PARCC and Smarter Balanced
plus the **Alternate** and
English Proficiency
Assessment Designs
Approved by the Consortia

Coming Together to Raise Achievement

New Assessments for the Common Core State Standards

Updated June 2013

Prepared by the
Center for K-12 Assessment & Performance Management at ETS

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K-12 Center at ETS

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Dear Colleague:

We are closing in on the target date of spring 2015 when the Consortia of states will be bringing online next generation assessment systems for K-12 education. This represents a dynamic moment in the history of large-scale K-12 assessment with six state-led and state-governed assessment development efforts under way. The policy goal in these efforts is to respond to the demands for more comprehensive, high-quality, useful and timely assessment systems. This body of work has the potential to bring significant improvements to the field of K-12 assessment, especially state testing programs. It is important that educators, parents and policymakers at all levels have up-to-date information so they can chart the path forward for their schools and school systems.

The Center for K-12 Assessment & Performance Management at ETS (the K-12 Center) has created this spring 2013 edition of *Coming Together to Raise Achievement* to build understanding of this unprecedented set of activities in K-12 assessment. In it, we:

- Describe the larger context of these reform initiatives and consider their potential for creating real and lasting improvements in student achievement;
- Describe each of the six federally funded assessment Consortia now developing next generation assessment systems and the types of supports they will be providing to educators, parents and students in their member states;
- Describe the work under way to ensure that schools will be ready to administer the new online assessments in 2014-2015;
- Consider what it will take to ensure these improvements make their way into our nation's classrooms.

For those who have been following the work of the Consortia, we have made it easy to locate the newest updates by placing a gray dotted line next to them as shown here.

The K-12 Center is pleased to provide timely and useful information on emerging issues in K-12 testing. We strive to stimulate bold, innovative thinking that will advance the field of K-12 assessment and measurement to benefit high-quality teaching and learning for all our children.

Pascal D. Forgione, Jr.

Will Common Core and New Assessments Lead to Improved Student Achievement?

Exciting work is going on in K-12 education today. Thousands of educators across the country are working with leaders in higher education and industry to develop new and more useful end-of-year assessments. Just as important, they are creating digital libraries of exemplary instructional units, professional development resources and progress-monitoring tools to support both student and teacher learning.

Collaboration is happening at an unprecedented scale and pace.

The goal is to significantly increase the rates at which students graduate from high school with the skills and knowledge needed to successfully enter college or the workplace. The question is: Will these efforts be enough?

Since the initiation of standards-based reform in the 1990s, we have learned that the changes in U.S. standards, assessments and accountability to date have not been sufficient to bring about major improvements in teaching and learning. While the academic performance of U.S. students has shown gains over this time, the gains have been modest at best. Several countries, including Belgium, Poland and Estonia, have improved at a faster rate in mathematics and science achievement.[1] So, even though our students are improving, they are losing ground against their international peers. As Dr. Charles Payne of the University of Chicago summarizes it, "So much reform, so little change." This is deeply troubling to American educators who have worked diligently over this period to improve achievement and close achievement gaps.

That said, there are several reasons to be cautiously optimistic that the work currently under way has real potential to create a better foundation for significant and lasting improvement.

First, the standards are better. The Common Core State Standards (CommonCore) in English Language Arts and Mathematics, which have been adopted by 45 states, have fewer standards per grade level, allowing more time for teachers to ensure that students develop deep understanding. This is a critical shift away from the "mile-wide, inch deep" standards that have caused teachers to rush from one topic to the next in the past. The new standards still include the "basics," but also call for the higher order thinking, communication and problem-solving skills required today for nearly all postsecondary pursuits. The standards specifically value persistence, the ability to identify multiple solutions to problems and the ability to clearly explain one's thinking in writing. In developing the new standards, the writers drew from the best existing state standards and those of top-performing countries around the world. Draft standards were reviewed by faculty in colleges and career training programs across the country to ensure that they align with the skills needed for postsecondary pursuits. Although the standards will inevitably need to

[1] http://www.oecd.org/pisa/46643496.pdf

be modified and improved over time, the foundation they create has been endorsed by dozens of national educational organizations and corporations as representing a distinct improvement over prior standards.[2]

Second, the tests will be better. They are being designed to measure the full range of skills and knowledge in the Common Core and to return timely, useful results. A recent evaluation of the work completed to date on the new assessments was conducted by the National Center for Research on Evaluation, Standards and Student Testing (CRESST) at UCLA.[3] CRESST concluded that the new end-of-year assessments being developed by the two comprehensive assessment Consortia "reflect a dramatic increase in intellectual rigor relative to current state assessments," and will address important 21st century competencies such as "mastering and being able to apply core academic content and cognitive strategies related to complex thinking, communication and problem solving."

Already, the work of the Consortia is accelerating advances in assessment development and scoring methodologies. Technology hardware and bandwidth limitations in schools may require changes to some of the more complex task types being planned, but the work to date indicates a clear intent to develop next-generation assessment systems that measure the breadth and depth of the Common Core with fidelity.

The Comprehensive and Alternate Consortia, described within this publication, are developing end-of-year assessments to be used for accountability decisions. Importantly, they are also creating aligned and optional formative assessments, interim assessments and other types of progress-monitoring tools for teachers to use within instruction to identify gaps in student understanding. For most schools, this will be the first time that the academic standards and the formative, interim and summative assessments are so deeply coherent and aligned.

Because the assessments will be delivered on computer devices, results will be returned much more promptly than with most existing state assessments. Online reporting systems will make results more readily available — and useful — to teachers, principals, students and parents. By utilizing substantial federal grants and drawing upon the collective expertise of many states, each consortium has the opportunity to develop reporting systems that provide timely, actionable, ongoing information that can be customized to each user group to guide continuous improvement.

Third, "going digital" opens new doors. This shift to online testing is propelling public schools to install the necessary technology infrastructure, which will then be available for instruction. In far too many places, students now have greater access to digital resources outside of school, through cell phones and computers, than they have in school.

There are several reasons to be cautiously optimistic that the work currently under way has real potential to create a better foundation for significant and lasting improvement.

As we have witnessed in other sectors, such as music and publishing, going digital is highly disruptive. It transforms product development and delivery, and significantly reduces the time required to go from concept to market. Going digital also dramatically widens the pool of potential creators and innovators and their ability to access and build upon the ideas of others.

The Assessment Consortia are leveraging these opportunities. They are creating digital libraries of exemplary instructional units and professional development modules, accompanied by videos and

[2] http://www.corestandards.org/resources/statements-of-support

[3] Joan Herman & Robert Linn (2013) On the Road to Assessing Deeper Learning: The Status of Smarter Balanced and PARCC Assessment Consortia. CRESST. CRESST/University of California, Los Angeles.

online discussion groups. No longer limited by the fiscal and intellectual resources within a single state, the best educational resources for students and teachers will be readily available online to teachers everywhere "24-7."

In this guide, within summaries of the six federally funded assessment Consortia, you will learn more about the specific tools, materials and strategies being utilized by each to support improvement at the district, school and classroom levels. In each case, the member states (listed on Page 53) have agreed to utilize the same summative assessments, accommodations guidelines and cut scores for proficiency. However, individual states will continue to determine whether and how these assessments are used for other purposes, such as educator evaluations, student promotion and graduation decisions.

The two Comprehensive Assessment Consortia, described on Pages 5-24**,** are preparing to have their optional diagnostic and interim assessments ready by the fall of 2014 and the summative assessments by the spring of 2015. Both Consortia have engaged lead teachers from member states in development of the assessments and related training materials for teachers. Their websites have sample items and tasks that educators and parents can use to better understand the types of student work the new assessments will demand (go to http://parcconline.org/samples/item-task-prototypes and www.smarterbalanced.org/sample-items-and-performance-tasks/).

The two Alternate Assessment Consortia, described on Pages 25-34, are focusing on the roughly 1% of students with significant cognitive disabilities. To date, states have struggled to develop high quality instructional and assessment tools for this small group of students who have a very wide range of needs. Now the combination of federal start-up funding and Consortia of states working together present a powerful new opportunity to help these students realize their full potential.

The Dynamic Learning Maps Assessment Consortium expects to have its assessments ready for use by the beginning of the 2014-15 school year, and the National Center and State Collaborative plans to set standards on the summative assessments in the summer of 2015, with pre-pilot and pilot testing in 2013-2014 and full census field/operational testing spring 2015.

The two English Language Proficiency Assessment Consortia, described on Pages 35-43, are developing next-generation assessments and related supports for English language learners in Grades K-12. These will not be used for accountability purposes but rather (a) to determine student eligibility for and placement in English learner programs, and (b) to determine, in combination with other indicators, student readiness to exit the programs. The ASSETS consortium will have its system ready for use in 2015-16 and the ELPA21 consortium, funded a year later, is expected be operational in the 2016-17 school year.

Assessments are critical building blocks for educational improvement, as they can serve to either support or distract high quality teaching and learning.

All six Consortia, and the thousands of educators and experts who are contributing to their work, are to be commended. Their efforts will result in many valuable resources being made available over the next two years. This is not easy work, and many challenges remain as they strive to implement new advances in measurement, cognitive science and technology, but it has tremendous potential.

Will our schools be ready to administer next-generation assessments and access the digital libraries of support resources? On Pages 44-47, leaders of the State Educational Technology Directors Association, which is helping states and districts prepare the technology infrastructure needed to deliver the new assessments, provide a description of the work under way.

The efforts described in this guide carry the potential for a step-change in the quality of standards, assessments, feedback systems and support resources. Whether they will be enough to bring about the increases in achievement and closing of achievement gaps we all seek is yet to be determined. In a closing article on Pages 48-50, we consider what else it may take to ensure that these efforts make their way into classrooms through next-generation school systems designed to produce, support and retain excellence in teaching.

Assessments are critical building blocks for educational improvement, as they can serve to either support or distract high quality teaching and learning. Through this publication, you can learn about — and how to engage in — these unprecedented initiatives to build a new generation of assessments that will actively support the goal of all students completing high school prepared for successful entry into college, career training or today's workplace.

SYSTEM DESIGNS, WORK TO DATE AND FUTURE PLANS

Comprehensive Assessment Consortia

As part of the historic economic stimulus package approved by Congress in 2009, the federal Race to the Top Assessment Program provided funding to develop a new generation of assessments intended to yield timely data to support and inform instruction, provide accurate information about what students know and can do, and measure achievement against standards that reflect the skills and knowledge required for success in college and the workforce.

Two Consortia of states were awarded grants to develop Comprehensive Assessment Systems in September 2010. Each Consortium was given more than $175 million to push the frontiers of the assessment field and build new testing and instructional support systems within four years. Currently, 45 states and the District of Columbia have joined the Consortia. The new summative assessments in English Language Arts and Mathematics will replace those currently used by member states in 2014-2015.

Each Consortium committed to build an assessment system for Grades 3-8 and high school that meets the following criteria[1]:

- Builds upon **shared standards** in mathematics and English Language Arts (ELA) for college- and career-readiness;
- Measures **individual growth** as well as proficiency;
- Measures the extent to which each student is on track, at each grade level tested, toward **college- or career-readiness** by the time of high school completion and;
- Provides **information that is useful** in informing:
  - Teaching, learning and program improvement;
  - Determinations of school effectiveness;
  - Determinations of principal and teacher effectiveness for use in evaluations and the provision of support to teachers and principals; and
  - Determinations of individual student college- and career-readiness, such as determinations made for high school exit decisions, college course placement to credit-bearing classes or college entrance.

The pages that follow provide illustrations of the two comprehensive Consortia — **the Partnership for the Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers** (PARCC) and the **Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium** (Smarter Balanced) — as well as summaries of their work to date and plans for the future.[2] These materials and other information about the Consortia can also be found at www.k12center.org/publications/assessment_consortia.html.

[1] US Department of Education Race to the Top Assessment Program Application for New Grants: Comprehensive Assessment Systems. CFDA Number 84.395B. 2009

[2] The summaries and illustrations of the two comprehensive assessment consortia have been approved by Consortia leadership.

For further information about the work of these consortia, visit:

Partnership for the Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers:
http://parcconline.org

Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium:
www.smarterbalanced.org

Partnership for the Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC)

The purpose of the PARCC system is to increase the rates at which students graduate from high school prepared for success in college and the workplace. It is based on the core belief that assessment should be a tool for enhancing teaching and learning. PARCC intends the assessments to help educators increase student learning by providing timely, actionable data throughout the school year to inform instruction, interventions and professional development, as well as to improve teacher, school and system effectiveness.

PARCC at a Glance

- MEMBERSHIP: 21 states, the District of Columbia, and the U.S. Virgin Islands educating approximately 24 million K-12 students
- GOVERNING STATES*: Arizona, Arkansas, Colorado, the District of Columbia, Florida, Georgia, Illinois, Indiana, Louisiana, Maryland, Massachusetts, Mississippi, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, Ohio, Oklahoma, Rhode Island, Tennessee
- PARTICIPATING STATES**: Kentucky, North Dakota, Pennsylvania, the U.S. Virgin Islands
- PROCUREMENT STATE***: Florida
- PROJECT MANAGEMENT PARTNER: Achieve
- HIGHER ED PARTNERSHIPS: More than 750 two- and four-year institutions, which typically receive 90 percent of all students across the PARCC Consortium states who enter college within two years of graduating from high school, will use the assessments as an indicator of readiness for credit-bearing entry-level courses.
- AWARD: $186 million total (assessment and supplemental grants), Race to the Top Assessment Program grants awarded September and October, 2010

This information is accurate as of April 15, 2013.

The following summary of the PARCC assessment system has been approved by the PARCC Consortium for its accuracy.

* GOVERNING STATES cast decision-making votes on test design and policy.

** PARTICIPATING STATES consult on test design and policy, but have no decision-making authority and must participate in pilot and field testing.

*** PROCUREMENT STATES are the fiscal agents.

The system of aligned diagnostic, interim and summative assessments is being designed to provide valid, reliable and timely data; provide feedback on student performance; help determine whether students are college- and career-ready or on track; support the needs of educators in the classroom; and provide data for accountability, including measures of growth.

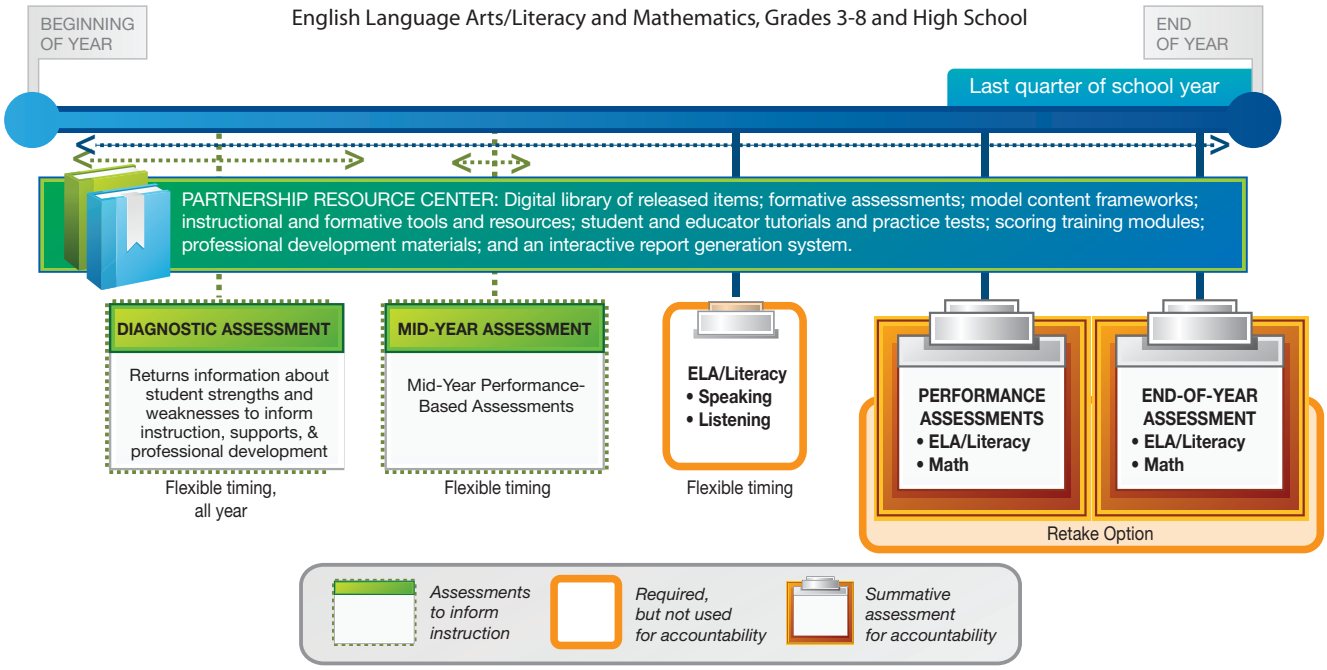
The PARCC assessment system will consist of five components: a required two-part computer-based summative assessment (a performance-based assessment and an end-of-year assessment); two optional components (a diagnostic assessment and a midyear assessment); and one required non-summative assessment in speaking and listening. Figure X shows how these assessments are distributed across the school year and the degree of flexibility in the testing window for each component.

Teachers will have access to an online repository of resources that are being developed by PARCC, culled from the best products from member states, and professional development modules to support implementation and use of the assessment system. A web-based reporting system is expected to provide teachers, students, parents and administrators with timely and user-appropriate information about the progress and instructional needs of students.

PARCC will leverage technology across the design and delivery of the system to support student engagement, innovation, accessibility, cost efficiency and the rapid return of results.

For those who have been following the work of the Consortia, we have made it easy to locate the newest updates by placing a gray dotted line next to them in the text, as shown here.

PARCC Assessment System



SYSTEM COMPONENTS

Summative Assessments for Accountability

Assessments will be developed in English Language Arts (ELA) and Mathematics for Grades 3-11 that assess the full range of standards within the Common Core State Standards (Common Core). The assessments are to be delivered on computer and utilize technology to increase access and student engagement.

PARCC has developed Model Content Frameworks[1] which describe the major content and skills to be emphasized in each grade/course and provide guidance on how one might emphasize the critical advances in the standards to focus on essential knowledge and skills that students must develop for college- and career-readiness. From these Frameworks, the assessment specifications which define the set of claims to be made about student knowledge, skills and abilities, sample forms of evidence accepted and examples of the types of tasks to be utilized were developed. Information about the PARCC assessment blueprints, including the numbers and types of tasks per grade level, can be found on the PARCC website.

With these specifications in hand, PARCC now estimates that the amount of time needed for the average student to complete the ELA and Mathematics performance-based and end-of-year summative assessment components will total approximately eight hours in Grade 3; nine hours in Grades 4-5; nine and one-half hours in Grades 6-8; and just under 10 hours for high school students. The two assessment components in each subject combined will comprise a total of nine testing sessions during the last 25 percent of the instructional year. These estimates will be refined after the **spring 2014** field test.

[1] See the PARCC Model Content Frameworks and webinars that discuss them at http://parcconline.org/parcc-content-frameworks.

Performance-Based Assessments (PBAs)
For each grade/course tested, the PBAs will be designed to closely resemble high-quality classroom work. They will focus on the hard-to-measure standards and will utilize short, medium and extended tasks, including computer-enhanced simulations. These assessments will be given primarily on computers or other digital devices after approximately 75-80 percent of instructional time. A mix of human and computer scoring will be used and results are expected to be reported prior to the end of the school year. This component will not itself generate a scale score, but will be used in conjunction with the end-of-year assessment in the determination of the summative score.

In ELA, the PBA will ask students to complete three sets of tasks that focus on writing effectively when analyzing text: one literary analysis task, one narrative writing task and one research simulation task. At each grade level, the sources will represent a range of reading/text complexity levels to enable students at higher and lower ranges of performance to demonstrate their skills. Students will be asked to read one or more texts, answer several short comprehension and vocabulary questions and write an essay that requires them to draw evidence from the text(s). High school students, for example, may be called upon to conduct electronic searches (within a predefined set of digital sources), evaluate the quality of the sources and compare and synthesize ideas across multiple sources on a topic, including text, video and graphs, to analyze the strength of various arguments. The research simulation task may draw upon informational texts from history or the sciences.

The mathematics PBAs will be taken over two testing sessions and will focus entirely on the major content of the grade/course, as defined in the PARCC Model Content Frameworks. They will require students to express their mathematical reasoning and to apply key mathematical skills, concepts and processes to solve complex problems of the types encountered in everyday life, work and decision-making. These multi-step problems will require abstract reasoning, precision, perseverance and the strategic use of tools. At the high school level, the PBA may ask students to set up a spreadsheet to determine the number of monthly payments of a given amount required to pay off a credit card debt, given a specific interest rate, and to determine the amount of the final payment. After scoring, the points from the mathematics PBAs will count for approximately 40-50 percent of the student's summative score for mathematics.

