

California Department of Education

**Report to the State Board of Education,
Department of Finance, and State Legislature:**

**Report and Recommendations for the Full Implementation of
Smarter Balanced Summative Assessments as Required by
*Education Code Section 60648.5***



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California Department of Education
Report and Recommendations for the Full Implementation of Smarter Balanced Summative Assessments as Required by *Education Code Section 60648.5*

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California Department of Education
Report and Recommendations for the Full Implementation of Smarter Balanced
Summative Assessments as Required by *Education Code* Section 60648.5

Executive Summary

California *Education Code* (*EC*) Section 60648.5 requires that the first full administration of assessments aligned with the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) (i.e., the Smarter Balanced Summative Assessments) for English-language arts (ELA) and mathematics shall occur in the 2014–15 school year unless the State Board of Education (SBE) determines that the assessments cannot be fully implemented. *EC* Section 60648.5 also requires that the CDE provide the SBE, Department of Finance (DOF), and appropriate fiscal and policy committees of the Legislature with a report and recommendations on or before October 1, 2014, regarding how local educational agencies (LEAs) are progressing toward the implementation of a technology-enabled assessment system and the extent to which the Smarter Balanced computer-adaptive summative assessments can be fully implemented. Based on the information contained in this report, the SBE must determine whether the state shall fully implement the Smarter Balanced Summative Assessments for ELA and mathematics in grades three through eight, inclusive, and grade eleven for the 2014–15 school year.

The newly enacted *EC* Section 60640 required the statewide administration of the Smarter Balanced Field Test in 2013–14 (Field Test). The strategic use of the Field Test to help California LEAs transition from a paper-pencil system to a technology-enabled assessment system was further supported by the legislative suspension of the Field Test results for state and federal accountability purposes. To address the requirements of *EC* Section 60648.5, the CDE, in collaboration with contractors and Senior Assessment Fellows, conducted a wide variety of activities to support and prepare LEAs for the spring 2014 Field Test administration. Through these activities, the CDE evaluated LEAs' technology progress as well as the state's readiness to fully implement the Smarter Balanced Summative Assessments in spring 2015.

The CDE, after considering the findings, made the following commendations and recommendations:

- The CDE commends the Governor, State Legislature, DOF, and SBE for their continuing actions to help California transition to its new assessment system. From the adoption of the CCSS to the passage of Assembly Bill (AB) 484 to the appropriation of funding for CCSS and technology for LEAs, the ongoing collaboration of California's leaders and policymakers has been significant. These actions reflect a strong, continuing commitment to the establishment of a sound, credible, and high-quality new assessment system for the state.
- The CDE also commends LEAs, schools, parents/guardians, students, educational organizations, and other stakeholders for their immense

contributions and hard work to prepare for and successfully administer the spring 2014 Field Test in California. Across the state, local organizations and educational communities were deeply involved in preparing technologically and administratively for the Field Test, reflecting a strong commitment of local educators and groups to establish the new assessment system.

- The CDE concurs with the collective findings regarding LEAs' progress toward implementing technology-enabled assessments as well as the extent to which the Smarter Balanced computer-adaptive summative assessments can be fully implemented in 2015 and makes the following recommendations:
 1. Administer the Smarter Balanced technology-enabled summative assessments in spring 2015. Provide the Smarter Balanced paper-pencil assessments to those schools that lack the necessary broadband connectivity for online testing or are unable to administer the braille version online, and encourage those LEAs to develop a plan to overcome these barriers by the 2016–17 school year.
 2. Continue to provide professional development and training for:
 - a. CCSS aligned instruction and assessment,
 - b. Alignment of classroom and assessment accessibility supports, and
 - c. Administration of the Smarter Balanced Summative Assessments.
 3. Provide ongoing support to LEAs that experience technology-related barriers, including information about resources and technical support.
 4. Use the consortium technology-enabled summative assessment development and implementation, as a model, to guide the development and implementation of a computer-based alternate assessment that is aligned with the CCSS in ELA and mathematics. The alternate assessment will be made available to all eligible students with significant cognitive disabilities who have an individualized education program (IEP).

These recommendations support California's continuing goal to provide the highest-quality assessment system that uses the most reliable and valid assessments possible for its teachers, students, schools, LEAs, and the state.

If you have any questions regarding this report, please contact Diane Hernandez, Director, Assessment Development and Administration Division, by phone at 916-319-0803 or by e-mail at CAASPP@cde.ca.gov. This report is also located on the CDE CAASPP Web page at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/tg/ca/>.

Introduction

The purpose of this report is to meet the requirements of EC Section 60648.5 which requires the CDE to provide the SBE, Department of Finance (DOF), and appropriate fiscal and policy committees of the Legislature with a report and recommendations on or before October 1, 2014. The report and recommendations must describe how LEAs are progressing toward the implementation of a technology-enabled assessment system and the extent to which assessments that are aligned with the CCSS in ELA and mathematics can be fully implemented. Based on the information in this report, the SBE must determine whether the state shall fully implement the technology-enabled Smarter Balanced Summative Assessment in ELA and mathematics for grades three through eight, inclusive, and grade eleven for the 2014–15 school year. In addition, the SBE will use the information provided in this report to inform future deliberations regarding additional assessments that may be included in the comprehensive statewide technology-enabled assessment system (e.g., development of the alternate assessment and science assessment).

In order to “test the system” for implementation readiness for a technology-enabled assessment system, the spring 2014 Smarter Balanced Field Test (Field Test) was administered to all eligible students in grades three through eight, inclusive, and grade eleven (a much larger sample than that needed by Smarter Balanced for psychometric studies). To support LEAs with the transition from a paper-pencil system to a technology-enabled one, the CDE, in collaboration with contractors and Senior Assessment Fellows, conducted a wide variety of activities to support and prepare LEAs for the spring 2014 Field Test administration. Through these activities, the CDE evaluated LEA’s technological progress as well as the state’s readiness to fully implement the Smarter Balanced Summative Assessments in spring 2015. This report presents a summary of this information accompanied by detailed appendices for key information and data.

This report begins with a description of the background and context of the Smarter Balanced assessment system and its implementation timeline in Section 1. Section 2 describes the Field Test’s dual purpose and design; preparations for the Field Test; and the data collection activities conducted before, during, and after the Field Test. In Section 3, the criteria, indicators, and evidence used to evaluate progress towards and readiness for a technology-enabled assessment system are presented. Section 3 also includes the issues that will need to be addressed for the operational assessment in 2014–15. Section 4 contains the presentation of the CDE’s commendations and recommendations, based on the findings included in this report, for going forward with the full implementation of the technology-enabled assessments in 2014–15. Finally, the section ends with a list of preparations underway for the 2014–15 operational administration.

Note, for the purpose of this report, “technology-enabled” assessments include both computer-adaptive and computer-based assessments. The spring 2014 Smarter Balanced Summative Assessment Field Test was computer-based and not computer-adaptive. The 2014–15 Smarter Balanced Summative Assessment will be the operational computer-adaptive assessment. In addition, the CDE will explore options to continue to expand the statewide technology-enabled assessment system, such as, computer-based options for the alternate assessment and the science assessment.

Section 1: Background

The journey toward the implementation of Smarter Balanced assessments and a new statewide assessment program in California began in August 2010, when the SBE adopted the Common Core State Standards for ELA and mathematics. This landmark event was followed in June 2011, when California joined the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium (Smarter Balanced) as a governing state. With these steps taken and the state's Standardized Testing and Reporting (STAR) Program to sunset in 2014, the State Superintendent of Public Instruction (SSPI) made recommendations in January 2013 for transitioning to a new statewide assessment system. The SSPI's recommendations are located on the CDE Statewide Pupil Assessment System Web page at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/tg/sa/ab250.asp>.

In October 2013, the Legislature and Governor passed AB 484 (Chapter 489, Statutes of 2013, subsequently enacted as California *EC* sections 60640 to 60649), which established California's new assessment system, the California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress (CAASPP) System, replacing the STAR Program on January 1, 2014. The work of the Governor, Legislature, SBE, and CDE reflects the collaboration and commitment of California's leaders and policymakers to move forward with its new statewide assessment system. The Field Test, which effectively began California's transition to the new technology-enabled assessment system, is the focus of this report.

