

Smarter Balanced Assessment Team



From the Test Director

You may recall that in the February 2nd Edition of the Vermont Smarter Balanced newsletter, I announced a new feature to the Online Reporting System called “expedited reporting” that will make it possible to return student test results to the school within about two weeks from when the student submits a completed test. You may also recall that there was a tiny “string” attached to this feature: schools may use the test results for internal purposes but may not send home individual student reports, or release results to the public until a date that will be announced by the Agency when all schools have completed testing.

Since I made this announcement, I’ve been contacted by a few schools for help determining if a use for expedited reporting that they have in mind will be permissible under the reporting embargo. I want to share these ideas with you because, if done correctly, they are good, allowable ideas that you might use or might help you identifying other uses for the new, quick turn-around of test results:

- Eligibility for Gifted and Talented Summer Programs – Nearly every year someone contacts me for help figuring out what test score a student would need to qualify for the Johns Hopkins summer program for students who are gifted and talented. Last year, unfortunately, results were not reported in time for students to use them in their applications. This year, when I get that call, I’ll be able to determine a score the student will need to achieve and the school will be able to report the student’s scaled score in the application. Using just the scaled score is fine. What is not fine is sending home the Individual Student Report that includes state and district comparison data.
- Adverse Effect – There is not enough room here for me to cover all the issues, concerns and recommendations relative to using Smarter Balanced test scores to determine Adverse Effect in the special education eligibility process. Please contact Cindy Moran (cindy.moran@vermont.gov / 802-479-1432) for those details. However, using a student’s scaled score for eligibility determination would be permissible. Again, as long as the Individual Student Report is not forwarded to the parent.

(Continued on pg. 2)

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

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- Student Engagement – A high school principal contacted me with an interesting idea on how to get students to take the Smarter Balanced tests more seriously: students who scored proficient or higher would be exempt from a final exam. This would definitely be an allowable use because it isn't actually necessary to post individual student test scores. The school can simply post a list of students who scored high enough to earn the exemption.

If you have other ideas you would like to check out with me, please don't hesitate to call.

Michael Hock, Director of Educational Assessment



From the Archives: Appeals

Appeals allow the test administrator to (1) reset a test, which allows the student to start over with a completely new set of questions, (2) reopen a test, which allows the student to go back to the last item the student completed if a test session has been closed prematurely, (3) extend the grace period, which allows the student to review and change answers after expiration of the pause rule, and (4) invalidate a test, which removes the test result from scoring and reporting. We are beginning to learn some of the advantages over NECAP that the appeals can provide. For example, I was recently contacted by a test administrator who, in typical NECAP thinking, believed that an ELA test had to be invalidated because a para-educator had mistakenly read the entire test to the student. When that happened with NECAP, the student could not receive any credit for the assessment, even though the mistake was made by the adult. However, because of the SBAC appeals process, we were able to reset the test so the student could start over and submit a valid test. Although I don't believe anyone has tried this yet, if a test administrator notices that a student is answering questions rapidly, presumably without taking them seriously, it would be possible and permissible to stop the student, encourage the student to take the test seriously, and then have the student start over. One thing to keep in mind about appeals is that you have to submit the appeal to me through TIDE and then give me a chance to approve. Generally, I've been processing appeals at the beginning and end of each workday. If you would like the approval to come through more quickly, please call to alert me that your appeal has been submitted." **Michael Hock, Director of Educational Assessment, michael.hock@state.vt.us / 802-479-1288**

Paper Test Orders / Performance Task Class Activities

[Paper Materials Order Forms](#) (braille included), Performance Task Activities, and Paper/Pencil Test Administration Manuals have now been posted to the [VT-SBAC](#) portal. Paper/Pencil tests are determined on an individual basis. These tests cannot be ordered for an entire school. If you have questions or concerns about your technology, please contact Peter Drescher at 802-479-1169 or peter.drescher@vermont.gov.

Braille Forms

This year, teachers can select one of three formats to administer the Smarter Balanced Assessment in Braille for math. The formats available are: 1) fixed paper version, 2) fixed online version, or 3) an online computer adaptive version. When doing the online version, teachers can select from a dropdown menu used to select your test session.

The screenshot shows a 'Test Selection' window with the following elements:

- Header: 'Test Selection' and 'Expand All' button.
- Instruction: 'Choose the tests to add to your session, and then start your session.'
- Tree view:
 - [-] Smarter Balanced Summative Assessments
 - [-] Grade 3
 - + ELA Computer Adaptive Testing (CAT)
 - + ELA Performance Task (PT)
 - + Math Computer Adaptive Testing (CAT)
 - + Math Performance Task (PT)
 - + Math Braille Fixed Form Testing (highlighted with a red arrow)
 - + Grade 4
 - + Grade 5
 - + Grade 6
 - + Grade 7
- Right-hand pane (expanded view of 'Math Braille Fixed Form Testing'):
 - [-] Math Braille Fixed Form Testing
 - Summative CAT - Math Grade 3 - Braille Fixed Form
 - Summative PT - Math Grade 3 - Braille Fixed Form
- Buttons: 'Start Session' (green) and 'Close' (grey).

NOTE: ELA has only two versions: fixed paper version or the adaptive online version that uses refreshable braille.

Testing Brochures

In an effort to streamline the administration of the Smarter Balanced Assessment, we have created four additional brochures housed in the VT-SBAC portal in the [Testing Administration Resources](#) section. Each brochure has several subtitles. For example, the TIDE brochure illustrates adding multiple students to TIDE, uploading test settings, and accessing the classroom activities. The new brochures are:

- Interim Test Sessions,
- Summative Assessment,
- VT Systems Task (Permissions), and
- TIDE.

Question of the Week: How do I indicate race in TIDE?

You may have noticed that “race” is a required field in TIDE and that “mixed race” is not an option. Here’s what we have learned. If the student or the student’s family has indicated the student’s racial make-up, you can select several of the listed options. This will activate a hidden reporting field for “mixed race” that will appear in the Online Reporting System. The same strategy can be applied if the student’s racial make-up has not been reported. Any combination of two or more racial categories will result in a designation as mixed race.