Individual performance tasks may be composed of a set of short, medium and/or extended response items and computer-enhanced items. Simulations may also be used, when needed to obtain a better measure of a standard or cluster of standards, with more sophisticated ones added over time as the technology infrastructure in member states evolves.

End-of-Year (EOY) Assessments
For each grade/course tested, the EOY assessments in ELA and Mathematics will, in combination with the PBAs, assess all of the standards for the grade level/course. This component will be taken during the last few weeks of the school year, utilize a range of innovative items types and technological tools, and be entirely computer scored. Students will have two testing sessions for each of the EOY assessments, and will complete them after approximately 90 percent of the instructional year.

PARCC assessments will be delivered on computer devices, including tablets, and the Consortium is working to keep the tests "device neutral" to minimize the need to buy new or additional devices.

The ELA EOY assessments will include 5-6 texts with a number of short answer questions that focus on reading and comprehending complex texts, including vocabulary interpretation and use. Informational passages from history/social studies, science and technical subjects will be included on these assessments.

The mathematics EOY assessments will focus on the major, additional and supporting content of the grade/course as defined in the PARCC Model Content Frameworks. They will leverage technology within items to enable students to, for example, create equations, graph functions, draw lines of symmetry or create bar graphs.

The mathematics assessments for the high school level will be designed as end-of-course assessments and states will have the option of selecting, or allowing their districts to select, a traditional course sequence (algebra I, geometry, algebra II) or an integrated mathematics sequence. Each option will measure the full range of high school mathematics standards in the Common Core.

It is expected that scale scores from the end-of-year assessments will be reported quickly enough after the test administration so that they may be included on student report cards. PARCC will release a portion of the items and tasks from both the performance-based and end-of-year component to support deeper understanding of expectations.

The assessments to be used by PARCC to indicate readiness to enter directly into credit-bearing college courses will be the Grade 11 ELA assessment and the third high school level end-of-course mathematics assessment — either the Algebra II assessment or the Integrated Math 3 assessment. In both cases, both the performance tasks and the end-of-year components will be used. For the first three years of implementation, students taking the third mathematics final assessment also will be required to complete two additional performance-based tasks that assess concepts and skills from the earlier two high school mathematics courses. After 2017, when the first cohort of students has completed all three high school mathematics end-of-course assessments, PARCC will make a determination regarding how college- and career- readiness will be determined for future cohorts.

Subject to state policy decisions, approved students will be able to retake summative assessments. For Grades 3-8, PARCC will make available one retest opportunity per year in mathematics and ELA. At the high school level, PARCC will provide for up to three retest opportunities for each end-of-course assessment. Individual states will determine whether and/or how many retest opportunities to make available.

Item and Task Development

PARCC has contracted for the development of all items and tasks, and these will be reviewed by state educators to ensure that they are age-appropriate and measure the content of the given grade level. Item development research was conducted in **spring 2013** to evaluate the quality, accessibility and usability of assessment items. Also, the items and tasks are undergoing thorough review by state K-12 content experts and higher education faculty for quality and alignment to the standards, and by educators and community members to ensure they are fair and free from bias. Field testing will take place with a representative sample of students across PARCC states in the **spring of 2014**. Information will be gathered to inform the development of the PARCC test forms for the operational assessment in the **spring of 2015**.

Assessment Delivery

PARCC assessments will be delivered on computer devices, including tablets, and the Consortium is working to keep the tests “device neutral” to minimize the need to buy new or additional devices. Paper-and-pencil versions will be made available only as an accommodation and, for the first year of administration, to schools that have been granted permission to use the paper format from their state departments of education.

States and districts will be able to choose from a set of defined testing windows for (a) the performance-based assessments and (b) the end-of-year assessments. In each case, the testing window will be a maximum of 4 weeks, but states and districts may choose a shorter testing window if they have the capacity to complete the assessments in less time.

Scoring

Annual combined results from the summative components will be reported back to states, districts and schools in time for information about each student's progress toward college- and career-readiness to be included his/her report card. PARCC states will adopt a common set of performance standards and scoring rubrics so results will be comparable across states.

A combination of computer and human scoring will be used for those portions of PBAs that cannot be electronically scored. PARCC's initial plans for monitoring the quality and reliability of scoring, which are subject to refinement as the development phase progresses, are to have 20-30 percent of randomly selected items for Grades 3 through high school scored a second time by humans.

The EOY assessment will utilize 100-percent computer scoring. PARCC plans to press for advances in automated scoring, including the use of artificial intelligence (AI). When paper forms are used for students with disabilities or for other state-approved instances, responses will be scanned for electronic or human scoring.

PARCC expects to be able to return the composite results from the PBAs and EOYs prior to the end of the school year. Member states are discussing whether to utilize trained teachers (who will not score their own students' work), contractor services or a combination thereof. All teachers would have access to the online training modules for scoring so they can more deeply understand the assessments and score classroom assignments in a consistent manner.

These scoring and administration plans may change as a result of the research conducted during the development phase.

Measuring Growth

Because scores will be combined for the PBA and EOY for accountability purposes, PARCC anticipates having nearly twice as many score points in its summative tests than are typically found in current state tests. This will provide room to measure all or most of the performance spectrum well enough to measure student growth.

Accountability

The Partnership plans to combine the results from the performance-based assessments and the end-of-year assessments to calculate the annual accountability scores for each student. The weighting scheme to be used will be determined in the **summer of 2014**, after field testing. Proficiency, on-track to college- and career-readiness and growth data will be produced by the system for use, as needed, in accountability systems. Scores from the Mid-Year Assessment (described below) will not contribute to summative scores.

All PARCC states have agreed to adopt, for each grade tested in ELA/literacy and mathematics, five common performance levels. They will also utilize the same performance levels across all member states for the determination of college- and career-readiness and for reporting student achievement. However, each member state retains the authority to utilize different PARCC performance levels for state accountability purposes such as graduation or promotion requirements.

Reporting System

An online Interactive Data Tool will provide teachers, parents and administrators with access to results after each assessment and include various tools for displaying data, creating customized reports and comparing the performance of similar schools. In addition, parents will be mailed printed reports after each assessment. For administrators, the system will include tools to help identify the individual professional development needs of teachers, as well as grade-level and school-level needs.

Results of the ELA assessments will be reported in three major categories: (a) reading and comprehending a range of grade-appropriate texts independently; (b) writing effectively when using and/or analyzing sources; and (c) the ELA score which is a composite of the reading and writing scores. The latter will be the score used for accountability purposes.

Results of the mathematics assessments will be reported as both scale and performance level scores. A full listing of the reporting categories for both ELA and mathematics will be released in updated test blueprints in late **spring 2013**.

Projected Costs

As of November, 2011, PARCC projected that the cost per student, per test (ELA test or mathematics test) will be $9.54 if 50 percent of the scoring is done by computers and 50 percent by humans, or $11.01 if fully scored by humans.[2] A new cost analysis is being conducted, a draft will be released in the **summer of 2013**, and final estimated costs for the summative assessments will be available in the fall of **2013**.

OTHER ASSESSMENTS, RESOURCES AND TOOLS

Prototype Items and Practice Tests

PARCC has released 23 prototype assessment items and tasks, and will be releasing additional ones in 2013 (these can be found at http://www.parcconline.org/samples/item-task-prototypes#7).

In addition, a Practice Test consisting of representative items and tasks at each grade level will be constructed and made available to all students in PARCC states in the **spring of 2014**. It will be computer-delivered, providing the opportunity for students to become familiar with the test administration interface and item types.

Optional Diagnostic and Mid-Year Assessments

In addition to the two summative assessment components described above, PARCC will develop diagnostic and mid-year assessments for each grade level for Grades 3-8 and high school.

Diagnostic Assessment
These diagnostic assessments in ELA and mathematics will be designed to pinpoint students' strengths and weaknesses relative to particular standards for each grade/course. Starting in **September of 2014**, they will be available throughout the school year and will provide an indicator of student knowledge and skills so that instructional supports and professional development can be tailored to address student needs. The diagnostic assessment component will include:

- A computer-based component that utilizes machine-scorable items;
- A bank of performance tasks for hard-to-measure standards and accompanying scored student responses to assist teachers in scoring them; and
- An online professional development module to assist teachers in the effective use of the data from the diagnostic assessments.

[2] See slide 7 of the PARCC Presentation to the Colorado State Board of Education, November 10, 2011. www.ednewscolorado.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/11/PARCCSlides11011.pdf

Mid-Year Assessment (MYA)
The mid-year assessments will be composed primarily of rich performance tasks and designed to inform curriculum, instruction and professional development. The tasks will preview the types of tasks included in the summative PBAs. States and/or districts may locally choose to administer— even to require — portions of the mid-year assessment or the full assessment. Scores from the MYA will not contribute to summative scores.

A Speaking/Listening Assessment
To assess the speaking and listening standards within the Common Core, an assessment will be required, but will not be used in the determination of the summative score. This component may be administered at any time during the academic year. Teachers will score each student's speaking and listening skills using a standardized rubric and may use the scores as part of student grades.

The Partnership Resource Center

This web-based platform is to be launched in **summer 2014** and will be a continually expanding collection of resources for teachers, students, administrators and parents. Some of these resources will be available prior to that time to allow users to gain familiarity with the PARCC system. The resources to be provided include:

Model Content Frameworks
PARCC has developed Model Content Frameworks in ELA and mathematics that identify the "big ideas" in the CCSS for each grade level and the priorities and areas of emphasis within the PARCC assessments. These frameworks are voluntary and not intended to be curricula, but rather to serve as a resource for districts and states as they engage in curriculum development efforts. They also provide a foundation for the PARCC test specifications and blueprints.

Prototype and Released Test Items and Performance Tasks
Teachers may use these within professional development sessions to deepen their understanding of the Common Core and also within the flow of instruction to check student understanding. Prototype items and tasks are available now on the PARCC website, and additional items and tasks will be added in the **summer of 2013**. Within a few years, performance tasks used in the summative assessments will be added to the Partnership Resource Center, along with student performance data, scoring rubrics and sample responses for each item. States may also contribute existing state-owned items or tasks aligned to the Common Core. The item bank will include capabilities for sharing, improving, analyzing, comparing, ranking and accrediting items, as well as formative and interim assessments.

Online Professional Learning Modules
PARCC had initially planned to develop a set of 38 voluntary model instructional units, across grades and subjects. However, in March 2012 the PARCC Leadership Team decided to shift the focus of this work away from developing instructional units and instead produce online professional learning modules that use existing state materials. The purposes of these modules will be to show educators and other instructional leaders a process they can use to (a) evaluate and align existing materials to the Common Core and PARCC frameworks and (b) create their own materials aligned to the Common Core and PARCC frameworks. The shift is intended to help build state and local capacity.

Professional Development Modules
These modules are designed to help teachers, counselors, school leaders and school and district testing coordinators understand the assessment system, implement the assessments and interpret and use the results. The modules will be administered and available online, and will target the level of expertise needed for the individual's specific role in the system. The modules are anticipated being available in the **2013-2014 school year**.

An Item Development Portal and Tools
Teachers will be able to develop their own innovative, computer-scored assessment items and share them with others via the item bank.

Formative Performance Tasks for Grades K–2
PARCC is developing an array of assessment resources to help K-2 educators implement the Common Core standards at these lower grades. Teachers and schools will be able to use these "ready-to-use" formative tasks and resources to monitor students' performance and progress against foundational aspects of the Common Core. The tasks will consist of developmentally appropriate measures such as observations, checklists, running records and on-demand performance events and may include the use of technology innovations, such as touch screens. The tasks are to be available by **February, 2014**.

College Readiness Tools
A set of tools are being developed collaboratively by K-12 and higher education educators to help students who have gaps in their college- and career-ready academic preparation. The tools may include online

tools to help diagnose the gaps and model Grade 12 bridge courses to address them. The resources are expected to be available by **spring 2014**.

The Interactive Data Tool:
Tool: See "Reporting System" above.

Sharing State-Developed Tools
Formative and diagnostic tools being developed by member states and districts may be added to the Partnership Resource Center. In addition, the PARCC supplemental grant provides support for a short-term planning process for the 10 states in PARCC that won RTTT state grants to enable them to coordinate their investments toward a "coherent and complete set of tools" from which all states can benefit. These state grants also contain funding for the development of formative assessments and instructional tools for the development of formative assessments and instructional tools.

TECHNOLOGY

Technology is a critical component for all aspects of the PARCC assessment system, from test delivery, administration, scoring and reporting to delivery of professional development and model lesson plans. The Partnership will require that all of the technology created with the support of federal RTTT resources be open source and any pre-existing technology employed in the system be either open source or documented in a fully transparent way.

CAPACITY BUILDING

PARCC is supporting states and districts in the transition to the Common Core through three major activities:

- **State Leadership Teams**
- **Educator Leader Cadres**
- **Review Committees**
- **Technical Working Groups**

State Leadership Teams

PARCC has been working with its member states to develop and support the implementation of their transition plans. State teams, which include state leaders, district/local leaders and other critical stakeholders as determined by each state, meet twice annually to learn from one another and advance their planning and implementation work. PARCC provides summaries of each gathering and distributes them to all member states and the entire implementation workbook, designed for states and districts, can be found on the PARCC website.[3]

Educator Leadership Cadres

To support the activities being organized by states, PARCC began in the summer of 2012 to convene 24-member teams of K-16 educators from all PARCC states at annual regional meetings, to build expertise in the Common Core and PARCC and help them become leaders in their states and among their peers. Each state's cadre was chosen by a state-developed process and includes K-12 teachers, school and district leaders, local and state curriculum directors, and postsecondary representatives.[4] Cadre members meet in person and virtually to discuss the effective use of the PARCC Model Content Frameworks and PARCC prototype items, and to engage in deep analysis of the Common Core and aligned PARCC materials (such as test specifications and scoring rubrics), and identify ways in which PARCC resources can be disseminated to classroom teachers, administrators, parents and community members. In addition to the twice annual meetings, online modules, webinars and/or conference calls are utilized to provide support. Using a "train-the-trainers" model, states and districts will be able to deploy these educators as leaders in their capacity building efforts.

Review Committees

K-12 and postsecondary educators from member states and other state content and assessment experts are serving on committees to review all test items and tasks and reading passages. Training is being provided to ensure consistency and alignment with the Common Core as well as standards of quality.

Technical Working Groups

As states transition to the Common Core and PARCC assessments, they face a number of technical issues. PARCC is supporting three multistate technical working group gatherings per year that focus on priority issues related to transition and implementation. At the gatherings, PARCC states have access to the advice of leading experts in assessment, measurement and other areas as needed, and have the opportunity to problem solve collectively.

[3] http://parcconline.org/sites/parcc/files/Common_Core_Workbook.pdf

[4] To learn about opportunities to get involved, go to http://parcconline.org/K12-educators.

Support for Technology Transitions

Many states and districts in each Consortium are concerned that they will not have adequate technology infrastructure to implement the new online Consortia assessment systems in 2014–2015. The two Consortia have collaborated on the development of an online interactive tool to help states and local districts evaluate their current level of technology readiness, identify strategies to address gaps and monitor progress. Also, because the assessment system designs of both Consortia rely on the use of automated scoring engines to score complex items quickly and cost efficiently, the two Consortia will collaborate on the development of standardized A.I. scoring protocols. They also will explore a possible collaboration on the procurement of an A.I. engine.

To aid schools and districts in preparing to deliver the assessments and fully access the resources to support instruction and professional development, PARCC released a Capacity Planning Tool that allows administrators to enter information about their school enrollment and technology infrastructure and to model a range of possible configurations for administration of the assessments. For example, if the tool indicates that the school cannot complete testing within the required four week window with existing hardware and bandwidth, the administrators can test the impact of increasing bandwidth or adding more computer devices. In addition, PARCC has released "rule of thumb" guidelines for the number of devices needed based on the school configuration and enrollment. These are available at http://parcconline.org/technology.

Sustainability

PARCC is currently a state led collaboration funded almost entirely through a Race to the Top Assessment Program grant. The grant period will end in September of 2014. In order to ensure that the PARCC assessment system can be sustained after that time, the PARCC Governing Board has formed a new nonprofit organization which will, over time, oversee the on-going operations and improvements of its assessments and support resources. The nonprofit will be governed by a Board of Directors comprised of PARCC state chief school officers. The current PARCC Governing Board will retain all decision-making authority through the end of the grant.

PARCC TIMELINE

2013	Item Development Research Studies (Spring) Test specifications and evidence statements (Spring) Item review (Ongoing) Accommodations Manual for Students with Disabilities and English Learners (Summer) Performance-Level Descriptors for all subjects and grades/courses (Summer)
2013-2014	Release of 2nd set of prototype assessment and instructional tasks (Summer) Updated Minimum Technology Specifications for schools and districts (Version 3) (Fall) Assessment PD Modules available (2013-2014 school year) Release of final estimated cost of summative assessments (Fall) Optional performance tasks for K-2 available (February) Field testing for representative sample (Spring) Partnership Resource Center launches (Spring)
2014-2015	Test administration policies (Fall) College readiness tools available (September) Diagnostic assessments available (September) Mid-Year Performance Based Assessments and Speaking and Listening Assessments available (Fall) Full operational administration of PARCC assessments (Spring) Setting of achievement levels, including college-ready performance levels (post-administration)

Timeline should be considered a draft as of April 2013 and is subject to change.

Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium

The state-led Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium (Smarter Balanced) is approaching the two-thirds marker in its development timeline and currently reports that it is on track to deliver a fully functional assessment system by the 2014-2015 school year.

This comprehensive system is being designed to strategically "balance" summative, interim and formative assessment through an integrated system of standards, assessment, instruction and teacher development, while providing accurate year-to-year indicators of students' progress toward college- and career-readiness.

Two of the system's three components — the year-end summative assessment and the interim assessments available throughout the year — will contain multiple item types including scenario-based performance tasks. The third component — a web-based set of formative tools and resources — is an instructional resource that supports teachers with their day-to-day classroom-based assessment activities. All components will be fully aligned with the Common Core State Standards and will draw upon research-based learning progressions that further define how students acquire the knowledge and skills called for in the standards.

A foundational feature of both the year-end summative assessments and the interim assessment system is that computer-adaptive testing (CAT) will be used to minimize testing time, assure broader coverage of Common Core standards and provide greater score precision, particularly for students toward the high or low end of the performance spectrum.

Teachers will have access to an optional suite of online resources and tools to help them provide high-quality instruction using formative assessment processes in their day-to-day instruction. Through use of an interactive electronic platform, Smarter Balanced will provide both standardized and customized reports that can be targeted to a range of audiences for tracking, describing and analyzing progress.

A guiding principle for states in Smarter Balanced is "responsible flexibility." The Consortium will make it possible for states to customize system components, while also ensuring comparability of student scores across all participating states on the summative assessments.

Smarter Balanced at a Glance

- MEMBERSHIP: 26 states* and territories serving approximately 21 million K–12 students
- GOVERNING STATES**: California, Connecticut, Delaware, Hawaii, Idaho, Iowa, Kansas, Maine, Michigan, Missouri, Montana, Nevada, New Hampshire, North Carolina, Oregon, South Carolina, South Dakota, Vermont, Washington, West Virginia, Wisconsin
- ADVISORY STATES***: Alaska, North Dakota, Pennsylvania, Wyoming
- AFFILIATE MEMBERS***: U.S. Virgin islands
- PROCUREMENT STATE****: Washington
- PROJECT MANAGEMENT PARTNER: WestEd
- HIGHER ED PARTNERSHIPS: Nearly 200 two- and four-year colleges and universities have committed to help the Consortium design the new assessments, and work toward using the assessments as an indicator of readiness for credit-bearing entry-level courses in lieu of existing placement tests. These participating institutions typically receive about three-quarters of all students in Smarter Balanced states who begin college within two years of graduating from high school.
- AWARD: $176 million total (assessment and supplemental grants), Race to the Top Assessment Program grants awarded October, 2010

This information is accurate as of April 15, 2013.

The following summary of the Smarter Balanced assessment system has been approved for accuracy by the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium.

* Two states currently belong to both Consortia (ND, PA) and six states (AL, MN, NE, TX, UT, VA) belong to neither.

