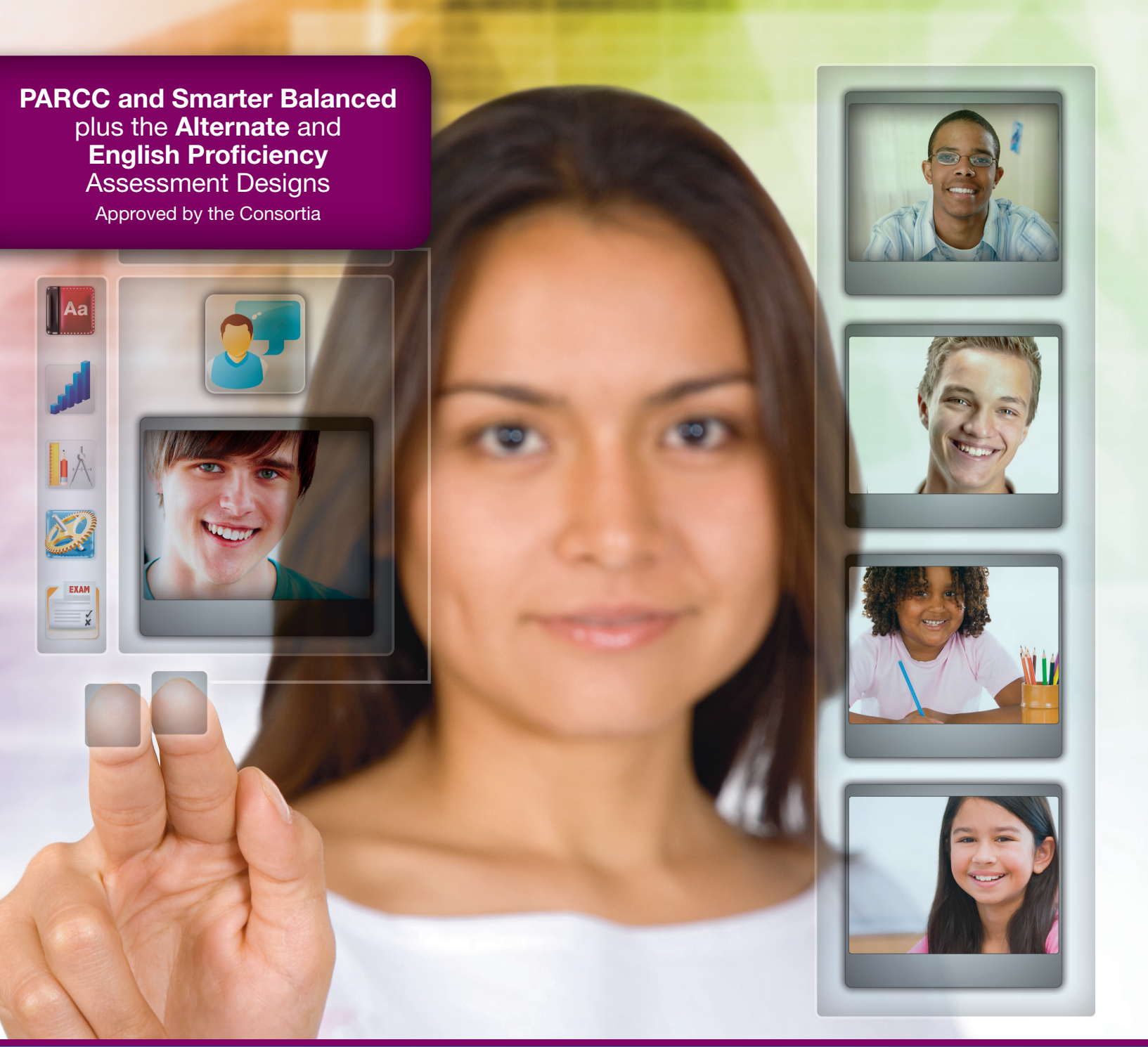

Coming Together to Raise Achievement

New Assessments for the Common Core State Standards

Updated March 2014

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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Distinguished Presidential Scholar and Executive Director

Dear Colleague:

As we publish this guide, our 5th and final edition of *Coming Together to Raise Achievement*, field testing of a new generation of student assessments is underway in classrooms across America.

Compared to existing state assessments, these new tests will be more similar to those that have long been used in academically high-performing countries. They will assess fewer topics more deeply and will measure more higher-order cognitive skills, such as the abilities to read and analyze complex texts, organize information to solve problems, and apply learning to new situations.

This emphasis on higher-order skills is important to the future of our students as they are required for success in postsecondary training and education[1]. But we have not done well in assessing them to date, due largely to cost constraints. A 2012 study by the RAND Corporation found that, in assessments from the 17 states with reportedly the most rigorous standards and assessments, only 21% of English language arts questions and fewer that 2% of mathematics items assessed higher-order skills[2].

If we are to reduce the postsecondary remediation rates and prepare all high school graduates for a healthy future, we must move forward to develop assessments that more accurately reflect real-world expectations. The six federally funded assessment Consortia are pooling their resources to address this need in the next-generation assessment development work that is underway.

This guide explains the progress the Consortia have made over the past three years. For those who have been following their work, we have made it easy to locate the newest updates by placing a grey dotted line next to them as shown here.

The K-12 Center is pleased to be a source of timely and useful information on emerging issues in K-12 testing and a catalyst for bold thinking that will advance high-quality assessment, teaching, and student learning for all our children.

Pascal D. Forgione, Jr.

[1] *Research Perspectives on Next Generations Assessments, J.L.* Herman, 2013. *A Text Readability Continuum for Postsecondary Readiness*, G.L. Williamson, 2008. *Paying Double: Inadequate High Schools and Community College Remediation*. Bob Wise, 2006.

[2] Higher-order skills defined in this study as those at Depth of Knowledge level 3 or 4. *Estimating the percentage of students who were tested on cognitively demanding items through the state achievement tests.* RAND Corporation, 2012.

Looking Ahead: Field Testing this Spring Ushers in a New Era with New Challenges

By Nancy Doorey

After more than three years of arduous work by education professionals in 45 states, three of the assessment Consortia are about to "come out of the workshop" this spring as they field test their summative assessments for students in Grades 3-8 and high school in English language arts and mathematics[1]. The field tests will provide our best understanding yet of the more rigorous academic expectations that will be used to judge the performance and progress of the large majority of our nation's students and schools starting in the 2014-15 school year.

The field tests will also mark the beginning of a new era in K-12 assessment in this country. Will the multistate Consortia that developed the assessments survive the inevitable turbulence of the initial years? If so, what additional changes might emerge over the coming decade?

Next 18 Months: A Difficult Transition

If analyses conducted to date are accurate, the new state assessments will be of higher quality and far more challenging than prior state assessments[2]. We should expect several key differences:

- Fewer skills and concepts assessed at each grade level, particularly in elementary grades;
- A sharp decrease in the percentage of questions that require recall of facts or procedures; and
- A sharp increase in the percentage of items requiring higher-order skills, such as well-structured analyses of challenging texts and the application of knowledge and skills to solve complex, real-world problems.

Student and teacher reactions to the increased rigor of the field tests will undoubtedly stir additional debate over the Common Core State Standards and state membership in the assessment Consortia. Concerns will likely increase in the Summer/Fall of 2015, when states announce the first round of student, school, and district accountability ratings. It is anticipated that student performance ratings will plummet in many states as a result of more rigorous standards and assessments.

While a few states have already withdrawn from the Consortia and others may follow, each Consortium appears to have a sufficient number of core members to continue its work and to transition, at the end of the federal grants, into a self-sustaining organization. It also appears that at least half of the states will be able to use these higher quality assessments for less than the cost of their existing assessments[3].

[1] Both of the Comprehensive Assessment Consortia (PARCC and Smarter Balanced) and one of the Alternate Assessment Consortia (DLM) are conducting field tests this Spring and NCSC, the other Alternate Assessment Consortium, will field test in the Fall. See implementation timelines for all six Consortia on page 60.

[2] *On the road to assessing deeper learning: The status of the Smarter Balanced and PARCC assessment Consortia.* Herman, J.L. and R.L. Linn, 2013.

[3] See information within each Consortium description herein, and a report by the Brookings Institution at *http://www.brookings.edu/research/reports/2013/10/30-standardized-testing-and-the-common-core-chingos*

Having conducted our own review of the standards, the K-12 Center at ETS supports them as a necessary foundation for all students in the 21st century. However, two concerns warrant serious attention. First, the resources teachers need to understand these standards and prepare aligned instructional activities have not yet made their way to every classroom. This holdup is due in part to the time needed to align professional development resources to both the Common Core standards and the more recently defined assessment targets. Polls indicate a strong majority of teachers support the Common Core, but also that instruction in most classrooms is not yet deeply aligned to the new expectations[4]. The situation may be worse for teacher preparation programs. A December 2013 report from the National Council on Teacher Quality reported that fewer than one in nine elementary programs and just over one-third of high school programs are preparing candidates with the subject matter expertise needed to teach the Common Core[5].

This leads to the second concern: striking a balance in state policy between the urgency of improvement and fairness to students and educators as new accountability provisions are implemented. All states currently have accountability policies in statute or regulation that are based on test scores. In nearly half of the states, test scores are directly linked to "high stakes" decisions regarding students, such as promotion at key grade levels, graduation, and the awarding of advanced diplomas. More than half the states are using or plan to use growth data from state assessments within multiple-measure educator evaluation systems[6]. These policies need to be revisited to support the transition to higher standards. We anticipate significant backlash from parents in states that maintain their accountability requirements without some type of phase-in or modification that recognizes the newness of these academic expectations and the need for alignment of instruction.

While the next 18 months are likely to be difficult for states in the Consortia, critics can play an important role by bringing public attention to healthy debates about what our students need to know and be able to do, how we measure their performance, and what is required to support successful implementation. Overall, support for the standards and assessments appears to be very strong among stakeholder organizations. The National Council of Teachers of Mathematics, the National Council of Teachers of English, the National PTA, the National Governor's Association, the US Chamber of Commerce, and the National Business Roundtable are just a few of the groups voicing their support and working to build public understanding of the need for higher academic expectations. But there is still a long journey ahead in building the level of grassroots support needed to sustain this fundamental shift in academic expectations for all students.

Calculating Student Scores

Both PARCC and Smarter Balanced will need to determine how to weight the performance tasks within final accountability scores for students. This is a long-standing measurement challenge. The K-12 Center has commissioned a group of renowned experts, led by Dr. Richard Shavelson, to create a white paper summarizing the psychometric challenges and opportunities presented by the integration of performance assessment into an assessment system, and making recommendations for best practice. Look for the release of that white paper toward the end of 2014 at www.k12center.org.

The assessments and reports provided in the Summer/Fall of 2015 will reflect "Consortia 1.0" – their initial and somewhat modest iteration

Beyond 2015: Continuing Evolution

The assessments and reports provided in the Summer/Fall of 2015 will reflect "Consortia 1.0" — their initial and somewhat modest iterations. Every Consortium has had to restrain its design due to the low level of technology infrastructure – hardware, bandwidth, and tech support – in some schools, many of which have never used computer-based assessment before. Importantly, the work going on to prepare the technology infrastructure for testing (see article on pages 57-59) will also benefit instruction.

As the baseline infrastructure improves, more of the potential of the new assessment systems can be realized. Given rapid advances in underlying technologies and the scale of the multistate Consortia, we should expect to see these new assessment systems evolve at a much faster pace than the previous single-state systems.

[4] See news articles and results of teacher surveys at http://www.aft.org/pdfs/press/ppt_ccss-pollresults2013.pdf, http://www.pewstates.org/projects/stateline/headlines/states-train-teachers-on-common-core-85899495529, http://marylandreporter.com/2013/11/13/teachers-feel-unprepared-for-new-common-core-curriculum-tests-survey-finds, and http://www.nea.org/home/57683.htm

[5] NCTQ Teacher Prep Review 2013, found at http://www.nctq.org/dmsView/Teacher_Prep_Review_2013_Report

[6] http://www.achieve.org/files/August21-22WorkbookonStateTransitiontoHigh-QualityCCRAssessmentsRevised11-12-13.pdf

Assuming the Consortia navigate the turbulent waters of the next 18 months and settle in as self-supporting collaboratives, what changes might we see in assessments and reporting systems over time?

It's a pretty solid bet that we will see advances in the types and complexity of items on the assessments, with greater use of multistep simulations that produce not only a measure of the student's skills or knowledge, but also information about the student's problem-solving process. Additional forms of student interaction are also highly likely, such as use of a stylus for free drawing of mathematical figures and spoken responses. Each advance expands our ability to measure important competencies.

The far more demanding work of aligning instruction, teacher preparation, and policy structures remains largely ahead.

These "Consortia 1.0" assessments will report whether a student, at each grade, is "on track" to "college- and career-readiness." Over time it may be possible to generate additional, more nuanced indicators and trajectories of postsecondary readiness. For example, through analysis of cohorts of students who have gone on to postsecondary pursuits, it may be possible to empirically differentiate the level of performance needed for a variety of distinct postsecondary options, such as the military, various career training programs, community colleges, and universities. Such information would help students steer a course toward — and gauge their readiness for — their desired postsecondary pursuit. It may also help some students realize that they can and should aim higher.

Far less likely, but still possible in the more distant future, the Consortia may be able to report out at a finer grain size on important skill clusters, in addition to the course/grade level. New Zealand has done this with their national assessments for high school students as part of a larger effort to reduce the dropout rate and increase student engagement. Professional and trade groups in New Zealand have been invited to review the reported skill clusters across all subject areas, determine the constellation needed for entry into their career area, and award certificates. More than 1,000 certificates have been created in fields including Business Administration, Computing, Mechanical Engineering Technology, and Tourism and Travel. These are based in part on the national assessments in ELA and mathematics and are awarded in addition to a certificate of readiness for college entry.

Each of these potential advances assumes that we will maintain high-stakes, end-of-year assessments. But many educators yearn to see the "drop from the sky" annual assessments replaced by a larger set of data gathered throughout the school year. The Dynamic Learning Progressions (DLM) Consortium, one of the alternate assessment Consortia, may open the door for states to consider such a shift (see pages 32-37). DLM will administer both an end-of-year assessment and a series of assessment tasks embedded in instruction, and will conduct studies to determine whether the aggregated information from the embedded tasks can be used for accountability decisions.

Additionally, two groups of states are developing new, aligned assessments of English language proficiency to be launched in 2015-16 (see pages 46-56). An important element of their work is ensuring that English learners have command of the academic language required by the Common Core. This initiative presents an opportunity to analyze information from the new English language proficiency assessments and the new ELA and mathematics assessments to generate richer profiles of English learners, their developing command of the language, and the types of support needed by a given student. Later this Summer, the K12 Center will publish a paper for policymakers on the opportunities and challenges related to the use of assessment data to improve teaching and learning for English learners, a rapidly growing segment of our student population.

More Demanding Work Ahead

The Common Core and new, aligned assessments provide a great opportunity to improve student readiness for citizenship, higher education, and careers. The skill demands of the workplace have increased significantly over the last few decades as routine work has been automated or shipped overseas. Our students need to be prepared for careers that will enable them to attain self-sufficiency. To address this need, extremely demanding work has been completed in a very short time, and we applaud the work of each Consortium, as well as that of states developing their own equally rigorous, 21st century standards and assessments.

That said, the far more demanding work of aligning instruction, teacher preparation, and policy structures remains largely ahead. As we wrap up this 5th and final edition of *Coming Together to Raise Achievement*, we invite you to join us in renewing our commitment to do all we can to support excellence and equity for America's students.

***Nancy Doorey** is the Director of Programs for the K-12 Center at ETS and does consulting for a variety of educational reform and policy organizations.*

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 be **ready for operational use by member states in the 2014-2015 school year**.

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.

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

[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.

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. 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.

PARCC at a Glance

- MEMBERSHIP: 17 states* and the District of Columbia, educating approximately 20 million K-12 students
- GOVERNING STATES**: Arizona, Arkansas, Colorado, the District of Columbia, Florida, Illinois, Louisiana, Maryland, Massachusetts, Mississippi, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, Ohio, Rhode Island, Tennessee
- PARTICIPATING STATES***: Pennsylvania
- PROCUREMENT STATE****: Maryland
- PROJECT MANAGEMENT: PARCC Inc., a 501(c)(3).
- HIGHER ED PARTNERSHIPS: 744 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, intend to 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 February 1, 2014.

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

* One state currently belongs to both Consortia (PA) and eleven states (AL, AK, GA, KS, KY, MN, NE, OK, TX, UT, VA) belong to neither.

** 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 STATE is the fiscal agent. Maryland is the fiscal agent for the PARCC Consortium, and has contracted with PARCC, Inc., which incorporated as an independent nonprofit in March 2014, to manage procurements for the Consortium.

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 nonsummative assessment in speaking and listening. Figure 1 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 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.

