

## 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](mailto:Linda.moreno@vermont.gov)

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

[Michael.hock@vermont.gov](mailto:Michael.hock@vermont.gov)

802-479-1288

Linda Moreno

Accessibility and  
Accommodations for Special  
Populations

[Linda.moreno@vermont.gov](mailto:Linda.moreno@vermont.gov)

802-479-1309



## From the Test Director

### Dual Reporting

Since about this time last year, my data wizard colleague Glenn Bailey and I have been working with our project team at AIR to figure out a way we can report a student's scores at two different schools. Our primary interest in doing this is for Career Technology Education (CTE) centers that are increasingly taking on responsibility for testing all of the students from all of its sending schools. We want the CTE Directors and staff to be able to create reports on all of their students, but we also want the data to track back to the home high schools and districts. This may also be useful for students placed by IEP teams in independents or regional programs.

If you think making this work should be easy, you would be wrong. For good reasons, AIR has programmed the TIDE system to treat entry of a student's data at two different schools as an error, so when you load a student's information into a second school's TIDE file it automatically wipes out any previous entries at another school. We have finally figured out a way to work around this hurdle by making each CTE a unique school district - they were originally listed as one of the schools in the district where the center is located which would result in that district being able to view data from ALL the sending schools (most likely a FERPA violation). With the new district designations in place, CTEs can now enter all the students they plan to test in their own TIDE file, but they can also make each student's home school the "Reporting School" by entering the school numbers where indicated in TIDE. You can also work this the other way around - if CTE students are tested at their home high school, but you would like to share the data with the CTE staff, you can enter the CTE's new district number in the reporting District and School fields.

You can find more detailed information under the [District Administrator's Resources Card](#) in the file titled [Understanding Dual Reporting](#).

**Michael Hock, Director of Educational Assessment**

From the Director's  
in-box



## Smarter Balanced Testing in High School

**To:** Michael Hock

**From:** A high school test administrator

**Subject:** When to test high school students who are not clearly 11<sup>th</sup> graders?

**Message:** Can you help us to better understand how things work when students are accelerated vs. held back? Here are our two scenarios:

### 1. Student is presently in 10<sup>th</sup> grade in terms of credit but working with an 11<sup>th</sup> grade cohort. Do we test him?

This is actually your call. Students need to be tested once while in high school, typically after they have finished 10<sup>th</sup> grade (or, more accurately, once they have complete Algebra 1 and Geometry). You could test the student this year if you think s/he is ready and want to get it out of the way. But on my end, we would not expect you to test the student if s/he is listed in the census as a 10<sup>th</sup> grader. So, the answer is whatever you think is best for the student and the school. It's okay to do it this year, but if you decide not to test this student, you must do it next year.

### 2. Student was tested last year as an 11<sup>th</sup> grader and is still considered an 11<sup>th</sup> grader based on his credit. Do we test him again?

No. Students only need to be tested once in high school. This one is off the hook.

*Note: Students who are retained in grades 3-8 will need to retake the assessment.*

### 3. Are we determining the testing group based on the students' status at the time of the fall census or is there another determining factor?

Actually, it's the student's status at the time of the spring census, or to look at it another way, at the time of assessment. The major determining factor for the Agency is what you tell us in the spring census. However, as in the two cases above, you may be able to make a case to bypass that assumption (e.g., the 10<sup>th</sup> grader is ready now versus the 11<sup>th</sup> grader already was tested). If you want to make either case, you should call me. (Michael Hock, 802-479-1288 or [michael.hock@vermont.gov](mailto:michael.hock@vermont.gov))

## TTS/ Read Aloud Accommodation (ELA CAT test)

The Text-to-Speech (TTS) and Read Aloud Accommodation, for all grades, needs to be entered by the District Administrator (DA). The TTS/Read Aloud Accommodation (grades 3-5) needs prior approval by the state before the DA can enter it into TIDE. The TTS/Read Aloud accommodation in grades 3-5 is rare and granted if the student is blind and has not has a chance to learn braille, recently diagnosed with a reading disorder AND has not developed a system for decoding words at any level, or has a disability so severe that it is likely the student will never be able to read without assistance. The reason is that the ELA CAT in grades 3-5 measures decoding, and if it is read to the student, it renders the score invalid and therefore cannot be used for diagnostic or IEP purposes. The TTS/Read Aloud designated support, however, can be used and still produce a valid score.



### **From the Newsletter Archives – What are the Roles and Responsibilities of the District Test Administrator?** From January 17, 2015

Based on the field calls I have been receiving at the agency, I thought it might be a good idea to describe the importance of the District Test Administrator's (DTA) role and their responsibilities. First and foremost, the DTAs will be trained to be the experts for their Supervisory Union or Supervisory District (SU/SD) on all things SBAC. Aside from being the point person for SBAC, they will also be responsible for coordinating the SU/SD training plan using the online training modules and resources that will be available on Vermont's SBAC Portal (scheduled to go live within the next week). Finally, they will coordinate updates of the Test Information Distribution Engine (TIDE). In all, the DTA is the SU/SD's designee who will make our Smarter Balanced test system work. If you're thinking "this sounds like a big job", you would be right. Fortunately, the DTA can designate any number of District Test Coordinators (DTC) to assist with the work, and DTCs don't necessarily need to be SU/SD personnel. For example, it might make sense to have one DTC in charge of training, another responsible for coordinating technology, and a third to help enter data into TIDE. There are no limits on the number of DTCs, or the roles they will be assigned to play. Each SU/SD can configure these roles to fit its unique needs. Please feel free to give me a call or send me an email if you have questions, and my sincere thanks to all of you who have agreed to take on the very important job of being your Supervisory Union or Supervisory District's Test Administrator.

*Please note: The DA should be mindful of FERPA regulations when assigning DTC roles.*

### **Question of the Week: What is the difference between scribing for a non-writing item and a writing item?**

Scribing for a non-writing test item (basically math) is less structured and is similar to how one might scribe in the classroom. The scribe will take dictation verbatim from the student. When finished, the student will review the answer, and once satisfied, the scribe will enter the answer into the computer. The scribe can assume correct grammar rules because grammar is not being measured on the math assessment.

On the other hand, there is a strict scribing protocol for student writing on the ELA assessments. When scribing for a student on the ELA assessments, the scribe needs to sit where the student cannot see what s/he is writing. There can be no spelling, punctuation, or capitalization assumed. The scribe takes dictation verbatim and any words beyond simple vocabulary (i.e. the, ate, tell, said...) need to be spelled by the student. These would be words with affixes, diphthongs, and certain consonant blends that may have one sound or no sounds such as "eight" or "school".

**NOTE:** It is very important that the aide and student follow scribing protocol in the classroom on a daily basis.

