

A horizontal banner with a yellow background and a blue background. The yellow background has a ruler scale with numbers 1 through 5. The blue background contains the text 'NEW TEST. NEW RESULTS.' in white.

SMARTER BALANCED ASSESSMENT:

NEW TEST. NEW RESULTS.

What do families need to know?
(Insert School Name)
(Insert Date)

Overview of Discussion

1. What the new state test means for your child
2. What your child can expect
3. Ways to support your child
4. How to interpret test results
5. Additional resources for families



SMARTER BALANCED ASSESSMENT: NEW TEST. NEW RESULTS

- Nationally, our education system was falling short in developing the communication, critical-thinking and problem-solving skills students need to succeed after high school, as compared to other countries.
- In 2010, Connecticut adopted higher, more focused standards—Connecticut Core Standards—to better prepare students for college and careers.
- New standards require new state tests that better measure the knowledge and skills found in these standards.

Smarter Balanced Assessment

English language arts/literacy and mathematics assessments administered to students in Grades 3–8

CMT/CAPT Science

Science assessments administered to students in Grades 5, 8, and 10

CONNECTICUT ALTERNATE ASSESSMENTS:

Connecticut Alternative Assessment

English language arts and mathematics assessments available to students with significant cognitive disabilities in Grades 3–8 and 11

CMT/CAPT Science Skills Checklist

Available to students with significant cognitive disabilities in Grades 3–8 and 10



SMARTER BALANCED ASSESSMENT: NEW TEST. NEW RESULTS

- **Students in Grades 3–8 take Smarter Balanced English language arts/literacy (ELA) and mathematics tests.**
- **These tests replaced the Connecticut Mastery Test (CMT) and Connecticut Academic Performance Test (CAPT) for English and Mathematics.**
- **The new tests include two sections that are each taken online:**
 - 1. Computer Adaptive Test**
 - Short-answer, multiple-choice questions and interactive test items
 - Questions adjust to each student's ability
 - 2. Performance Task**
 - Longer multi-step questions, including essays
 - Students solve real-world problems



SMARTER BALANCED ASSESSMENT: NEW TEST. NEW RESULTS

The Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium

- A group of states, including Connecticut, worked together to develop high-quality tests in English language arts/literacy and mathematics that are aligned to the new standards.
- Connecticut educators participated in the development of the Smarter Balanced assessments.
- The tests were field-tested in spring 2014 by more than 4 million students in 21 states, including Connecticut.

What Do the English Language Arts/Literacy Tests Measure?

- Can students **read closely** to understand different types of texts?
- Can students **write effectively** for multiple purposes and audiences?
- Can students **listen effectively** for different purposes?
- Can students use **research skills** to investigate topics, and analyze, integrate, and present information?

What Do the Mathematics Tests Measure?

- Can students explain and use math **concepts** to solve problems?
- Can students solve math problems using their knowledge of concepts and **problem solving** strategies?
- Can students **explain, justify, illustrate, or defend** their reasoning about a solution to a problem and be able to look at other solutions to do the same?
- Can students solve problems by using math **models** to represent a situation and interpret information from the problem to solve the problem?

SMARTER BALANCED ASSESSMENT: NEW TEST. NEW RESULTS



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What Your Child Can Expect

What's Different About These Tests?

1. The new tests go beyond a paper-and-pencil test.
2. Computer-Based Tests have:
 - **Interactive test items:** i.e., matching, complete a table with missing information, click and drag
 - **Accessibility features and supports:** built-in accommodations aligned to the student's Individualized Education Plan (IEP)
 - **Computer Adaptive Test:** Questions adjust to each student's ability



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How long will the tests take?

- Smarter Balanced tests are untimed. Students can take as much time as they need to finish. This allows students to think critically, explore, read carefully, and write a well-thought response.
- Total Estimated Testing Time: 6-7½ hours total, administered in periods over several weeks (*similar in many grades to the CMT and CAPT given previously*)

When will the tests be given?

- Administered sometime during the last 12 weeks of the school year (eight weeks for high school)

What Is Expected on the ELA Test?

Students will:

- Show they can read and understand a variety of complex, grade appropriate informational and literary texts.
- Use evidence from source materials to support their ideas in written responses at every grade level.
- Interpret and use information delivered orally to determine main ideas, summarize or analyze.
- Research a topic and use the findings to take a position and defend it or to evaluate information.



Example of Connecticut Mastery Test Grade 7 ELA

Under a new plan, your local shopping mall will require that anyone who is under the age of 18 must be accompanied by an adult when in the mall. Decide whether you support the new plan. Write to convince the editor of the newspaper to support your opinion.

Example of Smarter Balanced Assessment Grade 7 ELA

You have read several sources about the production of pennies in the United States. Using your sources, write a multi-paragraph argumentative essay either for or against the continued production of the penny in the United States. Make sure you establish a claim, address counterarguments, and support your claim with evidence from the sources you have read. Develop your ideas clearly and use your own words, except when quoting directly from the sources. Be sure to reference the sources by title or number when using details or facts directly from the sources.



What Is Expected on the Mathematics Test?

