Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium:

Usability, Accessibility, and Accommodations Guidelines

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Introduction

The Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium (Smarter Balanced) strives to provide every student with a positive and productive assessment experience, generating results that are a fair and accurate estimate of each student's achievement. Further, Smarter Balanced is building on a framework of accessibility for **all** students, including English Language Learners (ELLs), students with disabilities, and ELLs with disabilities, but not limited to those groups. In the process of developing its next-generation assessments to measure students' knowledge and skills as they progress toward college and career readiness, Smarter Balanced recognized that the validity of assessment results depends on each and every student having appropriate universal tools, designated supports, and accommodations when needed based on the constructs being measured by the assessment. This document was developed for the Smarter Balanced members to guide the selection and administration of universal tools, designated supports, and accommodations.

The Smarter Balanced assessment is based on the Common Core State Standards (CCSS). Thus, the universal tools, designated supports, and accommodations that are appropriate for the Smarter Balanced assessment may be different from those that members allowed in the past. For the secure summative assessments, a member can only make available to students the universal tools, designated supports, and accommodations that are included in the *Smarter Balanced Usability, Accessibility, and Accommodations Guidelines.* A member may elect **not to make available** to its students, any universal tool, designated support, or accommodation that is otherwise included in the *Guidelines* when the implementation or use of the universal tool, designated support, or accommodation is in conflict with a member's law, regulation, or policy.

These *Guidelines* describe the Smarter Balanced universal tools, designated supports, and accommodations available for the Smarter Balanced assessments at this time (see Appendix A). The specific universal tools, designated supports, and accommodations approved by Smarter Balanced may change in the future if additional tools, supports or accommodations are identified for the assessment based on member experience and research findings. The Consortium will establish a standing committee, including representatives from Governing Members that will review suggested additional universal tools, designated supports, and accommodations to determine if changes are warranted.

Proposed changes to the list of universal tools, designated supports, and accommodations will be brought to Governing Members for review, input, and vote for approval. Furthermore, members may issue temporary approvals (i.e., one summative assessment administration) for individual unique student accommodations or designated supports. K-12 leads will evaluate formal requests for unique accommodations/designated supports and determine whether or not the request poses a threat to the measurement of the construct. Upon issuing a temporary approval, the member will send documentation of the approval to the Consortium. The Consortium will consider all members' approved temporary accommodations/designated supports as part of the annual Consortium UAAG review process. If the Consortium determines it requires additional time to study the issue before the Consortium can engage in a vote, a member may notify the Consortium that the Member intends to issue temporary approvals for the same accommodation/designated support during the next summative assessment administration. Members should include in their notification to the Consortium the intended use of the temporary accommodation/support and the rationale for issuing temporary authorizations for the next summative assessment administration. The Consortium will provide to members a list of the temporary accommodations/designated supports issued by

members that are not Consortium approved accommodations/designated supports and cannot be authorized for the next summative assessment administration.

Intended Audience and Recommended Use

The Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium's *Usability, Accessibility, and Accommodations Guidelines* are intended for school-level personnel and decision-making teams, particularly Individualized Education Program (IEP) teams, as they prepare for and implement the Smarter Balanced assessment. The Guidelines provide information for classroom teachers, English development educators, special education teachers, and related services personnel to use in selecting and administering universal tools, designated supports, and accommodations for those students who need them. The Guidelines are also intended for assessment staff and administrators who oversee the decisions that are made in instruction and assessment.

The Smarter Balanced *Guidelines* apply to **all** students. They emphasize an individualized approach to the implementation of assessment practices for those students who have diverse needs and participate in large-scale content assessments. This document focuses on universal tools, designated supports, and accommodations for the Smarter Balanced content assessments of English language arts/literacy and mathematics (math). At the same time, it supports important instructional decisions about accessibility and accommodations for students who participate in the Smarter Balanced assessments. It recognizes the critical connection between accessibility and accommodations in instruction and accessibility and accommodations during assessment. Professional development materials that support the *Guidelines* and this critical instruction-assessment link will be available in the spring of 2014. The *Guidelines* also are supported by the Smarter Balanced Test Administration Manual.

Smarter Balanced Assessment Design

The Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium has developed a system of valid, reliable, and fair next-generation assessments aligned to the CCSS in English language arts (ELA)/literacy and mathematics for grades 3-8 and 11. The system includes summative assessments for accountability purposes, optional interim assessments for local use, and formative tools and processes for instructional use. Computer adaptive testing technologies are used for the summative and interim assessments to provide meaningful feedback and actionable data that teachers and other stakeholders can use to help students succeed. For more information, visit www.smarterbalanced.org/smarter-balanced-assessments/.

Recognizing Access Needs in All Students

All students (including students with disabilities, ELLs, and ELLs with disabilities) are to be held to the same expectations for participation and performance on member assessments. Specifically, all students enrolled in grades 3-8 and 11 are required to participate in the Smarter Balanced mathematics assessment except:

- Students with the most significant cognitive disabilities who meet the criteria for the mathematics alternate assessment based on alternate achievement standards (approximately 1% or fewer of the student population).

All students enrolled in grades 3-8 and 11 are required to participate in the Smarter Balanced English language/literacy assessment except:

- Students with the most significant cognitive disabilities who meet the criteria for the English language/literacy alternate assessment based on alternate achievement standards (approximately 1% or fewer of the student population).
- ELLs who are enrolled for the first year in a U.S. school. These students instead participate in their required English language proficiency assessment.

Federal laws governing student participation in assessments must meet the requirements of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) (reauthorized as the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 – NCLB), the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004 (IDEA), and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (reauthorized in 2008).

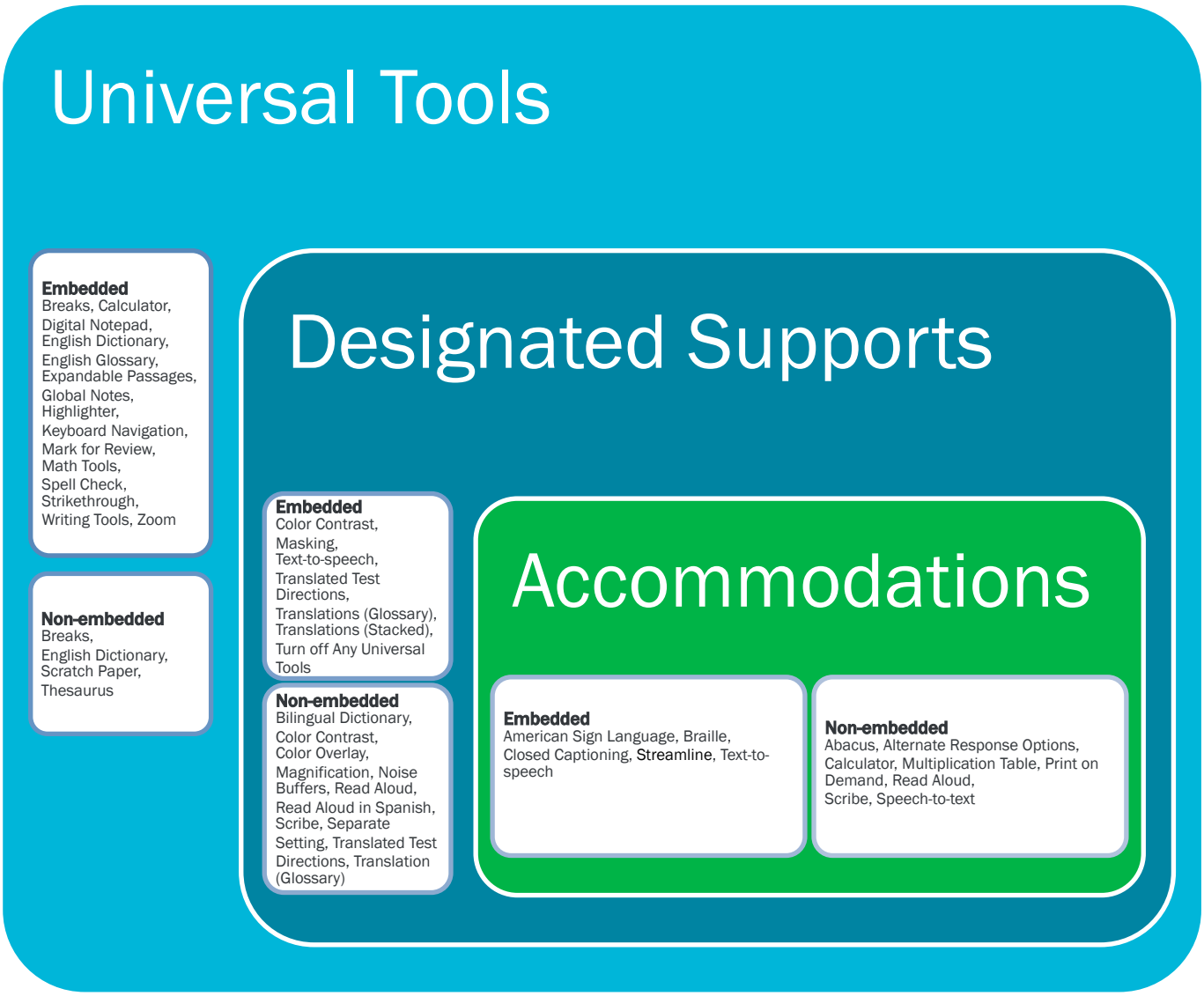
Recognizing the diverse characteristics and needs of students who participate in the Smarter Balanced assessments, the Smarter Balanced members worked together through the Smarter Balanced Test Administration and Student Access Work Group to develop an *Accessibility and Accommodations Framework* that guided the consortium as it worked to reach agreement on the specific tools, supports, and accommodations available for the assessment. The Work Group also considered research-based lessons learned about universal design, accessibility tools, and accommodations (see Appendix B).

The conceptual model that serves as the basis for the *Usability, Accessibility, and Accommodations Guidelines* is shown in Figure 1. This figure portrays several aspects of the Smarter Balanced assessment features – universal tools (available for all students), designated supports (available when indicated by an adult or team), and accommodations (available need is documented in an Individualized Education Program – IEP or 504 plan). It also portrays the additive and sequentially-inclusive nature of these three aspects. Universal tools are available to all students, including those receiving designated supports and those receiving accommodations. Designated supports are available only to students for whom an adult or team has indicated the need for these accommodations (as well as those students for whom the need is documented). Accommodations are available only to those students with documentation of the need through a formal plan (i.e., IEP). Those students also may use designated supports and universal tools.

A universal tool for one content focus may be an accommodation for another content focus (see, for example, calculator). Similarly, a designated support may also be an accommodation, depending on the content target (see, for example, scribe). This approach is consistent with the emphasis that Smarter Balanced has placed on the validity of assessment results coupled with access. **Universal tools, designated supports, and accommodations all yield valid scores that count as participation in assessments that meet the requirements of ESEA when used in a manner consistent with the *Guidelines.***

Also, as shown in Figure 1, for each category of assessment features – universal tools, designated supports, and accommodations – there exist both embedded and non-embedded versions of the tools, supports, or accommodations depending on whether they are provided as digitally-delivered components of the test administration system or separate from it.

Figure 1: Conceptual Model Underlying the Smarter Balanced *Usability, Accessibility, and Accommodations Guidelines.*



The Conceptual Model recognizes that all students should be held to the same expectations for instruction in CCSS and have available to them universal accessibility features. It also recognizes that some students may have certain characteristics and access needs that require the use of accommodations for instruction and when they participate in the Smarter Balanced assessments.

These *Guidelines* present the current universal tools, designated supports, and accommodations adopted by the Smarter Balanced members to ensure valid assessment results for all students taking its assessments.

