



### Update on Testing Progress:

#### 2015 SBAC Assessment Tally: WK 5 of 13

Total # of students registered 43,838	Completed the Summative Assessments		Completed the Performance Tasks		Total # of Tests Completed to date: 63,770 (36%)
	ELA	MA	ELA	MA	ALL
11: 7003	2831	2393	2634	2276	10,134
8: 6223	3176	2820	2792	2498	11,286
7: 6128	3121	2691	2785	2397	10,994
6: 6115	2245	1916	1689	1407	7,257
5: 6146	2169	1873	1873	1679	7,594
4: 6212	2691	2479	2508	2177	9,855
3: 6011	1875	1658	1627	1490	6,650

**Exemptions:** The exemption mechanism is now in TIDE. The DA will enter the ELL exemption; however, medical exemptions will still be approved and entered by Michael Hock at the state level.

### Message from the Director: Parent Opt-out or Exemption?

*"A few district test administrators have asked us if they should (or can) forward parent "opt out" questions to the Agency using our standard procedures for processing exemption requests. Neither federal nor state law provides for an "opt-out" of the annual testing requirement for public school students under the federal Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA). The SBAC test is the test instrument that Vermont has selected to comply with this requirement. As a result, the Agency of Education cannot provide any guidance on how a school district might provide an opt-out option for students, because such an option would violate the law. Therefore, we **cannot** accept or process test opt out or test refusal requests through our exemption approval procedures."* **Michael Hock, Director of Educational Assessment, michael.hock@state.vt.us / 802-479-1288.**

**Update on Reporting:** Because this is a new testing and reporting environment, summative results will not be available until sometime after the testing window closes on June 12<sup>th</sup>. We want to be very deliberate as we review the look and information of the summative results reports and will be convening a work group to help us establish guidelines to ensure consistent analysis and use of these results. Our intent is to take the time to make sure we understand this new information and data as well as allow time for involvement from school, district and SU level staff. More information about this opportunity and a detailed schedule will be released soon. Please remember that interim assessment results and participation reports are already available through the Online Reporting System (ORS).

**Feedback Surveys:** [Surveys](#) have now been posted to the VT-SBAC portal. You can access them through the portal homepage just under the card for newsletters and bulletins. There are six surveys: Test Delivery, Staff Support, Manuals/Guides/Brochures, Portal, Technology, and Other. Please read the directions carefully. We continue to receive constructive feedback from the field on a daily basis and want to thank everyone for their continued support.



**In the News:** You may have seen news reports concerning SBAC testing problems in three states. When Montana, Nevada and North Dakota all opened their assessment windows at the same time, their web-hosting system quickly reached capacity and no additional students were able to log into testing. Fortunately, no student work was lost, but schools needed to delay testing for several days while the issue was identified and corrected. We want to assure you that we do not anticipate similar problems here in Vermont. We are working with a different assessment contractor and use a completely different web-hosting system, the one that was used successfully last spring for SBAC field testing. That system recently reached a load milestone of 350,000 simultaneous test administrations, with no sign that it was nearing capacity. We are quickly approaching the half-way mark in our assessment window and thus far have experienced very few technical issues or delays, and none that required a system shut down. We are confident that this will be the experience of the schools who will complete testing during the second half of the window.



**Is it possible to pause the TTS reader and pick up where the student left off?** No and Yes. The TTS automated voice pack will read straight through the items and answer selections without pausing. If you pause, it will go back and read from the beginning. This can be very frustrating for the student. One strategy is to use the highlighting feature. If you highlight parts of the test or even just the answers, then the automated voice will read only the highlighted sections.

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