

The Smarter Balanced Assessment System has three major components: end-of-year summative assessments designed for accountability purposes, interim assessments designed to support teaching and learning throughout the year, and a suite of tools and resources in the Digital Library that support classroom-based formative assessment practices.

Interim assessments can serve a variety of educator needs. To better support the variety of possible uses consistent with member education agency policies, local districts may establish the timeframe, administration policies, and scoring practices for interim assessments. The interim assessments are considered non-secure and non-public. The non-secure designation provides educators the flexibility to access the questions and their students' responses to the questions. The non-public designation prohibits posting the interim assessments publicly, allowing educators to use the interim assessments as a standardized assessment if they choose to do so. Because the interims are non-secure, they are not intended to be used for accountability purposes. The interim assessments also include all of the accessibility resources that are available in the summative assessment to provide accurate results for all students.

Features of Interim Assessments

- Flexible administration options that better support local purposes
- High quality items that are placed on the same scale as the summative assessment and include the full array of accessibility resources that are available on the end-of-year summative assessment
- May be used to measure students' knowledge and skills in grade levels other than their enrolled grades
- A rigorous item bank that:
 - Covers the range of Depth of Knowledge described in the Common Core State Standards (CCSS)
 - Allows educators access to the test questions and their students' responses to the questions as part of educators' instructional process to address students' relative strengths and needs for improvement

Two Types of Interim Assessments

Interim Comprehensive Assessments (ICAs) are assessments that measure the same content as the summative assessment. Therefore, the ICAs may be helpful for purposes such as determining the knowledge and skills of students who are new to the district or the state, enrolled in non-tested grades (e.g. grades 9 and 10) and providing interim information after a significant period of instruction.

Interim Assessment Blocks (IABs) are assessments teachers can use throughout the school year to focus on more focused sets of related concepts in mathematics and English language arts (ELA). Since the IABs are more granular than the ICA, educators may be better able to administer the assessments during the school year in a manner more consistent with the sequence of their curricula.

The Interim Comprehensive Assessments and Interim Assessment Blocks draw from the same bank of items and performance tasks.

Interim Comprehensive Assessments (ICAs)	Interim Assessment Blocks (IABs)
Measure the same content as the summative assessment and assess the same standards.	Focus on smaller sets of targets and therefore are more flexible to better support instruction
Available as fixed form tests and may also be available as adaptive tests when item counts are adequate.	Available as fixed form tests and may also be available as adaptive tests, as appropriate based on content and when item counts are adequate.
Include the same item types and formats, including performance tasks, as the summative assessments	Include the same item types and formats, including performance tasks, as the summative assessments.
<p>Yield overall scale scores (on the same vertical scale), overall performance level designations, and claim-level information.</p> <p>Claim-level information results reported in the Smarter Balanced reporting system as “Below Standard,” “At/Near Standard,” and “Above Standard.”</p>	<p>Yield overall information for each block.</p> <p>Results will be reported in the Smarter Balanced reporting system as “Below Standard,” “At/Near Standard,” and “Above Standard.”</p>

Both the ICAs and the IABs are administered online and may use the same delivery software as the summative assessments. Members have the flexibility to re-administer interim assessments any number of times. These decisions should be made as part of larger assessment context that includes the purpose of the interim assessment, how the interim assessment will be scored and how the data from the interim assessment will be used to improve teaching and learning.

Interim assessment reports can be generated from the Smarter Balanced or member-designated alternate reporting system.

Most items in the interim assessment will be scored via the computer. However, there are some constructed response items and performance tasks, including the full write, or essay, that need to be hand-scored. This is a local/state responsibility. The Smarter Balanced Teacher Hand-scoring System or a member-designated alternate system allows educators to score student responses using the same scoring rules as the summative assessment. Smarter Balanced provides hand-scoring training materials that include rubrics and sample responses to be used by educators who will score student responses. Hand-scoring is a valuable professional development activity that provides educators with an understanding of the scoring process and the expectations for student learning.

The ICA and IABs contain a small number of overlapping items. Therefore students who take the ICA and IABs more than once, or who take both the ICA and IABs in the same grade levels and content areas, may see the same items more than once. As more interim assessment items are available, the ICAs and IABs will have fewer overlapping items.

What’s new for 2017–18?

The IAB blueprints for the 2017–18 mathematics and ELA IABs are now available for [download from the Smarter Balanced website](#). The blueprints provide information on the claims and targets assessed within each block, the types of items, and the Depth of Knowledge for the items.

How have the ELA IABs changed?

- **New Stimuli:** New combinations of passages have been implemented for the **Read Literary Texts IABs** for grades 3, 5, 6, and 7 and for the **Read Informational Texts IAB** for High School. A new stimuli and items appear in the **Listen/Interpret IAB** at grade 6 and one listening stimuli and its associated item have been dropped from the grade 4 **Listen/Interpret IAB**.
- **New Items:** Each **Language and Vocabulary Use** block has been revised with the addition of new items.

The interim blocks available for 2017–18 are outlined below, with blocks that we have revised or added to noted:

Grades 3-7	Grade 8	High School
Read Literary Texts*	Read Literary Texts	Read Literary Texts
Read Informational Texts	Read Informational Texts	Read Informational Texts*
Brief Writes	Brief Writes	Brief Writes
Revision	Edit/Revise**	Revision
Language and Vocabulary Use*		Language and Vocabulary Use*
Editing		Editing
Listen/Interpret*	Listen/Interpret	Listen/Interpret
Research	Research	Research
Performance Task	Performance Task	Performance Task

* IAB includes new items for one or more grades in 2017–18

** The Edit/Revise IAB for grade 8 will be separated as soon as possible when items are available in the item bank.

How have the Mathematics IABs changed?

More Blocks: Seven new blocks have been added: Grade 3 – Geometry, Grade 8 – The Number System, and High School (5 blocks) – Geometry Congruence, Geometry Measurement and Modeling, Interpreting Functions, Number and Quantity and Seeing Structure in Expressions/Polynomial Expressions. The interim blocks available for 2017–18 are outlined below, with new blocks noted.

Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
Operations and Algebraic Thinking	Operations and Algebraic Thinking	Operations and Algebraic Thinking
Number and Operations – Fractions	Number and Operations – Fractions	Number and Operations – Fractions
Measurement and Data	Measurement and Data	Measurement and Data
Number and Operations in Base Ten	Number and Operations in Base Ten	Number and Operations in Base Ten
Geometry*	Geometry	Geometry
Mathematics Performance Task	Mathematics Performance Task	Mathematics Performance Task

Grade 6	Grade 7	Grade 8
Ratios and Proportional Relationships	Ratio and Proportional Relationships	Expressions & Equations I
The Number System	The Number System	Expressions & Equations II (with Prob/Stat)
Expressions and Equations	Expressions and Equations	The Number System*
Geometry	Geometry	Functions
Statistics and Probability	Statistics and Probability	Geometry
Mathematics Performance Task	Mathematics Performance Task	Mathematics Performance Task

High School	
Algebra and Functions I — Linear Functions, Equations, and Inequalities	Geometry Congruence*
Algebra and Functions II — Quadratic Functions, Equations, and Inequalities	Geometry Measurement and Modeling*
Geometry and Right Triangle Trigonometry	Interpreting Functions*
Statistics and Probability	Number and Quantity*
Seeing Structure in Expressions/Polynomial Expressions*	Mathematics Performance Task

* IAB is new for 2017–18