



POWAY UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

Dear PUSD Families,

An important part of your student's academic program is measuring progress through the California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress (CAASPP) assessments.

Smarter Balanced Assessments

Students across California in grade 11 take these assessments each spring to gauge each student's performance in English language arts/literacy (ELA), mathematics. These tests measure the skills called for by the California academic standards, which focus on a student's ability to write clearly, think critically, and solve problems.

Because CAASPP tests are given statewide, they provide an opportunity to measure the skills of all students against the same academic standards. Given online, the tests are computer-adaptive, allowing more precise measurement of individual skills. Parents can use their student's ELA or Mathematics results as one of many indications of their child's performance. Our teachers and principals also use these results to compare a schools' performance toward achieving our state standards.

The Early Assessment Program (EAP)

EAP is a joint program of the CDE, California State University (CSU), and the California Community Colleges (CCC). The EAP provides students with an early indicator of their college readiness in English and mathematics prior to starting the senior year. In addition, EAP may earn students an exemption from the CSU and participating CCC English and/or mathematics placement tests that are required for entering freshmen.

To authorize the release of their results, students should select the circle that indicates their understanding that their CAASPP/EAP results will be shared directly with the CSU and/or the CCC. This question is asked at the end of each test. If the student does not authorize that the results of a particular test be shared, then results will not be shared for that content-area assessment. Students may voluntarily share results of one or both assessments. Students who choose not to release their results to the CSU and CCC will need to provide those results upon request at a later date.

California Science Test—Pilot Test

California's new state standards for science call for students to think and work like scientists and engineers—asking questions and learning through hands-on investigation and discovery. Working with science teachers, California is developing a new assessment that emphasizes scientific thinking and reasoning. This year students in grade 10 or 12 will participate in the tryout of test items for this future assessment. While this tryout will not provide scores for your child, it is an important first step in developing an assessment that will fairly and accurately measure how students are achieving on the new science standards.

California Alternative Assessments

The goal of the California Alternative Assessments (CAAs) is to ensure that students with the most significant needs in special education can attain increasingly higher achievement levels and leave high school ready for academic or career options. Students in grades three through eight and grade eleven are eligible to take the CAAs in ELA and mathematics as determined in the annual Individual Education Plan meeting. This year in grade 10 or 12, these students will also take the science alternative pilot assessment. As mentioned above this will also be a tryout of test items to assist in building future assessments.

Participation

Pursuant to California Education Code Section 60615, parents have the right to opt out of any state assessment. It is recommended parents meet with their child's school principal if they are considering this option. Our teachers and principals have found many benefits in having our students participate in this assessment and we want to assure parents that student results from any assessment will not be shared beyond the use of school staff directly involved in your child's education. Section 852 of Title 5 of the California Code of Regulations further provides that parents or guardians may annually submit a written request to the school to excuse their child from any or all parts of the CAASPP for the school year. Therefore, if you wish to exempt your student from testing, notification in writing to your school's principal is required.

We wish all of our students the best as they take these important exams.

Marian Kim-Phelps, Superintendent