



Assessing Student Achievement in an Era of Reform:

Designs of the Consortia Assessments and Implications for States

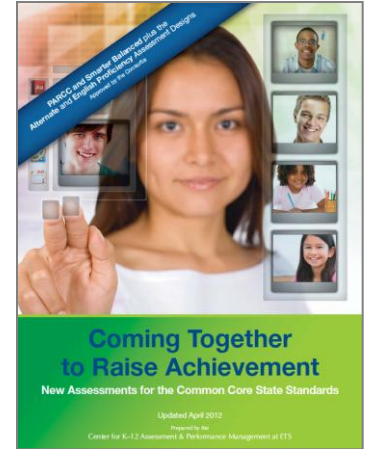
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Presentation at the December 2012 NCSL Forum for Legislative Education Staff
December 8, 2012

Driving Advances in K-12 Assessment

Presentation Outline

- Requirements of the Race to the Top Assessment Program
- The Two Comprehensive Assessment Consortia:
 - Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC); and
 - Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium (Smarter Balanced)
- Implications for States: Obligations, Benefits and Challenges
- The Larger Inflection Point
- Questions



www.k12center.org

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Federal Requirements in the Race to the Top Assessment Program

RTTT Assessment Program grants for development of next-generation assessment systems by 2014-15 that:

- Assess **shared standards** in mathematics and English language arts (ELA) for college- and career-readiness;
- Measure **individual growth**, proficiency and **extent to which each student is on track**, at each grade level tested, toward **college or career readiness** by the time of high school completion;
- **Utilize technology** to the maximum extent appropriate; and
- Provide **information that is useful** in informing:
 - Teaching, learning, and program improvement;
 - Determinations of school effectiveness;
 - Determinations of principal and teacher effectiveness for use in evaluations and the provision of support to teachers and principals; and
 - Determinations of individual student college and career readiness, such as determinations made for high school exit decisions, college course placement to credit-bearing classes, or college entrance.

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The Two State-Led Comprehensive Assessment Consortia

PARCC

- 22 states & DC (with 18 Governing states & DC)
- About 24 million students
- IHEs receiving ~90% of states' students signed on

