Now Underway:

A Step Change in K–12 Testing

We are closing in on the target date of Spring 2015 when four consortia of states will launch new online assessment systems for K–12 education in English language arts and mathematics. The following spring, two additional consortia will begin use of new assessments of English language proficiency.

All six are state-led, state-governed consortia, and all are seeking to leverage advances in learning sciences, measurement and technology to develop much more powerful assessments — ones that are truly "worth teaching to." The member states have adopted the Common Core State Standards and have agreed to report their scores, across each consortium, based on common expectations at each grade level.

If the consortia are able to meet their goals of a) measuring more complex skills through authentic tasks that reflect the skills needed in college and careers, b) reporting more timely and useful information to teachers, students, parents and policymakers, and c) leveraging their collective buying power to get more for each taxpayer dollar, they will have performed a great service for our states and our students. Indeed, they will have addressed many of the concerns raised over the last decade concerning No Child Left Behind (NCLB) tests.

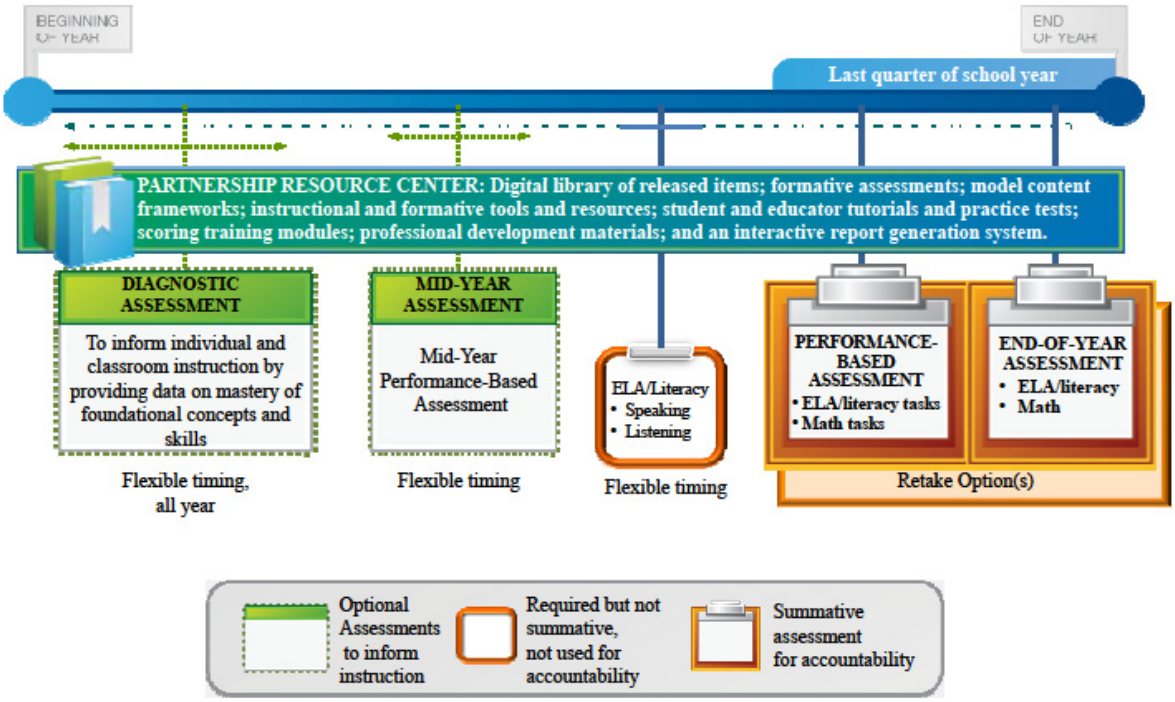
They also, however, raise a new set of questions and concerns. With the goal of supporting informed public discussion, the Center for K–12 Assessment & Performance Management at ETS (or "the K–12 Center") has produced short, accessible summaries of each group's membership, test design, transition supports and timelines. The guide to the consortia, called *Coming Together to Raise Achievement*, is updated periodically to maintain accuracy.

In this briefing document, you will find excerpts from this publication concerning each of the six assessment consortia. We invite you to download the complete document, which can be found at www.k12center.org.

