



## *Atascadero Unified School District*

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*Thomas Butler, Superintendent*

September, 2015

Dear Parent or Guardian,

Shortly before school ended for the year, your child took part in the 2015 California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress (CAASPP), the new computer-based tests for English language arts/literacy and mathematics that replaced the former paper-based tests for these subjects. These tests are commonly known as the Smarter Balanced Assessment or SBAC 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. The tests include a wider variety of questions than the multiple-choice Standardized Testing and Reporting (STAR) tests they replaced. The new tests require students to explain how they solve problems, think critically, and write analytically. For this reason, scores should not be compared to results from the STAR program tests in these subject areas. Because this was the first year that all California students in grades 3-8 and 11 took these new tests, your student's overall scores may be viewed as a basis from which to compare performance in future years.

The CAASPP tests are a snapshot of student learning and when combined with other types of student results provide a clearer picture of student progress. In Atascadero, we use multiple examples of student learning to monitor student progress including reading benchmarks, classroom tests, assignments, and grades.

The student score report enclosed with this letter shows your child's achievement on these new tests. Please take a few moments to review it. You'll notice that along with an overall score for each subject, there is also information about how your child performed in different skill areas associated with English language arts/literacy and mathematics.

Additionally, California administered the California Standards Test (CST), the California Modified Assessment (CMA), and the California Alternate Performance Assessment (CAPA) for Science to all students in grades five, eight, and ten. If your child was administered a science test, the results appear on the back of the student score report. While new assessments based on the Next Generation Science Standards are being developed, the California Department of Education will continue to use the CST, CMA, and the CAPA for Science at this time.

Early Assessment Program status (Grade 11 only). The Early Assessment Program (EAP) is a joint program of the California Department of Education, California State University, and California Community Colleges. The EAP provides you and your child with an early indication of your child's readiness for college-level English and mathematics prior to starting his or her senior year. CAASPP score reports for your child in grade 11 will provide an indicator of his or her predicted readiness to take college-level courses in those subjects. Additional information regarding the EAP can be found on the EAP Web site at <http://www.CSUSuccess.org>.

Our schools are adjusting to these new standards and the tests that go with them. Just as when the STAR tests began in 2003, we know that our students will make significant progress to reach the challenging new goals we have set. That's why no student or parent should be discouraged by test results which will not be used to determine whether a student moves on to the next grade.

These results are also being provided to your child's school, which will use them to help set learning goals for students this year. We invite you to take an active part in those discussions. If you have questions or concerns about your child's progress, please call the school office to arrange a conference with your child's teacher.

To learn more about the new tests, visit the CAASPP Summative Assessment web page at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/tg/sa/sbacsummative.asp>

Video for parents:

English <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FQi4qIOCrmk>  
Spanish <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6ZPqZeHXs6k>

If you have any questions regarding the balanced assessment system in Atascadero, or any other questions regarding your child's educational program, please call the Educational Services Department at 805-462-4200 or your child's school. We are happy to answer your questions.

Sincerely,

Daniel Mosunich, Ed.D.  
Director, Assessment and Accountability