

## 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: Score Reports

On August 30th we released the results of the 2016 Smarter Balanced Assessment, and with the release, we close the assessment cycle for one year and launch into another. Of course, many of us are anticipating the release of the school-level results that will coincide with a press conference Secretary Holcombe is planning for mid-September. We'll be firing up Excel to see what the data can tell us about the success of our previous efforts to provide our students with a successful learning experience, and the goals we will need to set for the future.

We've been asked several times recently why we are treating this year's assessment data as the baseline for future analysis, and why we are discouraging comparisons of this year's results with the 2015 scores. The quick answer is that testing on the computer was very new to us all last year - for students, educators, and the Agency's assessment team - and because of that we are not 100% sure what is reflected in the 2015 scores: students' actual academic proficiency or their ability to use a computer, or maybe a bit of both.

With the introduction of the new Smarter Balanced program we have an opportunity to correct some of the misuses of test scores that occurred in the past, foremost among them, the tendency to draw unwarranted conclusions. Right now, if your scores went up or if they went down, we can't tell with any degree of certainty what actually caused the change. Was it academic skills, computer skills, or something else? Any inferences would need to be drawn with a giant grain of salt. Things will be different at this time next year, and then we will celebrate how much the scores went up. In the meantime, there is a lot to be learned from this year's numbers. Let us know if we can help.

*Michael Hock, State Assessment Director*

**Question of the Week:** *I am trying to print batch student reports. How can I print score reports for my school?* At this time, score reports can only be batch printed by grade and content area. You will need to print one set for ELA and one set for MA. This can be done at the school, teacher, or roster level from the student listing view in ORS. You will have to select the "Student" view from the drop-down box in the navigation widget. Once your print request has been processed, you will receive an automated email indicating your file is ready for download from the inbox within the ORS (not your personal email inbox).

## Questions?

Please contact:

**Help Desk (AIR)** for Test  
Administration & Test  
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[vthelpdesk@air.org](mailto:vthelpdesk@air.org)  
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### 2017 State Testing Calendar

Below are the testing dates for the 2016-17 school year.

#### Smarter Balanced

Interims: 10/18/16 throughout the summer      Summative: 3/14/17-5/26/17  
 Make-up: 5/29/2017-6/16/2017

#### DLM

Fall Window: 9/21/2016-12/16/2016      Winter Window: 1/3/2017-2/28/2017  
 Spring Summative: 3/15/2017-6/9/2017

#### NECAP

May 1-25, 2017      Material Pick-up: May 26, 2017

#### VTAAP

Applications by 10/15/2016  
 Baselines completed by: 3/30/17  
 Portfolios due to AOE 5/15/17

#### ACCESS 2.0 / Kindergarten/ Alt-ACCESS

1/17/2017-3/10/2017

### AIR/Smarter Balanced Fall Regional Training: Save the Dates

Tuesday, October 11: Burlington (1:00-4:00pm)

Location: Sheraton Burlington Hotel and Conference Center  
 870 Williston Road  
 Burlington, VT 05403

Wednesday, October 12: Montpelier (1:00-4:00pm)

Location: Capitol Plaza  
 100 State St.  
 Montpelier, VT 05602

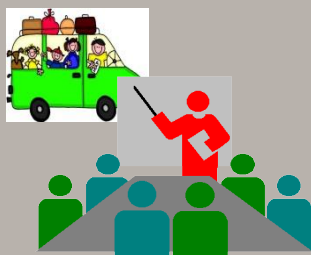
Thursday, October 13: Mt. Snow (1:00-4:00pm)

Location: Mt. Snow Grand Summit Resort  
 89 Grand Summit Way  
 West Dover, VT 05356

Friday, October 14: Killington (8:30-11:30am)

Location: Killington Grand Resort Hotel  
 228 E Mountain Rd.  
 Killington, VT 05751

**Registration links will appear in the next newsletter.**



**From the Inbox:**

Michael,

*We're starting to dig into our SBAC results. How many scale score points do you need for the difference between two groups to be significant?*

I've passed your question on to the psychometricians at the American Institutes for Research and will pass along whatever they have to say. In the meantime, here is what I can tell you.

I know we have made statistical significance into a holy grail of sorts. Unfortunately, because our schools are so small it's hard to show a significant effect simply because the numbers aren't big enough, and this can end up masking real change. Your school is relatively large by Vermont standards, but still not big enough to achieve a statistically significant change unless you went from 0% to 100%.

However, all is not lost. You can look for what we might call educational significance. Your school's average scaled scores are reported within a band of confidence (e.g. 2345 +/- 25). If the confidence bands for two data sets DO NOT overlap, you can assume some real change occurred. Let's say for example:

Data Set 1 = 2345 +/-25 gives you a confidence band of 2320 to 2370

Data Set 2 = 2400 +/-25 gives you a confidence band of 2374 to 2425

Because the lower limit of the Data Set 2 score is 5 points higher than the upper limits of the Data Set 1 score, you can assume that something good has happened. The difference probably would not satisfy a test of statistical significance, but it does represent real change. Even if you have a slight overlap of confidence bands, say 5 points for example, if you have other measures of the same skill or construct that show success or growth, it's okay to celebrate the increase in scores. Hope that helps. I'll let you know when I hear from AIR.

*Michael Hock, State Assessment Director*

**Digital Library**

I would like to thank the Vermont teachers who participated in the 2016 summer workshops. Everyone who participated should have received a Vermont Certificate of Attendance which can be used towards your recertification. If you did not receive a certificate issued by the AOE, but you attended a workshop, please let me know. Digital Library will be implementing new features and upgrades over the course of the 2016-17 school year. Phase 1 will happen in late October. These upgrades include: increased search speed, playlists (linked by topic and learning progressions), and a goal setting function to assist teachers in tracking their progress on lesson submissions and reviews. If you have any questions about becoming a State Network Educator (SNE), please feel free to contact Linda Moreno by email at [linda.moreno@vermont.gov](mailto:linda.moreno@vermont.gov) or by phone 802-479-1309.