2014–15 California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress (CAASPP) System

The goal of the CAASPP System is to provide assessments that can assist teachers, administrators, students and parents/guardians with a better understanding of college and career readiness. Further, the system will support this objective by promoting high-quality teaching and learning through the use of a variety of assessment approaches and item types. The assessments, where applicable and valid, will produce scores that can be aggregated and disaggregated for the purposes of federal and state accountability. Table 1 shows the assessments scheduled to be included in the CAASPP System for the 2014–15 school year, which will be the first school year of full implementation upon the SBE's approval of the recommendations found in this report. The assessments are to be administered in the spring of each school year.

Table 1. 2014–15 CAASPP System

Required Assessments for State and Federal Accountability Purposes	Smarter Balanced Summative Assessments: ELA and mathematics in grades three through eight and grade eleven
	California Standards Test for Science: Grades five, eight, and ten
	California Modified Assessment for Science: Grades five, eight, and ten
	California Alternate Performance Assessment (CAPA): Science in grades five, eight, and ten
	Alternative Assessment Field Testing: ELA and mathematics in grades three through eight and grade eleven
Optional Assessments	Early Assessment Program ELA and mathematics in grade eleven (anticipated to become available as part of the Smarter Balanced summative assessments in 2014–15)
	Standards-based Test in Spanish Reading/language arts in grades two through eleven for Spanish-speaking English learners who either receive instruction in Spanish or who have been enrolled in the U.S. for less than twelve months

The CAASPP System is one component of California’s broad statewide assessment system, which, in addition to the CAASPP System, includes for 2014–15 the California English Language Development Test, California High School Exit Examination, California High School Proficiency Examination, High School Equivalency Tests, National Assessment of Educational Progress, and Physical Fitness Test. More information about the CAASPP System is located on the CDE CAASPP System Web page at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/tg/ca/>; further information about California’s broad assessment system is located on the CDE Testing Web page at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/tg/>.

Smarter Balanced Assessment System in the CAASPP System

The Smarter Balanced assessment system includes three components: (1) summative assessments, (2) interim assessments, and (3) formative assessment practices. The primary goal of Smarter Balanced is to provide summative assessments that are valid, fair, and reliable and that provide accurate measurements of student performance. The computer-adaptive summative assessments are administered to all students who are not eligible for the alternative assessments in grades three through eight, inclusive, and grade eleven.

The Smarter Balanced assessment system’s overarching goal is to ensure that all students leave high school prepared for postsecondary success in college and career through increased student learning and improved teaching. Table 2 shows the three components of the Smarter Balanced assessment system.

Table 2. 2014–15 Smarter Balanced Assessment System

System Components	<p>Summative Assessments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Computer-adaptive section of multiple-choice items • Short constructed responses • Extended response items • Computer-based section requiring performance tasks • Administered at the end of each school year • Online reporting system to provide: (1) assessment results; and (2) reports that show student achievement and progress toward mastery of the CCSS
	<p>Interim Assessments (optional)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To provide educators and LEAs with actionable information about student progress throughout the year • Will be computer-adaptive and include performance tasks • To be made available for local and school use during the school year
	<p>Formative Assessment Practices (housed in Digital Library -optional)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Designed to promote the use of formative assessment practices in the classroom • Portal for professional development materials, resources, and tools available to all California Kindergarten through grade 12 (K–12) educators • Available throughout the school year to help K-12 teachers in California

In developing the Smarter Balanced assessment components, considerable efforts were made by Smarter Balanced to ensure that the assessments are fair, valid, and accessible through the development of the *Accessibility and Accommodations Framework* (January 26, 2014) and the *Usability, Accessibility, and Accommodations Guidelines* (August 1, 2014). These documents are available on the Smarter Balanced Support for Under-Represented Students Web page at <http://www.smarterbalanced.org/parents-students/support-for-under-represented-students/>. More information about Smarter Balanced is located on the Smarter Balanced Web site at <http://www.smarterbalanced.org/>.

Legislative Requirements for Full Implementation of Smarter Balanced Summative Assessments

EC sections 60640–49 set forth provisions for the implementation of the Smarter Balanced assessments. For the 2013–14 school year, the Field Test was required to be administered. Sections 2 and 3 focus on the Field Test. Table 3 shows key milestones in the journey toward the implementation of Smarter Balanced assessments.

Table 3. Smarter Balanced Implementation Timeline

August 2010	California adopts the CCSS for ELA and mathematics.
June 2011	California joins the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium as a governing state.
January 2013	SSPI presents recommendations for transitioning California to a future statewide assessment system.
Spring 2013	Selected California LEAs participate in Smarter Balanced assessment pilot test.
Fall 2013	CDE allocates \$1.25 billion in funding to LEAs to support the integration of academic content standards to support instruction. CDE conducts and reports results to SBE regarding a Technology Preparedness Survey of California LEAs.
October 2013	AB 484 signed by Governor, establishing the CAASPP System.
January 2014	CAASPP System replaces the STAR Program on January 1, 2014, authorizing the use of the Smarter Balanced assessments for California.
Fall 2013 – Spring 2014	California and Smarter Balanced prepare for the spring 2014 Smarter Balanced Field Test.
Spring 2014	Administration of the spring 2014 Smarter Balanced Field Test. Contractors, on behalf of the CDE, conduct pre-, mid-, and post-Field Test surveys and focus groups.
Fall 2014	The SSPI reports to the SBE, DOF, and Legislature on LEA technology progress and on California’s readiness for full implementation of Smarter Balanced assessments. CDE allocates \$26.7 million in funding for the K–12 High Speed Network (K12HSN) to perform a comprehensive network connectivity assessment and provide grant funds to LEAs with the greatest infrastructure needs. Smarter Balanced conducts achievement level setting for Smarter Balanced summative assessment; SBE to adopt achievement levels.
Fall 2014 – Spring 2015	California and Smarter Balanced prepare for 2015 Smarter Balanced operational test.
Spring 2015	Administration of the 2015 Smarter Balanced computer-adaptive operational test.
Fall 2015	2015 Smarter Balanced results available for students, and parents/guardians.

Section 2: The Spring 2014 Smarter Balanced Field Test: A Test of Readiness for Implementation of the Technology-enabled Assessment System in California

Section 2 includes a description of the Field Test purpose and design; the preparation and support activities undertaken by state and LEAs for the Field Test; and data and feedback collection efforts made before, during, and after the Field Test to evaluate California's progress towards and readiness for the full implementation of the technology-enabled summative assessments in 2014–15.

Field Test Purpose

The Field Test served a dual purpose in California. First, it allowed California to participate with other consortium states in field testing mathematics and ELA items in preparation for use in the operational assessments. Second, it allowed the CDE to conduct a “test of the system” at state and local levels to determine readiness and prepare for implementation of the new computer-based assessments in 2014–15.

Field Test Design

Between March 25 and June 6, 2014, the Field Test was administered to all students who did not meet eligibility requirements for the CAPA in grades three through eight, inclusive, and grade eleven. Students in grades nine and ten were also included in the scientific sample. Due to student results not being used for accountability purposes, students and LEAs were able to focus efforts on the shifts required in organization, training, and administration of the new technology-enabled test while students had a chance to experience the new test content and testing environment in a low-stakes context. Appendix B provides details about the Field Test sampling structure, scheduling and testing windows, and minimum technology requirements.

Preparations for the Field Test

In 2013, California policymakers and administrators faced the challenges involved in updating state-level administrative systems; establishing the contractor, processes, and procedures for administration; communicating and coordinating efforts at all levels; and providing training and resources to LEA staff, teachers, students, and parents/guardians. Coordinated efforts and supports from the Governor, Legislature, DOF, CDE, SBE, Smarter Balanced, and various service and system providers allowed the state and LEAs to successfully prepare for the computer-based Field Test. These extensive efforts included:

- The 2013–14 state budget, AB 86 (Chapter 48, Statutes of 2013), Section 85, appropriated \$1.25 billion to support the integration of academic content standards for instruction.
- The 2014–15 state budget (Senate Bill 852, Statutes of 2014) appropriated \$26.7 million for the K12HSN to allocate network connectivity infrastructure grants and perform a comprehensive network connectivity assessment. The grant recipients are scheduled to be announced in January 2015. Grant awards will be provided to LEAs that are currently unable to administer the CAASPP System computer-based assessments and are in critical need of network connectivity.
- Extensive outreach to LEAs included in-person training, direct phone support, video training modules, regular news flashes, and many other activities that helped prepare LEAs to administer the spring 2014 Smarter Balanced Field Test.