- **Two Comprehensive Assessment Consortia**, developing assessments for regular education students and students with disabilities who are able to take the same assessments with accommodations.
  - The Partnership for the Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers *(PARCC, page* 2)
  - The Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium (*Smarter Balanced, page 3*)
- **Two Alternate Assessment Consortia**, developing assessments for the roughly 1% of students who have significant cognitive disabilities
  - Dynamic Learning Maps (*DLM™, page 6*)
  - The National Center and State Collaborative (*NCSC, page 7*)
- **Two English Language Proficiency Assessment Consortia,** developing assessments for English language learners (ELs)
  - Assessment Services Supporting ELs through Technology Systems Consortium (*ASSETS, page 8*)
  - English Language Proficiency Assessment for the 21st Century (*ELPA21, page 9*)

The complete June 2013 edition of *Coming Together to Raise Achievement: New Assessments for the Common Core State Standards* can be found at www.k12center.org.

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



Description of Major PARCC Features

Partnership Resource Center: This digital library will contain resources to support teachers and students in grades K–12, including formative assessments for students in grades K–1 and a Text Complexity Diagnostic Tool. Many of these resources will be contributed by member states.

Optional Assessment Components:

Diagnostic Assessment: Available for grades 2–8, these computer-adaptive assessments will provide timely, detailed information concerning student strengths and weaknesses in foundational concepts and skills to support targeted instruction.

Mid-Year Performance Assessment: These extended formative tasks for grades 3–11 will provide teachers and students with instructionally useful feedback and prepare them for the summative performance tasks. A wide testing window will allow for alignment with local curricula. Tasks will focus on hard-to-measure standards and application of skills.

Summative Assessment: This will consist of Performance-Based Assessment and an End-of-Year Assessment. Total testing time fot ELA and math is expected to range from 8 hours at grade 3 to 9.75 hours in high school.

Performance-Based Assessment: Taken after roughly 75% of instruction, students will complete 3 ELA/literacy tasks (a literary analysis task, a narrative task and a research simulation task) and two or more math tasks that involve complex, real-world problems.

End-of-Year Assessment: This assessment will be computer-based and consist of innovative, machine-scorable item types. *High School:* In mathematics, both traditional and integrated math sequences will be supported; in ELA, literacy skills in ELA, science and social studies will be assessed, as in the Common Core.

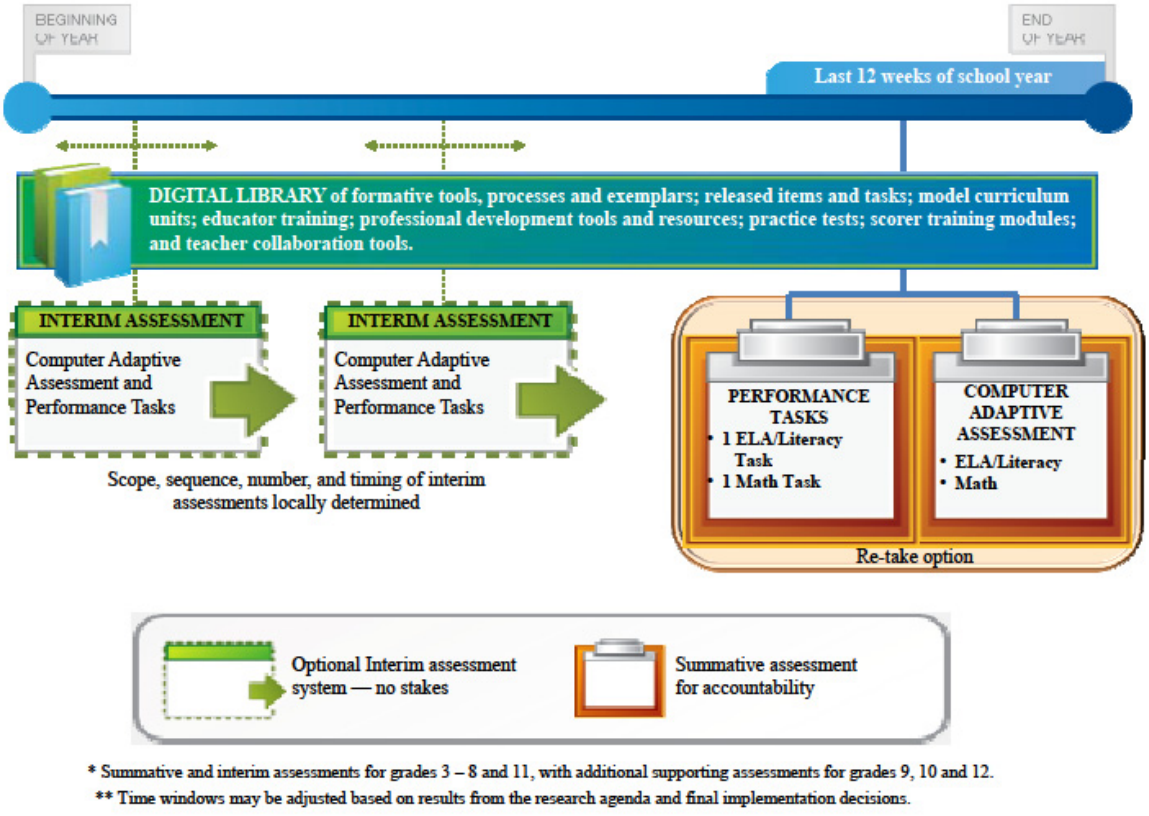
Speaking and Listening Assessment: *(Required, not used for accountability)* This component can be given any time between mid-year and end-of-year and scores may be used within student grades.

