



OSPI Randy I. Dorn, State Superintendent

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REPORT TO THE LEGISLATURE

## Assessment Inventory

December 2016

**Authorizing legislation:** 2ESHB 2376 [2016] Sec. 511(28)  
(<http://lawfilesexternal.wa.gov/biennium/2015-16/Pdf/Bills/Session%20Laws/House/2376-S.SL.pdf>)

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## Executive Summary

The 2016 Washington Legislature asked the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) to find out how much time Washington students spent taking tests. The Legislature wanted to data on both state and district-required tests. OSPI collected data on the 2015–16 school year from 78 percent of districts via an online survey.

The median testing time for state tests ranged from seven hours and twenty minutes in 3rd grade to nine hours and thirty minutes in 8th grade (Table 1). This was within the range expected by OSPI. These testing times include passing out materials and technical help. Examples of state tests are:

- Smarter Balanced Assessments in math and reading
- End-of-course exams in math and science
- Science exams at 5th and 8th grades

Districts also give tests in other subjects, such as social studies and physical education. About half of districts give health, arts, and physical educations tests in elementary schools. These tests are typically one to two hours each. About 60 percent of districts have a required social studies assessment. The median time for this test is three hours and twenty minutes.

Tests noted as "other" in the survey are more difficult to summarize. This is because they vary greatly in frequency, level, and subject area from district to district. Eighty-six percent of districts that completed the survey gave at least one "other" test.

## Introduction

The 2016 Washington Legislature directed OSPI to collect assessment information from school districts. The proviso specified the data collected should include an inventory of state-required assessments, district-required assessments, and the student time that is spent taking each assessment identified. OSPI distributed a bulletin (B028-16) on June 30, 2016 informing district leadership about the “Inventory of Time Students Spent Testing for the 2015–16 School Year.” The bulletin included a link to an online survey tool and a worksheet to help districts collect the necessary information from schools.

Districts reported the average testing times for each assessment in their district by grade bands. They stated how much time had been scheduled for each test, and how much time the average student actually spent on each test. The “actual” times include time to settle students in the testing location, pass out materials, read directions, log in to the test if it is delivered online, take the test, and return materials.

The questions were divided into several categories: state required tests, common district tests, and unique district tests. The online survey was completed by 231 of the 295 school districts. The results of the survey are described below.

## Testing Inventory Summary

### State Required Tests

The state required tests included:

- Smarter Balanced English Language Arts (ELA) and Math for grades 3–8 and 11
- Science Measurements of Student Progress for grades 5 and 8
- Biology End-of-Course for grades 9 or 10
- Math Year 1 and 2 End-of-Course for grades 10 or 11 if needed
- District-chosen second grade reading screener
- Online training tests that students should complete before testing online

**Table 1: Summary of Median Testing Times for State Required Tests (hh:mm)**

Test	3	4	5	6	7	8	HS
ELA	4:00	4:00	4:00	4:00	4:00	4:00	4:00
Math	3:20	3:20	3:20	3:30	3:30	3:30	2:00
Science	--	--	2:00	--	--	2:00	2:20

The Smarter Balanced assessment includes two parts: Computer Adaptive Test (CAT) and the Performance Task (PT). When calculating the information for Smarter Balanced, districts were told to combine the times for both parts of the assessment.

Online training tests are available for ELA, Math, and Science. They have a small number of items and are designed to focus students on the software and navigational tools used on the online tests. Districts are encouraged to give every student a chance to experience the training test before taking the actual test, and thus have been categorized as state required for purposes of the assessment inventory. More information is available about online practice opportunities in Appendix A.

Tables 2, 3, and 4 report the mean and median times for the state required tests. These are within the timeframes expected by OSPI (see Appendix B, C, and D).

**Table 2: Elementary School Required Tests**

<b>Test</b>	<b>Mean</b> hrs:mins	<b>Median</b> hrs:mins
Smarter ELA (3, 4, 5)	5:00	4:00
Smarter Math (3, 4, 5)	4:05	3:20
Science MSP (5)	2:19	2:00
Training Smarter ELA	1:48	1:00
Training Smarter Math	1:37	1:00
Training MSP Science	1:15	1:00
Second Grade Reading*	1:10	0:30

\*The second grade reading assessment is generally given three times per year to students. Some districts reported the total time per year, while others reported time per test instance.