Structure of This Document

This document is divided into several parts:

- **Introduction:** This section introduces the document and the conceptual model that is the basis for the universal tools, designated supports, and accommodations in the *Guidelines*.
- **Section I:** This section features the Consortium's universal tools.
- **Section II:** This section features the designated supports available on Smarter Balanced assessments.
- **Section III:** This section features the accommodations available on Smarter Balanced assessments.
- **Appendix A:** This appendix provides a summary list of Smarter Balanced's universal tools, designated supports, and accommodations.
- **Appendix B:** This appendix describes lessons learned from research on universal design, accessibility tools, and accommodations.
- **Appendix C:** This appendix provides Frequently Asked Questions.
- **Appendix D:** This appendix provides the Read Aloud Protocol (March 11, 2014).
- **Appendix E**: This appendix provides the Scribing Protocol (April 1, 2014).
- **Appendix F**: This appendix provides a Revision Log that lists all changes to this document by section, page, description, date, and version.

Section I: Smarter Balanced Universal Tools

What Are Universal Tools?

Universal tools are access features of the assessment that are either provided as digitally-delivered components of the test administration system or separate from it. Universal tools are available to all students based on student preference and selection.

Embedded Universal Tools

The Smarter Balanced digitally-delivered assessments include a wide array of embedded universal tools. These are available to all students as part of the technology platform.

Table 1 lists the embedded universal tools available to all students for computer administered Smarter Balanced assessments. It includes a description of each tool. Although these tools are generally available to all students, educators may determine that one or more might be distracting for a particular student, and thus might indicate that the tool should be turned off for the administration of the assessment to the student (see Section II – Designated Supports).

Table 1. Embedded Universal Tools Available to All Students

Universal Tool	Description
Breaks	The number of items per session can be flexibly defined based on the student's need. Breaks of more than 20 minutes will prevent the student from returning to items already attempted by the student. There is no limit on the number of breaks that a student might be given. The use of this universal tool may result in the student needing additional overall time to complete the assessment.
Calculator (for calculator-allowed items only, Grades 6-8 and 11) (See Non-embedded Accommodations for students who cannot use the embedded calculator)	An embedded on-screen digital calculator can be accessed for calculator-allowed items when students click on the calculator button. This tool is available only with the specific items for which the Smarter Balanced Item Specifications indicated that it would be appropriate. When the embedded calculator, as presented for all students, is not appropriate for a student (for example, for a student who is blind), the student may use the calculator offered with assistive technology devices (such as a talking calculator or a braille calculator).
Digital notepad	This tool is used for making notes about an item. The digital notepad is item-specific and is available through the end of the test segment. Notes are not saved when the student moves on to the next segment or after a break of more than 20 minutes.
English Dictionary (for ELA-performance task full writes)	An English dictionary **may** be available for the full write portion of an ELA performance task, **pending contractual discussions**. A full write is the second part of a performance task. The use of this universal tool may result in the student needing additional overall time to complete the assessment.
English glossary	Grade- and context-appropriate definitions of specific construct-irrelevant terms are shown in English on the screen via a pop-up window. The student can access the embedded glossary by clicking on any of the pre-selected terms. The use of this accommodation may result in the student needing additional overall time to complete the assessment.

Universal Tool	Description
Expandable passages	Each passage or stimulus can be expanded so that it takes up a larger portion of the screen.
Global notes (for ELA performance tasks)	Global notes is a notepad that is available for ELA performance tasks in which students complete a full write. A full write is the second part of a performance task. The student clicks on the notepad icon for the notepad to appear. During the ELA performance tasks, the notes are retained from segment to segment so that the student may go back to the notes even though the student is not able to go back to specific items in the previous segment.
Highlighter	A digital tool for marking desired text, item questions, item answers, or parts of these with a color. Highlighted text remains available throughout each test segment.
Keyboard navigation	Navigation throughout text can be accomplished by using a keyboard.
Mark for review	Allows students to flag items for future review during the assessment. Markings are not saved when the student moves on to the next segment or after a break of more than 20 minutes.
Math tools	These digital tools (i.e., embedded ruler, embedded protractor) are used for measurements related to math items. They are available only with the specific items for which the *Smarter Balanced Item Specifications* indicate that one or more of these tools would be appropriate.
Spell check	Writing tool for checking the spelling of words in student-generated responses. Spell check only gives an indication that a word is misspelled; it does not provide the correct spelling. This tool is available only with the specific items for which the Smarter Balanced Item Specifications indicated that it would be appropriate. Spell check is bundled with other embedded writing tools for all performance task full writes (planning, drafting, revising, and editing). A full write is the second part of a performance task.
Strikethrough	Allows users to cross out answer options. If an answer option is an image, a strikethrough line will not appear, but the image will be grayed out.
Writing tools	Selected writing tools (i.e., bold, italic, bullets, undo/redo) are available for all student-generated responses. (Also see spell check.)
Zoom	A tool for making text or other graphics in a window or frame appear larger on the screen. The default font size for all tests is 14 pt. The student can make text and graphics larger by clicking the *Zoom In* button. The student can click the *Zoom Out* button to return to the default or smaller print size. When using the zoom feature, the student only changes the size of text and graphics on the current screen. To increase the default print size of the entire test (from 1.5X to 3.0X default size), the print size must be set for the student in the Administration and Registration Tool (ART), or member's comparable platform), or set by the test administrator prior to the start of the test. This is the only feature that test administrators can set. The use of this universal tool may result in the student needing additional overall time to complete the assessment.

Non-embedded Universal Tools

Some universal tools may need to be provided outside of the computer test administration system. These tools, shown in Table 2, are to be provided locally for those students. They can be made available to any student.

Table 2. Non-embedded Universal Tools Available to All Students

Universal Tool	Description
Breaks	Breaks may be given at predetermined intervals or after completion of sections of the assessment for students taking a paper-based test. Sometimes students are allowed to take breaks when individually needed to reduce cognitive fatigue when they experience heavy assessment demands. The use of this universal tool may result in the student needing additional overall time to complete the assessment.
English Dictionary (for ELA-performance task full writes)	An English dictionary can be provided for the full write portion of an ELA performance task. A full write is the second part of a performance task. The use of this universal tool may result in the student needing additional overall time to complete the assessment.
Scratch paper	Scratch paper to make notes, write computations, or record responses may be made available. Only plain paper or lined paper is appropriate for ELA. Graph paper is required beginning in sixth grade and can be used on all math assessments. A student can use an assistive technology device for scratch paper as long as the device is consistent with the child's IEP and acceptable to the member. **CAT:** All scratch paper must be collected and securely destroyed at the end of each CAT assessment session to maintain test security. **Performance Tasks:** For mathematics and ELA performance tasks, if a student needs to take the performance task in more than one session, scratch paper may be collected at the end of each session, securely stored, and made available to the student at the next performance task testing session. Once the student completes the performance task, the scratch paper must be collected and securely destroyed to maintain test security.
Thesaurus (for ELA-performance task full writes)	A thesaurus contains synonyms of terms while a student interacts with text included in the assessment. A full write is the second part of a performance task. The use of this universal tool may result in the student needing additional overall time to complete the assessment.

Appendix A provides a summary of universal tools, designated supports, and accommodations (both embedded and non-embedded) available for the Smarter Balanced assessments.

Section II: Smarter Balanced Designated Supports

What Are Designated Supports?

Designated supports for the Smarter Balanced assessments are those features that are available for use by **any student** for whom the need has been indicated by an educator (or team of educators with parent/guardian and student). Scores achieved by students using designated supports will be included for federal accountability purposes. It is recommended that a consistent process be used to determine these supports for individual students. All educators making these decisions should be trained on the process and should be made aware of the range of designated supports available. Smarter Balanced members have identified digitally-embedded and non-embedded designated supports for students for whom an adult or team has indicated a need for the support.

Designated supports need to be identified prior to assessment administration. Embedded and non-embedded supports must be entered into the Administration and Registration Tool (ART, or member's comparable platform). Any non-embedded designated supports must be acquired prior to testing.

Who Makes Decisions About Designated Supports?

Informed adults make decisions about designated supports. Ideally, the decisions are made by all educators familiar with the student's characteristics and needs, as well as those supports that the student has been using during instruction and for other assessments. Student input to the decision, particularly for older students, is also recommended.

Forthcoming professional development materials to be available through Smarter Balanced will provide suggestions of processes that may be used if a district or school does not have an existing process in place for adults and others to make decisions about designated supports. The use of an *Individual Student Assessment Accessibility Profile (ISAAP)*, created and provided by Smarter Balanced, is one process that may be used to determine which designated supports should be available for an individual student. Schools may choose to use another decision-making process. **Regardless of the process used, all embedded designated supports must be activated prior to testing by entering information in the ART, or member's comparable platform**.

Embedded Designated Supports

Table 3 lists the embedded designated supports available to all students for whom the need has been indicated. It includes a description of each support along with recommendations for when the support might be needed.

Table 3. Embedded Designated Supports

Designated Support	Description	Recommendations for Use
Color contrast	Enable students to adjust screen background or font color, based on	Students with attention difficulties may need this support for viewing test content.

Designated Support	Description	Recommendations for Use
	student needs or preferences. This may include reversing the colors for the entire interface or choosing the color of font and background.	It also may be needed by some students with visual impairments or other print disabilities (including learning disabilities). Choice of colors should be informed by evidence that color selections meet the student's needs.
Masking	Masking involves blocking off content that is not of immediate need or that may be distracting to the student. Students are able to focus their attention on a specific part of a test item by masking.	Students with attention difficulties may need to mask content not of immediate need or that may be distracting during the assessment. This support also may be needed by students with print disabilities (including learning disabilities) or visual impairments. Masking allows students to hide and reveal individual answer options, as well as all navigational buttons and menus.
Text-to-speech (for math stimuli items and ELA items, not for reading passages)[1] (See Embedded Accommodations for ELA reading passages)	Text is read aloud to the student via embedded text-to-speech technology. The student is able to control the speed as well as raise or lower the volume of the voice via a volume control.	Students who are struggling readers may need assistance accessing the assessment by having all or portions of the assessment read aloud. This support also may be needed by students with reading-related disabilities, or by students who are blind and do not yet have adequate braille skills. This support will likely be confusing and may impede the performance of students who do not regularly have the support during instruction. Students who use text-to-speech will need headphones unless tested individually in a separate setting.
Translated test directions (for math items)	Translation of test directions is a language support available prior to beginning the actual test items. Students can see test directions in another language. As an embedded designated support, translated test directions are automatically a part of the stacked translation designated support.	Students who have limited English language skills can use the translated directions support. This support should only be used for students who are proficient readers in the other language and not proficient in English.
Translations (glossaries) (for math items)	Translated glossaries are a language support. The translated glossaries are provided for selected construct-irrelevant terms for math. Translations for these	Students who have limited English language skills (whether or not designated as ELLs or ELLs with disabilities) can use the translation

[1] See Embedded Accommodations for guidelines on the use of Text-to-speech for ELA reading passages.

Designated Support	Description	Recommendations for Use
	terms appear on the computer screen when students click on them. Students with the language glossary setting enabled can view the translated glossary. Students can also select the audio icon next to the glossary term and listen to the audio recording of the glossary.	glossary for specific items. The use of this support may result in the student needing additional overall time to complete the assessment.
Translations (stacked) (for math items)	Stacked translations are a language support. Stacked translations are available for some students; stacked translations provide the full translation of each test item above the original item in English.	For students whose primary language is not English and who use dual language supports in the classroom, use of the stacked (dual language) translation may be appropriate. Students participate in the assessment regardless of the language. This support will increase reading load and cognitive load. The use of this support may result in the student needing additional overall time to complete the assessment.
Turn off any universal tools	Disabling any universal tools that might be distracting or that students do not need to use, or are unable to use.	Students who are easily distracted (whether or not designated as having attention difficulties or disabilities) may be overwhelmed by some of the universal tools. Knowing which specific tools may be distracting is important for determining which tools to turn off.

Non-embedded Designated Supports

Some designated supports may need to be provided outside of the digital-delivery system. These supports, shown in Table 4, are to be provided locally for those students unable to use the designated supports when provided digitally.

