades 9, 10, 11, or 12. In addition, the interim assessments are not constrained by grade level; in other words, students may take a test at any grade level regardless of their enrolled grade. While Smarter does not constrain the use of the interim assessments, availability to the interim assessments by grade-level may be set within each state.

### 10.6.4 Interim Item Pools

The interim assessment items were developed under the same conditions, protocols, and review procedures as those used in the summative assessments. Therefore, they assess the same Common Core State Standards, adhere to the same principles of Universal Design to be accessible to all students, and provide evidence to support Smarter Balanced claims in mathematics and English language arts/literacy.

Smarter Balanced provides fixed-form interim assessments that include universal tools, designated supports, and accommodations listed in the *Usability, Accessibility, and Accommodations Guidelines.*

### 10.6.5 Interim Test Security

Interim assessments can serve a variety of educator needs. To better support the range of possible uses consistent with state education agency policies, educators may establish the timeframe, administration policies, and local scoring practices for interim assessments. The interim assessments are designated as student- and teacher- facing. The student- and teacher-facing designations provide educators the flexibility to access the test questions and their students' responses to the test questions. Because of this flexibility, the interim assessments are not intended to be used for accountability purposes. Interim assessments are not for public use, display, or distribution. This allows educators to use the interim assessments in the intended manner.

For this reason, any use, display, or distribution of the interim assessments that results in access to individuals beyond authorized local education agency staff and students is prohibited. Finally, interim assessment items must not be copied into a third-party application without the permission of Smarter Balanced.

Note: A state or territory may establish a policy that allows for interim assessments to be administered without the use of a secure browser provided that the above test security protocols are followed.

#### Responding to Testing Improprieties, Irregularities, and Breaches

Since interim assessments are not intended to be used for accountability purposes, most testing improprieties, irregularities, and breaches described in the Summative Assessment Online Test Administration Manual are not reported during an interim assessment administration. Unlike the summative assessments, teachers may discuss interim test items with students or other educators in the school and may use interim test items for instructional purposes.

There are two exceptions to this general policy.

* Testing Irregularity: A Test Administrator accidentally administers a summative assessment instead of an interim assessment. This testing irregularity is typically reported in the Administration and Registration Tool (ART) or the member’s proprietary registration tool.
* Breach: An adult or student shares interim items publicly.

Incidences that are considered breaches for interim assessments include the following examples:

* Adult or student posting interim test items or stimuli on social media (e.g., Twitter, Facebook).
* Adult allowing students to take printed interim test items, stimuli, or scratch paper that was used during test administration or during instruction, out of the learning environment. This includes students who take printed items without permission.
* Adult or student copying interim test items, stimuli, or answers for use outside of the learning environment. This includes the use of photocopiers or digital, electronic, or manual devices to record or communicate a test item.
* Adult posting interim test items in a third-party system (e.g., a student information system or local database).
* Adult displaying or distributing interim assessment items that results in access to individuals beyond authorized local education agency staff and students (e.g., posting on a classroom webpage or putting them into a homework packet).

These and any other incidents that have external implications for the Consortium should be considered a breach and may result in a Consortium decision to remove the test item(s) from the interim assessment bank. A breach incident must be reported to the School Test Coordinator and District Test Coordinator immediately. The District Test Coordinator is responsible for notifying the state education agency who will notify Smarter Balanced of a potential security breach.

### 10.6.6 Flexible Test Administration Options

Interim assessments may be administered in a standardized or non-standardized manner. A standardized administration follows the same protocols as a summative assessment test administration. A non-standardized administration is for use in a formative manner (e.g., classroom discussion, small groups of students working on interim assessment items).

## 10.7 Item Scoring for the Interim Assessments

Except for the Math Performance Task IAB, all mathematics IABs are machine scored. Most items in the ELA and Math ICAs and the ELA IABs are machine scored; however, there are some constructed response items, including the full write (essay) that need to be hand-scored. This is a local responsibility.

The state’s service provider will need to provide a hand scoring application to enable educators to hand-score items locally and to submit those scores for integration into the overall score of the test. Smarter Balanced provides rubrics, exemplars, and training guides for each interim assessment hand-scored item. Teacher hand scoring training guides are available in the Scoring Materials/Interim Scoring Materials folder of the [Secure File Transfer Server](https://fx.smarterbalanced.org/). Service providers will need to make these materials available through a password protected link on the state’s assessment portal. States may want to develop training protocols to support educators scoring these items locally.

Hand scoring is a valuable professional development activity that provides educators with an understanding of the scoring process and the expectations for student learning. This local scoring is not subject to the rigorous quality controls (e.g., validity papers, double scoring, score verification) used for the summative assessments. Educators engaged in hand scoring of interim items should use the scoring guides that are provided to ensure consistent results. The [ELA/Literacy ICA Blueprint](https://portal.smarterbalanced.org/library/en/ela-literacy-interim-comprehensive-assessment-blueprint.pdf) and the [ELA/Literacy IAB Blueprint](https://portal.smarterbalanced.org/library/en/english-language-artsliteracy-interim-assessment-blocks-fixed-form-blueprint.pdf) provide information about which interim assessments require hand scoring.

While most of the external scoring is done locally, each state will be responsible for determining the approach for the hand scoring of interim items (scored by teachers or contracted through a service provider, and whether to use automated scoring).

### 10.7.1 Interim Assessment Test Scoring

Like the summative assessments, in addition to scoring individual items, service providers are responsible for producing interim assessment scores for individual students. Test scores are produced in accordance with the [Smarter Balanced Scoring Specifications](https://technicalreports.smarterbalanced.org/scoring_specs/_book/scoringspecs.html).

#### Interim Comprehensive Assessment

The ICA reporting is the same as the reporting for the summative assessment. The reports include an overall scale score with error band and an achievement level per content area as well as claim-level scores. At the claim-level, student performance is classified into one of three reporting categories (Below Standard, Near Standard, or Above Standard) related to the overall scale score cut point between achievement levels 2 and 3.

#### Interim Assessment Block

For the IABs, student performance is classified into one of three reporting categories (Below Standard, Near Standard, or Above Standard) related to the overall scale score cut point between achievement levels 2 and 3, similar to claim reporting.

### 10.7.2 State Options for Interim Assessment Implementation

When planning for the administration of interim assessments, states should consider the following questions:

* What timeline does the state require for the implementation of the interim assessments?
* Will the state use Smarter Balanced-designed interim assessments (ICAs, IABs, and Focused IABs), or will the state require a state-specific solution for the interim assessments using the Smarter Balanced Interim Assessment item bank?
* Will the states allow use of automated scoring with artificial intelligence (AI) for hand-score interim items?
* Will the state require the service provider to hand-score interim items that require hand scoring or allow local scoring of hand-scored items?
* Will the state customize the *Smarter Balanced Interim Assessment Guide for Administration*?

#### Other Documentation

* [*Interim Assessments Overview*](https://portal.smarterbalanced.org/library/en/interim-assessments-overview.pdf)
* The interim assessment blueprints are available for download from the [Test Development and Design Page of the Smarter Content Explorer](https://contentexplorer.smarterbalanced.org/test-development)
* Teacher hand scoring training guides are available in the Scoring Materials/Interim Scoring Materials folder of the [Secure File Transfer Server](https://fx.smarterbalanced.org/)
* [*Smarter Balanced Scoring Specifications*](https://technicalreports.smarterbalanced.org/scoring_specs/_book/scoringspecs.html)

# 11.0 Paper-Pencil Summative Assessment

## 11.1 Paper-Pencil Assessments Overview

The Smarter Balanced summative assessment is intended to be administered as an online assessment; however, Smarter Balanced makes available a paper-pencil test for states that elect to use it.

States will need to determine whether they plan to offer paper-pencil tests, and if so, should have a process in place for identifying the schools or districts or individual students requiring paper materials. States will need to work closely with their service providers on all details of the paper-pencil test administration including ordering, shipping, receiving, scanning, scoring, and reporting. States are responsible for establishing a process for monitoring the administration of paper-pencil tests to ensure they are administered in a way to ensure comparability between online and paper-pencil Smarter Balanced assessments, in areas such as timing, scheduling, accommodations, scoring, and reporting.

For the 2023-24 school year, members who elect to allow for the remote administration of paper-pencil tests may do so provided that there is a process in place to ensure test security (e.g., a process to securely provide materials to the students and securely return the materials back to the school, a process for monitoring the administration of remotely administered paper-pencil tests).

Smarter Balanced provides one operational paper-pencil assessment form per grade and content area. The form is available in braille: Unified English Braille (UEB) and English Braille, American Edition (EBAE) codes from the American Printing House for the Blind (APH). The mathematics form is available translated into Spanish with a Dual Language Spanish presentation that includes both English and Spanish. Smarter Balanced does not provide a large-print version of the paper-pencil assessment.

For each grade and content area, the paper-pencil test will include only operational items from both the adaptive and performance task sections of the online test (no embedded field test items are included in the paper forms). The paper-pencil forms will be comprised of both machine and hand-scored items.

The following item types are included on the paper-pencil form:

* Multiple Choice
* Multiple Select Response
* Table Response
* Two-Part Multiple Choice, with Evidence Responses
* Gridded Response
* Equation Response
* Short Text Response
* Essay/Writing Extended Response

In some instances, items may be modified for delivery in a paper format. The modified items may have revised item parameters, and items that were originally machine-scored may require hand scoring. Updated item information for items appearing on each paper-pencil form is available in the Test Packages/Paper-Pencil folder on the [Secure File Transfer Server](https://fx.smarterbalanced.org/).

## 11.2 Paper-Pencil Test Materials

### 11.2.1 Test Books and Answer Booklets

The paper-pencil version of the Smarter Balanced Assessment includes test booklets and scannable answer booklets for each grade and content area.

States will need to procure services related to ordering, printing, packing, shrink wrapping, distributing, managing, retrieving, scanning, storing, and securely disposing of the secure paper-pencil test books.

Smarter Balanced provides both test books and answer booklets in camera-ready PDF and InDesign format. The Smarter Balanced logo will appear on the front cover of the test book. States may also insert their own insignia on the front cover of the test book.

