Common Core State Standards: An Essential Component of the College Completion Agenda

Research has consistently shown that the single most powerful predictor of student success in college is the rigor of academic preparation.

Common Core standards and assessments:

- Anchor K-12 experience in real-world expectations for success in college and careers.
- Remove the guesswork for teachers and schools.
- Allow schools, parents and students to track progress.
- Identify students who need additional assistance while still in high school.
- Reduce remediation and increase college success.
Alignment of National and …

“Community colleges will do their part by agreeing on a common performance level for “college and career-ready” high school assessments, working with secondary school leaders and teachers to align high school and college curriculum, and communicating more clearly to students the consequences in time and money of not meeting the college-ready standard on graduation from high school.”
California Community College Goals

“The Task Force recommends that the community college system closely collaborate with the SBE and Superintendent of Public Instruction to define standards for college and career readiness as California implements the K-12 Common Core State Standards and engages with the national Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium to determine the appropriate means for measuring these standards. Doing so would reduce the number of students needing remediation, help ensure that students who graduate from high school meeting 12th grade standards are ready for college-level work, and encourage more students to achieve those standards by clearly defining college and career expectations.”
A New Vision for Assessing Readiness

Readiness Testing Today

• Each college or system sets its own standards and selects its own measures.
• K-12 has no information about the standards.
• Students don’t know about tests and don’t prepare for them.
• Predictive validity of tests is unknown.
• Students who “played by the rules” end up in remediation.

Smarter Balanced Vision

• Assessments designed around known, agreed-upon standards (Common Core).
• Readiness standards set through an open process with substantial higher education involvement.
• Everyone (students, teachers, parents, etc.) knows the expectations.
• Students address deficiencies in high school.
College and Career Readiness: Really the Same?

College and career-readiness involves more than math and English. College readiness has been defined as a complex and multi-dimensional construct that involves content knowledge, learning and critical thinking skills, and practical information (Dr. David Conley).

In English language art and mathematics, research has consistently shown that skills needed for success in entry-level courses and the high-skill workplace are equivalent. Common Core State Standards make no distinction between college and career-readiness in English and math.
Common Core Standards Implementation: Important Roles for Higher Education

- Teacher and School Leader Preparation and Professional Development
- Clear Expectations (Assessments, Course Requirements)
- Aligned Curricula (adult, developmental, and general education)
- High School Interventions (bridge courses, dual enrollment, etc.)
- New Curricular Materials
A National Consortium of States

• 27 states representing 43% of K-12 students
• 20 governing, 7 advisory states
• Washington state is fiscal agent
State-Led Governance

States Join Consortium as Governing or Advisory State

• Governors
• Education Chiefs
• State Legislatures
• State Boards of Education

State Representatives Serve on Executive Committee

• 2 elected co-chairs
• 4 representatives elected by governing states
• Lead procurement state (WA)
• 2 higher education reps (B. Young)

Smarter Balanced Staff

WestEd, Project Management Partner

Advisory Committees
(Higher Education)
Consortium Work Groups

Work group engagement of 100+ state-level staff:

• Led by co-chairs from governing states
• 6 or more K-12 members from advisory or governing states
• 2 higher education members
• 1 liaison from Executive Committee

Work group responsibilities:

• Define scope and time line for work in its area
• Develop a work plan and resource requirements
• Determine and monitor the allocated budget
• Oversee Consortium work in its area, including identification and direction of vendors

1. Accessibility and Accommodations
2. Formative Assessment Practices and Professional Learning
3. Item Development
4. Performance Tasks
5. Reporting
6. Technology Approach
7. Test Administration
8. Test Design
9. Transition to Common Core State Standards
10. Validation and Psychometrics
# Higher Education Engagement Structure

## Higher Education Leads
- State’s primary higher education representative
- Communication node for state
- Work with K-12 State Leads, Common Core implementation committees
- One Lead serves on Executive Committee

## Regional Senior Consultants
- Advise regional clusters of states
- Present on Smarter Balanced at key state meetings
- Listen and communicate back issues
- Provide implementation advice

## Director
- Coordination and communication
- Identify concerns, work toward resolution
- Represent consortium at national higher education gatherings
- Convene leads by phone and in person

## Advisory Committee
- Advise director on issues and strategy
- Composed of Executive Committee higher education reps, regional senior consultants, and other higher education leaders
Smarter Balanced Goals for Higher Education

• Colleges and universities will recognize the Smarter Balanced 11\textsuperscript{th} Grade Assessment as a valid measure of college-readiness as defined by the Common Core State Standards.

• Colleges and universities will agree on a common performance standard in English Language Arts/literacy and mathematics for college-readiness.

• Colleges and universities will use the Smarter Balanced Assessment as evidence that students are ready for credit-bearing course work and can be exempted from remediation.
# Reaching the Goals: Expectations of Higher Education

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What is Expected</th>
<th>What is NOT Expected</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Participation in assessment design</td>
<td>• Use of Smarter Balanced assessment for admission</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Lead role in standard-setting for 11th grade assessment</td>
<td>• Standardization of admission criteria or standards</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Agreement on performance standards for placement in most common entry-level,</td>
<td>• Standardization of curricula</td>
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<tr>
<td>credit-bearing math and English courses (College Algebra and Freshman</td>
<td>• Complete reliance on the Smarter Balanced assessment for placement decisions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Composition)</td>
<td>(other data points and assessments may be used)</td>
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Developing business plan for post-2014 and seeking additional funding for ongoing support

States actively involved in determining future of Smarter Balanced

Addressing Higher Education Concerns

Comparability
- PARCC and Smarter Balanced working together to ensure that proficiency standards and data will be comparable and portable.

Relevance
- Higher education faculty involved in assessment design to ensure that the assessments are true to Common Core standards and higher education expectations.

Utility
- Data to support tailored instruction for students not on track to college/career readiness.

Quality
- Computer adaptive technology and performance tasks.
- Common protocols for item development: accessibility, language/cultural sensitivity, accommodations, etc.

Stability
- Developing business plan for post-2014 and seeking additional funding for ongoing support
- States actively involved in determining future of Smarter Balanced
Some Possible Options for Integration of Smarter Balanced Assessment in Placement

- Smarter Balanced
  - College Ready
    - 12th Grade Courses
    - Grades /Test Scores
    - Placement Test
  - Provisionally Ready*
    - Dual Enrollment
    - Bridge Courses
    - Placement or Diagnostic Test
- Not Yet Ready
  - Placement or Diagnostic Test

*The Consortium has not yet determined whether there will be a “Provisionally Ready” performance category.
Find Out More

Smarter Balanced can be found online at:

SmarterBalanced.org