Table 4. Non-embedded Designated Supports

Designated Support	Description	Recommendations for Use
Bilingual dictionary (for ELA-performance task full writes)	A bilingual/dual language word-to-word dictionary is a language support. A bilingual/dual language word-to-word dictionary can be provided for the full write portion of an ELA performance task. A full write is the second part of a performance task.	For students whose primary language is not English and who use dual language supports in the classroom, use of a bilingual/dual language word-to-word dictionary may be appropriate. Students participate in the assessment regardless of the language. The use of this support may result in the student needing additional overall time to complete the assessment.
Color contrast	Test content of online items may be printed with different colors.	Students with attention difficulties may need this support for viewing the test when digitally-provided color contrasts do not meet their needs. Some students with visual impairments or other print disabilities (including learning disabilities) also may need this support. Choice of colors should be informed by evidence of those colors that meet the student's needs.
Color overlays	Color transparencies are placed over a paper-based assessment.	Students with attention difficulties may need this support to view test content. This support also may be needed by some students with visual impairments or other print disabilities (including learning disabilities). Choice of color should be informed by evidence of those colors that meet the student's needs.
Magnification	The size of specific areas of the screen (e.g., text, formulas, tables, graphics, and navigation buttons) may be adjusted by the student with an assistive technology device. Magnification allows increasing the size to a level not provided for by the Zoom universal tool.	Students used to viewing enlarged text or graphics, or navigation buttons may need magnification to comfortably view content. This support also may meet the needs of students with visual impairments and other print disabilities. The use of this designated support may result in the student needing additional overall time to complete the assessment.

Designated Support	Description	Recommendations for Use
Noise Buffers	Ear mufflers, white noise, and/or other equipment used to block external sounds.	Student (not groups of students) wears equipment to reduce environmental noises. Students may have these testing variations if regularly used in the classroom. Students who use noise buffers will need headphones unless tested individually in a separate setting.
Read aloud (for math items and ELA items, not for reading passages) (See Non-embedded Accommodations for ELA reading passages)	Text is read aloud to the student by a trained and qualified human reader who follows the administration guidelines provided in the *Smarter Balanced Test Administration Manual* and *Read Aloud Protocol* (see Appendix D). All or portions of the content may be read aloud.	Students who are struggling readers may need assistance accessing the assessment by having all or portions of the assessment read aloud. This support also may be needed by students with reading-related disabilities, or by students who are blind and do not yet have adequate braille skills. If not used regularly during instruction, this support is likely to be confusing and may impede the performance on assessments. Readers should be provided to students on an individual basis – not to a group of students. A student should have the option of asking a reader to slow down or repeat text. The use of this support may result in the student needing additional overall time to complete the assessment.
Read aloud in Spanish (for mathematics, all grades)	Spanish text is read aloud to the student by a trained and qualified human reader who follows the administration guidelines provided in the *Smarter Balanced Test Administration Manual* and the read aloud guidelines. All or portions of the content may be read aloud.	Students receiving the Translations (stacked) Designated Support and who are struggling readers may need assistance accessing the assessment by having all or portions of the assessment read aloud. This support also may be needed by students with reading-related disabilities. If not used regularly during instruction, this support is likely to be confusing and may impede the performance on assessments. A student should have the option of asking a reader to slow down or repeat text. The use of this support may result in the student needing additional overall time to complete the assessment.

Designated Support	Description	Recommendations for Use
Scribe (for ELA non-writing items and math items)[2] (See Accommodations for Writing)	Students dictate their responses to a human who records verbatim what they dictate. The scribe must be trained and qualified, and must follow the administration guidelines provided in the *Smarter Balanced Test Administration Manual.*	Students who have documented significant motor or processing difficulties, or who have had a recent injury (such as a broken hand or arm) that make it difficult to produce responses may need to dictate their responses to a human, who then records the students' responses verbatim. The use of this support may result in the student needing additional overall time to complete the assessment.
Separate setting	Test location is altered so that the student is tested in a setting different from that made available for most students.	Students who are easily distracted (or may distract others) in the presence of other students, for example, may need an alternate location to be able to take the assessment. The separate setting may be in a different room that allows them to work individually or among a smaller group or to use a device requiring voicing (e.g., a Whisper Phone). Or, the separate setting may be in the same room but in a specific location (for example, away from windows, doors, or pencil sharpeners, in a study carrel, near the teacher's desk, or in the front of a classroom). Some students may benefit from being in an environment that allows for movement, such as being able to walk around. In some instances, students may need to interact with instructional or test content outside of school, such as in a hospital or their home. A specific adult, trained in a manner consistent with the TAM, can act as test proctor (test administrator) when student requires it.
Translated test directions	PDF of directions translated in each of the languages currently supported. Bilingual adult can read to student.	Students who have limited English language skills (whether or not designated as ELLs or ELLs with disabilities) can use the translated test directions. In addition, a biliterate adult trained in the test administration manual can read the test directions to the student. The use of this support may result in the student needing additional

[2] See Accommodations for use of Scribe for Writing items

Designated Support	Description	Recommendations for Use
		overall time to complete the assessment.
Translations (glossaries) (for math items, paper/pencil assessment)	Translated glossaries are a language support. Translated glossaries are provided for selected construct-irrelevant terms for math. Glossary terms are listed by item and include the English term and its translated equivalent.	Students who have limited English language skills can use the translation glossary for specific items. The use of this support may result in the student needing additional overall time to complete the assessment.

Appendix A provides a summary of universal tools, designated supports, and accommodations (both embedded and non-embedded) available for the Smarter Balanced assessments.

Section III: Smarter Balanced Accommodations

What Are Accommodations?

Accommodations are changes in procedures or materials that increase equitable access during the Smarter Balanced assessments. Assessment accommodations generate valid assessment results for students who need them; they allow these students to show what they know and can do. Smarter Balanced members have identified digitally-embedded and non-embedded **accommodations** for students for whom there is documentation of the need for the accommodations on an Individualized Education Program (IEP) or 504 accommodation plan. One exception to the IEP or 504 requirement is for students who have had a physical injury (e.g., broken hand or arm) that impairs their ability to use a computer. These students may use the speech-to-text or the scribe accommodations (if they have had sufficient experience with the use of these), as noted in this section.

Determination of which accommodations an individual student will have available for the assessment is necessary because these accommodations must be made available before the assessment, either by entering information into the ART, or member's comparable platform, for embedded accommodations, or by ensuring that the materials or setting are available for the assessment for non-embedded accommodations.

The Smarter Balanced Test Administration and Student Access Workgroup recognized that accommodations could increase cognitive load or create other challenges for students who do not need them or who have not had experience using them. Because of this possibility, Smarter Balanced members agreed that **a student's parent/guardian should know about the availability of specific accommodations through a parent/guardian report. This would ensure that parents/guardians are aware of the conditions under which their child participated in the assessment. Information included in the parent/guardian report should not be the basis for any educational decisions (such as eligibility for an Advanced Placement class) nor for documenting/reporting the use of the accommodation elsewhere (such as on a transcript).**

Who Makes Decisions About Accommodations?

IEP teams and educators make decisions about accommodations. These teams (or educators for 504 plans) provide evidence of the need for accommodations and ensure that they are noted on the IEP or 504 plan.

The IEP team (or educator developing the 504 plan) is responsible for ensuring that information from the IEP is entered into the ART, or member's comparable platform, so that all embedded accommodations can be activated prior to testing. This can be accomplished by identifying one person from the team to enter information into the ART, or member's comparable platform, or by providing information to the test coordinator who enters into the ART, or member's comparable platform, a form that lists all accommodations and designated supports needed by individual students on IEPs or 504 plans.

Embedded Accommodations

Table 5 lists the embedded accommodations available for the Smarter Balanced assessments for those students for whom the accommodations are included on an IEP or 504 plan. The table includes a description of each accommodation along with recommendations for when the accommodation might be needed and how it can be used. For those accommodations that may be considered controversial, a description of considerations about the use of the accommodation is provided.

Table 5. Embedded Accommodations

Accommodation	Description	Recommendations for Use
American Sign Language (ASL) (for ELA Listening items and math items)	Test content is translated into ASL video. ASL human signer and the signed test content are viewed on the same screen. Students may view portions of the ASL video as often as needed.	Some students who are deaf or hard of hearing and who typically use ASL may need this accommodation when accessing text-based content in the assessment. The use of this accommodation may result in the student needing additional overall time to complete the assessment. For many students who are deaf or hard of hearing, viewing signs is the only way to access information presented orally. It is important to note, however, that some students who are hard of hearing will be able to listen to information presented orally if provided with appropriate amplification and a setting in which extraneous sounds do not interfere with clear presentation of the audio presentation in a listening test.
Braille	A raised-dot code that individuals read with the fingertips. Graphic material (e.g., maps, charts, graphs, diagrams, and illustrations) is presented in a raised format (paper or thermoform). Contracted and non-contracted braille is available; Nemeth code is available for math.	Students with visual impairments may read text via braille. Tactile overlays and graphics also may be used to assist the student in accessing content through touch. Refreshable braille is available only for ELA because Nemeth Code is not available via refreshable braille. For math, braille will be presented via embosser; embosser-created braille can be used for ELA also. The type of braille presented to the student (contracted or non-contracted) is set in ART, or member's comparable platform. The use of this accommodation may result in the student needing additional overall time to complete the assessment.
Closed captioning (for ELA listening items)	Printed text that appears on the computer screen as audio materials are presented.	Students who are deaf or hard of hearing and who typically access information presented via audio by reading words that appear in synchrony with the audio

Accommodation	Description	Recommendations for Use
		presentation may need this support to access audio content. For many students who are deaf or hard of hearing, viewing words (sometimes in combination with reading lips and ASL) is how they access information presented orally. It is important to note, however, that some students who are hard of hearing will be able to listen to information presented orally if provided with appropriate amplification and a setting in which extraneous sounds do not interfere with clear presentation of the audio presentation in a listening test.
Streamline	This accommodation provides a streamlined interface of the test in an alternate, simplified format in which the items are displayed below the stimuli.	This accommodation may benefit a small number of students who have specific learning and/or reading disabilities in which the text is presented in a more sequential format.
Text-to-speech (available for ELA reading passages, all grades)	Text is read aloud to the student via embedded text-to-speech technology. The student is able to control the speed as well as raise or lower the volume of the voice via a volume control.	This accommodation is appropriate for a very small number of students. Read aloud is available as an accommodation for students whose need is documented in an IEP or 504 plan. A student should have the option of asking a reader to slow down or repeat text. Students who use text-to-speech will need headphones unless tested individually in a separate setting.

Non-embedded Accommodations

Table 6 lists the non-embedded accommodations available for the Smarter Balanced assessments for those students for whom the accommodations are documented on an IEP or 504 plan. The table includes a description of each accommodation, along with recommendations for when the accommodation might be needed and how it can be used. For those accommodations that may be considered controversial, a description of considerations about the use of the accommodation is provided.

Table 6. Non-embedded Accommodations Available

Accommodation	Description	Recommendations for Use
Abacus	This tool may be used in place of scratch paper for students who typically use an abacus.	Some students with visual impairments who typically use an abacus may use an abacus in place of using scratch paper.
Alternate response options	Alternate response options include but are not limited to adapted keyboards, large keyboards, StickyKeys, MouseKeys, FilterKeys, adapted mouse, touch screen, head wand, and switches.	Students with some physical disabilities (including both fine motor and gross motor skills) may need to use the alternate response options accommodation. Some alternate response options are external devices that must be plugged in and be compatible with the assessment delivery platform.
Calculator (for calculator allowed items only, Grades 6-8 and 11)	A non-embedded calculator for students needing a special calculator, such as a braille calculator or a talking calculator, currently unavailable within the assessment platform.	Students with visual impairments who are unable to use the embedded calculator for calculator-allowed items will be able to use the calculator that they typically use, such as a braille calculator or a talking calculator. Test administrators should ensure that the calculator is available only for designated calculator items.
Multiplication Table (grade 4-8 and 11math items)	A paper-based single digit (1-9) multiplication table will be available from Smarter Balanced for reference.	For students with a documented and persistent calculation disability (i.e., dyscalculia).
Print on demand	Paper copies of either passages/stimuli and/or items are printed for students. For those students needing a paper copy of a passage or stimulus, permission for the students to request printing must first be set in ART, or member's comparable platform. For those students needing a paper copy of one or more items, the member's help desk must be contacted by the school or district coordinator to have the accommodation set for the student.	Some students with disabilities may need paper copies of either passages/stimuli and/or items. A very small percentage of students should need this accommodation. The use of this accommodation may result in the student needing additional time to complete the assessment.

