

Smarter Balanced: Frequently Asked Questions

1. What is the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium?

The Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium (SBAC) is a team of states—including Oregon—working together voluntarily to develop K-12 assessments in English language arts/literacy and math called Smarter Balanced. These tests are aligned to the **Common Core State Standards (CCSS)** and accurately measure student progress toward college and career readiness. The Consortium includes educators, researchers, policymakers, and community groups working to help all students thrive in a knowledge-driven global economy. Smarter Balanced members states educate more than 19 million students nationally.

2. How are teachers involved in creating the Smarter Balanced assessment system?

Smarter Balanced is committed to engaging teachers in the design of an assessment system that provides resources and information to improve teaching and learning. Teachers helped write and review assessment items and performance tasks for the Pilot Test of the assessment system in early 2013 and contributed to the development of

5. How will Smarter Balanced assessments contribute to student success?

All students deserve an education that prepares them for their next steps in life—whether that's going on to college or starting a career. Smarter Balanced is guided by the belief that a balanced, high-quality assessment system can improve teaching and learning by providing information and tools for teachers and schools to help students succeed. Timely and meaningful assessment data can offer specific information about areas of performance so that teachers can follow up with targeted instruction, students can better focus their own efforts, and administrators and policymakers can more fully understand what students know and can do, in order to guide curriculum and professional development decisions. Importantly, educators will be able to easily compare student achievement between schools, districts, and states to ensure that students are making progress.

6. How does Smarter Balanced compare to our previous Oregon statewide tests?

Similar to our previous state tests, Smarter Balanced assessments make use of computer adaptive technology, which is more precise and efficient in delivering accurate and timely information on student progress. Computer adaptive tests adjust to a student's ability by basing the difficulty of future questions on previous answers, providing a more accurate measurement of student achievement, particularly for high and low-performing students. Unlike our previous state test