



## *Report on February 2013 HEPC Smarter Balanced Higher Education Advisory Council*

### *What is the Smarter Balanced Consortium?*

This is a nationwide consortium of states committed to national standards in public education and to interfacing public with higher education in an effort to reduce the need for remediation at the post-secondary level and to increase college-readiness of high school seniors. **Dianne Bazell**, representative of the Smarter Balanced Consortium (see <http://www.corestandards.org/>), has worked with WV and other states who are creating assessments for **Common Core Standards** (see English LA, Social Studies, Science, and Math standards at <http://www.corestandards.org/>). Sarah Beasley, HEPC staff, is spear-heading the coordination of state higher education with WV public education driving Smarter Balance in the state.

These new standards have been adopted by the state of WV, along with most other states in the country (see <http://www.corestandards.org/in-the-states>). This common core will now be the focus of WV public education; and the assessment tools and measures **adopted in WV will be used in lieu of the WESTEST, the 11<sup>th</sup> grade assessment** that now determines whether students go into remediation courses in Math and English in their senior year of high school. In theory, the new system will reduce the need for post-secondary developmental courses and increase college readiness among graduating high school seniors. By 2014-15, the Smarter Balanced Assessments will be completed and used across the country. See the *Education Week* article "Testing Group Wrestles with 'College Readiness,'" by Catherine Gewertz, at <http://www.edweek.org/ew/articles/2012/06/22/36collegeready.h31.html?print=1>. Since common core curriculum and assessments will be part of the continuum of K-12 education, it will take some years to see the full and tangible fruits of these labors.

### *What is the WV Smarter Balanced Higher Education Advisory Council?*

The WV Higher Education Policy Commission (HEPC) has created a state advisory council to help disseminate information and explore the interfacing of public and higher education regarding the new standards and college readiness. **Carla Williamson** represents the WV Department of Education in the project, and **Sarah Beasley**, who has worked with development of Adult Education in the state, is the point person for the HEPC. **Lucie Refsland** and **Sylvia Shurbutt** are higher education faculty representatives to the council. The following represent goals for the council and next steps:

### *West Virginia Smarter Balanced Higher Education Advisory Council*

**Objective 1: Generate higher education support and buy-in for the Smarter Balanced Assessment (SBA)**

**Objective 2: Strengthen and expand partnerships between higher education and K-12, including working with and supporting K-12 to advance the work of the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium (SBAC).**

**Objective 3: Provide expertise, advice, and feedback to HEPC, CTCS, and the national SBAC in the development, implementation, and promotion of SBA.**

**Objective 4: Take SBA information back to campuses and to various higher education advisory groups/councils.**

### **Next Steps...**

- HEPC/CTCS will create a WV Smarter Balanced higher education strategic plan and send to council for feedback and suggestions. This plan will also include some concrete action items for the council.
- Workshops for public and higher education faculty will be conducted throughout 2013 and 2014, when the program begins in the public schools.