Accountability: Scores for the Performance-Based Assessment and End-of-Year Assessment will combined for the student's annual accountability score. Subject to state decisions, PARCC will make available one retake for students in grades 3–8 and up to three retakes for high school students.

Implementation: Field testing in 2013–2014; operational by Spring 2015.

Cost: 2013 projection: $29.50 per student per year for all summative assessments, delivered and scored, in ELA/literacy and mathematics.

The Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium



* Summative and interim assessments for grades 3 – 8 and 11, with additional supporting assessments for grades 9, 10 and 12.

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

Description of Major Smarter Balanced Features

Digital Library: The digital library will contain optional resources to support teachers and students in grades K–12, including formative tools and exemplars, model instructional units, a Practice Test utility, professional development modules, a reporting suite and teacher collaboration tools.

Optional Interim Assessment System:

Interim Assessment System: This system will allow educators to deliver computer-adaptive assessments at locally-determined intervals to gain information about student progress throughout the year. The multiple item types will reflect those on the summative assessments. The item bank will be fully accessible to educators for instruction and professional development. States may use the item bank to develop assessments for grades 9, 10 and 12 and/or state end-of-course tests. Reports will link to appropriate resources for students and teachers.

Summative Assessment: This will consist of Performance Tasks and an End-of-Year Adaptive Assessment. Total testing time for ELA and math is expected to range from 7 hours at grade 3 to 8.5 hours at grade 11.

Performance Tasks: Taken after roughly 75% of instruction, students in grades 3–8 and 11 will complete one ELA/literacy task and one math task that generally require 90–120 minutes each. Tasks will focus on hard-to-measure standards and real-world scenarios, and will measure students' ability to integrate knowledge and skills across multiple standards.

End-of-Year Adaptive Assessment: Provided for grades 3–8 and 11, these computer-adaptive assessments will consist of innovative, machine-scorable item types, most of which can be immediately machine scored. To a limited extent, items from out of grade level may be used to increase score precision.

Accountability: Scores for the Performance Tasks and End-of-Year Adaptive Assessment will be combined for the student's annual accountability score. Subject to state approval, Smarter Balanced will make available one retake for students in grades 3–8 and 11 for instances of an irregularity in the administration of the assessment.

Implementation: Field testing in 2013–2014; operational in 2014–2015.

Cost: Spring 2013 projection: $22.50 per student per year for all summative assessments, delivered and scored, and $4.80 per student for optional interim and formative package of services.

Key Similarities and Differences of PARCC and Smarter Balanced

Key Similarities

Summative Assessments:

- Online assessments for grades 3–8 and high school, ELA and mathematics
- Use a mix of item types including selected-response, constructed-response, technology-enhanced and complex performance tasks
- Two components, both given during final weeks of the school year
- Use of both electronic and human scoring
- Delivery supported on computers, laptops and tablets and a limited variety of operating systems

Other Assessments, Resources and Tools:

- Practice tests
- Optional interim assessments
- Professional development modules
- Formative items/tasks for classroom use
- Online reporting suite
- Digital library for sharing vetted resources and tools