### 11.2.2 Audio Files for Listening Passages

Smarter Balanced provides files required to produce audio CDs of the ELA/literacy listening passages. States are responsible for mastering, replicating, and distributing the audio CDs. Alternatively, test administrators may read aloud scripts of the listening passages. The scripts are included in the ELA/literacy paper-pencil test administration manual.

### 11.2.3 Manipulatives

The paper-pencil assessments do not allow for the use of manipulatives.

### 11.2.4 Calculators

For grades 6 through 8 and high school, mathematics items are placed into calculator and non-calculator sessions. States must ensure that calculators are available to students for testing purposes and can decide whether to have local systems provide calculators or whether they have the service provider supply the calculators for the purposes of testing. Table 7 provides information about allowable calculators by grade.

Table 7: Paper-Pencil Testing Calculator Type (Maximum Functionality) by Grade Guidelines

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Grade | Calculator Type | Calculator Description |
| Grades 3–5 Mathematics | None | Calculator not allowed |
| Grade 6 Mathematics | Four-function Calculator | Four-function with square root and percentage functions |
| Grades 7 and 8 Mathematics | Scientific Calculator | A scientific calculator with exponents, trigonometry, and logarithmic functionalities |
| HS Mathematics | Graphing Calculator | A graphing calculator with similar functionalities to a TI-84 |

### 11.2.5 Translated Glossaries

Smarter Balanced provides glossaries for the mathematics paper-pencil forms in each of 13 languages. States are responsible for making the glossaries available to districts who plan to administer the paper-pencil test in advance of test administration so that they may print these glossaries locally.

### 11.2.6 Test Administration Manual

Smarter Balanced provides separate Paper-Pencil Test Administration Manuals (TAM) for each form and content area for paper-pencil test administrations. The Paper-Pencil TAMs work in conjunction with the Online Summative TAM to provide all necessary directions to administer the paper-pencil operational forms. The paper-pencil TAMs are available on the Secure File Transfer Server (<https://fx.smarterbalanced.org/>).

### 11.2.7 Special Versions of the Paper-Pencil Test

#### Braille Versions

Smarter Balanced provides braille versions of the paper-pencil test books at each grade level for visually impaired students. Answer booklets are not provided in braille. Student responses are entered into the scannable answer booklet by a local test administrator. The Braille Test Administration Manual Insert provides information about administering a braille version of the test.

States are responsible for working with their service providers to order braille forms or for ordering directly from the American Printing House for the Blind (APH). In addition, states are responsible for printing the accompanying notes and scripts. The notes and scripts may be printed locally, or the service provider may print them.

#### Large Print

Smarter Balanced does not provide a large-print paper-pencil version; however, states may require their service provider to create a large-print version of the paper-pencil test using the files provided for the regular form.

#### Spanish Translated Versions for Mathematics

Spanish translated mathematics paper-pencil forms for each grade level are available in the Test Packages/PaperPencil folder on the [Secure File Transfer Server](https://fx.smarterbalanced.org/login). The accompanying answer booklets and the test administrator script portions of the *Spanish Paper-Pencil Test Administration Manual* are also translated into Spanish. The Spanish-translated test booklets, answer booklets and Test Administration Manual are presented in Dual Language format with both English and Spanish.

## 11.3 Administering the Paper-Pencil Assessments

### 11.3.1 Registration

States need to procure services to register and administer the paper-pencil forms of the Smarter Balanced summative assessments.

### 11.3.2 Test Window

Schools have a maximum of a three-week window in which to administer a paper-pencil assessment for a grade and content area. The window begins on the day the test and answer booklets for the content area/grade are unsealed at the school site or made available to the school unsealed (e.g., by the district). States may establish a shorter window. In addition, states may approve exceptions on a school-by-school basis, based on the state’s determination that the exception does not constitute a material increase in risk to test security.

### 11.3.3 Test Security

Smarter Balanced expects that states will account for all test booklets and answer booklets throughout the testing cycle. States should follow best practices for handling (e.g., distributing and collecting) secure test materials outlined in the [Operational Best Practices for Statewide Large-Scale Assessment Programs](https://ccsso.org/resource-library/operational-best-practices-statewide-large-scale-assessment-programs) (ATP/CCSSO, 2013), and need to determine what services to procure related to security of test books and answer booklets.

## 11.4 Scanning and Scoring Paper Tests

The paper-pencil forms consist of items that require both machine and hand scoring. Once items are scored, service providers will need to assign test scores for those students taking the paper-pencil form.

### 11.4.1 Scanning and Machine Scoring of Responses

States need to procure services to scan answer booklets and machine score applicable item types. States should ask service providers to guarantee and demonstrate accuracy of the scanning machines for the paper-pencil forms. States should ask service providers to describe methods for scoring the paper-pencil answer booklets, beginning with receipt control methods and continuing through the step at which all data have been transferred to a master file.

Smarter Balanced provides answer keys for machine scored items on the paper-pencil forms.

### 11.4.2 Hand Scoring

Several items on the paper-pencil form will need to be hand scored, including some items that are automatically scored when delivered online. Smarter Balanced provides scoring rubrics, training papers, and validation papers to support scoring of paper-pencil responses.

### 11.4.3 Double Scoring

Each state shall determine the percentage of its student responses that it wants double scored. When there is not exact agreement between two raters, Smarter Balanced currently uses the resolution read performed by a senior rater as the score of record. Smarter Balanced expects members to collect item-level hand scoring statistics (e.g., inter-rater reliability) for each hand-scored item for all item responses that receive two reads.

Vendors will score students from multiple states; thus, states may want to request item-level, hand scoring statistics aggregated across all states scored by the vendor as well as item-level, hand scoring statistics for an individual state.

### 11.4.4 Scoring and Scaling Paper-Pencil Tests

Smarter Balanced provides test maps for the ELA/literacy and mathematics paper-pencil tests that include item-parameter files needed to calculate paper-pencil test scores. The test maps are available to members and service providers in the TestPackages/PaperPencil folder in the [Secure File Transfer Server](https://fx.smarterbalanced.org/). Refer to [*Section 5*](#_5.0_Item_Scoring) for further discussion of test scoring**.**

## 11.5 Merging Paper-Pencil and Online Administration Data

Service providers will need to merge student data from paper-pencil and online administrations for reporting and prior to submission of data to Smarter Balanced.

### 11.5.1 Storage

Smarter Balanced does not prescribe the length that paper-pencil test books and response booklets must be stored. Individual states will decide upon the length of time that they want to store their test booklets and answer booklets. Used test materials may not be reused.

# 12.0 Sending Data to Smarter Balanced

Smarter Balanced requests the submission of de-identified data from the summative assessment (at a minimum) from its members for the purposes of, but not limited to:

* Producing an annual technical report to:
  + Ensure that the assessment provides fair and accurate information regarding what students know and can do;
  + Provide information to stakeholders in a manner described by the 2014 Standards for Educational and Psychological Testing (AERA, APA, NCME); and
  + Provide annual counts of passages and other media exposure to the Copyright Clearance Center.

## 12.1 Authorizing Data Sharing

Member states may use the existing MOU between the state and the Regents of the University of California as authorization for sharing de-identified student level data. If a state requires an additional data sharing agreement, the state needs to inform Smarter Balanced of the need for a separate data sharing agreement.

## 12.2 Smarter Balanced Student Privacy Principles

In September 2013, Governing States adopted the policy that “Each member state retains control of its student-level data.” Smarter Balanced affirms that:

* Members control the data that Smarter Balanced collects.
* Smarter Balanced and its members will collect a minimum amount of data.
* Members may elect not to submit official identifiers, student names, and dates of birth.
* Smarter Balanced, its members, and their authorized contractors will use industry best practices to ensure that student data are secure when the data are transmitted and stored.

## 12.3 Secure File Transfer

All files will be transferred via the Secure File Transfer Protocol (SFTP). Smarter Balanced staff will provide the host name/IP address to member leads and member designated service providers where Consortium access is limited to Smarter Balanced and contractor staff respectively who have a legitimate need for the information.

## 12.4 Data for Submission

Each member determines what data is submitted. At a minimum, members should provide de-identified data, which includes:

* A unique student ID (that may not be linked to the educational record, but is consistent over time),
* Gender and subgroups (as defined by the Elementary and Secondary Education Act),
* Eligibility for accessibility resources,
* Test event information, including test instrument ID and test event ID,
* Test scores, claim scores, and standard errors of measurement, and
* Response data, including item IDs, raw responses, and scored responses.

## 12.5 Accepted File Types

Data will be delivered in [*Test Results Transmission (TRT) Format*](http://www.smarterapp.org/documents/TestResultsTransmissionFormat.pdf) or an alternative format. Refer to the [*Smarter Balanced Test Results Data Dictionary and Logical Data Model*](http://www.smarterapp.org/documents/TestResults-DataModel.pdf)that includes a data model and data dictionaries for test (student/examinee) and item response level results. If a state submits data in a manner different than the TRT format, they should provide documentation regarding the differences.

# 13.0 Ancillary Materials for Summative and Interim Assessments

## 13.1 Ancillary Materials Overview

Smarter Balanced develops several manuals related to test administration and test policy annually. Some manuals are customizable (e.g., *Summative Online Test Administration Manual*) while others describe Smarter Balanced policy and may not be changed (e.g., *Usability, Accessibility, and Accommodations Guidelines, Member Procedures Manual*).

In addition, Smarter Balanced develops user guides to accompany the various technical components of the assessment system.

States that administer the Smarter Balanced assessments with proprietary solutions will need to develop their own user guides for these systems.

## 13.2 Customizable Manuals and User Guides

All customizable manuals are delivered as Word documents annually. States may add their state name and logo to the cover page of the documents.

It is up to each state to determine how the manuals are delivered to end users. States must decide if the manuals will be printed and distributed to schools or districts, or if the manuals will be placed on a state website and printed locally by educators. If a state decides to print and distribute manuals, then the state will need to procure services for production and distribution of the manuals.

### 13.2.1 Online Summative Test Administration Manual

The Online Summative Test Administration Manual (*TAM*) provides information for District/School Test Coordinators and Test Administrators regarding policies and procedures for the summative assessment. This document is updated annually and is made available to states and service providers in September of each test administration year.