SYSTEM COMPONENTS

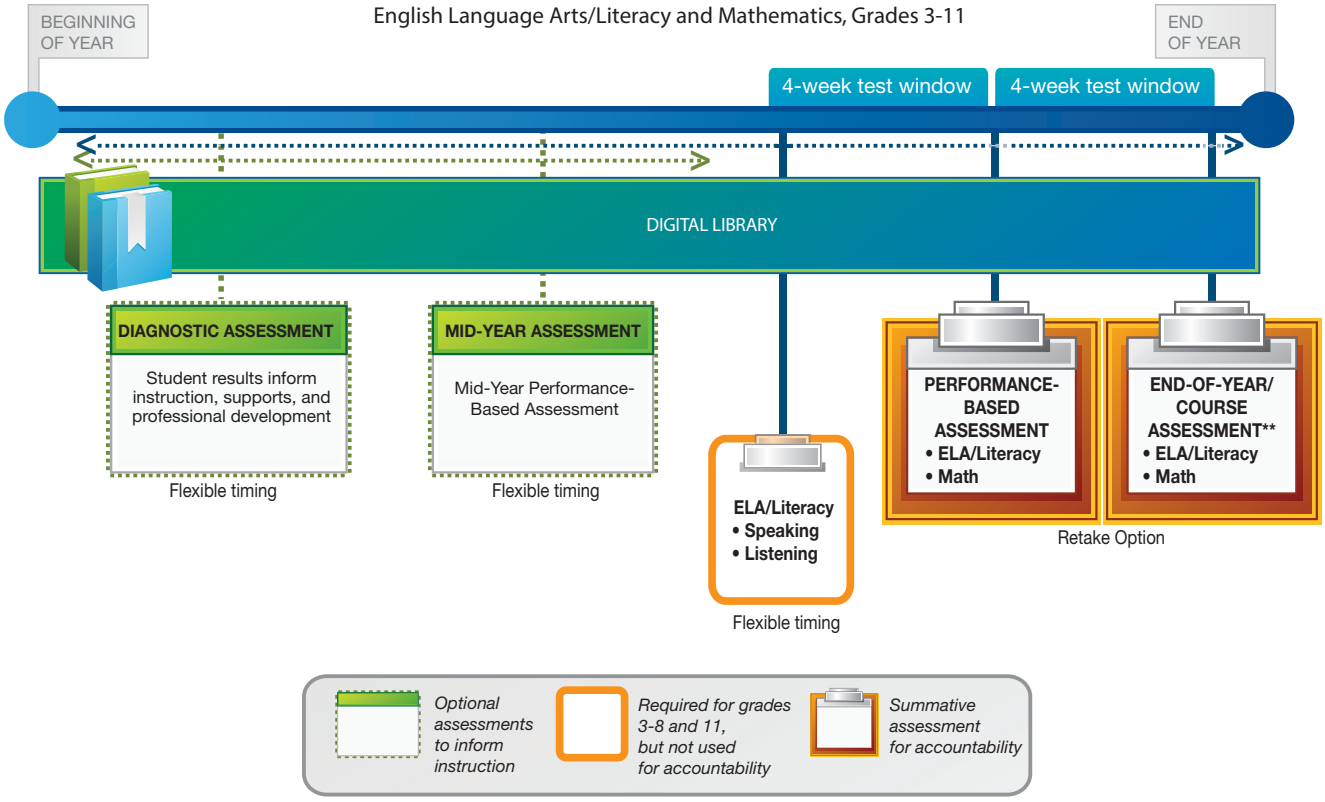
Summative Assessments for Accountability

Assessments will be developed in English language arts/literacy (ELA/literacy) and mathematics for Grades 3-11 that assess the full range of standards within the Common Core State Standards. The assessments are to be delivered

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.

Figure 1

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



* Summative assessments to be given during maximum 4-week testing windows that occur between 70% and 90% of the instructional year.

** End-of-year assessments for grades 3-8; End-of-course assessments for high school students given when the student completes the course, typically in grades 9-11

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. The Frameworks also provide guidance on how one might emphasize the critical advances in the standards to focus on essential knowledge and skills for college- and career-readiness., From these Frameworks, PARCC developed assessment specifications that define the set of claims to be made about student knowledge, skills and abilities, as well as sample forms of evidence accepted, and examples of the types of tasks to be utilized. Information about the PARCC assessment blueprints, including the numbers and types of tasks per grade level, is on the PARCC website.

PARCC estimates that the time needed for the average student to complete the ELA/literacy and mathematics performance-based and end-of-year summative assessment components will total 8 hours in Grade 3; 9 hours in Grades 4-5; 9.5 hours in Grades 6-8; and just under 10 hours for high school students. These assessments are to be completed over nine testing sessions during the last 25% of the instructional year. Time estimates will be refined after the **Spring 2014** field test.

Teachers will have access to an online repository of resources 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.

Performance-Based Assessments

In early Spring, about three-quarters of the way into the school year, students in Grades 3-11 will be given

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

the performance-based assessments (PBAs) in ELA/literacy and mathematics. The assessment tasks are designed to closely resemble high-quality classroom work. PBAs will focus on hard-to-measure standards and will include short, medium and extended tasks, including computer-enhanced simulations. These assessments will be given primarily on computers or other digital devices. A mix of human and computer scoring will be used. The PBA component will not itself generate a scale score, but will be used in conjunction with the end-of-year assessment in determination of the summative score. Results are expected to be reported prior to the end of the school year.

In the ELA/literacy PBA, students will complete three multipart tasks that focus on writing effectively when analyzing texts: one literary analysis task, one narrative writing task, and one research simulation task. At each grade level, the source texts 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). In a research simulation task, for example, high school students 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 on a topic across multiple sources to analyze the strength of various arguments. The research simulation task may require students to draw upon informational text, video and graphs from history or the sciences.

The mathematics PBA 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. The tasks 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 multistep problems will require abstract reasoning, precision, perseverance, and the strategic use of mathematical tools. At the high school level, for example, 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 are anticipated to count for approximately 40-50% of the student's summative score for mathematics, although final weighting decisions will be made after the **Spring 2014** field tests.

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

End-of-Year Assessment

For each grade/course tested, the end-of-year (EOY) assessments in ELA/literacy and mathematics will, in combination with the performance-based assessments, assess all of the standards for the grade level/course. This component will be taken in two testing sessions for each content area, given during the last few weeks of the school year. The EOY assessments will utilize a range of innovative items types and technological tools, and be entirely computer scored.

The ELA/literacy EOY assessments will focus on reading and comprehending complex texts, including the interpretation and use of vocabulary. The assessments will be comprised of 5-6 texts, including literary passages and some informational passages from history/social studies, science, and technical subjects, each followed by a number of short answer questions.

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 so that students can, for example, create equations, graph functions, draw lines of symmetry, or create bar graphs.

The mathematics assessments at the high school are designed as end-of-course assessments. States will have the option to select, or allow 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.

PARCC will offer testing windows for the mathematics and ELA/literacy assessments to accommodate block scheduling or other nontraditional schedules.

It is expected that scale scores from the end-of-year assessment will be reported quickly enough to be included on student report cards.

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 each year in mathematics and ELA/literacy. 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 retest opportunities will be made available, and if so, how many.

Item and Task Development

All PARCC items and tasks were developed by testing contractors and have been reviewed by state educators to ensure that they are age-appropriate and measure the content of the given grade level. The items and tasks also are being reviewed by state K-12 content experts and higher education faculty for quality and alignment to the standards. Educators and community members are reviewing them to ensure they are fair and free from bias. Item development research was conducted in Spring 2013 to evaluate the quality, accessibility and usability of assessment items.

Field Testing

Field testing will take place with a representative sample of approximately 1 million students across PARCC states and schools in **Spring 2014**. The schools have been randomly selected, and then classrooms within them, to ensure that the sample represents the demographics of each state and PARCC as a whole. Some schools will field test the computer-based versions of the assessments and others will field test the paper-based versions. To minimize the testing burden on schools and students, the majority of students participating will take only one half of the assessment – either the PBA or the EOY – in one content area. Information gathered from the field test will be used in **Summer 2014** to make final determinations regarding PARCC test forms, the length of each assessment component, and the method for calculating student scores on the operational assessments.

Some states have decided to utilize federal flexibility and administer the field test in place of their state accountability tests in ELA/literacy and mathematics. In most states, the field test will be given to a sample of students in addition to the state accountability test, which is given to all students.

Assessment Delivery

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

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

For the field test and delivery of the 2014-15 summative assessments, PARCC has contracted to use the vendor-owned TestNav assessment delivery platform. A PARCC-owned item bank and test delivery system will be used to field test the nonsummative assessments in **Spring 2015**. In 2015-16 and beyond, states will access both summative and nonsummative assessments using the PARCC-owned system.

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

PARCC is committed to ensuring that **all students** — including students with disabilities, English learners, and English learners with disabilities — are able to engage in a meaningful and appropriate manner so that the assessments provide a valid reflection of what they know and can do, without altering the construct of what is being assessed. Through a combination of universal design principles and computer-embedded features, PARCC will enhance accessibility to three categories of students:

- **All students:** Accessibility features include zoom, underline, flagging of items for review, read-aloud of directions, a highlighter tool, a notepad, a line reader tool, and a pop-up glossary. These features will be embedded in the test delivery system and can be accessed as desired.
- **Students identified in advance by local educators:** Additional accessibility features may include change of background color or font color, a line reader tool, and text-to-speech for the mathematics assessments.
- **Students with disabilities, English learners, and English learners with disabilities:** Additional accessibility features are available to students within an Individualized Education Program (IEP) or 504 Plan, or to students designated as English Learners. These features can include American Sign Language, braille, speech-to-text, read-aloud, closed-captioning of multimedia resources, language translations, and approved external assistive devices.

PARCC will develop translations of the general test directions and the reports of student results to parents and guardians. In addition, for the mathematics mid-year, performance-based, and end-of-year assessments, PARCC will develop translated versions in Spanish and other languages as necessary. Use of the translated assessments will be a state decision and costs will be shared by the states that use them. PARCC will not develop

translated versions of the ELA/literacy assessments because it has been determined that doing so would change the constructs being measured.

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 on his or her report card. PARCC states will adopt a common set of performance standards and scoring rubrics so that results will be comparable across states.

A combination of computer and human scoring will be used for portions of performance-based assessments that cannot be electronically scored. To monitor the quality and reliability of scoring, PARCC plans to have 20-30% of randomly selected items for Grades 3 through high school scored a second time by humans. This plan is subject to refinement as the development phase progresses. Member states are discussing whether to utilize trained teachers (who will not score their own students' work), contractor services, or a combination, for portions requiring human scoring. All teachers will 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.

The end-of-year assessment will utilize 100% computer scoring. PARCC plans to press for advances in automated scoring, including the use of artificial intelligence. When paper forms are used by students with disabilities, or for other state-approved purposes, responses will be scanned for electronic or human scoring.

PARCC plans to return composite results from both the performance-based and end-of-year assessments prior to the end of the school year. These scoring and test administration plans may be modified after the **Spring 2014** field testing.

Accountability

PARCC plans to combine results from the two summative assessments (performance-based and end-of-year) to calculate annual accountability scores for each student. The weighting scheme to be used will be determined in **Summer 2014**, after field testing. Scores from the mid-year assessment and the speaking/listening assessment (described below) will not contribute to summative scores.

The summative assessment system will produce data on student proficiency, growth, and on-track to college- and career-readiness.

While all PARCC states will set common achievement levels and will use a common set of cut scores to determine college- and career-readiness, each state will decide how to use the summative assessment system for accountability. Each state also will decide whether and how to include PARCC assessments in their criteria for high school graduation or other determinations.

Measuring Growth and College- and Career-Readiness

Because scores on the performance-based and end-of-year assessments will be combined for accountability purposes, PARCC anticipates having nearly twice as many score points in its summative tests as are typical in state tests. This will provide room to measure all or most of the performance spectrum well enough to measure student growth.

The determination of college- and career-readiness is intended to indicate that a student has or has not demonstrated the academic knowledge, skills, and practices needed in ELA/literacy and mathematics to be placed directly into first-year, credit-bearing courses at two- and four-year institutions of higher education. To indicate readiness, PARCC will use the Grade 11 ELA/literacy assessment and the third high school level end-of-course mathematics assessment in either Algebra II or Integrated Math 3. In both cases, both performance tasks and the end-of-year components will be used in the determination.

For the first three years of implementation, students taking their third mathematics final assessment also will be required to complete two performance-based tasks that assess concepts and skills from their two previous 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 decide how college- and career-readiness will be determined for future cohorts.

Reporting of Results

An online interactive data tool will provide teachers, administrators, and parents with access to results after each assessment. The tool offers various ways to display data, create customized reports, and compare the performance of similar schools. Administrators can use the tool to help identify the individual professional development needs of teachers, as well as grade-level and school-level needs. The tool can generate reports for mailing to parents after each assessment.

All student scores will be reported using 5 performance levels, 1 (lowest performing) through 5 (highest performing). Attaining performance level 4 on the designated high school assessments will indicate college- and career-readiness. At each prior grade tested, attaining level 4 will indicate the student is on track to engage successfully in the next year's work. In addition to the overall ELA/literacy and mathematics scores, reports will contain information regarding student performance on the major claims for each content area. In ELA/literacy, reports will include an overall reading score and an overall writing score. Additional information will be reported at subclaim and domain levels, to be determined using empirical data from **Spring 2014** field tests.

Projected Costs

As of **January 2014**, PARCC estimates that the cost per student for the full set of ELA/literacy and mathematics summative assessments will be $29.50 for the computer-based administration, and an additional $3-$4 per pupil for paper-based administration[2] in 2014-15.

The cost includes test delivery and scoring of human-scored responses for 2014-15. Beginning in 2015-16, PARCC states will choose either to manage assessment delivery and human scoring themselves, or to contract for these services with PARCC or another provider. Over time, PARCC will seek to leverage technologies to reduce per-student costs and improve the quality of test delivery and scoring.

PARCC will determine in Summer 2014 the additional cost for use of optional system components: the diagnostic assessment, the mid-year assessment, and the K-1 formative tools (described below). The additional cost of language translations of the summative assessments for English learners will be shared by the states that request translations.

OTHER ASSESSMENTS, RESOURCES AND TOOLS

Prototype Items, Technology Tutorial, Practice Tests

PARCC prototype assessment items and tasks can be found at www.parcconline.org/computer-based-samples/. These items can be tried out on the PARCC field test technology platform at that same webpage. A technology tutorial for students is being released in Spring 2014 to familiarize them with how to use the platform toolbar and how to access embedded supports and accommodations.

A practice test consisting of representative items and tasks at each grade level also will be made available in Spring 2014. The test will be computer-delivered, providing an opportunity for students to become familiar with the test administration interface and item types.

System Components: Revised Timeline for Delivery

In Summer 2013, PARCC received permission from the U.S. Department of Education to extend its grant through August 1, 2015. The revised timeline for delivery of the system components is as follows:

- 2014-15 school year: Summative performance-based and end-of-year assessments and optional mid-year assessment
- Summer 2015: Diagnostic assessments for Grades 2-8
- Summer 2015: Formative tools for K-1
- 2015-16 school year: Speaking/listening assessments for Grades K-12 (required for Grades 3-11)

Mid-Year Assessment, Grades 3-11

Optional mid-year assessments are designed to inform curriculum, instruction, and professional development. They will be comprised primarily of rich performance tasks, which will preview the types of tasks included in the summative performance-based assessments. Mid-year assessments are to be scored by teachers using PARCC rubrics and sample responses. States and/or districts may locally choose to administer, or even require, portions of the mid-year assessment or the full assessment. Scores

[2] See http://www.parcconline.org/cost.

from the mid-year assessment will not contribute to summative scores.

Diagnostic Assessment, Grades 2-8

Optional diagnostic assessments in ELA/literacy and mathematics will be designed to pinpoint students' strengths and weaknesses relative to particular standards for each grade/course. They will be available starting in Summer 2015, for use throughout the school year. Diagnostic assessments provide an indicator of student knowledge and skills so that instruction, supports, and professional development can be tailored to address student needs. Diagnostic assessments will include:

- A brief, on-demand, computer-based and computer-adaptive assessment that utilizes machine-scorable items
- Quick return of results at the level of specific standards
- An online professional development module to assist teachers in effective use of the data from the diagnostic assessments.

The Speaking/Listening Assessment, Grades K-12

To assess the speaking and listening standards within the Common Core, an assessment will be available for students in Grades K-12, and will be required for students in Grades 3-11. The speaking/listening assessment will not be used in determination of the summative score. This assessment will be available for the 2015-16 school year, and may be administered at any time during the academic year.

Students in Grades 3, 5, 7, 9, and 11 will complete a "real time" task in which they listen to a prerecorded speech and/or media production and speak/respond to prompts. Students in Grades 4, 6, 8, 10, and 12 will complete an "advance preparation" task in which they perform research on a topic, then give an oral presentation, and respond to audience questions. Teachers will score a student's speaking and listening skills using a standardized rubric and may use the scores as part of student grades.

Formative Tools, Grades K-1

PARCC is developing an array of "ready-to-use" formative assessment tools. The tools will provide K-1[3] teachers with actionable information they can use to modify instructional approaches for each student. The tools will be embedded in the curriculum and fit within regular instruction so as to be "invisible" to the student. The ELA/literacy tools will focus on fluency, decoding, vocabulary, reading comprehension, and using and analyzing information sources for writing. The mathematics tools will provide information regarding each student's progress toward the standards and practices to be identified in the forthcoming K-2 Model Content Frameworks for K-1.

The development timeline for K-1 formative tools calls for the release of eight sample tools – two per grade level per content area — in Spring 2015. The complete initial set of tools is to be available to educators through the Partnership Resource Center (see page 14) by the beginning of the 2015-16 school year.

[3] The formative tools were originally to be developed for Grades K-2, but PARCC decided to limit them to Grades K-1 as the diagnostic assessment will provide items, tasks, and supports for Grade 2.

The Partnership Resource Center

The Partnership Resource Center is a web-based platform to be launched in Fall 2014. It will offer a continually expanding collection of resources for teachers, students, administrators, and parents. Some resources will be available prior to Fall 2014 to enable users to gain familiarity with the PARCC system. Resources to be provided include the nonsummative assessment resources and tools described above as well as the following:

Model Content Frameworks
PARCC has developed Model Content Frameworks in ELA/literacy and mathematics that identify the "big ideas" in the Common Core for each grade level as well as 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. The frameworks also provide a foundation for the PARCC test specifications and blueprints.

To support transparency and inform instruction, PARCC will release a large number of test items and tasks from the summative assessment each year.

Item Bank with Released Test Items and Performance Tasks
To support transparency and inform instruction, PARCC will release a large number of test items and tasks from the summative assessment each year. In ELA/literacy, approximately 75% of the performance-based assessment tasks and 40% of the end-of-year assessment items will be released annually[4]. In mathematics, approximately 66% of the performance-based assessment tasks and 33% of the end-of-year assessment items will be released annually. These items and tasks will be available to educators through the Partnership Resource Center, along with student performance data, scoring rubrics, and sample responses for each performance task. States also may contribute existing state-owned items or tasks aligned to the Common Core. Item bank capabilities will include sharing, improving, analyzing, comparing, ranking, and accrediting items, formative assessments and interim assessments.

