

# Vermont Comprehensive Assessment Program

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## 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)

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State Assessment  
Information:  
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Michael Hock (AOE) for  
Policies and Procedures  
[Michael.Hock@vermont.gov](mailto:Michael.Hock@vermont.gov)  
802-479-1288

Linda Moreno for  
Accessibility and  
Accommodations  
[Linda.Moreno@vermont.gov](mailto:Linda.Moreno@vermont.gov)  
802-479-1309

Gabriel McGann for  
Science and PE Assessments,  
Exemptions and Appeals  
[Gabriel.McGann@vermont.gov](mailto:Gabriel.McGann@vermont.gov)  
802-479-1444

Goma Mabika  
NAEP  
[Goma.Mabika@vermont.gov](mailto:Goma.Mabika@vermont.gov)  
802-479-1366

Sarah Birgé  
School Climate Survey  
Digital Library/Interims  
[Sarah.Birge@vermont.gov](mailto:Sarah.Birge@vermont.gov)  
802-479-1426



## From the Director: Student Uploads

### It's time to upload your student data into TIDE

No need to panic. The Smarter Balanced assessment window doesn't open until March 13, 2019. However, there are several reasons why you might want to do your student data uploads soon:

- If you are one of the new unified school districts, you may not be able to access students' results from last year if the students went to a school in an SU or District that no longer exists because of the merger. Once you load the students in TIDE for 2019, you will be able to view any data that have been archived for those students.
- In order to apply for approval of a Text to Speech (TTS) accommodation, the student must be uploaded into TIDE for 2019. It is also necessary to have checked the IDEA or 504 button for the student because only students with an IEP or 504 are eligible for the TTS accommodation.
- Students need to be uploaded into TIDE in order to take an Interim Assessment.

If you need information on how to complete a TIDE upload, please see the TIDE User [Guide](#) or [brochure](#), and the [Training Module](#) available on the [VTCAP Assessment Portal](#)

*Michael Hock,*  
*State Assessment Director*

## Vermont Climate Survey (VTCLIM) Update

You may have already heard that the Vermont School Climate Survey (VTCLIM) launch has been pushed forward to the 2019-2020 school year. There were a series of factors that led to this decision, but the primary factor was a desire not to place a major tech burden on schools. If you have any questions or comments, please contact Sarah Birgé, School Climate Survey Coordinator, at [sarah.birge@vermont.gov](mailto:sarah.birge@vermont.gov).

### **Text-to-Speech (TTS) Accommodation Requests (ELA CAT)**

New for 2019: TTS Accommodations will be entered at the state level starting in spring 2019. This move should lighten the load for District Test Administrators. Grades 6-9

TTS accommodations will be submitted through a [link](#) on the VTCAP [Portal](#). The Grade [6-9 TTS Accommodation Request form](#) is available to all educators. The form will need to be completed for each student who will be assessed using the TTS accommodation (items and passages) on the ELA CAT in grades 6-9 with a Reading disability noted on an IEP or 504 plan. All other students may use the TTS Designated Support.

Grades 3-5

All [TTS accommodation requests in grades 3-5](#) will follow the same protocol as 2018, minus the involvement of the District Test Administrator (DA). Requests will no longer be required to filter through the DA; however, based on feedback I received at the regional trainings, some districts still may want the 3-5 TTS Accommodation requests run by the district special education directors. Please check with your special education directors regarding local policies and procedures.

Please contact Linda Moreno, 802-479-1309 or [linda.moreno@vermont.gov](mailto:linda.moreno@vermont.gov) with any questions you might have.

### **State Assessment Accommodations 101: Updated**

**Audience: Classroom Teachers, Special Educators, ESL Specialists, School Test Coordinators,**

It has been a few years since we launched the Smarter Balanced Assessment. Although much remains the same, there have been a few changes in the Usability, Accessibility, and Accommodations Guidelines. Beginning in January 2019, I will begin offering an updated accommodations training. All trainings will be held online and live, so there will be an opportunity for questions and answers. Please use the registration link below to register for your preferred date and time.