Accommodation	Description	Recommendations for Use
Read Aloud (for ELA reading passages, all grades; See Designated Supports for ELA items and math items)	Text is read aloud to the student via an external screen reader or by a trained and qualified human reader who follows the administration guidelines provided in the Smarter Balanced *Test Administration Manual* and *Read Aloud Guidelines*. All or portions of the content may be read aloud. Members can refer to the *Guidelines for Choosing the Read Aloud Accommodation* when deciding if this accommodation is appropriate for a student.	This accommodation is appropriate for a very small number of students. Read aloud is available as an accommodation for students whose need is documented in an IEP or 504 plan. A student should have the option of asking a reader to slow down or repeat text.
Scribe (See Designated Supports for math and non-writing ELA)	Students dictate their responses to a human who records verbatim what they dictate. The scribe must be trained and qualified, and must follow the administration guidelines provided in the *Smarter Balanced Test Administration Manual.*	Students who have documented significant motor or processing difficulties, or who have had a recent injury (such as a broken hand or arm) that makes it difficult to produce responses may need to dictate their responses to a human, who then records the students' responses verbatim. The use of this accommodation may result in the student needing overall additional time to complete the assessment. For many of these students, dictating to a human scribe is the only way to demonstrate their composition skills. It is important that these students be able to develop planning notes via the human scribe, and to view what they produce while composing via dictation to the scribe.
Speech-to-text	Voice recognition allows students to use their voices as input devices to the computer, to dictate responses or give commands (e.g., opening application programs, pulling down menus, and saving work). Voice recognition software generally can recognize speech up to 160 words per minute. Students may use their own assistive technology devices.	Students who have motor or processing disabilities (such as dyslexia) or who have had a recent injury (such as a broken hand or arm) that make it difficult to produce text or commands using computer keys may need alternative ways to work with computers. Students will need to be familiar with the software, and have had many opportunities to use it prior to testing. Speech-to-text software requires that the student go back through all generated text to correct errors in transcription, including use of writing conventions; thus, prior experience with this accommodation is essential. If students use their own assistive technology devices, all assessment content should be deleted from these

Accommodation	Description	Recommendations for Use
		devices after the test for security purposes. For many of these students, using voice recognition software is the only way to demonstrate their composition skills. Still, use of speech-to-text does require that students know writing conventions and that they have the review and editing skills required of students who enter text via the computer keyboard. It is important that students who use speech-to-text also be able to develop planning notes via speech-to-text, and to view what they produce while composing via speech-to-text.

Resources

Christensen, L., Carver, W., VanDeZande, J., & Lazarus, S. (2011). *Accommodations manual: How to select, administer, and evaluate the use of accommodations for instruction and assessment of students with disabilities (3rd ed.).* Washington, DC: Assessing Special Education Students State Collaborative on Assessment and Student Standards, Council of Chief State School Officers.

Christensen, L., Shyyan, V., Schuster, T., Mahaley, P., & Saez, S. (2012). *Accommodations manual: How to select, administer, and evaluate use of accommodations for instruction and assessment of English language learners.* Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota, National Center on Educational Outcomes.

Fedorchak, G. (2012). *Access by Design – Implications for equity and excellence in education*. Draft paper prepared for the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium.

Measured Progress. (2013). *Framework for Accessibility and Accommodations.* Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium. (Forthcoming Spring 2014)

National Center on Educational Outcomes. (2009). *Accommodations bibliography.* Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota, National Center on Educational Outcomes. Available at: https://apps.cehd.umn.edu/nceo/accommodations/

National Council on Measurement in Education. (2012). *Testing and data integrity in the administration of statewide student assessment programs.*

Professional Development Module. (Forthcoming Spring 2014)

Shyyan, V., Christensen, L., Touchette, B., Lightborne, L., Gholson, M., & Burton, K. (2013). *Accommodations manual: How to select, administer, and evaluate use of accommodations for instruction and assessment of English language learners with disabilities.* Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota, National Center on Educational Outcomes.

Smarter Balanced. (2012). *Translation accommodations framework for testing ELLs in mathematics.* Available at: http://www.smarterbalanced.org/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2012/09/Translation-Accommodations-Framework-for-Testing-ELL-Math.pdf

Smarter Balanced. (2012). *Accommodations for English Language Learners and Students with Disabilities: A research-based decision algorithm*. Available at: http://www.smarterbalanced.org/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2012/08/Accomodations-for-under-represented-students.pdf

Appendix A: Summary of Smarter Balanced Universal Tools, Designated Supports, and Accommodations

	Universal Tools	Designated Supports	Accommodations
Embedded	Breaks Calculator[3] Digital Notepad English Dictionary[4] English Glossary Expandable Passages Global Notes Highlighter Keyboard Navigation Mark for Review Math Tools[5] Spell Check Strikethrough Writing Tools[6] Zoom	Color Contrast Masking Text-to-Speech[7] Translated Test Directions[8] Translations (Glossary)[9] Translations (Stacked)[10] Turn off Any Universal Tools	American Sign Language[11] Braille Closed Captioning[12] Streamline Text-to-Speech[13]
Non-embedded	Breaks English Dictionary[14] Scratch Paper Thesaurus[15]	Bilingual Dictionary[16] Color Contrast Color Overlay Magnification Read Aloud[17] Noise Buffers Scribe[18] Separate Setting Translated Test Directions Translations (Glossary) [19]	Abacus Alternate Response Options[20] Calculator[21] Multiplication Table[22] Print on Demand Read Aloud[23] Scribe Speech-to-Text

*Items shown are available for ELA and math unless otherwise noted.

[3] For calculator-allowed items only in grades 6 – 8 and 11
[4] For ELA performance task full-writes
[5] Includes embedded ruler, embedded protractor
[6] Includes bold, italic, underline, indent, cut, paste, spell check, bullets, undo/redo.
[7] For ELA items (not ELA reading passages) and math items
[8] For math items
[9] For math items
[10] For math test
[11] For ELA listening Items and math items
[12] For ELA listening items
[13] ELA reading passages, all grades
[14] For ELA performance task full-writes
[15] For ELA performance task full-writes
[16] For ELA performance task full-writes
[17] For ELA items (not ELA reading passages) and math items
[18] For ELA non-writing items and math items
[19] For math items on the paper-pencil test
[20] Includes adapted keyboards, large keyboards, StickyKeys, Mouse Keys, FilterKeys, adapted mouse, touch screen, head want, and switches.
[21] For calculator-allowed items only in grades 6 – 8 and 11
[22] For math items beginning in grade 4
[23] For ELA reading passages, all grades

Appendix B: Research-based Lessons Learned about Universal Design, Accessibility Tools, and Accommodations

More than half of all members in the United States participated in research spurred by the opportunity that members had to develop alternate assessments based on modified achievement standards (AA-MAS). The research conducted since 2007 provides numerous findings that are relevant to the next generation assessments. Lessons learned from this research that are relevant to the Smarter Balanced assessment system are highlighted here[24].

Who might benefit from accessibility features identified by AA-MAS research?

Several studies explored the characteristics of students who might benefit from an AA-MAS and the accessibility features incorporated in the assessment. These studies consistently found:

- Students with and without Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) and 504 plans would likely benefit from assessments with increased accessibility features.
- Students identified for the AA-MAS or who were among the lowest performing students in a member tended to be males, ethnic or racial minorities, English language learners, or from low socioeconomic backgrounds.
- Students identified for the AA-MAS tended to have difficulty with:
  - Print materials
  - High vocabulary load materials
  - Directions
  - Multi-step problem solving
- Students identified for the AA-MAS tended to have:
  - Distractibility
  - Limited meta-cognitive skills
  - Poor organizational skills
  - Poor self-monitoring skills
  - Slower work pace
  - Limited working memory capacity

What changes can be made to test items and tests that do not change the construct being assessed?

Many studies examined the effects of changes to test items or the tests themselves. Among those changes that did not violate the construct were:

- Enhanced directions
- Increased size of text and visuals
- Increased white space
- Simplified formats, including simplified visuals
- Underlining

[24] The research used to develop this summary was highlighted in the document *Lessons Learned in Federally Funded Projects That Can Improve the Instruction and Assessment of Low Performing Students with Disabilities,* edited by M. Thurlow, S. Lazarus, and S. Bechard (2012), available at www.nceo.info/OnlinePubs/LessonsLearned.pdf, and presentations by the authors of three of the chapters in the *Lessons Learned* report, Sue Bechard, Vince Dean, Sheryl Lazarus, and Shelly Loving-Ryder, along with representatives from the two general assessment consortia (PARCC – Tamara Reavis; Smarter Balanced – Magda Chia).

Among those changes that might not violate the construct, depending on how the construct was specifically defined, were:

- Adding visuals
- Bolding text
- Simplifying language in item stems
- Changing distractors by editing the attractive distractor or changing the order of distractors
- Chunking text by embedding questions within a passage
- Reordering items
- Providing thought questions or hint boxes
- Scaffolding for vocabulary, definition, context, inference, or complex questions

Other findings highlighted the need for individualized decisions about some accessibility features. For example:

- Read-aloud features are differentially effective for and preferred by students
- Some features increase engagement and motivation in students
- Too many features can be confusing to students

Researchers found that students needed to have the opportunity to practice new item types and new accessibility features. In addition, their research emphasized the benefits of cognitive labs and item tryouts with students.

What can test developers do to build on the lessons learned from AA-MAS research and implementation?

Many studies and AA-MAS implementation efforts pointed to considerations for test developers. For example:

- Require item-writer training that focuses on universal design and accessibility principles
- Develop items from scratch rather than attempting to modify existing items to increase universal design and accessibility characteristics
- Ensure that all users understand the purpose of the assessment through professional development activities
- Always consider format changes that might increase the accessibility of items and tests, but make changes to content and cognitive load only after careful delineation of the purpose and content targets of the assessment.
- Engage in research on the effects of individual changes and combinations of changes intended to increase universal design and accessibility.
- Implement innovative items with caution, and only after exploring the accessibility implications of the innovative items.

Appendix C: Frequently Asked Questions

Smarter Balanced members identified frequently asked questions (FAQs) and developed applicable responses to support the information provided in the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium's *Usability, Accessibility, and Accommodations Guidelines*. These questions and responses, as well as the information in the *Guidelines* document apply to the Smarter Balanced interim and summative assessments.

Members may use these FAQs to assist districts and schools with transitioning from their former assessments to the Smarter Balanced assessments. In addition, the FAQs may be used by districts to ensure understanding among staff and schools regarding the universal tools, designated supports, and accommodations available for the Smarter Balanced assessments. Schools may use them with decision-making teams (including parents) as decisions are made and implemented with respect to use of the Smarter Balanced *Usability, Accessibility, and Accommodations Guidelines.*

Additional information to aid in the implementation of the *Guidelines* is available in the *Individual Student Assessment Accessibility Profile (ISAAP) Module*, the *Test Administration Manual*, and the *Implementation Guide*. These documents will be made available over the next few weeks.

The FAQs are organized into four sections. First are general questions. Second is a set of questions about specific universal tools and designated supports. Questions that pertain specifically to English language learners (ELLs) comprise the third set of FAQs, and questions that pertain specifically to students with disabilities comprise the fourth set of FAQs.

General FAQs

1. *What are the differences among the three categories of universal tools, designated supports, and accommodations?*

   Universal tools are access features that are available to all students based on student preference and selection. **Designated supports** for the Smarter Balanced assessments are those features that are available for use by any student (including English language learners, students with disabilities, and English language learners with disabilities) for whom the need has been indicated by an educator or team of educators (with parent/guardian and student input as appropriate). **Accommodations** are changes in procedures or materials that increase equitable access during the Smarter Balanced assessments by generating valid assessment results for students who need them and allowing these students the opportunity to show what they know and can do. The *Usability, Accessibility, and Accommodations Guidelines* identify accommodations for students for whom there is documentation of the need for the accommodations on an Individualized Education Program (IEP) or 504 accommodation plan.