**Table 3: Middle School Required Tests**

<b>Test</b>	<b>Mean</b> hrs:mins	<b>Median</b> hrs:mins
Smarter ELA (6, 7, 8)	4:55	4:00
Smarter Math (6, 7, 8)	4:05	3:30
Science MSP (8)	2:24	2:00
Training Smarter ELA	1:24	1:00
Training Smarter Math	1:22	1:00
Training MSP Science	2:09	1:00

**Table 4: High School Required Tests**

<b>Test</b>	<b>Mean</b> hrs:mins	<b>Median</b> hrs:mins
Smarter ELA	4:44	4:00
Smarter Math	3:52	2:00
EOC Biology	2:37	2:20
EOC Math Y1*	2:36	2:20
EOC Math Y2*	2:33	2:18
Training Smarter ELA	1:48	1:00
Training Smarter Math	1:32	1:00

\*Students only need one math test for graduation requirement but have two tests to choose from.

## Commonly Required District Tests

The inventory also included documenting times spent on district required assessments. The most common district required tests included:

- Smarter Balanced Practice tests in ELA and Math
- Smarter Balanced Interim Comprehensive Assessments (ICA) in ELA and Math
- Smarter Balanced Interim Assessment Blocks (IAB) in ELA and Math
- RCW 28A.230.095 assessments, commonly known as the Classroom Based Assessments (CBAs) in Social Studies, Health, Physical Education, and the Arts

If the district did not require the specific test, they could check a “not required” box for that test and not answer the questions about that test.

As noted in the list above, there are several Smarter Balanced options for students to get experience with the tests, both in terms of content and assessment format: practice tests, Interim Comprehensive Assessments (ICA), and Interim Assessment Blocks (IAB). The practice tests allow students to experience a full-length grade-level test. The Interim assessments help teachers monitor student progress throughout the year and can help improve instruction. These assessments were included in the inventory and were found to be administered by roughly 10–25 percent of districts. More information is available about these online practice opportunities in Appendix A.

Tables 5, 6, and 7 report the percent of districts that reported data for the commonly required district tests, and mean and median times for each.

**Table 5: Elementary School Commonly Required District Tests**

Test	% of Districts Requiring	Mean hrs:mins	Median hrs:mins
Smarter ELA Practice CAT	27%	1:45	1:30
Smarter Math Practice CAT	26%	1:45	1:30
Smarter ELA Practice PT	22%	2:02	1:30
Smarter Math Practice PT	23%	1:46	1:30
Smarter Interim ICA ELA	10%	3:30	3:15
Smarter Interim ICA Math	9%	3:33	2:00
Smarter Interim IAB ELA	19%	3:14	1:47
Smarter Interim IAB Math	19%	2:55	1:30
Social Studies	62%	4:12	3:20
Health	51%	2:03	1:00
Arts	50%	2:12	1:30
Physical Education	56%	1:45	1:00

**Table 6: Middle School Commonly Required District Tests**

<b>Test</b>	<b>% of Districts Requiring</b>	<b>Mean hrs:mins</b>	<b>Median hrs:mins</b>
Smarter ELA Practice CAT	22%	1:20	1:00
Smarter Math Practice CAT	21%	1:34	1:00
Smarter ELA Practice PT	19%	1:19	1:00
Smarter Math Practice PT	18%	1:06	1:00
Smarter Interim ICA ELA	5%	2:53	2:45
Smarter Interim ICA Math	7%	2:48	2:23
Smarter Interim IAB ELA	19%	2:16	1:41
Smarter Interim IAB Math	19%	2:08	1:38
Social Studies	60%	4:09	3:00
Health	50%	2:04	1:30
Arts	56%	2:10	1:20
Physical Education	50%	2:41	2:00

**Table 7: High School Commonly Required District Tests**

<b>Test</b>	<b>% of Districts Requiring</b>	<b>Mean hrs:mins</b>	<b>Median hrs:mins</b>
Smarter ELA Practice CAT	16%	1:21	1:00
Smarter Math Practice CAT	13%	1:13	1:00
Smarter ELA Practice PT	14%	1:25	1:00
Smarter Math Practice PT	12%	1:12	1:00
Smarter Interim ICA ELA	5%	3:49	3:00
Smarter Interim ICA Math	4%	2:44	2:00
Smarter Interim IAB ELA	10%	2:50	1:38
Smarter Interim IAB Math	10%	2:24	1:13
Social Studies	59%	4:12	3:00
Health	49%	2:15	1:30
Arts	52%	2:22	1:40
Physical Education	52%	3:01	2:00

### Specific District Required Tests

The specific district required tests were listed as, “other required interim, benchmark, or summative standardized assessments” in paragraph three of the proviso. The survey text gave the following examples:

- District science test for all 4th graders
- District writing prompt given to all 10th graders
- MAPs
- STAR

Districts answered a series of questions to identify each test and the time spent on each test. The questions are listed in Appendix E.