Key Differences

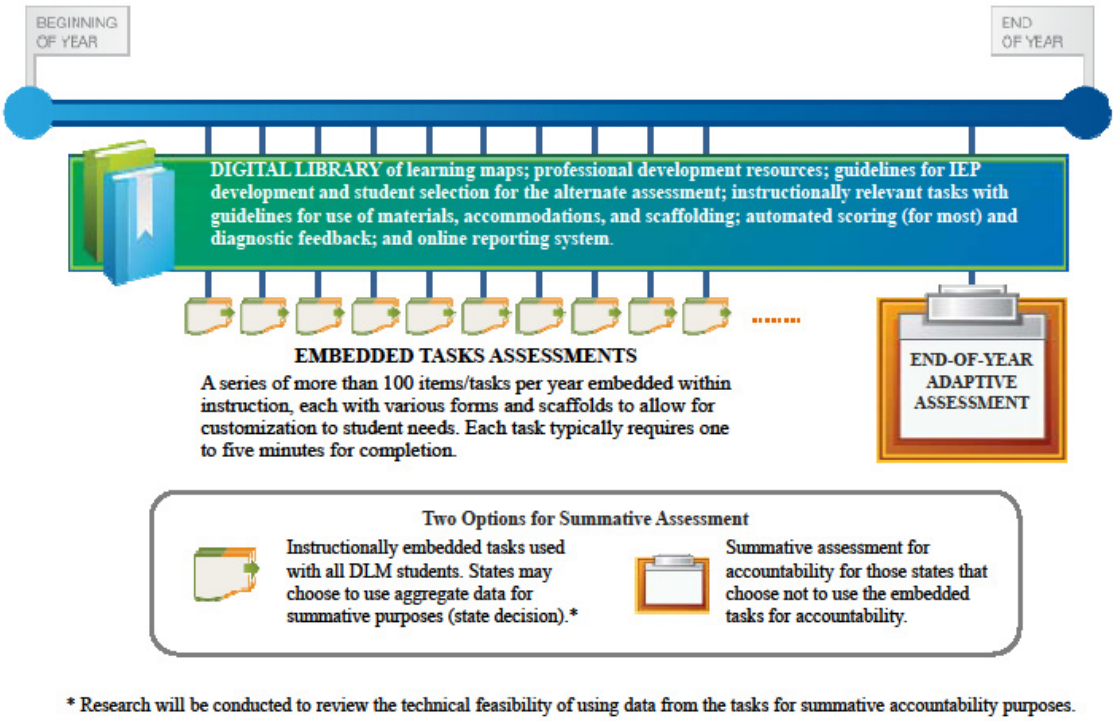
PARCC	Smarter Balanced
Summative Assessments	
• Fixed-form delivery (students take one of several fixed, equated sets of items and tasks) • Performance Based Assessment includes 3 ELA tasks and one or more mathematics tasks • One retake opportunity for grades 3–8 and up to three for high school, with state approval • Estimated total testing time for combined ELA and mathematics, spread over nine testing sessions: ▪ Grade 3: eight hours ▪ Grades 4–5: nine hours and twenty minutes ▪ Grades 6–8: nine hours and twenty-five minutes ▪ Grade 9–10: nine hours and forty-five minutes ▪ Grade 11; nine hours and fifty-five minutes • Paper-and-pencil version available as accommodation and for at least the first year as needed, for an additional fee of $3 to $4 per student. • Cost estimate: $29.50 per student annually, both subjects, delivered and scored	• Adaptive delivery (students see an individually tailored set of items and tasks) • Performance Based Assessment includes one ELA task and one mathematics task • One retake opportunity, but only for instances of a test administration irregularity • Estimated total testing time for combined ELA and mathematics, spread over several testing sessions, over several days: ▪ Grades 3–5: seven hours ▪ Grades 6–8: seven and one-half hours ▪ Grade 11: eight and one-half hours ▪ The assessments are untimed so these are descriptive only • Paper-and-pencil version available as accommodation and for three years for schools not ready for online delivery • Cost estimate: $22.50 per student annually, both subjects, delivered and scored
Other Optional Assessments, Resources and Tools	
• One diagnostic (grades 2 – 8) and one mid-year assessment (grades 3 – 11), with the latter made up primarily of tasks similar to the summative performance-based tasks. • A required, nonsummative speaking and listening assessment for grades 3–8 and high school, locally scored • K–1 formative performance tasks (optional)	• Interim assessments for grades 3–12 will be computer adaptive and include multiple item types, including performance tasks. The number, timing and scope (all standards or clusters of standards) can be locally determined • Exemplar Instructional Modules • Practice Test utility
Sustainability Model	
• Independent nonprofit organization governed by Chief School Officers of PARCC states	• Affiliation to be established with CRESST at UCLA