   Universal tools, designated supports, and accommodations may be either embedded in the test administration system or provided locally (non-embedded).

2. *Which students should use each category of universal tools, designated supports, and accommodations?*

   Universal tools are available to all students, including those receiving designated supports and those receiving accommodations. **Designated supports** are available only to students for whom an adult or team (consistent with member-designated practices) has indicated the need for these supports (as well as those students for whom the need is documented). **Accommodations** are available only to those students with documentation of the need through either an Individualized Education Program (IEP) or a 504 accommodation plan. Students who have IEPs or 504 accommodation plans also may use designated supports and universal tools.

What Tools Are Available for my Student?

	All Students	English language learners (ELLs)	Students with disabilities	ELLs with disabilities
Universal Tools	✔	✔	✔	✔
Designated Supports	✔[1]	✔[1]	✔	✔
Accommodations			✔	✔

[1] *Only for instances that an adult (or team) has deemed the supports appropriate for a specific student's testing needs.*

3. *What is the difference between embedded and non-embedded approaches? How might educators decide what is most appropriate?*

   Embedded versions of the universal tools, designated supports, and accommodations are provided digitally through the test delivery system while non-embedded versions are provided at the local level through means other than the test delivery system. The choice between embedded and non-embedded universal tools and designated supports should be based on the individual student's needs. The decision should reflect the student's prior use of, and experience with, both embedded and non-embedded universal tools, designated supports, and accommodations. It is important to note that although Print on Demand is a non-embedded accommodation, permission for students to request printing must first be set in the Administration and Registration Tools (ART) or the member's comparable platform.

4. *Who determines how non-embedded accommodations (such as read aloud) are provided?*

   IEP teams and educators make decisions about non-embedded accommodations. These teams (or educators for 504 plans) provide evidence of the need for accommodations and ensure that they are noted on the IEP or 504 plan (see *Guidelines,* pages 15-20). Members are responsible for ensuring that districts and schools follow Smarter Balanced guidance on the implementation of these accommodations (see [professional development materials]).

5. *Are any students eligible to use text-to-speech for ELA reading passages on the Smarter Balanced assessments?*

   For students in all grades, read-aloud is available on ELA reading passages as a non-embedded accommodation for students whose need is documented on an IEP or 504 plan, subject to

each member's laws, regulations, and policies. Text-to-speech is available on reading passages in all grades. Text-to-speech and read-aloud for ELA reading passages is not available for ELLs (unless the student has an IEP or 504 plan). Whenever text-to-speech is used, appropriate headphones must be available to the student, unless the student is tested individually in a separate setting.

6. *Why are some accommodations that were previously allowed for my state assessment not listed in the Smarter Balanced Usability, Accessibility, and Accommodations Guidelines?*

   After examining the latest research and conducting numerous discussions with external and member experts, Smarter Balanced member approved a list of universal tools, designated supports, and accommodations applicable to the current design and constructs being measured by its tests and items within them. Upon review of new research findings or other evidence applicable to accessibility and accommodations considerations, the list of specific universal tools, designated supports, and accommodations approved by Smarter Balanced may be subject to change. The Consortium will establish a standing committee, including members from Governing Members, to review suggested adjustments to the list of universal tools, designated supports, and accommodations to determine whether changes are warranted.

   Proposed changes to the list of universal tools, designated supports, and accommodations will be brought to Governing Members for review, feedback, and approval. Furthermore, members may issue temporary approvals (i.e., one summative assessment administration) for unique accommodations for individual students.

   Member leads will evaluate formal requests for unique accommodations and determine whether the request poses a threat to the measurement of the construct. The formal requests will include documentation of the student need, the specific nature of the universal tools, designated supports, or accommodations, and the plan for follow-up monitoring of use. Upon issuing a temporary approval, the Member will send documentation of the approval to the Consortium. The Consortium will consider all member-approved temporary accommodations as part of the Consortium's accommodations review process. The Consortium will provide to members a list of the temporary accommodations issued by members that are not Consortium-approved accommodations. In subsequent years, members will not be able to offer as a temporary accommodation any temporary accommodation that has been rejected by the Consortium.

7. *Under which conditions may a member elect not to make available to its students an accommodation that is allowed by Smarter Balanced?*

   The Consortium recognizes that there should be a careful balance between the need for uniformity among members and the need for members to maintain their autonomy. To maintain this balance, individual members may elect not to make available an accommodation that is in conflict with the member's laws, regulations, or policies.

8. *Can members allow additional universal tools, designated supports, or accommodations to individual students on a case by case basis?*

   Yes, only in certain restricted and emergent circumstances. To address emergent issues that arise at the local level, authorized staff in members will have the authority to approve temporary unique testing conditions for individual students. Because it is unknown whether a temporarily provided universal tool, designated support or accommodation actually belongs in the defined categories, all such temporary testing conditions are considered to be unique accommodations. Authorized member staff includes only those individuals who are familiar with the constructs the Smarter Balanced assessments are measuring, so that students are not

inadvertently provided with universal tools, designated supports, or accommodations that violate the constructs being measured.

The unique accommodations approved by a member for individual students will be submitted to Smarter Balanced for review. Temporary unique accommodations accepted by Smarter Balanced will be incorporated into the official guidelines released by Smarter Balanced in the following year or continue to be investigated for acceptance. Authorized staff members are not to add any universal tools, designated supports, or accommodations to the Smarter Balanced *Guidelines*; only the Smarter Balanced Consortium may do so.

9. *What is to be done for special cases of "sudden" physical disability?*

One exception to the IEP or 504 requirement is for students who have had a physical injury (e.g., broken hand or arm) that impairs their ability to use a computer. For these situations, students may use the speech-to-text or scribe accommodations (if deemed appropriate based on the student having had sufficient experience with the use of the accommodations) (see *Guidelines*, page 13).

10. *Who reviewed the Smarter Balanced Guidelines?*

In addition to individuals and officials from the Smarter Balanced governing members, several organizations and their individual members provided written feedback on the guidelines:

- American Federation of Teachers
- California School for the Blind
- California School for the Deaf
- Californians Together
- California State Teach
- Center for Applied Special Technology
- Center for Law and Education
- Conference of Educational Administrators of Schools and Programs for the Deaf
- Council for Exceptional Children
- Council of the Great City Schools
- Council of Parent Attorneys and Advocates
- Learning Disabilities Association of Maryland
- Mexican American Legal Defense and Education Fund
- Missouri School Boards' Association
- Missouri Council of Administrators of Special Education
- National Center for Learning Disabilities
- The Advocacy Institute
- The National Hispanic University

11. *Where can a person go to get more information about making decisions on the use of designated supports and accommodations?*

Practice tests provide students with experiences that are critical for success in navigating the platform easily. The practice tests may be particularly important for those students who will be using designated supports or accommodations, because the practice tests can provide data that may be useful in determining whether a student might benefit from the use of a particular designated support or accommodation. Smarter Balanced practice tests are available at http://www.smarterbalanced.org/pilot-test/.
In addition, it is recommended that decision makers refer to professional development materials provided by Smarter Balanced or state offices on the *Individual Student Assessment*

Accessibility Profile (ISAAP) or member-developed process, as well as other member-developed materials consistent with the Smarter Balanced *Implementation Guide.*

Additional information on the decision-making process, and ways to promote a thoughtful process rather than an automatic reliance on a checklist or menu, is available through materials developed by groups of members.[25]

12. *What security measures need to be taken before, during, and after the assessment for students who use universal tools, designated supports, or accommodations?*

Test security involves maintaining the confidentiality of test questions and answers, and is critical in ensuring the integrity of a test and validity of test results. Ensuring that only authorized personnel have access to the test and that test materials are kept confidential is critical in technology-based assessments. In addition, it is important to guarantee that (a) students are seated in such a manner that they cannot see each other's terminals, (b) students are not able to access any unauthorized programs or the Internet while they are taking the assessment, and (c) students are not able to access any externally-saved data or computer shortcuts while taking the test. Prior to testing, the IEP team should check on compatibility of assistive technology devices and make appropriate adjustments if necessary. When a non-embedded designated support or accommodation is used that involves a human having access to items (e.g., reader, scribe), procedures must be in place to ensure that the individual understands and has agreed to security and confidentiality requirements. Test administrators need to (a) keep testing materials in a secure place to prevent unauthorized access, and (b) keep all test content confidential and refrain from sharing information or revealing test content.

Printed test items/stimuli, including embossed Braille printouts, must be collected and inventoried at the end of each test session and securely shredded immediately. DO NOT keep printed test items/stimuli for future test sessions.

The following test materials must be securely shredded immediately after each testing session and may not be retained from one testing session to the next:

- Scratch paper and all other paper handouts written on by students during testing;
  - Please note, for mathematics and ELA performance tasks, if a student needs to take the performance task in more than one session, scratch paper may be collected at the end of each session, securely stored, and made available to the student at the next performance task testing session. Once the student completes the performance task, the scratch paper must be collected and securely destroyed to maintain test security.

[25] These materials were developed by collaboratives of members to address decision making for students with disabilities, ELLs, and ELLs with disabilities:

- *Accommodations Manual: How to Select, Administer, and Evaluate Use of Accommodations for Instruction and Assessment of Students with Disabilities* (3rd ed.). Washington, DC: Assessing Special Education Students State Collaborative on Assessment and Student Standards, Council of Chief State School Officers. Available at: www.ccsso.org/Resources/Programs/Assessing_Special_Education_Students_(ASES).html.
- *Accommodations Manual: How to Select, Administer, and Evaluate Use of Accommodations for Instruction and Assessment of English Language Learners.* Washington, DC: Washington, DC: Assessing English Language Learners State Collaborative on Assessment and Student Standards, Council of Chief State School Officers. Available at: www.ccsso.org?Resources?Programs?English_Language_Learners_(ELL).html.
- *Accommodations Manual: How to Select, Administer, and Evaluate Use of Accommodations for Instruction and Assessment of English Language Learners with Disabilities.* Washington, DC: Assessing Special Education Students and English Language Learners State Collaboratives on Assessment and Student Standards, Council of Chief State School Officers. Available at www.ccsso.org/Resources/Publications/Accommodations_Manual_How_to_Select_Administer_and_Evaluate_Use_of_Accommodations_for_Instruction_and_Assessment_of_English_Language_Learners_with_Disabilities.html.

- Any reports or other documents that contain personally identifiable student information;
- Printed test items or stimuli.

Additional information on this topic is provided in the Test Administration Manual (TAM).

13. *Who is supposed to input information about designated supports and accommodations into the Administration and Registration Tools (ART) or into a member's comparable platform? How is the information verified?*

    Generally a school or district will designate a person to enter information into the ART or the member's comparable platform. Often this person is a test coordinator. For those students for whom an IEP team (or educator developing the 504 plan) is identifying designated supports as well as accommodations, that team or educator is responsible for ensuring that information from the IEP (or 504 plan) is entered appropriately so that all embedded accommodations can be activated prior to testing.

    Entry of information for IEP and 504 students can be accomplished by identifying one person from the team to enter information or by providing information to the person designated by the school or district to enter data into the ART. For students who are ELLs, an educator who knows the student well and is familiar with the instructional supports used in the classroom should provide information to the person designated to enter information into the ART.

14. *Are there any supplies that schools need to provide so that universal tools, designated supports, and accommodations can be appropriately implemented?*

    Schools should determine the number of headphones they will provide (for text-to-speech, as well as for the listening test) and other non-embedded universal tools (e.g., thesaurus), designated supports (e.g., bilingual dictionary), and accommodations (e.g., multiplication table) for students. An alternative is to identify these as items that students will provide on their own.

