

Smarter Balanced Assessment Team

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

Linda Moreno
Assessment Coordinator for Special Populations
802-479-1309
Linda.moreno@vermont.gov

Questions?
Please contact:
Help Desk (AIR) for Test Administration & Test Delivery Technologies
vthelpdesk@air.org
844-218-1184

Michael Hock (AOE) for Policies and Procedures
Michael.hock@vermont.gov
802-479-1288

Linda Moreno
Accessibility and Accommodations
Linda.moreno@vermont.gov
802-479-1309

Jon Strazza for Health Exemptions & Appeals
jon.strazza@vermont.gov
802-479-1444



From the Test Director: *Hi Michael, I'm sorry to be pestering you with SBAC issues, but...*

Last week, I got an e-mail from a district test administrator that started like this: “Hi Michael, I’m sorry to be pestering you with SBAC issues, but...”

I get this all the time, which probably speaks to the fact that as a group, Vermont educators are some of the most kind and reasonable bunch you would ever want to meet. It’s extremely gratifying that folks who are extremely busy themselves would be concerned about adding to my workload. However, I want to make this very clear. It is my job and the job of the assessment team to make your students’ experience with testing as positive as possible. You are never pestering us. We welcome your calls. We want to help solve your problems. It would be helpful if you would direct your calls to the individuals who are most likely to know the most about your concern (see below), but no matter who you call, you should find a helpful, friendly voice on the other end of the line.

Help Categories	Contact	Phone	E-mail
Test Administration and delivery (TIDE, TDS, ORS)	VT Helpdesk	844-218-1184	vthelpdesk@air.org
Policy Issues	Michael Hock	802-479-1288	michael.hock@vermont.gov
Special Populations	Linda Moreno	802-479-1309	linda.moreno@vermont.gov
Science Assessment, appeals, health exemptions	Jon Strazza	802-479-1444	jon.strazza@vermont.gov
English Learners, ACCESS for ELLs	Jim McCobb	802-479-1273	james.mccobb@vermont.gov
Data entry, storage and analysis	Glenn Bailey	802-479-1305	glenn.bailey@vermont.gov
NAEP	Gabe McGann	802-479-1366	gabriel.mcgann@vermont.gov
Classroom computing, devices and internet	Peter Drescher	802-479-1169	peter.drescher@vermont.gov

It’s worth mentioning that not only do your calls not bother us, they are actually the last and one of the most important components of our assessment quality control. Despite their best efforts, because our assessment is so large and complex, our contractor can’t always pick up every tiny glitch in the system. We have to rely on our test administrators to report, as quickly as possible, any problems they encounter with the test delivery system and the test items it presents to our

students. The e-mail I mentioned at the beginning of this missive is a great example. This district administrator identified a test item that would only take one response, and noticed that the new Desmos calculator was not showing up on screen as expected. Because of these “good catches” the defective item has been removed and the new calculator has been activated. That is NOT what I would consider pestering us.

Michael Hock, State Assessment Director

TTS – Checklist & Accommodation 3-5 Protocol Webinar

VT - TTS
(3-5)
Accommodation
Qualification
Checklist

I want to thank all those who took the time out of their busy schedules to participate in the TTS Checklist and Accommodations Protocol Webinar. The [Power Point slides](#) are now posted in the [VT-SBAC Portal](#). If you did not get the opportunity to participate in one of the webinars, please take a few minutes to review the slides. Also, please remember to include the VT-TTS Checklist with any requests you send to the DA. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Linda Moreno at 802-479-1309 / linda.moreno@vermont.gov.

SBAC and Higher Ed



As we approach the start of the 2017 Smarter Balanced testing window, the assessment team begins to get calls from parents and, on occasion, students. One common theme around these calls pertains to the value of the high school assessment. It might interest folks to know that 256 colleges and universities in ten states have decided to use the Smarter Balanced High School Assessments as part of a multiple measures approach towards determining whether students are ready for credit-bearing courses and can be exempted from developmental courses. For a list of state colleges and universities, please visit the Smarter Balanced [webpage](#). As many colleges and universities move toward a multiple measures approach for admissions, the high school assessments are becoming more than just an accountability tool.

NECAP Science

We know that Smarter Balanced Assessment window has just opened, but we have received a number of questions over the last week about the NECAP Science dates. The NECAP Science assessment testing window opens on May 1st and runs through May 25th. The test pick-up will occur on May 26th. If you have any questions about NECAP Science, please contact Jon Strazza for general questions or the NECAP Help Desk at 1-877-632-7774 for questions pertaining to deliveries and student counts.



