Smarter Balanced Accessibility and Accommodations Policies and Guidelines

Chief Instructional Officers Update

March 12, 2013

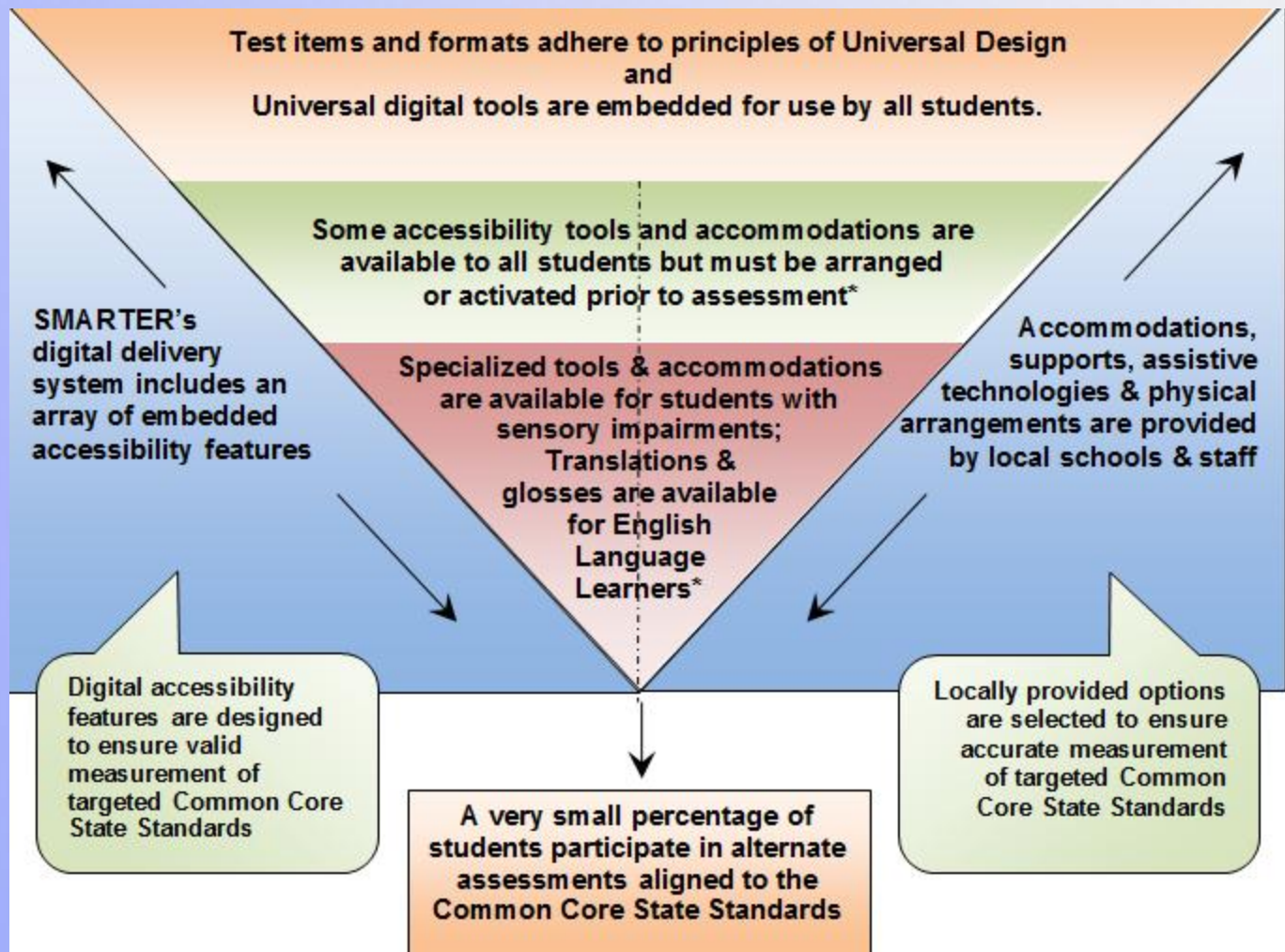# Smarter Balanced Accommodations Definition

- A practice or procedure in presentation, response, setting, and timing or scheduling that, when used in an assessment, provides increased equity access to all students.

- Consortium-approved accommodations do not compromise the learning expectations, construct, grade-level standard, or intended outcome of the assessment.

