

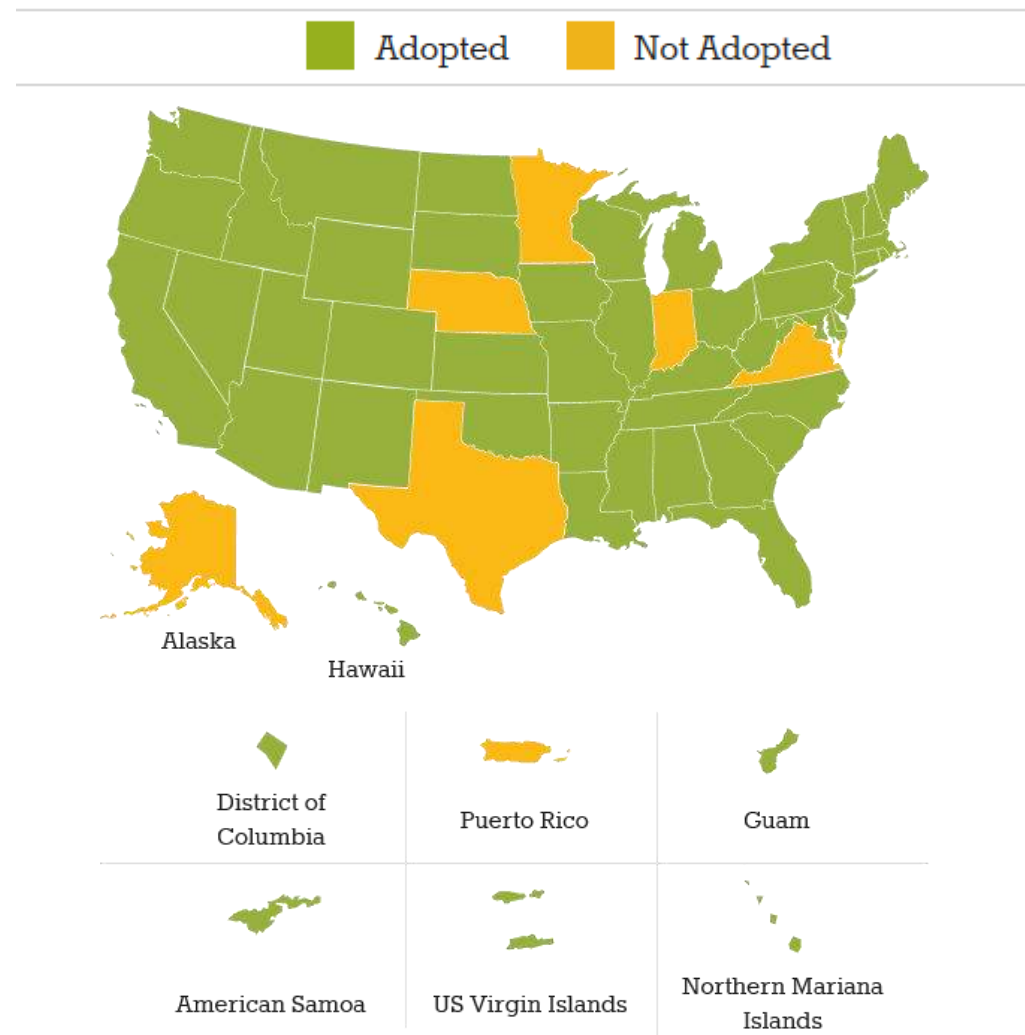
# Smarter Balanced

## Assessment Consortium



# Common Core State Standards

- Define the knowledge and skills students need for college and career
- Developed voluntarily and cooperatively by states; more than 40 states have adopted
- Provide clear, consistent standards in English language arts/literacy and mathematics



Source: [www.corestandards.org](http://www.corestandards.org)

# The Assessment Challenge

How do we get from here...

**Common Core  
State Standards  
specify K-12  
expectations for  
college and  
career readiness**



...to here?