Due to the complexity of testing (grade levels, subjects, types of assessments, frequency of testing, etc.) and the wide variety of implementation by districts, the “other” testing information is difficult to summarize cohesively. Districts reported various names for tests that may or may not be the same test. For example, some STAR tests were labeled “STAR,” while others said “STAR Reading,” and “STAR Math.” This made it unclear if “STAR” meant reading, or math, or both. Some districts reported times like “3 hours” and made comments to clarify that this was per year, while others reported times like “1 hour” and made comments to clarify that the test was given three times per school year (fall, winter, spring). Other districts did not provide detail about frequency. This combined to make the information difficult to aggregate in a meaningful way.

Of the 231 districts who completed the survey, 198 reported having at least one test in this category.

Table 8 lists the five most commonly named tests and the percent of districts (out of 198) that reported using them.

**Table 8: Specific District Required Tests**

<b>Test</b>	<b>% of Districts Requiring</b>
Measures of Academic Progress (MAP)	34%
Standardized Test for the Assessment of Reading (STAR)	29%
Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS)	33%
Benchmark assessment	14%
AIMS	11%

The MAP, STAR, and AIMS tests were noted to be given in multiple subject areas, most commonly reading or math. The DIBELS test is used to monitor reading fluency, most commonly of students who did not meet standards on the second grade reading test listed in Table 1. The “benchmark assessments” are a collection of tests labeled “benchmark” by the district, or advertised as “benchmark” by the testing company, and cover multiple subject areas. Tests like the “district science test” or “district writing prompt” mentioned as examples in the survey directions were included in the “benchmark assessment” group.

## **Conclusion and Next Steps**

The amount of time students spend on state–required tests is within the times OSPI expected. The time students spend on district–required tests varies across districts and grade levels.

# APPENDICES

## Appendix A: Types of Online Practice

There are three main ways that schools can have students practice using the online test system before testing: training tests, practice tests, and interim assessments. They can provide students with a preview of test questions aligned to academic standards and can help students prepare.

The online Training Tests are available for ELA, Math, and Science. They have a small number of items and are designed to provide students and educators with an opportunity to quickly familiarize themselves with the software and navigational tools used on the online tests. Guidance from OSPI about the use of the training tests is given to districts using the Test Administration Manual for online tests which states:

It is **highly recommended** that **all** students access the Training Test site before taking a test. The Training Tests will be especially beneficial for those students who have not previously participated in online testing. Teachers are encouraged to conduct a group walk-through of the Training Tests with their students to promote familiarity with the testing format and basic test rules and to allow for free and open communication on the testing process and/or content. This walk-through of the Training Tests provides opportunities for [teachers] to describe the limitations to the support they will be able to provide and the verbal interactions they can have with students during each live test session.

The group walk-through method could take up to an hour, depending on how the teacher conducts the session. Even with this strong recommendation from OSPI, some districts may choose to use the Smarter Balanced Practice or Interim Assessments in place of the training tests for ELA and Math.

The Smarter Balanced Practice Tests allow educators and students to experience a full grade level test and gain insight into the Smarter Balanced assessments. The practice tests mirror the summative assessments but are not scored. Each grade level test includes a variety of item response types and difficulty levels—approximately thirty items each in ELA and mathematics—as well as an ELA and mathematics performance task at each grade level (3–8 and 11). The practice test also includes a full set of embedded universal tools, designated supports, and accommodations that are available for the summative assessment. Districts are encouraged to also provide students with any non-embedded universal tools, designated supports, or accommodations that they will be allowed on the summative assessments when they do the practice tests. This full-length practice test allows for more focus on the content of the items, and take more time than the training tests.

There are two types of Smarter Balanced Interim Assessments: the full-length Interim Comprehensive Assessments (ICAs) which include a performance task, and the shorter Interim Assessment Blocks (IABs) which include a smaller number of items focused on

related concepts. There are multiple IABs for each grade level. Both types of interims are designed to help teachers monitor students' academic progress and understanding. They also allow educators and students to experience the testing software, navigational tools, and the embedded universal tools, designated supports, and accommodations that are available on the training and practice tests. Student responses on the interims can be scored and the data reported in the online reporting systems. This can provide teachers with information to improve their instruction. Some districts choose to use the Interim Assessments in place of the practice or training tests.

