



Guide to the Smarter Balanced Field Test

Smarter Balanced member states are developing assessments aligned to the Common Core State Standards. In the 2014-15 school year, these assessments will replace existing state tests in English and mathematics.

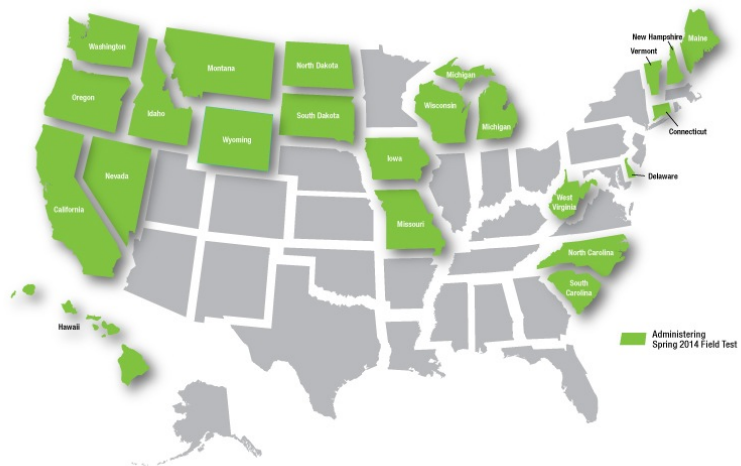
Improved assessments are a key part of implementing the new standards and preparing all students for success in college and careers. The Smarter Balanced assessments will provide an academic checkup for students by measuring real-world skills like critical thinking and problem solving. In addition, they provide real-time information during the year to give teachers and parents a better picture of where students are succeeding and where they need help.

Before the assessments are implemented, Smarter Balanced is conducting a Field Test from March 18 to June 6, 2014. The Field Test is a practice run of the assessment to ensure that test questions are accurate and fair for all students. The Field Test also gives teachers and schools a chance to gauge their readiness in advance of the first operational assessments in spring 2015.

For more information on the Field Test, visit: <http://www.smarterbalanced.org/field-test/>.

Who will participate in the Field Test?

- More than three million students in 22 states: grades 3–8 and 11 along with small sample in grades 9 and 10.
- 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.
- Most students will complete an assessment in one subject only.
- The assessments are untimed, but each subject area is expected to take 2.5 to 4 hours to complete. Schools will administer the tests over multiple days.
- Because questions may be revised or dropped after the Field Test, students will not receive scores.



What will the assessments cover?

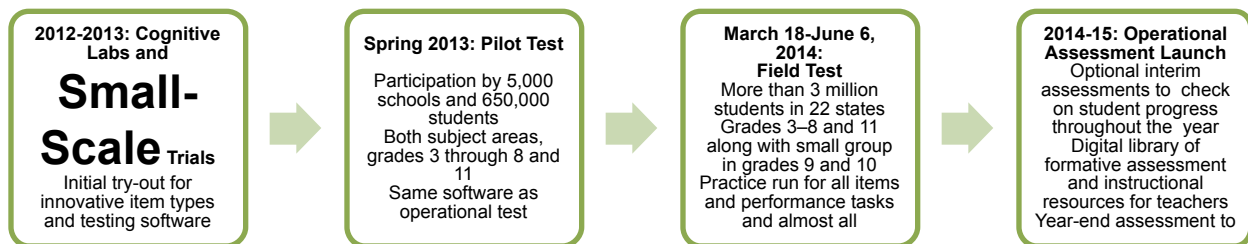
- The Smarter Balanced assessments will measure real-world skills in English and math, such as analytical reading, persuasive writing, and problem solving.
- Beginning in 2015, in addition to providing composite scores in those two subjects, score reports will provide information on student performance in the following areas:
 - English: reading, writing, listening, and research.
 - Math: concepts and procedures; problem solving and modeling/data analysis, and communicating reasoning.

Why is the Field Test important?

- The purpose of the Field Test is to ensure that the assessments are accurate and fair for all students. More than 20,000 assessment questions and performance tasks will be evaluated to determine which work well and which need to be improved.
- The Field Test also gives teachers and schools a chance to practice assessment administration procedures, and students the opportunity to experience the new assessments.
- We expect to discover challenges. Smarter Balanced will use information from the Field Test to improve the assessments and plan for their roll-out in the 2014-15 school year.

How were the Field Tests developed?

- 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 member states developed, reviewed, and tested thousands of assessment questions and performance tasks.



How can students and teachers prepare?

- Online Practice and Training tests give parents, teachers, and students the opportunity to experience sample test questions and the test software platform.
- The Practice and Training Tests are available at <http://www.smarterbalanced.org/practice-test/>.
- Teachers and test administrators can access training modules and administration guidelines for the Field Test at <http://sbac.portal.airast.org/field-test/resources/>.