The Field Test was administered only online without a paper-pencil alternative, posing an added challenge and opportunity to state and local staff to problem-solve and prepare for online testing. Appendix C provides a summary of the preparations carried out between 2013 and 2014 for the spring 2014 Smarter Balanced Field Test. An annotated list of the updates on the Field Test provided to the SBE from January 2013 through May 2014 can be found in Appendix A.

Data Collection Activities Before, During, and After the Field Test

Data and feedback collected through activities conducted by the CDE before, during, and after the Field Test to prepare and support LEAs helped the CDE to understand LEAs' experiences of the Field Test administration, including areas where progress has been made, and areas where additional support will be needed. Below are the various sources of data and feedback collected by the CDE to assess the progress and readiness for LEAs to administer technology-enabled assessments:

2013 Technology Preparedness Survey – This survey was available for LEAs to complete before the Field Test, between June and September 5, 2013. The CDE developed and conducted a survey of the technology readiness of California LEAs to gauge the current status and technological needs at that time, particularly the technology resources needed to implement the Smarter Balanced system of assessments. Details of the survey findings are available on the SBE Web site at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/be/pn/im/documents/memo-dsib-adad-oct13item01.doc>.

2014 Educational Testing Service (ETS) Outreach, Surveys, and Focus Groups – ETS, on behalf of the CDE, gathered feedback about readiness and the Field Test in five ways:

1. Before and during testing, the Senior Assessment Fellows and ETS conducted outreach activities to help promote the transition to online testing as well as customized training to sites that required it.
2. An online pre-test survey was administered to LEA testing and technology coordinators from February through early April 2014. This activity gathered information about early readiness and follow-up outbound calls were made to any of the LEAs who were having trouble and needed help.
3. A mid-test survey was the second online survey administered to LEA CAASPP coordinators from April through June 2014 once testing had begun. This survey was conducted to learn about the successes and challenges experienced by LEAs. This information was used to help LEAs having difficulty with various aspects of test administration.
4. A post-test survey was sent to all LEA testing and technology coordinators, and test administrators from June through August 2014 after the completion of the Field Test to determine readiness as well as best practices. The results of this survey and analyses from the Field Test administration are provided in Appendix D. (Attachment 2)
5. Post-test focus group meetings were held during July 2014, after the Field Test, to gather feedback from LEA and school staff. The purpose of the focus groups was to determine readiness, best practices, and areas where improvement was needed.

2014 Senior Assessment Fellows LEA Feedback Reports – Feedback was gathered from LEA and school staff after on-site trainings, workshops, and presentations made by the Senior Assessment Fellows on behalf of the CDE during spring 2014.

2014 San Joaquin County Office of Education (SJCOE) Parent/Guardian and Student Focus Groups – The SJCOE, on behalf of the CDE, conducted post-field test focus groups of parents/guardians and students July through September 2014 to obtain feedback on experiences with the Field Test, access to technology, communications, access and use of practice and training tests, and preparation for 2015 operational testing.

Section 3: The Spring 2014 Smarter Balanced Field Test: Evidence of Readiness for Implementation of the Technology-enabled Assessment System in California

EC Section 60648.5 requires the CDE to report on: (1) how LEAs are progressing toward the implementation of a technology-enabled assessment system and (2) the extent to which the Smarter Balanced computer-adaptive summative assessments can be fully implemented. Section 3 presents the criteria, indicators, and evidence used by the CDE to evaluate the progress and readiness of California for a full operational administration of the Smarter Balanced assessments in 2015. It also describes the issues to be addressed before the full operational administration.

Criteria and Indicators for Readiness

Table 4 lists the criteria and indicators developed by the CDE to serve as a guide in addressing the requirements of EC 60648.5.

Table 4. Criteria and Indicators for Readiness

Criteria	Indicators
1. Did LEA respondents indicate improvement in technological readiness from before the Field Test to after the Field Test?	<p>Suggested Progress in Technology Readiness</p> <p>Proportion of LEA survey respondents reporting being prepared before the field test compared to proportion reporting being prepared after the field test</p>
2. Was there a high and successful level of participation in the spring 2014 Field Test?	<p>Significant LEA and Student Participation in Field Test</p> <p>Significant proportion of LEAs and students participating in the Smarter Balanced Field Test to provide evidence that LEAs accomplished the technological and procedural requirements to administer the Field Test</p>
3. Was the Field Test participation regarding technology productive?	<p>Positive LEA Feedback of Readiness After Field Test</p> <p>Positive LEA post-Field Test feedback to reflect readiness and lessons learned for implementation</p>

Evidence of Readiness

Data from surveys, focus groups, trainings, presentations, and reports of student participation in the Field Test were reviewed and noted in gathering data to address the criteria and indicators. The results from respondents describe the available evidence of

LEA progress and readiness for operational implementation of Smarter Balanced assessments. The majority of selected data findings summarized in this report are taken from the post-field test survey and focus group report prepared by the ETS under the direction of the CDE.

Suggested Progress in Technology Readiness – To investigate progress in LEA respondents’ in technology readiness, the CDE reviewed results on readiness perceptions and progress from various quantitative and qualitative reports between 2013 and 2014. The *Initial Summary of Post-Field Test Survey Results and Analyses from the 2014 CAASPP Smarter Balanced Field Test Administration* (see Appendix D, Attachment 2) provided by ETS, presents results on readiness consistent with other findings reviewed and is summarized in this subsection. Table 5 presents the ETS results suggested progress in readiness for Smarter Balanced computer-based assessment implementation:

Table 5. Progress in Technology Readiness

Findings: Suggested Progress in Technology Readiness
<p>Major Findings</p> <p>A majority of study participants—survey respondents and focus group attendees—reported that they are ready for online operational testing in 2015. Responses indicated that experience gained through field testing contributed to increased readiness. Participants also identified areas that needed improvement at both the statewide and LEA levels.</p> <p>Rating Technology Readiness Before the Field Test (Question 112)</p> <p>A total of 41 percent of the LEA coordinator respondents (n=422) indicated that technologically their LEA was ready (21 percent), significantly ready (12 percent) or highly ready (8 percent) before the Field Test.</p> <p>Rating Technology Readiness After the Field Test (Question 113)</p> <p>A total of 68 percent of the LEA coordinator respondents (n=424) indicated that technologically their LEA was ready (38 percent), significantly ready (18 percent), highly ready (12 percent) after the Field Test.</p>

Significant LEA and Student Participation in Field Test – The CDE reviewed participation counts from the spring 2014 Field Test and developed a list of California’s Smarter Balanced participation results by test type (computer-adaptive test [CAT] or performance task [PT]), content area (ELA or mathematics), completion (started and completed), and grade level breakout. Students in grades three through eight were required to be tested, and participation rates for these grade levels were high. Participation rates for grade eleven were less than those for grades three through eight because grade eleven testing was optional. Appendix E provides a listing of the CDE participation reporting. Table 6 displays the key findings from the participation data show significant levels of student participation in the Field Test:

Table 6. LEA and Student Participation in Field Test

Findings: Significant LEA and Student Participation in Field Test	
ELA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 90 percent of students in grades three through eight who were eligible to test completed the ELA CAT and 46 percent completed the ELA PT. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – 63 percent of students in grade eleven who were eligible to test completed the ELA CAT and 32 percent completed the ELA PT.
Mathematics tests	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 92 percent of students in grades three through eight who were eligible to test completed the mathematics CAT and 48 percent completed the mathematics PT. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – 62 percent of students in grade eleven who were eligible to test completed the mathematics CAT and 32 percent completed the mathematics PT CAT and PT tests. • 95 percent of students in grades three through eight took a CAT (in either ELA or mathematics) and a PT (in either ELA or mathematics). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – 65 percent of students in grade eleven took a CAT (in either ELA or mathematics) and a PT (in either ELA or mathematics).