15. *What happens when accommodations listed in the Usability, Accessibility, and Accommodations Guidelines do not match any accommodations presented in the student's IEP?*

    IEP teams should consider accommodations a student needs in light of the Smarter Balanced Guidelines. If it is decided that a specific accommodation is needed that is not included in the Guidelines, the team should submit a request to the member. The member contact will judge whether the proposed accommodation poses a threat to the constructs measured by the Smarter Balanced assessments; based on that judgment the member contact will either issue a temporary approval or will deny the request. Temporary approvals will be forwarded to a standing committee; this committee makes a recommendation to the Governing Members about future incorporation of new accommodations into the Smarter Balanced Guidelines.

16. *Are there accessibility resources that members have discussed and agreed not include in the Smarter Balanced test?*

    There are several accessibility resources that members discussed with external experts, discussed with members, and agreed not to include in the Smarter Balanced test:

    - Translated 'word list' for ELA tests
    - Bilingual dictionary for all ELA items
    - Calculator on mathematics items in grades 3-5
    - External protractor/ruler for online mathematics tests
    - Multiplication table for mathematics items in grade 3

- Members also agreed to keep the current scribing policy; members agreed not to restrict it
- Members also agreed not to change the font style

17. What is the process and timeline for updating and making changes to the UAAG?

Smarter Balanced asks members to request changes to the UAAG once each year. The process for making changes to the UAAG is initiated by a survey that Smarter Balanced administers in April. Member leads or designees then submit requests via the survey. Upon collecting the survey results, Smarter Balanced engages in a process during May to examine research, solicit feedback from external experts and advisory committees, and discuss the requests with the UAAG Committee. Any new policy and/or change to existing policy that the UAAG committee recommends is brought to member leads for a vote. Smarter Balanced then updates the UAAG as necessary and posts the updated version the first week of June.

Universal Tools and Designated Supports FAQs (Available to All Students)

18. Is the digital notepad universal tool fully available for ELA and Math? Will a student's notes be saved if the student takes a 20-minute break?

The digital notepad is available on all items across both content areas. As long as a student or test administrator activates the test within the 20-minute break window, the notes will still be there. There is no limit on the number of pauses that a student can take in one test sitting.

19. For the global notes universal tool, if a student takes a break of 20 minutes do the notes disappear?

Global notes, which are used for ELA performance tasks only, will always be available until the student submits the test, regardless of how long a break lasts or how many breaks are taken.

20. For the highlighter universal tool, if a student pauses a test for 20-minutes, do the highlighter marks disappear?

If a student is working on a passage or stimulus on a screen and pauses the test for 20 minutes to take a break, the student will still have access to the information visible on that particular screen. However, students do lose access to any information highlighted on a previous screen.

21. How are students made aware that the spell check universal tool is available when moving from item to item?

When appropriate, items include universal tools available for students to use. For the spell check tool, a line will appear under misspelled words.

22. For the zoom universal tool, is the default size specific to certain devices? Will the test administrator's manual provide directions on how to do this adjustment?

The default size is available to all students and is not specific to certain devices. Information on how to use the zoom universal tool is included in the directions at the beginning of each test. Please note that in addition to zoom, students may have access to magnification, which is a non-embedded designated support.

23. For the English glossary universal tool, how are terms with grade- and context-appropriate definitions made evident to the student?

Selected terms have a light rectangle around them. If a student hovers over the terms, the terms with the attached glossary are highlighted. A student can click on the terms and a pop-up window will appear. In addition, a student can click on the audio button next to each term to hear it.

24. *For the mark-for-review universal tool, will selections remain visible after a 20-minute break?*

    If a student takes a break for longer than 20 minutes, the student will not be able to access items from previous screens.

25. *Can universal tools be turned off if it is determined that they will interfere with the student's performance on the assessment?*

    Yes. If an adult (or team) determines that a universal tool might be distracting or that students do not need to or are unable to use them. This information must be noted in ART prior to test administration.

FAQs Pertaining to English Language Learners (ELLs)

26. *How are the language access needs of ELLs addressed in the Smarter Balanced Usability, Accessibility, and Accommodations Guidelines?*

    The language access needs of ELLs are addressed through the provision of numerous universal tools and designated supports. These include universal tools such as English dictionaries for full writes and English glossaries, and designated supports such as translated test directions and glossaries. These are not considered accommodations in the Smarter Balanced assessment system. No accommodations are available for ELLs on the Smarter Balanced assessments; accommodations are only available to students with disabilities and ELLs with disabilities.

27. *Is text-to-speech available for ELLs to use?*

    Text-to-speech is available as a designated support to all students (including ELLs) for whom an adult or team has indicated it is needed for math items and for ELA items (but not ELA reading passages). Text-to-speech for ELA reading passages is available for an ELL in all grades only if the student has an IEP or 504 plan. For text-to-speech to be available for an ELL, it must be entered into the ART.

28. *What languages are available to ELLs in text-to-speech?*

    Text-to-speech is currently available only in English. However, the translated glossaries include an audio component automatically available to any student with the translated glossaries embedded designated support.

29. *For which content areas will the Consortium provide translation supports for students whose primary language is not English?*

    For Mathematics, the Consortium will provide full translations in American Sign Language, stacked translations in Spanish (with the Spanish translation presented directly above the English item), and primary language pop-up glossaries in various languages and dialects including Spanish, Vietnamese, Arabic, Tagalog, Ilokano, Cantonese, Mandarin, Korean, Punjabi, Russian, and Ukrainian. For the Listening portion of the English Language Arts assessment, Smarter Balanced will provide full translations in American Sign Language delivered digitally through the test delivery system.

Only translations that have gone through the translation process outlined in the Smarter Balanced Translation framework would be an accepted support (http://www.smarterbalanced.org/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2012/09/Translation-Accommodations-Framework-for-Testing-ELL-Math.pdf).

30. *Does a student need to be identified as an English language learner in order to receive translation and language supports? What about foreign language exchange students?*

    Translations and language supports are provided as universal tools and designated supports. Universal tools are available to all students. Designated supports are available to those students for whom an adult (or team) has determined a need for the support. Thus, these are available to all students, regardless of their status as an ELL. Foreign language exchange students would have access to all universal tools and those designated supports that have been indicated by an adult (or team).

31. *For the translated test directions designated support, what options are available for students who do not understand the language available in the digital format? Can a human reader of directions in the native language be provided?*

    If a student needs a read aloud/text-to-speech accommodation in another language, then the test directions should be provided in that other language. The reader or text-to-speech device must be able to provide the directions in the student's language without difficulty due to accent or register. To ensure quality and standardized directions, the reader or text-to-speech device should only use directions that have undergone professional translation by the Consortium prior to testing. Smarter Balanced is providing a PDF of the translated test directions in: Spanish, Vietnamese, Arabic, Tagalog, Ilokano, Cantonese, Mandarin, Korean, Punjabi, Russian, Ukrainian, Dakota, French, Haitian-Creole, Hmong, Lakota, Japanese, Somali, and Yup'ik.

32. *How is the translations glossary non-embedded designated support different from the bilingual dictionary?*

    The translations glossary non-embedded designated support includes the customized translation of pre-determined construct-irrelevant terms that are most challenging to English language learners. The translation of the terms is context-specific and grade-appropriate. Bilingual dictionaries often do not provide context-specific information nor are they customized. In addition, the translated glossary includes an audio support.

33. *Will translations be available in language dialects/variants?*

    Translated glossaries will be available in different languages and dialects including Spanish, Vietnamese, Arabic, Tagalog, Ilokano, Cantonese, Mandarin, Korean, Punjabi, Russian, and Ukrainian.

FAQs Pertaining to Students with Disabilities

34. *What accommodations are available for students with disabilities (including ELLs with disabilities)?*

    Students with disabilities (including those who are ELLs) can use embedded accommodations (e.g., American Sign Language, braille, speech-to-text) and non-embedded accommodations (e.g., abacus, alternate response options) that have been documented on an IEP or 504 accommodations plan. These students also may use universal tools and designated supports. A full list of accommodations can be found in the Guidelines documents, tables 5 and 6.

35. *Is an embedded ASL accommodation available on ELA items that are not part of the Listening test?*

    The embedded ASL accommodation is not currently available on any ELA items that are not part of the Listening claim. For the Listening test, a deaf or hard of hearing student who has a documented need in an IEP or 504 plan may use ASL.

36. *Will sign languages other than ASL (including signing in other languages) be available?*

    Currently, only ASL is available.

37. *Can interpreters be used for students who are deaf or hard of hearing who do not use ASL?*

    Smarter Balanced has consulted with external experts who have unanimously advised against this practice. Research indicates severe challenges with standardization and quality.

38. *What options do districts have for administering Smarter Balanced assessments to students who are blind?*

    Students who are blind and who prefer to use braille should have access to either refreshable braille (only for ELA) or embosser-created braille (for ELA or math). For those students who are blind and prefer to use text-to-speech, access to text-to-speech should be provided for the math test, and for ELA items only (text-to-speech is not available on ELA reading passages without a specific documented need in the student's IEP or 504 plan). Non-embedded Read Aloud Accommodation in all grades is available for students who have an indicated need on ELA reading passages in their IEP or 504 plan. Students should participate in the decision about the accommodation they prefer to use, and should be allowed to change during the assessment if they ask to do so. Students can have access to both Braille and text-to-speech that is embedded in the Smarter Balanced assessment system.

39. *Why is the non-embedded abacus an accommodation for the non-calculator items? Doesn't an abacus serve the same function as a calculator?*

    An abacus is similar to the sighted student using paper and pencil to write a problem and do calculations. The student using the abacus has to have an understanding of number sense and must know how to do calculations with an abacus.

40. *Can students without documented disabilities who have had a sudden injury use any of the Smarter Balanced accommodations?*

    Students without documented disabilities who have experienced a physical injury that impairs their ability to use a computer may use some accommodations, provided they have had sufficient experience with them. Both speech-to-text and scribe are accommodations that are available to students who have experienced a physical injury such as a broken hand or arm, or students who have become blind through an injury and have not had sufficient time to learn braille. Prior to testing a student with a sudden physical injury, regardless of whether a 504 plan is started, Test Administrators should contact their district test coordinator or other authorized individuals to ensure the test registration system accurately describes the student's status and any accommodations that the student requires.

41. *How will the test administrator know prior to testing that the print on demand accommodation may be needed?*

    The test administrator will know this information prior to testing because accommodations need to be documented beforehand and print on demand is an accommodation. Any accommodations – including both embedded and non-embedded accommodations – need to be entered into ART. The print on demand accommodation applies to either passages/stimuli or items, or both.

42. *For the print on demand accommodation, how are student responses recorded – by a teacher using a computer or some other method?*

    The method of recording student responses depends on documentation in the IEP or 504 plan (e.g., after first recording responses on the paper version, the student could enter responses into the computer or the teacher could enter responses into the computer.) Anyone who is designated to enter responses into the computer must have read, agreed to, and signed a test security agreement.

43. *How do member officials monitor training and qualifications for the non-embedded read aloud accommodation?*

    Members will need to develop processes and procedures to monitor training and the qualifications of individuals who provide the read aloud accommodation when text-to-speech is not appropriate for a student. Member officials can use the Smarter Balanced audio guidelines available online to obtain additional information about recommended processes to follow (http://www.smarterbalanced.org/smarter-balanced-assessments/#item). Members can also use the Smarter Balanced Read Aloud protocol (see Appendix D).

44. For students taking the **paper-pencil test**, can Read Aloud be provided in small groups?

    For a **paper-pencil test**, read aloud can be administered to a small group of students as long as the students are taking the same test (e.g., grade, content area) and students have experience testing under this condition. The number of students in the small group should allow a student to ask the reader to slow down or to repeat text without the request distracting others. For online assessments, readers should be provided to students on an individual basis.

45. *If students are using their own devices that incorporate word prediction, will this impact their score?*

    The students' score will not be affected under these circumstances. Students using these devices must still use their knowledge and skills to review and edit their answers.

46. *How are assistive technology (AT) devices certified for use for the Smarter Balanced assessments?*

    Assistive technology device manufacturers may use the Smarter Balanced practice test as a method of determining if a device works with the assessment. In addition, schools and districts can use the practice test to evaluate devices to ensure their functions are consistent with those allowed in the UAAG.