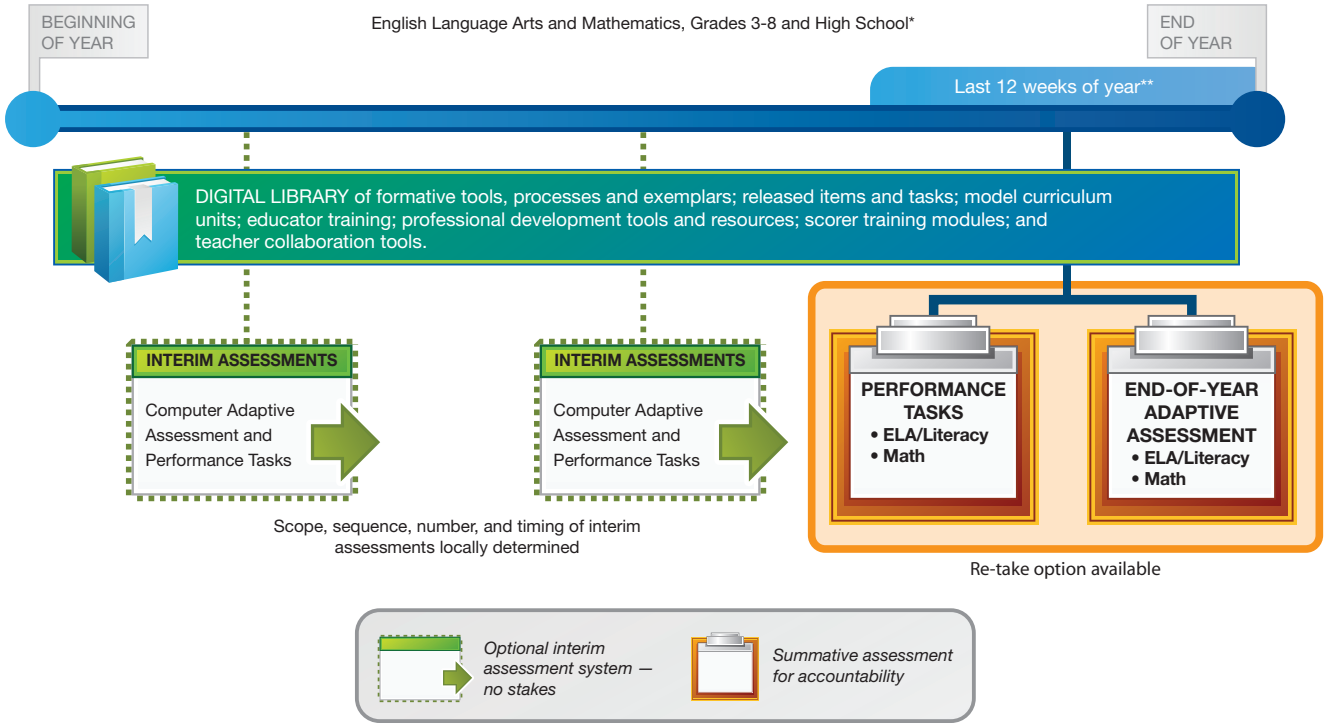
** GOVERNING STATES cast decision-making votes on test design and policy.

*** ADVISORY STATES and AFFILIATE MEMBERS consult on test design and policy, but have no decision-making authority.

For those who have been following the work of the Consortia, we have made it easy to locate the newest updates by placing a gray dotted line next to them in the text, as shown here.

For more information about Smarter Balanced, visit, **www.smarterbalanced.org**

Smarter Balanced Assessment System



*Summative and interim assessments for Grades 3-8 and 11; with additional supporting assessments for Grades 9, 10 and 12.
**Time windows may be adjusted based on results from the research agenda and final implementation decisions.

SYSTEM COMPONENTS

Summative Assessments that Support Policy Analysis and Accountability

Smarter Balanced states are developing summative assessments that support policy analysis and accountability systems for English Language Arts and Mathematics for Grades 3-8 and Grade 11, with additional supporting optional assessments for Grades 9, 10 and 12. While the assessments are designed to be delivered via computer, the Consortium will offer a paper-and-pencil option for up to three years to supplement technology infrastructure in schools that are not able to make a complete transition immediately to online assessments.

Taken during the final 12 weeks of the school year,[1] the summative assessments for each grade and subject will include one Performance Task in ELA, one Performance Task in mathematics and a Computer Adaptive component in ELA and mathematics, as described below. Each of these assessment components will provide information regarding students' achievement, growth and progress toward college- and career-readiness by the end of high school.

In the fall of 2012 the Smarter Balanced Governing States approved the test blueprints for these assessments. The Consortium now estimates that the total amount of testing time[2] required per grade level to complete both the mathematics and ELA summative assessments will be about seven hours in Grades 3-5, about seven and a half hours in Grades 6-8 and about eight and a half hours in Grade 11, spread over several days and testing sessions. These estimates are meant to be descriptive, as the assessment is untimed for students. The different amounts of testing time reflect the need to measure the Common Core State Standards with fidelity, and to produce results that yield sufficiently detailed information to guide improvement at the student level.

Performance Tasks Component

The Performance Tasks (PTs) will be delivered via computer and will generally require 90-120 minutes per content area to complete, with high school PTs taking longer. Students will complete one mathematics task and one ELA task per year. These extended tasks will be organized around real-world scenarios and will measure students' ability

[1] Time windows may be adjusted based on results from the research agenda and final implementation decisions.

[2] These times were estimated based on the number of items and item types each student will see on their test. Early analysis of the pilot test data indicates that the test may take less time than projected for many students.

to integrate knowledge and skills across multiple standards. For example, high school students may be asked to review a financial document, conduct a series of mathematical analyses using a spreadsheet or statistical software, develop a conclusion and provide evidence for it, or to read several sources of information concerning proposed legislation and create a brief for a legislator summarizing the pros and cons and recommending a position.

Computer Adaptive Assessment Component
The computer adaptive component will consist of approximately 40–65 questions per content area and will include selected-response, constructed-response and technology-enhanced items. The computer adaptive software will select items for students to maximize the precision of each student's score, while following the test blueprint instructions for content coverage and cognitive complexity. To a limited extent, items from out of grade level may be used to increase score precision, but most students will respond to items that assess on-grade standards. The computer adaptive component will not be limited to only using items and tasks that can be instantly scored. Some items and tasks will be hand scored, and these scores will be added into the student's final score before results are reported.

Smarter Balanced will allow a small percentage of students one opportunity to retake the summative assessments in cases where there is a irregularity in the administration of the test. Examples might include students whose testing experience was disrupted due to severe illness during or between testing sessions, those who experienced a home emergency during testing, and situations where extreme weather may have caused a school's testing to be disrupted. The retake would consist of a new set of items and tasks.

Item and Task Development

Smarter Balanced has worked with its member states, leading researchers, content experts and the authors of the Common Core to develop Content Specifications in ELA and mathematics. These documents provide the basis of the Smarter Balanced system of summative and interim assessments and formative assessment supports for teachers. The Content Specifications:

- delineate the claims that will be made about what students know and can do;
- describe the sufficient relevant evidence from which conclusions will be drawn about learning; and
- include assessment targets — descriptions of the prioritized content and depth of knowledge required for the summative assessments.[3]

From this foundation, Smarter Balanced developed item/task specifications, test blueprints and review guidelines, which can be found on its website. Review guidelines include General Accessibility Guidelines, ELL Guidelines, ELA Audio Guidelines, Math Audio Guidelines, Signing Guidelines, Tactile Guidelines, Bias and Sensitivity Guidelines and Style Guidelines. Also on the website are prototype items and performance tasks that provide an early look at the range and complexity of item types, the types of technology enhancements and the depth of understanding required on the summative assessments.

Hundreds of teachers in member states participated in the development and review of items and tasks for the spring 2013 pilot test. The pilot was conducted with a scientific sample of about a million students from more than 5,000 schools to test some of the innovative item types, to check on students' ease of use of the interactive items and accessibility features and to test the automated scoring engines. Student scores are not being reported from the pilot. There was a special emphasis on recruiting English language learners and students with disabilities who might use and potentially benefit from the new tools and supports Smarter Balanced will offer. The Consortium will now conduct research to ensure the resources are effective.

A field test comprising several million students will be conducted in the **spring of 2014** to further refine the item/task pool and to test the administration, scoring and reporting systems.

Assessment Delivery

Smarter Balanced assessments are being designed to be delivered on a variety of digital devices, including desktop and laptop computers and tablets that run on Windows, Android and Apple operating systems. As part of a research and development component, Smarter Balanced will explore the feasibility of using natural based interfaces (gesture controls, tablets, styluses) to capture drawings from students, particularly to support students' descriptions of their mathematical reasoning. This work will begin in 2013-2014 and, upon completion, will be implemented first in the interim assessment. After successful implementation of natural user interfaces in the interim assessment, Smarter Balanced will work with member states to establish any additional requirements for the summative assessment.

[3] The Smarter Balanced Content Specifications can be found a www.smarterbalanced.org/?s=content+specifications, along with videos of webinars in which Smarter Balanced leaders discussed them.

Supports for All Students, Including English Language Learners and Students with Disabilities

Smarter Balanced member states are building a test by systematically incorporating the principles of universal design. This work starts by organizing and describing the underlying content of the assessment in a manner that can support measures of student progress, regardless of the disabilities and language proficiency of students. In addition, the blueprints of each of the Smarter Balanced items are being evaluated by a cross-disciplinary team to ensure that each resulting item provides valid and reliable information about students' proficiency in the content of the Common Core.

Item writers are trained to measure the Common Core Content Standard using the Smarter Balanced approved resources. Cross-disciplinary panels comprised of individuals knowledgeable about mathematics, English Language Arts and the diverse needs of Smarter Balanced students review each item to ensure consistent quality, accessibility and fairness. To do this, test developers use rigorous research-based criteria, including the use of an innovative language-complexity tool that allows developers to ensure that each item's linguistic complexity is appropriate for the target, claim and grade level. In addition, Smarter Balanced state experts have participated in item review processes.

Each of the Smarter Balanced mathematics items will have item-level customized glossaries in English or a student's primary language. These digital customized glossaries will function like a specialized thesaurus to ensure that students understand what is being asked of them and to gain accurate measures of their mathematics skills and knowledge. Smarter Balanced will initially provide support in at least 5 languages, including Spanish and American Sign Language. The additional languages will be determined soon, based on a survey of 21 of the member states.

Smarter Balanced assessments will support a variety of accessibility tools, including text-to-speech, magnification, tab-enter navigation, masking, color contrast, color overlay, language supports and online refreshable braille. Smarter Balanced surveyed member states to generate a list of the current tools being offered, and the list was reviewed by the Consortium's ELL advisory committee and Students with Disabilities (SWD) advisory committee. A rating was developed for each potential tool's validity as well as effectiveness based on literature and expert knowledge. This rating system, along with data from the pilot and other Smarter Balanced research projects, helped the Consortium select tools to include in its assessment system.

To help educators become familiar with the embedded and nondigital tools available to students, Smarter Balanced is creating a professional development module in which educators will learn about each tool and how to select the tool(s) most appropriate for each student.

Scoring

Performance Tasks (PTs) will have some components that are scored by computer and others that require human scoring. A priority for Smarter Balanced states is the strategic involvement of teachers in the development of items and scoring guides and in the scoring of constructed-response items. About a third of the PT items and tasks will be human scored, including scoring by teachers, although teachers would not score their own students' responses. Additionally, 10 percent of the responses to computer-scored constructed-response items and tasks will be back-read[4] by teachers for validity purposes.

For the Computer Adaptive component, selected-response and technology-enhanced items will be computer-scored, and extended-response items/tasks that can be reliably scored using artificial intelligence engines will be electronically scored, with 10 percent back-read by humans to verify the accuracy of the engine. Some items that require responses that address more abstract concepts may be selected adaptively, but subsequently scored by educators. The scoring engines will be trained based on expert ratings of a diversity of student responses, including students for whom English is not their primary language, students with disabilities, students from urban and rural areas and students from diverse socio-economic conditions.

Final scores that merge PTs and Computer Adaptive results are expected to be delivered within two weeks after the completion of a building's testing. The Consortium plans to leverage advances in both electronic item types and electronic scoring to support its design and will invest in the development of an online system to allow efficient distributed human scoring and monitoring of the accuracy of each reader.

[4] A process in which a scoring leader randomly samples and reviews scored responses from each rater to ensure that scoring is consistent and accurate.

Measuring Growth

Smarter Balanced intends to build vertical scales across the Grade 3-11 span in English Language Arts and mathematics, which can then be used as the basis for growth measures evaluating an individual's progress toward college- and career- readiness across the years. Both the summative assessment results and the interim assessment results will be reportable on these vertical scales. Smarter Balanced will support a comprehensive validity research agenda to investigate, among other topics, the characteristics of different models for measuring growth, when used in conjunction with the data from the summative assessments, to inform subsequent decisions.

Accountability

Student scores from the Performance Task and the Computer Adaptive components will be combined for the annual summative score. The Smarter Balanced validity research agenda includes research to inform decisions concerning the aggregation and weighting of the results from these two components.

While the member states must commit to using common cut scores on the assessments for federal accountability purposes, they may set their own cut scores on the assessments for other state accountability purposes, such as high school graduation requirements.

Reporting System

A web-based Smarter Balanced platform is being developed to manage assessment data and provide sophisticated data reporting, analysis and visualization tools for customized reports. Students, teachers, parents and administrators will be given security settings to access appropriate data only. Each state will retain jurisdiction over all aspects of access to student records. Reporting tools will be customizable by states, allowing each state to "brand" the reporting in a manner consistent with other state-level reports.

In mathematics the reports will include individual student-level scores for an overall "Math Total" that is reported on the vertical growth scale and in terms of within-grade performance category, plus three "claim scores" for mathematics: concepts and procedures, problem-solving/modeling/data analysis, and communicating reasoning. For ELA, in addition to an overall "ELA Total," there will be four claim scores for each student: reading, writing, listening and research. Additionally, group-level reports (e.g., for classrooms, schools) will include total scores, claim scores and "content categories" that are at a more detailed level than the claims. For example, the ELA reading claim consists of two content categories: literary text and informational text.

Scores from the interim assessments throughout the school year will be available in the same reporting suite and provide more detailed information concerning progress toward each grade level's standards. This system also will include links to model curriculum and instruction resources and assessment professional development resources.

Projected Costs

A spring 2013 cost analysis based on the final design of the assessment system projects the cost to participating states to be $22.50 per pupil per year for the summative assessments, including both the ELA and mathematics and an additional $4.80 per pupil per year (for a total of $27.30) for those states that choose to subscribe to an optional interim and formative package of services. The $22.50 per pupil cost is broken into two parts. The first is a $6.20 per pupil cost that supports Smarter Balanced services provided in common to all states, such as: score certification, test validation, continued item development, maintenance of the test and delivery software. (For any state, the $6.20 per pupil cost is capped at one million students in Grades 3-8 and Grade 11.) The second part is an estimated $16.30 per pupil cost that will be needed to support implementation and administration services that provide, for example, computer servers for delivery of the assessments to students, scoring for constructed response items requiring human scoring and coordination of test administration materials. The estimated $16.30 cost is based on industry benchmarks as of spring 2013, and may be provided for by within-state services or through contracts with vendors.

States may also elect to subscribe to additional state-use secure assessments for Grades 9, 10 and 12. The pricing for the Grade 9, 10 and 12 secure assessments is the same as the pricing subscribed to for Grades 3-8 and 11: namely, $22.50 per student if subscribing to summative only and $27.30 if subscribing to summative plus interim/formative (a cap is also applied to this pricing model for states that have more than a million students in Grades 3-8 and 11). A pricing difference, however, is that for Grades 9, 10 and 12 the charges only apply to students actually tested. This feature has been added for states that may have, for example, additional assessment needs at the state level for

end-of-course testing, for assessments that monitor student progress from grade to grade throughout high school and/or for assessments required for graduation. Smarter Balanced will work with each subscribing member state to develop blueprints for these customized assessments.

OTHER ASSESSMENTS, RESOURCES AND TOOLS

Practice Tests

In the late spring of 2013 Smarter Balanced will make available online practice tests in ELA and mathematics at each grade for Grades 3-8 and Grade 11. The practice tests will follow the test blueprints for the operational assessments, and will include both Performance Tasks and items from the Computer Adaptive component. Although the practice tests will not be computer adaptive, they will have the "look and feel" of actual Smarter Balanced assessments. Availability of the practice tests will not be restricted — interested teachers, parents and policymakers will be welcome to explore the practice tests. Across the summer of 2013, the deployment of the practice tests will be updated with expanded accessibility tools for English language learners and students with disabilities. The practice tests will offer text-to-speech, translated item-level customized glossaries, braille and American Sign Language. Educators may use the practice test utility within professional development activities, in discussions with parents and policymakers and within the classroom to help students become familiar with the system interface, item types and performance tasks. The practice test will be accessible through the fall of 2014 when the Interim Assessment System becomes operational.

Optional Interim Assessments

These optional and customizable computer adaptive assessments will be available for Grades 3-8 and Grade 11 in ELA and mathematics beginning in the fall of 2014. The optional interim assessments are part of the Optional Interim and Formative package of services, described above.

The types of items and tasks in the Interim Assessments will mirror those on the summative comprehensive assessment and the item bank will be open to educators so that it can be used for instructional and professional development purposes.

Two modes of test administration will be available, both of which can be given multiple times per year at the discretion of the state, district or school.

One version mirrors the length and scope of the summative assessment and yields a score on the same scale as the summative assessment that can be used as a growth or achievement metric. A shorter "cluster assessment" mode also will be available that assesses, at a deeper level, a smaller set of standards based on member state and external expert input, that can be used in accordance with local scope and sequence, thereby providing more detailed, useful and actionable feedback.

The interim item bank will hold several thousand items per grade level in 2014-2015, and will expand over time. In time, educators will be able to search the item bank, to create customized assessments, and, after an assessment, to review the items seen by a given student and the student's responses. Reports of student results will link teachers to appropriate formative tools and strategies for their students and professional development resources.

Comprehensive Electronic Platform and Digital Library

The Smarter Balanced Assessment System will be built around a secure, credential-based, comprehensive electronic platform that features an expanding collection of resources for teachers, administrators, students and parents. This platform is to be launched by the **fall of 2014** and includes:

The System Portal
This portal will serve as the single point of entry for educators, students, parents and policymakers to all components of the system. In addition to the features described below, the portal will provide access to the assessment delivery platform, the distributed hand-scoring platform and issue-focused chat rooms.

The Educator Dashboard (Part of the optional Interim/Formative package)

A secure online portal will allow educators to download, view and analyze assessment reports, scoring rubrics and longitudinal data, and to generate custom reports (see Reporting System, above).

The Digital Library
This web-based library will allow educators to access: assessment literacy modules; exemplar instruction modules aligned to the Common Core; research-based instructional strategies and interventions; formative tools; sample performance tasks at each grade level; tools to evaluate the quality of publisher-provided assessments; and professional learning materials. This portal will include features for educators to collaborate across the Consortium to share information and resources and discuss curricula, instruction and assessment.

Formative Tools, Processes and Practices Digital Library (Part of the optional Interim/Formative package)

To be developed for Grades 3-8 and high school, this bank of resources will include:

- formative assessment tools and strategies, including the use of performance tasks to solicit formative information, and rubrics that can be used by teachers on-demand to support teaching and learning;
- research-based instructional tools and processes.

Item Development/Scoring Application
Online training modules will be available for both development of assessment items/tasks and for scoring of both items and tasks. For those educators who successfully complete the training, item authoring and scoring software will become accessible.

Reporting Suite
See Reporting System, above.

Feedback/Evaluation Tools
These tools will support regular surveying of system users (teachers, administrators, students, and parents) and vetting of submitted materials.

Alignment of Assessments to College and Career Readiness

Three additional activities are designed to support the overarching goal of Smarter Balanced states: to ensure that "all students leave high school prepared for postsecondary success in college or a career."[5] First, as described above, Smarter Balanced will offer its member states the option to design secure state-use assessments for Grades 9, 10 and 12, making it possible for states to build high school end-of-course assessments aligned to the Common Core in ELA and mathematics.[6] Second, the Smarter Balanced states and PARCC states are working in close collaboration to establish comparable achievement standards for the two assessment systems, making it possible for users of the test scores (students, parents, K-12 educators, policy makers and those in higher education) to compare the performance of student scores not only within Smarter Balanced, but also across the two Consortia. Finally, validity studies will be conducted to establish the connection between indicators of college and career readiness from the Consortium's assessment system and evidence of success in college or a career.

TECHNOLOGY

Smarter Balanced has already accelerated the development of technological solutions that support improved teaching and learning. The Spring 2013 Pilot Test, which will have assessed close to one million students by the end of May 2013, has been delivered without significant disruption, using the beta version of the Smarter Balanced test delivery software. Smarter Balanced is on schedule for a **September 2014** release to the assessment community of a fully operational, comprehensive and open-source computer-adaptive test delivery system. This delivery system will be available for states and vendors to use to deliver the Smarter Balanced item pool. Additionally, by virtue of being open source, the assessment software will be freely available for other assessment applications to use.

