Smarter Balanced Interim Assessments & i-Ready

FEBRUARY 28, 2021

Office of Assessments
VI Department of Education
Smarter Balanced Interim Assessments

The Smarter Balanced assessment system is more than an end of year test! The system is a comprehensive suite of standards-aligned tools and resources, including interim assessments, Tools for Teachers (instructional material such as lesson plans and activities), and the summative assessments. The Smarter Balanced Interim Assessments allow teachers to check student progress throughout the year. Additionally, the interim assessments provide teachers and students with exposure to the item types, test platform, and rigor of the assessments. The Interim Assessment Blocks (IABs) measure students’ knowledge and skills on no more than two to three assessment targets and take approximately forty minutes to complete.

The interim assessment window is always open from the first day of school to the beginning of the summative assessment window. This year, the interims will be available to all educators until March 5, 2021. The Assessment &Curriculum Offices collaborated to select IABs that align with the content covered in English language Arts and mathematics during the first and second quarters. Typically, students use the Secure Browser to take interim assessments at school. In the midst of the health crisis, the VIDE supported data-driven instruction by allowing teachers to administer interim tests remotely. Over 18,800 IABs (individual test taken) have been administered across the territory this school year.

Understanding Interim Assessment Results

Each student takes on average three blocks per content area. Student results for the interims are reported as one of three reporting categories: Above Standard, At/Near Standard, or Below Standard. The aggregate level data at the school, district, and state-level report student performance based on the number of tests taken. For example, Student A completed three IABs in English Language Arts. Student A scored Above Standard on one IAB and Below Standard on the other two IABs. Thus, Student A scored Above Standard on thirty-three percent (33%) of the test taken.

St. Croix District Results

In English language arts, students performed Above Standard on nine percent (9%) of the test taken, forty-five percent (45%) At/Near Standard of test taken, and forty-five percent (45%) Below Standard of test taken. In mathematics, students performed Above Standard on ten percent (10%) of test taken, thirty-six percent (36%) At/Near Standard of test taken, and fifty-four percent (54%) Below Standard of test taken.
St. Thomas/ St. John District Results

In English language arts, students performed Above Standard on nine percent (9%) of test taken, forty-three percent (43%) At/Near Standard of test taken, and forty-eight percent (48%) Below Standard of test taken. In mathematics, students performed Above Standard on nine percent (9%) of test taken, thirty-five percent (35%) At/Near Standard of test taken, and fifty-six percent (56%) Below Standard of test taken.

The State Office of Curriculum & Instruction will continue to work with schools to ensure that all students have an opportunity to experience the remote login process, testing platform, and test items before taking the summative assessment which will be given from March 8-May 28, 2021.

i-Ready Assessment

i-Ready is an assessment and online program utilized by both districts to improve reading and math achievement. Students enrolled in grades K-8 take the diagnostic assessment at the beginning of the year and are assigned a personalized online learning path based on their results. Educators reassess students at the middle and end of year to track progress. i-Ready determines a student’s eligibility for Response to Intervention (RTI) Tier 1, 2, and 3 instruction.

- Tier 1 students are performing on grade level and are provided with an online learning path to maintain their growth trajectory.
- Tier 2 students need moderately intensive interventions in the form of small group instruction.
- Tier 3 students are performing below grade level and require intensive support such as one-on-one instruction.

The i-Ready program includes Teacher Toolbox, Ready Reading/Writing, and Ready Math. The Toolbox is a digital collection of resources to help teachers differentiate instruction to students scoring above and below proficiency. iReady Math and Ready Reading/Writing are resources that supplement the core math and ELA curricula.
St. Croix District Comparison-Diagnostic and Mid-Year Assessments

In English language arts, data show a six-percentage (6%) point increase in the percent of students scoring on grade level (Tier 1) from the Diagnostic Assessment (27%) to the Mid-Year Assessment (33%). The percent of students needing Tier 2 support remained the same. Data also show a five-percentage (5%) point decrease in the percent of students recommended for intensive intervention from the Diagnostic Assessment (46%) to the Mid-Year Assessment (41%).

In mathematics, data show a five-percentage (5%) point increase in the percent of students scoring on grade level (Tier 1) from the Diagnostic Assessment (15%) to the Mid-Year Assessment (20%). The percent of students needing Tier 2 increased by one-percentage (1%) point from the Diagnostic Assessment (32%) to the Mid-Year Assessment (33%). Data also show a six-percentage (6%) point decrease in the percent of students recommended for intensive intervention from the Diagnostic Assessment (53%) to the Mid-Year Assessment (47%).
St. Thomas/St. John District Comparison-Diagnostic and Mid-Year Assessments

*The Mid-Year Assessment testing window is currently open in both districts.

In English language arts, data show a five-percentage (5%) point increase in the percent of students scoring on grade level (Tier 1) from the Diagnostic Assessment (31%) to the Mid-Year Assessment (36%). The percent of students needing Tier 2 intervention decreased by two-percentage (2%) points from the Diagnostic Assessment (31%) to the Mid-Year Assessment (29%). Data also show a two-percentage (2%) point decrease in the percent of students recommended for intensive intervention from the Diagnostic Assessment (38%) to the Mid-Year Assessment (36%).

*The Mid-Year Assessment testing window is currently open in both districts.

In mathematics, data show a three-percentage (3%) point increase in the percent of students scoring on grade level (Tier 1) from the Diagnostic Assessment (20%) to the Mid-Year Assessment (23%). The percent of students needing Tier 2 intervention increased by four-percentage (4%) points from the Diagnostic Assessment (35%) to the Mid-Year Assessment (39%). Data also show a seven-percentage (7%) point decrease in the percent of students recommended for intensive intervention from the Diagnostic Assessment (45%) to the Mid-Year Assessment (38%).