



Assessment News

May 22, 2015

Top News This Week

Reasons for Non-Participation

Test coordinators are asked to keep an electronic or paper log that lists each student who did not participate in a statewide assessment during the appropriate testing window and the reason why he/she was not tested.

Page 100 in the [2014-15 Smarter Balanced Test Administration Manual](#) includes the following information:

Each school is responsible for keeping an electronic or paper log throughout the 2014-2015 testing windows for all statewide student assessments and exams that includes the following information for each student who is enrolled and not tested:

1. Student's legal name
2. Student's current grade level
3. Student's 10 digit SSID number
4. Name of assessment or exam
5. Reason why the student was not tested during the testing window

Each school will be required to submit this information at the beginning of SY 2015-16. Details regarding the procedure for submitting the information will be provided when the new school year begins.

If a test coordinator will leave the school at the end of 2014-15 or will not serve as the 2015-16 test coordinator, this person needs to ensure that the electronic or paper log is given to the principal or another identified staff member so it can be accessed and used to submit the information when the new school year begins.

The 2014-15 required statewide student assessments include the following:

- ACT Explore Test (grades 8 and 9), ACT Plan Test (grade 10), and ACT Plus Writing (grade 11)
- Biology I EOC Exam (grades 9-12); (administration of Algebra I, Algebra II, and U.S. History EOC Exams is optional)
- Hawaii State Alternate Assessments for ELA, Mathematics, and Science (grades 3-8 and 11)
- Hawaii State Science Assessments (grades 4 and 8)
- Smarter Balanced ELA and Mathematics Assessments (grades 3-8 and 11)

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Important Reminders About Key Test Administration Requirements that Must Be Maintained During Make-Up Testing

Use of Electronic Devices by Students and Adults During Test Sessions for Any Statewide Student Assessment and the Related Consequences

Due to an increase in the number of reports of test security violations involving the use of cell phones during Smarter Balanced test sessions, schools are being asked to review their cell phone policy and to use the procedure provided below if students ARE ALLOWED to bring their cell phones into the testing rooms. The use of this procedure is not needed at schools that DO NOT ALLOW students to bring their cell phones into the testing rooms. This procedure also needs to be used at the beginning of each HSA Science and End-of Course Exam test session at schools that allow students to bring their cell phones into the testing rooms.

All test administrators need to read the following statement at the beginning of every Smarter Balanced, HSA Science, and End-of-Course Exam test session conducted during the remainder of the testing window that ends on June 3, 2015:

"Take your cell phone out of your pocket, back pack, or bag and turn it off. Do not leave it on or place it on silent mode. If you have a back pack or bag, place the turned off phone in the back pack or bag and place it in the area I have designated in the testing room that is not near your computer. If you do not have a back pack or bag, bring your phone to my desk and place it in the area I have designated on the desk. Your phone will be returned to you after all students have ended their test session. If you do not follow these test security directions and use your phone during the test session for any reason, the test you are working on will be invalidated and your parents will be informed of your behavior and the consequences that will be determined by the principal."

All schools are being asked to use this procedure to prevent students' from having their tests invalidated when they use their cell phones for any reason during test sessions e.g., checking their social networking feeds, texting friends and family members, listening to music, using the calculator on their cell phones to answer Mathematics items when an online calculator is not allowed for these items, accessing the Internet on their cell phones to locate answers to test items, taking pictures of test items and posting them on Snapchat, Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram. This will also prevent schools from being identified for ignoring the test security requirement regarding the use of cell phones which (1) may affect their Strive HI accountability results when students' scores are invalidated, (2) may require them to pay for items that are posted on social networking sites which can be clearly read, and (3) will require them to be closely monitored during the testing windows for all statewide student assessments for one to two years.

Use of Certain Math Tools that Are Not Allowed for the Mathematics Computer Adaptive Test (CAT) and Performance Task (PT)

Test administrators may not distribute hand held calculators and mathematics formula sheets to students at the beginning of a test session for use in answering the test questions.

Test administrators may not display any type of mathematics charts in the testing rooms that may help students answers the Mathematics CAT and PT items.

Professional Development Opportunities for Building Educators' Smarter Balanced Assessment Literacy including Hand Scoring of the Interim Assessments (repeat)

There are still openings for educational leaders to participate in the *Building Educator Assessment Literacy Training* sponsored by the Assessment Section, WestEd and the Stanford Center for Assessment, Literacy, and

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Equity (SCALE). This two-day training will provide educators with a deeper understanding of Smarter Balanced performance tasks, how they assess the Hawaii Common Core, and the implications for classroom instruction (see [DOE Memo dated May 8, 2015 Link](#)).

Announcements from the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium

Educators from across the country gather to design Smarter Balanced tests

Educators from across the country are coming together this week and next to help design and refine Smarter Balanced assessments.