States will need to customize the Online TAM to meet their needs. This should include the contact information for the state and help desk, as well as changes due to state/local policy, configuration of the test administration system, and/or preferential edits that do not impact the validity of the assessments.

Throughout the Online Summative TAM, states will see highlighted text. This indicates that states should customize the section/topic according to their policies and procedures and according to the platforms used to administer the test. States may edit the Online Summative TAM in sections that are not highlighted but should send any such changes to Smarter Balanced in advance to mitigate risks to validity, reliability, or comparability.

Some examples of needed areas of customization are:

* State testing dates
* State contact information
* Help desk information
* Student and Teacher Administration and Registration System user roles
* Test security policy
* Links for posted materials and modules
* Test security/administration training policy

The Braille Test Administration Manual Insert provides additional information about administering a braille version of the test.

### 13.2.2 Supplement: Online Summative Test Administration Manual for Remote Test Administration

The Supplement: Online Summative TAM for Remote Test Administration includes additional protocols and procedures specific to the remote administration of the Smarter Balanced English language arts/literacy and mathematics summative assessments. The addendum is intended to be used as a supplement to the member-customized Online Summative Test Administration Manual.

The customizable Online Summative TAM and the Online Summative TAM Supplement for Remote Test Administration are available in the Assessment Training and Operations/Manuals and Guides folder of the [Secure File Transfer Server](https://fx.smarterbalanced.org/login) and in the [Document Library of the Member Portal](https://portal.smarterbalanced.org/library-home/).

### 13.2.3 Test Administration Manual for Paper-Pencil Summative Assessment

Test administration manuals are provided for each form (primary and breach) of the ELA/literacy and mathematics paper-pencil assessments in grades 3-8 and high school. For ELA/literacy there is a secure and non-secure TAM and for Mathematics there is a TAM for the standard version and the Spanish version of the test. The customizable Paper-Pencil TAMs are available in the Assessment Training and Operations folder of the [Secure File Transfer Server](https://fx.smarterbalanced.org/login).

### 13.2.4 Interim Assessment Guide for Administration

The Interim Assessment Guide for Administration provides information about the interim assessments, test administration options, the open-source Smarter Balanced Reporting System and Tools for Teachers. States and their service providers may use this document to update their existing interim test administration manuals, as needed. This guide may also be used for district-level implementation of interim assessments in member states that have not purchased the complete package and for statewide implementation of the interim assessments in non-member states (potentially by service providers that have not previously delivered Smarter Balanced assessments). States and service providers will need to customize this manual to meet the needs of their specific state/territory, including the grades assessed, testing calendar, the service provider’s systems for administration, delivery, interim hand scoring, and reporting scores (if not using the open-source Smarter Balanced Reporting System) and/or preferential edits that do not impact the validity of the assessment. The customizable Interim Assessment Guide for Administration is posted on the [Smarter Balanced Member Portal Document Library](https://portal.smarterbalanced.org/library-home/) and is available for service providers in the Assessment Training and Operations folder of the [Secure File Transfer Server](https://fx.smarterbalanced.org/login).

### 13.2.5 Test Administrator User Guide Template

The [Test Administrator User Guide Template](https://www.smarterapp.org/documents/Administration_and_Registration_Tools_User_Guide.pdf) is available on SmarterApp. This user guide describes all of the features of the test delivery system. Many details will be specific to individual state deployments. Accordingly, the state service provider should customize this guide to match the actual deployment of the test delivery system for each state.

### 13.2.6 Test Registration Tool User Guide Template

The [Test Registration Tool User Guide Template](https://portal.smarterbalanced.org/library/en/test-registration-tool-user-guide-template.docx) describes the features of a test registration tool and may be used to ensure comparability across proprietary systems. Many details will be specific to individual state deployments. Accordingly, the state service provider should customize this guide to match the actual deployment of the test delivery system for each state. The Test Registration Tool User Guide Template is available in the Assessment Training and Operations folder of the [Secure File Transfer Server](https://fx.smarterbalanced.org/login).

## 13.3 Non-Customizable Manuals and User Guides

Smarter Balanced develops several manuals and user guides that are not customizable by states. These manuals describe Smarter Balanced policy and may not be changed. The user guides describe the technical components of open-source Smarter Balanced systems. States that administer the Smarter Balanced assessments with proprietary solutions will need to develop their own user guides for these systems.

### 13.3.1 Member Procedures Manual

This manual is available to Smarter Balanced member states and was developed to help state leadership prepare for the administration of the Smarter Balanced assessments. It includes information for the summative assessments, the interim assessments, Tools for Teachers, and the Smarter Balanced Data Warehouse and Reporting System. The document provides a general overview of Smarter Balanced policy topics such as test security, test scheduling, and general administration as it relates to the summative and interim assessments. In addition, this manual provides a high-level overview of state and/or district responsibilities, services provided by Smarter Balanced, and examples of services that states are responsible for securing. The *Member Procedures Manual* is available to member states on the [Smarter Balanced Member Portal](https://portal.smarterbalanced.org/library-home/).

### 13.3.2 Usability, Accessibility, and Accommodations Guidelines

This manual describes the Smarter Balanced universal tools, designated supports, and accommodations that are available on the Smarter Balanced assessments. It is posted on the [Accessibility and Accommodations page of the Smarter Balanced Website](https://smarterbalanced.org/our-system/accessibility/).

### 13.3.3 Student Device and Secure Browser Requirements

The [Student Device and Secure Browser Requirements](https://smarterbalanced.org/our-system/smarter-system/testing-technology/device-and-browser/) page on the Smarter Balanced Web site indicates the minimum requirements for devices and network connectivity when administering Smarter Balanced assessments.

### 13.3.4 Smarter Balanced Reporting System User Guide

The [*Smarter Balanced Reporting System User Guide*](https://portal.smarterbalanced.org/library/en/reporting-system-user-guide.pdf) is intended to be used by states who are using the open-source Smarter Balanced Reporting System. This user guide provides information about the functionality and features of the reporting system.

## 13.4 Summative Assessment Training Modules

Smarter Balanced provides training modules for the summative assessment to assure the consistency of administration and interpretation across states. These non-narrated training modules consist of scripted PowerPoint slides and may be customized by states and their service providers to include contact information, websites, and general system configuration updates. Table 8 lists the training modules that are available to states in the Assessment Training and Operations folder of the [Secure File Transfer Server](https://fx.smarterbalanced.org/login).

Table 8: List of Training Modules

| **Module Name** | **Primary Audience** | **Objective** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Accessibility and Accommodations | Test Administrators, School Coordinators, Teachers, Special Education Staff | This module describes the recommended uses of available universal tools, designated supports, and documented accommodations for student accessibility to Smarter Balanced assessments. |
| Let’s Talk Universal Tools | Students, Test Administrators, Teachers | This module acquaints students and teachers with the online, universal tools (e.g., types of calculators, expandable text) available in the Smarter Balanced assessments. This module should be shown to students in a classroom setting. For grades 3–8 and 11, it is encouraged that the teachers be in the room to answer questions from the students as they view the module. |
| Performance Task Overview | District/School Test Coordinators, Test Administrators, Teachers | This module provides an overview of the performance task section of the assessment. |
| Student Interface for Online Testing | District/School Test Coordinators, Test Administrators, Teachers | This module explains how to navigate the Student Interface. |
| Technology Requirements for Online Testing | District/School Technology Coordinators | This module provides current information about technology requirements, site readiness, supported devices, and secure browser installation. |
| Test Administrator (TA) Interface for Online Testing | District/School Test Coordinators, Test Administrators, Teachers | This module presents an overview on how to navigate the Test Administrator Interface. |
| Smarter Balanced Test Administration Overview | District/School Test Coordinators, Test Administrators, Teachers | This module prepares District/School Test Coordinators and Test Administrators with an overview of procedures, including policy matters and test security processes. |
| Administration and Registration Tools (ART) | District/School Test Coordinators, Test Administrators | This module provides detailed information on how to upload student information, manage users, and use other features of the ART system. |
| What is a CAT? (Computer Adaptive Test) | State, District/School Test Coordinators, Teachers | This module provides the characteristics and advantages of a Computer Adaptive Test (CAT). |

## 13.5 Practice Tests, Training Tests, and Released Items

Smarter Balanced provides practice test and training test packages to states and their service providers. States and their service providers are responsible for hosting their own instance of the practice and training tests so that students and educators may become familiar with the local test delivery system prior to testing. Students can use the Practice and Training Tests to become familiar with the accessibility resources to which they are assigned. The Practice and Training Tests may also be used for training of test administrators using the TA and student interfaces.

### 13.5.1 Practice and Training Tests

The Practice Tests are provided for ELA/literacy and mathematics for all tested grades. They are similar in format and structure to the Interim Comprehensive Assessment that assesses similar content as the summative assessment but as a fixed form test. Each practice test includes about 30 questions and a Performance Task for each grade and content area.

Training Tests are shorter than Practice Tests and offer a sample of six questions, so students can become familiar with the testing software. Training tests are available in three grade bands: grades 3-5, grades 6-8, and high school.

### 13.5.2 Smarter Annotated Response Tool (SmART)

The [Smarter Annotated Response Tool (SmART)](https://smart.smarterbalanced.org/) helps educators understand how student writing is scored on Smarter Balanced assessments. It provides annotated anchors of sample student responses for released Smarter Balanced practice test items that may be used to support student understanding of scoring rubrics.

Smarter Balanced also provides Writing Rubrics for the ELA/literacy performance tasks in grades 3-8 and high school. The Writing Rubrics provide multi-trait rubrics used to score the full write (essay) item for three dimensions of writing, Organization/Purpose, Evidence/Elaboration, and Conventions and are available on the [Test Development and Design Page of the Smarter Content Explorer.](https://contentexplorer.smarterbalanced.org/test-development)

### 13.5.3 Sample Items Website

The [Sample Items website](http://sampleitems.smarterbalanced.org/) provides examples of test questions used on Smarter Balanced assessments in ELA/literacy and mathematics for grades 3-8 and high school. Teachers, parents, students, administrators, and policymakers who do not have state-hosted Practice and Training Tests, can try out test questions and accessibility resources, and learn about the content assessed on the Smarter Balanced assessments.

