



For Immediate Release
Thursday, September 25, 2014

NEVADA STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION APPROVES NEW CRITERION REFERENCED TESTS FOR GRADES 3 THROUGH 8

Carson City, Nevada – Today the Nevada State Board of Education approved a recommendation to transition to the Smarter Balanced Assessment System as the statewide Criterion Referenced Tests (CRTs) that must be administered in grades 3 through 8 in all public schools. Previously, on September 16, 2014, the Nevada Council to Establish Academic Standards voted to recommend to the State Board that Nevada adopt the Smarter Balanced assessments. Nevada will continue with its existing CRT in science, the State Board and Council both agreed.

The Smarter Balanced assessments will replace existing CRTs in English language arts (ELA) and mathematics for grades 3-8 in the Spring of 2015. Nevada has partnered with over 20 other states in the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium (SBAC) to develop these assessments to be fully aligned to the Common Core State Standards, which were adopted in Nevada by the State Board of Education in 2010 and became the Nevada Academic Content Standards for ELA and mathematics.

“These improved assessments are a key part of implementing Nevada’s new standards and preparing all students for success in college and careers,” said Superintendent of Public Instruction Dale Erquiaga. “As a Smarter Balanced member state, Nevada has played a key role in the development of these next-generation assessments that provide more accurate and meaningful information about what students are learning.”

The new test system offers significant improvements over Nevada’s current CRTs, including: computer adaptive testing; expanded accessibility features to meet the needs of all students; and performance tasks that ask students to demonstrate an array of research, writing, and problem solving skills. The Smarter Balanced assessments will be computer-based, allowing for a much broader range of test questions than the multiple-choice exams currently administered to students. Schools without computer/online capabilities will have the ability to offer the tests on paper. The new tests will include short-answer portions and performance tasks, which give students real-world problems to solve and emphasize critical thinking, reasoning and problem-solving. Additional information is available on the Smarter Balanced website:

<http://www.smarterbalanced.org>.

The Nevada Department of Education will be providing additional communication and information throughout this school year to help answer parents’ questions about the new tests. Parents and students can experience what the Smarter Balanced assessment will be like by taking a practice test at <http://www.smarterbalanced.org/practice-test/>.

Visit

http://www.doe.nv.gov/Boards_Commissions_Councils/State_Board_of_Education/2014/2014_NV_State_Board_Meeting_Materials/ to access the Board’s agenda and supporting material from today’s meeting online.