

News release



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What do you know about [new state tests](#)?

Information and “hands on” sample test, Jan. 21, 6:30-7:30 p.m. at the [Community Resource Center](#), 3900 Broadway, Everett

This spring, students in grades three through eight and 10 and 11 will take different state assessments, known as [Smarter Balanced Assessments](#). The tests are new, and the way students take the tests is new.

Instead of using paper and pencil, students will take the tests online, using Chrome Book laptops. District teachers have been learning about the new test standards for the last two years. Students have been using Chrome Book since this fall when 3,400 of the white laptops rolled into classrooms in especially equipped power carts, thanks to the technology levy voters approved in 2010.



Eisenhower Middle School students using Chrome Books in December's [Hour of Code](#) activities. Regular use of the machines before spring tests builds familiarity before test day.

“The new Common Core State Standards (CCSS) sets different targets for students. Teachers have been learning about the new, more rigorous standards over the last two years so they can help students learn to those higher standards,” explained Associate Superintendent Joyce Stewart. Teachers have been adjusting instructional practices and incorporating the Chrome Book computers in classrooms this year. That way, students are familiar with the machines they will use when testing begins this spring.”

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“Parents have always helped prepare students for testing,” said Director of Curriculum and Assessment Catherine Matthews. “The January 21 information session is one way of helping parents understand the tests so they can help students be more confident on test days.”

Hosted by Everett Public Schools PTSA Council, the information session will be an overview of the *Smarter Balanced Assessments*. Those who attend will have a chance to ask questions about the tests and take a practice test.”

“All district Chrome Books are in schools and constantly used by students and teachers. So we will use laptops for the January 21 demonstration,” explained Matthews. “I’ll show those who attend how they can turn their home computers into Chrome Books so they can have that experience with students on more practice tests.”

Matthews will lead the January 21 session and notes that she is scheduled at other district schools to facilitate similar information sessions. Schedule dates and times are available from school PTSAs. “We also have a parent guide in video format on our website,” Matthews pointed out. “The video is available now in English. The Spanish version is in production.”

The district’s community newsletter *Everett Schools* will arrive in mailboxes beginning Jan. 16. “That issue has more information and some printed versions of practice tests,” noted Matthews. “While seeing the practice tests on paper is not the same experience students will have, it will give community members an idea of the tests’ rigor and what students are learning today.”

Online practice SBAC tests are available on the district’s [Smarter Balanced website](#).

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