NOTE: The Sample Items Website is not intended to be used by students for practice prior to testing.

#### Other Documentation

* *Online Test Administration Manual* available on the [Smarter Balanced Member Portal Document Library](https://portal.smarterbalanced.org/library-home/) and the [Secure File Transfer Server](https://fx.smarterbalanced.org/login)
* [*Test Administrator User Guide Template*](http://www.smarterapp.org/manuals/TestAdministrator-UserGuide-Template.html)available on SmarterApp
* [*Usability, Accessibility, and Accommodations Guidelines*](https://portal.smarterbalanced.org/library/en/v5.0/usability-accessibility-and-accommodations-guidelines.pdf)found on the Accessibility and Accommodations page of the Smarter Balanced Website
* Training modules found in the Assessment Training and Operations folder of the [Secure File Transfer Server](https://fx.smarterbalanced.org/)

# 14.0 Data Warehouse and Reporting System

## 14.1 Data Warehouse and Smarter Reporting System Overview

The Smarter Balanced Data Warehouse and Reporting System consists of two main components—the data warehouse and the reporting system—as described below.

### 14.1.1 Data Warehouse

The data warehouse component compiles the data into two data stores: individual item response and reporting, following the specifications and layouts found on SmarterApp.org.

* Individual Item Response Data Store holds the student responses to individual items.
* Reporting Data Store holds the scored student test data that will be used by the reporting system.

### 14.1.2 Smarter Reporting System

The open-source Smarter Reporting System allows users to produce public-facing and secure score reports for both summative and interim assessments. These online reports comprise the individual student reports and the aggregate reports used by school, district, and state-level users. The Smarter Reporting System is also used to display student results in a variety of ways, including individual item responses for interim assessments. All reports are available online. The Individual Student Reports (ISR) include an option for printing or downloading a PDF version.

The reporting system allows for the creation of optional student groups (e.g., teacher’s classes). This feature allows a user with the Group Administrator role to create and manage groups for a district or school. Student groups are assigned to users who may view test results for groups.

The Smarter Reporting System gives users the ability to filter by certain criteria.

Filters defined by the US Department of Education:

* Gender
* Race/Ethnicity
* English Learner Status
* Migrant Status
* 504 Plan status
* Disability Designation (504/IEP)
* Military Connectedness

Non-US Department of Education Filter:

* Primary Language

## 14.2 Deployment Options

States have two options for deploying a data warehouse and reporting system.

### 14.2.1 Option 1. Smarter Balanced Hosts and Manages Data Warehouse and Reporting System

A state’s service provider sends identified data directly to the Smarter Balanced Data Warehouse that is hosted and managed by Smarter Balanced. Data is sent in the [Test Results Transmission format](http://www.smarterapp.org/specs/TestResultsTransmissionFormat.html) or an alternate format as established with the state and Smarter Balanced. Once the data has been populated in the Smarter Balanced Data Warehouse, it is available in the Smarter Balanced Open-Source Reporting System where school-, district-, and state-level users can access it.

### 14.2.2 Option 2. State Hosts and Manages Its Own Data Warehouse and Reporting System

A state may host and manage a service provider’s proprietary data warehouse and reporting system or a state-specific solution for data warehousing and reporting. Under this option, the state sends identified student data to its own data warehouse. Data is reported in the state-specific reporting system where it can be accessed by school-, district-, and state-level users.

## 14.3 Types of Reports Available in the Open-Source Smarter Balanced Reporting System

There are four basic report types available in the reporting system: individual student reports (ISRs), roster reports, item-level reports (interim assessments only) and aggregate reports. These reports include:

* **Individual Student Report (ISR):** This secure report provides the student’s overall scale score and performance level for the selected assessment (summative or interim). For summative assessments and Interim Comprehensive Assessments (ICA), it includes a scale score, a standard error of measurement, achievement level and achievement level descriptor, claim information, writing trait scores (ELA/literacy), as well the option to include accommodations available to the student during testing. The ISR for the Interim Assessment Blocks (IAB) reports a scale score, standard error of measurement, and student performance as one of three reporting categories: Below Standard, Near Standard, or Above Standard.
* **Interim Assessment Block (IAB) Dashboard:** This report provides an overview of student performance on all IABs administered to a group of students.
* **Results by Student:** This report provides a roster of students with summative, IAB or ICA results for a particular grade level in a school or district. The report displays individual student achievement levels (summative/ICA) and reporting categories (IAB) and each student’s scale score with an error band.
* **Claim Report (Summative and ICA):** This report provides the distribution of claim scores for a group of students. The Claim Report available to teachers provides both aggregate and individual student data. The Claim Report, available to district/school administrators, is an aggregate report.
* **Target Report (Summative only):** This report provides target-level data for the ELA/literacy and mathematics summative assessments. The Target Report available to teachers is an aggregate report at the student group (classroom) level. The Target Report available to district/school administrators is an aggregate report.
* **Results by Item (Interim only):** This report provides item-level information for IABs and ICAs. The report displays individual student and group performance on each interim test item. It includes the claim and target, item difficulty, content standard assessed, and DOK for each item. The report also allows teachers to view student responses to interim test items and provides the rubric and exemplar for each item.
* **Key and Distractor Analysis (Interim only):** This report displays the percentage of students who selected each answer option for multiple-choice and multiple select items.
* **Writing Trait Scores:** This report displays student performance on the three writing traits, Organization/Purpose, Evidence/Elaboration, and Conventions for the Writing Extended Response (essay) item type. IAB and ICA reports include individual and group performance, while summative reports include only group performance.
* **Custom Aggregate Reports:** School and district administrations can create customized reports for overall student performance, claim and target performance, and longitudinal reports, including the ability to disaggregate results by subgroup performance.

Features of the individual student reports, roster reports, item-level reports, and aggregate reports are described below.

### 14.3.1 Individual Student Reports

For states using the Smarter Balanced Reporting System, the Individual Student Reports (ISR) for both the summative and interim assessments will be available through the Reporting System, as described above.

#### Batch Printing

District and school administrators can batch print PDFs of ISRs for their school or district. Teachers may print reports for students in their classrooms, by selecting students within a group of students to which they are assigned.

#### Translations

Smarter Balanced provides translations for the ISR in Spanish. States that provide their own reports may elect to provide translated reports consistent with their state’s policies. The open-source Smarter Balanced Reporting System will provide the Spanish translated versions and cannot be state-specific.

#### Parent/Guardian Access

Smarter Balanced does not provide parents/guardians with access to the Reporting System. If a state desires online, parental/guardian access to reports, then they will need to set up a system to support this. Smarter Balanced will offer one application programming interface (API) to link the Smarter Balanced Reporting System with a local reporting system for parents/guardians to view the ISR through the local reporting system. Smarter Balanced will not customize the API to each local situation.

### 14.3.2 Roster Reports

Roster reports are generated for available groups of students. They are most commonly used at the classroom, school or district level, but may be used for other groupings if these are available to the system. Teachers and administrators commonly use roster reports to identify patterns of achievement within a group or to identify students most in need of assistance. Along with other information, roster reports can be used to provide a direction for further investigation about instructional emphasis or to aid in resource allocation. Note that roster reports can be filtered and sorted for different purposes. They may be filtered by student demographic data (e.g. LEP, Race/Ethnicity, IEP, Gender, 504, or Migrant Status), or based on the completeness or validity of student test attempts.

### 14.3.3 Item-level Reports (Interim Assessments only)

Item-level reports provide item-level information for IABs and ICAs. The reports display individual student and group performance on each interim test item. Each report includes the claim and target, item difficulty, content standard assessed, and DOK for each item. The report also allows teachers to view student responses to interim test items and provides the rubric and exemplar for each item. Additional features of the item-level reports include:

* Key and Distractor Analysis Report: This report displays the percentage of students who selected each answer option for multiple-choice and multiple select items.
* Writing Trait Scores Report: This report displays individual student and group performance on the three writing traits, Evidence/Elaboration, Organization/Purpose, and Conventions for the Writing Extended Response item type.

### 14.3.4 Aggregate Reports

The Reporting System provides aggregate reports at the group, grade, school, district, and state levels. These reports include:

* **Interim** **Assessment Block (IAB) Dashboard** **(group level only):** This report provides an overview of student performance on all IABs administered to a group of students.
* **Student Score Distribution:** This report provides the student score distribution by achievement levels for summative and ICAs and by reporting categories for IABs.
* **Student Claim Score Distribution (Summative and ICA):** This report provides the distribution of claim scores for a group of students.
* **Target Report (Summative only):** This report provides aggregate target-level data for the ELA/literacy and mathematics summative assessments.
* **Key and Distractor Analysis (Interim only):** This report displays the percentage of students who selected each answer option for multiple-choice and multiple select items.
* **Writing Trait Scores:** This report displays student performance on the three writing traits, Organization/Purpose, Evidence/Elaboration, and Conventions.
* **Custom Aggregate Reports:** School and district administrations can create customized reports for overall student performance, claim and target performance, and longitudinal reports, including the ability to disaggregate results by subgroup performance.

## 14.4 Data Extracts

The results aggregated in each report are available for download as a .CSV file through the Reporting System. In addition, other data extracts that are available for download through the Reporting System include assessment completion, assessment outcomes, and individual item response data. Information necessary to create disaggregated reports will be available in the data extracts. Using this information, end users may create disaggregated reports outside of the Reporting System.

## 14.5 Longitudinal Data

Student data is housed in the Data Warehouse for as long as the state is using the Smarter Balanced Reporting System. Longitudinal reports for summative assessments will be available after the second year of results are made available in the Data Warehouse. Historical data for summative and interim assessments is also available after the second year of results are made available in the Data Warehouse.

## 14.6 Turnaround Time and Service Level Agreements

States should specify expectations for service providers regarding the length of time between when a student submits an assessment and the availability of the student’s data in the reporting system. Shorter turnaround times between assessment submission and reporting generally increase scoring costs. States may consider implementing test load balancing, in which the state schedules district assessment windows so that the percentage of students testing is relatively stable throughout the testing window to reduce scoring costs. The state may also consider establishing turnaround times for hand scoring or using automated scoring rather than hand scoring to reduce the amount of time before a test is available in the reporting system.