**All students  
leave high school  
college and  
career ready**

**...and what can an  
assessment system  
do to help?**

# Concerns with Today's Statewide Assessments

Each state pays for its own assessments

- Each state bears the burden of test development; no economies of scale

Based on state standards

- Students in many states leave high school unprepared for college or career

Heavy use of multiple choice

- Inadequate measures of complex skills and deep understanding

Results delivered long after tests are given

- Tests cannot be used to inform instruction or affect program decisions

Accommodations for special education and ELL students vary

- Difficult to interpret meaning of scores; concerns about access and fairness

Most administered on paper

- Costly, time consuming, and challenging to maintain security

# Next Generation Assessments

The U.S. Department of Education has funded two consortia of states with development grants for new assessments aligned to college- and career-ready standards

- Rigorous assessment of progress toward “**college and career readiness**”
- **Common cut scores** across all Consortium states
- Provide both **achievement and growth information**
- **Valid, reliable, and fair** for all students, except those with “significant cognitive disabilities”
- Administer **online**
- Use **multiple** measures
- **Operational in 2014-15** school year

# Smarter Balanced

## Background



# The Purpose of the Consortium

- To develop a **comprehensive and innovative** assessment system for grades 3-8 and high school in English language arts and mathematics aligned to the Common Core State Standards, so that...
  - ...students leave high school **prepared for postsecondary success** in college or a career through increased student learning and improved teaching
- [The assessments shall be **operational** across Consortium states in the 2014-15 school year]





# State Led

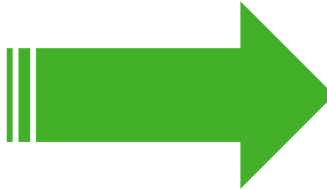
Committed to Transparency



# 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)
- Higher education representatives



Smarter Balanced Staff

WestEd, Project Management Partner

Advisory Committees

# Who We Are

<b>Executive Committee</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Co-Chairs:</b> Deb Sigman (CA), Joseph Martineau, Ph.D. (MI)</li><li>• <b>Committee:</b> Juan D’Brot (WV); Michael Hock, Ph.D. (VT); Mike Middleton (WA); Luci Willits (ID); Charles Lenth, Ph.D. (SHEEO-Higher Education Representative); Patricia Reiss, Ph.D. (HI); Beverly Young, Ph.D. (CA-Higher Education Representative)</li></ul>
<b>Staff</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Executive Director:</b> Joe Willhoft, Ph.D.</li><li>• <b>Chief Operating Officer:</b> Tony Alpert</li><li>• <b>Lead Psychometrician:</b> Marty McCall, Ph.D.</li><li>• <b>Chief Technology Officer:</b> Brandt Redd</li><li>• <b>Director of Higher Education Collaboration:</b> Jacqueline King, Ph.D.</li><li>• <b>Director of English Language Arts / Literacy:</b> Nikki Elliott-Schuman</li><li>• <b>Director of Mathematics:</b> Shelbi Cole, Ph.D.</li><li>• <b>Director of Support for Under-Represented Students / Director of System Design:</b> Magda Chia, Ph.D.</li><li>• <b>Director of Professional Learning:</b> Chrystyna V. Mursky, Ph.D.</li><li>• <b>Director of State Services:</b> Dacia Hopfensperger</li><li>• <b>Communications Associate:</b> Nicole Siegel</li></ul>
<b>Advisors</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Project Management:</b> WestEd (Stanley Rabinowitz, Ph.D., PMP Director)</li><li>• <b>Policy Coordinator:</b> Sue Gendron, Ph.D. (former Maine Education Commissioner)</li><li>• <b>Senior Research Advisor:</b> Linda Darling-Hammond, Ph.D. (Stanford University)</li></ul>

# Consortium Work Groups

## Work group engagement of 100 state-level staff:

Each work group:

- Led by co-chairs from governing states
- 8 or more members from advisory or governing states and 3-4 higher education representatives
- 1-2 liaisons from the Executive Committee
- 1 WestEd partner

## 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 Formative Assessment Practices/Transition to Common Core State Standards
- 2 Item Development/Performance Tasks
- 3 Technology Approach/Reporting
- 4 Test Administration/Student Access
- 5 Validation and Psychometrics/Test Design

