

## Smarter Balanced Assessment Team

For more information or to be added to the newsletter distribution list, please contact:

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## From the Test Director: NAG, NAG, NAG.

With just a few weeks left in our testing window - we are anticipating that all testing except for make-ups is completed by the end of May – it's time for me to do some friendly nagging. Here's my list:

- NAG #1: We've compiled a list of schools that have not started testing and plan to make some calls to ensure that this is consistent with the school's testing plan and not due to a problem we need to resolve. If you would like to avoid any additional nagging you could send me an e-mail ([michael.hock@vermont.gov](mailto:michael.hock@vermont.gov)) to let me know your plans. That would be very much appreciated.
- NAG #2: Before you declare that testing is over for another year, please use the test management function in the Online Reporting System to generate a test completion roster. You have several options for doing this including lists of students who have not started a test and students who have not completed a test. Because there are four sections to the Smarter Assessments it is fairly easy to overlook a student who might have been absent for one of the sections particularly in larger schools. You can find directions for running these reports in the [6/5/15](#) edition of this Newsletter. Please note: You **DO NOT** need to report the outcome of this inquiry to the AOE. This is for you to determine if you are finished.
- NAG #3: Please try to avoid sabotaging the dual reporting set up in TIDE accounts. If you recall from a previous [newsletter](#), it is now possible to have a student test at one school (a CTE or and Independent School) and have the student's results posted at that school plus one additional school (e.g., the reporting school). If you are the reporting school you will find the student's results mixed in with all the students you may have tested, and the student will also appear in the test management section or the ORS. So far the technology seems to be "glitch free" but we've had few human problems. In a few cases, schools or districts did a batch upload of their enrolled students. In a few others, District Administrators found some students in their files that they didn't test, assumed it was a mistake, and deleted the students. In both of these cases, not only is the dual reporting function eliminated, but it actually wipes out the student data in the testing school's TIDE files. If you find some mystery students, or plan a file update, please check with me first to make sure you're not fixing something that isn't broken.

Now that we're done with the nagging, I want to thank you all for a very uneventful testing window. Other than a few power outages and the aforementioned dual reporting sabotage we didn't really see any big problems, human, technological or otherwise. That is due to our excellent administrators and teachers, with a special hats-off to the nice folks at the American Institutes for Research.

**Michael Hock, State Assessment Director**

## Questions?

Please contact:

**Help Desk (AIR)** for Test Administration & Test Delivery Technologies  
[vthelpdesk@air.org](mailto:vthelpdesk@air.org)  
844-218-1184

Michael Hock (AOE) for Policies and Procedures  
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Linda Moreno  
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### From the Director's in-box



### Reminders:

1. **Make-Up Days:** June 1<sup>st</sup> starts the make-up phase of the Smarter Balanced testing. All schools should have their group testing completed by this date and only make-up testing should be done in June. All testing must be completed by June 20<sup>th</sup> when TIDE closes. If you have any students who were absent or still need more time, please take these last two weeks to wrap up testing.
2. **New Students:** June 1<sup>st</sup> is also the cut-off date for testing new students. If you have a student who arrives on or after June 1<sup>st</sup>, you do not need to test that student.
3. **Paper /Pencil Deadline:** The last day to order paper/pencils tests is Monday, May 23<sup>rd</sup>.

### From the Inbox

To: Michael Hock

From: A Teacher

Re: Power Outages

*We had a power outage and noticed that some work reappeared, but some did not. Is it possible to lose student work? I was under the impression that it picked up where the student left off.*

The general message is that TDS treats test exits due to technical issues (power outages, etc.) the same as if the test was manually paused by the student. The AIR systems will not register if a school experiences a power outage. The audit trail will capture that the student abnormally exited their test, but there won't be a message or alert that will indicate the cause. To prevent the loss of student responses, TDS saves student information at regular intervals (every 2 minutes) during testing. Once the student logs back in, after a power outage, the student can expect to see the last question on which the student was working. Unfortunately, if power is lost between save intervals, it is possible that those responses may be lost. Students will need to log in again upon resuming the test.

