

SFUSD CAASPP Results: Talking Points and Resources

September 2015

INCLUDED HERE:

- Suggested Talking Points for Overall and District-Wide Results
 - Suggested Talking Points for Likely Questions
 - Recommended Text for Parent Newsletters (feel free to modify for your needs)
 - Resource List for Parents - CAASPP Results, Smarter Balanced Tests, Common Core
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SUGGESTED TALKING POINTS FOR OVERALL AND DISTRICT-WIDE RESULTS

- **The Smarter Balanced assessments in math and English measure progress toward the more rigorous California Common Core Standards.**
 - The Common Core State Standards in English Language Arts and Mathematics define what a student needs to know and be able to do to be college and career ready for the 21st century.
 - With these new standards students must defend their reasoning through evidence, engage in inquiry and research, and show their thinking in multiple ways.
 - We continue to implement the common core standards and make the necessary shifts and adjustments in our instruction.
- **This is a baseline year and this year's results cannot be compared to previous years' results.**
 - To align with the changes in curriculum and standards, and the resulting instructional shifts, there have been changes in the content type and format of the assessments
 - These tests include a wider variety of questions, requiring students to explain how they solve problems, think critically, and write analytically.
 - These tests are no longer focused on getting the one right answer quickly.
 - The skills measured by these tests take time and effort to master, but our students will need them to succeed.
 - The computer-based Smarter Balanced assessments in math and English require students to navigate technology while demonstrating knowledge in a different way than before.
- **We see these tests as one of many ways to gauge our progress.**
 - These tests are one of the many ways we look at movement toward the high goals we have set for our students.
- **Our district-level baseline show that we are halfway to our goal - half of all SFUSD students who took the English and math assessments have mastered the common core standards for their grade level.**
 - We are proud of our teachers and students for their hard work.

- SFUSD teachers have been transitioning to the new standards and refining their instructional practices and it shows.
 - **These baseline results also highlight that we have a lot of work to do to ensure all subgroups are prepared for college and career.**
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SUGGESTED TALKING POINTS FOR LIKELY QUESTIONS

- **Why are our school's/ my student's scores so much lower than before?**
 - The **standards** that these tests measure **are very different** than they used to be, so we predicted that the tests would be challenging for our students. This is the new baseline and scores can't be compared to earlier ones.
 - We are learning how to better support our teachers and our students in learning the new content, and we fully expect baseline scores to climb dramatically over the coming years.
- **Why is there such a significant achievement gap?**
 - These were **computer based exams** and we know that [some/ many] of our students have less experience working on computers and may have been challenged by the new format, not just the content.
 - To better support our students, we are doing more classroom work now on the same computers/ devices that students use to take the tests. The district is also looking at how they can better support all students with building these digital skills.
 - These tests are particularly challenging for our **English learners** [especially our **newcomer students**] and our **special education students** because they require more text-based responses and deeper understanding of text in comparison to the old multiple choice tests. Even the math test now has many text-based questions.
 - We continue to support both our English learners and students in special education to build the skills they need to succeed on these tests and in other ways.
 - Some students have more **opportunities to practice the analysis and critical thinking skills** that they need to demonstrate on these tests at home.
 - We are exploring ways to better support all families so you can help your child(ren) build these important skills.

RECOMMENDED TEXT FOR PARENT NEWSLETTERS (modify for your needs)

Shortly before school ended for the year, our students in grades [3-8 and 11] took the new computer-based tests for English language arts/ literacy (ELA) and mathematics that replaced the former paper-based tests. Students in grade(s) [5] [8] and [10] also took the science test. We [received] [will receive] our school's results on September 9 and we will discuss this at our [date parent meeting.]. You will receive your child's individual results in the mail in mid to late October [and we will have additional meetings to help you better understand them].

About the Tests: These new exams are part of California's comprehensive plan for supporting high-quality learning at every school. They are based on California's new, more challenging academic standards, which are designed to help all students graduate ready for college and to pursue a career. They include a wider variety of questions than the multiple-choice tests they replaced, requiring students to explain how they solve problems, think critically, and write analytically. These skills take time and effort to master, but our students will need them to succeed in the long run.

Understanding the Results: Just like the new learning goals they measure, these new tests are much too different from the old exams to make any comparisons between old scores and new. This year's scores are a starting point for the progress we expect our school and our students to make over time. Like class assignments and report cards, they are one way to provide you and your child's teachers with information about your child's progress toward the high goals we have set for our students. [Many, if not most, students] [Some students] will need to make significant progress to reach the challenging new goals. But don't worry, no child will be held back based on these results.

Learn More: For more information, go to www.sfusd.edu and look for information on the Release of the California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress (CAASPP) Results. You will find a short video there (available in Spanish and Chinese) that will help you understand what you can learn when you receive your child's Score Report. You can find more detailed information here: <http://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/tg/ca/caasppssreports.asp>. [Option to attach or link Resource List -- see next item.]

RESOURCE LIST FOR PARENTS **CAASPP RESULTS, SMARTER BALANCED TESTS, COMMON CORE**

California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress (CAASPP) Results

- [Video for Parents: Understanding Your Child's Score Report](#)
 - [Spanish](#), Chinese (coming soon)
 - This video briefly explains the components of the individual student report.
- [GreatKids State Test Guide for Parents](#)

- This simple online guide breaks down what children need to know in every grade level and exactly how parents can help. It includes videos of students demonstrating tested skills.
- [Sample Student Score Report](#)
 - This shows you what you can expect to see when you receive your child's report.
- [Guide to Your CAASPP Student Score Report - ELA and Mathematics - Grades 3, 4, 6, 7, 11](#)
 - [Spanish](#); [Chinese \(simplified\)](#); [other languages](#)
 - This explains the different sections of the score report to help you better understand it.
- [Guide to Your CAASPP Student Score Report ELA, Mathematics and Science - Grades 5, 8](#)
 - [Spanish](#); [Chinese \(simplified\)](#); [other languages](#)
 - This explains the different sections of the score report to help you better understand it.
- [Guides to Other Score Reports \(Science and Spanish Tests\)](#)
 - See same link for the translated versions
- [Reporting Achievement Level Descriptors:](#)
 - These describe what each rating level means at each grade level for both ELA and Math
- [Claim Achievement Level Descriptors:](#)
 - These describe what each rating level measures for each ELA and Math category

Smarter Balanced Tests

- Parent Guides to the Smarter Balanced Summative Assessments
Note: These are long because they describe what students should be learning in each grade in English and math. They include sample test items for each subject and grade level tested.
 - [Grades 3, 4, 5](#)
 - [Grades 6, 7, 8](#)
 - [Grade 11](#)

Common Core

- [Video for Parents: Understanding Common Core State Standards](#)
 - [Spanish](#)
 This three-minute video explains how the Common Core State Standards will help students achieve at high levels and help them learn what they need to know to get to graduation and beyond.
- [Common Core State Standards: What Families Should Know](#)
 - [Spanish](#); [Chinese](#)
 This PDF provides families a top-level summary of Common Core and includes an easy-to-understand newspaper column about Math Common Core
- [Parent Roadmaps to the Common Core State Standards](#)
 - [Spanish](#)

This Council of Great City Schools website provides guidance to parents about what their children will be learning and how they can support that learning in grades K-8.