



TOM TORLAKSON
State Superintendent
of Public Instruction

What We Need to Know to Prepare Students for Common Core State Standards- Aligned Assessments

***Responses from a California Testing
Coordinator and Teacher Panel***

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California Smarter Balanced Assessment Update

- In 2015, over 3.2 million students in approximately 1815 local educational agencies (LEAs) took the on-line Summative Assessment last spring.
- More than 1.6 million interim assessments started across 1,100 California LEAs.



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First Year of California's Smarter Balanced Assessment Results

- Students' scores fall into one of four achievement levels: standard exceeded, standard met, standard nearly met, and standard not met.
- Statewide in all grades, 44% of students met or exceeded the English language arts/literacy standard and 33% met or exceeded the mathematics standard.

California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress for 2015

Table 1: Percentage of All California Students by Achievement Level for English Language Arts/Literacy and Mathematics

Content Area	Number of Students Tested	Number of Students Receiving Parental Exemption ¹	Percent of Students who Exceeded Standards	Percent of Students who Met Standards	Percent of Students who Nearly Met Standards	Percent of Students who Did Not Meet Standards
English Language Arts/Literacy	3,154,463	19,070	16	28	25	31
Mathematics	3,169,239	19,311	14	19	29	38

¹ Parental exemptions pursuant to *Education Code* Section 60615 and Section 852 in *Title 5 of the California Code of Regulations*. These counts are preliminary as local educational agencies have until September 15 to report parental exemptions.

For more detailed information per grade visit <http://www.cde.ca.gov/nr/ne/yr15/yr15rel69.asp>

Alternate Assessment Update

- Eligible students who took the California Alternate Assessment field test (April 15 - June 10) were given 15 test items each in ELA and math. The field test was computer-based and administered one-on-one.
- Each content area took approximately 45-60 minutes to complete.
- 59,882 tests were completed in ELA and math in 747 LEAS.
- CDE is creating an alternate assessment based on the work of the National Center and State Collaborative and continues to have conversations with the consortium for future alternate assessments.



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Training videos and materials for the California Symposium entitled *Shedding the Light: Creating Inclusive, Accessible, and Equitable Learning Environments for All Students* can be found at the California Special Education Web page at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/sp/se/cc/>.

Questions Asked of Testing Coordinators

- What went well regarding the ability of students to use the testing tools for the assessments?
- What challenges did the students and teachers experience with the testing tools for the assessments?
- What conclusions did you make about the students' ability to respond to the computer-adaptive questions ?
- What advice would you give to teachers and administrators to better prepare students to use the tools required for testing in the transition into this new era of on-line testing?

Questions Asked of Teachers

- What went well regarding the ability of students to use the testing tools for the assessments?
- What conclusions did you make about student performance on the assessments?
- What instructional practices are reaching ALL students in your classroom to prepare them to transition into testing?
- What challenges are you facing with instruction for ALL students to prepare them to transition into on-line testing?
- What challenges are you facing with curricular resources as we transition into the new assessments?
- What advice would you give to teachers and administrators to better prepare students for the complexity of responses as we transition into on-line testing?

Benefits of the Online Test and Testing Tools

- Format: One to two questions per screen was positive for students with attentional challenges.
- Testing Tools: Teachers and students like the Strikethrough, highlighting, zoom-in and -out for visual impaired students, the notes page and the text-to-speech tools.
- Designated supports: Teachers like that they can select tools that needed to be activated.
- Performance: Teachers and parents like the adaptive portion of the test allowed students to be more successful.
- Training: Testing coordinators and teachers like the modules and tutorials for testing on site.

Challenges of the Online Test

- The test is longer and students are struggling to finish it.
- There is a lot of writing in math and the language arts tests.
- Writing in the math test was unexpected.
- There is only one opportunity to take the test but students have several hours to complete it. Students are used to practicing the test over days. They are not used to having only one day to take the test.

Challenges of the Online Test (Con't)

- Students needed practice to understand what the questions meant and how to answer them.
- Justification of answers was difficult for students.
- The number of the questions differed by grade level.
- Students did not know what length the written answers should be.

Challenges of the Testing Tools

- Students had a hard time extracting information from the video portion of the test.
- The dashboard was unfamiliar.
- Text-to-speech failed at times.
- Students need to know how to type on a keyboard.
- Students were not sure how to scroll.

Challenges of the Testing Tools (Con't)

- Students gave up on lengthy passages.
- The complexity of responses was too difficult for some students.
- There was no hard copy available.
- Teachers need to understand what supports and accommodations students need.
- Teachers need training as to how best to identify accommodations that would be beneficial to students with disabilities and include those in each student's individualized education program.

Challenges of Instructional Practices

- Students need to practice reading articles on-line.
- Students need to practice writing textual evidence and giving examples.
- Students need basic research training.
- Students need to practice writing questions to hunt for evidence in videos & writing.

Challenges of Instructional Practices (Con't)

- Students need to learn keyboarding skills and how to use technology including the testing tools.
- Teachers need to know how to teach depth of knowledge.
- Students need more practice writing and in a short amount of time to reflect the timing of the test.
- Teachers do not have adequate materials and/or resources.
- Teachers need more professional development.

Considerations Moving Forward

- Chunk passages and make passages more easily available for students to read.
- Work on improving text-to-speech functions
- Create examples of well written answers
- Offer more help to teachers on accessing accommodations
- Teach keyboarding skills and practice typing.

Considerations Moving Forward (Con't)

- Increase experience with on-line testing.
- Get more familiar with testing tools.
- Practice extracting information from videos.
- Have teachers review best scheduling practices to accommodate the various needs of students for time, space and availability of devices.

Instructional Considerations

- Increase depth of knowledge to improve instruction to where it needs to be.
- Use interim assessments.
- Increase level of rigor of instruction to better prepare students to answer questions at the appropriate level.
- Work with students on the length and depth of their answers.
- Give students practice writing in math.

Instructional Considerations

- Teach students about constructed response questions, informational texts and marking texts.
- Offer more practice on performance tasks.
- Obtain needed instructional resources and materials.
- Encourage teachers to dive deeper into the analysis of language arts shifts, close reading strategies, and embedding vocabulary effectively.



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