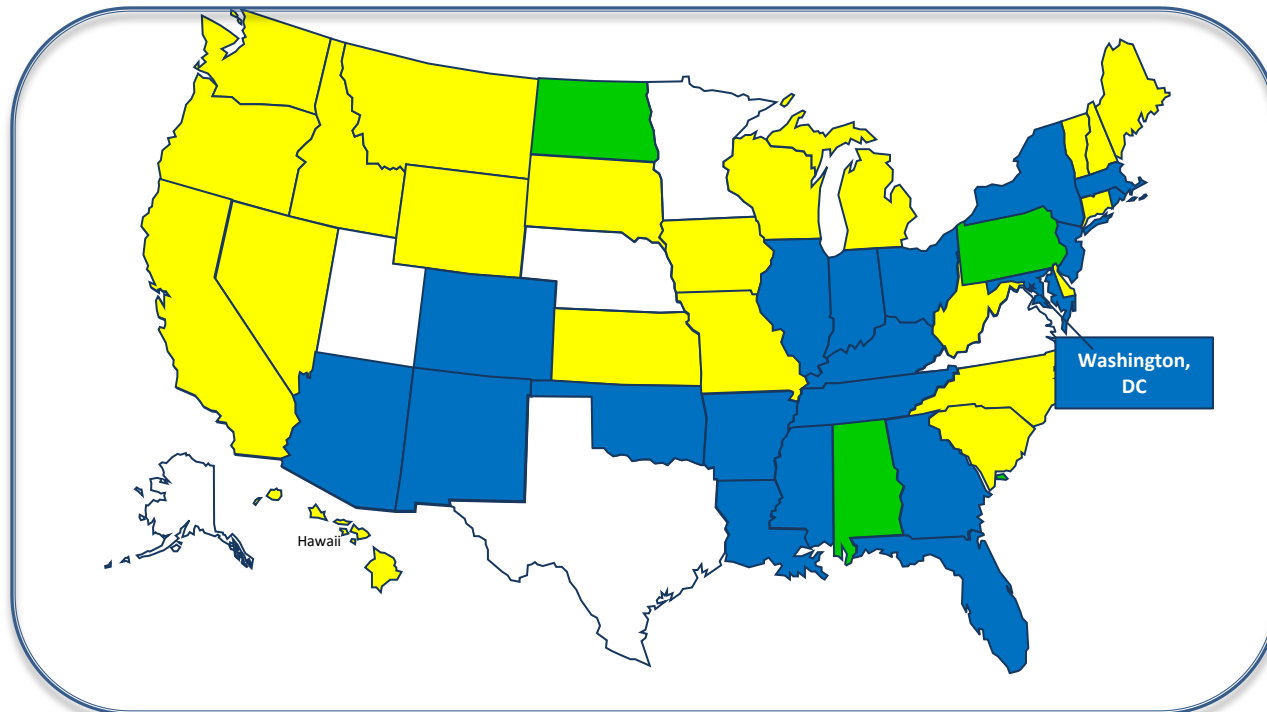
Smarter Balanced

- 25 states (with 21 Governing)
- About 19 million students
- IHEs receiving ~75% of states' students signed on

Both:

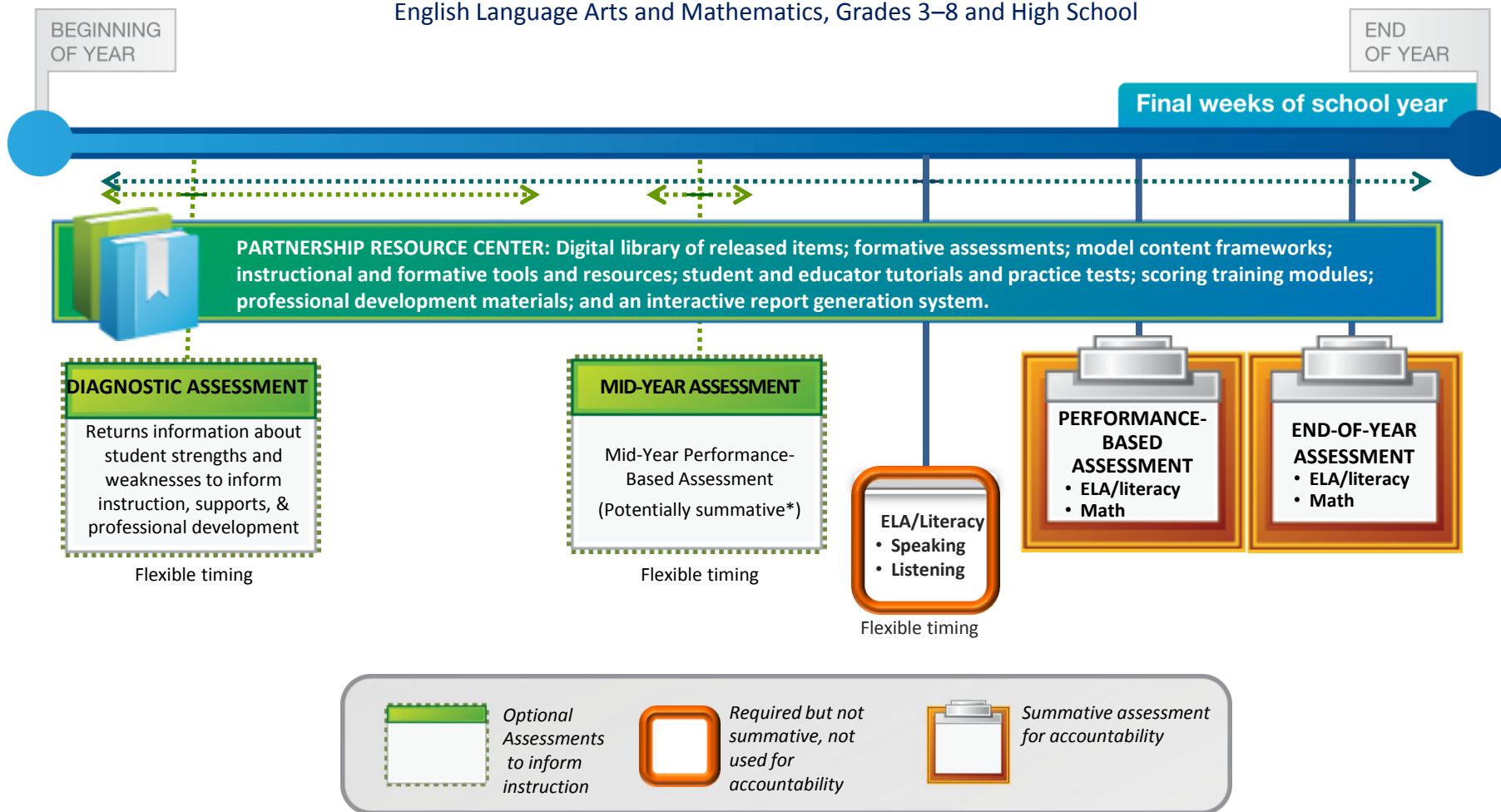
Alabama, North Dakota, Pennsylvania

Neither : Alaska, Minnesota, Nebraska, Texas, Utah, Virginia



The Partnership for the Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC)

English Language Arts and Mathematics, Grades 3–8 and High School



* After study, individual states may consider including this as a summative component.

