

What the assessments do: New Smarter Balanced summative tests are used at the end of the school year to measure how well students in grades 3-8 and 11 have mastered California's new mathematics and English language arts standards. Spring 2015 was the first time student tests were scored.



How the assessments work: Smarter Balanced assessments are taken on computers. The tests are also computer adaptive, meaning the difficulty level of the questions adjusts to your child's previous answers—wrong answers lead to easier questions; correct answers lead to more difficult questions. Scores take into account both the number of correct answers and the difficulty level of the questions.

When scores will arrive: Student score reports are due to be mailed home in September or October. Students will receive a score in each subject (mathematics and English language arts) that ranges between 2000 and 3000. There is a new website where you can look at the score statistics related to your school, your school district, and the State of California: caaspp.cde.ca.gov/sb2015/

NOTE: The Smarter Balanced summative test is the centerpiece of the new statewide student assessment system called California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress (CAASPP). CAASPP also includes science tests in grades 5, 8, and 10 and alternate assessments for certain students with special needs.

As you receive your 2015 student scores this fall, keep in mind...

The new scores will look different. Scores from the new tests cannot be compared to anything our kids have done before. Previous scores from the state's STAR testing system were connected to different standards which were assessed in a different way.

Now is a great time to ask questions. Parent-teacher conferences and back-to-school nights are a great time to talk with your child's teacher and school principal about the score reports and the new assessments.

The scores help improve learning for your child. Scores will give teachers the opportunity to adjust instruction and will give students and parents an idea of which areas should get extra attention this year. Scores will also allow parents to see which content areas their child has mastered.

The new scores are just one measure of how your child is doing. The new summative test scores are one piece of data. Overall, assessment of learning includes classroom assignments, quizzes, report cards and other ways of monitoring your child's progress.

The first score reports are a starting point. California's new standards call for increased depth of knowledge and critical thinking, and the assessments reflect these higher expectations. The first scores are a starting point for continued growth in college and career readiness skills for your child.

Resources about Assessment for PTAs and Parents

1. **California State PTA website assessment page:** www.capta.org/assessments
 - Print-ready handouts about assessment
 - Video from CA Department of Education about the student score report (also available in Spanish)
 - A link to samples of the score report
 - A link to an SBAC practice test
2. **California Department of Education website on assessment:** www.cde.ca.gov/ta/tg/ca/ **Scroll down to the tabs; select “Students & Parents”**
 - Click on "Understanding the CAASPP Student Score Reports" for a great page of materials--many of them translated into multiple languages.
 - Look for the ***Parent Guides to the Smarter Balanced Summative Assessments*** for grades 3-5, grades 6-8, and high school assessment guides including numerous sample questions and explanations.
 - Videos on various assessment topics
3. **Smarter Balanced website:** www.smarterbalanced.org/parents-students/



Other Important Resources to Share with Your Members

1. **California State PTA website Common Core page:** www.capta.org/commoncore
 - Single-page flier in six languages about the new standards
 - Fantastic, colorful, four-page “**Parents’ Guide to Student Success**” for each grade, describes what students will be learning in math and English language arts, activities to do with your child that year, and what to talk about with the teacher.

REMEMBER THAT ALL PTA RESOURCES ARE YOURS TO USE!

- Download, print and share at meetings, Back-to-School Nights and PTA events
- Post links on your PTA website and send to members through email and social media
- Post in the school office or on your PTA bulletin board
- Share with your school principal and school district superintendent