CAT = Computer-adaptive test, PT = Performance task

Appendix F provides a chart showing the numbers of concurrent users during the four testing windows of the Field Test. These concurrent user counts show the range of user levels that occurred from March through June 2014. On April 29, 2014, the number of concurrent users peaked at 185,000, which was approximately 30 percent of capacity for the network connection between the K12HSN/California Research Education Network (CalREN) and the Smarter Balanced test delivery system.

Smarter Balanced has made the paper-pencil test available for three years to allow LEAs to overcome technological barriers to administering the online assessments. The CDE is taking steps to identify schools that will require the paper-pencil administration for the 2015 testing due to broadband connectivity issues and students who will need the braille version of the Smarter Balanced test. The CDE is also encouraging and providing support for LEAs of these schools to help them develop and implement a plan to administer the online test by the 2016–17 school year.

LEA Feedback of Readiness After Field Test – The CDE reviewed results on readiness perceptions from quantitative and qualitative reports in 2014. The ETS post-Field Test report (see Appendix D, Attachment 2) concluded that a majority of survey respondents reported they are ready for online operational testing in 2015, and responses indicated that experience gained through field testing contributed to increased readiness. Qualitative analyses provided information on lessons learned.

An examination of the feedback reports from LEA focus groups, trainings, workshops, and presentations revealed a generally positive Field Test experience by respondents. The feedback also provided information about specific issues that would need to be addressed for the operational administration. Great appreciation was expressed for the work of technology coordinators and divisions in LEAs and for the opportunity to experience the Field Test. The Los Angeles Unified School District Information Technology Division remarked, "Participating in the Field Test was absolutely the right thing to do. We learned a lot, and there was really no other realistic way to learn what we did. Cooperation from CDE/Smarter Balanced was critical."

Issues to Address Before the 2015 Operational Administration

Data gathering activities during 2014 included results describing the challenges and lessons learned in administering the Field Test as well as issues to address before the 2014 operational administration of the Smarter Balanced Summative Assessments. The CDE reviewed the ETS post-Field Test report results (see Appendix D, Attachment 2) and feedback reports from other LEA focus groups, trainings, workshops, and presentations regarding this topic. The ETS results were very similar to and consistent with the other LEA feedback reports and are summarized in this subsection.

The ETS survey responses to two questions (Questions 114 and 115, open-ended) revealed the following feedback from LEA coordinator respondents:

Preparations – Students need to take field tests in addition to developing computer skills. For teachers and staff, they also need to work with the Field Test, become trained on using the testing devices, and improve their general computer literacy and proficiency with administering the tests.

Scheduling – Scheduling is a big challenge viewed by LEA coordinators. A large proportion of LEA coordinators (74 percent) reported it was difficult to predict the amount of time students need in completing the test. This sentiment was also observed in the ETS focus group study. Being flexible seemed to be the strategy used by many LEA coordinators.

Technology – LEA coordinators recognized that their technology infrastructure needed updating and they need to increase their bandwidth. They also reported that they need more devices for testing. They recommended devices that worked well for them and also the ones that did not work well.

Support for Staff – LEA coordinators reported it is important to provide site-based technology support for schools and have a sufficient number of proctors in the room during testing.

Accommodations and Designated Supports – LEA coordinators commented on the need for better understanding of, planning for, and training on designated supports. They also reported that there is a need to develop a process for identifying students' eligibility for various supports.

Section 4: The California Department of Education (CDE) Commendations and Recommendations

The CDE provides the following commendations and recommendations for full implementation of the Smarter Balanced summative assessments in 2015.

Commendations on California's Progress and Preparation

The CDE commends the Governor, State Legislature, DOF, and SBE for their continuing actions to transition California's assessment system. From the adoption of the CCSS to the passage of AB 484 to the appropriation of funding for CCSS and technology for LEAs, the ongoing collaboration of California's leaders and policy makers has been significant. These actions reflect a strong, continuing commitment toward establishing a sound, credible, and high quality new assessment system for the state.

The CDE also commends LEAs, schools, students, parents/guardians, and educational organizations and stakeholders for their immense contributions and hard work to prepare for and successfully administer the spring 2014 Field Test in California. All across the state, local organizations and educational communities were deeply involved in preparing technologically and administratively for the test, reflecting an equally strong commitment of local educators and groups toward establishing the new assessment system.

Recommendations on California's Readiness for Full Implementation in 2015

The CDE concurs with the collective findings regarding LEAs' progress toward implementing technology-enabled assessments as well as the extent to which the Smarter Balanced computer-adaptive summative assessments can be fully implemented in 2015 and makes the following recommendations:

1. Administer the Smarter Balanced technology-enabled summative assessments in spring 2015. Provide the Smarter Balanced paper-pencil assessments to those schools that lack the necessary broadband connectivity for online testing or are unable to administer the braille version online, and encourage those LEAs to develop a plan to overcome these barriers by the 2016–17 school year.
2. Continue to provide professional development and training for:
 - a. CCSS aligned instruction and assessment,
 - b. Alignment of classroom and assessment accessibility supports, and
 - c. Administration of the Smarter Balanced Summative Assessments.
3. Provide ongoing support to LEAs that experience technology-related barriers, including information about resources and technical support.

4. Use the consortium technology-enabled summative assessment development and implementation, as a model, to guide the development and implementation of a computer-based alternate assessment that is aligned with the CCSS in ELA and mathematics. The alternate assessment will be made available to all eligible students with significant cognitive disabilities who have an individualized education program (IEP).

Preparation and Support for Operational Administration

In response to the findings reported in the post-test survey results and analyses conducted by ETS (Appendix D, Attachment 2), the CDE, Senior Assessment Fellows, and designated assessment contractors are working to meet the needs identified for preparation and support. For example, both the CDE and ETS have refreshed the Web pages that pertain to Smarter Balanced for ease of access for all users. Messaging from the CDE, the Senior Assessment Fellows, and its contractors continue to stress the importance of interacting with the Practice and Training Tests and encourage the use of technology in the classroom for both teachers and students. ETS has made the Practice and Training Tests accessibility a priority selection on the ETS CAASPP Web site at <http://www.caaspp.org>.

The early availability of resources and training materials is also a priority. As highlighted in the survey results, LEAs want materials earlier to allow for extended training for all of their staff. Monthly Webcasts are being presented on the most timely information about the Smarter Balanced Assessment System, the technology to support online assessments, and specific information around the *Universal Tools, Designated Supports, and Accommodations*, the *Individual Student Assessment Accessibility Profile Tool*, and the new Test Operations Management System. Webcasts targeting these topics and others have been presented and immediately archived on the Smarter Balanced Assessment System Web page at (<http://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/tg/sa/>), or are currently in development to assist LEAs. Shortened manuals containing user-specific and/or topic specific information is currently being developed to allow LEA CAASPP Coordinators access to some of the key tools they have requested.

Preparation and Support for Future Technology-enabled Assessments

California's investment in the Field Test will benefit not only the future implementation of the Smarter Balanced operational assessment, but will also provide critical information to inform the development of future assessments that will be included in the CAASPP System. In particular, the state should consider adopting a similar process to "test the system" when developing the alternative assessments for students with significant cognitive disabilities that align with the CCSS in ELA and mathematics. Similar to the Smarter Balanced Assessment System, there is a desire to provide computer-based alternate assessments that support the larger statewide technology-enabled CAASPP System.

California students with significant cognitive disabilities did not participate in the 2013–14 Smarter Balanced Field Test, but continued to participate in the CAPA with test results reported and used for accountability. California is eager to move forward with an alternate assessment that is aligned with the CCSS in ELA and mathematics and provide a similar opportunity for students with significant cognitive disabilities to receive the same valuable opportunity to “test the system” as our general education students did.

In the 2014–15 school year, California will implement a new computer-based alternate assessment in ELA and mathematics aligned with the CCSS with the intent of field testing all eligible students. This plan is in the best interest of our students, teachers, and schools and consistent with our successful Smarter Balanced Field Test.