States should establish expected service levels with their service providers regarding how frequently data should be pushed from the assessment delivery system into the reporting system. If states want to embargo summative data (e.g., no aggregate data available until all summative testing is complete), they should include that in their requirements with their service provider.

If a state hosts a service provider’s proprietary reporting system, it should establish service-level agreements regarding hosting.

## 14.7 State Options for Implementation

Questions for states to consider when making implementation decisions:

* Does the state want to create a classroom-level report so that teachers may view results? If so, teacher information must be captured during the test registration process or in the reporting system.
* Will the states use the open-source Smarter Balanced Reporting System, or will the state use a state-specific solution for reporting? State-specific solutions do not need to mirror or be similar to the Smarter Balanced reports.
* Will the state have a service provider send printed ISRs to schools, or will the state have local users print reports using the batch-printing feature available in the Reporting System?
* How frequently does the state want a service provider to push data from the assessment delivery system into the data warehouse and reporting system?
* What are the requirements for report turnaround?

#### Other Documentation

* [Smarter Reporting System User Guide](https://portal.smarterbalanced.org/library/en/reporting-system-user-guide.pdf)

# 15.0 Universal Tools, Designated Supports, and Accommodations

## 15.1 Universal Tools, Designated Supports, and Accommodations Available to Students

The Smarter Balanced assessment system is designed so that all students—including students who are learning English or have special needs—can participate in the tests and demonstrate what they know and can do. Smarter Balanced accessibility resources include:

* Universal tools: Available to all students based on student preference and selection. A digital notepad and scratch paper are two examples of universal tools.
* Designated supports: Available to students for whom a need has been indicated by an educator or team of educators (along with the student and his or/her parent/guardian) familiar with the student’s instructional needs. A translated pop-up glossary is one example of a designated support.
* Accommodations: Available to students with a documented need noted in an Individualized Education Program (IEP) or 504 Plan. Braille and closed captioning are two examples of accommodations.

As shown in Figure 2, for each category of accessibility resources—universal tools, designated supports, and accommodations—there exist both embedded and non-embedded versions of the universal tools, designated supports, or accommodations depending on whether they are provided as digitally-delivered components of the test administration system or separate from it.

Figure 2: Conceptual Model Underlying the Smarter Balanced Usability, Accessibility, and Accommodations Guidelines.

Definitions for the terms Universal Tools, Designated Supports, and Accommodations are provided in the table below.

Table 9: Definitions for Universal Tools, Designated Supports, and Accommodations

| **Type** | **Definition** |
| --- | --- |
| Universal Tools | Access features of the assessments that are either provided as  digitally delivered components of the test administration system or separate from it. Universal tools are available to all students based on student preference and selection. |
| Designated Supports | Access features of the assessments available for use by any student for whom the need has been indicated by an educator (or team of educators working with the parent/guardian and student).  Designated supports are either provided as digitally delivered  components of the test administration system or separate from it. |
| Accommodations | Accommodations are changes in procedures or materials that increase equitable access during the Smarter Balanced assessments. Assessment accommodations are not modifications. They generate valid assessment results for students who need them; they allow these students to show what they know and can do. Embedded and non-embedded accommodations are available for students with documented IEPs or Section 504 Plans. Consortium-approved accommodations do not compromise the learning expectations, construct, grade-level standards, or intended outcome of the assessments. |

Universal tools, designated supports, and accommodations may be either embedded in the test administration or provided locally (non-embedded) as shown in Figure 2.

## 15.2 Usability, Accessibility, and Accommodations Guidelines

* The Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium’s [*Usability**, Accessibility, and Accommodations Guidelines (*UAAG)](https://portal.smarterbalanced.org/library/en/usability-accessibility-and-accommodations-guidelines.pdf), available on the [Accessibility and Accommodations page of the Smarter Balanced Website](http://www.smarterbalanced.org/assessments/accessibility-and-accommodations/) focus on universal tools, designated supports, and accommodations for the Smarter Balanced assessments of English language arts (ELA)/literacy and mathematics.
* The [*Usability, Accessibility, and Accommodations Implementation Guidelines*](https://portal.smarterbalanced.org/library/en/usability-accessibility-and-accommodations-implementation-guide.docx) available on the [Accessibility and Accommodations page of the Smarter Balanced Website](http://www.smarterbalanced.org/assessments/accessibility-and-accommodations/) provides states with both (a) clarification of the critical information to convey to districts and schools about the Smarter Balanced *UAAG* document, and (b) strategies for ensuring that the information in that document is conveyed to districts and schools.
* Scribing and Read Aloud Guidelines are included as appendices in the *UAAG* and are also posted on the [Accessibility and Accommodations page](http://www.smarterbalanced.org/assessments/accessibility-and-accommodations/) of the Smarter Balanced website.
* The [Smarter Accessibility page](https://smarterbalanced.org/our-system/accessibility/) helps members identify similarities between the assessment resources and classroom practices. The accessibility strategies corresponding to the resources help states identify similarities between the assessment resources and classroom practices. The crosswalk lists the resources currently included in the UAAG and assists educators and decision-makers by providing a description of both the resource and its classroom equivalent.

Some of the Smarter Balanced materials, such as the *Online, Summative, Test Administration Manual (Online TAM)* and the test administration training modules will require customization by each state to meet their unique needs. Other materials, such as the *Usability, Accessibility, and Accommodations Guidelines,* and the *Member Procedures Manual* are policy and should not be customized unless an applicable law, regulation, or policy requires the omission of an accessibility resource or other change.

For all materials developed to support the Smarter Balanced assessments, states should determine the appropriate mechanism for posting and disseminating the information to their districts and schools. For those students completing a paper-pencil assessment, states will need to work with schools to ensure all applicable universal tools, designated supports, and accommodations are available.

## 15.3 Universal Tools, Designated Supports, and Accommodations

Smarter Balanced assessments are designed to use only the available universal tools, designated supports, and accommodations identified in the *Smarter Balanced Usability, Accessibility, and Accommodations Guidelines (UAAG)*. A state may elect not to make available to its students any universal tool, designated support, or accommodation that is included in the UAAG when the implementation or use of the universal tool, designated support, or accommodation is in conflict with the state, territory, or agency law, regulation, or policy.

### 15.3.1 Assistive Technology Readiness

Successful implementation of assistive technologies requires careful communication and clearly defined processes. Schools and districts should consider the following checklist to ensure that students are prepared to use their approved assistive technology accommodations on Smarter Balanced assessments:

* Assistive technology accommodations are fully documented on each student’s IEP or 504 Plan, including those specific to assessment.
* Students regularly use their approved assistive technology during instructional activities and other assessments.
* Students use assistive technologies to complete Smarter Balanced Practice Tests and interim assessments (if available) prior to summative testing.
* Approved assistive technology accommodations and test day expectations are explained to students.

Refer to the [*Smarter Balanced Guide to Assistive Technology Readine*ss](https://portal.smarterbalanced.org/library/en/smarter-balanced-guide-to-assistive-technology-readiness.docx) for additional information.

## 15.4 Requests for New Universal Tools, Designated Supports, and Accommodations

Proposed changes to the list of universal tools, designated supports, and accommodations will be brought to Governing Members for review, input, and vote for approval. States may issue temporary approvals (i.e., one summative assessment administration) for individual unique student accommodations or designated supports.

To capture state suggestions and/or school/district requests for improving the Smarter Balanced UAAG, Smarter Balanced has developed a feedback mechanism by which members can request changes to the UAAG every April.

K-12 Leads will evaluate formal requests for temporary, unique student accommodations or designated supports and determine if the request poses a threat to the measurement of the construct. If a state approves a request, they will submit the accommodation or designated support to the Consortium for review to include in the UAAG:

1. Upon issuing a temporary approval, the state will send documentation of the approval to the Consortium.
2. The Consortium will consider all state-approved temporary accommodations or designated supports as part of the annual Consortium UAAG review process.
3. If the Consortium determines that additional time to study the issue before the Consortium can engage in a vote is required, a state may notify the Consortium that the state intends to issue temporary approvals for the same accommodation or designated support during the next summative assessment administration. States should include in their notification to the Consortium the rationale for issuing temporary authorizations for the next summative assessment administration.

The Consortium will provide to states a list of the temporary accommodations/designated supports issued by states that are not Consortium approved accommodations/designated supports and cannot be authorized for the next summative assessment administration. When states review and consider temporary unique accommodations and designated supports (accessibility resources) they should engage in a systematic process to examine the accessibility resource’s relevance, the information available to inform use of the accessibility resource, and the impact of the use of the requested accessibility resource:

* Relevance: States should evaluate whether the request for the unique accessibility resource likely serves to support a student’s needs in a manner that is not met by other accessibility resources currently offered as a Universal Tool, Designated Support, or Accommodation:
  + Has the student used the accessibility resource regularly during instruction?
  + Has the student used the accessibility resource as part of an assessment of the particular construct and have educators interpreted the results from the testing to be comparable to the performance of the student’s peers?
* Information: States should seek insight from experts and research on whether the requested designated support or accommodation is recommended for use in large-scale assessment. Smarter Balanced provides resources to support this process:
  + States should consult the Accommodations for ELLs and SWDs: A Research-Based Decision Algorithm written for Smarter Balanced by Abedi and Ewers, which includes research and a decision-making algorithm for validity and effectiveness.
  + States should also examine the *Smarter Balanced Usability, Accessibility, and Accommodations Guidelines*, which includes all of the Consortium’s available accessibility resources and information about certain resources which members have agreed do not yield comparable results.
* Impact: States should consider the risk of allowing an accessibility resource in terms of validity feasibility, and potentially, test security:
  + Validity: Would the accessibility resource alter the intended construct measured? If the accessibility resource alters the intended construct, allowing the accessibility resource would provide results to the students, parents/guardians, and teachers that are not consistent with the achievement level descriptors. In addition, the states may elect not to make that accessibility resource available in subsequent years.
  + Feasibility: Are there logistical issues related to standardization or validity when implementing the requested accessibility resource?
  + Test Security: Does allowing the use of the requested accessibility resource result in any concerns related to test security?

