



SAN MATEO-FOSTER CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT

April 2017

Re: CAASPP Testing – April 24th-June 2nd, 2017

Dear Parent/Guardian,

California's academic standards—what we want our students to learn and apply—are designed so students graduate college and are career ready. One way we measure their progress is through the California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress (CAASPP). Students across California in grades 3–8 and grade 11 take these assessments each spring. These tests were created specifically to gauge each student's performance in English language arts/literacy (ELA), mathematics, and science. They measure the skills called for by the academic standards, including the ability to write clearly, think critically, and solve problems. CAASPP tests are given statewide, and provide an opportunity to measure the skills of all students against the same academic standards. The tests are computer-adaptive, meaning that correct responses will be followed with more challenging questions, and incorrect responses with less challenging questions, to provide a more accurate score in fewer total questions.

This year, the CAASPP program is comprised of the following assessments:

- Smarter Balanced Summative Assessments for ELA and mathematics
- The California Science Test—Pilot Test (CAST)
- The California Alternate Assessment (CAA)

The Smarter Balanced Assessments

The Smarter Balanced ELA and mathematics tests reflect California's rigorous academic standards and allow students to demonstrate analytical writing and critical thinking skills as well as their knowledge of facts. In 2017, parents will be able to compare results across **three years** (2014–15, 2015–16, and 2016–17) to determine their child's progress in meeting the standards. (Exceptions: Only two years of data will be reported for students in grade 4, and only one year of data will be reported for students in grade 3.) Test results will be mailed home near the start of the next school year. To learn more about these tests, please visit CDE's Test Score Guide Web site at <http://www.testscoreguide.org/ca>, which provides informative guides and test score descriptions as well as sample test items at different levels of difficulty.

The California Science Test – Pilot and Field Test

The Next Generation Science Standards for California Schools (CA NGSS) 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 your students in grades 5 and 8 will participate in the pilot of the test platform for this future assessment. While this pilot will not provide scores for any student, school or

district, it is a critical first step in developing an assessment that will fairly and accurately measure how students are learning the new science standards. Next year the science test will be field tested, for a projected operational release in the 2018-19 school year. For additional information about the new science tests and sample questions, please visit the CDE's CAASPP Science Assessment Web page at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/tg/ca/caasppscience.asp>.

The California Alternate Assessment

Students in grades 3 through 8 and grade 11 who have an IEP that designates the use of an alternate assessment are eligible to take the CAA in ELA and mathematics. The goal of the CAA is to ensure that students with the most significant cognitive disabilities attain increasingly higher achievement levels and leave high school ready for academic or career options. If you would like more information or resources about alternate assessments, please visit the CDE's CAASPP Alternate Assessments Web page at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/tg/ca/altassessment.asp>.

Our students will be testing during the weeks of April 24th – June 2nd. (See below for specific dates.) Not all students will be testing at the same time. It helps our teachers, schools, district, and state to have a complete and accurate picture of how our students are learning. Every student's best effort is important to have the most accurate data when using assessment data for instructional and programmatic decision making. California educational code allows parents/guardians to choose to not have their student participate. If you have any questions regarding your child's participation in statewide assessments, please contact your child's teacher or principal.

Sincerely,

John Cosmos
Principal
Bayside STEM Academy

Sincerely,

Heather Olsen
Assistant Superintendent
Education Services

2017 CAASPP Testing Schedule – Bayside STEM Academy

April 24th – June 2nd

8th Grade

Language Arts – April 24th-25th; April 27th-28th

Science – April 26th

Math – May 15th-19th

7th Grade

Language Arts – May 1st – May 5th

Math – May 15th-19th

6th Grade

Language Arts – May 8th-12th

Math – May 15th-19th

Make-Ups for All Grades: May 22nd-June 2nd

What parents can do to help prepare your child for testing:

- Talk to your child about the importance of taking the CAASPP seriously.
- Do not stress out your child about the test, but do encourage him/her to try their very best.
- Make sure your child gets a good night's sleep before each day of testing.
- Provide your child with a healthy breakfast in the morning of the test.
- Attendance during testing is very important. Please do not take your child out of school for appointments during this time.

Thank you in advance for talking to your child about CAASPP testing!!!