Accordingly, California is requesting a waiver under Section 9401 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) of the requirements in Title I, Part A, as amended, and their associated regulatory provisions. This waiver will allow California to improve how our State, districts, and schools effectively serve students with significant cognitive disabilities and allow us to properly field test new alternate assessments without creating an unduly burdensome double testing situation in grades three through eight, inclusive, and grade eleven for this special student population.

Based on experiences with the spring 2014 Smarter Balanced Field Test, the CDE proposes this waiver as a significant first step toward the implementation of a technology-enabled assessment. The opportunity to conduct a field test will allow assessment and technology coordinators, in addition to teachers, students, and parents/guardians, to prepare for the transition from a field test to the implementation of a full operational assessment. For example, exposure to practice tests and changes in test schedules, and the opportunity to interface with technology and designated supports, are central to the success of implementation. Therefore, the state is preparing to apply these lessons learned to the development and implementation of the alternate assessment.

List of Acronyms Used in this Report

AB	Assembly Bill
CAASPP	California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress
CaREN	California Research Education Network
CAPA	California Alternate Performance Assessment
CAT	computer-adaptive test
CCSS	Common Core State Standards
CDE	California Department of Education
DOF	Department of Finance
EC	<i>Education Code</i>
ELA	English-language arts
ESEA	Elementary and Secondary Education Act
ETS	Educational Testing Service
Field Test	2014 Smarter Balanced Field Test
K–12	Kindergarten through grade twelve
K12HSN	K–12 High Speed Network
LEA	local educational agency
PT	performance task
SBE	State Board of Education
SJCOE	San Joaquin County Office of Education
SSPI	State Superintendent of Public Instruction
STAR	Standardized Testing and Reporting

Appendix A

Annotated List of Smarter Balanced Implementation Updates to the State Board of Education from January 2013 through September 2014

Below is an annotated list of updates that were presented to the State Board of Education (SBE) regarding the implementation of the Smarter Balanced Assessment System. The SBE Items and Information Memoranda may be retrieved at the SBE Web page at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/be/>.

January 2013 (Item 8)

The California Department of Education (CDE) presented to the SBE the SSP's recommendations to the Legislature for the future statewide assessment system and engaged in discussion with the SBE regarding the recommendations.

March 2013 (Item 9)

The CDE presented the first update on the future statewide assessment system and Smarter Balanced assessment development activities, including the initial Achievement Level Descriptors (ALDs) and college content readiness policy.

May 2013 (Item 3)

The CDE and Smarter Balanced Executive Director Joe Willhoft presented an update on Smarter Balanced assessment development activities:

- Smarter Balanced sustainability plan
- Initial ALDs and college content readiness policy
- Spring 2013 Pilot Test and Practice Tests
- Digital Library

July 2013 (Item 5)

The SBE received an update from the CDE on Smarter Balanced assessment development activities, including:

- Release of Practice Tests
- Feedback from CDE staff observations of the spring 2013 Pilot Test
- California educator involvement in item development and Digital Library development activities
- Available resources to help gauge the technology readiness of local educational agencies (LEAs)
- Initial cost estimates for implementing the Smarter Balanced system of assessments

Appendix A (cont.)

September 2013 (Item 3)

The CDE presented information to the SBE on Smarter Balanced assessment activities, including:

- Legislative developments
- Findings from the CDE Technology Preparedness Survey
- Report on research regarding the costs of statewide student testing
- Research regarding computer-based versus paper-based testing
- Review of the draft Accessibility and Accommodations Guidelines
- Developments for the spring 2014 Smarter Balanced Field Test
- Comparison of costs for the development and administration of the English-language arts (ELA) and mathematics portions of the Standardized Testing and Reporting (STAR) Program and the Smarter Balanced assessment system

September 26, 2013 (October Memorandum to SBE)

The SSPI provided the SBE with results of the Technology Preparedness Survey.

November 2013 (Item 8)

The CDE provided the SBE with the following updates:

- Highlights of Assembly Bill 484
- Information on the availability of the Smarter Balanced Usability, Accessibility, and Accommodations Guidelines
- Technology Readiness Tool
- Changes to the new registration system with the California Longitudinal Pupil Achievement Data System
- Collaboration activities of the CDE and the K–12 High Speed Network

January 2014 (Item 4)

The CDE provided the SBE with an update on statewide assessment transition activities, including:

- Establishment of the California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress (CAASPP) System
- Spring 2014 Smarter Balanced Field Test preparation activities
- Information about the Smarter Balanced Usability, Accessibility, and Accommodations Guidelines
- CDE and Educational Testing Service (ETS) training modules for California LEAs
- CAASPP technology update

Appendix A (cont.)

March 2014 (Item 13)

The CDE provided the SBE with the following updates:

- CAASPP activities
- Outreach efforts to prepare LEAs for the Smarter Balanced Field Test
- Smarter Balanced Digital Library
- Spring 2014 Smarter Balanced Field Test
- National Center and State Collaborative (NCSC) activities
- Planning of the science assessment stakeholder meetings

May 2014 (Item 3)

The CDE provided the SBE with an update on:

- Progress of the Smarter Balanced Field Test
- Details of the Smarter Balanced Practice and Training Tests
- Digital Library
- Smarter Balanced Field Test Online Reporting System
- NCSC for the development of alternate assessments

July 2014 (Item 22)

The CDE provided the SBE with an update on:

- CAASPP activities
- Details of the Smarter Balanced Field Test
- Results of the Mid-test survey
- Planning of the Post-test survey
- Focus group meetings
- Future outreach activities for the 2015 operational assessments

July 2014 (Item 5)

The SBE approved the contract amendment to extend the ETS contract through December 31, 2015.

September 2014 (Item 2)

The CDE provided the SBE with an update on:

- Smarter Balanced focus groups and post-test survey results
- Technology update
- Outreach activities to prepare for the 2015 Smarter Balanced operational assessment
- Science assessment stakeholder meetings
- Alternate assessment and NCSC

September 2014 (Item 3)

The SBE approved the Memorandum of Understanding with Smarter Balanced for the 2014–17 school years.

Appendix B

Spring 2014 Smarter Balanced Field Test Design Details

The spring 2014 Smarter Balanced computer-enabled field test (Field Test) design encompassed the sampling structure, scheduling and testing windows, and minimum technology requirements.

Sampling Structure

The Field Test sampling for California included a scientific sample of students who were required to be tested and a larger sample that incorporated other students who volunteered to be tested. A scientific sample of 20 percent of students across all member states was selected to participate in the Field Test, 10 percent to participate in the English-language arts (ELA) test, and 10 percent to participate in the mathematics test. In California, over 680,000 students were selected to participate in the scientific sample, comprising approximately 36 percent of the total Smarter Balanced Field Test sample. For grades nine and ten, a small sample of students were selected for vertical scaling purposes. The scientific sample included students in grades three through eleven who were selected to represent the demographic characteristics of each member state. Table 1 below presents the California scientific sample sizes by content area and grade level.

Table 1 Number of California Students Selected for the Scientific Sample of the Smarter Balanced Spring 2014 Field Test

Grade Level	Scientific Sample Size for ELA	Scientific Sample Size for Mathematics
3	31,825	35,194
4	34,743	37,050
5	34,560	37,596
6	35,002	38,797
7	35,448	39,998
8	36,545	41,941
9	9,433	9,433
10	9,433	9,433
11	91,061	113,530
Total	318,050	362,972

Appendix B (cont.)

In addition to the scientific sample, all California local educational agencies (LEAs) were required by Assembly Bill 484 to participate in the Field Test in accordance with procedures set forth by the California Department of Education. With the exception of students who participate in the California Alternate Performance Assessment, English learners enrolled in school in the United States for less than twelve months, or students with a parent/guardian exemption, all students in grades three through eight were expected to participate in either the ELA or mathematics Field Test. For grades nine and ten, only students selected for the scientific sample were expected to participate. For grade eleven, only students in the scientific sample were expected to participate in the Field Test, and all other grade eleven students were encouraged to participate. All grade eleven students, including those who participated in the Field Test, had the option to participate in the Early Assessment Program.

