

The Smarter Balanced Assessment System has three major components: end-of-year **summative** assessments designed for accountability purposes, **interim** assessments designed to support teaching and learning throughout the year, and a suite of tools and resources in the Digital Library that support classroom-based **formative** assessment practices.

Interim assessments can serve a variety of educator needs. To better support the range of possible uses consistent with member education agency policies, educators may establish the timeframe, administration policies, and scoring practices for interim assessments. The interim assessments are considered student and teacher facing. The student and teacher facing designation provides educators the flexibility to access the test questions and their students' responses to the test questions. Because of this flexibility, the interim assessments are not intended to be used for accountability purposes. Interim assessments are not for public use, display, or distribution. This allows educators to use the interim assessments in the intended manner. For this reason, any use, display, or distribution of the interim assessments that results in access to individuals beyond authorized local education agency staff and students is prohibited. The interim assessments also include all the accessibility resources that are available in the summative assessment to provide accurate results for all students. Finally, interim assessment items must not be copied into third party systems without the permission of Smarter Balanced.

Features of Interim Assessments

- Flexible administration options that better support local purposes
- High quality items that are placed on the same scale as the summative assessment and include the full array of accessibility resources that are available on the summative assessment
- May be used to measure students' knowledge and skills in grade levels other than their enrolled grades
- A rigorous set of items that:
 - Covers the range of Depth of Knowledge described in the Common Core State Standards (CCSS)
 - Allows educators access to the test questions and their students' responses to the test questions as part of educators' instructional process to address students' relative strengths and needs for improvement

Two Types of Interim Assessments

Interim Comprehensive Assessments (ICAs) are assessments that measure similar content to the summative assessment. Therefore, the ICAs may be helpful for purposes such as determining the knowledge and skills of students who are new to the district or the state and providing interim information after a significant period of instruction.

Interim Assessment Blocks (IABs) are assessments teachers can use throughout the school year to assess more focused sets of related concepts in mathematics and English language arts/literacy (ELA). Since the IABs are more granular than the ICA, educators may be better able to administer the assessments during the school year in a manner more consistent with the sequence of their curricula. Each IAB is associated with a Connections Playlist that supports teachers by describing actions they

may take to help their students based on their performance on the assessment, including links to instructional resources in the Digital Library that support the formative process by providing tools, resources, and instructional strategies that they may deploy in the classroom.

The Interim Comprehensive Assessments and Interim Assessment Blocks draw from the same bank of items and performance tasks.

Interim Comprehensive Assessments (ICAs)	Interim Assessment Blocks (IABs)
Measure similar content to the summative assessment and assess the same standards.	Focus on smaller sets of targets and therefore are more flexible to better support instruction.
Available as fixed form tests.	Available as fixed form tests.
Include the same item types and formats, including performance tasks, as the summative assessments.	Include the same item types and formats, including performance tasks, as the summative assessments.
Yield overall scale scores (on the same vertical scale), overall performance level designations, and claim-level information. Claim-level information results reported in the Smarter Balanced reporting system as “Below Standard,” “At/Near Standard,” and “Above Standard.”	Yield overall information for each block. Results reported in the Smarter Balanced reporting system as “Below Standard,” “At/Near Standard,” and “Above Standard.”
	Each IAB is associated with a Connections Playlist that supports teachers by describing actions they may take to help their students based on their performance on the assessment, including links to instructional resources in the Digital Library that support the formative process by providing tools, resources, and instructional strategies that they may deploy in the classroom.

Both the ICAs and the IABs are administered online and may use the same delivery software as the summative assessments. Members have the flexibility to re-administer interim assessments any number of times. These decisions should be made as part of larger assessment context that includes the purpose of the interim assessment, how the interim assessment will be scored and how the data from the interim assessment will be used to improve teaching and learning. Interim assessment reports can be generated from the Smarter Balanced or member-designated alternate reporting system.