# Technical Advisory Committee

**Jamal Abedi, Ph.D.**

*UC Davis/CRESST*

**Randy Bennett, Ph.D.**

*ETS*

**Derek C. Briggs, Ph.D.**

*University of Colorado*

**Gregory J. Cizek, Ph.D.**

*University of North Carolina*

**David T. Conley, Ph.D.**

*University of Oregon*

**Linda Darling-Hammond, Ph.D.**

*Stanford University*

**Brian Gong, Ph.D.**

*The Center for Assessment*

**Edward Haertel, Ph.D.**

*Stanford University*

**Joan Herman, Ph.D.**

*UCLA/CRESST*

**G. Gage Kingsbury, Ph.D.**

*Psychometric Consultant*

**James W. Pellegrino, Ph.D.**

*University of Illinois, Chicago*

**W. James Popham, Ph.D.**

*UCLA, Emeritus*

**Joseph Ryan, Ph.D.**

*Arizona State University*

**Martha Thurlow, Ph.D.**

*University of Minnesota/NCEO*

# Smarter Balanced Approach

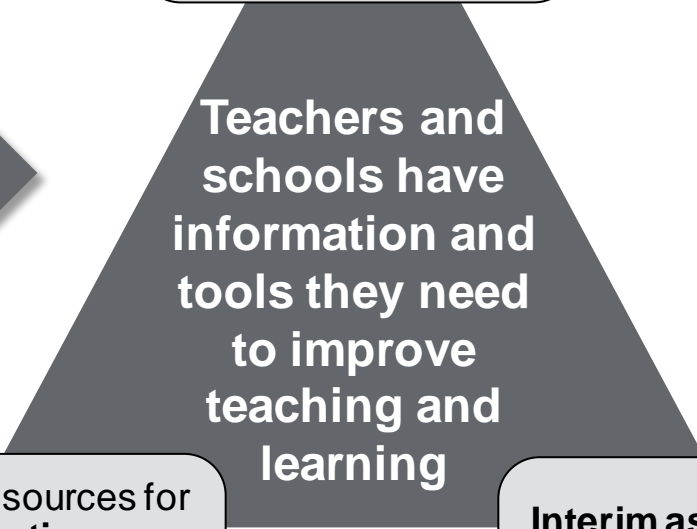


# A Balanced Assessment System

Common Core State Standards specify K-12 expectations for college and career readiness



**Summative assessments**  
Benchmarked to college and career readiness



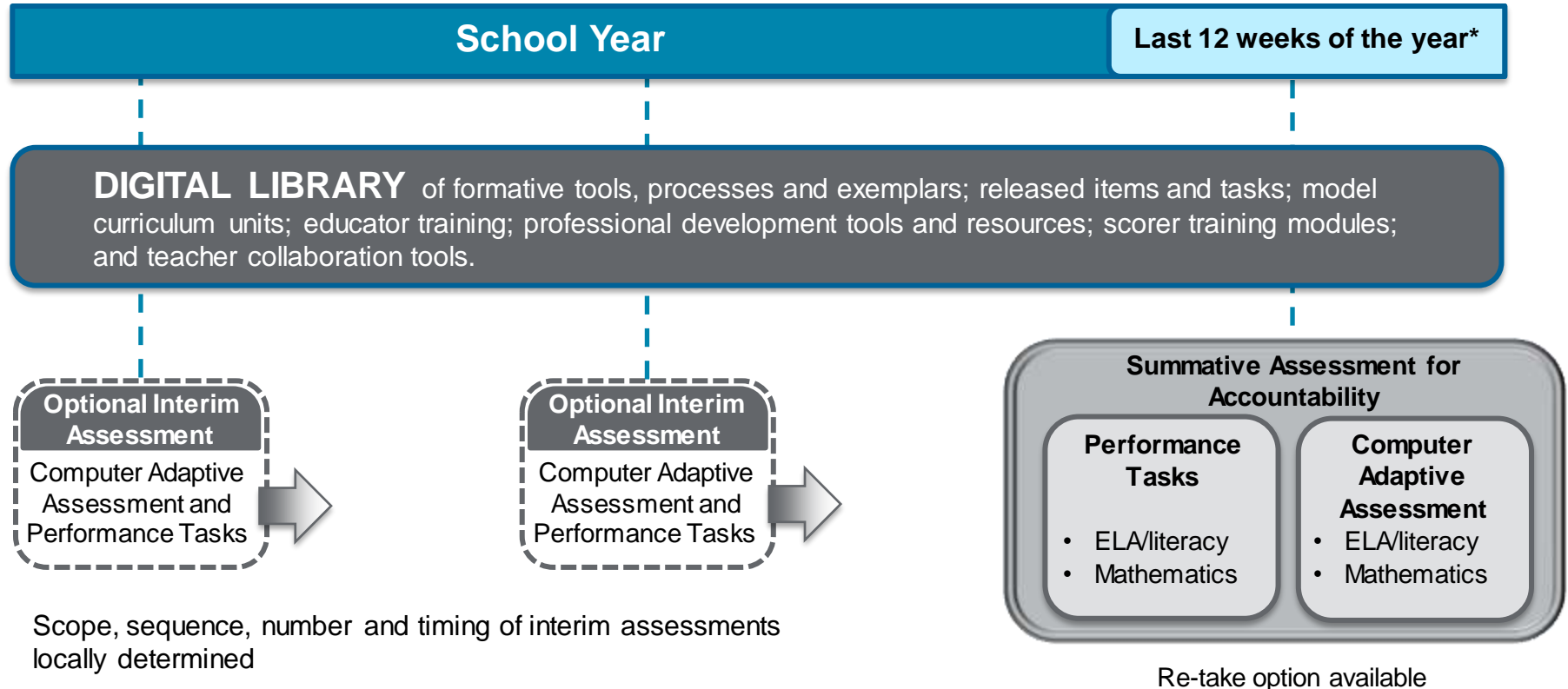
All students leave high school college and career ready

