

Frequently Asked Questions - Reed Union School District
California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress (CAASPP)

The following fact sheet is designed to provide parents and students information about the implementation of California state standardized assessments in the Reed Union School District.

Q: What is CAASPP?

A: The California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress (CAASPP) System is the statewide testing program in California, which replaced the STAR (Standardized Testing and Reporting) tests, and are required for all students in California public schools.

Q: What do the assessments measure?

A: The CAASPP tests measure college and career readiness in English language arts/literacy (ELA), mathematics, and science. The academic standards measured are the Common Core State Standards in ELA and mathematics, and the Next Generation Science Standards in science.

Q: Who takes the test? In which subject areas?

A: In middle schools, all 6th - 8th grade students will take the *Smarter Balanced* assessment in math and English language arts. Additionally, all 8th grade students will take the California Science Test (CAST) field test in science.

Q: Is participation required?

A: Yes. Federal regulations require schools to report 95% participation rates. We are held accountable to this by the state and federal government, and categorical funding can be withheld if we do not meet participation rates.

Q: When will this test be administered?

A: Tests occur annually in between March and June. Each school site will communicate testing dates, locations, and timelines directly to families.

Q: How long will the test take?

A: The state of California mandates that the test be untimed, meaning students can take as long as they need. For ELA and math, each student will complete 4 days of testing and the tests will last approximately 2 hours each day. The science field test (CAST) will last approximately 2 hours.

Q: What should parents and students know about the test questions?

A: These assessments are computer-based and adaptive, including a bank of test questions aligned to standards, and free-response performance tasks. The questions are more open-ended and require students to explain how they arrived at their answers, support their responses with evidence, and solve real world problems. The questions are designed to provide information for how well students know the content and skills outlined in California's academic standards.

Q: What does an adaptive test do?

A: Each student takes the same assessment and the questions are customized to each student's response during the exam. The benefit to this type of test is that it very personalized to each individual student and provides more accurate information about what each student knows and can do.

Q: What is a performance task?

A: Performance tasks are multiple step problems or scenarios that require a student to think critically and apply understanding. Sample tasks can be viewed on the Smarter Balanced website:

<http://www.smarterbalanced.org/sample-items-and-performance-tasks/>

Q: What should my child do to prepare?

A: All students should be adequately prepared in their English, math, and science classes. Practice and training tests are available online to help students prepare, and are entirely optional, <http://www.smarterbalanced.org/practice-test/> and <http://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/tg/sa/practicetest.asp>.

RUSD also encourages all students to eat a balanced meal and come to school well rested on exam days.

Q: What happens with the results?

A: This year, Smarter Balanced assessment scores in ELA, math and science will be reported to students, teachers, psychologists and parents. The results will be used to calculate academic progress and growth at the student, subject, school, and district level.

Q: Where can I learn more?

A: The following websites:

- The CAASPP website: www.caaspp.org

- The Smarter Balanced website: www.smarterbalanced.org
- The CDE's CAASPP Science Assessment website
<http://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/tg/ca/caasppscience.asp>
- The CDE's Test Score Guide website <http://www.testscoreguide.org/ca>
- California Science Test: <http://www.caaspp.org/administration/about/science/>