



Field Test

The Smarter Balanced Field Test will take place from March 18 – June 6, 2014. The Field Test is a trial run of the assessment system that helps ensure the assessments are valid, reliable, and fair for all students. It also gives teachers and schools a chance to gauge their readiness in advance of the first operational assessment in spring 2015. All 22 Governing States will participate in the Field Test. This

page will be updated as more information becomes available.

Student and School Participation

Students in grades 3-8 and 11—along with a small sample of students in grades 9 and 10—will participate in the Field Test. Administered online, the Field Test will closely resemble the summative assessment that students will participate in during the spring of 2015.

Most students will complete a test in one subject: either English language arts/literacy or mathematics. While the Smarter Balanced assessment is untimed, each subject area is expected to take 3-4 hours to complete. Schools may administer the Field Test over multiple days. Because the Field Test is a “test of the test,” students will not receive scores.

Each Smarter Balanced state individually determined how schools and students would be selected to take the Field Test. In some states, only a representative sample of students will participate—10 percent of students for each subject area. In others, the Field Test will be administered more broadly. For additional information about Smarter Balanced in your state, contact your state education agency.

An Essential Step in Test Development

The Field Test represents a major milestone toward developing next-generation assessments. It serves several important purposes.

Quality Assurance: The field test will evaluate the performance of more than 20,000 assessment items and performance tasks—as well as the performance of the online testing system. For test developers, the Field Test will show which questions work well and which ones need to be improved so that they contribute to a fair and accurate assessment of student achievement.

Achievement Standards: Data from the Field Test will allow Smarter Balanced to set preliminary achievement standards in summer 2014. These achievement standards will indicate whether or not students are on track to achieve college and career readiness in English language arts/literacy and mathematics.

Test Administration: For member states, the Field Test provides an opportunity to make sure technology systems and administration logistics are ready for implementation of the assessment system in the 2014-15 school year. To assist schools, a Test Administration Manual will be released by February 1, 2014.

Designed for All Students

Smarter Balanced is committed to producing assessments that are valid, reliable and fair for all students. The consortium has developed usability, accessibility, and accommodation features to ensure that students have a positive and productive assessment experience that generates fair and accurate estimates of each student's achievement. All usability, accessibility and accommodation features will be available to students in the field test, consistent with the Smarter Balanced *Usability, Accessibility, and Accommodation Guidelines*. Further, students with disabilities, English language learners and English language learners with disabilities will be included among field test participants.

Developed with Educators

The Field Test represents one of the final stages in a lengthy development process to ensure that the Smarter Balanced Assessment System measures the depth and breadth of the Common Core State Standards. Over the past two years, working with K-12 teachers and higher education faculty, Smarter Balanced developed, reviewed, and tested thousands of assessment items and performance tasks.

In 2013, Smarter Balanced conducted a Pilot Test of a smaller number of assessment items in a sample of schools across the country. Information from the Pilot Test informed the development of additional assessment items and performance tasks, accessibility options and accommodations, and the design of the test interface.

For More Information

[Frequently Asked Questions \(PDF\)](#)