Questions/Comments from “Ready, Set, Go: Smarter Balanced Assessment System in Connecticut”

“My experience has been that, outside the school of education, my university colleagues are largely unfamiliar with the CCSS and/or SBAC, which calls into question the validity of any claims to college-ready standards. Can you describe SBAC’s efforts to reach out to college faculty from content area departments for input that shapes the design of the assessments?”
-Faculty

“For the Spring 2015 test, when will results be available? Will the results be reported by CCSS or by SCAB claims? What level of detail will be reported?”
-School/District administrator

“If a fifth grader is taking a CAT test and continues to get questions wrong, how low will the level of questioning go? Fourth grade? Second?”
-School/District administrator

“As I understand it, the actual items in the Smarter Balanced item bank will be held secure. My question is about what occurs when there is a breach in security such that an item becomes widely known. As a consequence... 1) Will the item need to be removed from the secure item bank? 2) What are the consequences locally to the person(s) responsible for causing the breach? (Will there be a fine or some legal procedure?) Bonus questions: What procedures are, or should be, in place to... 1) Reduce the likelihood of security breaches? 2) React to them efficiently when they occur?”

“Will all SBAC test questions continue to be aligned to grade level CCSS for all students?”
-School/District administrator

“Will science assessment be part of SBAC testing in the future?”

“Do you know when we should expect test results following the 2015 administration? How will the constructed response items be scored?”
-School/District administrator

“Have all member states agreed to report results using the same cut scores from standard setting?”

“Are panelist members selected from ‘all’ or ‘different’ academic environments, such as districts with
lower resources and funding, vs. districts with more resources or funds?”
-Related services

“Is there any talk of creating arts assessments? Specifically, music?”

“Many, including myself, would argue that any short term paper-and-pencil (or computer and keyboard) test will inevitably lead to a narrowing of the curriculum to the foci of the test. What evidence can you offer that this test won’t lead to another ‘teaching to the test’ scenario?”
-Faculty

“What does college- and career-ready mean for you? 1) How will you be measuring success after high school? 2) Why did states choose PARCC over Smarter Balance?”
-Related services

“To ensure 11th-graders and parents understand the important of test and if Smarter Balance claims ‘proficiency standard…indicates whether students are prepared for credit-bearing…coursework in college or university.’ Will the colleges and universities ask for scores on student applications? Note: Even if they aren’t used for ‘admission’ it would put emphasis on need to take the test seriously.”
-School/District administrator

“I understand that there may be some issues with calculator companies with the use of one calculator vs. another. However, could the three top educational calculators be available as emulators for student use during the math assessments, so that there is one less thing the students have to learn how to use (which would reduce their stress level even a little)?”
-Teacher

“Why isn’t science part of the test?”
-Related services

“What has the field testing revealed to be the biggest challenge to fair, valid, and reliable assessment so far?”
-Student in a preparation program

“Are test items going to be available for practice and review (in print) for students and teachers?”
-Teacher
“Is there a plan for alternative assessment for students with disabilities (like the MAS)? If not, how are these students’ scores included in the school’s overall average (if there is an accountability plan)?”

“How are the students who are allotted additional accommodations made aware of these additional tools? Are they taught how to use them (i.e. text to speech, translations, etc.)?
-Student in a preparation program

“There is a 12-week window for testing. How can you compare a student who took the SBAC during the first week with a student who took it the 12th week and has had an additional 10-11 weeks of learning in their grade? How can you address the same problem across schools/districts?”
-Student in a preparation program

“Beginning with the 2014-15 school year, what types of results with Smarter Balance release to the states, districts, teachers, and parents?”
-Teacher

“When do you expect the interim assessments to be ready for student use during the 2014-2015 school year? Specifically, if a school wanted to implement these in the fall, is SBAC prepared to have them available in September? If not September, what month might they be ready? Will there be PT on the interim assessments?”
-School/District administrator