Accessibility and Accommodations Policies and Guidelines

The development of a full array of Accessibility and Accommodations features is an ongoing project informed by:

- Research and best practices
- Advances enabled by digital technologies
- Review of existing state accommodations practices across partner states
- Recommendations of panels of experts in testing students with disabilities and English language learners
- Findings of the pilot and field tests

DRAFT Accessibility Framework

Test items and formats adhere to principles of Universal Design
and
Universal digital tools are embedded for use by all students.

Some accessibility tools and accommodations are available to all students but must be arranged or activated prior to assessment*

SMARTER's digital delivery system includes an array of embedded accessibility features

Specialized tools & accommodations are available for students with sensory impairments; Translations & glosses are available for English Language Learners*

Accommodations, supports, assistive technologies & physical arrangements are provided by local schools & staff

Digital accessibility features are designed to ensure valid measurement of targeted Common Core State Standards

A very small percentage of students participate in alternate assessments aligned to the Common Core State Standards

Locally provided options are selected to ensure accurate measurement of targeted Common Core State Standards

Accessibility Framework

- Test items and formats adhere to principles of Universal Design.

- Some universal digital tools are embedded for use by all students.

- Some accessibility tools and accommodations are available to all students but must be arranged or activated prior to assessment.

- Specialized tools and accommodations are available for students with sensory impairments.

Access by Design

- Needs of most students can be accommodated during the design process rather than in a post hoc manner after the original version of an item and task are developed.

- Accessibility supports are embedded in a digital file.

Accessibility Supports Embedded in a Digital File

Spoken (Read Aloud) Tags

ASL tags

Text-Based Default Form

Braille Tags

Language Learner Tags
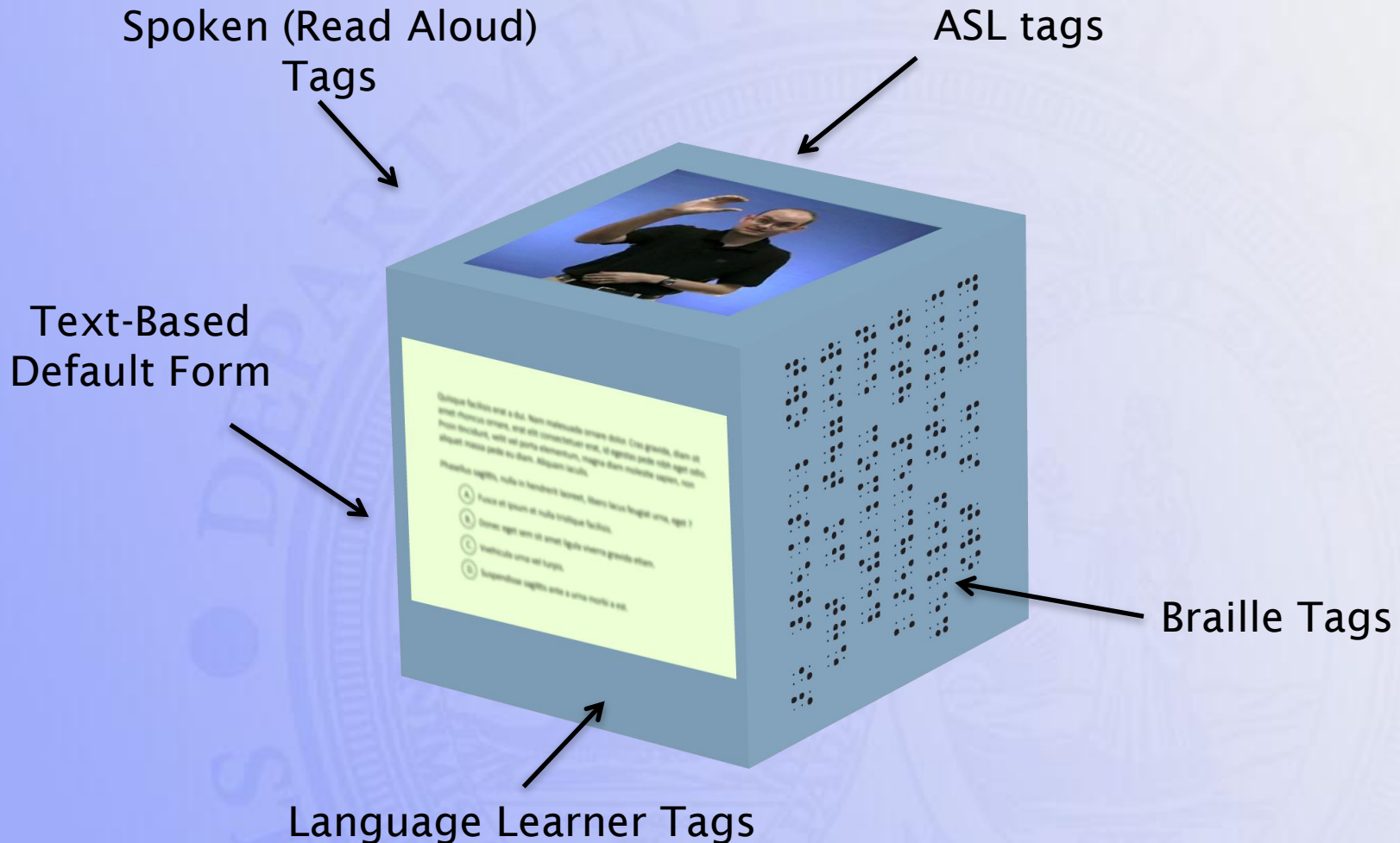
Differences in Digitally-delivered Accommodations from Paper-based Assessment Accommodations

