Classroom Activities FAQ and Guidance

Will the decision to use classroom activities occur at the state level only (e.g., not district/school level)?
It is up to the member to decide whether to delegate the decision about making classroom activities available (e.g., state, district, or school). However, this decision will likely need to be made in collaboration with the member’s service provider.

Will vendors need to change how performance tasks are assigned to schools?
The decision likely needs to be made in collaboration between the member and the service provider. As part of the decision making process, members should consider how teachers might use classroom activities in cases where their students are assigned performance tasks that are associated with different classroom activities.

There are 4 performance tasks “families” in math for which a classroom activity may provide necessary supports for some students. Will Smarter Balanced remove these performance task families from administration for all members or only those that decide to not administer classroom activities?
Yes, these performance tasks families will be removed by Smarter Balanced. Smarter Balanced will notify service providers that these 4 performance tasks families will be omitted from the 2015-16 operational pool. Smarter Balanced will determine whether these 4 performance tasks families may be amended sufficiently with additional resources such that they can be included in a future operational pool.

Has Smarter Balanced reviewed or plan to review the Interim Assessment performance tasks to determine whether classroom activities are necessary to support student understanding of the context? It might be beneficial to administer the Interim Assessments without the classroom activities to follow the same administration procedures as for the summative.
We have not reviewed the Interim performance task classroom activities. However, teachers can review the applicable interim assessment classroom activities and should use their judgment as to whether the interim assessment classroom activities provide information that their students may not otherwise have as contextual knowledge.

Will Smarter Balanced develop classroom activities during future performance task development?
We learned a lot about the classroom activities, in particular, the logistical challenges raised after the spring 2015 operational test. We also learned about how to incorporate sufficient supports embedded in the performance tasks such that a classroom activity is not required. In the future, performance tasks will be written and field tested without classroom activities. All future performance task development will include sufficient built-in supports (e.g. English and translated glossaries) to ensure that our diversity of students will be able to demonstrate what they know and can do based on the resources provided in the performance task itself.

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