Teacher resources for **formative assessment practices** to improve instruction

**Interim assessments**  
Flexible, open, used for actionable feedback

# A Balanced Assessment System

ELA/Literacy and Mathematics, Grades 3-8 and High School



\*Time windows may be adjusted based on results from the research agenda and final implementation decisions.



# Using Computer Adaptive Technology for Summative and Interim Assessments

## Increased precision

- Provides accurate measurements of student growth over time

## Tailored for Each Student

- Item difficulty based on student responses

## Increased Security

- Larger item banks mean that not all students receive the same questions

## Shorter Test Length

- Fewer questions compared to fixed form tests

## Faster Results

- Turnaround time is significantly reduced

## Mature Technology

- GMAT, GRE, COMPASS (ACT), Measures of Academic Progress (MAP)

# K-12 Teacher Involvement



- Support for implementation of the Common Core State Standards (2011-12)
- Write and review items/tasks for the pilot test (2012-13) and field test (2013-14)
- Development of teacher leader teams in each state (2012-14)
- Evaluate formative assessment practices and curriculum tools for inclusion in digital library (2013-14)
- Score portions of the interim and summative assessments (2014-15 and beyond)

# Higher Education Collaboration



- Involved 175 public and 13 private systems/institutions of higher education in application
- Two higher education representatives on the Executive Committee
- Higher education lead in each state and higher education faculty participating in work groups
- Goal: The high school assessment qualifies students for entry-level, credit-bearing coursework in college or university

# Assessment System Components

## Summative Assessment (Computer Adaptive)

- Assesses **the full range of Common Core** in English language arts and mathematics for students in grades 3–8 and 11 (interim assessments can be used in grades 9 and 10)
- Measures **current student achievement and growth across time**, showing progress toward college and career readiness
- Administered **within the last 12 weeks** of the instructional year
- Includes a **variety of question types**: selected response, short constructed response, extended constructed response, technology enhanced, and performance tasks

# Assessment System Components

## Interim Assessment (Computer Adaptive)

- Optional comprehensive and content-cluster assessment to help **identify specific needs of each student**
- Can be administered **throughout the year**
- Provides **clear examples** of expected performance on Common Core standards
- Includes a **variety of question types**: selected response, short constructed response, extended constructed response, technology enhanced, and performance tasks
- Aligned to and reported on **the same scale as the summative assessments**
- **Fully accessible** for instruction and professional development