State Memberships as of August 16, 2013

	Comprehensive Assessment Consortia		Alternate Assessment Consortia		English Language Proficiency Consortia	
State	**PARCC** (21)	**SBAC** (26)	**DLM** (17)	**NCSC** (26)	**ASSETS** (34)	**ELPA21** (11)
Alabama					Member	
Alaska		Advisory	Member		Member	
Arizona	Governing			Member		
Arkansas	Governing			Member		Member
California		Governing		Member		
Colorado	Governing				Member	
Connecticut		Governing		Member		
Delaware		Governing		Member	Member	
District of Columbia	Governing			Member	Member	
Florida	Governing			Member		Member
Georgia				Member		
Hawaii		Governing				
Idaho		Governing		Member	Member	
Illinois	Governing		Member		Member	
Indiana	Governing			Member		
Iowa		Governing	Member			Member
Kansas		Governing	Member			Member
Kentucky	Participating				Member	
Louisiana	Governing			Member		Member
Maine		Governing		Member	Member	
Maryland	Governing			Member	Member	
Massachusetts	Governing				Member	
Michigan		Governing	Member		Member	
Minnesota					Member	
Mississippi	Governing		Member		Member	
Missouri		Governing	Member		Member	
Montana		Governing		Member	Member	
Nebraska						Member
Nevada		Governing		Member	Member	
New Hampshire		Governing			Member	
New Jersey	Governing		Member		Member	
New Mexico	Governing			Member	Member	
New York	Governing			Member		
North Carolina		Governing	Member		Member	
North Dakota		Governing	Member		Member	
Ohio	Governing					Member
Oklahoma	Governing		Member		Member	
Oregon		Governing		Member		Member
Pennsylvania	Participating	Advisory		Member	Member	
Rhode Island	Governing			Member	Member	
South Carolina		Governing		Member	Member	Member
South Dakota		Governing		Member	Member	
Tennessee	Governing			Member	Member	
Texas						
Utah			Member		Member	
Vermont		Governing	Member		Member	
Virginia			Member		Member	
Washington		Governing	Member			Member
West Virginia		Governing	Member			Member
Wisconsin		Governing	Member		Member	
Wyoming		Governing		Member	Member	
Virgin Islands (U.S.)	Participating	Affiliate		Member	Member	
PAC-6*				Member		

* PAC-6 consists of six entities: American Samoa, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Guam, Palau and Republic of the Marshall Islands.

The Dynamic Learning Maps Assessment Consortium (DLM™)



* Research will be conducted to review the technical feasibility of using data from the tasks for summative accountability purposes.

Description of Major DLM Features

Digital Library: This online library will contain supporting resources including learning maps, professional development resources, guidelines for IEP development, and an online reporting system.

Instructionally Embedded Assessment Component:

Embedded Task Assessments: Within the flow of instruction, students will complete two instructionally relevant "testlets," consisting of 3–5 tasks, in ELA and in mathematics each week over the course of the school year. Tasks will typically require one to five minutes for completion, and each will be available in a variety of forms and scaffolds to allow for customization to individual abilities and needs. As tasks are completed, the student's learning is mapped. A dynamic adaptive delivery system will select tasks for students based on several pieces of information including the level of success with prior tasks, the amount of prompting or support required, and the current position within the learning map.

