



# Shelton Public Schools

## Smarter Balanced Assessment Information Guide



Since the adoption of the Common Core State Standards in 2010, Shelton has begun preparing students for the next generation of assessments known as Smarter Balanced. This spring, all students in grades 3-8 and 11 will be participating in the Smarter Balanced field test in Math and English Language Arts. This assessment will be fully ready for implementation in the 2014-15 school year.

### What is Smarter Balanced?

Smarter Balanced is a new standardized assessment designed to align with the new Common Core State Standards (CCSS) that have been adopted by the state of Connecticut. This test will be replacing the Connecticut Mastery Test (CMT) and will be added as a standardized test in grade 11.



### How is it different from the CMT's?

Unlike the CMT/CAPT, the Smarter Balanced Assessments will be administered online and will go beyond multiple choice questions to include short answers, performance tasks, and technology enhanced items such as drawing that allow students to demonstrate research, writing, and analytical skills. In addition to the year-end test, teachers may also administer interim tests to monitor student progress and inform teaching and learning. Also, an online reporting system will be used to provide timely, clear data on student achievement and growth. These reports will present parents and teachers information they can use to help students make even greater progress. (*\*Students will not receive scores on the field test.\**)

### Computer Adaptive Testing (CAT)

Smarter Balanced Assessments will be taken online using Computer Adaptive Testing. CAT responds and adapts to the user to individually tailor the test to the student. Questions will be easier or more difficult, depending on if the student answers correctly or incorrectly. These tests are shorter and more efficiently and accurately measure a student's ability. Accommodations will still be available for those students in need. (*\*This year's field test will not be computer adaptive.\**)

### What are Common Core State Standards (CCSS)?

The CCSS are clear, consistent standards in English language arts and mathematics. The CCSS defines the knowledge and skills students should take away from their K-12 schooling to be successfully prepared for postsecondary and career opportunities. More than 40 states have adopted the Common Core State Standards.



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### Achievement Level Descriptors (ALDs)

ALDs are descriptive categories used to describe a student's performance on the Smarter Balanced Assessment. For the Smarter Balanced Assessments, outcomes will be reported in terms of four levels of achievement: Level 1 (ex. minimal), Level 2 (ex. partial), Level 3 (ex. adequate), and Level 4 (ex. thorough). The ALDs are text descriptions of the knowledge, skills, and processes demonstrated by students in each category of performance.

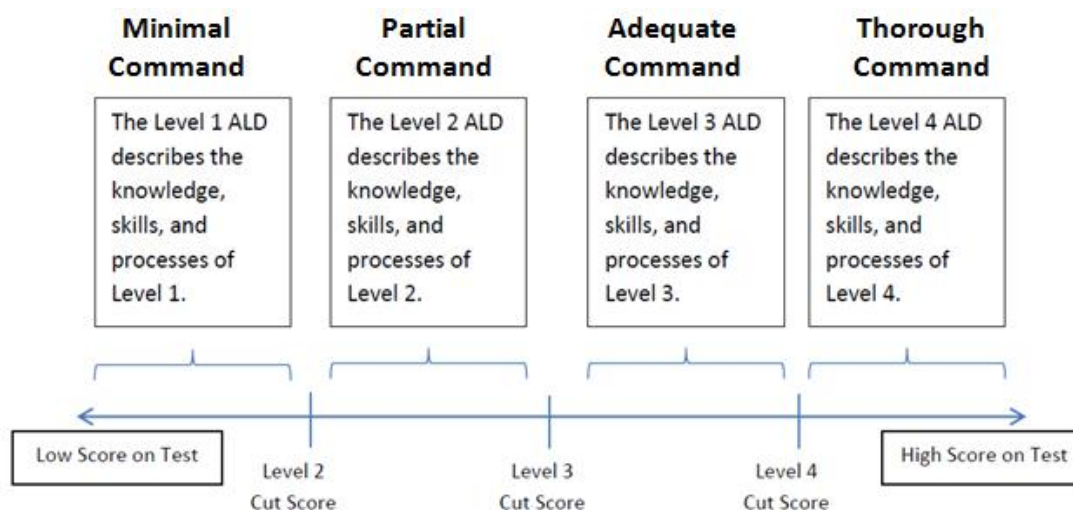


Figure 1. Relationship between Test Scale and ALDs

### Further Information

Smarter Balanced provides both practice tests and sample items, and can be accessed through the following web addresses:

- Sample items: <http://www.smarterbalanced.org/sample-items-and-performance-tasks/>
- Practice Tests: <http://sbac.portal.airast.org/practice-test/>  
To log in to the Practice Test, simply select "sign in" or "okay" to move through the pre-filled log in screens.

You can also visit the Smarter Balanced website for more information at <http://www.smarterbalanced.org/>