[5] Smarter Balanced Race to the Top Assessment Program Application, June 24, 2010, pg. 31.

[6] End-of-course assessments are currently being used by several Smarter Balanced states. State-created end-of-course assessments will be appropriate only for state-defined purposes, not federal accountability purposes.

In February 2012 Smarter Balanced released the information technology (IT) systems architecture report, which defines how each of the technology components will work together so that the entire assessment system meets the needs of its various members and user groups. This report guides the development of the item authoring, item banking, test design, test administration, scoring and reporting systems, as well as the digital library of formative tools and resources for teachers. In addition, the IT systems architecture requires interoperability, or the ability to exchange data and information across member states, through established standards, promotes strong data security, and ensures economies of scale to reduce operational costs for states.

CAPACITY BUILDING

Smarter Balanced will provide both direct support to member states and their districts and engage teachers, school leaders and other educators in the development of the assessments and formative support resources. The primary forms of support and engagement are:

Multistate Collaborative Supporting Implementation of Common Core Systems

The Council of Chief State School Officers established a multistate collaborative, implementing the Common Core System (ICCS), to support states' efforts to transition to the Common Core standards. Members of this collaborative meet three times per year to share and discuss policies and practices that connect the subsystems of the K-12 educational delivery system (curriculum, instruction, professional development, accommodations, assessment, etc.). Smarter Balanced has supported the membership fees in ICCS for each Governing State.

Pilot Test Item Development

Several hundred educators from member states were given training in item development and participated in the development and review of items and tasks for the **Spring 2013** Pilot Test.

Curriculum Materials

To provide exemplars of instructional units that meet the quality criteria established by Smarter Balanced states, the Consortium has contracted for the development of approximately 52 Exemplar Instructional Modules, to be developed across grades and in both English Language Arts and mathematics. Each module will address one or two learning progressions and will include lesson plans, curriculum resources, links to appropriate informational texts, formative tasks and tools, scoring rubrics and samples of student work at multiple performance levels. The initial set of 12 modules is anticipated to be available, after review and approval by teams including teachers from member states, in **late 2013**, and the remainder by **summer 2014**.

Smarter Balanced context experts are collaborating with professional organizations, universities and nonprofits to develop curriculum materials and identify existing efforts and materials that align to the Smarter Balanced learning progressions. The developers of selected existing materials will be contracted to "adapt or extend" their materials as needed for alignment with Smarter Balanced learning progressions. These materials will provide examples of new approaches and effective lessons to teach the Common Core and will provide a foundation for professional development.

Formative Processes and Tools/ Professional Development

The Exemplar Instructional Modules described above will include the full Smarter Balanced cycle of formative assessment practices: identifying learning targets, using tools/strategies to gather evidence of student understanding, analyzing the evidence, providing feedback, making adjustments to instruction and helping students reassess.

Each of the modules also will be accompanied by facilitator templates and tools that can be used by trainers to show teachers how to (a.) use these materials and (b.) identify and select other quality formative assessments tasks and tools for placement in the Digital Library. These training modules will support both web-based and face-to-face delivery.

In the **summer/fall of 2013**, Smarter Balanced will convene teacher cadres averaging 90 teachers from each member state and train them in the use of the Exemplar Instructional Modules, formative tasks and training resources. These training sessions will be facilitated by the Smarter Balanced content-area experts in collaboration with state and regional chapters of content-area professional organizations.

State Roll-Out Plans and Communications Tools

Smarter Balanced content experts are assisting states in the development of state-specific plans and communications tools for training of their teachers in the use of the Digital Library resources. Teacher

cadre members (described above) can be tapped by states and districts to lead such activities.

Support for Technology Transitions

Many states and districts in each consortium are concerned that they will not have adequate technology infrastructure to implement the new online Consortia assessment systems in 2014–2015. Smarter Balanced issued a contract, that has been cost-shared with PARCC, for the development of an online interactive tool to help states and local districts evaluate their current level of technology readiness, identify strategies to address gaps and monitor progress. In addition to hardware, because the assessments are delivered over the Internet, bandwidth capacity has been a concern voiced by schools and districts. Smarter Balanced has made available a Bandwidth Checker that can be used by schools to see if they have sufficient bandwidth to test a given number of students simultaneously. Finally, because the assessment system design relies heavily on the use of AI scoring engines to score complex items quickly and cost efficiently, Smarter Balanced has required its item development contractor to include subcontracts with multiple software development companies with expertise in AI scoring. Those companies successfully capable of replicating human-scored results will be required either to release their code to open source or to make available sufficient descriptions to allow others to replicate the results.

Sustainability

The federal grant that is providing the majority of funding for the Consortium will expire in the fall of 2014. States in Smarter Balanced intend that the Consortium continue as a state-led enterprise that will leverage their collective expertise to meet shared needs through a Sustainability Plan. Beginning in the fall of 2011, the Smarter Balanced Governing States established a Sustainability Task Force, comprising several state chiefs, deputies and state finance officers. That Task Force was able to draw upon external business consultants to explore the feasibility of various business models for a sustainable state-led Smarter Balanced organization. After review of different options, the Task Force determined that the most advantageous model for long-term sustainability would be one that employed a partnership with a governmental entity, such as a public university or other state-authorized entity. Letters of interest were sought from several such organizations and in March of 2013 the Smarter Balanced Governing States voted to establish an affiliation with the National Center for Research on Evaluation, Standards and Student Testing (CRESST) at the University of California, Los Angeles. This affiliation will allow Smarter Balanced states to procure services, access faculty expertise and research support, and secure administrative services needed to sustain and continuously improve the comprehensive assessment system. At press time, negotiations between Smarter Balanced and UCLA/CRESST are ongoing, with a target date to initiate transition activities in the **summer of 2013**.

Smarter Balanced TIMELINE

SUMMATIVE ASSESSMENT	
Spring/ Summer 2013	Continued development, procurement and review of materials to populate the Digital Library Practice Test utility released (May) Professional training modules developed Educator Cadres from each member state convene for training in use of formative and professional development training modules (Summer) Sustainability Plan formally instituted (Summer)
2013–14	Initial set of Exemplar Instructional Modules, including formative assessment tasks and tools and training templates, released (Fall) Field testing includes test of the items, tasks, and systems for administration, scoring and reporting (March – June 2014)
2014–15	Interim assessments available (Fall) Additional Exemplar Instructional Modules released Calibration and Scaling of Item Pool (Summer) Items and tasks are parsed between summative and interim item pools (Summer) Initial Standard Setting (Summer)
2014–15	Launch of comprehensive Electronic Platform, including Digital Library with formative resources (Fall) Summative assessments available (Spring) Final achievement standards for summative assessments verified and adopted (Summer)

Timeline should be considered a draft as of April 2013 and is subject to change.

Key Similarities and Differences of PARCC and Smarter Balanced

Table 1

Key Similarities

Summative Assessments:

- Online assessments for grades 3 – 8 and high school, ELA and mathematics
- Use of a mix of item types including selected response, constructed response, technology-enhanced and complex performance tasks
- Two components, both given during final weeks of the school year
- Use of both electronic and human scoring
- Delivery supported on computers, laptops and tablets and a limited variety of operating systems

Other Assessments, Resources, and Tools:

- Practice tests
- Optional interim assessments
- Professional development modules
- Formative items/tasks for classroom use
- Online reporting suite
- Digital library for sharing vetted resources and tools

Key Differences

PARCC	Smarter Balanced
Summative Assessments	

• Fixed-form delivery (students take one of several fixed, equated sets of items and tasks)
• PBA includes 3 ELA tasks and 1 or more mathematics tasks
• One retake opportunity for grades 3 – 8 and up to three for high school, with state approval
• Estimated total testing time for combined ELA and mathematics, spread over nine testing sessions:
  • Grade 3: eight hours
  • Grades 4-5: nine hours and twenty minutes
  • Grades 6-8: nine hours and twenty-five minutes
  • Grade 9-10: nine hours and forty-five minutes
  • Grade 11; nine hours and fifty-five minutes
• Paper-and-pencil version available as accommodation and, for the 2014-2015 school year, for schools approved by their state
	• Adaptive delivery (students see an individually tailored set of items and tasks)
	• PBA includes 1 ELA task and 1 mathematics task
	• One retake opportunity, but only for instances of a test administration irregularity
	• Estimated total testing time for combined ELA and mathematics, spread over several testing sessions, over several days:
	  • Grades 3-5: seven hours
	  • Grades 6-8: seven and one half hours
	  • Grade 11: eight and one half hours
	• The assessments are untimed so these are descriptive only
	• Paper-and-pencil version available as accommodation and for three years for schools not ready for online delivery

Other Assessments, Resources and Tools	
• One Diagnostic and one Mid-year assessment (optional), with the latter made up primarily of tasks similar to the summative performance-based tasks. Available for grades 3 – 8 and high school • A required, nonsummative speaking and listening assessment for grades 3-8 and high school, locally scored • K-2 formative performance tasks (optional)	• Interim assessments for grades 3 – 12 (optional) will be computer adaptive and include multiple item types, including performance tasks. The number, timing and scope (all standards or clusters of standards) can be locally determined • Exemplar Instructional Modules
Sustainability Model	
• Independent nonprofit organization governed by Chief School Officers of PARCC states	• Affiliation to be established with CRESST at UCLA

SYSTEM DESIGNS, WORK TO DATE AND FUTURE PLANS

The Alternate Assessment Consortia

The No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 placed strong emphasis on the inclusion of all students in statewide assessments based on the premise that doing so is essential to ensuring each student has equal opportunity to achieve the state's academic standards. But general assessments are not accessible to or valid for all students. For those students with the most significant cognitive disabilities, who are unable to participate in general state assessments even with appropriate accommodations, states were required to develop alternate assessments linked to the state's grade level content standards in mathematics and reading.

Alternate assessments are those developed for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities.

By the 2005-2006 school year, all states had alternate assessments in place, but the quality varied and the costs per pupil were high, particularly in small states.[1] There are approximately a half-million students (or 1 percent of the public school population) who will be eligible to be served under the alternate assessment provision. In 2010, the U.S. Department of Education offered competitive grants to spur the development of a new generation of alternate assessments to be jointly developed and used by groups of states.

Grants were awarded to two Consortia — the **Dynamic Learning Maps Alternate Assessment Consortium** (DLM) and the **National Center and State Collaborative** (NCSC). Summaries and illustrations of the designs of these two Alternate Assessment Consortia[2] can be found on the following pages and at www.k12center.org/publications.html.

These new alternate assessments will be aligned to the Common Core State Standards and are expected to fit cohesively within the comprehensive assessment systems under development by the federal grant recipients: the Partnership for Assessment Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) and the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium (Smarter Balanced). Both DLM and NCSC are to be ready for use by the 2014-2015 school year, the same year in which the comprehensive assessment systems will be operational.

[1] State and Local Implementation of the No Child Left Behind Act. Volume IX – Accountability Under NCLB: Final Report. U.S. Department of Education, 2010.

[2] These summaries and illustrations of the two alternate assessment consortia have been approved by Consortia leadership.

For further information about the work of these consortia, visit:

Dynamic Learning Maps:
www.dynamiclearningmaps.org

National Center and State Collaborative:
www.ncscpartners.org

Dynamic Learning Maps (DLM)

The purpose of the DLM assessment system is to significantly improve the academic outcomes of students with the most significant cognitive disabilities, thereby improving their preparedness for postsecondary options and the world of work. The comprehensive assessment system will be designed to more validly measure what students with significant cognitive disabilities know and are able to do than previous assessments. It will provide useful, timely diagnostic information and strong instructional support to teachers through a highly customizable system of instructionally embedded and end-of-year assessments. In addition, professional development resources will be developed by DLM to provide Individualized Education Program (IEP)[1] teams with clear, consistent guidelines for the identification of students for alternate assessment and to train teachers in the use of the assessment system.

DLM At a Glance

- MEMBERSHIP: Iowa, Kansas, Michigan, Mississippi, Missouri, New Jersey, North Carolina, Oklahoma, Utah, Vermont, Virginia, Washington, West Virginia, and Wisconsin (14 states serving approximately 80,000 students who require an alternate assessment)
- GOVERNANCE: Two representatives from each member state (one assessment and one special education representative), Neal Kingston of CETE, and four external members: Brian Gong of the National Center for the Improvement of Educational Assessment; Jim Pellegrino of the University of Illinois at Chicago; Ed Roeber of Michigan State University; and Jim Ysseldyke of the University of Minnesota
- PROJECT MANAGEMENT: The Center for Educational Testing and Evaluation (CETE) at the University of Kansas serves as the host, fiscal agent and project management lead, in partnership with Member states and three partner organizations: the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill on professional development and support materials; Edvantia, Inc. on alternate standards definitions and project evaluation; and The Arc on the reporting system and dissemination
- AWARD: $22 million from the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs
- WEBSITE: **www.dynamiclearningmaps.org**

This information is accurate as of April 10, 2013.

The following summary of the DLM assessment system has been approved by the DLM.

For those who have been following the work of the Consortia, we have made it easy to locate the newest updates by placing a gray dotted line next to them in the text, as shown here.

SYSTEM COMPONENTS

Summative Assessments for Accountability

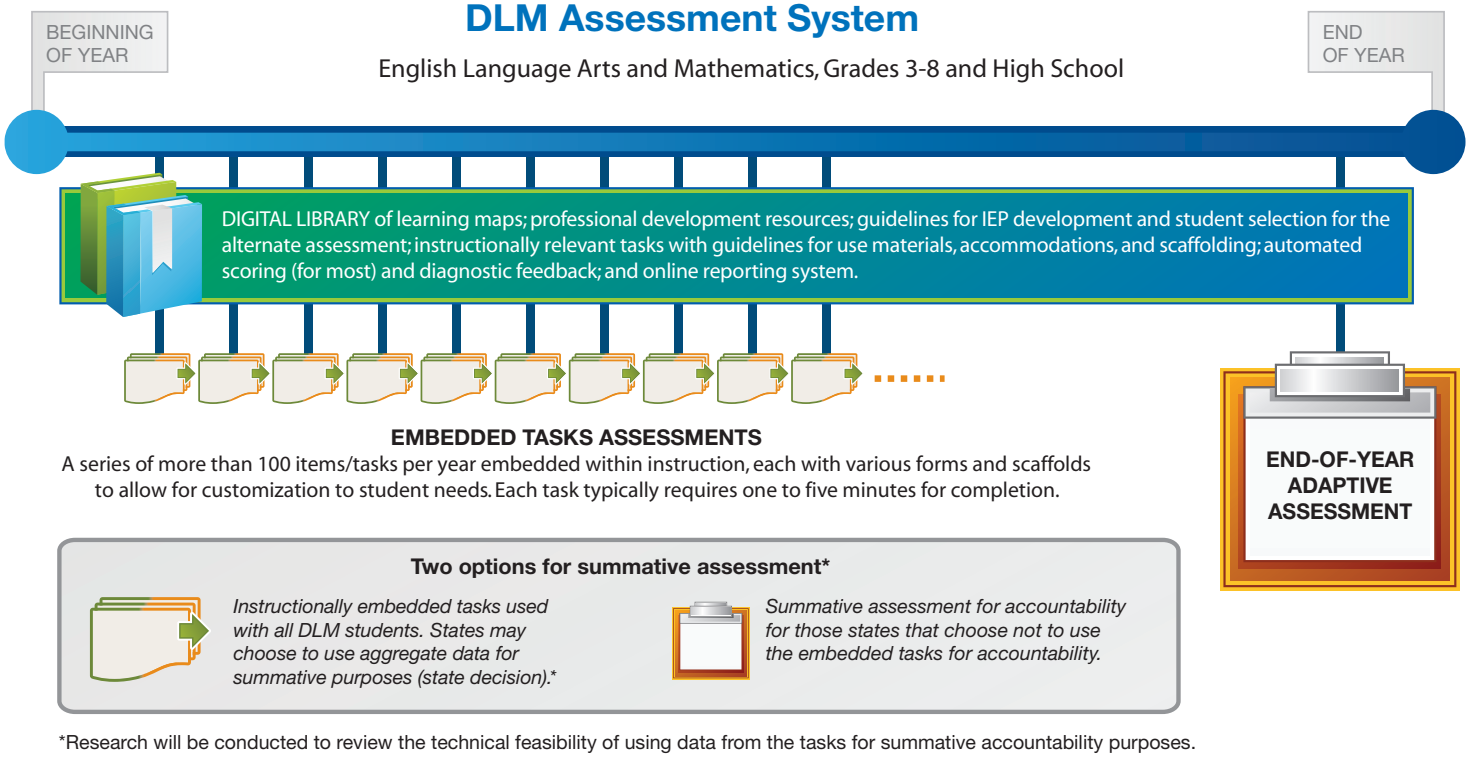
A unique proposed aspect of the DLM system, which will be implemented only if upcoming research supports it, is that states will be given two options for the administration of the summative assessments.

- The first option utilizes the DLM items and tasks that are to be given to all alternate assessment students as part of their day-to-day instructional activities so that teachers can use the results to tailor instruction to meet student needs. Under this option, students will participate in two instructionally relevant[2] "testlets" in English Language Arts and in mathematics each week over the course of the school year and the results will be used to make summative decisions.[3]
- The second option is a stand-alone summative assessment that branches/adapts based on mastery of concepts in the learning map, and will be given in the spring of the year.

Both options are based on the DLM learning maps, described below, and provide many options for customizing the assessment to the individual abilities and needs of students. In addition, both will be designed to provide teachers, students and parents detailed information to guide and support learning.

[1] Individualized Education Program, mandated by the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), is a written plan for a student with disabilities that describes how the student learns, how the student best demonstrates that learning and the program(s) and special services that the student requires to do so more effectively.

[2] Instructionally relevant testlets are set of 3-5 tasks that model good instruction and teachers would be interested in using for purely instructional purposes.



*Research will be conducted to review the technical feasibility of using data from the tasks for summative accountability purposes.

Common Core Essential Elements (CCEE) and Learning Maps

DLM began its development work by defining links to the grade level Common Core State Standards in English Language Arts and Mathematics through statements of essential elements and achievement descriptors for students who take the alternate assessment.[4] Simultaneously, learning maps have been developed based on reviews of research and the input of more than 300 teachers. DLM describes a learning map as being similar to a road map that shows both the main route to a destination as well as several alternate routes. In the DLM maps, the "destination" for all students will be based on the CCEE.

A fundamental feature of learning maps, then, is that they do not assume that all students take the same learning pathway, but seek to allow and provide support for multiple pathways.

See a video that explains what a learning map is at http://dynamiclearningmaps.org/video/whatisalearningmapvideo.html.

Another important aspect of the learning maps is that they not only include the definitions of the subject-specific skills that students are to acquire — such as being able to add a series of three-digit numbers or define a vocabulary word — but also provide useful delineation of the following skills:

- Hypothesized precursor academic skills — those skills needed to master the tested skill;
- Communication skills — skills required to communicate answers through speech, pointing or other means; and
- Attention skills — the ability to focus on the task or item.

As the skills in the learning maps were defined, universal design principles were used to ensure that the description of each skill does not disadvantage some groups.[5] Each skill was written with structured scaffolding so it can be accessed through multiple cognitive pathways where applicable and measured appropriately.

[3] Research will be conducted to determine the technical feasibility of using assessment data collected through the year as the basis for summative decisions and use in state accountability systems.

[4] The linked standards and achievement level descriptors can be found at www.dynamiclearningmaps.org.

[5] Go to www.cast.org for more information about Universal Design for Learning

Throughout the school year, as a student completes instructionally-embedded tasks and the responses are entered into the DLM system, the student's learning is mapped and the teacher is given diagnostic feedback and instructional guidance.

Dynamic Adaptive Delivery

The DLM system utilizes dynamic delivery, which is a variant of adaptive delivery. Under traditional, item-by-item adaptive delivery, items are selected based on their difficulty. A correct response results in the selection of a more difficult item to follow, and an incorrect response leads to a less difficult item. In contrast, dynamic delivery relies on several pieces of information, including the student's level of success with the previous item/ task and the position in the learning map of the skills tapped by the task (and thus the amount of support or prompting required) to select the next item. In addition, it provides immediate corrective feedback to the student, when needed. Dynamic delivery, therefore, integrates assessment and instruction. Dynamic delivery will be used for both the instructionally-embedded items and the end-of-year assessment. All students using the DLM assessments will utilize these tasks throughout the school year and, pending the results of a research activity, states may opt to use the results from these embedded tasks for summative and accountability purposes in lieu of the stand-alone summative assessment.

Types of Items and Tasks

A variety of item types will be utilized, all of which will adhere to universal design and evidence-centered design principles to ensure the assessments are accessible to the broadest range of students and produce valid results.

