

Note to states: States are encouraged to customize this information to align with state policy and procedure, and to include links to relevant state online resources.

1. What is the Smarter Balanced Field Test?

The Field Test is a practice run that will help ensure the Smarter Balanced assessments are accurate and fair for all students. The Field Test also gives teachers and schools a chance to practice assessment administration procedures, and students the opportunity to experience the assessments aligned to the Common Core. Smarter Balanced will use information from the Field Test to improve the assessments and plan for the rollout in the 2014-2015 school year.

2. When will the Smarter Balanced Field Test be administered?

March 25 to June 6, 2014 (on request, an optional makeup week is available June 9–13).

3. What content areas will the Field Test cover?

The Smarter Balanced assessments are in English language arts/literacy and mathematics, and will measure real-world skills such as analytical reading, persuasive writing, and problem solving.

4. Who participates in the Field Test?

Students in grades 3-8 and 11 in all 22 of the Consortium's Governing States will be involved in the Smarter Balanced Field Test. A small number of students in grades 9 and 10 also will participate to support a special study.

5. How long will the Field Test take?

The Field Test is not timed, but we estimate that the ELA/literacy assessment will take 3.5 hours (for elementary students) to 4 hours (for high schools students) and the math assessment will take 2.5 hours (for elementary students) to 3.5 hours (for high school students). In addition, students will have a brief classroom activity to introduce the topic of the performance task. Testing will occur in multiple sessions, so students will typically spend 1 to 2 hours per day on the assessments.

6. Will the Field Test be administered on paper or only by computer?

While the Field Test will be administered online, Smarter Balanced will make a paper-and-pencil version of the end-of-year assessment available to schools during a three-year transition period beginning in the 2014-15 school year.

7. Are schools also administering regular state tests?

Whether or not a school also needs to administer its existing state test is a decision made by your state department of education. Some states will administer the Field Test in place of their state accountability test; in other states, the Field Test will be administered in addition to the state accountability test.

8. What are the technology requirements for the Field Test?

In December 2012, Smarter Balanced released its *Technology Strategy Framework and System Requirements Specifications*; this document, which recently was updated, provides minimum hardware specifications and basic bandwidth calculations that will allow schools and districts to evaluate how best to support the administration of online assessments. The framework was developed with input and feedback from Smarter Balanced member states and work groups, and was informed by data from the Technology Readiness Tool, an online inventory of school technology resources. Based on the research and data analysis, Smarter Balanced estimates that the majority of schools and districts in member states will be able to successfully administer the assessments with their existing infrastructure. For more information and to download the specifications, visit our [Technology page](#).

9. Does the Field Test support English language learners, students with disabilities, and other students with special needs?

The Smarter Balanced Assessment System will provide accurate measures of achievement for students with disabilities and English language learners. The assessments will address visual, auditory, and physical access barriers—allowing virtually all students to demonstrate what they know and can do. Our work is guided by the [Smarter Balanced Technical Advisory Committee](#), as well as [advisory panels](#) for English language learners and students with disabilities. For more information, download the [Accessibility and Accommodations](#) factsheet and visit the [Support for Under-Represented Students](#) page.

10. How will student data be protected?

States will continue to retain control of all student information, including assessment results. Unless directed to do so by the state, Smarter Balanced will not collect information such as student names or dates of birth that can be used to identify individual students. No parent information will be collected. Smarter Balanced will not share student-level information with the U.S. Department of Education. Further, use of the Smarter Balanced assessments will result in no changes to state reporting to the U.S. Department of Education. Smarter Balanced, states, and districts cannot and will not sell student information, as prohibited by federal laws like the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act.