Most items in the interim assessment will be scored via the computer. However, there are some constructed response items and performance tasks, including the full write, or essay, that need to be hand-scored. This is a local/state responsibility. The Smarter Balanced Teacher Hand-scoring System or a member-designated alternate system allows educators to score student responses using the same scoring rules as the summative assessment. Smarter Balanced provides hand-scoring training materials that include rubrics and sample responses to be used by educators who will score student

responses. Hand-scoring is a valuable professional development activity that provides educators with an understanding of the scoring process and the expectations for student learning.

The ICA and IABs contain a small number of overlapping items. Therefore, students who take the ICA and IABs more than once, or who take both the ICA and IABs in the same grade levels and content areas, may see the same items more than once. As more interim assessment items are available, the ICAs and IABs will have fewer overlapping items.

What's New for the 2018–19 School Year?

As part of Smarter Balanced's commitment to fully accessible assessments and to support the nation's transition to Unified English Braille (UEB), we have added UEB files to each item in the IAB. Each item is now available in English Braille American Edition (EBAE), UEB, and Nemeth.

ELA/Literacy	Mathematics
English Braille, American Edition (EBAE), contracted	English Braille, American Edition (EBAE), contracted with Nemeth
English Braille, American Edition (EBAE), contracted	English Braille, American Edition (EBAE), uncontracted with Nemeth
Unified English Braille (UEB), contracted	Unified English Braille (UEB), contracted with Nemeth
Unified English Braille (UEB), uncontracted	Unified English Braille (UEB), uncontracted with Nemeth
	Unified English Braille (UEB), contracted with UEB Technical
	Unified English Braille (UEB), uncontracted with UEB Technical

What's Included in the ELA/literacy IABs for 2018–19?

Grades 3-7	Grade 8	High School
Read Literary Texts	Read Literary Texts	Read Literary Texts
Read Informational Texts	Read Informational Texts	Read Informational Texts
Brief Writes	Brief Writes	Brief Writes
Revision	Edit/Revise*	Revision
Language and Vocabulary Use		Language and Vocabulary Use
Editing**		Editing
Listen/Interpret	Listen/Interpret	Listen/Interpret
Research	Research	Research
Performance Task	Performance Task	Performance Task

*The Edit/Revise IAB for Grade 8 will be separated and the Language and Vocabulary Use IAB will be available as soon as possible when items are available in the item bank.

**One item removed from the Grade 6 editing IAB for the 2018-19 school year

What's Included in the Mathematics IABs for 2018–19?

Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
Operations and Algebraic Thinking	Operations and Algebraic Thinking	Operations and Algebraic Thinking
Number and Operations – Fractions	Number and Operations – Fractions	Number and Operations – Fractions
Measurement and Data	Measurement and Data	Measurement and Data
Number and Operations in Base Ten	Number and Operations in Base Ten	Number and Operations in Base Ten
Geometry	Geometry	Geometry
Mathematics Performance Task	Mathematics Performance Task	Mathematics Performance Task

Grade 6	Grade 7	Grade 8
Ratios and Proportional Relationships	Ratio and Proportional Relationships	Expressions & Equations I
The Number System	The Number System	Expressions & Equations II (with Prob/Stat)
Expressions and Equations	Expressions and Equations	The Number System
Geometry	Geometry	Functions
Statistics and Probability	Statistics and Probability	Geometry
Mathematics Performance Task	Mathematics Performance Task	Mathematics Performance Task

High School	
Algebra and Functions I — Linear Functions, Equations, and Inequalities	Geometry Congruence
Algebra and Functions II — Quadratic Functions, Equations, and Inequalities	Geometry Measurement and Modeling
Geometry and Right Triangle Trigonometry	Interpreting Functions
Statistics and Probability	Number and Quantity
Seeing Structure in Expressions/Polynomial Expressions	Mathematics Performance Task

What's Next?

To increase the actionable information that teachers can obtain from the interim assessments, Smarter Balanced is developing additional interim assessments called focused IABs. Focused IABs will measure more specific bundles of content (one or two targets in mathematics and up to three targets in ELA/literacy). This large project will take many years to complete. We anticipate schools will have access to the first set of focused IABs beginning in the 2019-20 school year.