Scheduling and Testing Windows

Schools in California were assigned to two of four specific windows in which to administer the Field Tests from March 25 through June 6, 2104. Assignments were made for each school in each LEA and posted online by county. Table 2 below shows the testing windows.

Table 2 California Spring 2014 Field Test Windows

Test Windows	Test Window Dates LEAs Started Testing
Window 1	March 25 through April 4, 2014
Window 2	April 7 through April 25, 2014
Window 3	April 28 through May 16, 2014
Window 4*	May 19 through June 6, 2014

*LEAs and schools were not assigned to Window 4; however, it was used for test extensions as needed.

Minimum Technology Requirements

Based on preliminary survey responses' LEAs and schools had minimum technology requirements to participate in the Field Test. To promote ease of implementation, the online Field Test assessment system was designed to operate within the technology infrastructures that currently exist in most California schools. Accordingly, the system was designed to work on a variety of older hardware and operating system configurations. Details about the minimum technology requirements can be found in the Smarter Balanced report, *Technology Strategy Framework and Testing Device Requirements*, available on the Smarter Balanced Technology Web page at <http://www.smarterbalanced.org/smarter-balanced-assessments/technology/>.

Appendix C

Summary of California's Preparations for the Spring 2014 Smarter Balanced Field Test

This summary provides descriptions of the preparations carried out, mainly in 2013 and 2014, to prepare for the spring 2014 Smarter Balanced field test (Field Test), which has helped California to be well prepared for the 2015 Smarter Balanced operational administration. Many of the descriptions were taken from the regular Smarter Balanced updates provided by the California Department of Education (CDE) to the State Board of Education (SBE) at each meeting beginning in March 2013. Described are the state-level preparations for implementation, state support to increase local educational agency (LEA) preparedness, LEA activities to increase preparedness, and Smarter Balanced preparations.

State Level Preparations for Implementation

Since joining the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium in 2011, California's multilevel involvement in the development of the Smarter Balanced assessments has allowed the CDE to become informed about the Field Test and operational test administrations and to plan, anticipate, and provide in advance the activities and supports needed to prepare for the Field Test and operational test administrations. The strategic statewide preparation for transitioning to the new assessment system includes several major activities to update state-level programs and systems.

Common Core State Standards (CCSS) Implementation Plan – Foremost among these activities was the development of the *Common Core State Standards Systems Implementation Plan for California* (April 2014), of which the new assessments are an important element. (The document is available on the CDE CCSS Web page at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/re/cc/>). The plan describes the philosophy of and strategies for the successful integration of new kindergarten through grade twelve (K–12) academic content standards that permeate both well before and far beyond those grade levels. California's standards-based educational system is one in which standards, curriculum, assessment, and accountability are in alignment in order to support student attainment of the standards. Teachers and local school officials, in collaboration with families and community partners, use the CCSS to help students achieve academic success.

Regulations for the California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress (CAASPP) – Another key state-level preparation activity has been the adoption of regulations. As required by *Education Code (EC)* Section 60640(q), the SBE adopted permanent regulations governing CAASPP in July 2014. Before that, initial regulations had been adopted as emergency regulations to immediately implement the CAASPP System, including the administration, scoring, and reporting of assessments.

Appendix C (cont.)

Presentations to California's Education Coalition (EDCO) – Essential to making the transition to new assessments and a new assessment system has been the efforts of the CDE to communicate clear, specific, and timely information to all stakeholders about the upcoming changes. It has been especially important to communicate to and hear from leaders in key educational organizations. In order to alert those leaders about the new changes and timelines for transition, the CDE began making presentations in February 2013 to California's EDCO representatives from the California School Boards Association, Association of California School Administrators, California County Superintendents Educational Services Association (CCSESA), California Federation of Teachers, Parent Teacher Association, University of California, California State University, California Community Colleges, Service Employees International Union, California State Employees Association, and LEAs. These educational organization leaders then disseminated the information to their constituencies. The presentations have been posted on the CDE Smarter Balanced Presentations Web page at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/tg/sa/sbac-pres.asp> so that others can benefit from the information.

California Longitudinal Pupil Achievement Data System (CALPADS) Integration – Of great importance to the success of the spring 2014 Field Test and to the readiness for operational administration was the integration of the CALPADS and the Test Information Distribution Engine (TIDE) system. The CDE updated CALPADS to provide student enrollment, demographic, and program data to the Smarter Balanced test registration system, known as the TIDE system, before and during the Field Test. Doing so required that LEAs update specific student-level data elements in CALPADS on a frequent and consistent basis, especially before and during the testing windows. The CDE submitted student-level registration files in time for Smarter Balanced to process for the Field Test.

Smarter Balanced Technology Joint Work Group – State-level coordination and collaboration were and continue to be important activities in increasing the readiness of LEAs across the state. The Smarter Balanced Technology Joint Work Group was formed, and met in December 2013 and January 2014, to discuss and coordinate efforts to support the technology preparation of LEAs, particularly for the spring 2014 Field Test. The Joint Work Group is comprised of members from the CDE, CCSESA subcommittees (the Curriculum and Instruction Steering Committee's Regional Assessment Network and the Technology and Telecommunications Steering Committee), California's K–12 High Speed Network (K12HSN), and representatives from statewide technology-related professional associations. The Joint Work Group determined priority areas for policies and delegation of authority; technology procurement, deployment, and scheduling; professional development, training, and human resource issues; communication; student access and accommodations; and project management, issue escalation, and resolution.

Appendix C (cont.)

Smarter Balanced Hosting – Another major state-level technology system update was the planning and development for hosting data. California, as a member of Smarter Balanced, is responsible for hosting its own Smarter Balanced assessment delivery. Included in the state-hosted requirements are item scoring, test delivery, test administration, test registration, and an adaptive engine. In order to review the potential hosting alternatives, which will begin with the spring 2015 assessment, the CDE contracted with Sabot Technologies to conduct an analysis on the alternatives, costs, and recommendations for hosting. The analysis concluded that the currently viable alternative for hosting is through a vendor. The results of the report by Sabot Technologies will be used to develop risk management and mitigation strategies, vendor Requests for Submission, and other hosting-related solicitations so that state-level hosting will be established for the spring 2015 operational testing.

State Support to Increase LEA Preparedness

As Assembly Bill (AB) 484, introduced in February 2013, and progressed toward its passage in October 2013, state policymakers and administrators realized that the change to an entirely new statewide student assessment system would be extremely challenging and would require significant development at all levels across the state. Even more challenging was the fact that the new assessments would be computer-based, requiring significant resources, funding, and training at the local level. To start preparing for a transition to new assessments, the state took strategic steps during 2013 and 2014 to increase the preparedness of LEAs for technology-enabled testing. A key step toward technology readiness was the appropriation of funding to support the integration of academic content standards for instruction and the implementation of CCSS. In addition, a variety of entities worked together, particularly between fall 2013 and spring 2014, to assist California LEAs by providing resources, technical and administrative assistance, outreach, and communications. Four divisions of the CDE, the Educational Testing Service (ETS), four Senior Assessment Fellows designated by the State Superintendent of Public Instruction (SSPI), the San Joaquin County Office of Education (SJCOE), and the K12HSN worked tirelessly on a number of activities and events to provide resources, tools, and assistance to LEAs. The work of each of these entities, as well as the steps taken by the SSPI, SBE, Legislature, and Governor, were critical in making substantive progress to enable California to be ready for spring 2014.

Policy and Program Leadership and Coordination – The work of the CDE’s Assessment Development and Administration Division (ADAD) has been key in bringing about the needed progress to make the Field Test successful. The ADAD provided the leadership and guidance regarding test content, administration, regulations, and policy interpretation. The Division had the role of coordinating the efforts of all of the entities toward the common goal of ensuring readiness. The ADAD also provided ongoing communication through presentations, Webinars, Webcasts, Field Test Flashes, and Smarter Balanced Updates to LEAs. It recruited educators for ongoing participation in

Appendix C (cont.)

Smarter Balanced development activities, including reviews of administration materials, training materials, and test item reviews and audits.