[Register](#)

### **Digital Library / Interims**

Districts have been taking advantage of the free Digital Library and Interim Assessment training offered by the AOE. We're happy to work with your district to tailor these trainings to fit your needs. Contact Sarah Birgé at [sarah.birge@vermont.gov](mailto:sarah.birge@vermont.gov) for more information and/or to schedule a training.

In other news, Smarter Balanced has just released the first in a series of webinars. This focuses on how educators are using the Interim Assessment Blocks (IAB) in their classrooms to support all learners. You can view this [IAB Webinar here](#), and [see older webinars and videos here](#).

**Alternate VTPEA Individual Fitness Assessment (IFA): Case Studies**

The Vermont Physical Education Assessment (VTPEA) Team is seeking volunteers to attend one of two workshops on the IFA Process. The purpose of the Case Study Workgroup is to refine the FitnessGram (FG), Brockport Fitness Test (BPFT), and IFA decision making protocol as well as develop a few reference case studies from each of the VTPEA assessments. If anyone is interested in more information on these work groups, please contact [Linda Moreno](#) at 802-479-1309, or [Susan Yesalonia](#) at 802-479-1284. To participate in a workgroup, please use the registration link below and select one of the dates.

**Workgroup Dates:**

Monday, December 17, 2018 in White River Junction, 118 Prospect Street  
Wednesday, December 19, 2019 at the Agency of Education, Barre VT

[Register](#)

**VTPEA Teacher Leader Training: Make-up Date****Tuesday, January 8, 2019: Norwich University**

Unfortunately, the training scheduled for Friday, November 16<sup>th</sup> at Norwich University was postponed due to unsafe travel conditions. The team was able to secure space at Norwich University (same venue) for Tuesday, January 8, 2019. We were also fortunate to be able to have Dr. Cathy Houston-Wilson return to present information on special populations. This training will include new information on the Individualized Fitness Assessment (IFA). For those who attended the November training at Castleton, you do not need to attend the training at Norwich. New information on the IFA will be presented in one or more future webinar(s) in February dates to be determined.

[Register](#)

**Vermont Science Assessment (VTSA): Educator Opportunities****VTSA Item Review**

Assessment work may be the farthest from everyone's mind now; however, in January, a group of educators will convene in Nashua, New Hampshire to review test items for the VTSA. The item review will take place at the DoubleTree Nashua, and go from Monday, January 14 through Wednesday, January 16, 2019. Because teachers are under contract, there is no daily stipend; however, there is money to pay for substitute teachers. Additionally, all travel expenses, and meals not provided during the day, will be reimbursed. If you are interested in participating in the review, please contact [Margaret Carrera-Bly](#) (content review) and [Linda Moreno](#) (accessibility & bias review).

**From our Inbox:**

**From:** A Newspaper Reporter

**Sent:** Friday, December 07, 2018 2:51 PM

**To:** Hock, Michael <[Michael.Hock@vermont.gov](mailto:Michael.Hock@vermont.gov)>

**Subject:** SBACs data

Hi Michael,

When you guys first announced the statewide scores awhile back you said the disaggregated data should be ready in December. What's the ETA on that?

Thanks,

Michael's Response:

I hesitate to project an exact date. Our ability to create the reports for disaggregated student groups is dependent on having the final results of the spring 2018 student census. Without the census data, we have no accurate way to determine if a student was receiving free reduced lunch at the time of assessment, or if the student was receiving IEP services. As you may have heard, the census data has been delayed while we wait for deployment of the Agency's new state longitudinal data system

**Q: Is Text-To-Speech (TTS) available in Spanish?**

**A:** TTS is not currently available in Spanish even with the stacked Spanish translation setting on the Smarter Balanced Assessment. However, there is a Spanish Read/Aloud available as a non-embedded designated support. Please make sure, if you select the Spanish Read Aloud designated support, that the translator is fluent in the Spanish dialect of the student and is not a member of the student's immediate or extended family. All translators must sign a confidentiality agreement, be trained in all testing procedures and protocols, and the student must take the stacked Spanish assessment. Assessments are read verbatim.

**The VTSA**, however, has Spanish TTS. Be sure to select the Spanish Toggle in order to have the Spanish TTS activated.

Please feel free to contact [Linda Moreno](#) with any questions.