Online Professional Learning Modules
Through the Partnership Resource Center, PARCC will offer professional development materials, including online modules, through which teachers and school leaders can learn how to read results from the assessments, make inferences about the results, and diagnose learning gaps to make relevant instructional decisions.

In Summer 2014, the center will have five online training modules designed to help teachers, school leaders, and school site testing coordinators as they begin to implement the PARCC nonsummative assessments. The five modules are:

- PARCC assessments overview – including the types of information about students each component will produce
- Introduction to the mid-year assessment – including scoring rubrics and connections to the summative performance-based assessments
- Introduction to the diagnostics assessment – including administration options and uses
- Introduction to the speaking and listening assessment – including scoring rubrics and interpretation of results
- PARCC accessibility system — including the features built into the computer-based testing platform for students with disabilities, English language learners, and other students

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

College Readiness Tools
A set of tools is being developed collaboratively by educators in K-12 and higher education to help students who have gaps in their academic preparation for college- and career-readiness. These may include online tools to help diagnose the gaps and model Grade 12 bridge courses to address the gaps. The resources are expected to be available by **Fall 2014**.

State-Developed Tools
Formative and diagnostic tools being developed by member states and districts may be added to the Partnership Resource Center. In particular, the 10 states in PARCC that won Race to the Top state grants are seeking to coordinate their investments to compile a "coherent and complete set of tools" from which all states can benefit.

[4] See the PARCC Progress Update, slide 23 at www.parcconline.org/sites/parcc/files/PARCCProgressUpdate_05-26-13.pptx

CAPACITY BUILDING

PARCC is supporting states and districts in their transition to the Common Core through monthly meetings of State Leads to coordinate work and provide feedback, as well as multiple capacity-building initiatives:

- Educator Leader Cadres
- Review Committees
- Technical Working Groups
- Partnership Between Major Teacher Unions and PARCC

Educator Leader Cadres

PARCC's Educator Leader Cadres follow a "train-the-trainers" model: States selected their cadre members to include K-12 teachers, school and district leaders, local and state curriculum directors, and representatives of postsecondary institutions. Since Summer 2012, PARCC has convened annual cadre meetings in each region. The purpose of the meetings is to build participants' expertise in the Common Core and PARCC, so that they can become leaders in their states and among their peers. At and between annual meetings, cadre members meet in person and virtually to discuss effective use of the Model Content Frameworks and PARCC prototype items. They engage in deep analysis of the Common Core and aligned PARCC materials, such as test specifications and scoring rubrics. They identify ways to disseminate PARCC resources to classroom teachers, administrators, parents and community members. PARCC provides added support to cadre members through online modules, webinars and conference calls. States and districts are able to deploy these educators as trainers in their capacity-building efforts.

Review Committees

Hundreds of K-12 and postsecondary educators from member states, as well as other state content and assessment experts, have been 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, working group members from PARCC states get advice from leading experts in assessment, measurement, and other matters, and have opportunities to solve problems together.

Partnership Between Major Teacher Unions and PARCC

Funded by a $830,000 grant from the Helmsley Charitable Trust, affiliates of the major teacher unions NEA and AFT across PARCC states and the District of Columbia will engage in one or more of the following activities over an 18-month period:

- Train for and participate in item review for Phase II of item development (summative assessments and nonsummative assessments)
- Design and develop instructional supports for classroom educators (e.g., how to understand a student's response on a task and employ instructional strategies)
- Participate in jointly sponsored NEA-AFT-PARCC state and regional conferences at which item reviewers discuss their experiences with PARCC and the Common Core, and the impact of these expereinces on their classrooms (these sessions will be made available via live streaming webcast or video).

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. PARCC requires that all technology created with the support of federal Race to the Top resources be open source, and that any pre-existing technology employed in the system be either open source or documented in a fully transparent way.

Many states and districts in each assessment Consortium are concerned that they will not have adequate technology infrastructure to implement the new online assessment systems in 2014-15. The two comprehensive Consortia, PARCC and Smarter Balanced, have collaborated on the development of an online interactive tool to help states and districts evaluate their current level of technology readiness, identify strategies to address gaps, and monitor progress.

Administrators using the tool can enter information about their school enrollment and technology infrastructure and 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 4-week window with existing hardware and bandwidth, administrators can model the impact of increasing bandwidth or adding more computer devices.

In addition to the interactive tool, PARCC has released "rule of thumb" guidelines for the number of devices needed based on the school configuration and enrollment. The guidelines are available at http://parcconline.org/technology.

SUSTAINABILITY

PARCC began as a state-led collaboration funded almost entirely through a 2010 Race to the Top Assessment Program grant. In 2013, the original 4-year grant was extended by the U.S. Department of Education until August 1, 2015, and PARCC formed a new nonprofit organization to support the long-term sustainability of the Consortium. This nonprofit is governed by an independent board of directors and is responsible for managing the Consortium as well as the development of PARCC assessments, and implementation in the member states and the District of Columbia. Oversight of the PARCC Consortium and assessments is still governed by the member states.

Nonmember Access to PARCC

Most of the resources developed under the grant are available on the PARCC website, with the exception of secure test materials. Districts within PARCC states will be able to purchase the nonsummative assessments that PARCC is developing, even if their state is not using them. States that are not PARCC members, and districts within those states, also will be able to purchase the nonsummative assessments.

PARCC TIMELINE

2013-14	Technology tutorial available (Winter/Spring) Field tests of a representative sample of students (Spring) Grade level/course practice tests available (Spring) Assessment professional learning modules available (Summer)
2014-2015	College readiness tools available (September) Test administration policies (Fall) Partnership Resource Center launches (Fall) Mid-year performance-based assessments available (Fall) Full operational administration of PARCC summative assessments Setting of achievement levels, including college-ready performance levels (post-administration) Diagnostic assessments available (Summer)
2015-2016	K-1 formative tools available (Fall) Speaking and listening assessments available

Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium

The state-led Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium (Smarter Balanced) is on track to deliver a fully functional assessment system by the 2014-15 school year. This comprehensive system has been designed to strategically "balance" summative, interim, and formative assessment through an integrated system of standards, assessments, instruction, and teacher development, while providing accurate year-to-year indicators of students' progress toward college and career readiness.

As shown in Figure 2, 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 will support 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 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. Through 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: 23 states* and the U.S. Virgin Islands serving more than 18 million K-12 students
- GOVERNING STATES**: California, Connecticut, Delaware, Hawaii, Idaho, Iowa, Maine, Michigan, Missouri, Montana, Nevada, New Hampshire, North Carolina, North Dakota, Oregon, South Carolina, South Dakota, Vermont, Washington, West Virginia, Wisconsin, Wyoming
- ADVISORY STATES***: Pennsylvania
- AFFILIATE MEMBERS***: U.S. Virgin islands
- PROCUREMENT STATE****: Washington
- PROJECT MANAGEMENT PARTNER: WestEd
- HIGHER ED PARTNERSHIPS: More than 600 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.
- AWARD: $176 million total (assessment and supplemental grants), Race to the Top Assessment Program grants awarded October 2010

This information is accurate as of February 1, 2014.

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

* One state currently belongs to both Consortia (PA) and eleven states (AL, AK, GA, KS, KY, MN, NE, OK, TX, UT, VA) belong to neither.

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

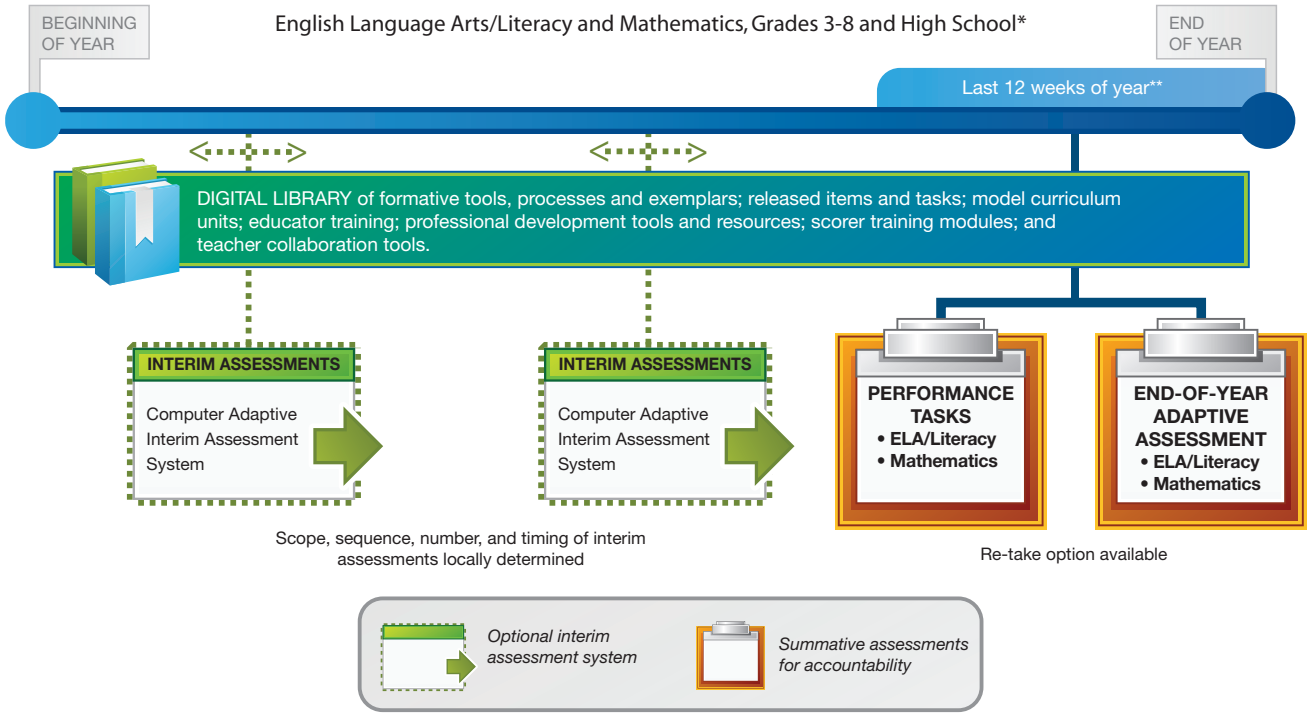
*** ADVISORY STATES and AFFILIATE MEMBERS consult on test design and policy, but have no decision-making authority.

**** PROCUREMENT STATE is the fiscal agent.

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**

Figure 2 **The Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium**



* Summative and interim assessments for grades 3 – 8 and 11, with additional supporting assessments available for grades 9, 10, and 12.

** Grades 3-8: Testing shall not begin until at least sixty-six percent (66%) of a school's annual instructional days have been completed, AND testing may continue up to and including the last day of school. Grade 11:Testing shall not begin until at least eighty percent (80%) of a school's annual instructional days have been completed, AND testing may continue up to and including the last day of school.

SUMMATIVE ASSESSMENTS FOR ACCOUNTABILITY

Smarter Balanced states are developing summative assessments that support policy analysis and accountability systems for English language arts/literacy and mathematics for Grades 3-8 and 11, with additional optional assessments available for Grades 9, 10, and 12. While the assessments are designed to be delivered via computer, for up to three years the Consortium will offer a paper-and-pencil option for use 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/literacy, one performance task in mathematics, and a computer adaptive component in ELA/literacy 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.

Summative assessments are untimed for students. For planning purposes, the Consortium estimates that the total amount of testing time[2] required to complete both the mathematics and ELA/literacy summative assessments will be about 7 hours in Grades 3-5, about 7.5 hours in Grades 6-8 and about 8.5 hours in Grade 11, spread over several days and testing sessions. The testing times reflect the need to measure the Common Core with fidelity, and to produce results that yield sufficiently detailed information to guide improvement at the student level. The time estimates include classroom activities lasting up to 30 minutes to introduce both the ELA/literacy and mathematics performance tasks.

In addition to the Consortium summative assessments for Grades 3-8 and 11, member states may elect to subscribe to additional state-use secure assessments for Grades 9, 10, and 12 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, which will be

[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.

priced based on the number of students taking the assessments.

Smarter Balanced will allow a small percentage of students one opportunity to retake the summative assessments in cases where there is an irregularity in 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.

Performance Tasks Component

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

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/literacy 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
- include assessment targets, which are 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 the 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.

[3] The Smarter Balanced Content Specifications can be found at www.smarterbalanced.org/smarter-balanced-assessments/, along with videos of webinars in which Smarter Balanced leaders discussed them.

Hundreds of teachers in member states participated in the development and review of items and tasks for the Spring 2013 pilot test and Spring 2014 field test. The pilot test was conducted with a scientific sample of about 650,000 students from more than 5,000 schools. It tested some of the innovative item types, students' ease of use of the interactive items and accessibility features, and the automated scoring engines. Student scores are not being reported from the pilot. As part of the research and evaluation process, and to ensure the resources are effective, there was a special emphasis in the pilot test on recruiting English Language Learners and students with disabilities who might use and potentially benefit from the new tools and supports

Hundreds of teachers in member states participated in the development and review of items and tasks for the Spring 2013 pilot test and Spring 2014 field test.

Field Testing

The Spring 2014 field test will allow further refinement of the item/task pool and testing of the administration, scoring, and reporting systems. More than 3 million students across Smarter Balanced states will participate in the field test of the ELA/literacy and mathematics assessments. Students in Grades 3-8 and 11, and a small sample of students in Grades 9 and 10, will complete either an ELA/literacy assessment or a mathematics assessment. While untimed, each assessment is expected to take 3-4 hours, and may be given over several days. Administered on computers, the field test will be fixed-form assessments for most students. Toward the end of the field test window, after sufficient data have been collected on the items and tasks, some students may be given a computer adaptive version. No student scores will be reported from the field test.

Each state has determined how schools and students are being selected to take the field test. Some states have decided to utilize federal flexibility and administer the field test to all students in Grades 3-8 and 11 in place of their state accountability tests in ELA/literacy and mathematics. In other states, the field test will be given to just 10% of students in each subject area, in addition to the state accountability test. States may administer the field test to more students, if they choose.

Assessment Delivery

Smarter Balanced assessments are 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 research and development, Smarter Balanced will explore the feasibility of using natural interfaces — such as gesture controls, touch screens and styluses —to capture drawings from students, particularly to support students' descriptions of their mathematical reasoning. This work will begin in 2013-14 and, upon completion, will be implemented first in the interim assessment. After successful implementation in the interim assessment, Smarter Balanced will work with member states to establish any additional requirements for use of natural interfaces in the summative assessment.

Each state will establish a schedule for administration of the summative assessments, which must fall within the following Consortium-wide testing windows:

- Grades 3-8: a maximum of 12 weeks (the final third of the school year), up to and including the last day of school
- Grade 11: a maximum of 7 weeks (the final 20% of the school year), up to and including the last day of school

Schools may complete their testing within much shorter testing windows, based on their technology infrastructure or their use of the paper-and-pencil versions.

Smarter Balanced will offer paper-and-pencil versions of the assessments for 3 years to support schools' transition to online testing. The design may include a short locator test to improve the precision of scores.

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

Smarter Balanced member states are systematically incorporating the principles of universal design. This work starts with 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 and field test results of Smarter Balanced items are being evaluated to ensure that items provide valid and reliable information about students' proficiency in the content of the Common Core.

Three categories of accessibility and accommodation resources will be available to students as they complete the Smarter Balanced assessments:

1. **Universal tools** are access features that are either digitally-delivered components of the test administration system or separate from it. Universal tools are available to all students based on student preference and selection.

2. **Designated supports** are the features available for use by any student for whom the need has been indicated by an educator or team of educators with parent/guardian and student.

3. **Accommodations** are changes in procedures or materials that increase equitable access during the assessments.

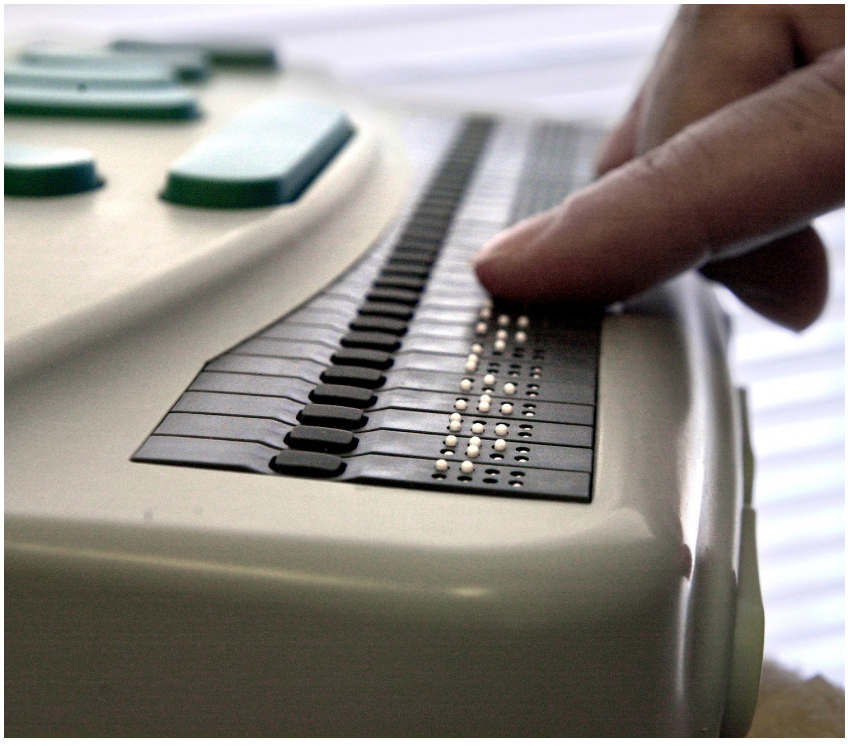
Smarter Balanced is also tagging items for language complexity to ensure that the level is appropriate to an item's purpose and to verify that there is sufficient diversity in language complexity across items. The Consortium will be able to conduct quantitative analyses regarding the relationship between an item's language complexity and student performance.