Students will:

- Explain and use mathematics to solve problems.
- Complete math problems quickly and accurately.
- Understand how math concepts link together.
- Apply their mathematical knowledge to solve real-world problems.
- Communicate their mathematical reasoning.

$$(x-y)(x+y) = x^2 - y^2$$



Example from the Connecticut Mastery Test Grade 5 Math

Which equation is true?

$$\begin{array}{r} 2\frac{1}{6} \\ + 3\frac{4}{6} \\ \hline \end{array}$$

A. $6\frac{5}{6}$

B. $5\frac{5}{6}$

C. $5\frac{5}{12}$

D. $1\frac{1}{2}$

Example from Smarter Balanced Assessment Grade 5 Math

17

Drag one number into each box to create a fraction that correctly completes each statement.

0
1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9

✖ Delete ✖

$4 \times \frac{\square}{\square} < 4$

 $4 \times \frac{\square}{\square} = 4$

 $4 \times \frac{\square}{\square} > 4$

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Ways to Support Your Child

How Can I Help My Child at Home?

- Have your child read a variety of materials at home, including fiction and informational texts.
- Involve learning in everyday activities, such as cooking or shopping. Ask children to express opinions and to back their views.
- Encourage your child to do his/her best.
- Assure your child that he/she will have enough time to finish.
- Review a practice test with your child:
<http://www.smarterbalanced.org/practice-test/>

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How to Interpret Test Results



SMARTER BALANCED ASSESSMENT: NEW TEST. NEW RESULTS

- With the new tests, students will receive new scores.
- **Results will be different.**
 - In many cases, performance may look lower on the Smarter Balanced tests than what we are used to seeing on the CMT/CAPT because the standards are more rigorous.
- This is to be expected because **we are using a different measure.**
- This does not mean that students are learning less. Rather, it reflects that we set a new, higher bar and this year's test is a baseline from which our students will grow.



SMARTER BALANCED ASSESSMENT: NEW TEST. NEW RESULTS

This is certainly a big shift for our students and teachers—but one that holds great promise for our children. By making this transition, we are better preparing our kids to meet the demands of college and the 21st-century workforce.

SMARTER BALANCED ASSESSMENT: NEW TEST. NEW RESULTS



CONNECTICUT STATE
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Student Name: **Jacqueline Doe**
Grade: **08**
Date of Birth: **05/20/2002**
SASID: **1234567892**

School: **Demo Middle School**
District: **Demo District**
Test Date: **Spring 2015**

Overall Results

Jacqueline scored at Level 3 on the English language arts/Literacy test and scored at Level 2 on the Mathematics test.

ELA/Literacy	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4
Mathematics		✓	✓	

ELA/Literacy Results

Jacqueline's Total Scale Score=2651

(Score Scale Range 2288-2769)

Level 3: Meets the Achievement Level

Jacqueline has **met the achievement level** for English language arts and literacy expected for this grade. Students performing at this level are **demonstrating progress toward mastery** of English language arts and literacy knowledge and skills. Students performing at this level are on track for likely success in high school and college coursework or career training.

Student's Score	2651			
School Average	2602			
District Average	2571			
	Level 1 Does Not Meet (2288-2486)	Level 2 Approaching (2487-2566)	Level 3 Meets (2567-2667)	Level 4 Exceeds (2668-2769)

A student's test score can vary if the test is taken several times. If your child were tested again, it is likely that Jacqueline would receive a score between 2641 and 2661.

Areas of Knowledge and Skill

Reading
Writing
Listening
Research/Inquiry

Performance

✓ Above Standard
= At/Near Standard
✓ Above Standard
= At/Near Standard

Mathematics Results

Jacqueline's Total Scale Score=2582

(Score Scale Range 2265-2802)

Level 2: Approaching the Achievement Level

Jacqueline has **nearly met the achievement level** for Mathematics expected for this grade. Students performing at this level **require further development toward mastery** of Mathematics knowledge and skills. Students performing at this level will likely need support to get on track for success in high school and college coursework or career training.

Student's Score	2582			
School Average	2595			
District Average	2592			
	Level 1 Does Not Meet (2265-2503)	Level 2 Approaching (2504-2585)	Level 3 Meets (2586-2652)	Level 4 Exceeds (2653-2802)

A student's test score can vary if the test is taken several times. If your child were tested again, it is likely that Jacqueline would receive a score between 2572 and 2592.

Areas of Knowledge and Skill

Concepts and Procedures
Problem Solving and
Modeling & Data Analysis
Communicating Reasoning

Performance

✓ Above Standard
⚠ Below Standard
= At/Near Standard

SMARTER BALANCED ASSESSMENT: NEW TEST. NEW RESULTS

This guide will answer questions about what the Smarter Balanced test means for your child and provides tips to support your child at home.

www.bealearninghero.org





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How Will Scores Be Used to Help Your Child?

1. Test results will allow parents, teachers, and students to know whether students are on track each year.
2. Results provide an annual snapshot of student achievement that should be used along with other information, such as class work and other tests, when making educational decisions.
3. Results are not a sole measure of student achievement, program evaluation or school, district, and state accountability systems.

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Additional Resources for Families



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Where Can I Learn More?

- PTA Parent Guides to Student Success
<http://www.pta.org/parents/content.cfm?ItemNumber=2583>
- Bealearninghero.org
<http://bealearninghero.org/>
- Connecticut State Department of Education, CT Core Standards website, family page
http://ctcorestandards.org/?page_id=32
- Connecticut State Department of Education, Student Assessment
<http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/cwp/view.asp?a=2748&q=335456>
- Smarter Balanced Website, family page
<http://www.smarterbalanced.org/parents-students/>
- Smarter Balanced Practice Tests
<http://www.smarterbalanced.org/practice-test/>



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Questions?