## Appendix B: Smarter Balanced Estimated Test Times



Table 9: Estimated Testing Times for Smarter Balanced Assessments

Content Area	Grades	Computer Adaptive Test (CAT) Items hrs : mins	Performance Task (PT) hrs : mins	Total hrs : mins	Total hrs : mins
English Language Arts/Literacy	3-5	1:30	2:00	3:30	3:30
	6-8	1:30	2:00	3:30	3:30
	HS	2:00	2:00	4:00	4:00
Mathematics	3-5	1:30	1:00	2:30	2:30
	6-8	2:00	1:00	3:00	3:00
	HS	2:00	1:30	3:30	3:30
Both	3-5	3:00	3:00	6:00	6:00
	6-8	3:30	3:00	6:30	6:30
	HS	4:00	3:30	7:30	7:30

When developing a testing schedule, use the estimated testing times to calculate the number of days and the amount of time it will take to complete an assessment in each content area and grade level.

These estimates do not account for any time needed to start computers, load secure browsers, and log in students. Nor do they account for breaks. TAs should work with SCs to determine precise testing schedules.

Source: *Smarter Balanced Assessment—Summative Fall Online TAM*; page 29  
[http://wa.portal.airast.org/wp-content/uploads/SBAC\\_Fall-Online\\_TAM.pdf](http://wa.portal.airast.org/wp-content/uploads/SBAC_Fall-Online_TAM.pdf)

## Appendix C: Measurements of Student Progress (MSP) Estimated Test Times

### Scheduling Time for Testing:

Table 8 contains rough estimates of the time it will take most students to complete the online science MSP. This information is for scheduling purposes only, as the assessments are not timed.

**Table 8: Estimated Testing Times**

Administration & Grade	Subject	Estimated Student Working Time*	Student Working/Break Schedule					Additional Time
			Working Time (Set 1)	Break (First)	Working Time (Set 2)	Break (Second)	Working Time (Set 3)	
MSP Grade 5	Science	70-90 minutes	35-minutes	10-minutes	35-minutes	10-minutes	20-minutes	20-minute intervals
MSP Grade 8	Science	90-110 minutes	45-minutes	10-minutes	45-minutes	10-minutes	20-minutes	20-minute intervals

These estimates do not account for any time needed to start computers, load secure browsers, and log in students. TAs should work with SCs to determine precise testing schedules.

Source: *Test Administration Manual—Online MSP TAM, spring 2016, page 24.*

## Appendix D: End-of-Course (EOC) Estimated Test Times

### TESTING TIMES

Table 4 contains the estimated times it will take most students to complete the paper-pencil test. This information is for scheduling purposes only, as the assessments are not timed.

**Table 4: Estimated Testing Times**

Course	Three Sessions	Single Session	Breaks
Algebra 1/Integrated Mathematics I Geometry/Integrated Mathematics II	Session 1: 20 minutes* Session 2: 50 minutes* Session 3: 50 minutes*	120 minutes*	Not necessary for three sessions. One 10-minute break scheduled during single session.
Biology	Session 1: 20 minutes* Session 2: 50 minutes* Session 3: 50 minutes*	120 minutes*	Not necessary for three sessions. One 10-minute break scheduled during single session.

\* Times reference student working time only and do not include time for distributing materials and reading directions. Additional time may be given in 10- to 20-minute intervals.

Source: *End-of-Course Exam (EOC) TAM, Paper Test Administration Manual for Mathematics and Biology, spring 2016*, page 13.

## Appendix E: Specific District Required Survey Questions

*This could be answered by the district as many times as necessary.*

### SPECIFIC DISTRICT MANDATED

Use the drop-down menus, radio buttons, and text boxes to enter the rest of your district-required assessments.

- a) Name of assessment [text box]
- b) Tested grades [radio button, grades 2–12, click all that apply]
- c) Content area [drop down menu “C”]\*
- d) Type [drop down menu “D”]\*
- e) Intended purpose [radio button, click all that apply, see drop down menu “E”]\*
- f) Format [radio buttons: online, paper, performance, other]
- g) Average Student Test Time (in minutes)—Allotted [text box, numeric input only]
- h) Average Student Test Time (in minutes)—Actual [text box, numeric input only]
- i) Test date start [calendar]
- j) Test date end [calendar]
- k) Comments

\*Drop Down Menus:

C) ELA, math, reading, grammar, listening, science, biology, physics, chemistry, social studies, civics, general arts, dance, music, theatre, visual arts, health, physical education, educational technology

D) summative, interim, benchmark, screener, formative, diagnostic

E) district accountability, scheduling, parent information, diagnose problems, inform instruction, school accountability

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