PARCC: Supports and Timeline

Plans as of summer 2012

Summer 2012

- K-16 Educator Leader Cadres launched (24 per state)
- Prototype items & tasks released (www.parcconline.org)
- College-ready determination adopted

Spring 2013

- Partnership Resource Center launched
- Limited pilot/field testing begins

Fall 2013

- Online professional learning modules released

Winter 2014

- Full-scale pilot/field testing begins
- Optional formative tasks for K-2 released
- Field test of performance-based assessments conducted

Spring 2014

- College readiness tools released
- Field test of end-of-year assessments conducted

Fall 2014

- Diagnostic assessments released

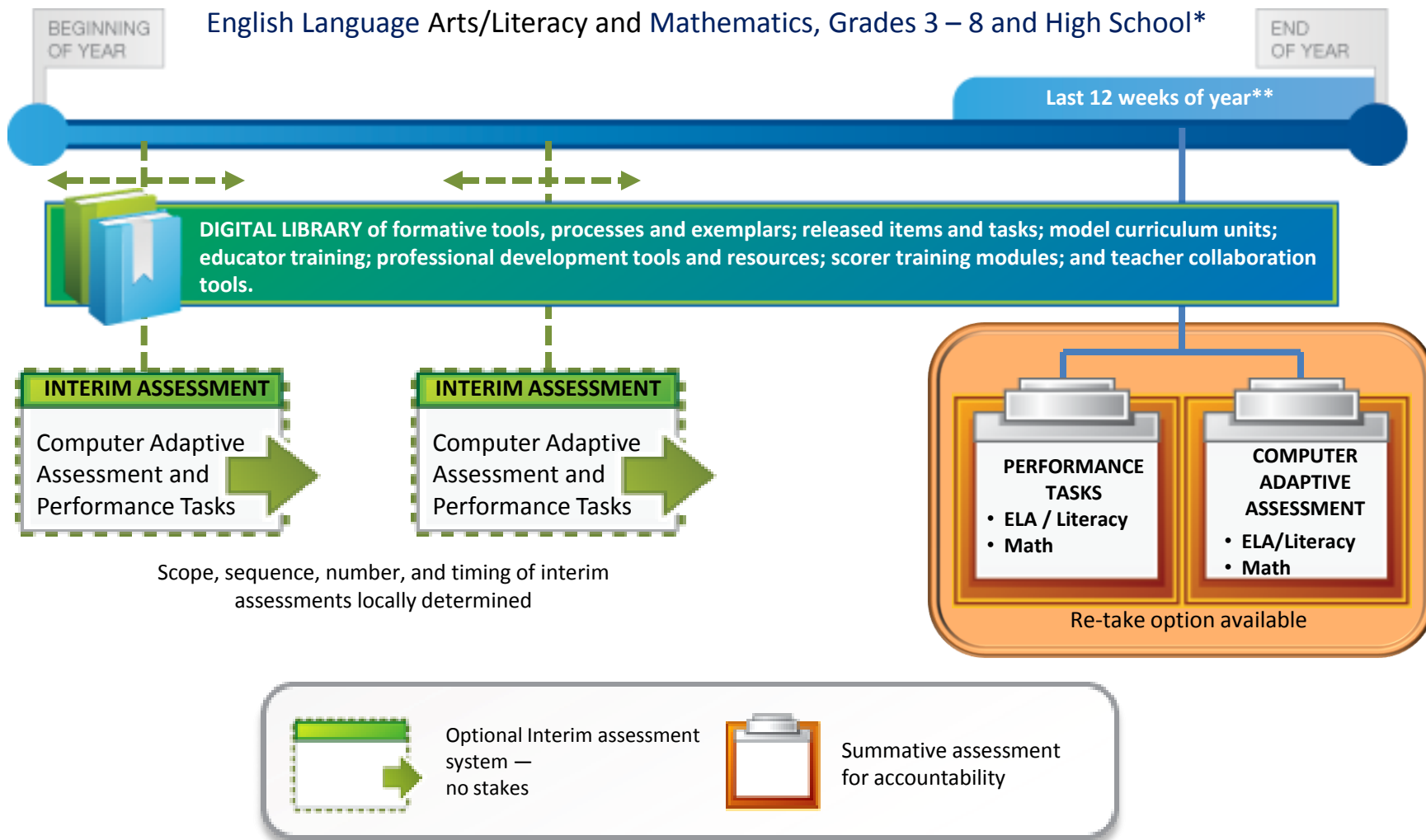
Spring 2015

- First administration of summative assessments

Summer 2015

- Final achievement levels adopted

The Smarter Balanced Assessment System



* Summative and interim assessments for grades 3 – 8 and 11, with additional supporting assessments for grades 9 and 10.

** Time windows may be adjusted based on results from the research agenda and final implementation decisions.

Smarter Balanced: Supports and Timeline

Plans as of summer 2012

Summer/Fall 2012

- Online professional development modules for item and task writing released
- Teacher teams began writing field test items and tasks
- Sample items released on website (www.smarterbalanced.org)

Winter/Spring 2013

- Pilot test in sample of schools

Summer/fall 2013

- Teacher cadres from each state trained in use of formative tools and PD modules
- Teacher cadres review curricular materials
- Field testing of items and tasks

Spring 2014

- Second phase of field testing of items and tasks

Fall 2014

- Comprehensive Electronic Platform, including Digital Library launched
- Smarter Balanced optional Interim assessments available

Spring 2015

- First administration of summative assessments

Summer 2015

- Final achievement standards adopted

PARCC and Smarter Balanced: Comparison of Features

Similarities

- Two summative components given during final weeks of school year
- Online delivery
- Mix of item types
- Use of both electronic and human scoring, with results expected within 2 weeks
- Approximate cost of \$20 per student per year for summative assessments
- Professional development modules and tools online
- Support for technology infrastructure planning
- Smarter has retake option and PARCC is developing a retake policy

Differences

- PARCC: fixed test forms; optional interim Diagnostic and Mid-year assessments
- Smarter: adaptive delivery; optional adaptive interim assessment system with locally determined number, scope and timing