Items are being designed to be instructionally relevant. For each grade and subject to be assessed, the Consortium convened a panel of master teachers, who reviewed the extended content standards and developed activities that teachers could use to teach the skills. Task developers are using these activities to guide the development of items and tasks. For each item or task in the assessment system, lists of materials or manipulatives needed, allowed accommodations and prohibited accommodations, and levels of scaffolding will be provided. Multiple tasks are being developed for each assessed skill to allow for differentiation based on student needs and disabilities. Most tasks are expected to require between one and five minutes for students to complete. In total, more than 11,000 items and tasks will be developed.

Presentation of Items and Tasks

The presentation of items will vary based on the abilities and needs of each student and the skill being assessed. Students who can complete the assessments on a computer, with or without the use of assistive technologies, will be allowed to do so. The system is being designed to be accessible to students who are deaf, hard of hearing, blind or have low vision, and those with neuromuscular, orthopedic or other motor disabilities. Students will be able to enter responses through keyboards, switch systems, a computer mouse or touch-screen technology (when available). The system will also be compatible with a variety of common assistive technologies and allow for varying levels of teacher assistance. For students unable to use computers on their own, teachers will administer items offline and enter responses into the system.

Scoring

The majority of items and tasks, representing varying types, will be scored by the computer. In some cases, the teacher may observe the student performing a task and then enter a score based on a rubric that defines levels of accuracy and quality of student performance. In both cases, the system will be able to identify missing precursor skills that interfere with student learning and to propose the next task in the learning map.

Measuring Growth

In order to provide consistency between the comprehensive assessment systems being developed by PARCC and Smarter Balanced and the DLM assessments, the growth modeling methods used by those Consortia will be studied to determine compatible adaptations appropriate for both the embedded and end-of-year summative assessments. Measures of growth unique to a learning-map-based system will also be studied.

Accountability

Subject to research and technical approval of both delivery options for use as the summative assessment (see footnote 2), states will be able to choose between using an end-of-year stand-alone assessment for accountability purposes or using the data from the embedded items and tasks given across the school year.

Reporting

The reporting system will produce online and printable student and group level results. A combination of

existing best practices in reporting and an iterative series of focus groups will be used to ensure clear, useful reports for each major audience (teachers, students, parents). These reports and accompanying interpretive guides will be designed to communicate each student's current performance position, as well as growth within the learning maps. Each audience will be provided information that can be readily used to make better decisions that support the academic needs and progress of the student. In addition, the online versions for teachers will include links to professional development that will help teachers interpret the score reports to adjust instruction.

RESOURCES, TOOLS AND CAPACITY BUILDING

Professional Development Resources

The Center for Literacy and Disability Studies (CLDS) of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill is leading professional development activities for the DLM. Representatives of member states helped to identify the range of topics, modes of delivery and types of support most important for their states.

Professional development modules are being developed and will be made available through the Consortium's digital library in multiple formats to allow each member state to choose how best to implement professional development. Educators can view online materials, download written materials, register for professional development classes that states or districts might offer and access online professional development from the State Member section of the DLM website.

In order to support teachers' efforts to meet the wide range of needs in this student population, DLM is utilizing a research-based framework called Universal Design for Learning (UDL) in the development of all professional development resources. This approach includes and exceeds the factors considered under Universal Design and leads to flexible instructional materials, techniques and strategies that help teachers differentiate instruction to meet students' varied needs. The UDL methodology does this by incorporating options for:

- the presentation of information and content;
- the types of responses students can give to express what they know; and
- the engagement of students[1].

[1] Go to www.cast.org for more information about Universal Design for Learning

Each professional development module will be available in three formats: self-directed learning modules that run between 30 and 45 minutes, trainer packets for facilitated sessions and a collection of the trainer materials that can be adapted for local use. Each module includes a narrated slide show, interactive activities, a pretest and post-test, and video segments featuring students with significant cognitive disabilities. Modules are currently available for the following topics, with additional topics under development:

- Common Core Overview
- Common Core Essential Elements
- Principles of Effective Instruction in ELA
- Standards of Mathematical Practice
- Universal Design for Learning

TECHNOLOGY

DLM will utilize the Kansas Interactive Testing Engine (KITE), a platform developed by CETE, to deliver its testing programs, including all DLM assessments. Piloted in three states in 2012, the system supports dynamic adaptive delivery on computers and tablets. KITE includes components for task development, local management of administration options, professional development resource delivery, test/task administration including support for various assistive technologies, a reporting suite, and learning map software.

DLM TIMELINE

2013-2014	EProfessional development modules ready for use Test delivery software used in small-scale pilot testing (September-October) and field testing (November-June)
2014-2015 school year	The DLM Instructionally embedded tasks available for use (August) The DLM stand-alone summative test available (April 2015)
August/September 2015	Professional development program validated Technical manual published Assessment system evaluated

Timeline should be considered a draft as of April 2013 and is subject to change.

For more information about DLM, visit **www.dynamiclearningmaps.org**

National Center and State Collaborative (NCSC)

The goal of the National Center and State Collaborative (NCSC) is to ensure that students with the most significant cognitive disabilities achieve increasingly higher academic outcomes and leave high school ready for post-secondary options. A central feature of the NCSC design is the commitment to building a system of curriculum, instruction and assessment around an articulated model of student learning in the academic domains. This coherent framework supports implementation of the Common Core State Standards in the classroom and informs the assessment design.

The consortium is developing a comprehensive system that addresses the curriculum, instruction, and assessment needs of students with the most significant cognitive disabilities by:

- Producing technically defensible summative assessments;
- Incorporating evidence-based instruction and curriculum models; and
- Developing comprehensive approaches to professional development delivered through state-level Communities of Practice.

These resources will support educators and Individualized Education Program (IEP)[1] teams as they design and implement appropriate instruction that addresses content and skill expectations aligned to the Common Core standards, as well as help prepare students with the most significant cognitive disabilities for postsecondary life. When complete, the assessment system and accompanying resources will be made available to all states, regardless of their participation in the original grant.

SYSTEM COMPONENTS

Summative Assessments for Accountability

NCSC is designing a summative assessment that coordinates with the general assessment used by each member state and produces scores that can be used for accountability purposes. NCSC is developing a technology-based management system to facilitate assessment administration, documentation and reporting.

Curricular Sequencing and Grade-Level Content Targets

NCSC began its development work in 2011 by convening partners from member states and project research staff to create a vision of college- and career-readiness (CCR) for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities. This CCR definition then informed the use of research-based learning progression frameworks (LPFs) that describe a curricular sequence for how typical students develop and demonstrate more sophisticated understanding in each content area over time. From these LPFs for mathematics and English Language Arts, NCSC is developing grade-level assessment content targets and alternate achievement standards linked to the Common Core for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities. The system of assessments, curricular materials and professional development materials will address these grade-level learning targets in the context of the broader curriculum for all students.

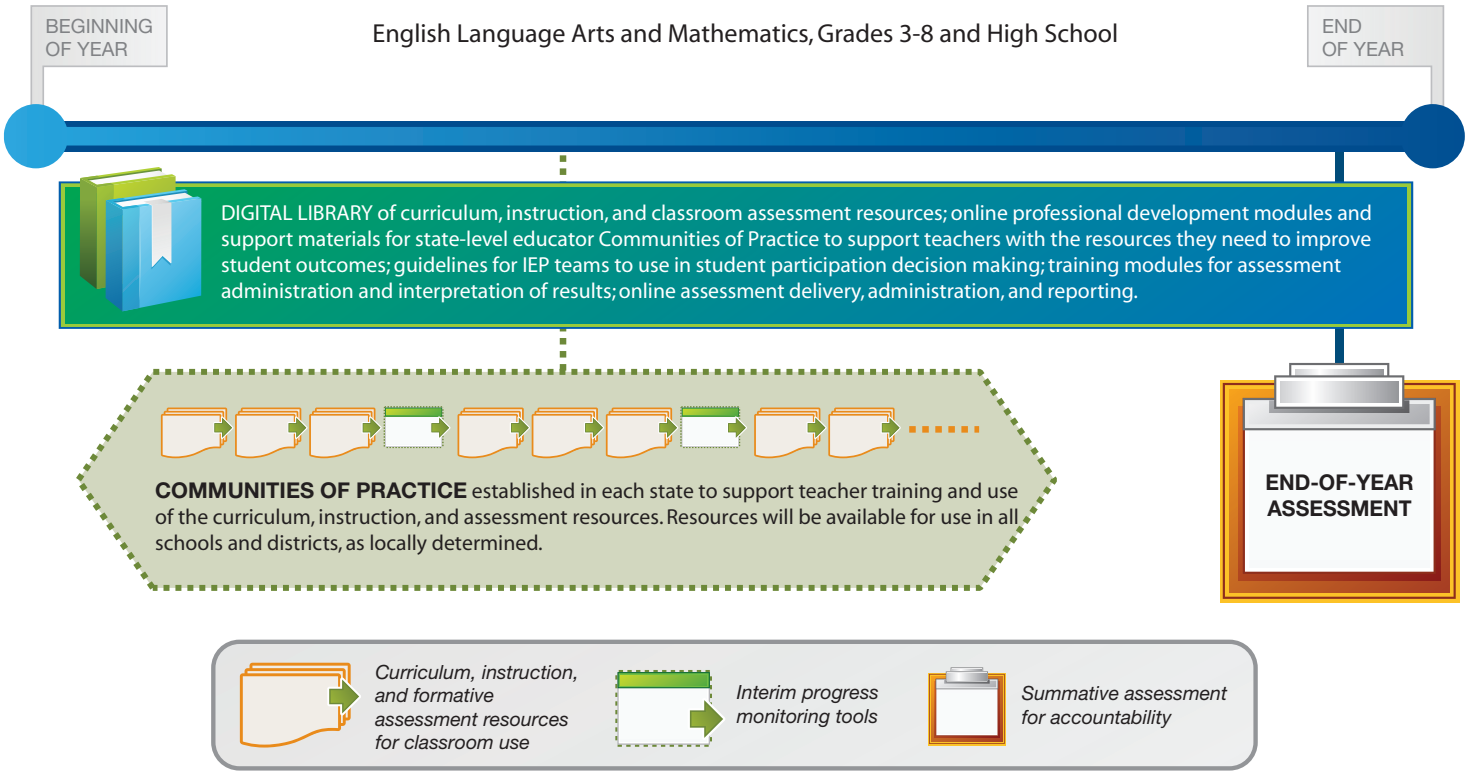
Assessment Delivery

Teachers will be trained in the use of an online assessment delivery system to administer an annual assessment for each student in Grades 3-8 and Grade 11 in ELA and mathematics. While the content being assessed will be standardized and accessibility parameters will be defined for each student's assessment participation, teachers will be trained on guidelines and parameters regarding the administration of individual items to ensure that each student can interact with the content. This will allow NCSC to balance the need for test standardization with the need to provide full access for each student. NCSC will create online accommodations and administration manuals and teachers will certify their training prior to test administration.

[1] Individualized Education Program, mandated by the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), is a written plan for a student with disabilities that describes how the student learns, how the student best demonstrates that learning, and the services, supports and special instruction that the student requires to do so more effectively.

For those who have been following the work of the Consortia, we have made it easy to locate the newest updates by placing a gray dotted line next to them in the text, as shown here.

NCSC Assessment System



NCSC At a Glance

- MEMBERSHIP: 18 core state partners: Alaska, Arizona, Connecticut, District of Columbia, Florida, Georgia, Indiana, Louisiana, Nevada, New York, North Dakota, Pacific Assessment Consortium*, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, South Carolina, South Dakota, Tennessee, Wyoming (serving approximately 90,000 students who participate in an alternate assessment based on alternate achievement standards); and 10 Tier II affiliated states: Arkansas, California, Delaware, Idaho, Maine, Maryland, Montana, New Mexico, Oregon, and the US Virgin Islands,
- GOVERNANCE: A Project Management Team oversees development of the system and consists of designated state representatives, along with Committee of the Whole participation by all state partners; Project Principal Investigators from the National Center on Educational Outcomes (NCEO); and lead staff from the four partner organizations: University of Kentucky (UKY), the National Center for the Improvement of Educational Assessment (NCIEA), the University of North Carolina at Charlotte (UNCC), and edCount, LLC
- PROJECT MANAGEMENT: The National Center on Educational Outcomes at the University of Minnesota is the host fiscal agent and leads the management team. Four additional organizations provide specialized leadership: UKY (professional development, communicative competence, teacher evaluation); NCIEA (technical issues/ assessment design, technology); UNCC (curriculum and instruction); and edCount, LLC, (research and validity evaluation; assessment contracts management and implementation).
- AWARD: $45 million from the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs

* The Pacific Assessment Consortium (PAC-6) consists of 6 entities: American Samoa, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Guam, Palau, Republic of Marshall Islands.

This information is accurate as of April 16, 2013.

This summary of the NCSC assessment system has been approved by the NCSC Consortium.

For more information about NCSC, visit **www.ncscpartners.org**

Types of Items and Tasks

A variety of item types will be developed, including multiple choice, short constructed response and performance tasks. For each standard to be measured, an evidence-centered design (ECD) approach is used to determine the appropriate item type(s). Multiple items are then being developed for each standard at four increasing levels of complexity, along with accommodations, to allow for measurement across the performance continuum. The process for ensuring that each student interacts with items at appropriate levels of challenge is still being studied, but may involve the use of classroom data, locator tests and/or multi-stage adaptive testing.

Presentation of Items and Tasks

Because the population of students with significant cognitive disabilities has varying communication modes and a wide range of skill levels, teachers have generally adapted assessment tasks to meet each student's needs at the time of testing. This flexibility is a strength in terms of accessibility, but poses a challenge for score interpretation because some adaptations may inadvertently change the knowledge and skills being measured. Through the use of small-scale tryouts, observation protocols and other methodologies, NCSC is researching test formats that balance the need for flexibility with the need for standardization. This process involves teachers who work with students eligible to take an alternate assessment based on alternate achievement standards, assessment design experts and content experts.

Students who are able to interact with the computer will enter their own responses directly into the online system. For other students, teachers will enter data into the online system based on their interactions with the students as part of the assessment administration process.

Scoring

Many items will be automatically scored by the system. NCSC will investigate the accuracy, efficiency and costs associated with scoring processes that may be used for complex or performance-based responses.

Measuring Growth

The NCSC assessments will be designed to support valid inferences about student achievement on the assessed domains. NCSC will identify methods to evaluate student growth based on studies involving students with the most significant cognitive disabilities.

Accountability

The system will be designed to produce aggregate scores that can be used to meet all of the uses and requirements of Race to the Top and pending ESEA reauthorization.

Reporting

The reporting system will allow scores and interpretive information to be disseminated electronically and will include both teacher and parent guides to help them interpret reports and determine next steps. Accompanying curriculum and professional development resources will help educators use the data to improve student learning. In addition, NCSC is creating a comprehensive online system of resources to support educators in delivering high quality, academic instruction for all students with the most significant cognitive disabilities.

RESOURCES, TOOLS AND CAPACITY BUILDING

Formative and Interim Assessment Tools

In addition to developing the system of summative assessments, NCSC is integrating formative and interim tools as part of comprehensive curriculum and instruction resources for use by teachers throughout the school year to monitor student progress. NCSC will offer a wide range of professional development resources through individual state Communities of Practice; these resources will be available to the public online by the end of the project.

Curriculum and Instruction Tools

To help teachers translate the Common Core standards into effective instruction, NCSC is developing curriculum resource guides for the concepts in math and ELA that are considered to be "big ideas" within the academic content. These guides will provide information on instruction within the general education setting (e.g., how the area can be taught to typically developing students); teaching and applying skills in meaningful contexts; linking skills to other content areas; differentiation of instruction through Universal Design for Learning; considerations for providing instruction of more basic skills to some students as embedded within instruction of grade level content; and tools for tiered interventions.

State Transition Planning

Central to the NCSC design are state-level Communities of Practice. Using a train-the-trainers model and multiple delivery modes, NCSC partners work within and across states to build training networks that meet state needs. To roll out the NCSC-developed curriculum and assessment materials, each state is implementing tailored implementation plans that fit their broader state transition to the Common Core.

Professional Development Resources and Activities

Implementation of the Common Core
NCSC is developing online professional development modules to help special educators gain an understanding of the prioritized academic content within the learning progressions. Content modules for ELA and mathematics will be available in an online, multimedia Wiki format that will provide explanations and examples of the concepts that may be more difficult to teach or unfamiliar to special education teachers. Potential adaptations will also be provided.

Curriculum Resource Guides, instructional units and scripted lessons will be provided through the project Wiki to illustrate how to make specific content accessible to students with cognitive disabilities. These materials will not constitute an entire curriculum but will provide guidance and examplars for local use, along with training for educators to build more resources based on the model.

Assessment Administration and Use of Assessment Accommodations
NCSC is developing online training modules to ensure readily accessible and consistent training in the proper administration of the assessments and use of accommodations. Teachers will be required to complete an accompanying certifying exam before administering the assessments.

Assessment Results Interpretation
NCSC is working closely with state teams in the development of training modules designed to help teachers use both formative and summative assessment results to improve instruction and instructional programs.

Communication Triage
Most students who participate in alternate assessments based on alternate achievement standards currently use some form of symbolic communication, such as spoken words, printed text, sign language or pictures. For students who do not use any form of symbolic language, research suggests that most can still communicate through the use of augmentative communication strategies. NCSC partners with states to build capacity in each state for teachers to effectively use augmentative communication strategies with these students. The goal is to ensure that each student is given the opportunity to develop communicative competence to allow for access to instruction and assessments.

Teacher and Principal Evaluation Guidelines, Tools and Strategies
NCSC will develop research-based guidelines, tools and strategies for evaluating teacher and principal effectiveness that rely on multiple measures. Professional development modules will be created to support appropriate use of these resources.

TECHNOLOGY

NSCS will use technology to deliver, score and report on the assessments, to deliver curriculum and instruction tools, and to deliver online and on demand professional development. The assessment delivery system will support numerous assistive technologies and communication modalities.

NCSC TIMELINE

2013-2014	Pilot testing (Spring)
2014-2015	Develop final test blueprint, items, and reporting system Finalize test design and item banks Census field testing/operational administration (Spring) Standard-setting (Spring/Summer) Complete validation studies and technical report
Summer 2015	The NCSC Alternate Assessment System is operational Technical documentation in place

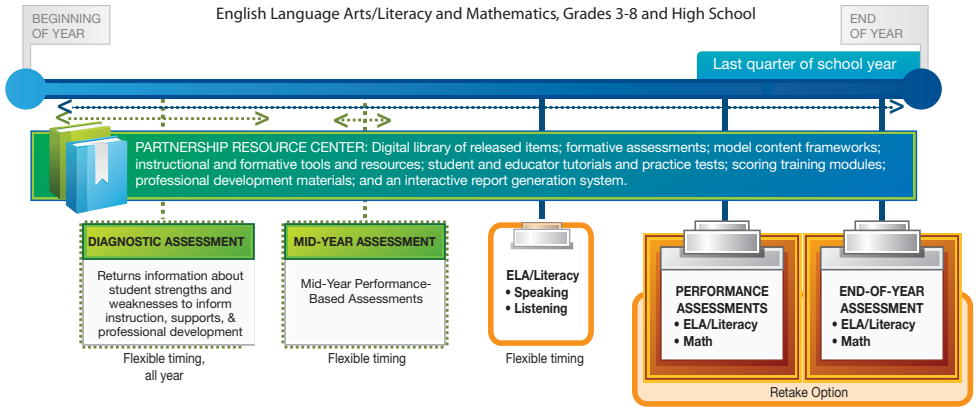
Timeline should be considered a draft as of April 2013 and is subject to change.

