



SPECIAL TEST LAUNCH EDITION



Message from the Director

Today, Tuesday March 17th, marks the opening of the first ever administration of our new Smarter Balanced Assessment System. Although we are aware that many schools will not actually begin testing until later this spring, we want to take this opportunity to remind you of some essentials that need to be in place before delivering the new assessments to your students. The following should work as a guide in your preparations.

- ◇ Make sure you have completed updating your TIDE files with student additions, deletions and/or corrections.
- ◇ Make sure you have coordinated with any school or program that will be testing students from your school/district (ie, CTE Center or independent school).
- ◇ Make sure you have made training modules available to all staff that will participate in test administration and assured that all are adequately trained for the role(s) they will play.
- ◇ Make sure that all staff members who will be administering the assessments have successfully completed the Online Test Administration Certification Module.
- ◇ Make sure you have downloaded the secure browser onto all computers that will be used for assessment.
- ◇ Make sure you have identified designated supports and/or accommodations for all students that may need them and entered the correct codes in TIDE.
- ◇ Make sure you have set aside time for students to complete the training test some time during the three-week period prior to assessment.
- ◇ Make sure you have provided parents with information on the new assessment (click [here](#) to access the "Tools for School Leaders" file that contains a sample parent letter).

Please see Appendix D and Appendix E in the [Test Coordinators Manual](#) for more detailed checklists. If you need help completing any of these items, please give us a call. Good luck to your students and staff. 

Choosing the Right Test & Session: Our neighbors in New Hampshire started testing yesterday, with several schools reporting they were having difficulty activating a test session. It turned out that the schools were selecting the interim assessments rather than the summative assessments, both of which can be accessed through the Test Delivery System (TDS). AIR has provided us with detailed directions on how to activate a test session. Click [here](#) to access the directions for the summative tests.

SBAC and Social Media: When you prepare your students for the assessment please be sure to tell them they may not use cell phones during the assessment, and in particular, may not take photographs of the test. You may also want to mention that Smarter Balanced will be monitoring social media sites like Facebook, Instagram and Twitter throughout the entire three months of testing and will report any infractions of this rule to the State Testing Director, who will alert the school principal. Students who violate this rule will be subject to disciplinary action. **Michael Hock, Director of Educational Assessment, michael.hock@state.vt.us / 802-479-1288**



If we want a student to have some of the new accommodations, do we have to hold an IEP meeting to add them?

Under SBAC policy only a handful of accessibility options are considered "accommodation" and require a decision from an IEP or 504 team, everything else is available to all students. Although I am not aware of an official policy on this, my guess is that you will be fine if you just call the parent to let them know if you're going to be offering any accessibility tools that are not listed on the IEP and ensure that they have no objections. If they do, then you may need to hold a meeting.



For more information or questions please contact Linda Moreno at 802-479-1309 or linda.moreno@state.vt.us