Protocol for Appeals and Exemptions

In the last newsletter, the Assessment Team introduced our new State Assessment Coordinator, Jon Strazza, to the field. One of Jon’s first duties is to approve all testing exemptions, and once the test window opens, the appeals. Jon has been a breath of fresh air to an over extended team, so please use Jon as your first contact for all appeals and exemption inquiries.

Digital Library

New Resource: Please download and post the new [Digital Library flyer](#) regarding playlists and account registration. Playlists are collections of resources based on a specific claim. There are also professional development playlists if you are planning faculty workshops.

Registration: There is now a self-registration tool for creating accounts in the Digital Library. Vermont supplied Smarter Balanced with a list of every supervisory union or district’s email domain, so if you register with your work email, you shouldn’t have any issues. However, some of our independent schools and even new SU/SDs may not have been included in the original list. If you find you are having difficulty registering, please contact Linda Moreno to have your school’s email domain added to the file.

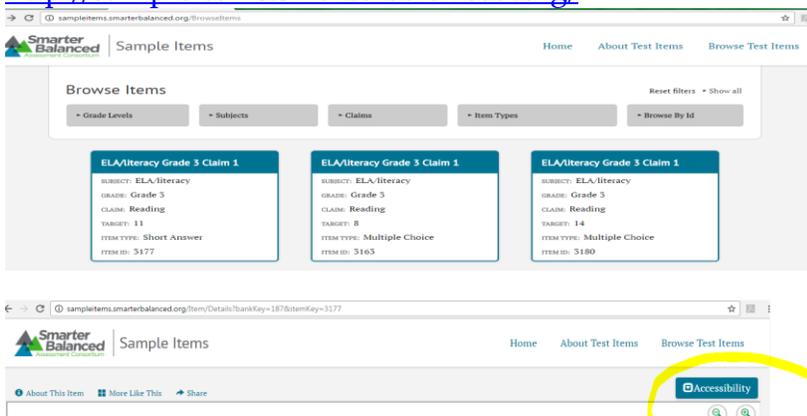
Bug Fixes: During the Digital Library Winter SNE Workshop, bugs in the resource review process were detected. One such bug created a situation in the Quality Review process that had the resource going through multiple cycles of review. There is now a new review protocol. All SNEs are encouraged to read the about the [Workflow Updates](#) posted in the Digital Library section of the VT-SBAC Portal.



Sample Item Website

Although many schools have been through the Smarter Balanced Testing cycle a few times, we need to be mindful of our new teachers, third grade students, and parents who are experiencing the assessment for the first time. In addition to the practice and training tests found on the VT-SBAC Portal, Smarter Balanced has created a website that allows stakeholders to browse and learn more about the test items and supports. It is a public facing site, so please feel free to mention the new Sample Item website, and insert the web address in any test announcements you send home.

<http://sampleitems.smarterbalanced.org/>





Question of the Week – Correction.

In the last issue of the newsletter, it was mentioned that schools *should administer the practice test prior to the start of the testing window.*

Correction:

...There are no performance tasks and students will need to have a Student ID and Session ID to access the *training* tests. It is recommended that *training tests* be given no more than 6 weeks prior to the start of the summative assessment. Most schools administer the *training* test either the week before or the week of the school’s selected assessment window.

Question of the week

Why does my name not print on the certificate, nor am I able to access the Test Delivery System (TDS) after I’ve completed my (re)certification quiz?

It has been discovered that if your cache is not cleared prior to taking the certification or recertification quiz, then it will not register in the system as “complete”. Therefore, please be sure your cache is cleared before you take the recertification/certification quiz.



Smarter Balanced Assessment Tally

VT 2017 SBAC Assessment Tally: 3/31/17 (Completed)							
Grade	# of students	ELA CAT	MA CAT	ELA PT	MA PT	Total #	% Completed
	41646						
11	6754	2255	1861	1986	1637	7739	29
8	5758	951	565	835	471	2822	12
7	5849	1025	686	960	522	3139	14
6	5905	1127	477	906	437	2947	12
5	5602	612	425	445	360	1842	8
4	5912	5990	546	488	418	2042	9
3	5866	596	430	507	289	1822	8
							Overall 13%