For more information about NCSC, visit **www.ncscpartners.org**

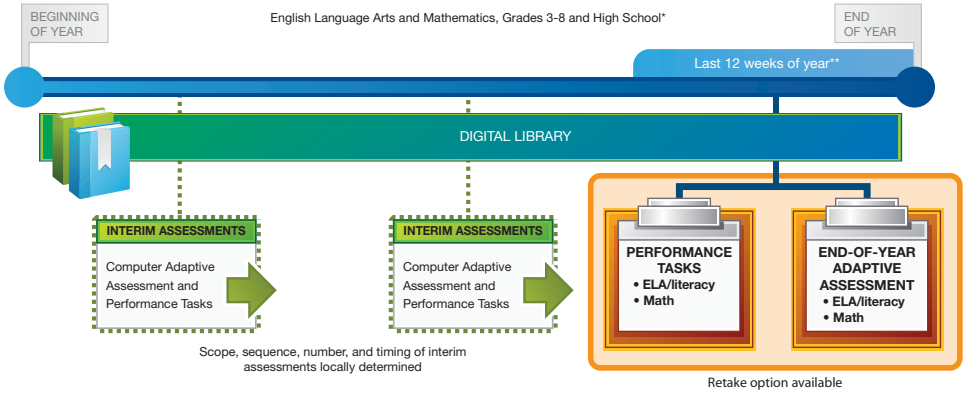
Side-by-side Comparison of Assessment Systems

Table 2

PARCC Assessment System

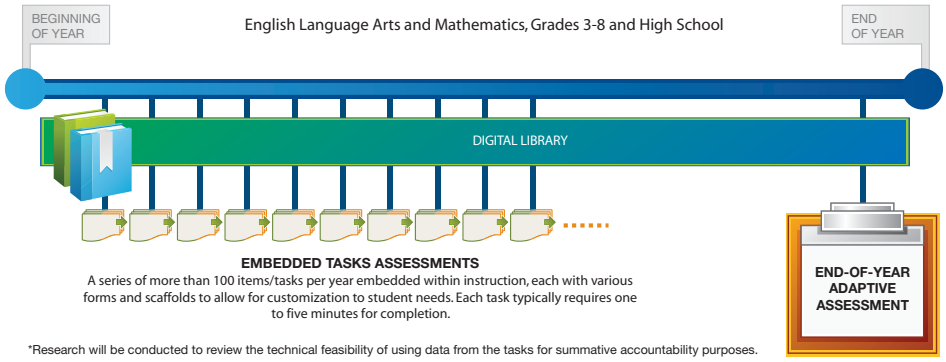


Smarter Balanced Assessment System



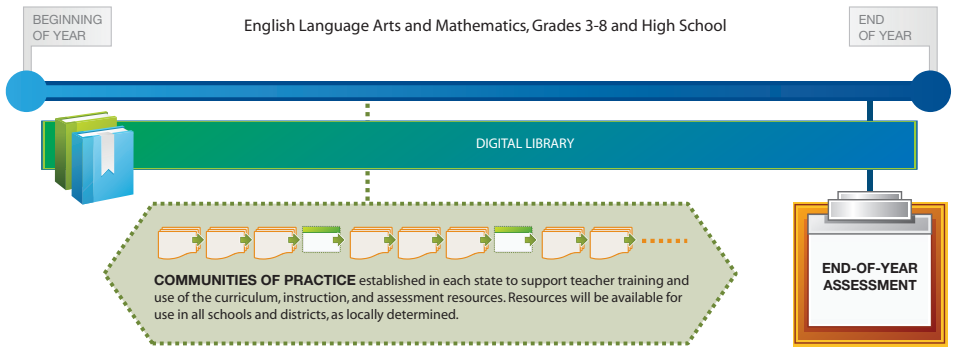
*Summative and interim assessments for grades 3-8 and 11; with additional supporting assessments for grades 9,10 and 12.
**Time windows may be adjusted based on results from the research agenda and final implementation decisions.

DLM Assessment System



*Research will be conducted to review the technical feasibility of using data from the tasks for summative accountability purposes.

NCSC Assessment System



SYSTEM DESIGN, WORK TO DATE AND FUTURE PLANS

English Language Proficiency Assessment Consortia

Approximately one in five U.S. public school students, or nearly 9.9 million, speak a language other than English at home.[1] This English language learner subgroup is now the fastest-growing segment of the U.S. K-12 student population.

The No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 augmented the longstanding federal requirements for instructional supports for English language learners (ELLs) by also requiring annual testing of English proficiency. Currently, all states assess ELL students in Grades K-12 each year until they are determined to be proficient in English. ELL students — also known as limited-English proficient (LEP) students and English as a second language (ESL) students — must also participate in the state academic assessments in English language Arts and mathematics, with accommodations as appropriate.

In order to support the development of next-generation assessments of English proficiency, the U.S. Department of Education's 2011 competitive Enhanced Assessment Grant supported the development of new assessments by consortia of 15 or more states. In addition to producing results that are valid, reliable and fair for the intended purpose, the new assessment systems had to meet additional criteria, including that they:

- Be based on a common definition of English learner adopted by all Consortium states;
- Include diagnostic (e.g. screener or placement) and summative assessments;
- Assess English language proficiency across the four language domains of reading, writing, speaking and listening for each grade level from kindergarten through Grade 12;
- Produce results that indicate whether individual students have attained a level and complexity of English proficiency that is necessary to participate fully in academic instruction in English;
- Be accessible to all English learners with the one exception of those who are eligible for alternate assessments based on alternate academic standards; and
- Use technology to the maximum extent appropriate to develop, administer and score assessments.

The first award was given in 2011 to the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, in collaboration with the World-Class Instructional Design and Assessment (WIDA) Consortium. The assessment system under development, called **Assessment Services Supporting ELs through Technology Systems (ASSETS)** is to be ready for use by the 2015-16 school year.

A second consortium of states was awarded funding in 2012. The **English Language Proficiency Assessment for the 21 Century (ELPA21) Consortium** is a partnership of 11 states, Stanford University and the Council of Chief State School Officers. The system is to be fully operational in the 2016-17 school year.

For further information about the work of these consortia, visit

ASSETS: **http://assets.wceruw.org/**

ELPA21: **www.elpa21.org**

[1] Profile America: Facts for Features, U.S. Census Bureau, July 27, 2011. Based on 2009 student data.

Assessment Services Supporting ELs through Technology Systems (ASSETS)

Through the ASSETS grant, the World-Class Instructional Design and Assessment Consortium (WIDA) and project partners are developing a next-generation, technology-based English language proficiency assessment system for English language learners in Grades 1-12[1]. The system will include a summative language proficiency assessment, an on-demand screener, classroom interim assessments and foundations for formative assessment resources, as well as accompanying professional development materials. All of these components will be grounded in the WIDA English Language Development Standards, which correspond to the Common Core State Standards in English Language Arts, Mathematics and the Next Generation Science Standards. This project is building on the work of WIDA, a consortium of many of the same member states, which was originally formed in 2002 under another Enhanced Assessment Grant. The assessments and tools developed from this initiative will be available to all member states.

SYSTEM COMPONENTS

Summative Assessment for Accountability

The annual summative assessment will be available in 2015-2016 and is currently being called ACCESS for ELLs 2.0. It will build upon the existing paper-based ACCESS for ELLs® and transition to computer-based testing. The full summative assessment will be administered in Grades K-12 for accountability and program improvement purposes. The system's English language proficiency assessments will cover the language domains of listening, speaking, reading and writing and will address the language of the academic content areas as well as social and instructional language. The annual assessments will be based on the 2012 WIDA Amplified English Language Development (ELD) Standards[2] and will represent the full range of language proficiency levels, allowing educators, students and families to monitor students' progress in acquiring English over time. ACCESS for ELLs 2.0 will incorporate technology and will have the capability of assessing authentic language development more reliably than paper-based tests through features such as the recording of spoken English. It will use the Accessible Portable Item Protocol (APIP) Standard to provide appropriate accessibility features and accommodations to all students, including those with disabilities.

Dynamic Language Learning Progressions

The Consortium is working with researchers at UCLA to identify language learning progressions that represent the development of key academic language functions from kindergarten through Grade 12. These progressions are described as dynamic because:

- They are designed to capture multiple pathways to the development of English language proficiency, and
- The progressions are designed to account for multiple facets that influence the pathways of development, including contexts of language use and students' backgrounds.

The language learning progressions will inform the Consortium's assessments and will play a key role in the development of formative resources and professional development materials.

Types of Items and Tasks

The principles of evidence-centered design and universal design are being adhered to in the support of technical quality and accessibility during item development. The assessments will include both selected response and extended constructed response items. The exact number of each item type will vary based on the grade level and the language proficiency levels targeted in the test form. To ensure that computer delivery does not interfere with students' ability to demonstrate their language skills, studies are being conducted on how students interact with the interface and item types. Sample items are being reviewed by teachers, experts and other stakeholders.

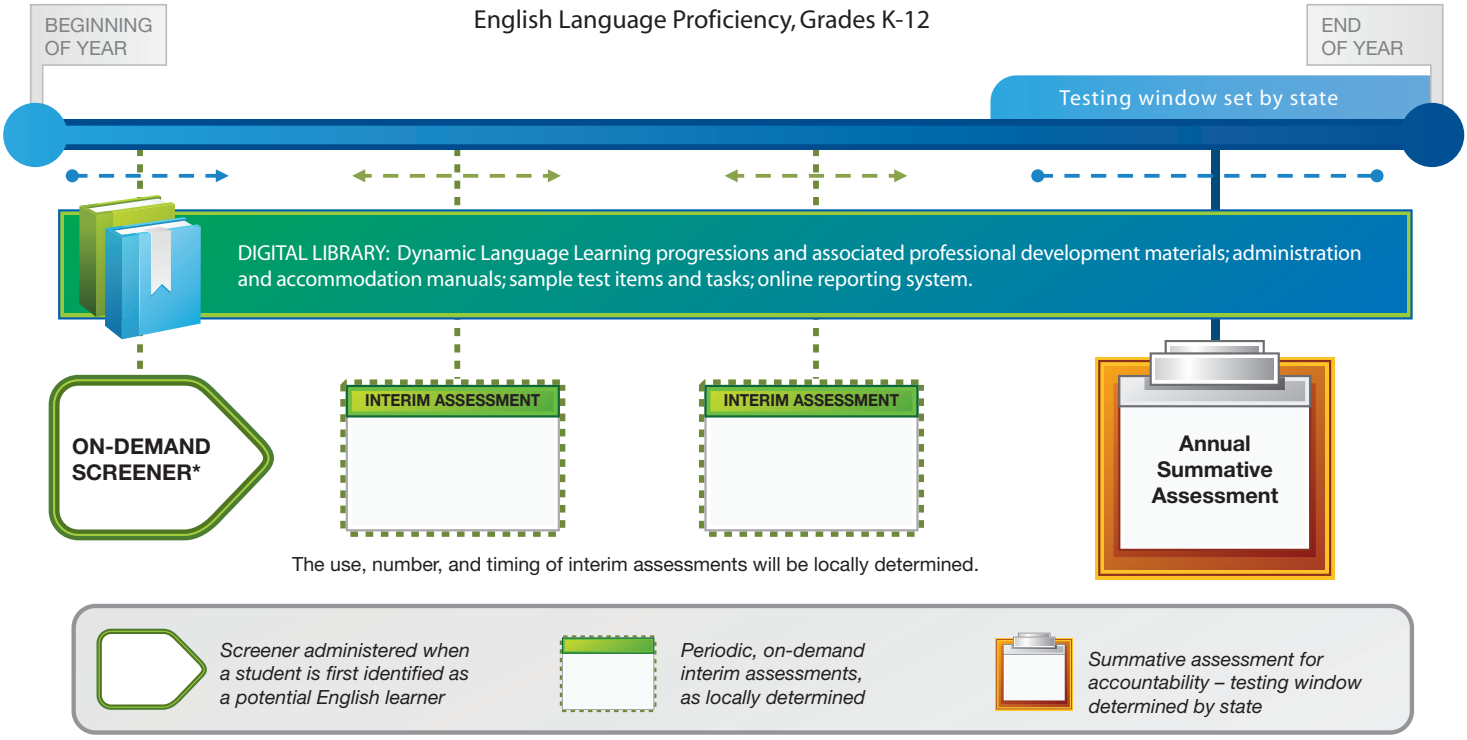
Before the summative assessment is administered, students and administrators will have an opportunity to become familiar with the item types through a tutorial with practice items. Over time, the Consortium will seek to add innovative item types to the summative assessments.

[1] WIDA currently provides a paper-based kindergarten test that will be updated but is not funded under the grant.

[2] The 2012 ELD Standards can be found at www.wida.us/standards/elp.aspx. This new edition of the standards includes grade-level examples to connect the standards to the Common Core, topically and linguistically.

For those who have been following the work of the Consortia, we have made it easy to locate the newest updates by placing a gray dotted line next to them in the text, as shown here.

ASSETS Assessment System



ASSETS at a Glance

- MEMBERSHIP: 31 states* (Alabama, Delaware, the District of Columbia, Idaho, Illinois, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, Mississippi, Missouri, Montana, Nevada, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New Mexico, North Carolina, North Dakota, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, South Carolina, South Dakota, Tennessee, Utah, Vermont, Virginia, Wisconsin, Wyoming, U.S. Virgin Islands
- GOVERNANCE: The Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction is the lead state in collaboration with World-Class Instructional Design and Assessment (WIDA) at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. Policies affecting member states are listed in states' Memorandum of Understanding and decided upon at annual Board meetings. A steering committee comprised of representatives of a subset of member states provides additional guidance to ensure the products and services meet state needs. At the end of the four-year grant period, the WIDA Consortium will sustain the assessment system with ongoing input from states that select to be part of the WIDA Consortium.
- PROJECT MANAGEMENT PARTNER: WIDA at the Wisconsin Center for Education Research serves as the project management partner and, along with the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, liaison to member states. Other organizations that have major responsibilities include: the Center for Applied Linguistics for item and test development as well as psychometric research; WestEd for interoperability and accommodations expertise; the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA) for language learning progressions development and validation research; Data Recognition Corporation for field testing; and MetriTech for scoring of specific language domains.
- AWARD: $10.5 million four-year, Enhanced Assessment Grant from the U.S. Department of Education, September 2011

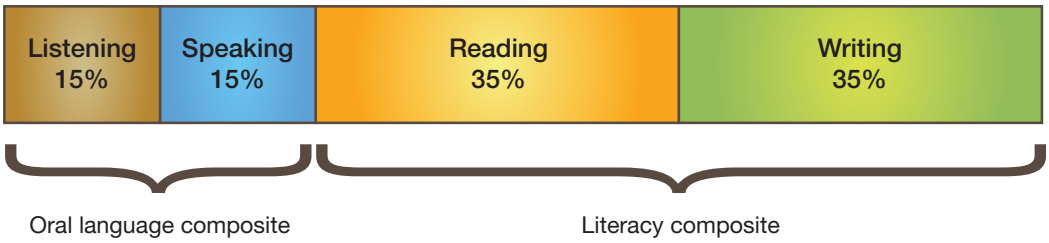
This information is accurate as of April 15, 2013.

This summary of the ASSETS assessment system has been approved by the ASSETS managing partners.

* In this context, "states" refers to any U.S. state or jurisdiction authorized to participate in ASSETS.

For more information about ASSETS, visit **http://dpi.wi.gov/oea/assets.html**

Proposed Weighting of the Overall Composite Score on ACCESS for ELLs 2.0



Assessment Delivery

Each member state will determine its own testing window in accordance with its local needs. Students will use computers with headsets in order to assess listening and speaking.

The amount of time required for a student to complete all four portions of the summative assessment (listening, speaking, reading and writing) is anticipated to be approximately two hours for Grades 1-12. The time required for kindergarten students is still being determined.

Although the annual summative assessment will be delivered on computers, a static version of the current paper-based test will be available for students requiring this format as an accommodation in circumstances to be determined by the member states.

Scoring

The annual summative assessment will be centrally scored. The selected response items used in the reading and listening sections will be scored by computer. Student responses for the writing and speaking tasks will be digitally recorded and subsequently scored by trained raters, using an online scoring system that includes built-in safeguards for scoring consistency. It is anticipated that final scores will be returned to states within two to four weeks.

A total of eight scores will be reported for English learners: sub-scores for the language domains of listening, speaking, reading and writing; an oral language composite score; a literacy composite score; a comprehension score for listening and reading; and an overall composite score. The English language proficiency (ELP) scores will be calculated based on the weighted sub-scores shown below. The scores will be reported both as scale scores and interpreted as one of the six English language proficiency levels according to each student's current grade level.

Measuring Growth

The assessment will yield scores on a vertical K–12 scale that educators, students and parents can use to chart student language development over time. The interim assessments, described below, will allow for charting student progress on an ongoing basis.

Accountability

The assessment system will be designed to produce composite ELP scores that can be used to help inform decisions about whether an individual student should be reclassified, as well as to contribute to decisions about district and state performance for accountability purposes.

Reporting

The member states, particularly through the Consortium's reporting subcommittee, will provide guidance for the development of a score report that meets the needs of multiple stakeholders.

RESOURCES, TOOLS AND CAPACITY BUILDING

Additional Assessment Tools

On-Demand Screener

This is the first component of the assessment system that English language learners will encounter when they enter a school in a member state. The screener will be technology-based and used to determine eligibility and appropriate placement for English learner program services. The listening and reading portions will be computer-scored, while the writing and speaking portions will be scored on-site by educators. Scores will be readily available and, for those qualifying as English language learners, reported as comprehensive ELP scores based on the WIDA Performance Definitions and English Language Proficiency Levels. A computer-based training

program will be developed to prepare educators to score the screener consistently.

Technology-Based Classroom Interim Assessments
A series of shorter, targeted interim assessments will be developed to help guide instruction and to enable schools to chart student progress in finer increments than the annual summative assessment. Computer delivery will enable immediate scoring and feedback to teachers and students. Partial-credit scoring and analysis of patterns across responses will be used to enhance the diagnostic value of the feedback.

The interim assessments also may be used to conduct research on innovative item types to be considered for future use in the summative assessment. Complex, technology-enhanced item types will be piloted within the system and, as appropriate, transitioned into the summative assessment.

Resources to Support Formative Assessment
The language learning progressions will provide a foundation for the development of formative resources to help educators monitor student performance during instruction. They will be a data-based articulation of students' academic language development that can build teacher knowledge of where a student is placed along the language trajectory, why they are so placed and what further incremental and precursor skills may form the next step to advance language learning.

Professional Development Resources and Activities
WIDA and ASSETS partners are working together to develop a comprehensive set of professional development tools and resources to help educators understand and administer the new assessments and interpret the results.

Materials and resources also will be developed to help teachers utilize the ELD standards and the language learning progressions to set individual learning targets for students, as well as to mine data from the assessments to inform and improve their educational practice.

By the summer of 2015, the training materials will be available in electronic format and online to support both group and individual self-paced use. In addition, the Consortium will partner with State Education Agencies to deliver state-based, face-to-face trainings.

Administration manuals, interpretation guides, and sample practice items will also be password protected and available online.

ASSETS TIMELINE

2013–2014	Analyze results of pilot test Release sample assessment items for public review Continue research and analysis for the Dynamic Language Learning Progressions Decide on accommodations plans Continue to create outreach and professional development materials Field testing for Speaking, Reading, and Writing domains (Spring)
2014–2015	Field testing for Listening domain (Spring) Finalize design of system Finalize score reports, administrator training materials, and reporting system Training materials available (Summer)
2015–2016	ASSETS assessment system is operational
2016–2017	Evaluation of the assessment system (Fall)

Timeline should be considered a draft as of April 2013 and is subject to change.

TECHNOLOGY

Technology will be incorporated into the development, administration, scoring and reporting of the assessments within a comprehensive and interactive system. Strategies are being developed to ensure the system can be utilized in educational environments with a range of technology capabilities, as well as to minimize the need for extensive local upgrades. All items will be developed to an open-license interoperability standard to support:

- consistent delivery of the assessments across multiple delivery platforms;
- consistent application of accessibility features; and
- coordination with the systems being developed by the Comprehensive Assessment Consortia, the Partnership for the Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers, and the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium.

The English Language Proficiency Assessment for the 21st Century Consortium (ELPA21)

ELPA21 is an enhanced assessment system designed to measure the English language proficiency (ELP) of English language learners (ELLs) as they progress through their K-12 education and achieve college- and career-readiness. Designed for states by states and other assessment and content experts of English language development, ELPA21 will provide assessments for ELLs — along with strategies for test design, administration, scoring and reporting — that provide students, parents, teachers, administrators and communities the current and relevant information they need to best support every student as they work toward achieving ELP in support of the college- and career-ready Common Core State Standards in English Language Arts and Mathematics.

ELPA21 at a Glance

- MEMBERSHIP: There are currently 11 member states (Arkansas, Florida, Kansas, Iowa, Louisiana, Nebraska, Ohio, Oregon, South Carolina, Washington, and West Virginia) in partnership with the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) and Stanford University's Understanding Language Initiative. The Oregon Department of Education is the lead state agency.
- GOVERNANCE: A Consortium Council (CC) will consist of the chief state school officer or designee from each member state. The CC will determine the general scope of the assessment system, review recommendations of Task Management Teams or TMTs (see below), and elect five members to serve on an Executive Board (EB). The Project Director from the Oregon Department of Education will also serve on the EB, which will act as the final voice on issues and decisions emanating from the CC.
- PROJECT MANAGEMENT PARTNER: CCSSO will provide project management. Nine TMTs — led by contracted experts and comprised of state education agency representatives from each Consortium state — will oversee development of all work components. The National Center for Research on Evaluation, Standards, and Student Testing (CRESST) at UCLA will serve as the third-party evaluator, facilitate the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC), and provide guidance to the CC and the EB.
- AWARD: $6.3 million four-year Enhanced Assessment Grant from the U.S. Department of Education, September 2012

This information is accurate as of April 11, 2013.