Making good on a promise to include classroom teachers at every stage of test development, the consortium held collaborative work sessions at the University of California Los Angeles and the University of Connecticut, with educators representing 13 states.

Over the course of two weeks, 70 educators with expertise in mathematics and English language arts will review and edit new performance tasks to make sure they are aligned to the standards they are assessing, and are written and designed in a way that students can understand. Performance tasks are an item type designed to provide students with the opportunity to critically analyze and synthesize information and to support their responses with evidence. After the educators have refined the performance tasks, they will be field tested with students and further analyzed prior to being included in live tests.

Statement from Executive Director Tony Alpert on Smarter Balanced test time

"An innovative and adaptive test that measures critical thinking, like Smarter Balanced, is naturally going to take longer than a traditional multiple choice test, which encourages rote memorization. Smarter Balanced is highly customized for each student and takes less time than comparable assessments. In fact, early estimates from states indicate that students are actually taking less time on the test than anticipated. We will be reviewing feedback and examining the assessment for a number of issues, including time. Our number one priority continues to be measuring college and career ready standards, including critical thinking."

More than 5 million students take Smarter Balanced ELA and Mathematics Assessments

With a few weeks left in the test administration window, more than 5 million students across 18 states and one territory have taken the Smarter Balanced end-of-year test; this represents 70 percent of the students expected to take the test.

In the News

[“Are New Common Core Tests Better Than Old Multiple-Choice Exams?”](#)

U.S. News & World Report

You are a congresswoman's chief of staff and she needs your help coming up with a position on whether a nuclear power plant should be built in the district.

These are the kinds of prompts students across the country are being presented with during the first round of [Common Core](#) testing this spring.

In this example – from Smarter Balanced, one of two state groups tapped by the federal government to develop tests aligned to Common Core – students would be given a mix of articles, videos and charts to inform an argumentative essay for or against the construction of the plant.

[“Thousands of Scorers Take on the Common-Core Tests”](#)

Education Week

Clearing that hurdle doesn't ensure job security, though. [The work of hand-scorers for Smarter Balanced] is

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monitored as they score, and if their scores don't agree with those of pregraded, model answers often enough—70 percent to 90 percent of the time, depending on the complexity of the question—they can be dismissed. "Once a scorer, not always a scorer," said Luci Willits, the deputy director of Smarter Balanced.

["National Group: Doing Well in School Prevents Jail Time Later"](#)

KCRG-TV9, Cedar Rapids, Iowa

The group members also endorsed the "Smarter Balanced" [educational assessment program](#) recommended by a state educational task force last fall. They believe that program would do a better job of measuring academic performance and success in later life — whether in the workplace or moving on to higher education.

["Why Opting Out is Shortsighted"](#)

Washington Post

THIS MONTH, the growing movement urging parents to opt their children out of standardized school testing received a well-deserved shaming from [national civil rights groups](#). They pointed out that students who sit out tests sabotage the collection of data that is critical in gauging the progress of students who are most at risk. Good for them for calling out the anti-test advocates who have misappropriated the language of the civil rights movement to justify an effort that can only end up hurting poor children of color.

["Hartford Students Tackle SBAC Test"](#)

NBC Connecticut

Because the SBAC is taken on a computer, the questions adapt to students' answers. "It definitely is different," said Charlie Grabber. "This is sort of adjusting, so I'm getting more out of it."

["Education Reforms Like Common Core Standards Help Beat Back 'Tide of Mediocrity'"](#)

NJ.com

Unfortunately, though many politicians are demonstrating courage in sticking with higher expectations, others seem to be wondering whether it might be easier to simply return to the old way of doing things before students even have a chance to rise to the challenge of these tougher exams. It's much easier, after all, to set expectations low and then celebrate "success" when the vast majority of students meet or exceed those expectations. While this might be a good deal for politicians seeking re-election, students are the ones who suffer.

["Lawmakers Defeat Mandatory Opt Out for Common Core Tests"](#)

Las Vegas Sun

Nevada lawmakers have defeated a proposal that would have required school districts to allow children to opt out of standardized testing.

["Gov. Brown Calls for 'Balanced Approach to Testing and Accountability'"](#)

Edsource.org

He said there "is a role for measurement," including for the Academic Performance Index, the main index used to measure schools in California for the past 15 years. The API is currently suspended as the state implements new Common Core-aligned assessments developed by the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium, and experts try to figure out how to incorporate other measures into the API in addition to test results, such as measures of college and career readiness.

Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium

www.smarterbalanced.org

Follow Smarter Balanced on Twitter—Follow @SmarterBalanced for resources and links to the latest news about the Consortium.

Smarter Balanced Hawaii—Information and resources related to the administration of the Smarter Balanced Assessments in Hawaii is located at the statewide testing portal: <http://AlohaHSAP.org>.