# Assessment System Components

## Performance Tasks

- Extended projects demonstrate real-world writing and analytical skills
- May include online research, group projects, presentations
- Require 1-2 class periods to complete
- Included in both interim and summative assessments
- Applicable in all grades being assessed
- Evaluated by teachers using consistent scoring rubrics

“ The use of performance measures has been found to increase the intellectual challenge in classrooms and to support higher-quality teaching. ”

- Linda Darling-Hammond  
and Frank Adamson,  
Stanford University

# Assessment System Components

## Formative Assessment Practices

- Research-based, **on-demand tools and resources for teachers**
- Aligned to **Common Core**, focused on increasing student learning and enabling **differentiation of instruction**
- **Professional development** materials include model units of instruction and publicly released assessment items, formative strategies

“ Few initiatives are backed by evidence that they raise achievement.

Formative assessment is one of the few approaches proven to make a difference.”

- **Stephanie Hirsh, Learning Forward**

# Assessment System Components

## Online Reporting

- **Static and dynamic reports**, secure and public views
- Individual **states retain jurisdiction** over access and appearance of online reports
- Dashboard gives parents, students, practitioners, and policymakers access to **assessment information**
- **Graphical display** of learning progression status (interim assessment)
- **Feedback and evaluation** mechanism provides surveys, open feedback, and vetting of materials

“Data are only useful if people are able to access, understand and use them... For information to be useful, it must be timely, readily available, and easy to understand.”

- Data Quality Campaign



# Support for Special Populations

- Accurate measures of progress for students with disabilities and English Language Learners
- Accessibility and Accommodations Work Group engaged throughout development
- Outreach and collaboration with relevant associations

“ **Common-Core Tests to Have Built-in Accommodations** ”



- June 8, 2011

# Technology Strategy Framework and System Requirements

(November 2013)

## Hardware and Software Requirements Overview

Operating System	Minimum Smarter Balanced Requirements for Current Computers <sup>123</sup>	Recommended Smarter Balanced Minimum for New Purchases
Windows	Windows XP (service pack 3) Pentium 233 MHz processor 128 MB RAM 52 MB hard drive free space	Windows 7+ 1 GHz processor 1 GB RAM 80 GB hard drive or at least 1GB of hard drive space available
Mac OS X	Mac OS X 10.4.4 Macintosh computer with Intel x86 or PowerPC G3 (300 MHz) processor, 256 MB RAM, 200 MB hard drive free space	Mac OS X 10.7+ 1GHz processor 1GB RAM 80 GB hard drive or at least 1GB of hard drive space available
Linux	Linux (Ubuntu 9-10, Fedora 6) Pentium II or AMD K6-III 233 MHz processor 64 MB RAM 52 MB hard drive free space	Linux (Ubuntu 11.10, Fedora 16) 1 GHz processor 1 GB RAM 80 GB hard drive or at least 1GB of hard drive space available
iOS	iPads 2 running iOS6	iPads 3+ running iOS6
Android	Smarter Balanced-certified* Android-based tablets running Android 4.0+	Smarter Balanced-certified* Android-based tablets running Android 4.0+
Windows	Windows-based tablets running Windows 8+ (excluding Windows RT)	Windows-based tablets running Windows 8+ (excluding Windows RT)
Chrome OS	Chromebooks running Chrome OS (rolling release)	Chromebooks running Chrome OS (rolling release)

### Minimum Computer Requirements

Minimum requirements represent a low compliance threshold. Districts should attempt to exceed these requirements as many machines operating at these levels could struggle with sufficient on-board memory and processing to run secure browsers as well as other simultaneous running programs accumulated on the device over time.

**1** The minimum Smarter Balanced requirements are generally equivalent to the minimum requirements of the associated eligible operating system. Users should refer to the minimum requirements of the operating system as a means of resolving any ambiguities in the minimum Smarter Balanced requirements.

**2** These guidelines do not supersede the minimum requirements of the operating systems.

**3** All hardware choices should consider the individual needs of students. Some students may need hardware that exceeds these minimum guidelines, and some students may require qualitatively different hardware. Tablets may require the use of a mouse.

\*The Smarter Balanced “Device Certification Process” includes the certification of specific device models from manufacturers, including, but not limited to, Android-based devices.