Unique Elements

- PARCC: K-2 tasks, College-readiness tools for Grade 12
- Smarter: Customizable interim system; Exemplary instructional modules

Not to be Forgotten: The Other Four Assessment Consortia

- Two **Alternate Assessment Consortia**
 - Developing CCSS-aligned assessments for the students with the most significant cognitive disabilities (“1%”)
 - Consortia:
 - **Dynamic Learning Maps:** 13 states, \$22 million
 - **National Center and State Collaborative:** 27 states, \$45 million
 - Operational in 2014-15
- Two **English Language Proficiency Assessment Consortia**
 - Developing new CCSS-aligned common EL screener tests, program entry and exit criteria and summative assessments
 - Consortia:
 - **ASSETS:** 30 states, \$10.5 million, operational 2015-16
 - **ELPA21:** 13 states, \$6.3 million, operational 2016-17

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Member State Responsibilities and Commitments

- Participate in the **governance** of the state-led consortium
- Provide leadership in the state in the **transition to the Common Core State Standards**
 - Teacher and administrator **professional development**
 - **Parent/community awareness**
- Ensure that schools have the **technology infrastructure** needed to delivery the assessments
- Select, alone or with other states, an **assessment delivery provider**
- Starting spring 2015, **cover on-going costs** for administration, scoring and reporting of the assessments
- **Administer the Consortia summative assessments** in 2014-15 and use the results for federal accountability purposes

State Policy Decisions

States must individually determine:

- Whether to **augment the Common Core State Standards** (CCSS must remain at least 85% of the total)
- **Memberships:** Which consortia to join or leave (as long as federal requirements for accountability are met)
- Whether to fund/require the **use of the Optional components** at the state level or leave to district discretion
- How results are used within **state accountability systems** (but performance levels and cut scores will be common across the consortium)
- Whether the consortia high school assessments will supplement or replace existing **EOC tests**
- If/how to modify **state high school graduation policies**
- Whether assessment data will be used for **educator evaluations**
- How best to coordinate the content and the delivery of **other statewide assessments**, such as science and social studies
- Policies regarding **teacher and administrator preparation and certification**