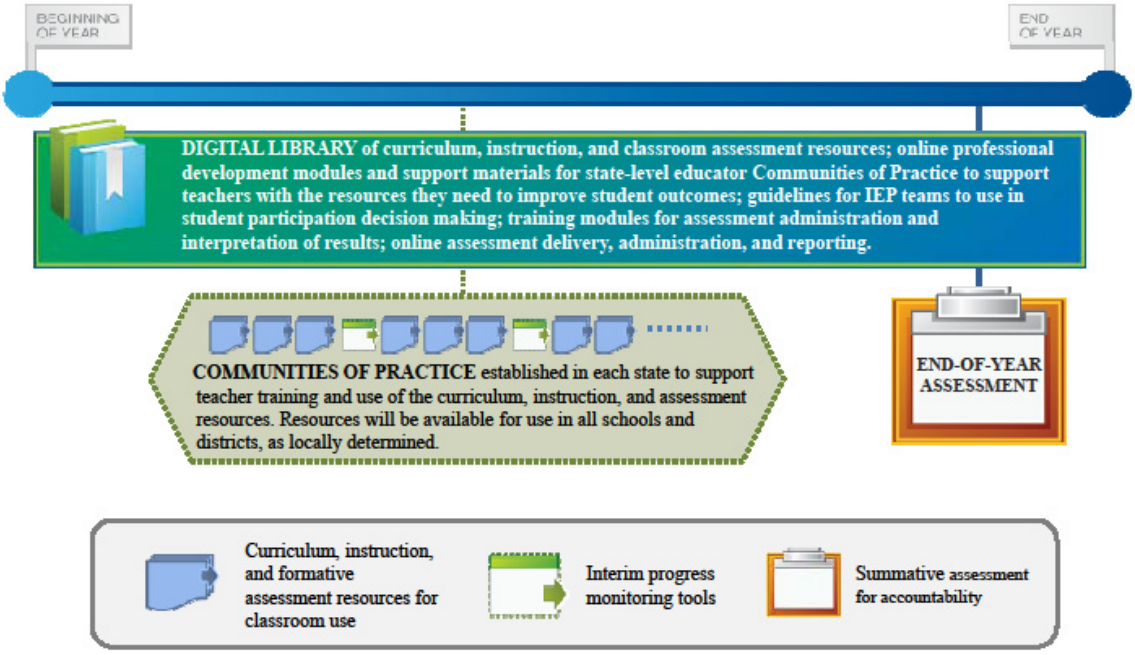
Summative Assessment:

End-of-Year Adaptive Assessment: This stand-alone end-of-year assessment will utilize the same dynamic adaptive delivery engine as the instructionally embedded tasks and will be given near the end of the school year. The DLM system will be created to be accessible for students with a variety of disabilities including significant cognitive disabilities, students who are deaf or hard of hearing, students who are blind or have low vision, and those who have neuromuscular, orthopedic or other motor disabilities. The system also will be compatible with a variety of assistive technologies commonly used by students and will allow for varying levels of teacher assistance.

Accountability: Results from the End-Of-Year Adaptive Assessment can be used for accountability purposes. Alternatively, and subject to research to be conducted, states may choose to use the aggregated results from the Embedded Tasks to make summative decisions.

Implementation: Field testing in 2013–2014; operational in 2014–2015.

The National Center and State Collaborative (NCSC)



Description of Major NCSC Features

Digital Library: All of the NCSC curriculum, instruction, professional development and classroom assessment materials will be available in a digital library and made available to all states by the end of the grant.

Instructional Supports:

State-Based Communities of Practice (CoPs): These groups are the primary vehicle for review and dissemination of materials and for professional development. NCSC is developing curriculum resource guides, instructional units, formative assessment tools and sample scripted lessons to illustrate how to make specific content accessible to students with cognitive disabilities. NCSC is also developing research-based resources to build educator capacity in the effective use of augmentative communication tools and strategies. Online training modules are being developed to train teachers in the use of these resources. CoPs are holding regular webinars and web-based meetings to learn about and discuss these instructional and support resources and to develop plans for training other educators within their states.

Interim Assessment Tools: NCSC is developing interim assessment tools to be used within the flow of instruction (illustrated above) to monitor student progress and improve instruction and instructional programs.