Mathematics items will have item-level digital customized glossaries in English and/or a student's primary language. These 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 several languages and dialects, including Spanish, Vietnamese, Arabic, Tagalog, Ilokano, Cantonese, Mandarin, Korean, Punjabi, Russian, Ukrainian and American Sign Language, at no additional charge to states.

In addition to the *Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium Usability, Accessibility, and Accommodations Implementation Guide*, Smarter Balanced is creating a professional development module as part of the Formative Assessment Digital Library that states can choose to use. Educators can use this module to learn about each resource and how to select the resource(s) most appropriate for each student.

Scoring

While performance tasks will have some components scored by computer, the majority of the components were designed to be scored by humans, including teachers, although teachers will not score their own students' responses. A priority for Smarter Balanced states has been the strategic involvement of teachers in development of items and scoring guides, selection of range finding papers, and scoring of constructed-response items. Additionally, Smarter Balanced is conducting a series of artificial intelligence engine validation studies to evaluate scoring of items and tasks in the future.



Final scores that merge performance tasks and computer adaptive results are expected to be delivered within two weeks after a school completes 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 scorer.

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.

Measuring Growth, College-Readiness, and Career-Readiness

Smarter Balanced intends to build vertical scales across the Grade 3-11 span in ELA/literacy and mathematics, which can then be used as the basis for growth measures evaluating the individual's progress toward college- and career-readiness across the years. Both summative and 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.

The Consortium distinguishes between college-readiness, which encompasses a broader array of knowledge, skills and dispositions, and college content-readiness in the core areas of ELA/literacy and mathematics. Smarter Balanced will report college content-readiness based on performance on the Grade 11 assessments, which are intended to signal whether a student has the knowledge and skills necessary for introductory college courses in a variety of disciplines as well as the knowledge and skills necessary for entry-level, transferable, credit-bearing courses in mathematics/statistics and English/composition.

In September 2014, after the field test, representatives of higher education and K-12 education in member states will jointly recommend to the Smarter Balanced Governing States the preliminary cut scores for each achievement level on the Grade 11 assessments. These preliminary cut scores will be revisited and revised as necessary in 2015. A College Content-Readiness Policy, available on the Consortium website, provides states with additional considerations and options for use of multiple measures to determine appropriate course placement in higher education.

Smarter Balanced is currently working with experts in career readiness to determine how the assessments can be used to advise students on their readiness to pursue a variety of postsecondary careers. The results from this process will be made available for public review in **Spring 2014**.

Reporting of Results

A web-based Smarter Balanced platform is being developed to manage data from the summative and interim assessments and provide clear, easy-to-understand information concerning student achievement and growth. The system will include 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.

Smarter Balanced has decided to use four achievement levels to report performance, with Level 3 serving as the indicator of college content-readiness or adequate progress toward that goal.

In both ELA/literacy and mathematics, the reports will include total scores for individual students that are reported on the vertical growth scale and in terms of within-grade performance category. In addition, four claim level scores will be reported for each student. For mathematics, the claim level

scores will be in concepts and procedures, problem-solving, communicating reasoning, and modeling/data analysis. For ELA/literacy, the claim level scores will be in reading, writing, listening, and research. Group-level reports (e.g., for grades, schools) will include total scores and claim level scores. The reporting system also can be filtered by demographic information.

Smarter Balanced hopes to benchmark results from the summative assessments to the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) and to PISA, an international assessment, to provide the public and policymakers with a larger context for understanding the performance of students in their state.

The interim assessments will be available in two formats: the Interim Comprehensive Assessment (ICA) and Interim Assessment Blocks (IAB), described below. The ICA will yield the same reports as the summative assessment. The IAB will focus on small clusters of content. The reports for the IAB will be consistent with the claim level reporting on the summative assessment.

Projected Costs

A Spring 2013 cost analysis based on the final design of the assessment system projects the cost to participating states as $22.50 per student per year for the summative assessments, including both ELA/literacy and mathematics, and an additional $4.80 per student per year (for a total of $27.30) for states that subscribe to the optional interim and formative package of services.

The $22.50 cost is comprised of two parts. The first is a $6.20 per student 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 11. The second part is an estimated $16.30 per student cost that supports implementation and administration provided through within-state services or through contracts with vendors. Such services include, 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 $16.30 cost is an estimate based on industry benchmarks as of Spring 2013.

States also may elect to subscribe to additional state-use secure assessments for Grades 9, 10, and 12. Pricing for these is the same as for Grades 3-8 and 11 — $22.50 per student per year — but applies only to the number of 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. The above costs are for use of the computer-based assessments.

The projected cost for the paper-and-pencil version in 2014-15 is $33.50 per student for delivery and scoring of the ELA/literacy and mathematics assessments.

OTHER ASSESSMENTS, RESOURCES, AND TOOLS

Sample Items and Practice Tests

On the Smarter Balanced website, educators and parents can view sample assessment items and performance tasks to gain a deeper understanding of the academic expectations at each grade level. Most constructed-response and technology-enhanced items can be scored automatically, and many items include downloadable scoring rubrics.

In addition, in **Spring 2013** Smarter Balanced made practice tests available to the public online. Practice tests are provided for each Grade, 3-8 and 11, giving students the opportunity to experience a range of grade-specific item types similar in format and structure to the Smarter Balanced assessments. They include both performance tasks and items mirroring those in the computer adaptive testing component. The practice tests are not adaptive in delivery, but do utilize the same computer interface and include a number of the accessibility tools for all students as well as those for English language learners and students with disabilities that will be available on the summative assessments. Educators may use the practice tests in their professional development activities, in discussions with parents and policymakers, and in their classrooms to help students become familiar with the system interface, item types, and performance tasks. The practice tests will be publicly accessible through Fall 2014 when the Interim Assessment System becomes operational.

In January 2014, Smarter Balanced also introduced a training test. It consists of 14-15 items in ELA/literacy and mathematics, organized by grade band (3-5, 6-8, and high school). It contains all of the summative assessment item types, exclusive of performance tasks. The purpose of the training test is to quickly familiarize students with the software interface, accessibility and accommodations resources, and item types they will encounter on the upcoming field test and operational assessment. The training test may be particularly beneficial for students who have not previously experienced online testing.

Optional Interim Assessments

Optional interim computer adaptive assessments will be available for Grades 3-8 and 11 in ELA/literacy and mathematics beginning in late **Fall 2014**. A gradual rollout of interim assessments will take place throughout the 2014-15 school year. These assessments are part of the optional interim and formative package of services described in the "Projected Costs" section above.

Optional interim computer adaptive assessments will be available for Grades 3-8 and 11 in ELA/literacy and mathematics beginning in late Fall 2014.

All Smarter Balanced summative and interim items and tasks are being developed through a single process and field tested in **Spring 2014**. In **Summer 2014**, all items and tasks that have met professional criteria for use will be divided into two item banks: a secure one for summative assessment use and an open one for interim assessment use. This process will ensure that the interim assessments mirror the summative assessments.

Two modes of test administration will be available for interim assessments, both of which can be given multiple times per year at the discretion of the state, district, or school. One mode, the Interim Comprehensive Assessment (ICA), mirrors the length and scope of the summative assessment. It yields a score on the same scale that can be used as a growth or achievement metric, as a predictor of the end-of-year summative assessment, and/or as a means to track students' progress throughout the year. A teacher may opt to use the ICA at the beginning of the school year for students who did not participate in the summative assessment at the end of the prior year.

The second mode is called Interim Assessment Blocks (IAB). Each IAB focuses on a smaller set of skills and is being designed to produce more targeted information about student performance. An IAB can be administered based on local scope and sequence to check for understanding at the end of a unit of instruction. As with the ICA, IAB use will be determined at the state, district or school level. Teachers can use an IAB as a pre- or post-instruction assessment. For example, a teacher may use a writing IAB following a series of instructional units on persuasive writing.

The interim assessments are not intended for accountability purposes and the item bank is not secure. As a result, interim assessment items may be used by educators for professional development and/or instructional purposes. Future enhancements to the interim assessment include the capacity to search the item bank, item mapping, and possibly the option for teachers to view the items given to each student and the student's responses (e.g. item level reporting).

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. All components in the platform will be open source and Smarter Balanced is actively cultivating partnerships with other assessment providers to make use of the same tools and technology. This platform, to be launched in phases beginning in April 2014, will include:

System Portal: This portal will serve as the single point of entry for educators, students, parents, and policymakers to all components of the system. The portal includes single sign-on to all Smarter Balanced services and administrative features for the creation and management of accounts for state, district and school personnel.

Digital Library: This is an online collection of professional learning and instructional resources supporting classroom formative assessment practices. The platform is designed to help educators easily find materials and to encourage professional learning communities to improve teaching and learning. Key features of the portal include:

- State-of-the-art tagging and search features that help educators quickly find resources related to Common Core State Standards, formative assessment practices, media type, etc.

- Ability to download resources to use in all educational settings
- Feedback system that encourages users to rate the resources and post comments
- Networking features that enable educators from across the Consortium to collaborate and share their knowledge virtually

Several school districts in member states will pilot the Digital Library in **Spring 2014**. It will be open to all registered members in late **Summer 2014**.

For more information about the contents of the Digital Library, see Curriculum Materials on page 26.

Item Development/Scoring Training Modules: Online training modules will be available for both development of assessment items/tasks and for scoring of both items and tasks. Educators who successfully complete the training will gain access to item authoring and scoring software.

Item and Test Authoring: These systems will support a community of educators to contribute to the pool of assessment items. It will support the workflow process to draft, refine and review assessment items. Items will be managed in large assessment item banks before periodically being collected into test packages for use in the test delivery and scoring systems.

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

[5] 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.

Test Registration, Delivery and Scoring: While Smarter Balanced is developing the open source code base, member states are responsible for independently procuring test registration, delivery and scoring services. This includes automated scoring of many items plus management of human scoring for the remainder. Test registration, delivery and scoring services will be provided to states through a community of test delivery vendors. Vendors will likely use a mix of the Smarter Balanced open source code and their own proprietary code. In 2014, Smarter Balanced will launch a certification program for test delivery vendors that includes the source code, format specifications and support that vendors need to properly deliver and score Smarter Balanced assessments.

Data Warehouse and Reporting: Smarter Balanced will maintain a secure data warehouse on behalf of all member states. An associated reporting system will grant authorized users access to reports as described in the "Reporting of Results" section above. The data warehouse and reporting system will be capable of generating aggregate reports for all states. Individual student reports will only be generated for states that choose to make Smarter Balanced the custodian of student identity data (e.g. student name, date of birth). States that choose not to share identity data will need to operate their own data warehouse and reporting system for the generation of individual student reports.

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[4]." First, as described above, Smarter Balanced will offer 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/literacy and mathematics[5]. Second, 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 students scores not only within Smarter Balanced, but also across the two comprehensive assessment 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 career.

CAPACITY BUILDING

Smarter Balanced is providing direct support to member states and their districts. The Consortium also is engaging teachers, school leaders and other educators in the development of the assessments and formative support resources. Funding for these efforts is being provided through both the supplemental Race to the Top grant and additional grants secured by the Consortium. The primary forms of support and engagement are as follows:

Collaboration Conferences

Twice each year, Smarter Balanced convenes participants from member states for a week of collaborative work and decision-making. The Collaboration Conference brings together K-12 and higher education state leads, chief state school officers, work group members, and vendors. On days one and two of the conference, K-12 and higher education leads discuss key issues confronting the Consortium. On day two, chief state school officers join the meeting and a public session is held at which key votes are taken. On days three and four, work group volunteers and vendors meet to collaborate on important elements of the design and build-out of the assessment system.

Pilot and Field Test Item Development

Several hundred educators from member states were trained in item development and participated in the development and review of items and tasks for the Spring 2013 pilot test and Spring 2014 field test.

Curriculum Materials

As part of the Consortium's commitment to help teachers prepare students for college and careers, the Digital Library will contain a collection of professional learning and instructional resources supporting classroom formative assessment practices. All materials in the Digital Library will be fully vetted against quality criteria developed by a Formative Assessment Advisory Panel of experts. Currently, the professional learning resources and instructional resources will come from three sources:

- **State Network of Educator (SNE) members:** Over 1,700 K-12 and higher education faculty with a variety of expertise — including Common Core for ELA/literacy and mathematics, the formative assessment process, and diverse learners — are part of the SNEs in member states. They will create their own materials or adapt or extend other materials to meet the expectations set by the quality criteria. Examples include lesson plans and unit plans to implement the Common Core using the formative assessment process, research-based instructional strategies for diverse learners, performance tasks, rubrics, and professional learning materials.

- **Teacher Ambassadors from the National Education Association (NEA) and American Federation of Teachers (AFT):** Funded by a grant from the Helmsley Charitable Trust, Smarter Balanced, NEA, and AFT are partnering to educate Teacher Ambassadors from member states on the Smarter Balanced Assessment System, including how the summative, interim, and formative components contribute to evidence-based decisions about teaching and learning. NEA Ambassadors will turnkey this information to other educators and post the professional learning materials they develop to the Digital Library. AFT Ambassadors will apply this information to develop Common-Core-aligned lessons that will be posted in the Digital Library.

- **Commissioned Modules:** Smarter Balanced has contracted to develop interactive, online modules for Assessment Literacy and Exemplar Instruction. The Assessment Literacy Modules will provide information on the summative, interim, and formative components of the Smarter Balanced Assessment System, provide details about the formative assessment process and its impact on teaching and learning, and highlight effective formative assessment strategies. Exemplar Instruction modules will provide instructional materials that demonstrate how to use effective formative assessment practices to teach key content and practices from the Common Core for ELA/literacy and mathematics. These modules will include a supplementary toolkit with materials to use with students, background on the standard(s) highlighted, strategies for meeting the needs of diverse learners, and more.

Several school districts in member states will pilot the Digital Library in early Spring 2014. It will be open to all registered members in late **Summer 2014**.

TECHNOLOGY

Smarter Balanced has already accelerated the development of technological solutions that support improved teaching and learning. The Spring 2013 pilot test assessed approximately 650,000 students by the end of May 2013, and was delivered without significant disruption using the beta version of the Smarter Balanced test delivery software. This software will be further tested in **Spring 2014** when more than 3 million students participate in the field test. 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 system will be available for states and vendors to use to deliver the Smarter Balanced item pool. Additionally, because it is open source, the assessment software will be freely available for other assessment applications, such as assessments in other content areas.

In February 2012, Smarter Balanced released the information technology (IT) systems architecture report, which defined how the technology components work together so that the entire assessment system meets the needs of its various members and user groups. This report has guided 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 information technology systems architecture requires interoperability (i.e., 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. Smarter Balanced Governing States agreed to the principle that states will retain control of all student assessment data and the Consortium. Consistent with that principle, Smarter Balanced has offered states a model data security policy to implement with their contractors.

Many states and districts are concerned that they will not have adequate technology infrastructure to implement new online assessment systems in 2014-15. Smarter Balanced and PARCC 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. In addition to concerns about hardware, bandwidth capacity has been a concern because the assessments are delivered over the Internet. Smarter Balanced has made available a bandwidth checker that schools can use to see if they have sufficient bandwidth to test a given number of students simultaneously.

SUSTAINABILITY

The federal grant providing the majority of funding for the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium will expire in Fall 2014. In March 2013, based on the recommendation of a Sustainability Task Force, the Governing States approved a motion to establish an affiliation with the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA), to begin after the federal grant concludes. 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 are ongoing, with a target date to initiate transition activities in **Spring/Summer 2014**.

Nonmember Access to Smarter Balanced Resources

The Race to the Top Assessment Program required that each Consortium receiving these federal funds make its resources available to nonmembers at a cost no greater than the cost to members. To implement this requirement, Smarter Balanced has adopted a policy for nonmember access. The policy, available on the website, stipulates:

- Nonmembers may gain access to Consortium resources by paying the same per-student annual membership fee established by the member states.
- Payment of this access fee does not enable nonmembers to contribute to or approve Consortium policies or setting of the budget and membership fees.
- Nonmembers agree to maintain the security of Consortium materials and to administer assessments in accordance with Consortium test administration manuals and copyright agreements, and to submit to Consortium certification results prior to reporting results on the Smarter Balanced scale.

Smarter Balanced TIMELINE

SUMMATIVE ASSESSMENT	
2013–14	Initial set of Exemplar Instructional Modules, including formative assessment tasks and tools and training templates, released (Spring) Field testing includes test of the items, tasks, and systems for administration, scoring and reporting (March-June) Digital Library available to registered users in selected districts (April)
2014-15	Calibration and scaling of item pool (Summer) Field tested and approved items and tasks divided into summative and interim item pools (Summer) Initial standard setting (Fall) Additional Exemplar Instructional Modules released (Fall) Interim assessments (gradual rollout beginning lateFall) Summative assessments available (Spring) Final achievement standards for summative assessments verified and adopted (Summer)

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

Key Similarities and Differences of the Comprehensive Assessment Consortia

Table 1 (continued on next page)

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:

- Online practice tests by grade/course
- Optional diagnostic/interim assessments
- Professional development modules
- Formative items/tasks for classroom use
- Online reporting suite
- Digital library for sharing vetted resources and tools
- State ownership and control of all individual student data, as is currently the case for state assessments

Key Differences

PARCC	Smarter Balanced
Summative Assessments for Accountability	
• Summative assessments for Grades 3-11	• Summative assessments for Grades 3-8 and 11 (states can add Grades 9, 10 and/or 12 at an additional cost per student tested)
• End of year test: Fixed-form delivery (students take one of several fixed, equated sets of items and tasks)	• End of year test: Adaptive delivery (students see an individually tailored set of items and tasks)
• Performance-based assessment: 3 ELA performance tasks and 1 or more mathematics tasks	• Performance tasks: 1 ELA performance task and 1 mathematics performance task
• Reporting results: Student performance will be reported as one of five Performance Levels	• Reporting results: Student achievement will be reported as one of four Achievement Levels
• Language translations to be provided at additional cost	• Language translations provided at no additional cost in Spanish, Vietnamese, Arabic, Tagalog, Ilokano, Cantonese, Mandarin, Korean, Punjabi, Russian, and Ukranian
• One retake opportunity for Grades 3-8 and up to three for high school, with state approval	• One retake opportunity, but only for instances of a test administration irregularity
• Estimated total testing time for combined ELA and mathematics, spread over nine testing sessions: ○ Grade 3 . . . . . 8 hours ○ Grades 4-5. . . . . 9 hours and 20 minutes ○ Grades 6-8. . . . . 9 hours and 25 minutes ○ Grades 9-10. . . . . 9 hours and 45 minutes ○ Grade 11 . . . . . 9 hours 55 minutes	• Estimated total testing time[1] for combined ELA and mathematics, spread over several testing sessions, over several days: ○ Grades 3-5. . . . . 7 hours ○ Grades 6-8. . . . . 7 hours and 30 minutes ○ Grade 11 . . . . . 8 hours and 30 minutes
• Paper-and-pencil version available as accommodation and, for the 2014-15 school year, for schools approved by their state	• Paper-and-pencil version available as accommodation and for three years for schools not ready for online delivery

[1] The summative assessments are untimed, so these estimates are descriptive only.