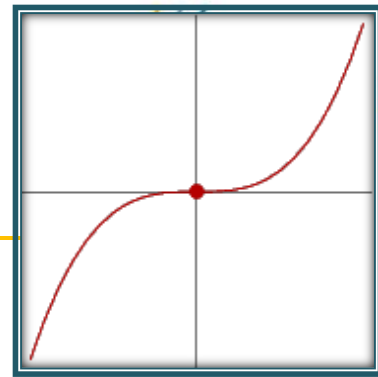
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Major trends impacting education and learning:

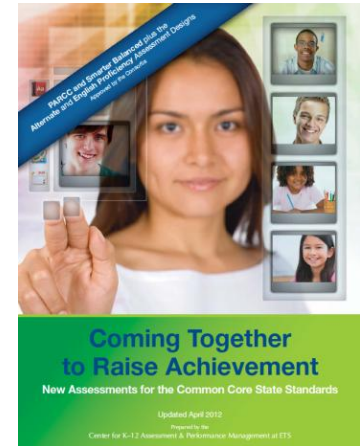
- State-specific K-12 standards & tests → CCSS and consortia = aggregated demand, increased innovation, investment, sharing, competition
- paper → digital (*The Long Tail*, C. Anderson, 2006)
- 1-size fits all → adaptive, personalized
- silos of curriculum/assessment → aligned and integrated systems to support learning
- school days for learning → anytime, anywhere
- rare and episodic feedback loops → continuous, embedded feedback loops to student, teacher, program, system (*oli.web.cmu.edu*)
- adequate (?) funding → reduced budgets with increased demands

Questions & Discussion



GUIDE TO THE ASSESSMENT CONSORTIA:

*Coming Together to Raise Achievement:
New Assessments for the
Common Core State Standards*



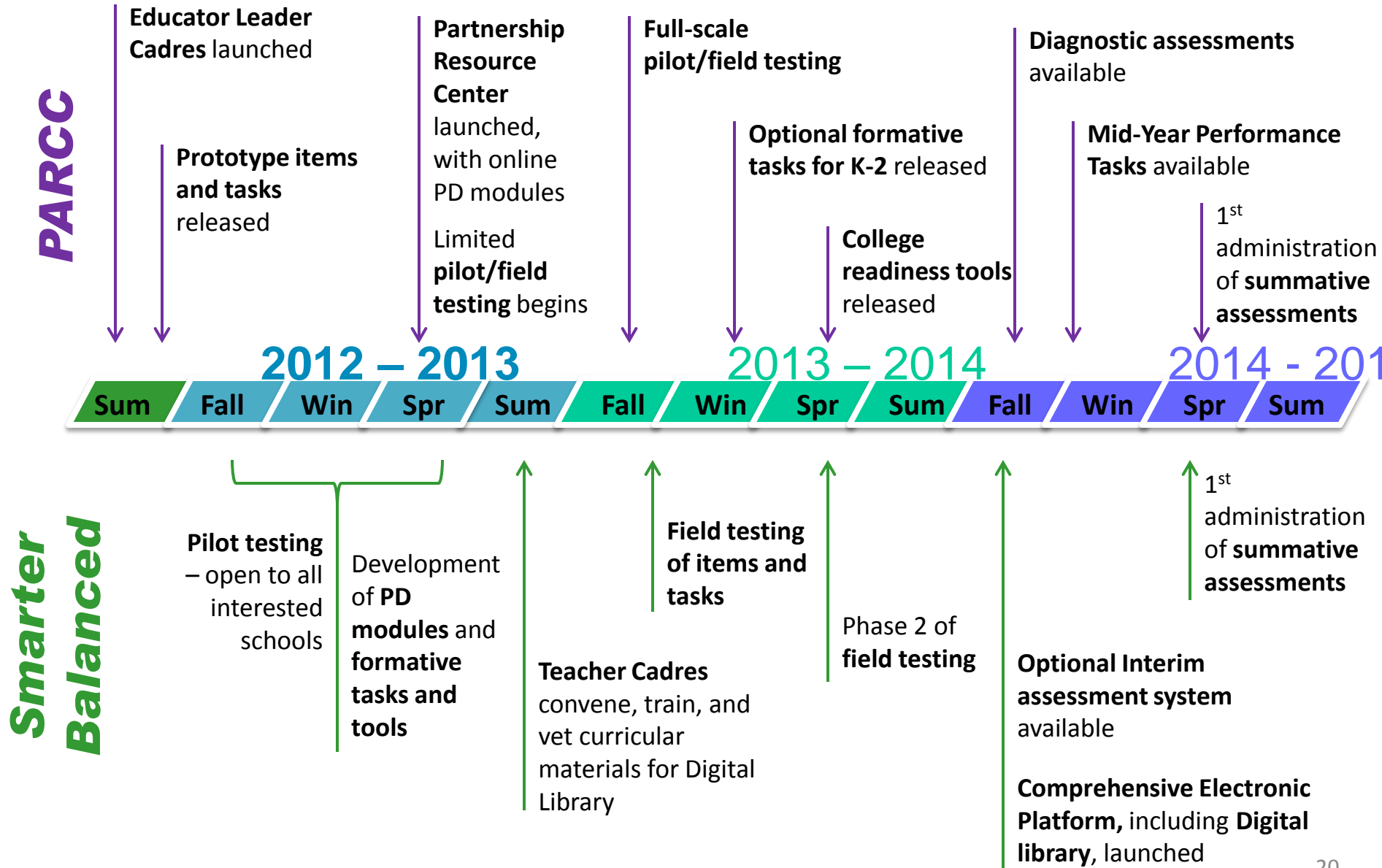
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Driving Advances in K-12 Assessment