The following summary of the ELPA21 assessment system has been approved by the Oregon Department of Education and CCSSO managing partners.

The purpose of ELPA21 is to enhance the quality of assessments used by states for measuring students' ELP development and progress. The Consortium plans to develop a system of valid and reliable ELP assessment instruments that align in deep and meaningful ways with the Common Core.

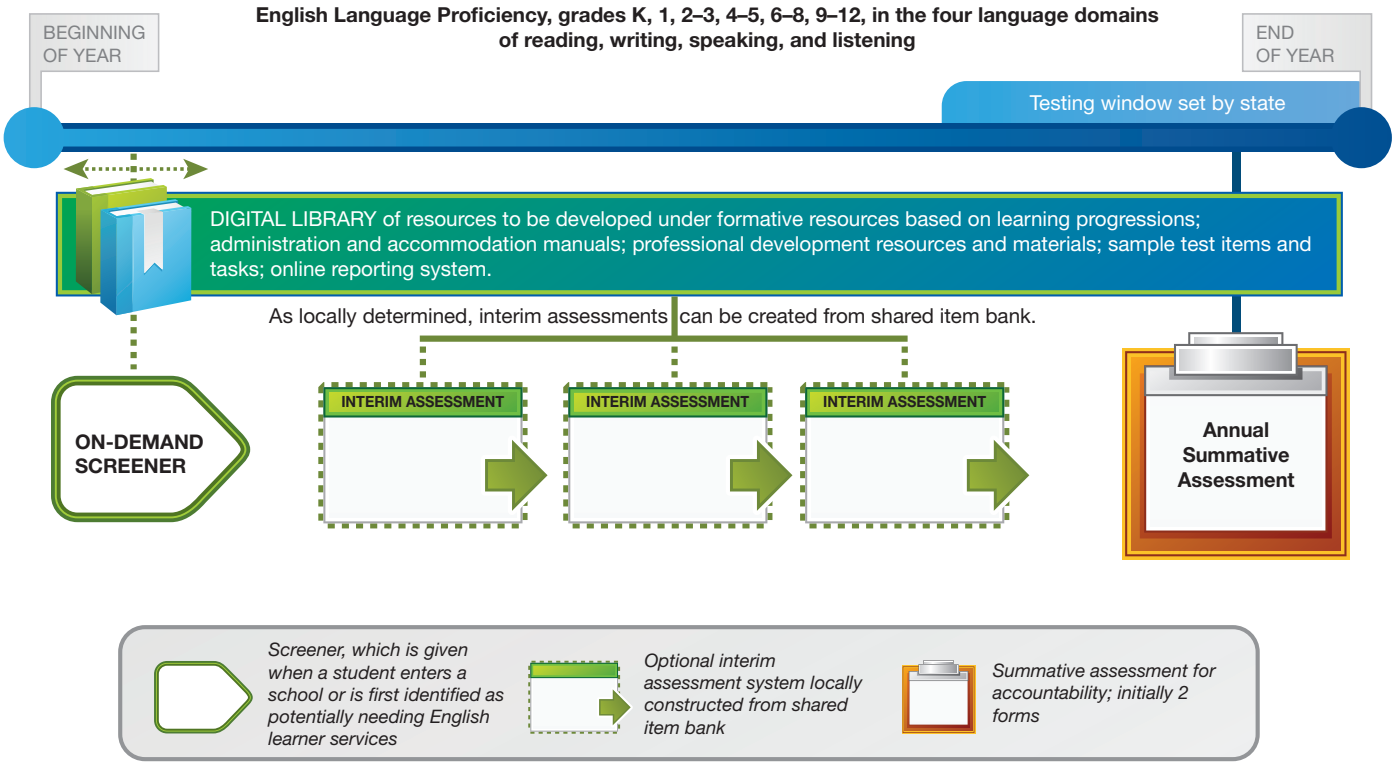
Under the ELPA21 grant, the Consortium will develop:

- two computer-based fixed forms of an annual summative assessment for each of six grade bands for monitoring student progress, tracking accountability, certifying program exit and prompting instructional improvement; and
- a diagnostic screener test to provide information for English language learner identification and placement.

All Consortium states will use these assessments and agreed-upon criteria for entry, placement and exit from ELL programs. Through extended collaboration, ELPA21 will also develop supporting professional development resources, recommendations on formative assessment practices, a secure item bank from which locally defined interim benchmark assessments can be constructed and a cooperative data reporting system. The system, as a whole, is intended to establish a continuous feedback loop to teachers, schools and districts to support ongoing improvements in ELP instruction, teacher professional development and student learning in Grades K-12.

To the extent that it is feasible and valid, the Consortium will contain costs by leveraging the existing quality work of member states. A rigorous vetting process will ensure that all adopted resources are appropriate for use across the ELPA21 system. A more detailed description of the system components of ELPA21 follows.

ELPA21 Assessment System



SYSTEM COMPONENTS

Summative Assessments for Accountability

The ELPA21 summative assessments will be developed for each of six grade bands — K, 1, 2-3, 4-5, 6-8 and 9-12 — and administered near the end of the academic year.[1] Because ELLs arrive in schools with varying levels of English and academic proficiency, each grade band assessment will measure across a wide range of proficiency. These assessments will measure students' level of English proficiency in the four domains of reading, writing, speaking, and listening. In addition, a composite score will be reported along a continuous K-12 vertical scale to facilitate monitoring of student progress.

Assessment Delivery

The summative assessments will be computer-delivered; a comparable paper-and-pencil format may also be provided for use. The decision to employ computer-based delivery as the preferred mode was made based on the desire to (1) ensure standardized administration of the assessments, (2) have more flexibility and standardization in providing students with disabilities a range of accommodations that are consistent with other large-scale assessment programs, (3) include innovative item types that improve the ability to measure the ELP standards and (4) provide economical and easily accessed training for administrators, proctors, and scorers.

The Consortium will not administer the summative assessments directly, but will develop and provide all of the necessary components for states to use on the delivery platform(s) of their choice. ELPA21 will work to maximize interoperability with the platforms being developed by the other major assessment Consortia, such as the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium and the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC). The deliverables for the summative assessments will feature test specifications, including blueprints, professional development resources, performance-level descriptors with performance-level cut scores and administration and security protocols. These resources, as well as model Request for Proposal language, will be available to states (individually or in multi-state partnerships) as they enter contracts with vendors for delivery of the operational assessments, beginning in the 2016-2017 school year.

[1] The timing of the summative assessments will depend on each state's controlling state assessment schedule.

ELPA21's website is under construction and will be available at **www.ELPA21.org.**

You also can visit **www.ccsso.org** and search "ELPA21" for updates.

Types of Items and Tasks

To the extent that it is feasible and practical, the Consortium will use a range of item types, including selected response, short constructed-response, technology-enhanced and more extensive performance tasks. The test blueprints, to be developed by the Consortium, will specify the standards appropriate to assess and the number and types of items that will be used to measure them. The technology-enhanced and performance items will be used, where necessary, for the valid measurement of the ELP standards. Constructed-response or performance-based items will be included in the assessment of each of the four domains to the extent possible, and technologies such as audio output and speech recorders will be utilized. The Consortium will leverage existing secure items from member states' item banks that align to the common set of ELP standards for use in the summative assessments. A gap analysis will then be conducted, and the Consortium will develop additional items, as needed, to fulfill the test blueprints.

Scoring

Scores will be produced for the four language domains of reading, writing, speaking and listening, along with a composite ELP score based on all four domains. The weight of each of the four domains within the composite score will be determined after field test data are available.

ELPA21 will provide the materials and protocols for consistency in the administration, scoring and reporting of the assessments across member states, and each state will be responsible for conducting these activities. Selected-response items will be computer scored, and the use of speech-recognition software is being explored for the efficient measurement of speaking ability. Systems will be developed to ensure that items requiring human scoring can be quickly and consistently scored. An ELPA21 scoring certification course will be developed, and successful completion will be encouraged for all human scorers. States may choose to use an external vendor to score these items or may opt to have certified local educators score them.

Measuring Growth

Each of the grade band assessments will report composite ELP scores on a single, K-12 vertical scale. In addition, each grade band assessment will measure across a wide range of ELP. These features, in tandem, will allow the reporting system to capture the progress that students make between the annual administrations of the summative assessment. When interim assessments are added to the system, these optional assessments will also produce scores along the vertical scale, allowing progress during the school year to be monitored.

Accountability

The summative scores from the ELPA21 assessments may be used to qualify a student for exit from the ELL program, as long as other data also provide evidence of ELP. Consortium states will decide how and what combination of evidence will be acceptable, and ELPA21 will make recommendations as to how this can best be done. The results will be appropriate for use within state accountability systems and for program improvement purposes. As appropriate, data regarding student progress on achieving ELP may be used as one of multiple measures within a state's educator evaluation system.

Reporting

A web-based reporting system will provide secure access to data and allow for the generation of reports that are customized for different user audiences. For example, reports of student growth and performance across the four domains can be created to help teachers identify the instructional needs of their students and to help school officials identify the types of professional development that will support teachers to better address the needs of their students. Formats for reports to students' families will be created to help them understand their child's progress. Student reports will include:

- student's overall composite ELP score on the K-12 vertical scale; and
- scale scores for each of the four domains of reading, writing, speaking and listening, also reported on the K-12 vertical scale.

Student summative assessment results will inform decisions about reclassification for the following school year and will provide important information about the students' ELP levels to the following year's teachers.

On-Demand Diagnostic Screener

ELPA21 will develop a diagnostic screener to determine whether, and at what level, a student needs ELL services. It will be administered at the time a student enters a school system and may be re-administered as needed. While shorter than the summative assessment, the screener will still assess across the four language domains. To the extent possible, it will be administered by computer and will be composed of a limited range of item types, primarily selected-response items in the reading and listening portions and constructed-response items in the speaking and writing portions. In order to support prompt and appropriate placement of students into ELL services, ELPA21 will design the screener to be scored very quickly through a combination of computer scoring and trained, certified local scorers.

ELPA21 will establish and use a Consortium-wide common cut score to make initial ELL identification and program placement decisions. Teachers will also have access to the score reports from the screener to inform instruction.

Formative and Interim Assessments*

ELPA21 believes that a comprehensive assessment system for ELL students should include formative assessment at the time of instruction and interim assessments to monitor progress throughout the school year. However, these components are beyond the scope of the initial grant. The Consortium plans to seek additional funding to refine existing formative and interim assessment resources contributed by member states.

RESOURCES, TOOLS AND CAPACITY BUILDING

Professional Development Resources and Activities

ELPA21 will provide professional development modules for both ELL teachers and academic content teachers on (1) how to provide a secure and accurate assessment experience, (2) how to best use the assessment results to inform instructional placement and (3) how to discuss results with students and families.

TECHNOLOGY

Technology based upon the Assessment Interoperability Framework being developed by the Smarter Balanced and PARCC Consortia will be used extensively in test development and in test administration, scoring and reporting. The intent is for the ELPA21 assessments to be administered on the platforms used by states to deliver the Smarter Balanced and PARCC assessments. All items will be adapted or developed to comply with open license interoperability standards to support consistent delivery across multiple compliant platforms.

ELPA21's website is under construction and will be available at **www.ELPA21.org.**

You also can visit **www.ccsso.org** and search "ELPA21" for updates.

*These assessments are not yet funded.

Will Schools Be 'Technology-Ready' to Administer Nation's New Assessments?

By Doug Levin and Geoff Fletcher

The Race to the Top Assessment program is ambitious and has the potential to help make far-reaching changes not only in how students are assessed, but also in how teachers teach and students learn. One important feature shared by both the PARCC and Smarter Balanced assessment systems is that student assessments will be technology-delivered. About two-thirds of states currently deliver one or more state tests via technology. For many schools and districts, however, the shift to computer-based assessment for the majority of students will be new.

About two-thirds of states currently deliver one or more state tests via technology. For many schools and districts, however, the shift to computer-based assessment for the majority of students will be new.

There are compelling advantages to technology-based assessment systems, when compared to current paper-and-pencil approaches. Chief among these is the ability to capture more robust data about student knowledge, skills and abilities across the full range of content standards through interactive items that can be reliably scored for low cost. Technology-based assessment can also ensure that results are made available to educators and students in time to intervene and adjust instruction for students having difficulty. In addition, technology-based assessment can be a marked improvement over paper based tests for ensuring security of both test items and student responses. Indeed, if the aim is to implement better tests with higher college- and career-ready standards, it is sound policy to accelerate the trend toward technology-based assessment.

Yet, in the absence of direct federal support for the technology needs of districts and schools for the nation's new assessments, important questions arise:

- Can school technology investments in eTextbooks and digital learning be leveraged for assessment?
- Will this shift disadvantage students without access to technology outside of school?
- Will schools be able to accommodate both instructional and assessment needs for technology?
- Most significantly, will schools be 'technology-ready' to administer next generation assessments?

These questions — and particularly the last — cannot be answered with a simple yes or no for a number of reasons. First, the nation lacks comprehensive, actionable data on school technology access (an issue that the Consortia are helping to address). Second, even without high-quality data, it is clear there are vast differences among school districts across the country in terms of how they have deployed technology in the past and how they are implementing improvements as an engine of school reform.

The ability of the nation's schools to administer the next generation assessments hangs in the balance.

TECHNOLOGY FOR TESTING: DEVICE REQUIREMENTS

For the initial year of test implementation, the Consortia have set a highy flexible — and arguably low — bar for adoption of the technology necessary to run the tests. This was done to accommodate the range of technologies currently available in schools and the anticipated access students will have to it. In general, the Consortia have pledged to support nearly every major computer operating system on the market today in a variety of forms (desktop, laptop, tablet) — provided that the screen size is sufficient and the system is able to run peripheral devices may be required. This has required the Consortia to pay special attention to interoperability, security and accessibility for students with special needs.

Moreover, the Consortia have pledged to support legacy technology that exists in schools, some which is more than a decade old. For instance, schools will be permitted to use desktop computers and laptops that rely on Microsoft Windows XP, even though support for XP (security patches, updates) will cease on April 9, 2014. A primary reason for this is that more than half of the computers reported in the online PARCC-Smarter Balanced Technology Readiness Tool are running Windows XP. The Readiness Tool, a survey device created by Pearson under a contract with both Consortia with advice from the State Educational Technology Directors Association) contains data on more than 6 million devices in use in American schools as of spring 2013. Requiring those devices to be upgraded or replaced by the 2014-2015 school year would be difficult both financially and politically.

If the aim is to implement better tests with higher college- and career-ready standards, it is sound policy to accelerate the trend toward technology-based assessment.

The current minimum technology requirements for assessment can be found online at the respective Consortia's websites:

PARCC:
http://www.parcconline.org/technology

Smarter Balanced:
http://www.smarterbalanced.org/smarter-balanced-assessments/technology/

Beyond Device Access

With the Consortia's Technology Readiness tool, districts in participating states can calculate technology readiness for the new assessments based on five interrelated factors:

- Number of eligible testing devices,
- Internet bandwidth to a building,
- Network connectivity within a building,
- The number of students to be tested simultaneously, and,
- The length of the test and testing window.

Technology Readiness Resources

Technology Readiness Tool (TRT):
www.techreadiness.net
States, districts and the Consortia are using this tool to gauge the extent to which they may be ready for online assessments. It is accessible only by state, district or school personnel with appropriate permission. The tool compares the inventory and bandwidth of a school or district against the requirements set by the Consortia and provides a measure of readiness as a percentage.

The PARCC Assessment Administration Capacity Planning Tool:
http://www.parcconline.org/assessment-administration-guidance
Designed to help schools and districts look at and manipulate the various technology-readiness factors for PARCC states, schools and districts.

The Smarter Balanced Bandwidth Checker:
https://sbac.tds.airast.org/networkdiag/Pages/LoginShell.aspx?section=sectionDiagnostics
Designed to help school determine if they have sufficient bandwidth to test a given number of students simultaneously. A modern version of Mozilla, Safari or Chrome must be used to run this tool.

SETDA Resources on Technology Readiness for Assessment:
http://setda.org/web/guest/assessment
SETDA maintains this regularly updated site to provide information, resources and a community of practice focused on getting ready for online assessment.

Within these factors there are a number of considerations that warrant a special mention:

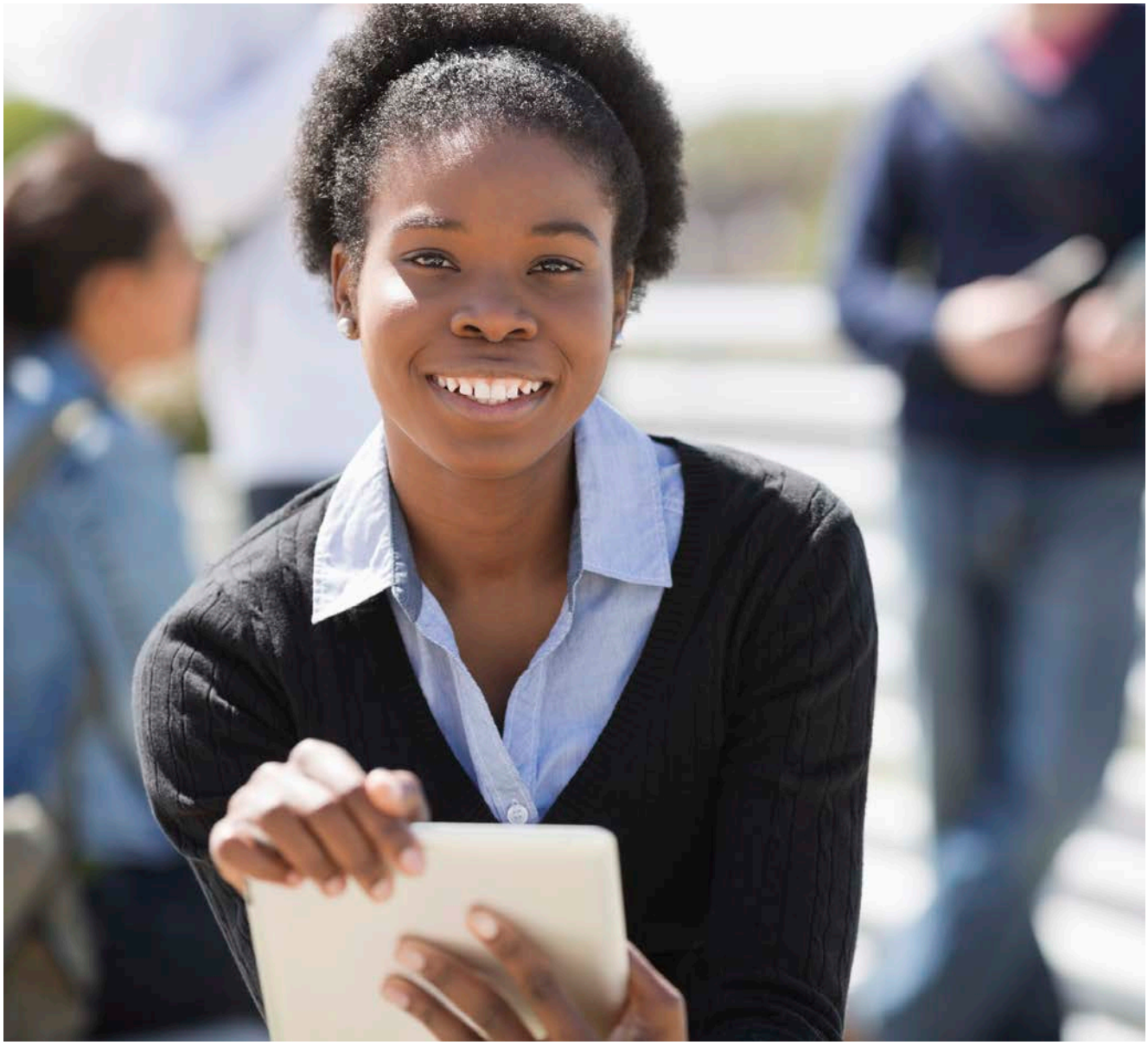
External and Internal Bandwidth
Many districts, particularly those in rural areas, report they lack adequate bandwidth at schools. However, many districts lack the tools and sophistication necessary to determine the extent of the problem, because there are many variables that can affect it. Key factors include the age of district/school servers, the traffic load on different parts of a district's network, what devices are used, whether operations are wired or wireless, the location of the router in relation to the room(s) where testing will be done, etc. The State Educational Technology Directors Association recommends that schools take advantage of free online broadband speed testing tools to help diagnose these and related issues (and commissioned a paper evaluating a number of these tools — see: h**ttp://www.setda.org/web/guest/schoolspeedtests**).

