

## **Implementing the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) in Freeman**

The Freeman School District continues to implement the new Common Core State Standards (CCSS), which were adopted by the Washington State Legislature, along with the Smarter Balanced assessment for measuring progress toward meeting the new standards.

### **FAQ's:**

**What are the Common Core State Standards?** Developed voluntarily and cooperatively by 48 states, two territories, and the District of Columbia, the Common Core State Standards offer schools, teachers, students and parents consistent standards in English language arts and mathematics. The CCSS defines the knowledge and skills students should take away from their K-12 schooling to be successfully prepared for postsecondary and career opportunities.

**How will the Common Core State Standards be assessed?** Teachers and parents need information about whether students are meeting the expectations set by the CCSS. Smarter Balanced is an assessment system that will measure mastery of the Common Core State Standards and provide timely information about student achievement and progress toward college and career readiness.

**When will the new assessment be in place?** This school year, 2013-14, we will field test the new assessment in grades 3-8 and grades 9 & 11. Results of the assessment won't be released to either parents or the school district; however, this will allow students and teachers to get a "glimpse" of what the new assessment will look like and provide practice for taking a test using the computer. Full implementation will occur in the 2014-15 school year and will replace the current MSP assessments in grades 3-8.

**How is Smarter Balanced different from current assessments?** Smarter Balanced will provide timely and meaningful assessment information about areas of performance so that teachers can follow up with targeted instruction, students can better target their own efforts, and administrators and policymakers can more fully understand what students know and can do, in order to guide curriculum and professional development decisions.

The Smarter Balanced assessment uses computer adaptive technology, to provide more precise information. Teachers, principals, and parents can receive results from computerized assessments in weeks versus months. Faster results mean that teachers can use the information from assessments throughout the school year to differentiate instruction to meet the unique needs of their students. Smarter Balanced assessments go beyond multiple-choice questions and includes short constructed response, extended constructed response, and performance tasks that allow students to complete an in-depth project that demonstrate analytical skills and real-world problem solving.

**Are sample Smarter Balanced assessment questions available?** In April 2013, Smarter Balanced released online Practice Tests that provide an early look at sets of assessment questions aligned to the Common Core for grades 3-8 and 11 in both English language arts/literacy and mathematics. The Practice Tests allow teachers, students, parents, and other interested parties to experience the features of online testing and gain insight into how Smarter Balanced will assess students' mastery of the Common Core. You can view the practice test at [www.smarterbalanced.org](http://www.smarterbalanced.org).