Appendix D: Read Aloud Protocol

Guidelines for Read Aloud, Test Reader
August 24, 2015
(Available at: www.smarterbalanced.org/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2014/03/Read-Aloud-Guidelines.pdf)

When a student cannot access text-to-speech, an embedded resource available on the Smarter Balanced assessment, the student may be eligible to work with a test reader. A test reader is an adult who provides an oral presentation of the assessment text to an eligible student. The student depends on the test reader to read the test questions accurately, pronounce words correctly, and speak in a clear voice throughout the test. The test reader must be trained and qualified and must follow the *Smarter Balanced Guidelines for Read Aloud, Test Reader* presented here. The guiding principle in reading aloud is to ensure that the student has access to test content.

On Smarter Balanced Assessments, test readers are allowable across all grades as a **designated support** for mathematics and ELA items as appropriate (not ELA reading passages). Test readers are allowable for ELA reading passages as a **documented accommodation** in all grades. Note that this accommodation is appropriate for a very small number of students (estimated to be approximately 1-2% of students with disabilities participating in a general assessment). For information on documentation requirements and decision-making criteria for use of test readers and all other Smarter Balanced resources please see the *Smarter Balanced Usability, Accessibility, and Accommodations Guidelines.*

Qualifications for Test Readers

- The test reader should be an adult who is familiar with the student, and who is typically responsible for providing this support during educational instruction and assessments.
- Test readers must be trained on the administration of the assessment in accordance with member policy, and familiar with the terminology and symbols specific to the test content and related conventions for standard oral communication.
- Test readers must be trained in accordance with Smarter Balanced and member administration and security policies and procedures as articulated in Consortium and member test administration manuals, guidelines, and related documentation.

Preparation

- Test readers should read and sign a test security/confidentiality agreement prior to test administration.
- Test readers are expected to familiarize themselves with the test environment and format in advance of the testing session. Having a working familiarity with the test environment and format will help facilitate reading of the test.
- Test readers should have a strong working knowledge of the embedded and non-embedded accessibility and accommodations options and features available on Smarter Balanced assessments.
- Test readers should be familiar with the Individualized Education Program (IEP) or 504 plan if the student for whom they are reading has access to additional designated supports and/or accommodations. This will ensure that there are plans in place for providing all needed designated supports and accommodations.
- In addition to a test reader, students may make use of any other approved specialized tools or equipment during the test as appropriate and in accordance with the *Usability, Accessibility, and Accommodations Guidelines*. Test readers should be familiar with any assistive technology or approved supports the student requires.
- Test readers should have extensive practice in providing read aloud support and must be familiar and comfortable with the process before working directly with a student.
- The reader should be knowledgeable of procedures for reading aloud text by content area (see Table 1 at the end of the Guidelines for Read Aloud, Test Reader).

- The test reader should meet with the student in advance and inform the student of the parameters of the support. A suggested test reader script is included at the end of the Guidelines for Read Aloud, Test Reader.
- Unless otherwise specified by a student's IEP or 504 plan, the test reader does not have a role in manipulating the test or assisting with any other support tools. Test readers should be ready with appropriate script that reinforces the parameters during the test session.

General Guidelines

- The test reader's support should ideally be provided in a separate setting so as not to interfere with the instruction or assessment of other students.
- Read each question exactly as written as clearly as possible.
- Throughout the exam, strive to communicate in a neutral tone and maintain a neutral facial expression and posture.
- Avoid gesturing, head movements, or any verbal or non-verbal emphasis on words not otherwise emphasized in text.
- Avoid conversing with the student about test questions as this would be a violation of test security; respond to the student's questions by repeating the item, words or instructions verbatim as needed.
- Do not paraphrase, interpret, define, or translate any items, words, or instructions as this would be a violation of test security.
- Spell any words requested by the student.
- Adjust your reading speed and volume if requested by the student.

Post-Administration

- The test reader must collect scratch paper, rough drafts, and login information immediately at the end of the testing session and deliver it to the test administrator in accordance with Smarter Balanced and member policies and procedures.
- The test reader must not discuss any portion of the test with others.

English Usage/Conventions

- **Punctuation:** Read all text as punctuated.
- **Ellipses:** When an ellipsis is used to signify missing text in a sentence, pause briefly, and read as 'dot, dot, dot.'
- **Quotations:** Quotation marks should be verbalized as "quote" and "end quote" at the beginning and end of quoted material, respectively.
- **Emphasis**: When words are printed in boldface, italics, or capitals, tell the student that the words are printed that way. In order not to provide an unfair advantage to students receiving this support, test readers should be cautious not to emphasize words not already emphasized in print. Emphasis is appropriate when italics, underlining, or bold is used in the prompt, question, or answers.
- **Misspellings:** In some cases a test item may present a word or phrase that is intentionally misspelled as part of the assessment. In these instances the student is required to respond in a specific way. When presented with intentionally misspelled words test readers should not attempt to read the word(s) aloud as pronunciation is somewhat subjective. For example, I love to eat apples/aples. This is my favorite fruit. This should be read as, "I love to eat (pause). This is my favorite fruit."

Images / Graphics

- Before describing a picture or graphic, the test reader should determine whether the details of the picture are necessary to understanding and responding to the item(s). In many cases, an image will be used to accompany a passage or reading excerpt as a piece of visual interest that is not essential in responding to the item.
- Describe the image/graphic as concisely as possible following a logical progression. Focus on

providing necessary information and ignoring the superfluous. Use grade-appropriate language when describing the image/graphic.

- Read the title or caption, if available.
- Any text that appears in the body of an image may be read to a student. Read text in images in the order most suited for the student's needs. Often the reader moves top to bottom, left to right, or general to specific in accordance with teaching practices.

Passages

- Read the passage in its entirety as punctuated (e.g., pauses at periods; raised intonation for questions). Do not verbalize punctuation marks other than ellipsis and quotation marks as noted above.
- If the student requires or asks for a specific section of the passage to be re-read with the punctuation indicated, the test reader should re-read those specific lines within the passage and indicate all punctuation found within those lines as many times as requested by the student.
- When test questions refer to particular lines of a passage, read the lines referenced as though they are part of the stem.

Graphic Organizers

- Before reading a graphic organizer, the test reader should discern the most appropriate and logical manner in which to present the information. In general, information should be presented from broad to specific as indicated by the visual components of the document. The test reader should read the terms exactly as indicated in the graphic organizer. No other information about should be articulated. For example, the test reader should not create sentences if information is bulleted or appears in a title or label.
- Use common grade-appropriate language throughout the item and the test when referring to graphic organizers and their attributes (labels, blank cells, stems, etc.).

Mathematical Expressions

- Mathematical expressions must be read precisely and with care to avoid misrepresentation by a student who has no visual reference. For mathematics items involving algebraic expressions or other mathematical notation, it may be preferable for the reader to silently read the mathematical notations or the entire question before reading it aloud to the student.
- Test readers read mathematical expressions with technical accuracy. Similar expressions should be treated consistently.
- In general, numbers and symbols can be read according to their common English usage for the student's grade level.
- Numbers greater than 99, however, should be read as individual numbers.
- Additional examples may be found in the attached appendix.
- Abbreviations and acronyms should be read as full words. For example, 10 cm needs to be read as "ten centimeters." Some abbreviations may be read differently by different readers. For example, cm^3 may be read as "cubic centimeters" or "centimeters cubed".

Table 1. Test Reader Guidance for Mathematics

Numbers

Description	Example(s)	Read as:
Large whole numbers	632, 407, 981 45,000,689,112	"six three two comma four zero seven comma nine eight one" "four five comma zero zero zero comma six eight nine comma one one two"
Decimal numbers	0.056 4.37	"zero point zero five six" "four point three seven"
Fractions - common Fractions - not common - read as "numerator over denominator"	$\frac{1}{2}, \frac{1}{4}, \frac{2}{3}, \frac{4}{5}$ $\frac{14}{25}$ $\frac{487}{6972}$	"one half, one fourth, two thirds, four fifths" Other common fractions include "sixths, eighths, tenths" "fourteen over twenty-five" "four eight seven over six nine seven two"
Mixed numbers - read with "and" between whole number and fraction	$3\frac{1}{2}$ $57\frac{3}{4}$	"three and one-half" "fifty-seven and three fourths"
Percents	62% 7.5% 0.23%	"sixty-two percent" "seven point five percent" "zero point two three
Money - if contains a decimal point, read as "dollars AND cents"	$4.98 $0.33 $5368.00	"four dollars and ninety-eight cents" "thirty-three cents" "five three six eight dollars"
Negative numbers - do NOT read negative sign as "minus"	-3 $-\frac{5}{8}$ -7.56	"negative three" "negative five eighths" "negative seven point five six"
Dates (years)	1987 2005	"nineteen eighty-seven" "two thousand five"
Roman Numerals	I	"Roman Numeral one"

Description	Example(s)	Read as:
	II III IV	"Roman Numeral two" "Roman Numeral three" "Roman Numeral four"
Ratios	$x: y$	"x to y"

Operations

Description	Example(s)	Read as:
Addition	13 + 27 13 + 27 =	"thirteen plus twenty-seven equals"
	13 + 27 =?	"thirteen plus twenty-seven equals question mark"
Subtraction	487 – 159 487 – 159 =	"four eight seven minus one five nine equals"
	487 - 159 =?	"four eight seven minus one five nine equals question mark
Multiplication	63 X 49 63 X 49 =	"sixty-three times forty-nine equals"
	63 X 49 =?	"sixty-three times forty-nine equals question mark
Division – Vertical or Horizontal	$120 \div 15 = 8$ $\frac{120}{15}=8$	"one two zero divided by fifteen equals eight"
Operations with boxes	3 + □= 8	"three plus box equals fifteen"

Expressions

Description	Example(s)	Read as:
Expressions containing variables (any letter may be used as a variable)	N + 4	"'N' plus four"
	8x – 3	"eight 'x' minus three"
	4(y-2) +5 = 7	"four open parenthesis 'y' minus two close parenthesis plus five equals seven"
	$V = \frac{4}{3}\pi r^3$	"'V' equals four-thirds pi 'r' cubed"

Description	Example(s)	Read as:
	$\frac{\lvert t\rvert-2}{6 \leq 15}$ $x^2y^3=-36$ $156x \geq 4$	"the absolute value of 't' (pause) minus two (pause) over six is less than or equal to fifteen" "'x' squared 'y' cubed equals negative thirty-six" or "'x' to the second power times 'y' to the third power equals negative thirty-six" "one hundred fifty six 'x' is greater than or equal to four"
Coordinate pairs Answer choices with no other text	the point (–1, 2) the point A is at (6, 3). *A.* (–3, –4)	"the point (pause) negative one comma two" "The point 'A' is at (pause) six comma three." "'A' (pause) negative three comma negative four"
Parallels	$\overline{AB} \parallel \overline{CD}$	"line AB is parallel to line CD"
Perpendiculars	$\overline{AB} \perp \overline{CD}$	"line AB is perpendicular to line CD"

Suggested Test Reader Script
(to be used with student in advance of the day of testing)

Hi ____,

I'm the person who will be reading your test to you when you take your Smarter Balanced Assessment next week in [math/ELA]. I wanted to let you know how we'll work together. When I'm reading a test to you, it's very different from when I'm reading to you during class time. I have to follow certain rules.

- I cannot help you with any answers.
- I cannot click on anything in the screen.[1]
- I will not be using different character voices or changes in my tone when I read. I will be using a very direct voice that does not change very much, no matter how exciting the story or test item gets.
- If there is a picture that has words in it, I will read those words. If you ask, I will re-read the words as well.
- Sometimes there may be something about a word or phrase that might give you a hint if I read it out loud. In those cases, I will skip the word, point to it on screen [or on your booklet if braille or print on demand], and continue to read.
- I can still help you with your [**list any assistive technology that the student may require that would need adult support -- if that support is provided by you].
- You can ask me to re-read parts of the test if you didn't hear me or need more time to think.
- You can ask me to pause my reading if you need to take a break.
- You can ask me to slow down or speed up my reading, or read louder or softer if you are having trouble understanding what I read.
- I will only read certain types of punctuation, but if you need me to re-read a sentence and tell you how it was punctuated, I can do that.
- If you ask me a question about the test all I will say is: "do your best work. I cannot help you with that."
- Do you have any questions for me about how we'll work together during the test?