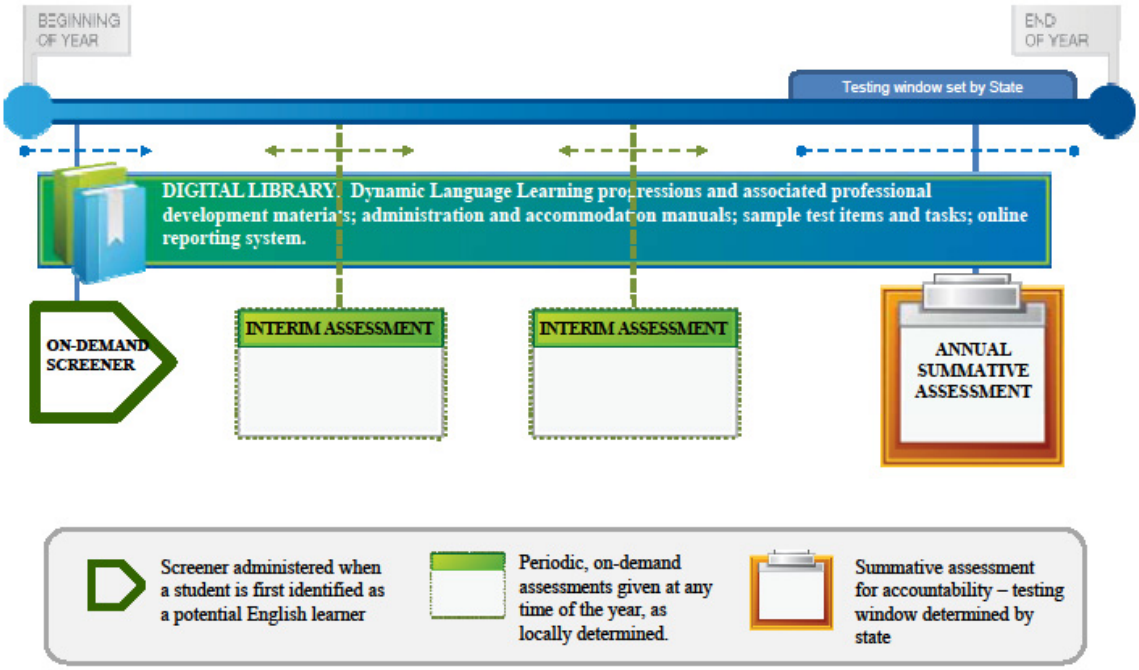
Summative Assessment:

End-of-Year Assessment: These assessments in ELA and mathematics will be taken by students at the end of grades 3–8 and 11. While the content assessed will be standardized, teachers will be trained and certified in the administration in order to ensure that each student can interact with the content. A variety of item types — including multiple choice, short constructed response and performance tasks — will be included. The process for ensuring each student interacts with content at an appropriate level of challenge is being studied and may involve use of short locator tests and/or multi-stage adaptive testing.

Accountability: Results from the end-of-year assessment will be used for accountability purposes.

Implementation: Census field testing/operational administration in Spring 2015.

Assessment Services Supporting ELs through Technology Systems Consortium (ASSETS)



Description of Major ASSETS Features

Digital Library: The digital library will contain Dynamic Language Learning Progressions and associated professional development materials, test administration and accommodation manuals, sample test items and tasks, and an online reporting system.

On-Demand Screener: The screener will be technology-based and used to determine eligibility and appropriate placement for English Learner program services. The listening and reading portions will be computer scored, while the writing and speaking portions will be scored on-site by trained educators.

Optional Assessments:

Interim Assessment System: A series of shorter, targeted, online interim assessments will be developed to help guide instruction and to enable schools to chart student progress in finer increments than the annual summative assessment. Multiple item types will reflect those in the summative assessment. In addition, complex, technology-enhanced item types will be piloted within the interim assessment system and, as appropriate, transitioned into the summative assessment.

Summative Assessments:

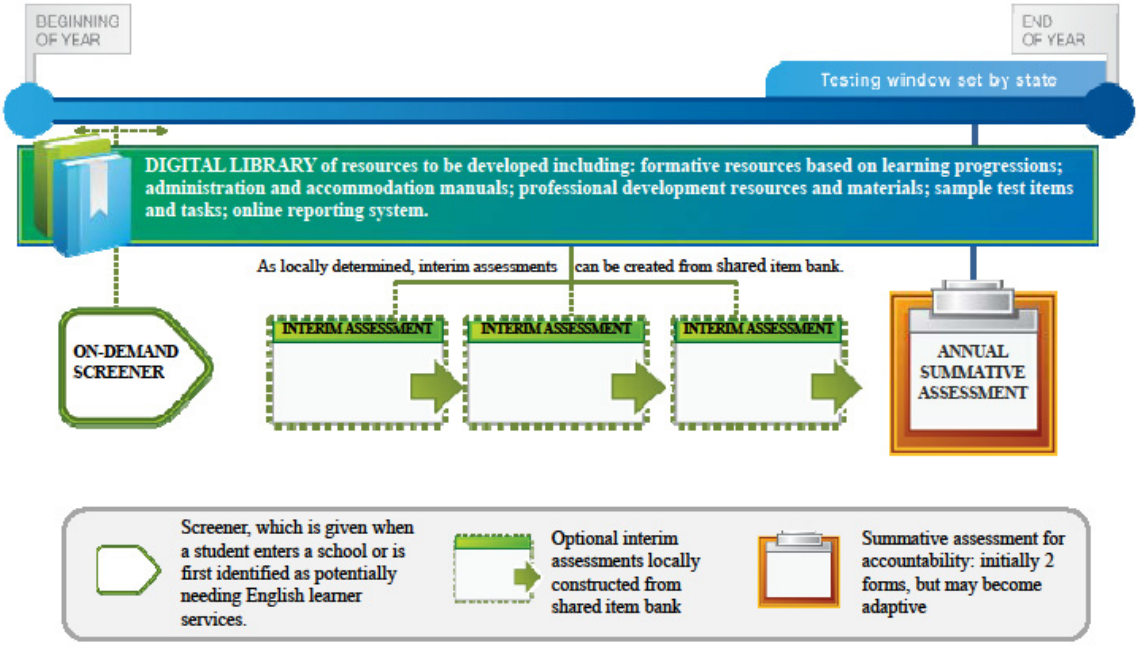
Annual Summative Assessment: This computer-based assessment will assess the language domains of reading, writing, speaking and listening and will have the capability of assessing authentic language development more reliably than paper-based tests through features such as the recording of spoken English. Academic, social and instructional language will be assessed. Students will use computers with headsets in order to assess listening and speaking. The assessment will yield scores on a vertical K–12 scale that educators, students and parents can use to chart student language development across school years. It is anticipated that final scores will be returned to states within two to four weeks.

Accountability: The assessment system will be designed to produce composite ELP scores that can be used to help inform decisions about whether an individual student should be reclassified as well as to contribute to decisions about district and state performance for accountability purposes.

Implementation: Field testing in 2014–2015; operational in 2015–2016.

The English Language Proficiency Assessment Consortia

The English Proficiency Assessment for the 21st Century Consortium (ELPA21)



Description of Major ELPA21 Features

Digital Library: This library will contain professional development modules for both ELL teachers and academic content teachers on (1) how to provide a secure and accurate assessment experience, (2) how to best use the assessment results to inform instructional placement, and (3) how to discuss results with students and families. It also will contain formative resources based on learning progressions, administration and accommodation manuals, vetted resources contributed by states, professional development materials, sample test items and tasks, and an online reporting system.

On-Demand Screener: This short assessment will be used to determine whether, and at what level, a student needs ELL services. It will be administered at the time a student enters the school system and may be re-administered as needed. It will still assess across the four language domains. A Consortium-wide common cut score will be used to make initial ELL identification and program placement decisions. Teachers also will have access to the score reports from the screener to inform instruction.

Optional Interim Assessments: Through extended collaboration beyond the grant, ELPA21 will develop a secure item bank from which locally defined interim benchmark assessments can be constructed.

Summative Assessments: The summative assessments will be developed for each of six grade bands (K, 1, 2–3, 4–5, 6–8 and 9–12) and administered near the end of the academic year. Because ELLs arrive in schools with varying levels of English and academic proficiency, each grade band assessment will measure across a wide range of proficiency. Two test forms will be available per grade band each year. These assessments will measure students' level of English proficiency in the four domains of reading, writing, speaking and listening. A composite score will be reported along a continuous K–12 vertical scale to facilitate monitoring of student progress across school years.

Accountability: The summative scores from the ELPA21 assessments may be used to qualify a student for exit from the ELL program as long as other data also provide evidence of ELP. Consortium states will decide how and what combination of evidence will be acceptable.

Implementation: Operational in 2015–2016.

K-12 Center at ETS

Driving Advances in K-12 Assessment

For more helpful resources about the assessment consortia, go to

www.k12center.org.

To sign up for notices as new resources are released, go to

www.k12center.org/subscribe

Created by Educational testing Service (ETS) to forward a larger social mission, the K–12 Center at ETS serves as a catalyst and resource for the improvement of measurement and data systems to enhance student achievement. 23544