Administration Assistance, Resources Development, and Communications – ETS, through a contract with the CDE, provided administration assistance, help with resources development, and ongoing communication to LEAs about Field Test administration. ETS staff developed a test-delivery portal customized for California to protect student-level data from leaving the state; produced a customized test administration manual; organized the Field Test administration, including test content (i.e., content areas by school and grade level) and testing window assignments to LEAs; developed Webcasts to train LEAs in the uploading of student information in conjunction with CALPADS; produced videos about key procedures and concepts; provided an online forum in collaboration with the CDE to help problem solve LEA administration issues; and provided ongoing support to LEAs through the California Technical Assistance Center. ETS, on behalf of the CDE, conducted 30 in-person regional workshops for LEA CAASPP coordinators and technology coordinators and, in coordination with the CDE, Smarter Balanced, and other CDE contractors, presented a series of training modules for California LEAs to prepare for the spring 2014 Field Test. ETS developed and conducted a mid-test and a post-test survey as well as eight post-test focus groups of LEA coordinators, site coordinators, and test administrators to obtain feedback on training, support, technology, scheduling, accommodations, and Field Test format issues.

Four Senior Assessment Fellows, on behalf of the CDE, spearheaded the collaboration, relationships, and communication between the CDE and LEAs to ensure the successful implementation of the CAASPP System, including the spring 2014 Field Test. The Senior Assessment Fellows worked with the CDE, ETS, SJCOE, EDCO, and LEAs to identify, develop, and provide information and trainings for multiple stakeholder groups (teachers, students, parents/guardians, test administrators, and community members); to assist and support training sessions provided by the test contractor; to deliver presentations for small and large, urban, rural, and suburban LEAs throughout the state; to meet with county and district assessment directors and curriculum coordinators; and to provide intensive support to LEAs where it was determined that a higher than expected risk for low- or non-completion of the Field Test existed. Resources targeted both general and special populations of students. The Senior Assessment Fellows provided both on-site and online support to LEAs to help district personnel evaluate technology and training readiness, identify potential gaps, and locate the resources needed to effectively administer the Field Test.

On behalf of the CDE, the SJCOE provided informational flyers and videos related to the Field Test. The videos, in English and Spanish, were done by students and for students. The SJCOE also provided templates of parent/guardian notification letters

Appendix C (cont.)

regarding the Field Test, which were provided in several languages. The SJCOE conducted and reported on three post-test focus group meetings of parents/guardians and students to obtain feedback on support, communication, understanding, and processes.

Technology – Of particular importance to helping LEAs become ready for a technology-enabled assessment system was support for technology and network issues. The CDE conducted the 2013 Technology Preparedness Survey for LEAs in order to gauge the readiness of LEAs for online testing. The CDE’s Educational Data Management Division (EDMD) provided the leadership, analyses, and resources in the technological areas of preparing for the Field Test at both the state and the LEA levels. It coordinated and provided support for the use of the Smarter Balanced Technology Readiness Calculator to help schools estimate the number of days it will take to administer the Smarter Balanced summative assessments. The Technology Readiness Tool (TRT) survey helped LEAs gauge their level of readiness to administer the Smarter Balanced summative assessments. To assist LEAs in completing the TRT, the EDMD developed technology training videos and Webinars. The EDMD also coordinated with the California Smarter Balanced Technology Joint Work Group, the K12HSN project, and the Corporation for Education Network Initiatives in California representing technology and curriculum stakeholders to address and resolve technology and network related concerns for the Smarter Balanced Field Test and operational administration. The EDMD provided assistance in developing the hosting framework for California to participate in the Smarter Balanced assessment system and host the spring 2014 Field Test.

CALPADS – The EDMD provided leadership and assistance in working with CALPADS. Together with the CDE’s Technology Services Division, the EDMD developed and maintained a process for uploading student enrollment data from CALPADS to the new test registration system, TIDE, and trained LEAs on the importance of CALPADS as the single source of registration information for TIDE.

Network and Bandwidth – The EDMD was instrumental in coordinating with the K12HSN project, an organization aimed at bringing high performance, advanced services network capacity to California’s K–12 schools. The K12HSN worked jointly with the EDMD to assist LEAs in understanding the role of the K12HSN and preparing for the Field Test. To help with technology procurement and deployment, the K12HSN released several informational brochures for LEAs (*Network at a Glance*, *Network Capacity Worksheet*, and *Ed-Tech Ecosystems*). The K12HSN encouraged LEAs to use the DataLINK program to report connectivity data and related information for California K–12 schools and LEAs. It tested the latency of servers from the Rackspace servers to the K12HSN. The K12HSN and the American Institutes for Research monitored the system for total concurrent users (test server capacity).

Appendix C (cont.)

Technology Funding – The CDE’s School Fiscal Services Division allocated funding to LEAs from the state budget appropriation of \$1.25 billion. These funds helped LEAs, charter schools, and state special schools to purchase devices and upgrade their network infrastructure prior to field testing. AB 86 (Chapter 48, Statutes of 2013), Section 85, appropriated \$1.25 billion to support the integration of academic content standards in instruction. The CDE apportioned \$625 million in August 2013, and the remaining \$625 million in October 2013. More information about this funding is located on the CDE CCSS Implementation Funds Web page at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/fg/fo/profile.asp?id=3434> and the CDE CCSS Implementation FAQ Web page at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/fg/aa/ca/commoncorefaq.asp>.

LEA Activities to Increase Preparedness

Many LEAs began working in 2010 to implement the CCSS and have continued in their ongoing commitment by devoting significant levels of time and resources to prepare for the implementation of the Smarter Balanced assessments. Using information, resources, and support from the state, LEAs have been evaluating their own readiness prior to, during, and after the Field Test and working to identify and address critical areas of need, such as technology and networking capabilities, staffing preparedness, facilities availability, and scheduling adequacy. They have been focusing efforts to accurately learn and communicate large amounts of new information about the test components, items, processes, and administration to their staff, students, and parents/guardians. Some larger LEAs, such as San Diego Unified School District and Los Angeles Unified School District, conducted surveys after the spring 2014 Field Test in order to identify their areas of concern, address technology gaps, and improve support for the future Smarter Balanced assessments

Identifying Priority Areas– LEAs also made time to attend state workshops and trainings; view videos, Webinars, and Webcasts; read and understand manuals; and provide feedback to surveys and focus groups conducted by the state. At debriefing meetings conducted as part of onsite trainings and workshops, LEAs identified areas of highest-priority need in order to increase their readiness. Their feedback helped to notify the state of areas needing additional support and also helped to alert their own staff of areas that may need attention at the local level. The local commitment and efforts of LEAs appear to be continuing after the Field Test. One comment from a school district director of assessment and accountability at a spring 2014 meeting was, “Even after the Field Test LEAs are still obtaining technology and are still improving in order to get ready for the spring 2015 operational administration.”

Smarter Balanced Preparations

Smarter Balanced carried out activities to meet its responsibilities in regard to the administration of the spring 2014 Field Test, and many other activities are currently

Appendix C (cont.)

underway or continuing. The content for the Smarter Balanced summative assessments was developed and field-tested and is being refined. Resources for the Field Test have been developed and posted online, such as test manuals, user guides, accessibility guidelines and supports, technical resources, a Field Test communications tool kit, test delivery portal, and training modules. Smarter Balanced provided the assessments for the spring 2014 Field Test, which included test processing, scoring, and analyses, and provided online Practice and Training Tests for students to become familiar with the test content and computer-based processes. It developed and posted information on minimum technology requirements, a Technology Readiness Calculator, and TRT for LEAs to assess their readiness. It developed and posted a secure online reporting system for authorized users. In the future, Smarter Balanced will provide test results information.

Appendix C (cont.)



