Bringing Common Sense
to the Common Core State Standards

NEXT GENERATION ASSESSMENTS: WHAT TO EXPECT
Presented by Sue Gendron

Questions & Answers

1. How will the Next Generation Assessments be scored? Will teachers be required to score these?
   Both assessment consortia proposals included use of artificial intelligence to score all assessment items. Some foundations have supported funding for moving the technology to this type of scoring. The back-up plan is for cadres of teachers to be brought together and trained on how to score these tests. These teachers would likely not be expected to core the summative assessments locally. For interim assessments, rubrics will be provided for scoring purposes.

2. Do you know if there will be any accommodations for the end-of-year testing for those schools that are not on a traditional school year?
   Right now, it appears it will be at the discretion of each state to determine how to handle timing of assessments for these schools.

3. For 4x4 block schools, I assume that these assessments will take place at the end of each semester?
   Right now, it appears this will be at the discretion of each state to determine how to handle timing of assessments for schools using block scheduling, but rest assured states will accommodate these schedules.

4. How do you use this to assess student growth throughout the year? How do we tell whether the students have really mastered material throughout the entire year and not just from unit-to-unit or lesson-to-lesson?
   Within SMARTER Balanced, the interim assessment tool will allow this progress monitoring. Teachers can select how often they choose to monitor and it will generate a measurement of how well the student has been able to master the information. It can be used as often as teachers wish. It is computer adaptive and will be constantly checking the level of internalization.

5. Do the questions have time limits?
   Yes, the questions will have time limits which will vary based upon the particular performance task.

6. How will teachers across the country gain technical knowledge necessary to teach students to take online tests, and how will schools be able to have technology to provide adequate tools and hardware available?
   In terms of training teachers, we expect little will be required. The students who are taking these assessments are digital natives, who will need little preparation to take assessments in an online environment.

   As for the hardware question, both consortia are currently gathering information from schools throughout the country as to the level of infrastructure (such as broadband, hardware).

7. I heard that the assessments would only adjust UP in difficulty, not down. Sue contradicted this. What is true -- will assessments adjust both up AND down in difficulty depending on answers?
   While the details are still being worked out on precisely how the assessments will adapt, we know that questions will be generated from grade expectations from the CCSS. For incorrect answers, the test engine will generate a new question to see where the student's level of understanding is. All questions will be precise to every student. For correct answers, the questions will continue along the CCSS to see how much they understand.

8. Will summative assessments be expected to be administered on a certain day only? If so, how will that work with the expectation that the tests are given online?
   We don't expect the tests will be given simultaneously. Test security is not a concern because all testing is personalized to every student.

9. Will the Common Core Standards address the critical STEM areas essential to creating a competitive workforce. We are part of a global market.
   Mathematical practices is a large component of the assessments, which also strongly relates to Engineering. Science needs to remain at the top of daily instruction. For some assessment questions, students will be given a list of tools and asked which one will help them arrive at the correct answer. Some of the choices will have a direct correlation to an understanding of technology.

10. Is there a plan in place to financially help schools that do not have technology ready for NGA?
    Neither of the two consortia have financial support for building up the infrastructure. While we don't expect to see much federal funding for technology infrastructure in the immediate term, both consortia will be providing data to state governors in the hope there will be legislative action for gearing up. Both will

provide this information to Congress, also, in the event that as federal resources are explored, what could also be looked into is the possibility of sufficient funding for infrastructure.

11. Will a student's score on these tests determine promotions and/or graduating from high school?
These assessments are meant to ensure all students leave high school college- and career-ready. However, it will be each state's discretion to determine whether they determine promotion or graduation.