Key Similarities and Differences of the Comprehensive Assessment Consortia

Table 1 (continued from previous page)

Key Differences (continued)

PARCC	Smarter Balanced
Assessment Delivery	
• States and districts select from a set of 4-week testing windows, one for the performance-based assessments and one for the end-of-year assessments • A vendor delivery platform will be used through 2014-15 (TestNav), after which a PARCC-developed, open source or fully documented delivery system will be available to member states and their contractors • All system components delivered and operational in the 2014-15 school year with the exception of K-1 formative tools, diagnostic assessments, speaking/listening assessment, and PARCC test delivery platform	• States establish one 12-week testing window for Grades 3-8 and one 7-week testing window for Grade 11 for the summative assessments • An open source delivery system is being developed and will be made freely available to states and vendors for delivery of Smarter Balanced assessments and other assessment applications • All system components delivered and operational in the 2014-15 school year
Other Assessments, Resources and Tools	
• A diagnostic assessment (Grades 2-8) and a mid-year assessment (Grades 3-11), with the latter made up primarily of tasks similar to the summative performance-based tasks (optional use) • A speaking and listening assessment for Grades K-12 (required for Grades 3-8 and high school but not used for accountability), locally scored • K-1 formative performance tasks (optional use) • (Future) Item bank with released summative items and tasks • State-developed formative and diagnostic tools will be added to the Partnership Resource Center	• Interim assessments for Grades 3-8 and 11 (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. Item bank can be accessed by educators for instructional and professional development uses (optional use). • Exemplar instructional modules, three per grade level in ELA/literacy and mathematics, with teacher training resources; additional instructional resources submitted by educators that meet quality criteria • Formative tools, processes and practices available in digital library
Sustainability Model	
• Independent nonprofit organization governed by Chief School Officers of PARCC states, PARCC, Inc.	• Affiliation being established with CRESST at UCLA
Costs	
• $29.50 per student for summative assessments in 2014-15 includes centralized delivery and scoring • Cost of optional resources to be announced	• $22.50 per student for summative assessments in 2014-15 includes estimated costs for state-determined delivery and scoring • Additional $4.80 per student annually for optional resources

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. The assessment system will be **ready for operational use in the 2014-15 school year.**

DLM At a Glance

- MEMBERSHIP: 18 member states, including Alaska, Colorado, Illinois, Iowa, Kansas, Michigan, Mississippi, Missouri, New Jersey, North Carolina, North Dakota, Oklahoma, Utah, Vermont, Virginia, Washington, West Virginia, and Wisconsin.
- 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 project evaluation; and The Arc on family constituency involvement
- AWARD: $24.8 million from the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs
- WEBSITE: www.dynamiclearningmaps.org

This information is accurate as of February 1, 2014.

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.

ALTERNATE ACHIEVEMENT STANDARDS AND LEARNING MAPS

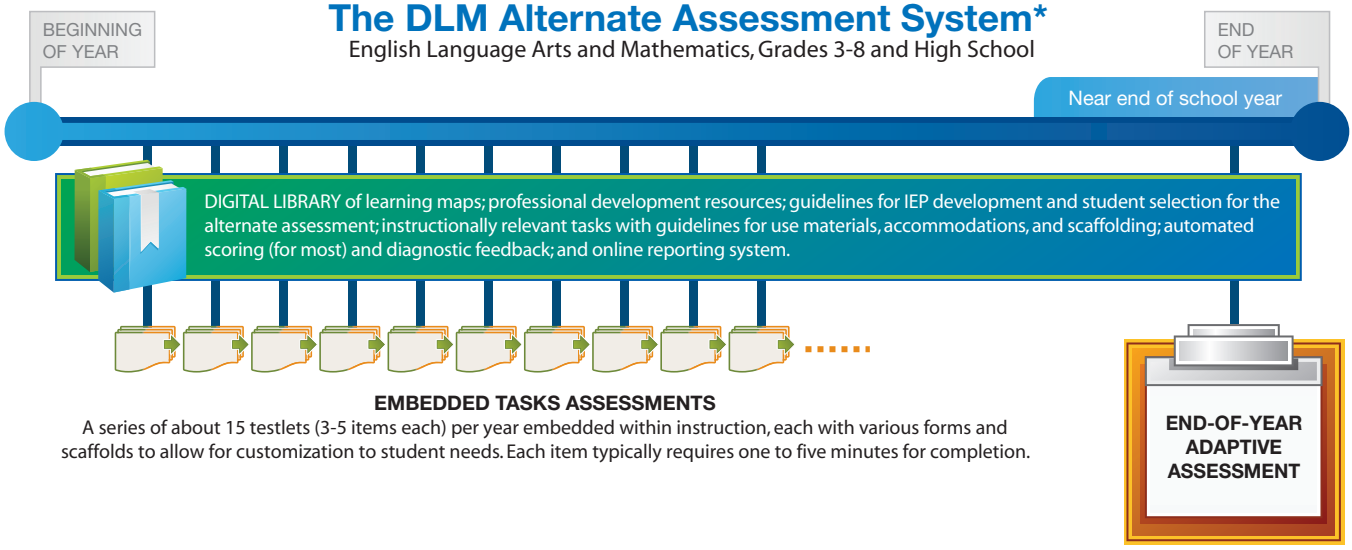
The alternate achievement standards that will be assessed are the DLM Essential Elements (DLM EE). These are statements of the knowledge and skills linked to grade level expectations for students requiring an alternate assessment. The Essential Elements also will serve as the primary content standards for instruction, as they provide teachers with important end-of-year instructional targets. The Essential Elements in mathematics and ELA were finalized in **January 2014** and are available on the DLM website.

The DLM assessment system is based on the use of learning maps, which are similar to road maps 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 Essential Elements and associated linkage levels (the local pathway to that essential element).

A fundamental feature of learning maps is that they do not assume all students take the same learning pathway, but rather allow and provide support for multiple pathways. In addition, the maps show all the "places" a student must travel through to get to the learning destination.

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 and that appears on assessments — 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:

[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.



* Alternate assessment systems are those developed for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities and are based on alternate achievement standards.
** Research will be conducted to review the technical feasibility of using data from the tasks for summative accountability purposes.

- Related precursor academic skills needed to master the tested skill
- Communication skills required to communicate their answers through speech, pointing or other means
- Attention skills, i.e. 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 the skill does not disadvantage some groups. Each skill was written with structured scaffolding so it can be accessed through multiple cognitive pathways, where applicable, and measured appropriately.

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.

SUMMATIVE ASSESSMENTS FOR ACCOUNTABILITY

DLM will build and deliver both an instructionally embedded and end-of-year assessment for Grades 3-8 and high school, as illustrated in the diagram above. Contingent on DLM program research to be completed by the end of Summer 2014, each Consortium member will determine whether accountability scores for their state should be based on one, the other, or a hybrid of the two. All options are based on the DLM learning maps, which allow many options for customizing the assessment to the individual abilities and needs of students. In addition, both types of assessments are untimed, allow the educator to restart or resume the assessment at a later time, and are designed to provide teachers, students and parents detailed information to guide and support learning.

Item, Task and Testlet Development

A variety of item types will be utilized in the DLM assessments, 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.

More than 100 educators from DLM member states with in-depth knowledge of academic content, classroom instructional practices, or the special education SWD population, participated in the development of the instructionally relevant activities, items, and tasks that will comprise the more than 6,500 DLM testlets in ELA and mathematics.

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

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

A testlet is a set of 3-5 tasks that model good instruction and that teachers would be interested in using for purely instructional purposes. Multiple testlets are available for each assessed skill to allow for differentiation based on student needs and disabilities, including the use of assistive technology devices. For each testlet in the assessment system, teachers are provided with lists of materials or manipulatives needed, allowed accommodations and prohibited accommodations, and levels of scaffolding. Most testlets are expected to require between 10 and 30 minutes for students to complete, depending on the particular needs of the student.

Pilot Testing

DLM conducted pilot testing in a sample of schools in **December 2013**. Approximately 1,800 students across three grade bands — 3/4, 7/8, and 10/11 – took both the ELA and the mathematics assessment, which together required approximately 60 minutes to complete. The tests were untimed and administered by the classroom educator using the DLM assessment delivery system.

Field Testing

DLM will conduct field testing among all volunteer schools in **Spring and Fall 2014**. Approximately 3,000 students at each grade level will participate. Each field test will take a typical student about 45-60 minutes, but ample breaks will be available for students who require them. The tests are untimed and will be administered by the classroom educator using the DLM assessment delivery system. Results from the field test will inform final testlet selection.

Assessment Delivery

The DLM system utilizes dynamic adaptive delivery, which is a variant of computer adaptive testing. 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 selects the next item based on several pieces of information, including the student's level of success with the previous testlet and the position in the learning map of the skills tapped by the task.

For the instructionally-embedded activities, at the completion of each testlet the teacher will receive instructional recommendations. Teachers may utilize those recommendations or may choose to focus on a different skill in order to keep the assessment aligned with instruction.

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, or in combination with, the stand-alone summative assessment.

Supports for Students with Disabilities and English Language Learners

The presentation of items will vary based on the cognitive and sensory abilities and needs of the 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.

Student Participation Guidelines

In **Fall 2013**, the DLM member states agreed on principles underlying student participation guidelines, an important step required by the federal grant. To qualify a student for use of the DLM Alternate Assessment, educators must answer yes to each of three questions:

- Does the student have a significant cognitive disability?
- Are DLM Essential Elements the primary content standards for the student's instruction?
- Does the student require extensive, direct, individualized instruction and substantial supports to achieve measurable gains in the grade- and age- appropriate curriculum?

Member states may modify this guidance as needed to fit their particular policies.

Scoring

The majority of items and tasks 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.

DLM plans to offer member states three options for use as the summative assessment: the end-of-year assessment, the embedded items and tasks given throughout the school year, or a hybrid of the two."

Measuring Growth

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, DLM plans to offer states three options for use as the summative assessment: the end-of-year assessment, the embedded items and tasks given throughout the school year, or a hybrid of the two. Decisions regarding the availability of the three options are to be made by the end of Summer 2014.

Reporting of Results

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, and parents. These reports and accompanying interpretive guides will be designed to communicate what students know and can do in the context of the learning map 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.

Costs

Each DLM member state that has joined since the award of the grant pays a membership fee of $20,000 per year to cover incremental participation costs. The fee, which will be charged only through the Spring of 2015, entitles states to full voting participation in the Consortium's decisions and access to technical assistance and professional development materials.

In addition, member states will pay $78 per student in 2015-16 for administration, scoring and reporting of the embedded and end-of-year assessments, help desk support, and access to all DLM professional development materials. While the DLM assessments increase the technical quality, accessibility, and range of item types included, the cost is much less than most states have been paying for alternate assessments, due in large part to the cost savings that result from shared development and support services.

OTHER RESOURCES AND TOOLS

Professional Development Resources

The Center for Literacy and Disability Studies at 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.

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: a) the presentation of information and content; b) the types of responses students can give to express what they know; and c) the engagement of students[1].

Professional development modules created to date are available through DLM's digital library, and more will be added over time. Each includes video segments featuring students with significant cognitive disabilities. In addition, each module is available in two primary formats to allow each member state to choose how best to implement professional development:

- Self-directed modules, which combine videos, text, and activities and require 30 to 40 minutes to complete
- Facilitated modules, which are intended for small groups and face-to-face meetings, and include videos for delivery of the content as well as all handouts and materials needed for facilitation. Both self-directed and facilitated modules include a post-test that can be taken to earn state professional development credits.

These professional development materials are be accessible via a variety of digital devices including computers, tablets, MP3 players, and smartphones.

These professional development materials are accessible via a variety of digital devices including computers, tablets, MP3 players, and smartphones. Educators can view and download print materials, register for professional development classes that states or districts might offer, and access online professional development modules from the State Member section of the DLM website.

Virtual Community of Practice

In **September 2013**, DLM launched a Virtual Community of Practice website (**www.dlmpd.com/clds/hello-world/**), available to all educators of students with significant cognitive disabilities across DLM member states, allowing them to share materials, insights, and expertise. The site currently contains a blog, topical and grade-band discussion groups, materials exchange, and information about DLM instructional resources. The site is moderated by faculty and staff at the Center for Literacy and Disability Studies at the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill.

Exemplar Text Supports and Familiar Texts

Within the Common Core standards for ELA/Literacy, Appendix B contains a list of Exemplar

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

Texts recommended for use with regular education students. A challenge often faced by educators of students with significant disabilities is finding materials that link directly to the content of the grade level and are accessible to their students. DLM is creating a library of accessible, open-source, easy-to-read texts for each grade level that go with the Exemplar Texts. These books are organized by grade level and title of the corresponding Exemplar Texts at **www.dynamiclearningmaps.org/unc/texts/index.html**.

To support students with the most complex disabilities, DLM also will provide advance access to the texts used within the ELA assessments. The familiar texts for the field test are available from the Instructional Resources page of the Virtual Community of Practice website (see page 36).

Support for Other Content Areas

While development work in content areas outside of ELA and mathematics are not within the current DLM Consortium grant, a subset of member states have committed to the state-funded development of a science alternate assessment.

TECHNOLOGY

DLM will utilize the KITE™, a platform developed by the Center for Educational Testing and Evaluation (CETE) at the University of Kansas, to deliver its testing programs, including all DLM assessments.

Piloted in three states in 2012 and about 15 states in 2013, 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. The software will be further tested during the 2013-14 field test.

To help schools prepare for the DLM web-based assessments, the Consortium has provided technology requirements guidance and a Bandwidth Estimation Tool. Schools can use them to determine, given their number of devices, whether the building has enough bandwidth to allow simultaneous testing of the desired number of students. See more on this at: **http://dynamiclearningmaps.org/assessment/faq.html#q2**

SUSTAINABILITY

After the grant period, the organizational structure for the DLM Consortium will remain largely as it is now, with representatives of member states and selected organizational partners serving on the governing board and the Center for Educational Testing and Evaluation (CETE) at the University of Kansas serving as the host, fiscal agent and project manager.

DLM TIMELINE

2013-2014	Professional development modules ready for use Field testing conducted using test delivery software (Spring)
2014-2015 school year	Field testing, part 2 (Fall) DLM instructionally embedded tasks available for use (September 2014) DLM stand-alone summative test available (Spring 2015)
June-September 2015	Professional development program validated Standard setting and performance modeling Assessment system evaluated

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 to design and implement appropriate instruction that addresses content and skill expectations aligned to the Common Core standards. The summative assessments will be **ready for operational use in the 2014-15 school year**. When complete, the assessment system and accompanying resources will be made available to all states, regardless of their participation in the original grant.

ALTERNATE ACHIEVEMENT STANDARDS

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 definition of college-and-career readiness then informed the use of research-based learning progression frameworks that describe a curricular sequence for how typical students develop and demonstrate more sophisticated understanding in each content area over time.

From the learning progression frameworks for mathematics and English language arts (ELA), NCSC developed 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 address these grade-level learning targets, in the context of the broader curriculum for all students.

