

Frequently Asked Questions - Tamalpais Union High School District California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress (CAASPP)

The following fact sheet is designed to provide parents and students information about the implementation of California state standardized assessments in the Tamalpais Union High School District.

Q: What is CAASPP?

A: The California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress (CAASPP) System is the statewide testing program in California, which replaced the STAR (Standardized Testing and Reporting) tests, and are required for all students in California public schools.

Q: What do the assessments measure?

A: The CAASPP tests measure college and career readiness in English language arts/literacy (ELA), mathematics, and science. The academic standards measured are the Common Core State Standards in ELA and mathematics, and the Next Generation Science Standards in science.

Q: Who takes the test? In which subject areas?

A: In high schools, all 11th graders will take the *Smarter Balanced* assessment in math and English language arts. Additionally, the state of CA is piloting new assessments this year in science, and schools are assigned a grade level. This year, Drake, Tamalpais, and Tamiscal will test 10th graders; Redwood will test 11th graders; and San Andreas will test 12th graders.

Q: Is participation required?

A: Yes. Federal regulations require schools to report 95% participation rates. We are held accountable to this by the state and federal government, and categorical funding can be withheld if we do not meet participation rates.

Q: When will this test be administered?

A: Tests occur annually in between March and June. Each school site will communicate testing dates, locations, and timelines directly to families.

Q: How long will the test take?

A: The state of California mandates that the test be untimed, meaning students can take as long as they need. For ELA and math, each student will complete 2 days of testing and the

tests will last approximately 3.5-4 hours each. The science pilot test (CAST) will last approximately 90 minutes.

Q: What should parents and students know about the test questions?

A: These assessments are computer-based and adaptive, including a bank of test questions aligned to standards, and free-response performance tasks. The questions are more open-ended and require students to explain how they arrived at their answers, support their responses with evidence, and solve real world problems. The questions are designed to provide information for how well students know the content and skills outlined in California's academic standards.

Q: What does an adaptive test do?

A: Each student takes the same assessment and the questions are customized to each student's response during the exam. The benefit to this type of test is that it very personalized to each individual student and provides more accurate information about what each student knows and can do.

Q: What is a performance task?

A: Performance tasks are multiple step problems or scenarios that require a student to think critically and apply understanding. Sample tasks can be viewed on the Smarter Balanced website:

<http://www.smarterbalanced.org/sample-items-and-performance-tasks/>

Q: What should my child do to prepare?

A: All students should be adequately prepared in their English, math, and science classes. Practice and training tests are available online to help students prepare, and are entirely optional, <http://www.smarterbalanced.org/practice-test/> and

<http://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/tg/sa/practicetest.asp>.

TUHSD also encourages all students to eat a balanced meal and come to school well rested on exam days.

Q: What happens with the results?

A: This year, Smarter Balanced assessment scores in ELA and math will be reported to students, teachers, counselors and parents. Scores will not impact college eligibility for individual students however, California State Universities and participating community college do use scores to measure college and career readiness through the Early Assessment Program (EAP) (see below). The results will be used to calculate academic

progress and growth at the student, subject, school, and district level. This year, scores will not be reported for the science test, but will instead be used to validate the assessment.

Q: What is the EAP?

A: The California State University system (CSU) and participating California community colleges will use student results from the Smarter Balanced Summative Assessments to determine college readiness. Students who score at the highest performance level (“Standard Exceeded”) are considered *ready* for college-level coursework in English and/or mathematics and exempt from taking the CSU placement exams in that subject area (ELA or math). Students who score at the “Standard Met” performance level are considered *conditionally ready* and will be exempt from taking the CSU placement exams *if* they earn a C or better in an approved English or math course during their senior year. Students that do not meet the conditional requirement will need to participate in the CSU’s Early Start Program. For more information, please see the CSU’s Early Assessment Program Web page, at <http://www.csusuccess.org/caaspp>.

Q: Where can I learn more?

A: Contact your school’s principal, or...

- The CAASPP website: www.caaspp.org
- The Smarter Balanced website: www.smarterbalanced.org
- The CDE’s CAASPP Science Assessment website
<http://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/tg/ca/caasppscience.asp>
- The CDE’s Test Score Guide website <http://www.testscoreguide.org/ca>