Technical Support
As states move to new assessment systems, teachers, administrators and students must have confidence that the technology will work for the assessments so they can focus on what is important— students demonstrating their knowledge and skills.

Preparing the devices and infrastructure for the assessments by installing a secure browser or applications, for example, and testing each to ensure they are in working order, will take time and expertise. And, if a computer breaks or a network goes down, districts must have adequate personnel and back-up devices so that a disruption is minimal.

Professional Development
All teachers of students in grades that will be assessed, as well as other test administrators, will need to be trained on how the assessment system works, how to ensure students are correctly logged onto the system and how to proctor the exams. A much more difficult professional development task will be ensuring that teachers employ the very different pedagogies demanded by the Common Core. A key element of these pedagogies is seamless integration of technology throughout instruction to solve complex problems and demonstrate mastery in ways similar to the assessments. While this is often not considered a part of technology readiness considerations, there may be no greater threat to readiness than the preparation of teachers to teach the Common Core effectively.

Given the compelling advantages of a technology-based assessment system as compared to paper-and-pencil approaches, schools and districts will need to ensure they are technology-ready for the 2014-2015 school year.



More important, technology readiness for assessment is not separate from readiness for instruction and learning. In that light, it is not a destination for school districts, but an ongoing process that is vital for 21st century education.

Many districts will be ready when the assessments are administered the first time — and some may bridge their readiness gap with paper-and-pencil for a few more years. Yet as districts move forward, there is no question that it will take a concerted effort and focused leadership to ensure that all K-12 students are provided the opportunity to learn and demonstrate their learning with tools that are already commonplace in both colleges and workplaces across America.

Doug Levin
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Dr. Fletcher is Senior Director for Strategic Initiatives and Communications for the State Educational Technology Directors Association (SETDA).

Supporting What Matters Most

As information about the work of the assessment Consortia percolates through the K-12 education system, many educators and parents are getting the mistaken impression that these efforts are solely about improving state tests in order to increase accountability. In reality, they are more broadly about improving teaching and learning. The new standards — both the Common Core State Standards (Common Core) in Mathematics and English Language Arts (ELA) and the newly released Next Generation Science Standards — demand much more of both students and teachers.

Students, for example, are expected to develop the skills to read and analyze complex texts. They must demonstrate that they can apply their mathematical skills and conceptual understandings to solve novel, multifaceted problems. And they must use modern tools to efficiently research a topic, develop a claim and craft a well-supported argument. While long demanded of top students, it is new to require such skills of all students.

Teachers are expected to be deeply knowledgeable about their content area and about effective instructional techniques that optimize learning for all students. They must design activities that lead students to develop deep understandings and the ability to apply those understandings to solve more complex and demanding problems. Teachers also will need the skills to analyze student work, including discourse, for misconceptions and to take appropriate instructional actions.

The Consortia understand the demands they are making on students and teachers. That is why they are developing resources and tools that will help teachers and school systems align instruction with the Common Core and improve the quality of instruction. The Consortia are drawing upon the latest research, internationally recognized experts, master teachers, administrators and college faculty to adapt existing materials and to design and develop new materials.

To gain greater insight into this work, the K-12 Center recently held discussions with 14 educators from across the country involved in Common Core transition efforts. In the Center's new publication, *Seeing the Future: How the Common Core Will Affect Mathematics and English Language Arts in Grades 3-12 Across America*, these educators use the lens of selected formative and summative assessment tasks released by the Consortia to help non-educators understand what the Common Core will demand of students and teachers.

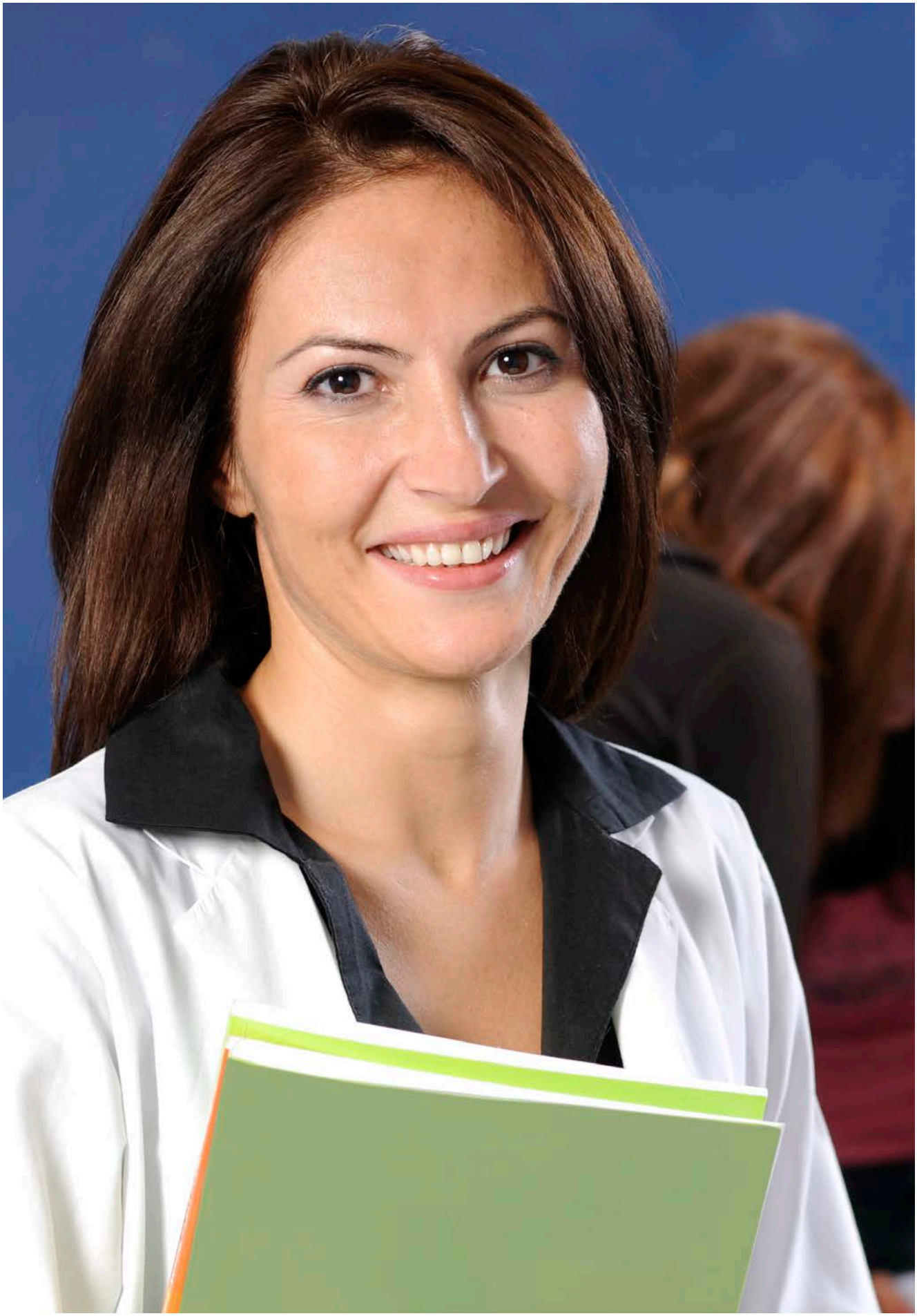
For example, a seventh grade ELA task from the PARCC Assessment Consortium provides an illustration of the type and complexity of the research and writing skills that may be expected in the summative Performance Assessments (see Page 9). As one part of a larger research simulation task, students are asked to read a 1,600-word biography of aviator Amelia Earhart, watch a short biographical video about her disappearance (they are also given the video transcript) and read a news account examining where she may have died. Students are then asked to select at least two of these sources and to write an analysis of the strength of the argument made by each author about Earhart's bravery. They are reminded to support their assertions with evidence from the sources.

In *Seeing the Future*, the expert educators also discussed a high school level mathematics task developed by the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium that focuses on problem-solving skills. In this task, a buyer is shopping for a used car and students are challenged to *calculate and explain* which of two cars is the better deal, based on the following information for each:

- Purchase price,
- Miles per gallon,
- Estimated immediate repair costs,
- Estimated number of miles the owner will drive per month,
- Price of gas per gallon,
- The buyer's intent to own the car for four years.

This assessment task illustrates not only the types of multi-step, real-world problems emphasized by the Common Core, but also expectations of computational fluency, the ability to organize unstructured information to determine a solution path and the ability to clearly explain one's mathematical reasoning.

To help teachers develop instructional activities and formative assessment strategies that will build deeper student understanding, the Consortia are working on new professional development and assessment literacy training modules. Many of these modules will be made available for use in face-to-



face training sessions and also as on-demand, web-based resources. They may include features such as videos of master teachers presenting lessons, samples and analyses of student work that reveal common misunderstandings or misconceptions, and potential adjustments to instruction to support students.

Because more than 30 million students will be taught based on this common set of standards, companies that sell educational products and services, as well as professional organizations such as Illustrative Mathematics and the National Council of Teachers of English, are also developing and vetting new instructional and professional development resources. Each is vying to produce the most engaging, effective and useful materials aligned to the Common Core.

As we ask our educators to take on the very challenging work inherent in the Common Core, we must also ensure that we provide the time, working environment and policy framework that will enable them to succeed.

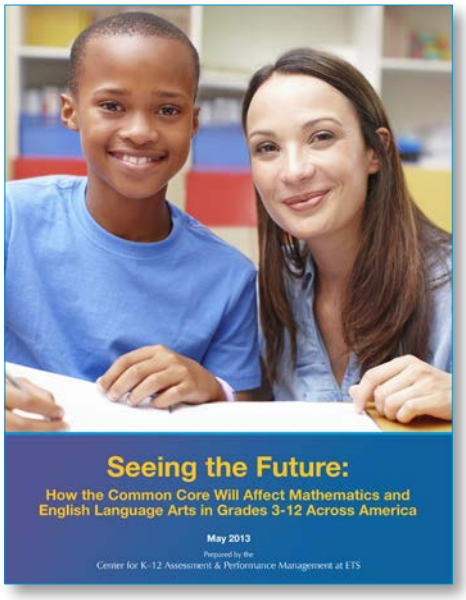
In the process, they are expanding the definition of the education marketplace. In the past, the vast majority of materials produced were aimed squarely at the average learner. Now, much greater attention is being given to the broad diversity of learners, modes of learning and different learner needs. While early, the growth in these areas is promising.

All of these new resources have the potential to deeply impact — and improve — teaching and learning. But will they? Will this entire initiative of common standards, next-generation assessments and shared resources lead to deep and sustained improvements, and to many more students graduating from high school prepared for success?

At least part of the answer will lie in the degree to which states and districts align policies and allocate resources to support excellence in teaching. Nations that lead the world today in student achievement place a high priority on recruiting strong candidates into teaching, training them well, supporting their continuous improvement and creating an environment that fosters professionalism and career satisfaction. Beginning teachers are recruited from top college graduates, trained to very high professional standards and given ongoing support from master teachers for several years. New and veteran teachers alike are given several hundred more hours a year than their U.S. counterparts for professional development and collaboration with peers on the refinement of lessons. In short, teaching is seen as a valued and intellectually demanding profession as well as a national priority.

As we ask our educators to take on the very challenging work inherent in the Common Core, we must also ensure that we provide the time, working environment and policy framework that will enable them to succeed.

Only then will educators be able to realize — for all of us — the dream of preparing all our students for college and the 21st century workplace.

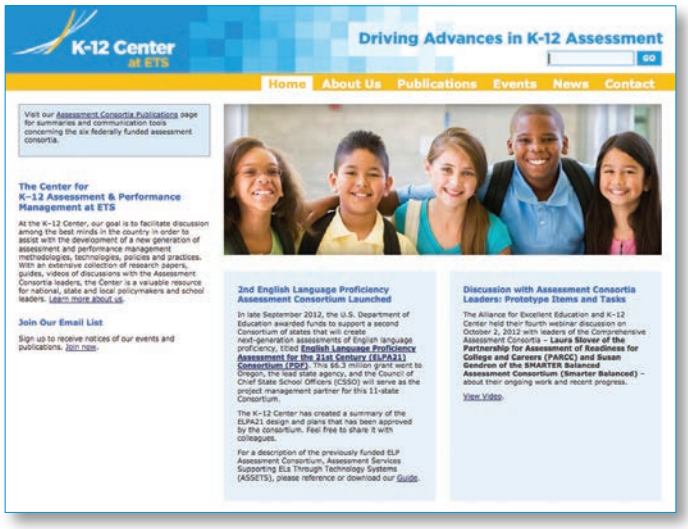


Seeing the Future: A New K-12 Resource

Why did the states adopt the new standards and how will they affect day-to-day instruction in our nation's classrooms? More importantly, will new standards and assessments lead to more students being better prepared for success in college, the workplace and life?

In this new publication, the Center for K-12 Assessment & Performance Management at ETS brings you the views of educators from across the country who believe in and are working to implement these standards. We hope this proves to be a valuable resource as you evaluate the merits of these reforms.

Resources on the K-12 Center Website



www.k12center.org

The website of the Center for K-12 Assessment & Performance Management at ETS provies a wide variety of information and communication tools regarding the assessment Consortia.

The Six Assessment Consortia

- Consortia-approved summaries of the assessment systems and transition supports
- Slide presentations
- At-a-glance handouts
- Recorded webinars with Consortia leaders

Materials from Assessment Research Symposia on Topics of Current Importance

Next Generation Science Assessments *(Coming in October 2013)*
Seven commissioned papers plus slide decks on the development of new assessments to measure achievement and support instruction of the Next Generation Science Standards.

Technology Enhanced Assessments *(May 2012)*
Eleven commissioned papers, slide decks and videos of a keynote presentation and panel discussion on emerging technologies designed to enhance the measurement, scoring, instructional value and financial feasibility of next generation assessments.

Through-Course Summative Assessments *(February 2011)*
Seven commissioned papers, slide decks and a summary report on the measurement opportunities, challenges and potential solutions related to the use of a through-course summative assessment design. In recorded videos, two panels of state and national policymakers discuss the presentations and the R&D agenda ahead.

Next-Generation K-12 Assessment Systems *(March 2010 and December 2009)*
Eighteen commissioned papers and slide decks on designing assessments to measure growth and inform instruction. Four papers describing the designs of comprehensive assessment systems proposed by leading experts in order to inform the thinking of states as they developed proposals for the Race to the Top Assessment Program.

To sign up for notices as new resources are made available, go to
www.k12center.org/subscribe

Timelines Of The Six Assessment Consortia

	PARCC	Smarter Balanced	DLM	NCSC	ASSETS	ELPA21
Summer 2013	Accommodations Manual for students with disabilities and English learners released Release of 2nd set of prototype assessment and instructional tasks Performance level descriptors for all subjects and grades/courses	Practice Test utility released (May) Educator Cadres from each member state convene for training in use of formative and professional development training modules (Summer) Sustainability Plan instituted			Analyze results of pilot tests	This Consortium was approved in 2012 but did not finalize negotiations with USED until February 2013. At press time for this publication, the milestones for the ELPA21 Consortium are under development and will be made available at www.elpa21.org.
2013-2014	Assessment PD Modules available (Fall) Release of final estimated cost of summative assessments Assessment PD Modules available (TBD) Optional performance tasks for K-2 available (February) Field testing for representative sample (Spring) Partnership Resource Center launches (Spring)	Initial set of Exemplar Instructional Modules, including formative assessment tasks and tools and training templates, released (Fall) Field testing of items, tasks, and systems for administration, scoring and reporting (March – June 2014) Preliminary standard-setting (Summer) Additional Exemplar Instructional Modules released (Summer)	Professional development modules ready for use Test delivery software used in small-scale pilot testing (September-October) and field testing (November-June)	Pilot testing (Spring)	Sample assessment items released Decide on accommodations plans Continue to create outreach and professional development materials Field testing (Spring)	
2014-2015	College-readiness tools available (September) Diagnostic assessments available (September) Mid-Year Performance Based Assessments and Speaking and Listening Assessments available (Fall) Full operational administration of PARCC assessments (Spring) Setting of achievement levels, and college-ready performance levels (post-administration)	Launch of comprehensive Electronic Platform, including Digital Library with formative resources (Fall) Interim assessments available (Fall) Summative assessments available (Spring) Final achievement standards for summative assessments verified and adopted (Summer)	The DLM Instructionally embedded tasks available for use (August) The DLM stand-alone summative tests available (April 2015)	Test design and item banks finalized Census field testing/operational administration (Spring) Standard-setting (Spring/Summer) Complete validation studies and technical report (Summer)	Field testing for Listening domain (Spring) Finalize design of system Finalize score reports, administrator training materials, and reporting system Training materials available (Summer)	
2015-2016			Professional development program validated Technical manual published DLM assessment system evaluated	The NCSC Alternate Assessment System is operational Technical documentation in place	ASSETS assessment system is operational	
Fall 2016						

These timelines reflect the Consortia plans as of spring 2013, but may be adjusted as the development work continues.

State Memberships in Assessment Consortia

Table 3

Accurate as of April 19, 2013

	Comprehensive Assessment Consortia		Alternate Assessment Consortia		English Language Proficiency Consortium	
State	**PARCC (23)**	**SBAC (26)**	**DLM (14)**	**NCSC (28)**	**ASSETS (31)**	**ELPA21 (11)**
Alabama					Member	
Alaska		Advisory		Member		
Arizona	Governing			Member		
Arkansas	Governing			Tier II Partner		Member
California		Governing		Tier II Partner		
Colorado	Governing					
Connecticut		Governing		Member		
Delaware		Governing		Tier II Partner	Member	
District of Columbia	Governing			Member	Member	
Florida	Governing			Member		Member
Georgia	Governing			Member		
Hawaii		Governing				
Idaho		Governing		Tier II Partner	Member	
Illinois	Governing				Member	
Indiana	Governing			Member		
Iowa		Governing	Member			Member
Kansas		Governing	Member			Member
Kentucky	Participating					
Louisiana	Governing			Member		Member
Maine		Governing		Tier II Partner	Member	
Maryland	Governing			Tier II Partner	Member	
Massachusetts	Governing				Member	
Michigan		Governing	Member		Member	
Minnesota					Member	
Mississippi	Governing		Member		Member	
Missouri		Governing	Member		Member	
Montana		Governing		Tier II Partner	Member	
Nebraska						Member
Nevada		Governing		Member	Member	
New Hampshire		Governing			Member	
New Jersey	Governing		Member		Member	
New Mexico	Governing			Tier II Partner	Member	
New York	Governing			Member		
North Carolina		Governing	Member		Member	
North Dakota	Participating	Advisory		Member	Member	
Ohio	Governing					Member
Oklahoma	Governing		Member		Member	
Oregon		Governing		Tier II Partner		Member
Pennsylvania	Participating	Advisory		Member	Member	
Rhode Island	Governing			Member	Member	
South Carolina		Governing		Member	Member	Member
South Dakota		Governing		Member	Member	
Tennessee	Governing			Member	Member	
Texas						
Utah			Member		Member	
Vermont		Governing	Member		Member	
Virginia			Member		Member	
Washington		Governing	Member			Member
West Virginia		Governing	Member			Member
Wisconsin		Governing	Member		Member	
Wyoming		Advisory		Member	Member	
Virgin Islands (U.S.)	Participating	Affiliate		Tier II Partner	Member	
PAC-6*				Member		

PARCC – Partnership for the Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers: www.parcconline.org

SBAC – SMARTER Balanced Assessment Consortium: www.smarterbalanced.org

DLM – Dynamic Learning Maps Assessment Consortium: www.dynamiclearningmaps.org

NCSC – National Center and State Collaborative: www.ncscpartners.org

ASSETS – Assessment Services Supporting ELs Through Technology System: http://assets.wceruw.org

ELPA21– English Language Proficiency Assessment for the 21st Century: www.ELPA21.org

* PAC-6 consists of six entities: American Samoa, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands,, Federated States of Micronesia, Guam, Palau, and Republic of the Marshall Islands

Driving Advances in K-12 Assessment

The Center will work with nationally recognized measurement experts from across the country to explore possible solutions to the measurement challenges inherent in the designs of the new assessments and will share the resulting ideas and recommendations through webinars and our website.

For more helpful resources about the assessment Consortia and next generation assessments, go to

www.k12center.org

To sign up for notices as resources are made available, go to

www.k12center.org/subscribe

Created by Educational Testing Service (ETS) to forward a larger social mission, the Center for K–12 Assessment & Performance Management at ETS has been given the directive to serve as a catalyst and resource for the improvement of measurement and data systems to enhance student achievement.