SUMMATIVE ASSESSMENTS FOR ACCOUNTABILITY

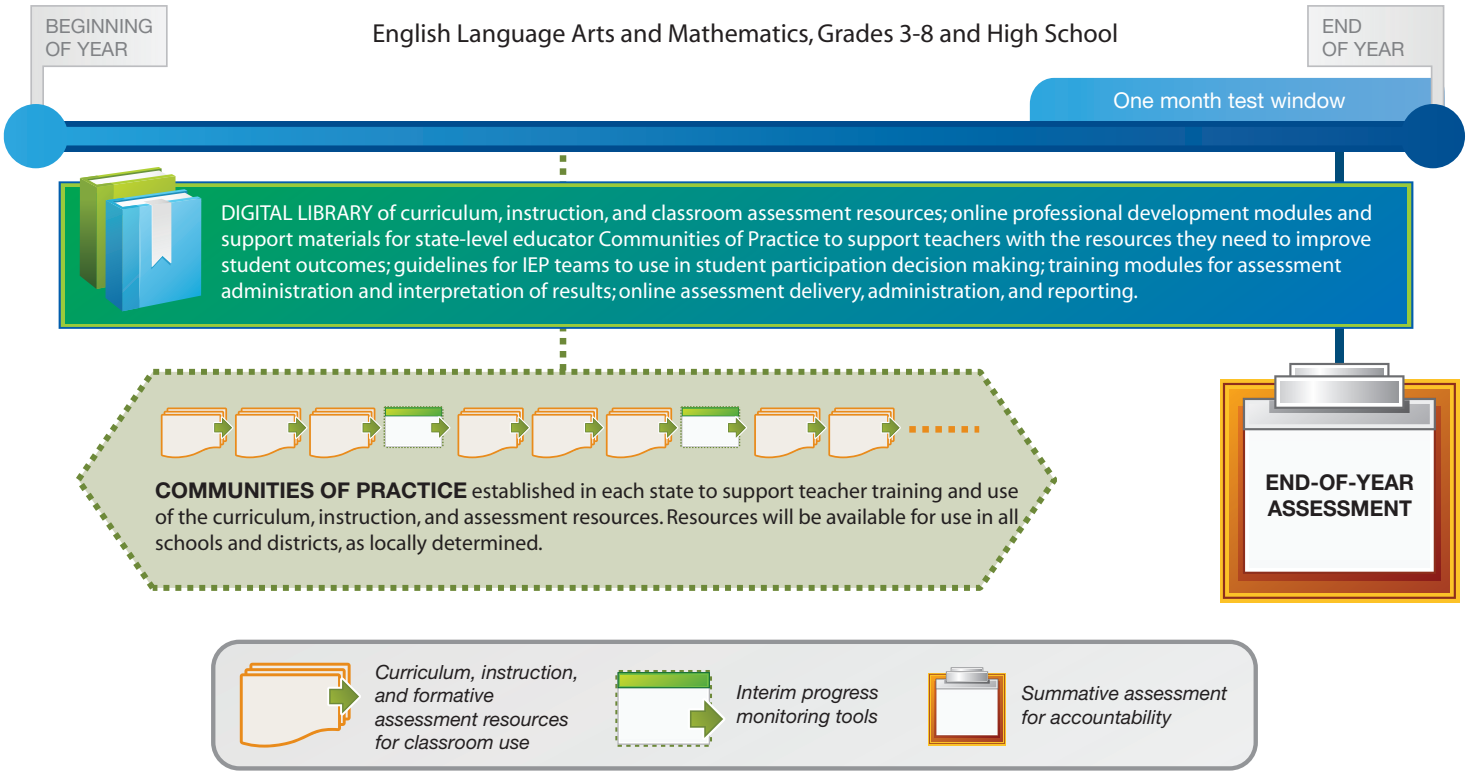
NCSC is designing summative assessments in ELA and mathematics for Grades 3-8 and 11 that coordinate with the general assessment used by each member state and produce scores that can be used for accountability purposes. NCSC is developing a technology-based management system to facilitate assessment administration, documentation, and reporting.

The NCSC summative assessments will be administered near the end of the school year and will be stage-adaptive (see Pilot Testing below for explanation). Under the project's grant, a minimum of two assessment forms per grade and content area will be developed. Each content area assessment will be composed of up to 30 items and, while untimed, is expected to require approximately 1.5 to 2 hours to administer.

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.

[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.

The NCSC Alternate Assessment System



NCSC At a Glance

- MEMBERSHIP: 25 states and jurisdictions serving approximately 150,000 students who participate in an alternate assessment based on alternate achievement standards. State partners are Arizona, Arkansas, California, Connecticut, Delaware, District of Columbia, Florida, Georgia, Idaho, Indiana, Louisiana, Maine, Maryland, Montana, New Mexico, New York, Oregon, Pacific Assessment Consortium*, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, South Carolina, South Dakota, Tennessee, the US Virgin Islands, and Wyoming.
- 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
- WEBSITE: **www.ncscpartners.org**

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

This information is accurate as of February 1, 2014.

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

Types of Items and Tasks

For each standard to be measured, an evidence-centered design (ECD) approach was used to determine the appropriate item type(s). Multiple items were then developed for each standard at four increasing levels of complexity, along with accommodations, to allow for measurement across the performance continuum. Most items will be machine-scored selected response, with several open response items scored by the test administrator and one writing constructed response.

Presentation of Items and Tasks

All items developed for the NCSC Alternate Achievement Standards were based on evidence-centered design (ECD), which considered the learning and communication modes of students with the most significant cognitive disabilities. Through the use of small-scale tryouts, observation protocols, and other methodologies, NCSC has developed the following assessment delivery process.

Assessment Delivery Process

Test administrators will be trained in the use of an online assessment delivery system to administer the annual assessment for each student during a month-long testing window in the Spring. Each of the two content area assessments, mathematics and ELA, will be composed of up to 30 items and will take approximately 1.5 to 2 hours to administer, divided across two or more testing sessions. The content being assessed will be standardized and accessibility parameters will be defined for each student's participation. Test administrators will be trained on assessment features and accommodations guidelines to ensure that each student can access the content and can respond. Students who are able to interact with the computer will enter their own responses directly into the online system. For other students, the test administrators will enter the student responses. In addition, a paper-and-pencil PDF version will be available to print at the item-by-item level.

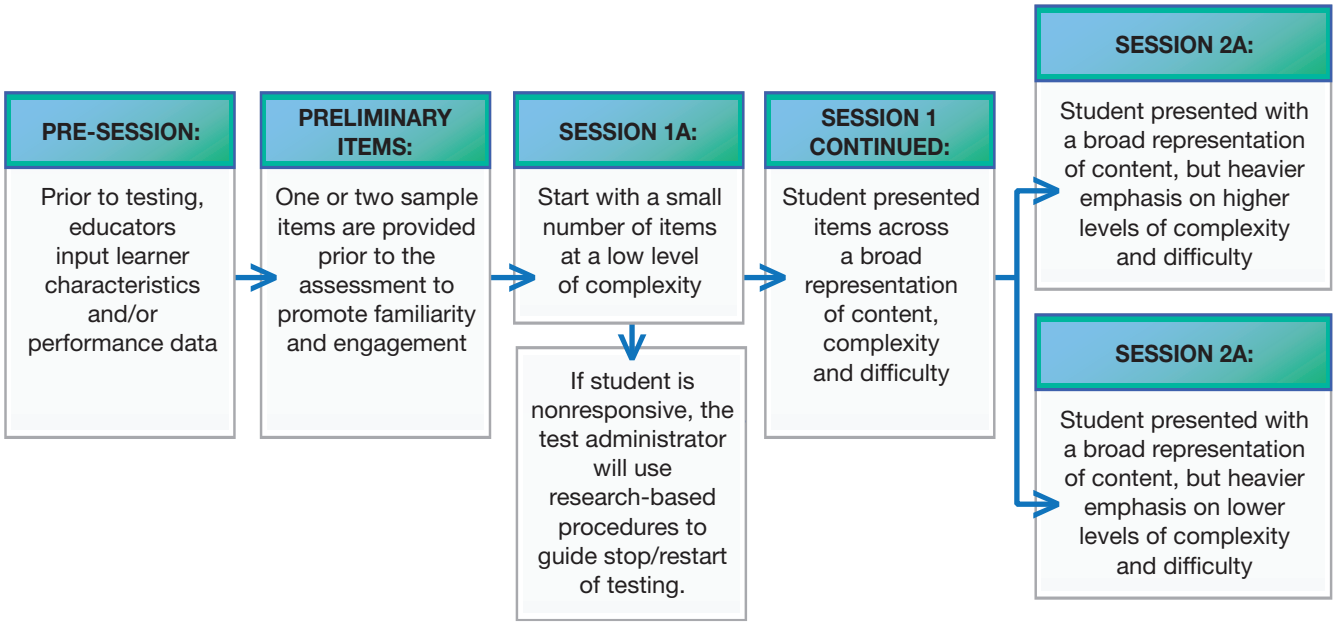
Pilot Testing

NCSC plans to conduct a two-phase pilot. Pilot 1 will occur in **Spring 2014**, and Pilot 2 will occur in **Fall 2014**. No individual results will be reported from either pilot test. Test administrator certification based on completion of the online training requirements and passing accompanying quizzes will be verified prior to both pilot administrations.

Pilot 1. NCSC is conducting pilot testing of all items in **Spring 2014** through a family of studies, including large-scale administration of all items in linear forms, plus several small-scale student interaction studies and accessibility feature try-outs. This will allow educators to provide valuable feedback on the item types, item presentation, administration procedures, and delivery system.

Pilot 2. The primary purpose of Pilot 2 is to examine the functionality of the stage-adaptive algorithm

Stage-Adaptive Assessment Delivery Process



and stage-adaptive testing process. Stage-adaptive test forms will be assembled based on preliminary data from Spring 2014 as part of Pilot 2 testing in **Fall 2014.** The basic structure of the stage-adaptive assessment is depicted in the chart on the previous page; however, the final structure of the stage-adaptive system will be defined after Pilot 1.

Students will be given one or two sample content-neutral items shortly before the test in order to promote familiarity with the testing platform. Next, a small number of items at a low level of complexity will be given and the teacher will check for engagement. If the student is engaged, more items will be presented to complete Session 1, with research-based procedures to guide stop/restart of testing. Based on the student's responses in Session 1, the student will be given items at a higher or lower level of complexity and difficulty during Session 2. The stage-adaptive process allows NCSC to balance the need for test standardization with the need to provide full access and a valid measure for each student.

Operational Testing

The operational stage-adaptive assessments will begin in **Spring 2015**. Validation studies and standard-setting will take place in Summer 2015. NCSC will create an online Test Administration Manual and professional development modules. Test administrator certification based on completion of the training requirements and passing accompanying quizzes will be verified prior to test administration.

Supports for English Language Learners and Students with Disabilities

Evidence-centered design has driven the development of NCSC items, including the designation of accessibility features and accommodations for each item. This process was used to maximize accessibility while maintaining the integrity of the constructs being assessed. NCSC summarizes its accessibility policies by identifying Optimal Testing Conditions, Assessment Features, and Accommodations. Although some of these are provided by the test administrator, for the operational test the built-in features will include: compatibility with assistive technology, text-to-speech, speech-to-text, amplification, color contrast, highlighting, increased size, and masking. Ongoing research may result in adjustments to the planned list of technology-embedded features and accommodations prior to the operational tests in **Spring 2015.**

Student Participation Guidelines

Member states adopted student participation criteria, an important step required by the federal grant. A student is eligible to participate in the NCSC Alternate Assessment if all of the following are true:

- The student has a significant cognitive disability.
- The student is learning content linked to the Common Core State Standards.
- The student requires extensive direct individualized instruction and substantial supports to achieve measurable gains in the grade- and age- appropriate curriculum.

All content areas should be considered when determining eligibility. The eligible student participates in both NCSC assessments: English language arts and mathematics.

The stage-adaptive process allows NCSC to balance the need for test standardization with the need to provide full access and a valid measure for each student.

Scoring

Most items will be automatically scored by the system. A few open-response items will be scored by the test administrator, based on scoring rubrics, and the accuracy of the student response will be entered into the online system. NCSC will investigate the accuracy, efficiency, and costs associated with scoring processes that may be used for constructed response items. Scores on the reading and writing assessments will be combined into a single ELA score and performance level.

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.

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 the Race to the Top initiative[2] and federal accountability requirements.

Reporting of Results

NCSC will report individual student scores and performance levels in ELA and mathematics. Separate information for writing will be reported, such as a raw score and/or a narrative description of student performance. At the total score level for ELA and mathematics, the scores will be comparable across years.

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.

The NCSC 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.

Costs

NCSC member states will be responsible for selected end-user costs associated with the administration of the operational assessments in Spring 2015, the final year of the grant, according to a formula determined by participating states. Costs for the 2015-16 school year and beyond, when the Consortium will be self-supporting, have not yet been finalized. Several scenarios and cost models are under consideration and states that have signed on to continue membership after the grant will make these determinations in coming months.

OTHER ASSESSMENTS, RESOURCES, AND TOOLS

NCSC is developing a range of resources and supports to help states and special educators meet the needs of students with significant cognitive disabilities so that these students achieve increasingly higher academic outcomes and leave high school ready for post-secondary options. The support resources being developed under the grant are described below.

Prototype Items

The NCSC project has developed a set of sample assessment items for teachers, administrators, and policymakers. These sample items do not cover all content that is assessed at each grade level, and not every item type is represented. The sample items provide a preview of the array of items and illustrate multiple item features that support the ways in which students with a wide range of learner characteristics interact with the assessment process. The items are not intended to be used as sample tests. These sample items will be available to the public after refinements based on data from pilot/field test studies are complete.

Formative and Interim Assessment Tools

In addition to developing the system of summative assessments, NCSC is integrating formative and interim tools as part of the comprehensive curriculum and instruction resources developed for use by teachers to monitor student progress throughout the school year. 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.

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

[2] NCSC was not funded through the Race to the Top Assessment Program so it is not held specifically to that program's requirements. It will, however, produce results that meet requirements of the larger Race to the Top initiative, such as their potential use in educator evaluations.

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 are consistent with their state transition to the Common Core.

NCSC Instructional Resources

The NCSC Partners have developed **a wiki** – a website that allows people to add, modify, or delete content in collaboration with others – to serve as their online resource library and collaboration hub (**http://wiki.ncscpartners.org**). The site currently hosts a set of curriculum and instruction resources, and will be added to over time. Noteworthy resources include:

Curriculum Resource Guides: These guides explain how to teach students with significant cognitive disabilities and provide examples for differentiating instruction. They are currently available online for:

- Mathematics: data analysis, equations, measurement and geometry, fractions and decimals, ratio and proportions
- ELA: reading informational texts, vocabulary acquisition and use

More topic areas will be posted during the final year of the project.

Content Modules: These modules focus on the concepts in the Common Core that may be difficult to teach or are unfamiliar to special education teachers. Currently eight ELA modules and eight mathematics modules provide explanations and examples of these core concepts, and can be used by teachers at all grades. The modules promote a foundational understanding of the concepts and provide potential adaptations and modifications to consider when designing materials and instruction.

Instructional Resource Guide: This guide provides information about the principles of Applied Behavior Analysis, instructional strategies, and guidelines for the use of prompting in instruction.

UDL Instructional Units: These model instructional units were developed using Universal Design for Learning. They are general education lessons that have been adapted by content experts and special educators to support inclusive education. They clarify the academic content and how to make it accessible for all students. Lessons incorporate multiple means of engagement, representation, and expression. Each unit includes an overview, key vocabulary, several

lessons, and a culminating activity. As of January 2014, the wiki contains one ELA unit and one mathematics unit at each level: elementary, middle, and high school. Training resources are provided so that teachers can develop their own UDL units by adapting general education lessons obtained from their peers or from online lesson banks.

Scripted Systematic Instruction: Available in both mathematics and ELA at each of three grade bands, these sample scripts demonstrate techniques of systematic instruction. As of January 2014, the wiki contains:

- Mathematics Activities for Scripted Systematic Instruction (MASSIs) available in four areas: equations, measurement and geometry, data analysis and ratios and proportions
- Language Arts Sample Systematic Instruction Scripts (LASSIs) available for information textTemplates and training are available for teachers to develop additional MASSIs and LASSIs for all content areas.

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 Training

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 is developing research-based guidelines, tools, and strategies for evaluating multiple measures of teacher and principal effectiveness. Professional development modules will be created to support appropriate use of these resources.

TECHNOLOGY

NCSC is using 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. The open-source TAO platform is the basis for NCSC's technology solution. NCSC is working with a contractor to extend and customize the software to support the required functions and meet the specialized needs of the project. Because the platform is open-source, states will have access to the software and source code for ongoing use, modification, and enhancement following the grant, with no licensing fees.

SUSTAINABILITY

NCSC states have formed a governance group that will lead all continuing development over the final 18 months of the grant and make decisions on the nature and size of the Consortium for the post-grant period. All project deliverables will be fully owned, operated, and managed by the member states. Deliverables include the open-source test delivery system; the summative assessment system; the technical reports, validity evaluation and ongoing research plan; the curriculum and instruction resources and wiki that include classroom assessment materials; and the professional development Learning Management System. Multiple scenarios and cost modeling are being studied to determine the governance structure and assessment models that will best meet the needs of member states over time.