Timeline for Key Deliverables



Instructional Shifts in the Common Core

English Language Arts & Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects

From the Standards:

“Synthesize information from a range of sources (e.g., texts, experiments, simulations) into a coherent understanding of a process, phenomenon, or concept, resolving conflicting information when possible.”

ELA Standard, Science
and Technical Subjects

Instructional shifts:

- Building knowledge through **content-rich nonfiction and informational texts**
- Reading and writing grounded in **evidence from text**
- Regular practice with **complex text** and its **academic vocabulary**

www.achievethecore.org

Instructional Shifts in the Common Core

Mathematics

From the Standards:

“When making mathematical models, [proficient students] know that technology can enable them to visualize the results of varying assumptions, explore consequences, and compare predictions with data. ... They are able to use technological tools to explore and deepen their understanding of concepts.”

Standards for Mathematical Practice

Instructional shifts:

- **Focus** on fewer topics per grade level, to deeper levels of mastery
- Build on **coherence** of progressions across grades and connections within
- **Rigor**: in major topics pursue:
 - conceptual understanding,
 - procedural skill and fluency, and
 - applicationwith equal intensity.

Testing Costs

New report from Brown Center on Education Policy at Brookings Institute

- State expenditures on assessment vary greatly based on enrollment, number of subjects tested, types of items used, internal vs external scoring, etc., but average was \$65 per student in grades 3-9
- Biggest determinant of cost was enrollment due to large fixed costs
- PARCC and Smarter Balanced both projected to cost approximately \$20 per student, per year
- Report concluded: By joining a consortium, a state with 100,000 students will save an estimated 37%, and a state with 500,000 students will save an estimated 25%, *all else being equal*
- Study could not determine costs/savings of transitioning to new online consortia assessments with wider range of item types

Technology Requirements and Readiness

Smarter Balanced Smarter Balanced and PARCC have jointly:

- issued **guidance for hardware and bandwidth purchasing**, to inform district/state plans (both will support tablets with 9.5 inch screens or larger)
- provided a **Technology Readiness Tool** to help states identify infrastructure gaps and plan for future needs
 - Baseline inventory data collected in spring/summer 2012
 - Gap analysis will be generated next, as minimum specifications are known
 - Need to run studies of comparability of keyboard vs touch vs stylus for input, innovative item types, etc.
 - Additional rounds of data collection occurring every spring and fall through 2014 to monitor readiness

Key Advantage of Common Standards

Individuals and groups around the world developing and sharing teaching, learning and assessment resources to support the CCSS

- Examples:
 - State websites gathering the best of locally developed resources
 - External groups such as Illustrative Mathematics and Student Achievement Partners developing, adapting and collecting, and vetting aligned resources and making them freely available
 - Foundations hosting highly successful international competitions to spur advances in automated scoring to help control future costs
 - “Smart” engines being developed to help teachers and parents match educational resources to the specific needs and interests of each child

Recommendations from The Leadership Collaborative (TLC)

TLC (initiative of the Association of Public and Land-Grant Universities) recommends:

- 1. Increase selectivity and proactive recruitment** into teacher prep
- 2. Alter the content of disciplinary courses and professional preparation courses** to ensure its effectiveness in preparing teachers to teach the CCSS
- 3. Identify, nurture and sustain high quality field experiences** for all future teachers, placing with effective teachers of the CCSS

(www.teacher-imperative.org)