

Q: What will be included in the SMARTER Balanced assessment?

A: The Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium (SBAC) is developing an assessment with three major components: (1) a summative assessment; (2) an interim assessment; and (3) formative assessments and tools.

Summative Assessments:

- Include computer adaptive selected response (multiple choice), constructed response, and performance tasks;
- Produce composite content area scores, based on the computer-adaptive items and performance tasks;
- Will be administered in the last 12 weeks of the year in grades 3–8 and high school for English language arts (ELA) and mathematics. Students will have two opportunities during this testing window.

Interim Assessments:

- Optional computer adaptive assessments and performance tasks, administered at locally determined intervals;
- Designed to provide actionable information about student progress;
- Based on publicly released items and tasks;
- Grounded in learning progressions across grades and how college and career-readiness emerge over time.

Formative Tools and Processes:

- Provides resources to inform teachers about student progress toward achieving the CCSS;
- Will be used by teachers and students to monitor a student’s learning needs, check for misconceptions, and/or to provide evidence of progress toward learning goals.

Q: Will the SMARTER system provide immediate feedback to students?

A: SMARTER is comprised of a formative, interim and summative assessment. Formative assessment practices are intended to support teachers by providing tools that support their interaction with students to elicit consistent information that will help teachers improve their instruction and help them provide feedback to students. The interim assessment is intended to provide periodic information regarding student progress and will be a more structured assessment than the formative and most likely more timely feedback than the summative. The purpose of the summative assessment will not be to immediately effect change in student behavior but rather evaluate programs and to support accountability. While the goal is to provide some feedback from the summative by providing a preliminary score based on those elements that are immediately scored, this is still being worked out.

Q: Will the assessments be adaptive just within grades or across grades?

A: The SMARTER proposal described an intent to provide at least one score that potentially includes off-grade content. However, the US Department of Education has not yet approved that these off-grade level content scores be included in states’ implementation of federal accountability systems. If they do not approve these scores for use in accountability, SMARTER may have to reconsider this issue.

Q: Will there be review of SMARTER assessment items for cultural and generational bias?

A: Yes. This is standard practice among any large scale assessment system.

Q: Will SMARTER use RIT scores for reporting like OAKS?

A: It will use scale scores. However, they will most likely be called something else and will be on a different scale than OAKS. For example a score of 300 will mean something different in SMARTER than in OAKS. More information will be provided in the future as work on the development of the scale progresses.

Q: When will SMARTER test specifications be released?

A: Most likely in late winter 2012 there will be at least a general description of the test items and allocation of content.

Q: When will SMARTER be releasing sample questions and performance tasks?

A: Most likely by winter 2012. However, sample tests and tasks should only be used to familiarize students and teachers with the form and format of assessments. They should not be used to evaluate students' knowledge and skills or teachers' instruction.

Q: Will there be multiple testing opportunities for students who don't meet, or if students want to try to exceed?

A: The purpose of the summative assessment will be to confirm student achievement as otherwise described through the interim assessment and formative processes. The budgeted cost for the summative assumed about 25% of students may take the summative more than once, so it will likely be used in cases where there is evidence that the test administration was irregular or the test results do not accurately describe a student's achievement.

Q: How often can the interim assessment be administered?

A: A limit has not yet been established.

Q: Will the interim be a predictor of the summative assessment?

A: Yes.

Q: What does flexible mean regarding the interim assessment? Will teachers be able to choose items?

A: The design of the interim assessment is under further review and discussion by experts. However, in this context, "flexible" means that teachers would be able to choose clusters of content standards upon which students would be assessed.

Q: Are there performance task items on the summative assessment?

A: Yes.

Q: Will there be a menu to pick from for the performance task items?

A: This has not been discussed, but given concerns about comparability, it is unlikely.

Q: How tight is the 12 week testing window regarding the summative assessment? Is there any flexibility especially for schools that have block schedules?

A: Currently the window is 12 weeks based on the requirement that each school have available a comparable measure of growth. As described in the proposal, the consortium will research opportunities for additional flexibility. To date, the window has not changed.

Q: Will the Oregon Department of Education be reviewing the scoring of writing and math work samples?

A: This is not likely to change prior to 2014-15 at which point, scoring rubrics will change based on SMARTER.

Q: Will the English Language Proficiency Assessment (ELPA) be part of SMARTER?

A: No. Oregon is participating in a separate grant led by California to develop a new English Proficiency Assessment.

Q: Will Oregon have access to the Interim and Formative Assessments associated with SMARTER?

A: Oregon districts will need to work with ODE to ensure that Oregon allocates sufficient funds to provide this balanced assessment system to each Oregon student.