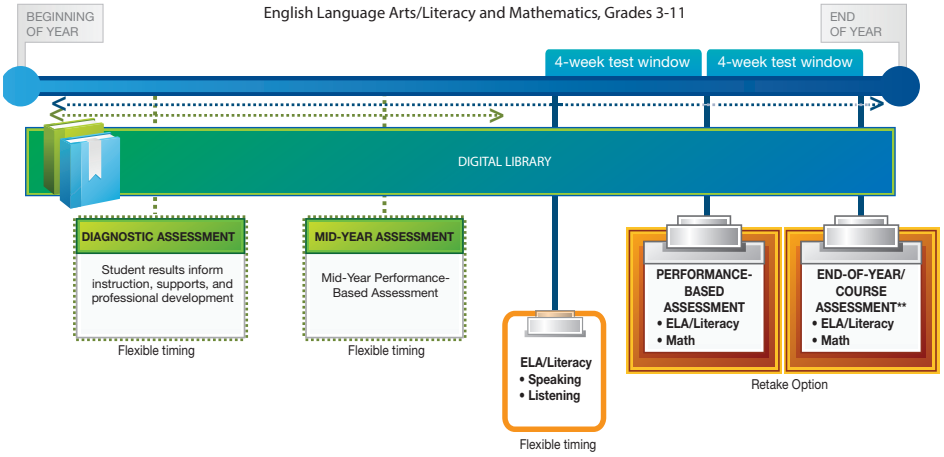
NCSC TIMELINE

2013-2014	Pilot 1 Family of Studies (Spring)
2014-2015	Develop final test blueprint, items, and reporting system Finalize test design and item banks Pilot 2 Testing of Forms (Fall) 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

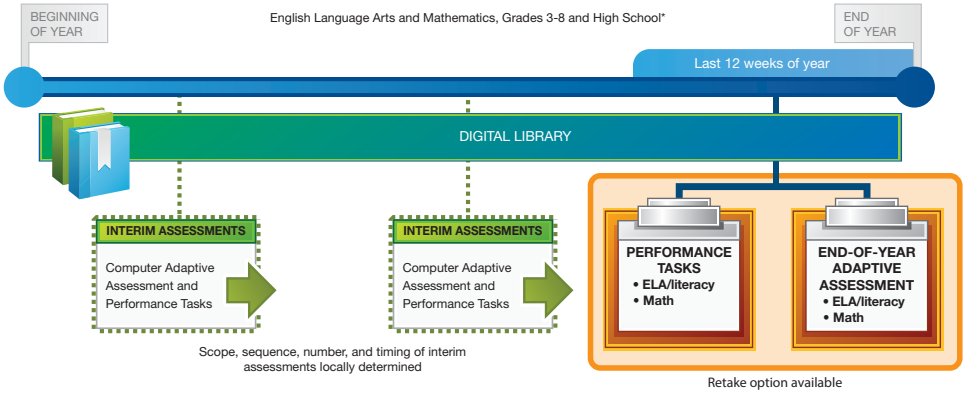
Side-by-side Comparison of Assessment Systems

Table 2

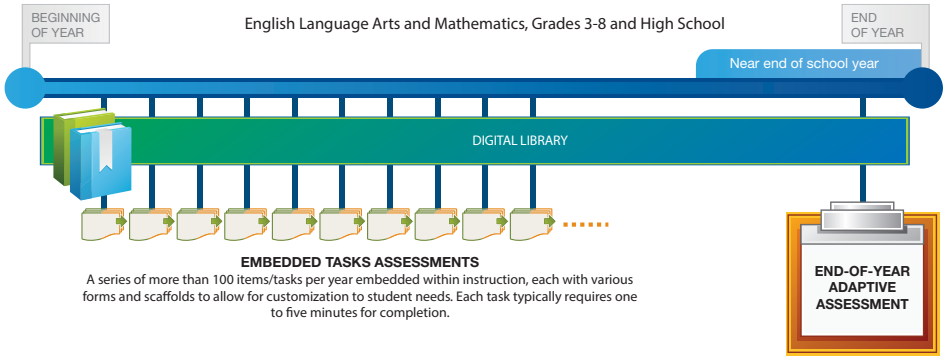
PARCC Assessment System



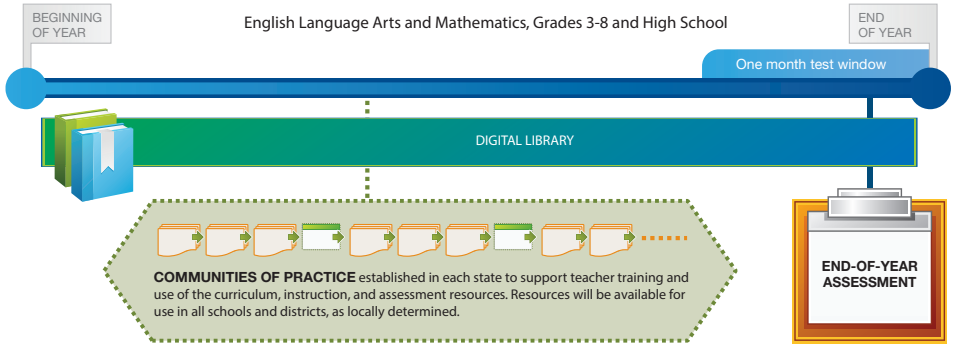
Smarter Balanced Assessment System



DLM Assessment System



NCSC Assessment System



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 language 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 language 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 **2015-16 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, referred to as ACCESS for ELLs 2.0, will measure student progress in attaining the academic English necessary to succeed in school and, ultimately, in post-secondary studies and work. It 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. The ASSETS 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 **ready for use in the 2015-16 school year.**

THE STANDARDS

All of the ASSETS system components and support materials will be grounded in the 2012 Amplification of the WIDA English Language Development Standards. This new edition of the standards includes grade-level examples to connect the standards to the Common Core and the Next Generation Science Standards, topically and linguistically, as well as to content standards of other states that are of comparable rigor.

There are five WIDA standards: social and instructional language, the language of mathematics, the language of language arts, the language of science, and the language of social studies. The standards, and examples described in the more granular model performance indicators, form the basis for all ASSETS assessment materials.

SUMMATIVE ASSESSMENTS FOR ACCOUNTABILITY

The annual summative assessment, ACCESS for ELLs 2.0, will be available in **2015-16**. It will build upon the existing paper-based ACCESS for ELLs® and transition to computer-based testing. The full computerized summative assessment will be administered in Grades 1-12 for accountability and program improvement purposes. The English language proficiency assessment 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.

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.

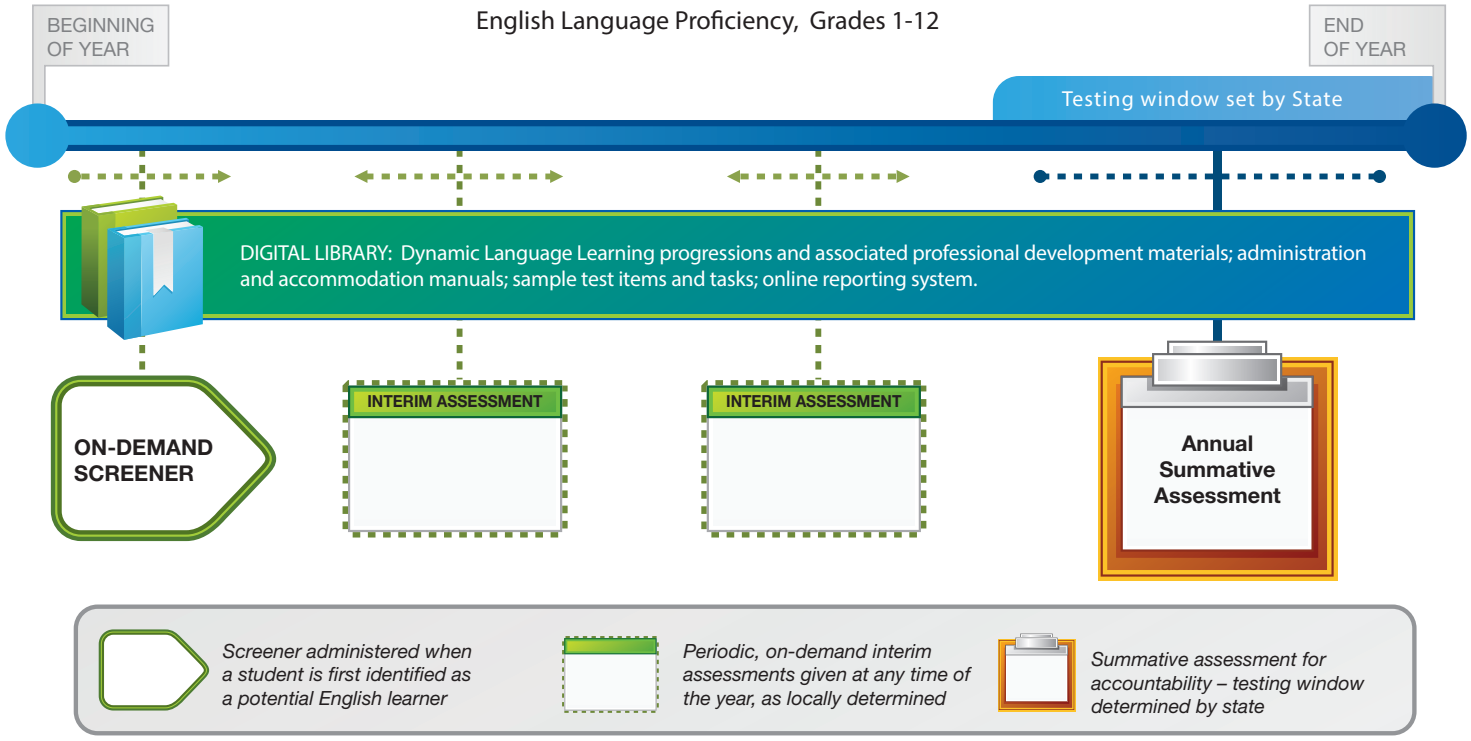
[1] Note that the Kindergarten assessment is not included in the grant and will remain an interactive, paper-based kit for the near future.

The summative assessment will include separate test forms for the following grade bands: 1, 2-3, 4-5, 6-8, and 9-12. For each grade band, it 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 include features such as the recording of students' spoken English. It will use the Accessible Portable Item Protocol (APIP) Standard to provide appropriate accessibility features and accommodations to all English language learners, including those with disabilities.

Items and Task Development

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. The listening and reading tests will be composed of selected response items. The writing test will be composed of extended constructed response items in which students respond to writing tasks. The speaking test will be composed of extended constructed response items and will include recording of students' speech. 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.

The ASSETS English Learning Proficiency Assessment System



Assessment Services Supporting English Learners Through Technology Systems (ASSETS) is a collaborative between World-Class Instructional Design and Assessment (WIDA), lead state Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, member states, and project partners.

ASSETS at a Glance

- MEMBERSHIP: 35 states* and jurisdictions including Alabama, Alaska, Colorado, Delaware, the District of Columbia, Idaho, Illinois, Kentucky, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, Mississippi, Missouri, Montana, Nevada, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New Mexico, North Carolina, North Dakota, Northern Mariana Islands, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, South Carolina, South Dakota, Tennessee, U.S. Virgin Islands, Utah, Vermont, Virginia, Wisconsin, and Wyoming.
- 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 elect 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 February 1, 2014.

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

Before the summative assessment is administered, students and administrators will have an opportunity to become familiar with the item types through a video tutorial with practice items. Over time, sample items will be placed online for public viewing and the ASSETS Consortium will seek to add technology-enhanced item types to the summative assessments.

Field Testing

In **Spring 2014 and Spring 2015**, ACCESS for ELLs 2.0 will be field tested in all participating states to confirm that all items and tasks are of high quality and to create linkages between the paper-based version of ACCESS for ELLs and ACCESS for ELLs 2.0. In order to create such linkages, districts will need to administer the field test within a two- to five-week window after administering the operational version of ACCESS for ELLs. Administration dates for districts will depend on each state's operational testing window. The reading, writing, and speaking domains will be field tested in **Spring** 2014, and the listening domain and additional reading forms will be field tested in **Spring 2015**. Field tests will be delivered on a modified version of Data Recognition Corporation's test platform. This platform has a number of embedded accessibility and accommodation features (see below).

Assessment Delivery

Each member state will determine its own testing window in accordance with its local needs. Students will use computers or other digital devices to take the assessments and use headsets for listening and speaking.

The time required for a student to complete the four domains of the summative assessment (i.e. listening, reading, writing and speaking) is anticipated to be less than one hour per domain. The directions for each domain will be delivered by computer. Group administration will be possible, provided logistical considerations, such as the number of students in the testing space, are addressed.

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.

Supports for All Students and Students with Disabilities

ASSETS is working with member states to determine the accessibility features and accommodations to be included within the test delivery system for the operational assessments. A more limited set of features will be available in the field test, including large print magnification, volume control, extended time, and background color adjustment.

Scoring

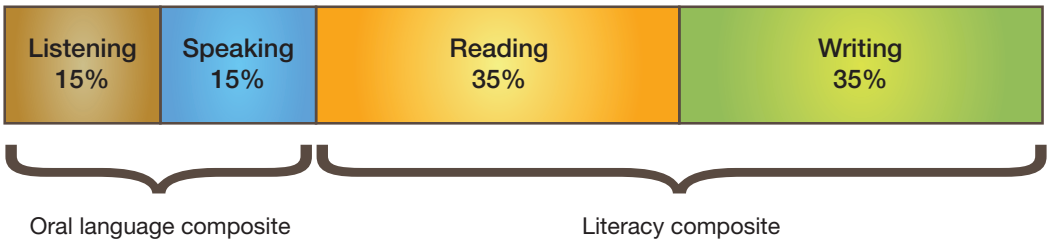
The annual summative assessment will be automatically scored by computer for some domains and centrally scored off site for others. The selected response items for the reading and listening sections will be automatically scored by computer. Student responses for the writing and speaking tasks will be digitally recorded and subsequently scored off site by trained raters. The immediate, computerized scoring and real-time digital capture of student responses promises to improve the efficiency and consistency of scoring as well as the timeliness of score reports.

In addition to an overall composite score, scale scores on a K-12 vertically aligned scale will be reported for the language domains of listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Three composite subscores will also be reported: an oral language composite score, a literacy composite score, and a comprehension score for listening and reading.

The overall English Language Proficiency (ELP) scores will be calculated based on the weighted

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



subscores shown in the chart above. The scores will be reported as scale scores and also interpreted as one of the six English language proficiency levels according to the 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 provide instructionally actionable information to educators throughout the year.

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 of Results

Scores from the ACCESS for ELLs 2.0 will include each of the subscores and composite scores described above. Individual student score reports will be generated for various user groups, including parents and teachers.

Costs

The current cost for use of the online assessments in 2014-15 is $23 per student for the basic package. Decisions regarding future costs of the assessments developed as part of the ASSETS grant are pending.

OTHER ASSESSMENTS, RESOURCES, AND 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. Available in the **2015-16 school year**, the screener will be technology-based, given on demand, and used, in combination with other measures, to determine eligibility and appropriate placement for English language learner program services. It will include item types similar to those found on the summative assessments and will indicate a student's social and academic English language proficiency in the domains of listening, reading, writing, and speaking. Results of the screener will also help students understand their current level of English language proficiency along the developmental continuum. 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.

Technology-based Classroom Interim Assessments

A series of shorter, targeted interim assessments will be available in selected grades **as of the 2015-16 school year**. The interim assessments will help guide instruction by providing information on 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 may be used to enhance the diagnostic value of the feedback.

The interim assessments may also 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 interim assessment system and, as appropriate, transitioned into the summative assessment.

Dynamic Language Learning Progressions to Support Formative Assessment

The Consortium is working with researchers at UCLA to identify language learning progressions that encompass the language development of students in Grades pre-K through 5 for specific academic language functions needed for success in school. These progressions are described as dynamic because 1) they are designed to capture multiple pathways to the development of English language proficiency, and 2) 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. (See www.dllp.org for more information.)

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. Resources available for the 2014 field test include an Online Test Administration Manual, student tutorial, and practice items, which will be available on the ASSETS website. Webinar trainings to assist educators in preparing for the 2014 field test are recorded and available on the ASSETS website.

By S**ummer 2015**, similar training materials for the operational test are available in electronic format and online to support both group and individual self-paced use. In addition, the ASSETS Consortium will partner with state education agencies to deliver state-based, face-to-face trainings, as needed.

ASSETS TIMELINE

2013–2014	Prepare assessment items for the field test and continue to modify for the operational test Continue research and analysis for the Dynamic Language Learning Progressions Continue to create outreach and professional development materials Field testing for speaking, reading, and writing domains (Spring)
2014–2015	Field testing for listening domain and additional reading forms (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)

TECHNOLOGY

Technology will be incorporated into the development, administration, scoring, and reporting of the assessments within a comprehensive and interactive system. All items, including technology-enhanced items that utilize audio, speech-capture, and accessibility features for students with disabilities, 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
- Coordination with the systems being developed by the Comprehensive Assessment Consortia (i.e. Partnership for the Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers and the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium) 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. The ASSETS Consortium is collaborating with the comprehensive and alternate assessment Consortia, PARCC, Smarter Balanced, DLM and NCSC, to ensure the transition to online testing is smooth and that districts have clear guidance concerning technology readiness.

The Consortium will utilize an existing vendor test delivery platform for the 2014-15 field test, but will issue an RFP for the operational test delivery platform to be used for the 2015-16 operational assessments, and thereafter. The Consortium expects to support the use of tablets, in addition to desktop and laptop computers, for delivery of the summative assessment in 2015-16 (see technology guidelines/specifications at http://assetsproject.org/implementation/ASSETS%20Technology%20Requirements.pdf).

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

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 ELL student.

ELPA21 at a Glance

- MEMBERSHIP: 11 member states, including Arkansas, Florida, Iowa, Kansas, Louisiana, Nebraska, Ohio, Oregon, South Carolina, Washington, and West Virginia, in partnership with Stanford University's Understanding Language Initiative, the National Center for Research on Evaluation, Standards & Student Testing (CRESST), and the National Center on Educational Outcomes (NCEO). 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 (PMP): The Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) provides project management Six Task Management Teams (TMT) — led by contracted experts and comprised of state education agency representatives from each Consortium state — oversee development of all work components. The National Center for Research on Evaluation, Standards & Student Testing (CRESST) serves as the third-party evaluator, facilitates the Technical Advisory Committee, and provides guidance to the CC and the EB.
- AWARD: $6.3 million four-year Enhanced Assessment Grant from the U.S. Department of Education (USED), September 2012.

This information is accurate as of February 1, 2014.

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

ELPA21's website will be available at www.ELPA21.org in Spring 2014. You also can visit www.ccsso.org and search "ELPA21" for updates.

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 is developing:

- An annual summative assessment for each of six grades or grade bands for monitoring student progress, tracking accountability, certifying program exit, and prompting instructional improvement
- A screener to provide information for English language learner identification and placement.

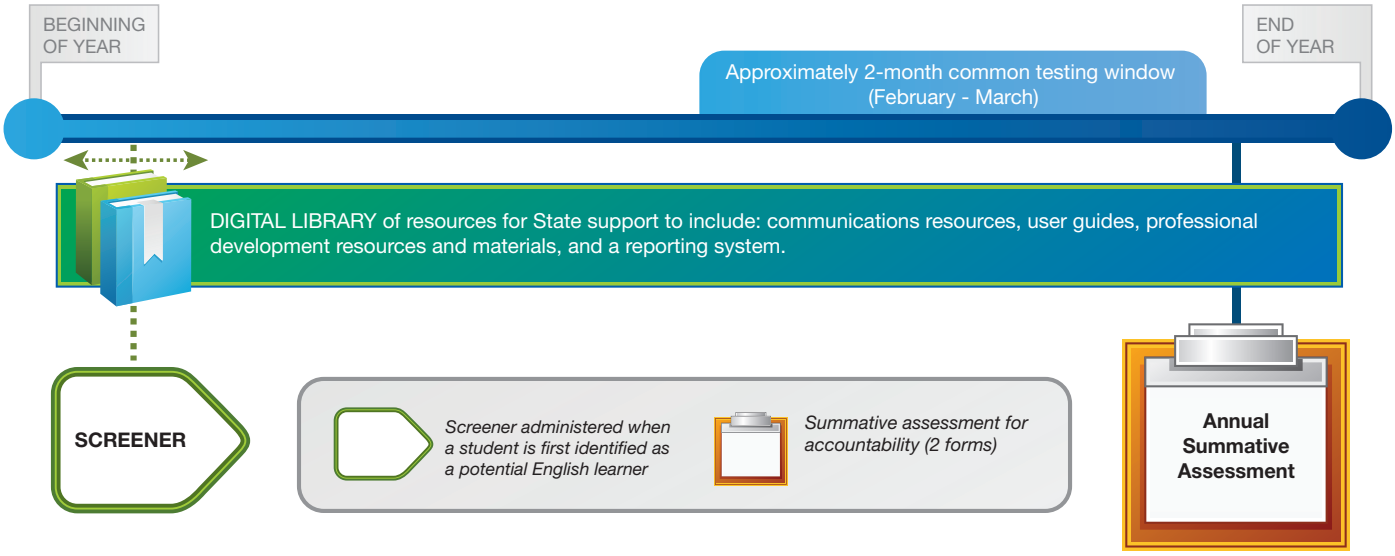
All Consortium states will use these assessments and agreed-upon criteria for entry, placement, and exit from ELL programs. The ELPA21 screener and summative assessments are due to be field tested in 2014-15 and **ready for operational use in the 2015-16 school year.**

Through extended collaboration, ELPA21 will also develop supporting professional development resources, a secure item bank, and a data reporting architecture. 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 ELPA21 system components follows.