Digital Based

- File can contain several forms of a given item
  - Auditory
  - Braille
  - ASL
  - Glossary definitions
  - Text-based descriptions
- Flexible
- Access to variety of devices that student can control for response

Paper Based

- Flat uni-dimensional
- Inflexible fixed print-based format
- Requires pen or pencil to respond (if student unable to use pen or pencil requires human intervention)

Accessibility and Accommodations for the Pilot

- Universal Digital Tools

- Accommodations Supports

- Research Forms

Universal Digital Tools

Built into the test administration software and available for all students. Can be activated by student.

- Pausing
- Variable font size (5 sizes)
- Highlighting
- Marking for review
- Answer eliminator
- Expandable passages
- Tab-enter navigation
- Calculator (on-line embedded) displays only for certain items
- Note taking tool for ELA performance task

Universal Digital Writing Tools

- Bold, Italics, Underline

- Indent

- Cut, Copy, Paste

- Spell Check

- Undo/Redo

Accommodations Supports

- Extended time

- Frequent breaks

- Quiet environment

- Font background color alternatives
  - Black on White (default)
  - Black on Rose
  - Medium Gray on Light Gray
  - Yellow on Blue
  - Reverse Contrast

Accommodations Supports (cont.)

- Print on request (items/stimuli/passages)

    - for students who cannot use computer screens

    - Passages/Stimuli: Students may require the print-on-request feature for individual reading passages or stimuli.

    - Items: In extremely rare circumstances—students can request to print individual items.

Pilot Research Forms

- Small number of students for the 2013 Pilot

- To investigate specific assessment accessibility and accommodation issues

- Schools will assign forms on documented student need
  - IEP
  - 504 Plan

Pilot Research Forms (cont.)

- Online Refreshable Braille
  - Students who use braille for accessing content

- Text-to-Speech
  - Students with identified need
  - Math
    - text-based content and graphics
  - ELA
    - test items only

Pilot Research Forms (cont.)

- Online English Glossary
  - Allows student to view words identified as key to understanding what is being asked
  - Glossaries provide context or synonyms but do not provide formal definitions for key-word terms
  - Key words have been identified as non-essential to the construct measured
  - Students who may have a need include those with
    - Disability that effects memory retrieval or decoding skills
    - "Advanced" language proficiency level

Pilot Research Forms (cont.)

Online refreshable braille   ELA   4, 7, 11

Math 3, 7,11

Text-to-speech   ELA   4, 7, 11

Math 3, 7,11

Online English glossaries   ELA   4

Math 3

Personal Needs Profile (PNP)

- Developed for all students
- Matches supports to individual needs
- Students requiring one or more accessibility or accommodations support will have this documented prior to test administration.
  - Digital delivery system will activate the specified options when the student logs in to an assessment.
  - For paper-based administration the PNP will allow the assessment program to deliver the appropriate materials to each school.
  - Provides information to the school regarding any special settings or conditions

Preparation for SBAC

- Include special education teachers in all CCSS implementation activities in the school and district.
  - A deep understanding of the CCSS is essential for instruction in and access to the assessment content.
- Identify technology needs created by access needs and provide opportunity for use in routine instruction and assessment.
- Use sample items for practice.
- Encourage students with access needs to participate in the pilot testing.

Contact Information

Cathy Boshamer, Director

Office of Exceptional Children

cboshamer@ed.sc.gov

Suzanne Swaffield

Office of Assessment

sswaffie@ed.sc.gov