

Meeting the Needs of All Students

Assessments help teachers and parents/guardians know if students are on the path to success. For students with special needs or those learning English, it is essential that the tests are designed to eliminate barriers to participation and provide accurate measurement of student performance.

Accessibility for all students is a core principle of Smarter Balanced. The Smarter Balanced Assessment System provides accurate measures of achievement and growth, while challenging students to think critically and solve real-world problems. The assessments include accessibility resources that address visual, auditory, and physical access barriers—allowing virtually all students to demonstrate what they know and can do.

Timeline

2012

Research with English language learners and students with disabilities to try out computer-based tests

2013

Pilot Test to review all items for accessibility and bias

2014

Field Test to make sure questions are accurate and fair for all students

Accessibility Resources

- A set of universal accessibility tools—such as a digital notepad and scratch paper—are available to all students
- Designated supports—like a translated pop-up glossary—are available to students for whom a need has been identified by school personnel familiar with each student's needs and testing resources
- Accommodations are available to students with a documented need noted in an Individualized Education Program (IEP) or 504 plan. Accommodations include Braille and closed captioning, among others.
- The Individual Student Assessment Accessibility Profile (ISAAP) tool and training module support educators in selecting accessibility resources that match student access needs.

Developed with Experts

Smarter Balanced worked with educators, students, and experts in the field to design and test the assessment system. In addition to a state-led Test Administration/Student Access Work Group, the Consortium works with advisory panels on English language learners and students with disabilities to ensure that the assessments are developed using principles of Universal Design and research-based best practices.

“Working with a consortium of states allowed us to create a better assessment with an incredible set of accommodations and accessibility (designated) supports.”

—Angela Hemingway, Director of Assessment and Accountability for Idaho

Learn More

- Visit the Smarter Balanced website:
<http://www.smarterbalanced.org/parents-students/support-for-under-represented-students/>
- Follow us on Twitter:
[@SmarterBalanced](https://twitter.com/SmarterBalanced)

Take the Test

- Gain familiarity with the test software platform, accessibility resources, and sample test questions for grades 3-8 and 11
- Take the Practice Test:
<http://www.smarterbalanced.org/practice-test/>