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

English Language Proficiency, Grades K–12



THE STANDARDS

During the first year of the grant, 2012-13, the ELPA21 Consortium developed a new set of ELP standards, in collaboration with the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO), WestEd, and the Understanding Language Initiative at Stanford University. These ELP standards highlight and amplify the *critical language, knowledge about language,* and *skills using language* that are in the Common Core college- and career-ready standards.

Ten ELP standards are organized in six grade bands: K, 1, 2-3, 4-5, 6-8, and 9-12. Each of the 10 standards is further refined into five performance levels at each grade band. This provides ELL and content area teachers with an understanding of what an ELL's language use looks like as that student progresses toward independent participation in grade-appropriate coursework. The standards are designed for collaborative use by English as a second language (ESL)/English language development (ELD) and content area teachers as they assist students with both language development and content-area learning.

These 10 standards and 5 performance levels serve as the foundation for the ELPA21 assessment system.

SUMMATIVE ASSESSMENTS FOR ACCOUNTABILITY

The ELPA21 summative assessments for each of six grade bands — K, 1, 2-3, 4-5, 6-8, and 9-12 — will be administered in February/March[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. The 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 to facilitate monitoring of student progress.

Items and Task Development

ELPA21 will use a range of item types, including selected response, short constructed-response, speech-capture, and technology-enhanced. Technologies such as audio output and recording will be utilized, so headsets will be required for portions of the assessments. The assessment system will include more interactive item types, especially for speaking and listening tests. The Consortium is developing test blueprints that specify the standards

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.

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

appropriate to assess and the number and types of items that will be used to measure them. Under the guidance of ELPA21 leadership, educators and classroom teachers from ELPA21 states will write 25% of the items. For each domain assessed, items will be developed across the range of proficiency levels.

Field Testing

Test items for the ELPA21 screener and summative assessments will be completed during the 2014-15 school year. Details will be forthcoming.

Assessment Delivery

The summative assessments will be delivered online. The decision to employ online delivery was made to (1) ensure standardized administration of the assessments, (2) have more flexibility and standardization in providing students with disabilities a range of accommodations and accessibility features 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 delivery within states. ELPA21 prioritizes interoperability with the platforms being developed by the other major assessment Consortia.

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 multistate partnerships) as they enter contracts with vendors for delivery of the operational assessments, beginning in the 2015–16 school year.

The Consortium will not administer the summative assessments directly, but will develop and provide all of the necessary components for delivery within states.

Supports for ELLs and ELLs with Disabilities

ELPA21 is seeking to maximize accessibility for ELLs, including those with disabilities. To ensure that all participating students are able to demonstrate their ELP knowledge and skills on the assessments, test items will be consistent with universal design principles. This process is used to identify and then eliminate or minimize any features that are irrelevant to the constructs represented in the ELP standards. ELPA21 has carefully determined its criteria for participation and the desired accessibility features and accommodations.

Scoring

ELPA21 will provide the materials and protocols for consistency in the administration and scoring of the assessments across member states, and each state will be responsible for conducting these activities. 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 grade band assessment will measure across a wide range of ELP. This feature will allow the reporting system to capture the progress students make between annual summative assessments. When interim assessments are added to the system, these optional assessments will also produce scaled scores 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 what combination of evidence is 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 of Results

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 member states with materials and protocols for consistency in the reporting of results. 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.

Costs

As the Consortium continues to develop the assessments, a cost per student will be determined.

OTHER ASSESSMENTS, RESOURCES, AND TOOLS

On-Demand Screener

ELPA21 will develop a screener to determine whether, and at what level, a student needs ELL services. It will be administered at the time a student enters the 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 online and will include 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 promptly through a combination of computer scoring and trained, certified local scorers.

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

While shorter than the summative assessment, the screener will still assess across the four language domains.

Formative and Interim Assessments

Contingent on additional funding, ELPA21 will develop formative and interim assessment tools. 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.

Professional Development Resources and Activities

ELPA21 will provide professional development resources for all teachers, including ELL instructors 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.

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.

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. The intent is for the ELPA21 assessments to be administered on diverse platforms, including those used by states delivering 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.

SUSTAINABILITY

The vast majority of the funding from the ELPA21 enhanced assessment grant is being used in the development and implementation of the field test. Once items are developed, operating platforms are aligned, and technical sufficiency is attained, the primary focus of the Consortium will become maintenance of the system, improvement of the item bank, and refinement of the assessment. Systems must be integrated into the school, district, and state processes to support future sustainability.

Sustainability planning work by a task force made up of ELPA21 member states who are affiliated with PARCC or Smarter Balanced, as well as those unaffiliated, began in September 2013. Sustainability planning warrants research efforts focused on ELPA21 test administration, particularly in the area of accessibility and accommodations. Research projects examining how accessibility tools and accommodations help students access test content will inform the process of improving ELPA21 assessments and ensure their effectiveness and sustainability.

ELPA21 Timeline

2013-2014	Item and task development
2014-2015	Completion of item and task development for screener and summative assessment Field testing
2015-2016	ELPA21 assessment system operational

Crossing the Chasm to Digital Teaching, Learning and Assessment

By Douglas A. Levin and Geoffrey H. Fletcher

The implementation of the next generation technology-enhanced assessments aligned to college and career-ready state standards beginning in the 2014-15 school year represents an enormous opportunity for states and districts to systematically move to address inequities in access to and powerful use of technology to realize improvements in teaching, learning, assessment and school operations. Indeed, the decision by the U.S. Department of Education in requiring Race to Top Assessment applicants to "use technology to its maximum extent to develop, administer, and score assessments and report assessment results" was made to support the majority of states that had already begun to implement technology-enhanced assessments and to accelerate the realization of the benefits of online testing. These benefits include the creation of remarkably better tests as compared to their paper-and-pencil predecessors, with actionable results returned much more rapidly and able to be put into use by educators.

While no official report is available of the percentage of schools and districts that are on track to being ready for online assessments in 2014-15, most states and districts have already completed their initial readiness analysis of the sufficiency of internet and computer access. Field testing for the two general assessment Consortia – PARCC and Smarter Balanced – is now, in Spring 2014, underway. As such, it is important that the focus on technology readiness for assessment shifts from the macro to the micro, from counts of computers reported to be available for testing toward a process for validating school readiness for online test administration and the sufficiency of policies and supports to ensure that implementation of the operational tests are successful.

Best Practices and Lessons Learned in Shifting to Online Test Administration

Several states – including but not limited to Delaware, Idaho, North Carolina and Virginia – have had extensive experience in administering online assessment on a large scale. The State Educational Technology Directors Association (SETDA) profiled each of these four states (as well as the emerging experiences of Michigan) in a series of online case studies on how these states and their districts managed the transition from traditional paper-and-pencil assessment to large-scale technology-based assessment. These case studies (available online at http://assessmentstudies.setda.org) include rich descriptions of policies implemented and actions taken, as well as downloadable sample communications, presentations, and resources created by these states to communicate with stakeholders. Based on these case studies and dialogue with other state and local leaders and testing vendors, it is clear that there are a series of steps in three broad areas that stakeholders can take to increase the odds of success in making the transition to computer-based testing.

Best Practice # 1: Communicate Evolving Technology Requirements Early and Often

PARCC and Smarter Balanced have communicated their minimum and recommended requirements for infrastructure and devices for the first operational year of testing, but most states also belong to one of two multi-state Consortia concerned with assessments for English Language Learners as well as to one of two multi-state Consortia concerned with students with disabilities. And while the technology requirements across all six Consortia are similar, there are some differences that need to be communicated among all potential users (to say nothing of differing requirements for other technology-based assessments states may be administering across the full range of academic content areas). For instance, there are peripheral requirements, such as for keyboards and headphones, which have not received the attention that devices and operating systems have, but are no less important to the testing process.

Students must have training opportunities in using the online tools the tests will incorporate and in navigating within the test software itself. Next generation assessments must not be assessments of the technology preparedness of the students.

In addition, there are numerous other technology implementation considerations and requirements that will need to be established, communicated, and validated as states and districts transition from field tests to operational tests. These include mundane expectations for things like the availability of electrical power and air conditioning in testing areas to technical expectations for firewall and content filter configuration, known hardware or software incompatibilities, the need for client software on testing devices, the compatibility of caching devices and software, and tactics to ensure fault tolerance during outages whether experienced by vendors, districts and/or schools.

A summary of the technology requirements across all six assessment Consortia will be available at www.sedta.org in May 2014.

In future years, states and vendors will need to help schools manage the orderly phasing out of legacy and obsolete technologies that become too expensive to maintain, while undertaking a thoughtful process about whether and how to incorporate new technologies in assessment that are adopted for use by schools for instructional purposes.

Best Practice #2: Set Clear Expectations and Roles for State, District, School, and Vendor Staff, as Well as for Teachers and Students

For the administration of online assessments to succeed, it is vital that all actors understand their roles and responsibilities – and are supported in performing their duties. Advance scenario planning must be done to ensure that any irregularities that occur during testing windows can be handled quickly, effectively, and with grace and that the responsible parties are appropriately identified and held accountable.

Training is important for each entity in the partnership. Both technology and assessment staff must fully understand all requirements, implementation approaches, and lines of support, and communications staff need to be able to craft messages that are clear and understandable for educators, administrators and the public at large. Contractors providing technical and help desk support need to be fully informed of states' policies and preferred practices.

Finally and most important, students must have training opportunities in using the online tools the tests will incorporate and in navigating within the test software itself. Students must use the devices (i.e., computers, laptops, tablets) that they will use during assessment during everyday instruction with their teachers in ways aligned to academic content and standards. Next generation assessments must not be assessments of the technology preparedness of the students, and this has large implications for educator professional development and support. Both of the Comprehensive Assessment Consortia have made available technology tutorials and sample items to allow educators and students to gain familiarity with their testing interfaces and the tools that are available:

- PARCC: www.parcconline.org/computer-based-samples
- Smarter Balanced: www.smarterbalanced.org/practice-test/

Best Practice #3: Proactively Manage Assessment-Related Communications for Stakeholders

All stakeholders, from parents and community members to the policy makers at the local and state level to all the vendors providing the services of the program should have a common vocabulary and framework for understanding the assessment– and instructional – program. Transparency and ongoing communication should be a hallmark. States and districts should offer public access to testing information, such as sample items and online test interfaces and released tests when they become available.

Schools and districts should anticipate possible problems during test administration windows and have contingency plans at the ready. Indeed, establishing a communications strategy for use during testing windows is vital to ensuring that all stakeholders remain fully informed about the status of testing systems, any potential emerging issues, and steps to take to resolve any irregularities or outages.

Technology Requirements and Readiness Planning

Consortia Technology Requirements: A summary of the technology requirements across all six assessment Consortia will be available at www.setda.org in May 2014, or at the following Consortia webpages:

PARCC:
www.parcconline.org/technology

SBAC:
www.smarterbalanced.org/smarter-balanced-assessments/technology

DLM:
http://dynamiclearningmaps.org/assessment/faq.html#q2

NCSC:
http://www.ncscpartners.org/Media/Default/PDFs/NCSC_Proposed_Workstation-and-Bandwidth_Technology_Requirements_11-18-13.pdf

ASSETS:
http://assetsproject.org/implementation/ASSETS%20Technology%20Requirements.pdf

ELPA21:
Not yet determined.

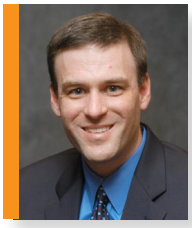
State Education Policy Center (SEPC): a database of state policies related to education and technology, curated by the State Educational Technology Directors Association (SETDA).
http://sepc.setda.org/

Case Studies of states and districts that have made the transition to online testing:
http://assessmentstudies.setda.org

Other SETDA Resources on Technology Readiness: regularly updated information and resources to support the transition to online assessment.
http://setda.org/web/guest/assessment

Ensuring Technology Readiness for the Long Term

The primary theme that cuts across the experiences of states and districts that have successfully navigated the shift to technology-based assessment is that of proactive, inclusive and trusted communications across two dimensions. The first dimension includes communications among the state, district, school, technology providers, and assessment contractor providing the services. The second dimension includes communication between and among technology and assessment staff at all levels in each partner organization. After all, the ongoing shift to online testing may be as notable in the end for advancing the quality of student assessment in the U.S. as it is for demonstrating the ability of SEAs and LEAs to manage the large-scale deployment of a software solution to every one of their schools.



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Timelines of the Six Assessment Consortia

These timelines reflect the Consortia plans as of February 2014, but may be adjusted as the development work continues.

	PARCC	Smarter Balanced	DLM	NCSC	ASSETS	ELPA21
Spring – Summer 2014	Field testing for representative sample of students (Spring) Grade level/course practice tests available (Spring) Assessment professional learning modules available (Summer)	Initial set of exemplar instructional modules, including formative assessment tasks and tools and training templates, released (Spring) Field testing includes test of the items, tasks, and systems for administration, scoring and reporting (March-June) Digital library available to all registered users (Summer) Calibration and scaling of item pool (Summer) Field tested and approved items and tasks divided into summative and interim item pools (Summer)	Professional development modules ready for use (Spring) Field testing conducted using test delivery software (Spring)	Pilot 1 testing of all items - Family of Studies (Spring) Final test blueprint, items, and reporting systems developed (Summer) Test design and item banks finalized (Summer)	Assessment items prepared for the field test and modified as needed for the operational test Research and analysis for dynamic language learning progressions continued Continued creation of outreach and professional development materials Field testing for speaking, reading, and writing domains (Spring)	Item and task development
2014-15	College readiness tools available (September) Test administration policies finalized (Fall) Resource Center launches (Fall) Mid-year performance-based assessments available (Fall) Full operational administration of PARCC summative assessments (Winter/Spring) Setting of achievement levels, including college-ready performance levels (post-administration) Diagnostic assessments available (Summer)	Initial Standard Setting (Fall) Additional Exemplar Instructional Modules released (Fall) Interim assessments available (Fall) Summative assessments available (Spring) Final achievement standards for summative assessments verified and adopted (Summer)	DLM instructionally embedded tasks available for use (September) DLM stand-alone summative test available (Spring) Professional development program validated (Summer) Standard setting and performance modeling (Summer) Assessment system evaluated (Summer)	Pilot 2 testing of forms (Fall) Census field testing/operational administration (Spring) Standard-setting (Spring/Summer) Complete validation studies and technical report	Field testing for listening domain and additional reading forms (Spring) Design of system finalizes Score reports, administrator training materials, and reporting system finalized Training materials available (Summer)	Completion of item and task development for screener and summative assessment Field testing
2015-16	K-1 formative tools available (Fall) Speaking and listening assessments available			NCSC Alternate Assessment System operational Technical documentation in place	ASSETS assessment system operational	ELPA21 assessment system operational
Fall 2016					Evaluation of the assessment system (Fall)	

State Memberships in Assessment Consortia

Table 3

Accurate as of February 3, 2014, this chart reflects official memberships. Therefore, states that have announced plans to withdraw but have not formally done so are shown below as members.

	Comprehensive Assessment Consortia		Alternate Assessment Consortia		English Language Proficiency Assessment Consortia	
State	**PARCC (18)**	**SBAC (24)**	**DLM (18)**	**NCSC (25)**	**ASSETS (35)**	**ELPA21 (11)**
Alabama					Member	
Alaska			Member		Member	
Arizona	Governing			Member		
Arkansas	Governing			Member		Member
California		Governing		Member		
Colorado	Governing		Member		Member	
Connecticut		Governing		Member		
Delaware		Governing		Member	Member	
District of Columbia	Governing			Member	Member	
Florida	Governing			Member		Member
Georgia				Member		
Hawaii		Governing				
Idaho		Governing		Member	Member	
Illinois	Governing		Member		Member	
Indiana	Governing			Member		
Iowa		Governing	Member			Member
Kansas			Member			Member
Kentucky					Member	
Louisiana	Governing			Member		Member
Maine		Governing		Member	Member	
Maryland	Governing			Member	Member	
Massachusetts	Governing				Member	
Michigan		Governing	Member		Member	
Minnesota					Member	
Mississippi	Governing		Member		Member	
Missouri		Governing	Member		Member	
Montana		Governing		Member	Member	
Nebraska						Member
Nevada		Governing			Member	
New Hampshire		Governing			Member	
New Jersey	Governing		Member		Member	
New Mexico	Governing			Member	Member	
New York	Governing			Member		
North Carolina		Governing	Member		Member	
North Dakota		Governing	Member		Member	
Ohio	Governing					Member
Oklahoma			Member		Member	
Oregon		Governing		Member		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		Governing		Member	Member	
Virgin Islands (U.S.)		Affiliate		Member	Member	
PAC-6*				Member		
N. Mariana Islands					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

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