## 15.5 Practice and Training sets

The Practice and Training tests should be hosted on each state’s public website or assessment portal to ensure that students’ experiences mirror the operational test administration experience. The Practice and Training tests use guest credentials; however, the Test Administration (TA) Interface is required to simulate print-on-demand and braille embossing in a training context. States’ service providers should load the practice and training tests into their testing environment so that Test Administrators can perform training on setting up a test session using the TA Interface and the Practice Test. States will need to customize the Online TAM with their specific process for getting user logins to the TA Interface.

#### Other Documentation

* [*Usability, Accessibility, and Accommodations Guidelines*](https://portal.smarterbalanced.org/library/en/usability-accessibility-and-accommodations-guidelines.pdf)
* [*Usability, Accessibility, and Accommodations Implementation Guide*](https://portal.smarterbalanced.org/library/en/usability-accessibility-and-accommodations-implementation-guide.docx)
* [*Accessibility Strategies for Teaching and Learning*](https://portal.smarterbalanced.org/library/en/accessibility-strategies-for-remote-teaching-and-learning.pdf)
* [*Accommodations for ELLs and SWDs: A Research-Based Decision Algorithm*](https://portal.smarterbalanced.org/library/en/accommodations-for-english-language-learners-and-students-with-disabilities-a-research-based-decision-algorithm.pdf)

# 16.0 Tools for Teachers

## 16.1 Smarter Balanced Tools for Teachers Overview

The [Tools for Teachers website](https://smartertoolsforteachers.org/) is an online collection of instructional and professional learning resources. These resources are aligned with the Common Core State Standards and help educators implement the formative assessment process to improve teaching and learning. Tools for Teachers was developed by educators for educators and provides a variety of resources, including:

* [Instructional Resources](https://smartertoolsforteachers.org/landing/instructional) developed by educators through a collaborative development and quality review process utilizing a set of consistent criteria,
* [Formative Assessment Strategy](https://smartertoolsforteachers.org/landing/formative) and [Accessibility Strategy](https://smartertoolsforteachers.org/landing/accessibility) resources embedded within instructional resources and available independently for educator use,
* [Interim Connections Playlists](https://smartertoolsforteachers.org/landing/playlist), which are collections of resources that provide educators with a means of understanding the student performance progressions of a concept, and
* [Professional Learning Resources](https://smartertoolsforteachers.org/landing/professional) focused on educator professional development, mentoring, and coaching.

Tools for Teachers includes several innovative design features that make it user-friendly. State-of-the-art search features help educators locate materials which can be bookmarked and annotated with the “notes” feature. In addition, Tools for Teachers is web accessible (i.e., WCAG 2.1 AA compliant). Resources are built with the realities of classroom instruction in mind: they include options for differentiating instruction, student-focused accessibility strategies, remote teaching, and are embedded with cross-cutting formative assessment strategies that can be transferred to other lessons and activities across content areas. Also embedded across the site are hyperlinks to navigate to other Smarter Balanced applications to allow educators easy access to address questions and curiosities with ease.

Tools for Teachers is embedded with “help features” throughout the site. Additional support may be needed beyond what the help function provides. Technical support for Tools for Teachers will be provided by the member.

## 16.2 Accessing Tools for Teachers

Tools for Teachers is available to eligible educators in member states or local education agencies (LEAs) that subscribe to the complete system. States may also provide higher education faculty, especially faculty who teach in educator preparation programs, with access to Tools for Teachers. States or their service providers are responsible for working directly with districts and institutions of higher education to set up and maintain user accounts and to provide help desk support.

Tier 1 and Tier 2 Technical support for Tools for Teachers will be provided by the state and its service provider. Tier 3 support is available from Smarter Balanced for escalation.

## 16.3 Tier 3 Support

Tier 3 Support is available for escalation when Tier 1 and Tier 2 Help Desks receive questions about Tools for Teachers software, and they are unable to resolve the issues. Help Desk support is available to states and their Tier 1 and 2 service providers only. Districts and schools should not contact Smarter Balanced directly.

State Help Desks can log the [Tier 3 Support Request Form](https://portal.smarterbalanced.org/wp-content/uploads/Tier-3-Support-Request-Form.pdf) using the URL [support@smarterbalanced.org](mailto:support@smarterbalanced.org).

To qualify for escalation to Tier 3 Support, the issue must match the following criteria:

* Represent behavior that is not expected based on current documentation of the system.
* Be reproducible or have been reported by at least three users.

### 16.3.1 Information Required for Escalation

Tier 3 Support requires the following information when Help Desks log their support tickets:

* Category of issue
* Description of issue
* Screen shot (if applicable)
* Level of severity and rationale (as defined on escalation form)
* Expected behavior
* Actual behavior
* Browser/Device/OS
* Date of occurrence
* Steps to resolution
* Number of incidents

### 16.3.2 Expected Response Time

Tier 3 will respond to tickets within three (3) business days either:

* Confirming the issue is a bug and:
  + Supplying work-around, if available
  + Providing estimated date of resolution, if available
  + Asking for additional information
  + Explaining why feature is as designed

#### Other Documentation

* [Tools for Teachers Overview](https://portal.smarterbalanced.org/library/en/tools-for-teachers-overview.pdf)
* [*Tools for Teachers Help Desk Guide*](https://portal.smarterbalanced.org/library/tools-for-teachers-help-desk-guide/)
* [The Formative Assessment Process](https://portal.smarterbalanced.org/library/en/formative-assessment-process.pdf)

# Appendix A: Guidance for Social Media Summative Assessment Monitoring

## Smarter Balanced Test Security

Maintaining test security during administration of the summative assessment is critical to preserving the integrity of test items and validity of the test itself. These guidelines provide recommendations for monitoring social media.

## Test Administration Procedures

It is important to be vigilant before, during, and after testing for any situations that could lead to or be an impropriety, irregularity, or breach. Please remember that only individuals who have been appropriately trained and whose presence is required may be present during the administration of the summative assessment.

To get ahead of the problem and reduce the number of security breaches on social media, Smarter Balanced encourages members to refer to the [*Test Security Chart (Section 8.2.1, Table 6*](#_8.2.1_State_Responsibility)) for detailed information on the impact and definition of incidents as well as the timeline for reporting these activities.

## Social Media Monitoring

Smarter Balanced and members have a vested interest in ensuring that assessments are supported by security protocols that establish both fairness for student engagement and validity in the interpretation of results. Maintaining test security during administration of the summative assessment, especially during remote test administration, is critical to preserving the integrity of the test.

Educators and policymakers need valid information about student performance to improve schools, and students deserve to have real information about what they know and can do related to the assessed content.

When some students see questions in advance, the test results don’t have the same meaning for all students. Test security has always been a concern, and states have addressed these issues since they first began administering standardized tests. The biggest differences are the new landscape of social media—instead of copying tests, students post questions online—and remote test administration. During the 2022-23 test administration, there was an increase in social media posts regarding the summative assessment from students in a remote testing environment.

Smarter Balanced works with a major test security company to monitor the Web and social media, including Twitter, Instagram, Tik Tok, and Facebook. Member states are encouraged to perform their own monitoring. If Smarter Balanced staff confirm a breach, they will:

* Post the image from social media to the Operational Test Security folder of the [Secure File Transfer Server](https://fx.smarterbalanced.org/login),
* Provide as much information as possible, including the name and location of the individual who posted the breach, and
* Notify the appropriate K-12 Lead via email.

### Member State Responsibilities

* Contact the district/school where the breach occurred,
* Request verification that the image was posted by a student from the district/school,
* Once verified, request that the image of the item be taken down, and
* Alert Smarter Balanced when the item has been removed.

When a member state finds a potential security breach, SEA staff will:

* Contact the district/school where the breach occurred,
* Request verification that the image was posted by a student from the district/school,
* Post the image from social media to the Operational Test Security folder of the [Secure File Transfer Server](https://fx.smarterbalanced.org/login),
* Request that the image of the item be taken down, and
* Notify Smarter Balanced ([sb@smarterbalanced.org](mailto:sb@smarterbalanced.org)) of the resolution, providing as much information as possible, including whether the item is from the interim or summative assessment.

## Test Administration Procedures

States and districts may choose to monitor social media for potential security breaches. Smarter Balanced recommends the following:

### Twitter, Tik Tok, Instagram, and Facebook

* If schools in your state or territory do not have social media accounts, Smarter Balanced recommends they create them to help monitor possible test security issues.
* Following [@SmarterBalanced](http://www.smarterapp.org/) will also help you to monitor the Smarter Balanced news feed.
* To search for conversations and posts about the summative assessment, consider the following search queries:
  + #sbac #smarterbalanced #commoncore #ccss
  + #[insert name of school] or @[insert school Twitter handle]
  + “smarter balance(d)” “sbac” and any acronym used for your state test

### What to Look For

* Images of the computer screen that show ELA/literacy or mathematics test items.
* Any photographs that appear to have been taken in the test administration room; these can be images students have taken of themselves or their classmates as well as pictures taken by test administrators of the testing session.
* Tweets that indicate test security policies are not being upheld.

### New Technologies

Evolving technology can complicate test security. Members should amend their test security guidance to ensure new devices such as smartwatches do not compromise the security of test items.