Preparation for the 2014 Smarter Balanced Field Test



603

Site Visits and Workshops (CDE, Fellows, Contractors)

CALIFORNIA TAC

310
EMAILS

637
CALLS

1 week avg as of 3/25

87,296

Tests Completed
As of 04/03/14

BY THE NUMBERS

WEB HITS

98,000 CalTAC WebSite	CDE Field Test Overview	5,466
71,000 CDE Smarter Balanced Home Page	High School Video	8,292
163,000 CDE Smarter Balanced Practice Test	Middle School Video	20,042
	Elementary School Video	824

SUBSCRIBERS

12,608

Smarter Balanced Listserv

18,223

Field Test Flash

9,969

Webinar
Participants

23

Training
Videos

2,582

Workshops and
Site Visit Participants

California Department of Education in Collaboration with Senior Fellows • Smarter Balanced • Assessment and Communications Contractors

As Of 04/08/2014

Appendix D

Initial Summary of Post-Field Test Survey Results and Analyses from the 2014 CAASPP Smarter Balanced Field Test Administration, is located in Attachment 2.

Appendix E

Summary Report on Student Participation in the spring 2014 Field Test

The following five tables present data on student participation in the spring 2014 Smarter Balanced Field Test for California. Tables 1 and 2 provide data for English-language arts (ELA), and Tables 3 and 4 provide data for mathematics. Tables 1 and 3 show student participation on the computer-adaptive test (CAT) component, and Tables 2 and 4 show student participation on the performance task (PT) component. Table 5 presents data on students who took no test, students who took at least one test, and students who took at least one CAT and one PT. The data in the tables show results by each grade level tested (i.e., grades three through eight inclusive, and grade eleven), the total for all grade levels tested, and the total for the grade levels required to be tested (i.e., grades three through eight). Participation for grade eleven was less than for the other grade levels tested because grade eleven testing was optional.

Table 1. ELA CAT Student Participation

Grade	Overall*	Not Tested**		Started Test		Completed Test	
	N	N	Percent	N	Percent	N	Percent
3	472,972	24,945	5.3%	448,027	94.7%	436,852	92.4%
4	469,077	28,995	6.2%	440,082	93.8%	431,642	92.0%
5	467,556	28,083	6.0%	439,473	94.0%	431,307	92.2%
6	460,467	29,944	6.5%	430,523	93.5%	409,413	88.9%
7	464,024	33,716	7.3%	430,308	92.7%	404,211	87.1%
8	471,848	41,121	8.7%	430,727	91.3%	401,882	85.2%
11***	479,979	156,763	32.7%	323,216	67.3%	301,634	62.8%
Total, All Grades	3,285,923	343,567	10.5%	2,942,356	89.5%	2,816,941	85.7%
Total, Grades 3 through 8	2,805,944	186,804	6.7%	2,619,140	93.3%	2,515,307	89.6%

* Number of students who were eligible to test in the California Longitudinal Pupil Achievement Data System (CALPADS) during the testing window and who did not take the California Alternate Performance Assessment (CAPA)

** Number and percent of students who did not log onto the test

*** Grade eleven testing was optional

Appendix E (cont.)

Table 2. ELA PT Student Participation

Grade	Overall*	Not Tested**		Started Test		Completed Test	
	N	N	Percent	N	Percent	N	Percent
3	472,972	247,479	52.3%	225,493	47.7%	221,701	46.9%
4	469,077	246,943	52.6%	222,134	47.4%	218,561	46.6%
5	467,556	246,091	52.6%	221,465	47.4%	218,682	46.8%
6	460,467	242,443	52.7%	218,024	47.3%	212,481	46.1%
7	464,024	247,335	53.3%	216,689	46.7%	209,989	45.3%
8	471,848	260,715	55.3%	211,133	44.7%	202,273	42.9%
11***	479,979	321,521	67.0%	158,458	33.0%	152,964	31.9%
Total, All Grades	3,285,923	1,812,527	55.2%	1,473,396	44.8%	1,436,651	43.7%
Total, Grades 3 through 8	2,805,944	1,491,006	53.1%	1,314,938	46.9%	1,283,687	45.7%

* Number of students who were eligible to test in CALPADS during the testing window and who did not take the CAPA

** Number and percent of students who did not log onto the test

*** Grade eleven testing was optional

Appendix E (cont.)

Table 3. Mathematics CAT Student Participation

Grade	Overall*	Not Tested**		Started Test		Completed Test	
	N	N	Percent	N	Percent	N	Percent
3	472,972	24,235	5.1%	448,737	94.9%	444,926	94.1%
4	469,077	28,192	6.0%	440,885	94.0%	436,333	93.0%
5	467,556	26,250	5.6%	441,306	94.4%	435,973	93.2%
6	460,467	29,898	6.5%	430,569	93.5%	421,135	91.5%
7	464,024	35,602	7.7%	428,422	92.3%	414,416	89.3%
8	471,848	41,288	8.8%	430,560	91.2%	414,545	87.9%
11***	479,979	168,911	35.2%	311,068	64.8%	298,094	62.1%
Total, All Grades	3,285,923	354,376	10.8%	2,931,547	89.2%	2,865,422	87.2%
Total, Grades 3 through 8	2,805,944	185,465	6.6%	2,620,479	93.4%	2,567,328	91.5%

* Number of students who were eligible to test in CALPADS during the testing window and who did not take the CAPA

** Number and percent of students who did not log onto the test

*** Grade eleven testing was optional

Appendix E (cont.)

Table 4. Mathematics PT Student Participation

Grade	Overall*	Not Tested**		Started Test		Completed Test	
	N	N	Percent	N	Percent	N	Percent
3	472,972	242,892	51.4%	230,080	48.6%	228,164	48.2%
4	469,077	238,595	50.9%	230,482	49.1%	228,796	48.8%
5	467,556	237,777	50.9%	229,779	49.1%	227,296	48.6%
6	460,467	239,466	52.0%	221,001	48.0%	217,495	47.2%
7	464,024	244,834	52.8%	219,190	47.2%	214,898	46.3%
8	471,848	244,262	51.8%	227,586	48.2%	223,277	47.3%
11***	479,979	321,725	67.0%	158,254	33.0%	154,342	32.2%
Total, All Grades	3,285,923	1,769,551	53.9%	1,516,372	46.1%	1,494,268	45.5%
Total, Grades 3 through 8	2,805,944	1,447,826	51.6%	1,358,118	48.4%	1,339,926	47.8%

* Number of students who were eligible to test in CALPADS during the testing window and who did not take the CAPA

** Number and percent of students who did not log onto the test

*** Grade eleven testing was optional

Appendix E (cont.)

Table 5. Participation in No Test, One Test, and One CAT and One PT

Grade	Overall*	No Test**		One Test***		One CAT & One PT****	
	N	N	Percent	N	Percent	N	Percent
3	472,972	9,328	2.0%	463,644	98.0%	454,311	96.1%
4	469,077	8,641	1.8%	460,436	98.2%	451,293	96.2%
5	467,556	8,352	1.8%	459,204	98.2%	449,567	96.2%
6	460,467	9,497	2.1%	450,970	97.9%	437,326	95.0%
7	464,024	12,837	2.8%	451,187	97.2%	433,842	93.5%
8	471,848	16,655	3.5%	455,193	96.5%	436,417	92.5%
11*****	479,979	131,292	27.4%	348,687	72.6%	310,025	64.6%
Total, All Grades	3,285,923	196,602	6.0%	3,089,321	94.0%	2,972,781	90.5%
Total, Grades 3 through 8	2,805,944	65,310	2.3%	2,740,634	97.7%	2,662,756	94.9%

* Number of students who were eligible to test in (CALPADS) during the testing window and who did not take the CAPA

** Number and percent of students who did not log onto any test

*** Number and percent of students who logged onto any test

**** Number and percent of students who took a CAT (in either ELA or mathematics) and a PT (in either ELA or mathematics)

***** Grade eleven testing was optional

Appendix F

Concurrent User Counts in the Spring 2014 Field Test

California Spring 2014 Field Test Concurrent Users by Testing Window

Testing Window (Dates)*	Average Number of Concurrent Users	Maximum Number of Concurrent Users
Window 1 March 25 to April 4, 2014	22,234	26,183
Window 2 April 7 to April 25, 2014	63,425	142,770
Window 3 April 28 to May 16, 2014	95,508	184,448
Window 4 May 19 to June 13, 2014	8,572	22,509

* Local educational agencies (LEAs) and schools were not assigned to Testing Window 4, however, it was used for test extensions as needed.