[1]A reader may click on something on the screen only if this is an identified need in the student's IEP or 504 plan and the reader has received appropriate training on when and how to do so.

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Appendix E: Scribing Protocol for Smarter Balanced Assessments

August 24, 2015

A scribe is an adult who writes down what a student dictates via speech, American Sign Language, or an assistive communication device. The guiding principle in scribing is to ensure that the student has access to and is able to respond to test content.

Scribes are allowable on Smarter Balanced Assessments as a **documented accommodation** for ELA writing, and a **designated support** for mathematics and ELA non-writing items. For information on documentation requirements and decision-making criteria for use of scribes and all other Smarter Balanced supports please see the *Smarter Balanced Usability, Accessibility, and Accommodations Guidelines.*

Qualifications for Scribes

- The scribe should be an adult who is familiar with the student, such as the teacher or teaching assistant who is typically responsible for scribing during educational instruction and assessments.
- Scribes must have demonstrated knowledge and experience in the subject for which scribing will be provided.
- Scribes should have extensive practice and training in accordance with Smarter Balanced and state administration and security policies and procedures as articulated in Consortium and state test administration manuals, guidelines, and related documentation.

Preparation

- Scribes should read and sign a test security/confidentiality agreement prior to test administration.
- Scribes are expected to familiarize themselves with the test format in advance of the scribing session. Having a working familiarity with the test environment will help facilitate the scribe's ability to record the student's answers.
- Scribes should be familiar with the Individualized Education Program (IEP) or 504 Plan if the student for whom they are scribing has a disability, so that there are plans in place for providing all needed designated supports and accommodations.
- Scribes should also have a strong working knowledge of the embedded and non-embedded accessibility and accommodations options and features available on Smarter Balanced assessments.
- Scribes should review the Scribing Protocol for Smarter Balanced Assessments with the student at least one to two days prior to the test event.
- Scribes should practice the scribing process with the student at least once prior to the scribing session.

General Guidelines

- Scribing must be administered so that the interaction between a scribe and a student does not interrupt other test-takers, or inadvertently reveal the student's answers.
- If not in a separate setting, the scribe should be situated near enough to the student to prevent their conversations from reaching other students in the room.
- For computer-based administrations, scribes must enter student responses directly into the test interface, making use of the available embedded and non-embedded tools available for a given item and student.
- Scribes are expected to comply with student requests regarding use of all available features within the test environment.
- Scribes may respond to procedural questions asked by the student (e.g., test directions, navigation within the test environment, etc.).
- Scribes may not respond to student questions about test items if their responses compromise validity of the test. The student must not be prompted, reminded, or otherwise assisted in formulating his or her response during or after the dictation to the scribe.
- Scribes may ask the student to restate words or parts as needed. Such requests must not be communicated in a manner suggesting that the student should make a change or correction.
- Scribes may not question or correct student choices, alert students to errors or mistakes, prompt or influence students in any way that might compromise the integrity of student responses. A scribe may not edit or alter student work in any way, and must record exactly what the student has dictated.
- Students must be allowed to review and edit what the scribe has written. If necessary, the student can request the scribe to read aloud the completed text before final approval.

Content-Area Specific Guidelines

English Language Arts	<u>Selected Response Items (Single and Multiple Answer)</u> ● The student must point to or otherwise indicate his/her selection(s) from the options provided ● Scribes are expected to comply with student directions regarding screen and test navigation and use of test platform features available for a given item ● The student will confirm the selected answer and indicate to the scribe when he/she is ready to move to the next item <u>Constructed Response Items (Short-Text)</u> ● The scribe will write verbatim student responses on paper or on screen in an area occluded from other students' view. ● The scribe will correctly spell all words as dictated. ● The scribe will **not** capitalize words or punctuate text. ● The scribe will orally confirm spelling of homonyms and commonly

	confused homophones, e.g., *than* and *then*; *to*, *two*, and *too*; *there*, *their*, and *they're*. ● The student will proofread to add punctuation, capitalization, spacing, and make other edits. ● The scribe will make student requested changes, even if incorrect. ● The student will confirm the fidelity of the response. ● The student will indicate to the scribe when he/she is ready to move to the next item. <u>Long Essay (Full-Write)</u> ● The scribe will write verbatim student responses on paper or on screen in an area occluded from other students' view. ● The scribe will correctly spell all words as dictated. ● The scribe will **not** capitalize words or punctuate text. ● The scribe will orally confirm spelling of homonyms and commonly confused homophones, e.g., *than* and *then*; *to*, *two*, and *too*; *there*, *their*, and *they're*. ● The student will proofread to add punctuation, capitalization, spacing, and other edits. ● The scribe will make student requested changes, even if incorrect. ● The student will confirm the fidelity of the response. ● The student will indicate to the scribe when he/she is ready to move to the next item. ● Scribes should request clarification from the student about the use of capitalization, punctuation, and the spelling of words, and must allow the student to review and edit what the scribe has written.
Mathematics	<u>Selected Response Items (Single and Multiple Answer)</u> ● The student must point to or otherwise indicate his/her selection from the options provided. ● The scribe will comply with student directions, including requests regarding screen and test navigation and use of test platform features available for the question. ● The student will confirm his/her selections and indicate to the scribe when he/she is ready to move to the next item. ● Scribes should request clarification from the student about the use of capitalization, punctuation, and the spelling of words, and must allow the student to review and edits what the scribe has written. <u>Constructed/Equation Response Items</u> ● The student must point or otherwise direct the scribe in developing his/her response. ● The scribe will input student work directly onscreen and in view of the student. ● For responses requiring equations, the student must specify where to place figures and operands. ● For responses requiring text, the scribe will correctly spell all words as

	dictated and conform to standard writing conventions. ● For responses requiring text, the student will proofread to add punctuation, capitalization, spacing, and other edits. ● The scribe will make student requested changes, even if incorrect. ● The student will confirm the fidelity of the response. ● The student will indicate to the scribe when he/she is ready to move to the next item.

Considerations for students also using ASL

- The scribe should be proficient in ASL or the scribe should be working with an interpreter proficient in ASL, as determined by the member.
- When a constructed response is required, the interpreter/scribe should convey the meaning behind the student's indicated response.
- The interpreter/scribe should show the student the written response, but NOT sign the response to the student.
    - Probing or clarifying is allowed in the case of classifiers for students using ASL.
- Students may review the written or typed response on paper or on the computer screen and indicate any changes or revisions to the scribe.

Post-Administration

- The scribe will submit online or paper-based student responses and collect scratch paper, rough drafts, and login information immediately at the end of the testing session and deliver it to the test administrator in accordance with Consortium and state policies and procedures.

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Appendix F: Revision Log

Updates to the *Smarter Balanced Usability, Accessibility, and Accommodations Guidelines* are captured in this Revision Log. Updates are based on requests from members that do not impact policy. Any changes impacting policy require discussion and vote by Governing Members. Updates captured in the Revision Log are separated into two categories:

- **Clarification:** Updates of this type add details to existing information included in the *Guidelines*.
- **Increased Flexibility:** Updates of this type reflect explicatory information included in the *Guidelines* that result in augmented access to Smarter Balanced assessments.

Revisions are captured in tracking tables according to category. In cases where both **Clarification** and **Increased Flexibility** edits are made, changes to the *Guidelines* will be captured in the **Increased Flexibility** tracking table.

Section	Page	Clarification: Description of Changes	Date	Version
Table 3	9	Consistently used the term "ELA reading passages" instead of "ELA passages" to clarify availability of text-to-speech as an embedded designated support.	03/12/14	1.2
Table 4	12	Consistently used the term "ELA reading passages" instead of "ELA passages" to clarify availability of read aloud as a non-embedded designated support.	03/12/14	1.2
Table 5	17	Consistently used the term "ELA reading passages" instead of "ELA passages" to clarify availability of text-to-speech as an embedded accommodation.	03/12/14	1.2
Table 6	19	Consistently used the term "ELA reading passages" instead of "ELA passages" to clarify availability of read aloud as a non-embedded accommodation.	03/12/14	1.2
Table 3	10	Added verbiage clarifying the audio component of translated glossaries.	08/01/14	2.1
Table 3	10	Added clarifying language for the translated test directions embedded designated support, "As an embedded designated support, translated test directions are automatically a part of the stacked translation designated support."	11/5/14	2.2
Appendix C	32	Added question 16 to FAQs, which reflects information about a state vote addressing accessibility resources discussed and not included.	11/5/14	2.2
Global		References to Consortium "states" were changed to "members."	6/1/15	3.1
Global		References to TIDE were changed to ART.	6/1/15	3.1
Figure 1	4	Updated graphic to reflect new resources.	6/1/15	3.1
Introduction	5	Updated to include all appendices (A-E) and descriptions.	6/1/15	3.1
Table 1 Table 6 Appendix A	6 19 23	Inserted grade levels for which calculators are permitted.	6/1/15	3.1
Table 4	15	Updated the description of non-embedded Translations (Glossaries) to reflect that it is a resource available only for paper-pencil tests.	6/1/15	3.1
Appendix C	36	Add question 43 to FAQs to clarify small group administration of the Read Aloud.	6/1/15	3.1
Appendix	39	Example added to guidance regarding misspellings in the Read Aloud	6/1/15	3.1

D		Protocol.		
Table 4	14	Updated description of Separate Setting to include, “or to use a device requiring voicing (e.g., a Whisper Phone).”	8/15/15	3.2
Appendix C	32	Added FAQ 17 to describe the process for updating the UAAG.	8/15/15	3.2

Section	Page	Increased Flexibility: Description of Changes	Date	Version
Table 2	8	Scratch paper, the non-embedded universal tool, description has additional details regarding the performance task testing sessions: "For mathematics and ELA performance tasks, if a student needs to take the performance task in more than one session, scratch paper may be collected at the end of each session, securely stored, and made available to the student at the next performance task testing session. Once the student completes the performance task, the scratch paper must be collected and securely destroyed to maintain test security."	03/12/14	1.2
Table 4	14	Added information regarding the availability of translated test directions in PDF format. New accessibility resource also added to Figure 1 and Appendix A.	08/01/14	2.1
Table 4	14	To separate setting, added that, "A specific adult, trained in a manner consistent with the TAM, can act as test proctor (test administrator) when student requires it."	08/01/14	2.1
Table 4	13	Added information regarding the availability of noise buffers. New accessibility resource also added to Figure 1 and Appendix A.	08/01/14	2.1
Appendix C	26	Added the FAQs section.	08/01/14	2.1
Table 4	13	Moved noise buffers from non-embedded accommodations to non-embedded designated support. Same change was made to graphic and Appendix A table.	11/5/15	2.2
Table 5	18	Added descriptive information on the Streamline accommodation. Streamline was also added to graphic and Appendix A table.	11/5/14	2.2
Table 6	20	Throughout document, updated the policy on Read Aloud non-embedded Accommodation, per member vote on 3/6/15	3/9/15	2.3
Appendix D	38	Added Read Aloud protocol reflecting change in policy as per member vote on 3/6/15	3/9/15	2.3
Intro, Appendix C	1 28	Added descriptive information regarding temporary approvals for individuals unique student accommodations or designated supports. Language to address this language included in FAQ 6.	6/1/15	3.1
Table 4	13	Added information regarding the availability of Read Aloud in Spanish. New accessibility resource also added to Figure 1 and Appendix A.	6/1/15	3.1
Table 4	14	Updated the information on Translated Test Directions to include ELA	6/1/15	3.1
Table 6, Appendix C	20 35	Removed the conditional school year 2014-2015 for the Read Aloud non-embedded accommodation on ELA passages. Language consistent with this change included in FAQ 37.	6/1/15	3.1
Appendix	34	Added languages to reflect all languages offered for Translated Test	6/1/15	3.1

Section	Page	Increased Flexibility: Description of Changes	Date	Version
C		Directions to FAQ 30.		