# Revision Log

Updates to the *Implementation Guide for States and Service Providers* are noted below*.*

| **Section** | **Page** | **Description of Change** | **Revision Date** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 4 | 20 | Updated Table 2 with the estimated total number of Items in the 2019-20 summative assessment item pool that require hand scoring. | 10/1/2019 |
| 7 | 38 | Table 6- Test security chart: Moved “Administrator or Coordinator leaving related instructional materials on the walls in the testing room” from Low Impropriety to Medium Irregularity.  Moved “Disruptions to a test session such as a fire drill, school-wide power outage, earthquake, or other acts” from Medium Irregularity to Low Impropriety.  Added “(e.g., calculators during non-calculator sections)” as an example of a non-allowable device. | 10/1/2019 |
| 9 | 41 | Updated the information about interim assessments including a link to the updated Interim Assessments Overview and information about Focused IABs | 10/1/2019 |
| 9 | 42 | Updated the information about the Interim Assessment Blueprints | 10/1/2019 |
| 9 | 43 | Updated the information about Interim Assessment Test Security | 10/1/2019 |
| Global edits | various | Changed section number format to mirror other manuals  Changed references to 2019-20 to 2020-21  Embedded all hyperlinks in the associated text to address accessibility compliance issues  Replaced all references to the Administration and Registration Tools (ART) with “test registration tool”  Replaced all references to the ART User Guide with the Test Registration Tool User Guide Template  Changed all references to the Development and Design page of the Smarter Balanced website to the Test Development and Design page of the Smarter Content Explorer  Changed references to the Digital Library to Tools for Teachers  Corrected the name of the Smarter Balanced Reporting System for consistency | 8/27/2020 |
| 1.0 | 7 | Added the link to the Operational Best Practices for Statewide Large-Scale Assessment Programs doc | 8/27/2020 |
| 2.3.5 | 9 | Replaced “calls into” with “contacts” | 8/27/2020 |
| 2.3.5 | 10 | Made clarifying edits to the Quality section | 8/27/2020 |
| 2.3.6 | 11 | Clarified the expectations for Tier 2 response time | 8/27/2020 |
| 3.1 | 12 | Added historical information about ART and information about the new Test Registration Tool User Guide Template | 8/27/2020 |
| 3.1.1 | 12 | Removed section about standard format for uploading data to ART after “Smarter Balanced recommends that end users be able to upload data files with student, school, and district information into the test registration tool.”  Made clarifying edits to the last paragraph | 8/27/2020 |
| 3.1.1 | 13 | Made clarifying edits to the Accessibility Resources section | 8/27/2020 |
| 3.2 | 13 | Updated the information about transition to federated SSO | 8/27/2020 |
| 4.0 | 14 | Changed the title of this section from Test Delivery to Online Test Delivery System | 8/27/2020 |
| 4.1 | 14 | Made clarifying edits to the first paragraph | 8/27/2020 |
| 4.2.2 | 15 | Added more detailed information about item rendering | 8/27/2020 |
| 5.1.2 | 21 | Made clarifying and editorial edits to this section | 8/27/2020 |
| 6.1 | 27 | Revised opening sentence to match the Member Procedures Manual and deleted outdated graphic (Figure 1)  Updated subsequent figure numbers accordingly | 8/27/2020 |
| 6.1.2 | 27 | Updated the location of the achievement levels information | 8/27/2020 |
| 6.4.3 | 33 | Changed “lowest possible scale score” to “Lowest Obtainable Scale Score (LOSS)” and “highest possible scale score” to “Highest Obtainable Scale Score (HOSS)” | 8/27/2020 |
| 7.0 | 35 | Changed section title from Summative Assessment Test Design to Summative Assessments | 8/27/2020 |
| 7.1 | 35 | Added new section about Online Summative Test Packages | 8/27/2020 |
| 8.0 | 37 | Changed this section title from Online Summative Test Administration Manual to Online Summative Test Administration. Deleted first paragraph with information about the Online Summative TAM since this is included in Section 13.  Updated section reference for the guidance on assigning PTs | 8/27/2020 |
| 8.2.1 | 38 | Changed “other testing incidents” to “improprieties and Irregularities”  Added information about the training modules | 8/27/2020 |
| 8.2.1 | 39 | Clarified the expectation regarding TA understanding of the guidelines in the UAAG  Added a description for Table 6: Test Security Chart | 8/27/2020 |
| 9.1.5 | 42 | Changed the section title from Performance Tasks to Field Test Performance Tasks | 8/27/2020 |
| 10.1 | 44 | Added the policy for remote administration of interims as approved by member states on 6/22/2020 | 8/27/2020 |
| 10.1.2 | 44 | Clarified the description of IABs | 8/27/2020 |
| 10.1.3 | 45 | Added new section about Focused IABs | 8/27/2020 |
| 10.4.2 | 46 | Added testing time as another consideration for multiple administrations. | 8/27/2020 |
| 10.4.5 | 47 | Clarified the incidences considered breaches | 8/27/2020 |
| 11.1 | 50 | Clarified that Spanish mathematics forms are available in Stacked Spanish presentation | 8/27/2020 |
| 11.2.5 | 51 | Updated the number of languages available in translated glossaries and clarified the information about the number of pages and state responsibility to make the glossaries available to districts | 8/27/2020 |
| 11.2.6 | 51 | Corrected the name of the Paper-Pencil TAMs | 8/27/2020 |
| 11.2.7 | 52 | Under Braille Versions, changed “response” to “answer” booklets for consistency  Changed the section Spanish Translation to Spanish Translated Versions for Mathematics and clarified the information to match the Member Procedures Manual | 8/27/2020 |
| 11.3 | 52 | Replaced “documents” with “booklets” and made other edits to references about test and answer booklets throughout this section for consistency | 8/27/2020 |
| 11.4 | 53 | Changed verb tense for consistency and made paper-pencil forms plural | 8/27/2020 |
| 11.4.1 | 53 | Changed “documents” to “booklets” and removed “student” from “paper-pencil answer booklets” for consistency | 8/27/2020 |
| 13.2.1 | 55 | Clarified that the Online Summative TAM is also available to service providers and added the link to FX | 8/27/2020 |
| 13.2.1 | 57 | Deleted duplicate reference to the TA User Guide Template | 8/27/2020 |
| 13.2.2 | 57 | Moved the Paper-Pencil manuals from the Non-customizable Manuals and User Guides to Customizable Manuals and User Guides section and added location of the manuals | 8/27/2020 |
| 13.2.3 | 57 | Added locations and links to where the Interim Assessment Guide for Administration is posted | 8/27/2020 |
| 13.2.5 | 57 | Added a new section about the new Test Registration Tool User Guide | 8/27/2020 |
| 13.5 | 60 | Replaced “Sample” with “Released” in the title to match the Member Procedures Manual | 8/27/2020 |
| 13.5.4 | 61 | Deleted references to the Smarter Balanced Sample Test in the title and in this section | 8/27/2020 |
| 14.1.1 | 61 | Updated information about the Data Warehouse.  Removed references to student registration and changed the verb tense to present tense | 8/27/2020 |
| 14.1.2 | 62 | Removed reference to “including registration statistic, assessment completions” from available data extracts in the reporting system | 8/27/2020 |
| 14.2.2 | 62 | Split the sentence into two sentences and made minor editorial changes to the second sentence | 8/27/2020 |
| 14.3 | 63 | Added “scale score and standard error of measure” to information provided for IABs | 8/27/2020 |
| 15.0 | 67 | Changed the title from Usability, Accessibility and Accommodations to Universal Tools, Designated Supports and Accommodations | 8/27/2020 |
| 15.1 | 67 | Changed the title from Accommodations and Accessibility Overview to Universal Tools, Designated Supports and Accommodations Available to Students.  Updated the section to use consistent language for each type of support and match language from the UAAG. | 8/27/2020 |
| 15.1 | 68 | Updated Table 9 to match the definitions in the Member Procedures Manual | 8/27/2020 |
| 15.3.1 | 70 | Changed the title from Use of Assistive Technologies on a Daily Basis Across Platforms to Assistive Technology Readiness.  Updated the section to match language in the Smarter Balanced Guide to Assistive Technology Readiness. | 8/27/2020 |
| 14.4 | 70 | Changed the title to include the full name of each accessibility resource | 8/27/2020 |
| 16.0 | 73 | Changed the title from Digital Library to Tools for Teachers and replaced information about the Digital Library with information about Tools for Teachers | 8/27/2020 |
| 6.3 | 74 | Replaced Tier 3 Support Tickets with the Tier 3 Support Request Form | 8/27/2020 |
| 6.3.2 | 75 | Under Other Documentation, replace the Digital Library resources with Tools for Teachers resources | 8/27/2020 |
| Appendix A | 75 | Updated the language to match the MPM and the Social Media Monitoring Resource. | 8/27/2020 |
| 8.3 | 41 | Added new section 8.3 – Remote Administration of Summative Assessments for 2020-21 | 12/15/2020 |
| 11.1 | 50 | Added information about remote administration of paper-pencil tests | 12/15/2020 |
| Global Edits | various | Updated cover page and logo to the new Smarter Balanced template  Since this document is not typically read from beginning to end, included acronyms in parenthesis at the beginning of each section and used the acronym only for subsequent references within each section.  Included the full name of each content area “English language arts/literacy” and “mathematics”  Replace reference to “Stacked” translations with “Dual Language” to align with an update to the UAAG.  Added “Focused IABs” to references that previously indicated only “IABs” and replaced some references to “ICAs and IABs” with the more general term, “interim assessments,” to include Focused IABs. | 9/9/2021 |
| 1.0 | 7 | Added before Section 1.0: “Note: Sections highlighted in gray designate a change from the 2020-21 Implementation Guide for States and Service Providers.  Additional information about the changes is available in the Revision Log at the end of this document.” | 9/9/2021 |
| 2.3.3 | 9 | Correct section number to be 2.3.3 rather than 2.3.4 and added “the subsequent” before “review” to clarify the sentence about additional training materials.  Corrected subsequent section numbers accordingly. | 9/9/2021 |
| 2.3.4 | 10 | Added “inquiries” after “chat-based” for clarity | 9/9/2021 |
| 2.3.5 | 11 | Changed “It is also recommended” to “Smarter Balanced also recommends” for clarity.  Corrected the section number for Ancillary Materials | 9/9/2021 |