# Technology Strategy Framework and System Requirements

(November 2013)

## Additional Requirements Applicable across Operating Systems

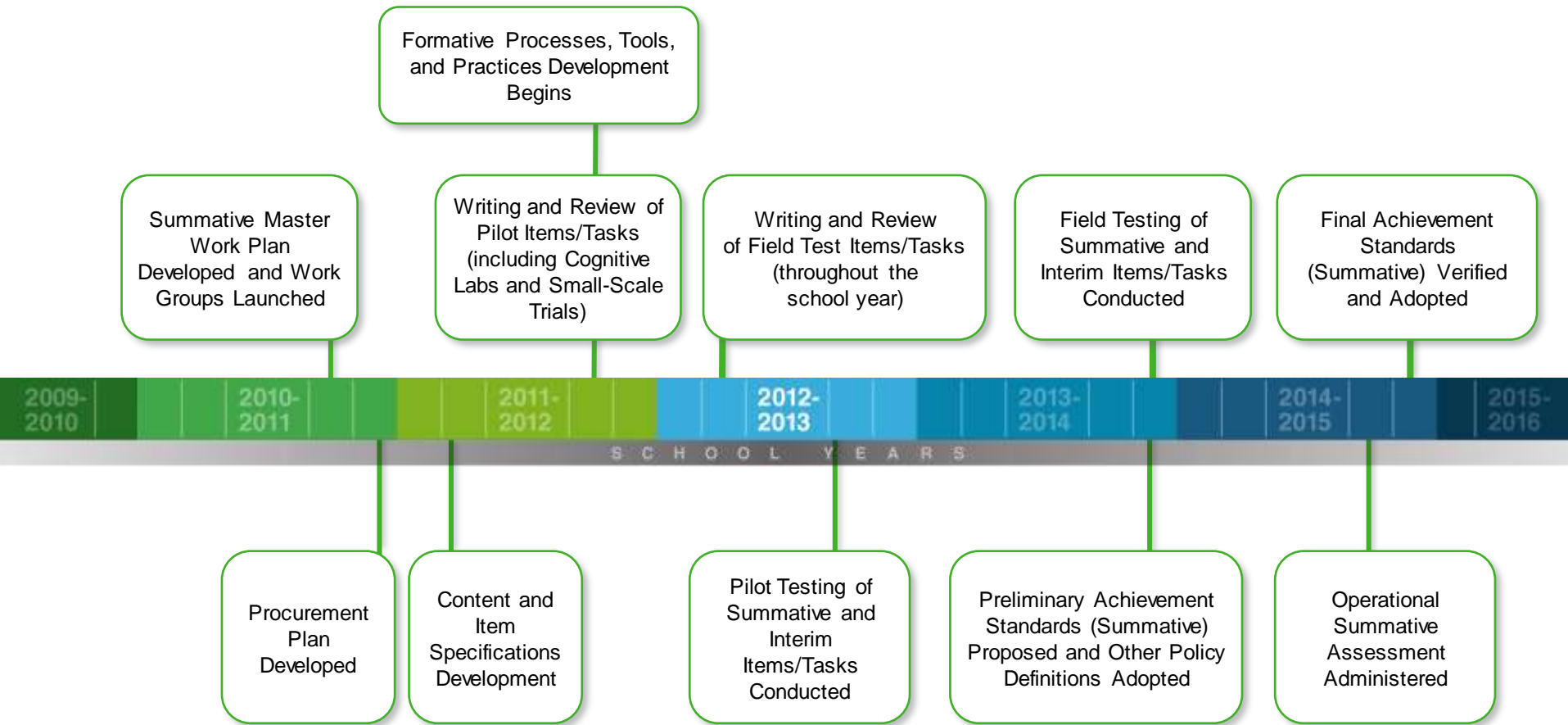
Device Requirements	Minimum Smarter Balanced Requirements for Current Computers
Screen Size	10" class or larger with 1024 x 768 resolution
Headphones / earphones	Available to students for use during the English language arts test and for students who require text-to-speech features on the mathematics test
Security	The device must have the administrative tools and capabilities to temporarily disable features, functionalities, and applications that could present a security risk during test administration.
Keyboards	<p>External keyboards are required in all cases unless specified differently by a student's Individualized Education Program (IEP) or 504 plan. Any form of external keyboard that disables the on-screen virtual keyboard is acceptable. This includes mechanical, manual, plug and play, and wireless-based (e.g., Bluetooth, RF, IR) keyboards. The intent of this specification is to ensure the required display area is available to allow students to read multiple sources of complex item text and respond to source evidence for analytical purposes.</p> <p>While wireless keyboards are permissible, districts should be aware that high-density deployments of wireless keyboards and mice might interfere with each other or with the wireless network. Therefore, they should test the room configuration before the examination date and consider wired alternatives.</p>
Pointing Device	A pointing device must be included. This may consist of a mouse, touch screen, touchpad, or other pointing device with which the student is familiar.
Form Factors	No restriction as long as the device meets the other stated requirements. These forms include desktops, laptops, netbooks, virtual desktops and thin clients <sup>4</sup> , tablets (iPad, Windows, Chromebooks, and Android), and hybrid laptop/tablets.
Network	Must connect to the Internet with a minimum of 20 Kbps available per student to be tested simultaneously. Local Web proxy caching servers are not recommended.