Pause (20 minute) rule:

If a student is logged out for more than 20 minutes, a Grace Period Extension will need to be filed in order for students to resume testing where they left off. This will also apply to flagged items. They will remain flagged if the student is logged out of the test for less than 20 minutes. If they are logged out for longer than 20 minutes, the mark for review flags will not persist.

Exception: Digital Notes:

Digital notes will not be available when students access a test after being kicked out due to a power outage. Digital notes are not considered part of a test item; therefore, they will not be saved.



### Special Populations: Unapproved Accommodations

All assessments have a list of approved accommodations. We might not agree with them, but we understand that in order to have a standardized test, we need a standardized delivery which includes accommodations that are available to all students who take the assessment. But what happens when the authorized accommodations aren't enough or do not address your student's specific need? Can you adjust the procedure in an effort to make the assessment more accessible? Yes, you can. In fact there is a request form (recently posted) that allows educators to ask for a modification in a procedure or request new technology. We need the form so we can document the procedure and also forward to Smarter Balanced for review. One procedure, approved this year, pertained to voice recognition software. The software was not able to pick up the student's voice, but those familiar with the student could understand him/her. The teacher applied for, and was granted, a one-year temporary accommodation that would allow her to repeat (verbatim) what the student said into the voice recognition software thus allowing the student to answer naturally in his/her own voice and pace. If you are considering or have used an unauthorized procedure or accommodation, please complete the [Temporary Accommodation Request Form](#) located in the VT-SBAC portal.



### ZOOM Text Feature: Editorial Clarification

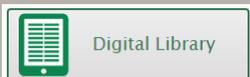
The non-embedded Designated Support, mentioned in the May 4<sup>th</sup> newsletter, is a separate software program called ZoomText. This program is used by students with visual impairments that require additional magnification beyond what the embedded Universal Tool Zoom can provide. ZoomText is allowed through permissive mode and required a fix as mentioned. The makers of ZoomText have noted that they will be including this fix in the next update of the software.

### Educator Opportunities: Digital Library

Mark your calendars. Smarter Balanced will be holding their Digital Library State Network of Educator (SNE) workshop this year during the week of July 18<sup>th</sup>. Dates will be finalized next week. This is a two-day workshop which will have break-out sessions for new SNEs, lesson reviews, and tagging. Teachers are not compensated for their time; however, an honorarium will be awarded to teachers who develop lessons that make it into the Digital Library. Travel and hotels are paid in advance through Smarter Balanced, and meals are reimbursed. Breakfast and lunch will be provided on both days. Any teacher who is interested in attending should send Linda Moreno an email indicating:

1. New or returning teacher
2. Area of interest: new / lesson review or creation / tagging
3. Contact information (summer)

See contact information on page 1.





### Digital Library Spotlight: webinars

If you haven't been to the Digital Library recently, please check it out. The Digital Library has contracted with a new service provider to manage the website. Improvements and enhancements are happening often. If you haven't had a chance to review some of the new webinar series and forums, please do. There is a flier posted in the VT-SBAC portal containing links to the most recent webinars. The webinars range from assessing students with disabilities to illustrative mathematics. You can download or stream the presentations and participate in a forum.



### Question of the Week

**Do I need to assess students who are only home-schooled for half a day?**

It is not necessary to assess home-schooled students, even if they come into school part of the day. Only fully enrolled students need to be assessed.



### Testing Progress: Completion Tally: Friday, May 20

2016 SBAC Assessment Tally – Vermont: Week 10					
Total # of Students Registered: 45,613	Completed the CAT Summative Assessments		Completed the Performance Tasks		Total # of Tests Completed to Date: 150,938 (82.7%)
Grade / #	ELA	Math	ELA	Math	All
11: 8,915	5,713	5,680	5,635	5,573	22,601
8: 6,129	5,435	5,149	5,245	4,944	20,773
7: 6,039	5,340	5,237	5,171	5,092	20,840
6: 6,116	5,568	5,514	5,322	5,160	21,564
5: 6,198	5,679	5,536	5,460	5,326	22,001
4: 5,998	5,510	5,373	5,379	5,183	21,445
3: 6,218	5,615	5,581	5,208	5,310	21,714