

Not your parents' bubble sheets

Smarter Balanced tests designed for 21st century learning

New assessments are coming

Like all districts in Washington, Seattle Public Schools is preparing for students to take new state-mandated tests.

WHAT: Smarter Balanced assessments

WHEN: This April or May

WHO: Students in grades 3-8 and 11

SUBJECTS: English language arts and math only

REPLACES: Measurements of Student Progress (But grades 5 and 8 still take the science MSP.)

WHY: To measure how well students are meeting college and career readiness goals



try it

Find more info and practice tests at seattleschools.org. Under Additional Links, click Smarter Balanced.

Smarter Balanced is computer-based

Forget about that standardized stereotype in which students darken bubbles with a pencil; the majority of our students will use a computer. Smarter Balanced assessments are:

INTERACTIVE

Students may be asked to drag-and-drop answers, complete a chart or highlight evidence.

SUPPORTIVE

The test offers built-in calculators and dictionaries, and we can accommodate special needs.

ADAPTIVE

Tests conform to ability; questions change for each test-taker depending on answers.

Smarter Balanced requires complex thinking

Smarter Balanced tests check to see how well students are meeting College and Career Readiness Standards (Common Core). These more rigorous standards mean more rigorous tests.

EVIDENCE

It's not enough to skim-read and answer questions with personal opinion. The tests demand careful reading and evidence-based responses, such as highlighting phrases that support an answer.

AUTHENTICITY

It's not enough to memorize formulas and apply them to a set of numbers out of context. The new standards apply math concepts to real-life situations, often requiring multiple steps.

RIGOR

It's not enough to use process-of-elimination techniques to find an answer. The test includes some multiple choice with more than one answer as well as other demands for higher-level thinking.

WRITING

Writing is now assessed at all grade levels, with extended writing in English language arts. Each test – in both language arts and math – ends with a “performance task” and includes authentic writing.

The district is getting ready

Projects are underway this year to ensure Seattle Public Schools students and buildings are ready for this big change. We are upgrading Wi-Fi, training teachers, purchasing laptops, implementing keyboarding programs, and more. Your student's teacher and school principal will provide your school's testing schedule this spring.