NYSED Teaching is the Core Grant

Western Suffolk BOCES was recently awarded a $300,000 "Teaching is the Core" grant to work with nine participating districts and the BOCES Special Education division to review assessments that students take and to develop an action plan related to future testing. The project is expected to reduce the number of assessments that students must take while increasing each assessment’s value to teachers and administrators as a tool to guide instruction.

As a participating district, Smithtown will create Assessment Review Teams that will be trained as they review the district's assessments. Then, the teams will compare their assessments with criteria for effective assessments that are developed as part of the professional development process. The teams will collaborate with each other to develop and implement an action plan for modifying the tests that students take.

BOCES staff and expert consultants will facilitate regional and in-district professional development. The training will address key issues related to the development of formative assessments, and support district teams as they continue their work and build a databank of instructionally useful assessments that align with the requirements of the Annual Professional Performance Review (APPR) for teachers and principals. The result will be an assessment inventory that more effectively supports student achievement and improvement.