| 3.1 | 12 | Changed “accommodations” to “accessibility resource” since universal tools and designated supports may also be managed in the test registration tool | 9/9/2021 |
| 4.2.2 | 16 | Updated the requirement for a physical keyboard in the Student Device and Secure Browser Requirements. Added. “An exemption may be made for students requiring assistive technology.” | 9/9/2021 |
| 4.2.5 | 17 | Clarified that the appeals process may also be referred to as an “incident reporting” process. | 9/9/2021 |
| 5.1.2 | 22 | Added the Smarter Balanced recommendation for a minimum of 10% of student responses to be double scored as also noted in the Member Procedures Manual. | 9/9/2021 |
| 6.1.2 | 27 | Added “performance” before “level” for clarity | 9/9/2021 |
| 6.2 | 32 | Changed “Honor Student’s Effort” to “Honor Students’ Effort  Replaced "the student's control" with "an individual student's control"  Replaced "he/she is" with "they are" to use gender-neutral pronouns | 9/9/2021 |
| 6.3 | 32 | Under Valid Tests, added a dot point to call out adherence to standardized test administration policies and procedures. (e.g., reading test directions, maintaining a suitable test environment) | 9/9/2021 |
| 8.3 | 41 | Updated the years (2021-22) in the Remote Administration of Summative Assessment Policy | 9/9/2021 |
| 9.1.4 | 42 | Clarified that the number of responses per item used for computing item statistics and calibrations is "approximately" 1,500. | 9/9/2021 |
| 10.1 | 44 | Clarified the dot point about TAs following state and local policies regarding test security to include a statement about the option for members to establish a policy to allow for administration of interim assessments without the use of a secure browser and procedures to address item security, as discussed with members on 6/8/2021. | 9/9/2021 |
| 10.2 | 45 | Renamed Section 10.2 as Types of Interim Assessments and renumbered subsequent sections as subsections. | 9/9/2021 |
| 10.2.3 | 45 | Updated the information about Focused IABs to match the language in the Interim Assessment Guide for Administration | 9/9/2021 |
| 10.3 | 45 | Added new Section 10.3 for the Interim Assessment Item Portal (IAIP) and renumbered subsequent sections accordingly. | 9/9/2021 |
| 10.6.5 | 47 | Replaced “States may individually set security policy around the use of interim assessments,” with “Note: A state or territory may establish a policy that allows for interim assessments to be administered without the use of a secure browser provided that the above test security protocols are followed.” | 9/9/2021 |
| 10.7 | 48 | Split the second sentence in the third paragraph to clarify the language, | 9/9/2021 |
| 10.7.2 | 49 | Added introductory text before the questions. | 9/9/2021 |
| 11.1 | 50 | Updated the years (2021-22) in the policy for the remote administration of paper-pencil tests | 9/9/2021 |
| 11.2.3 | 51 | Changed paper assessments “do not include the use of manipulatives" to "do not allow for use of manipulatives." | 9/9/2021 |
| 11.2.5 | 52 | Removed the second sentence about the number of pages in the English language glossaries due to its lack of relevance. | 9/9/2021 |
| 11.2.7 | 52 | Changed the title of this section from “Special Forms” to “Special Versions of the Paper-Pencil Test.”  Replaced reference to the “Paper-Pencil TAM” with the “Braille Test Administration Manual Insert.” | 9/9/2021 |
| 13.2.1 | 57 | Removed information about the location of the Online Summative TAM in this section and added information about the location of all manuals after Section 13.2.2.  Added information about the Braille TAM Insert | 9/9/2021 |
| 13.2.2 | 57 | Added new Section 13.2.2 about the Supplement: Online Summative TAM for Remote Test Administration and renumbered subsequent sections accordingly. This is a new document that was previously released as an addendum to the 2020-21 Online Summative TAM. | 9/9/2021 |
| 13.4  Table 8 | 60 | Added "Special Education Staff" to the Primary Audience for Accessibility and Accommodations module. | 9/9/2021 |
| 13.5.2 | 61 | Replaced Section 13.5.2 Scoring Guides and Section 13.5.3 Annotated Anchors and Writing Rubrics for the ELA/Literacy Performance Tasks with a new Section 13.5.2 for the Smarter Annotated Response Tool (SmART) and renumbered the subsequent section accordingly. Smarter Balanced no longer provides Practice Test Scoring Guides since we replaced the Sample Test with the Sample Items Website. Scoring information is included in the Sample Items Website. | 9/9/2021 |
| 14.0 | 62 | Updated the name of the reporting system to “Smarter Reporting System” | 9/9/2021 |
| 14.1.2 | 62 | Updated the description of the Smarter Reporting System | 9/9/2021 |
| 14.3 | 64 | Updated the description of the Writing Trait Scores report | 9/9/2021 |
| 14.3.4 | 66 | Updated the description of the Writing Trait Scores aggregate report | 9/9/2021 |
| 14.7 | 67 | Added introduction text before the questions  Changed the name of the reporting system user guide to Smarter Reporting System User Guide | 9/9/2021 |
| 15.1 | 68 | Replaced Figure 2 with updated version from the UAAG | 9/9/2021 |
| 16.0 | 74 | Made clarifying edits to the introductory information about Tools for Teachers | 9/9/2021 |
| Appendix A | 77 | Updated Appendix A to include remote testing and additional social media platforms | 9/9/2021 |
| 4.4 | 18 | Created new Section 4.4 Test and Item Management System (TIMS) that includes dates by which only urgent feedback about test content will be reviewed and acted upon for the 2021-22 SY.  Renumbered subsequent sections accordingly | 11/30/2021 |
| Global edits |  | Revised 2021-22 to 2022-23 where applicable throughout the document. | 9/8/2022 |
| 3.2 | 14 | Updated resource list to include *Understanding the Individual Student Assessment Accessibility Profile* and *the*  *Individual Student Assessment Accessibility Profile: A Tool to Support Students.* | 9/8/2022 |
| 5.1.2 | 22 | Updated table for the estimated Total Number of Items in the 2022-23 Summative Assessment Item Pool that require Hand Scoring. | 9/8/2022 |
| 10.5 | 46 | Added the Infographic *Interim Assessment At A Glance*. | 9/8/2022 |
| 13.3.3 | 60 | Updated links for Student Device and Secure Browser Requirements. | 9/8/2022 |
| 14.1.2 | 64 | Updated terms for searchable filters for Smarter Reporting System including new language: English learner status and Disability status, which includes both 504/IEP designations. | 9/8/2022 |
| 15.2 | 71 | Revised the term guide to guidelines. | 9/8/2022 |
| 15.2 | 71 | Revised language describing the Accessibility page. (dot point) | 9/8/2022 |
| 16.1 | 74 | Added live links to resources and added “strategy.” | 9/8/2022 |
| 16.2 | 75 | Accessibility tools linked and “eligible” students added. | 9/8/2022 |
| Global Edits | Various | * Adjusted formatting of headings for consistency and readability. * Copy edits from Smarter Balanced Communications team for consistency and clarity. * Adjusted formatting of all internal document links for consistency. * Changed “Focused IABs” to “FIABs”. * Removed most references to remote teaching and learning throughout document. * Changed “ELA” to “ELA/literacy” for consistency. | 10/31/2023 |
| Table of Contents |  | Adjusted formatting to display only numbered headings for consistency, with exception of appendices. | 10/31/2023 |
| 3.1.1 | 13 | Corrected internal document link under “Accessibility Resources” | 10/31/2023 |
| 3.2 | 14 | * Adjusted wording of first sentencing in second paragraph for clarity. * Other documentation: Updated the Usability, Accessibility, and Accommodations Implementation Guide hyperlink. | 10/31/2023 |
| 4.2.4 | 17 | * In paragraph starting with “Note”: Reworded second sentence for clarity. | 10/31/2023 |
| 4.4 | 19 | * Corrected formatting of first bullet-point list in this section. * Updated key dates to reflect 2023-24 administration in second bullet-point list. | 10/31/2023 |
| 5.1 | 21 | Formatting adjustment of Table 1 for more standard pagination. | 10/31/2023 |
| 5.1.2, Table 2 | 22 | Updated numeric values in the “total number of hand-scored items across all grades” column to reflect 2023-24 administration. | 10/31/2023 |
| 5.1.2, Table 3 | 26 | Formatting adjusted to display entire table on same page. | 10/31/2023 |
| 6.1.2 | 30 | * “Claim-level scores” heading: Added sentence to end of section regarding composite score information and link to Smarter Balanced Scoring Specifications. * “Combining Performance on the PT and CAT” heading: Added link to Smarter Balanced Scoring Specifications. | 10/31/2023 |
| 6.2 | 33 | * Added new first paragraph to “Promote Equity” section. * Adjusted first sentence for clarity in the “Incentivize Desirable Outcomes” section. | 10/31/2023 |
| 7.5 | 38 | In first paragraph:   * Added links to ELA/literacy adjusted form summative blueprint and math adjusted form summative blueprint. * Added sentence indicating that members may choose to administer full or adjusted summative assessment.   Other Documentation:   * Add links to ELA/literacy and math adjusted summative blueprints. | 10/31/2023 |
| 8.2.1 | 39 | Formatting adjustment for clarity: Made bulleted list include two bullet points, instead of one. | 10/31/2023 |
| 8.2.1 | 40 | Bullet-point list:   * First bullet point: Added Usability, Accessibility, and Accommodations Guidelines hyperlink. | 10/31/2023 |
| 8.3 | 42 | * Added remote administration caveat in bold to last sentence of third paragraph in order to align with the information in the Member Procedures Manual. * Adjusted formatting of bullet-point list at bottom of page for clarity and readability. | 10/31/2023 |
| 11.1 | 52 | Revised fourth paragraph of section to reflect that only one operational paper-pencil assessment form per grade and content area is provided. | 10/31/2023 |
| 11.1 | 53 | Added sentence to end of section noting location of paper-pencil forms on Secure File Transfer Server. | 10/31/2023 |
| 11.2.7 | 55 | “Spanish Translated Versions for Mathematics” sections: Removed reference to operational and breach forms to reflect that only operational forms are provided. | 10/31/2023 |
| 15.0, Figure 2 | 71 | Updated content of figure to reflect current universal tools, designated supports, and accommodations. | 10/31/2023 |
| 15.5 | 75 | “Other Documentation” section:   * Removed Usability, Accessibility, and Accommodations Guidelines FAQ hyperlink. * Removed Resources and Practices Comparison Crosswalk hyperlink. * Added Accessibility Strategies for Teaching hyperlink. | 10/31/2023 |
| Appendix A | 79 | Changed “#common core” to “#commoncore” | 10/31/2023 |