### *Minimum Requirements for Other Devices*

Minimum requirements represent a low compliance threshold. Ultimately, districts should attempt to exceed these requirements as many machines operating at these levels could struggle with sufficient on-board memory and processing to run secure browsers as well as other simultaneous running programs accumulated on the device over time.

<sup>4</sup> The resources (e.g., memory and processors) available to each client need to be equivalent or greater to the requirements for standalone hardware

# Timeline



# Find Out More

Smarter Balanced  
can be found  
online at:

[SmarterBalanced.org](http://SmarterBalanced.org)

The screenshot shows the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium website. At the top left is the logo, which consists of three stylized triangles (two green, one blue) forming a larger triangle, with the text "Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium" below it. To the right of the logo are navigation links: "Home", "Contact Us", and "Member States Login". Below these is a "Stay Connected" section with an email icon and a search bar containing the text "What are you looking for?" and a "Search" button. A horizontal navigation menu below the search bar includes links for "ABOUT", "SMARTER BALANCED ASSESSMENTS", "K-12 EDUCATION", "HIGHER EDUCATION", "PARENTS & STUDENTS", and "RESOURCES & EVENTS". The main content area features a large banner with a background image of diverse students. The banner text reads: "Helping States Prepare for New Assessments". Below this, it states: "Smarter Balanced and PARCC are collaborating to develop a Technology Readiness Tool to support states as they transition to online assessments." and includes a "READ MORE" link. Below the banner, there are two columns of content. The left column is titled "Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium" and provides a brief description of the consortium's mission, followed by a "READ MORE" link. Below this is a "Latest News" section with two items: "Computer Adaptive Testing Event Now Available" and "California's Young Joins Executive Committee", each with a "READ MORE" link. The right column is titled "School Years" and lists implementation years from 2009-2010 to 2014-2015. The 2011-2012 year is highlighted in green and includes a "What's Happening" section with a "READ MORE" link.

**Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium**  
Smarter Balanced is a state-led consortium developing assessments aligned to the Common Core State Standards in English language arts/literacy and mathematics that are designed to help prepare all students to graduate high school college- and career-ready. [READ MORE](#)

**Latest News**  
**Computer Adaptive Testing Event Now Available**  
This recorded webinar addresses the advantages of adaptive testing and the critical decision points in designing, developing and administering an effective computer adaptive assessment to measure student achievement and growth. [READ MORE](#)

**California's Young Joins Executive Committee**  
Dr. Beverly L. Young, assistant vice chancellor of academic affairs for the California State University System, has been named to the Consortium's Executive Committee. Young is one of two higher education representatives on the nine-member governing body and also serves as a Smarter Balanced higher education lead for California.

**School Years**  
Smarter Balanced assessments will be implemented in the 2014-15 school year. Click below to see what's happening and when.

- 2009-2010
- 2010-2011
- 2011-2012**
  - What's Happening**  
Smarter Balanced is creating content specifications aligned to the Common Core State Standards and test development guidelines and materials. [READ MORE](#)
- 2012-2013
- 2013-2014
- 2014-2015