

CAPISTRANO UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT
BOARD REPORT

To: Board of Trustees

From: Greg Merwin, Chief Academic Officer, Education and Support Services

Date: April 21, 2021

Board Item: Resolution No. 2021-41, Resolution to Implement Local Assessments in Lieu of the California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress Except for Grade 11

HISTORY

The California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress (CAASPP) System was established on January 1, 2014. The CAASPP System replaced the Standardized Testing and Reporting (STAR) Program, which became inoperative on July 1, 2013.

The CAASPP System encompasses Smarter Balanced Summative Assessments for English-language arts/literacy (ELA) and Mathematics in grades 3 through 8 and grade 11. The California Alternate Assessments (CAAs) for ELA and Mathematics in grades 3 through 8 and grade 11 is for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities who are unable to take the Smarter Balanced Summative Assessments, even with accessibility supports and whose individualized education program (IEP) indicates assessment with an alternate test. The CAA is for Science in grades 5, 8, and once in high school. The California Spanish Assessment (CSA) is for Spanish-language arts in grades 3 through 8 and high school (optional). And the California Science Test (CAST) is for grades 5, 8, and once in high school.

BACKGROUND

In February 2021, the State Board of Education voted to seek a waiver that would give schools the means to account for the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic in their ability to assess students. The Board's action was in response to federal guidance allowing states to seek flexibility given that most students have yet to return to in-person instruction either part or full-time.

Unlike last year, the United States Department of Education did not invite states to apply for blanket waivers that would allow states to opt-out of annual testing altogether, citing the important role testing data plays in supporting students.

As granted, California's waiver:

- Decouples state assessments from federal accountability requirements, as applicable. Instead, any data collected will be used to inform local educators, parents, and the public and align resources to student supports.
- Waives federal penalties for student testing participation rates of less than 95 percent on the state's Smarter Balanced English-language arts and Math.

Under the Every Student Succeeds Act, all states that receive federal funds for low-income students and English learners must assess annual learning progress in Math, Language arts, Science, and English learner language proficiency, as applicable.

At its November 2020 meeting, the State Board voted to approve shortened blueprints of the Smarter Balanced assessments in English-language arts and Math in order to administer shorter tests in these subjects during the 2020–2021 school year.

CURRENT CONSIDERATIONS

As we navigate the ever-changing guidelines and rules for reopening schools, we also are preparing for the realities of State Testing. Ultimately, it is the state’s guidance that Local Education Agencies (LEAs) must follow when it comes to administering state assessments.

The United States Department of Education formally approved limited relief from certain federal testing, accountability, and reporting requirements that California requested in the template waiver for the 2020-2021 school year. The waiver allows districts to implement the most viable option for assessment under the following conditions:

- Aligned with California Common Core State Standards for ELA and Mathematics;
- Available to assess students in grades 3 through 8 and grade 11;
- Uniformly administered across a grade span, school, or district; and
- Provide results that can be reported to parents/guardians, educators about individual students, and to the public by school and by district and are disaggregated by student group.

Given the challenges of administering a lengthy state assessment, the limited time we have with students before the end of the year, and wanting to ensure we focus on supporting staff and students with the full return to in-person learning, staff recommends the Board of Trustees approve the implementation of local assessments in lieu of the CAASPP, except in grade 11. Both the Capistrano Unified Education Association (CUEA) and site principals support this recommendation.

The recommendation is the following:

- Grades 3 - 5: Students will complete iReady Reading and Math diagnostics tests.
- Grades 6 - 8: Students will complete iReady Reading and Math diagnostic tests.
- Grade 11: Students will complete the CAASPP assessments in English-language arts and Math.
- The CAA will be provided for those students with disabilities per the student IEP or for those enrolled in District modified programs and curriculum.
- The District will not be administering the California Science Test for grades 5, 8, 11 or 12 due to the same constraints that we have with the CAASPP assessment.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The financial impact is estimated to not exceed \$40,000 for iReady licensing and training to be funded by one time funds.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Following discussion, it is recommended the Board of Trustees approve Resolution No. 2021-41, Resolution to Implement Local Assessments in Lieu of the California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress Except for Grade 11.

PREPARED BY: Gregory Merwin, Chief Academic Officer, Education and Support Services

CAPISTRANO UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT
San Juan Capistrano, California

RESOLUTION NO. 2021-41
RESOLUTION TO IMPLEMENT LOCAL ASSESSMENTS IN LIEU OF THE CAASPP
EXCEPT FOR GRADE ELEVEN

WHEREAS, the District navigates the ever-changing guidelines and rules for reopening schools, the District is also preparing for the realities of State Testing. Ultimately, it is the State's guidance that Local Education Agencies (LEAs) must follow when it comes to administering state assessments; and

WHEREAS, the U.S. Department of Education (ED) formally approved limited relief from certain federal testing, accountability, and reporting requirements that California requested in the template waiver for the 2020-2021 school year; and

WHEREAS, the waiver allows districts to implement the most viable option for assessment in our local context assessments must be:

- Aligned with California Common Core State Standards for ELA and mathematics;
- Available to assess students in grades three through eight and grade eleven;
- Uniformly administered across a grade span, school, or district; and
- Provide results that can be reported to parents/guardians, educators about individual students, and to the public by school and by district and are disaggregated by student group; and

WHEREAS, given the challenges of administering a lengthy state assessment, the limited time we have with students before the end of the year, and wanting to ensure we focus on supporting staff and students with the full return to in-person learning, we will be administering local assessments rather than the CAASPP, except in 11th grade;

WHEREAS, the Capistrano Unified Educators Association (CUEA) and school site principals are in support of the following testing plan; and

WHEREAS, the additional funding needed to provide the local assessment option will not exceed \$40,000 for costs for Grades 6-8 iReady Reading and Math licensing and training for middle school teachers;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED AND ORDERED, the District will implement assessments as follows:

- Grades 3 - 5: Students will complete iReady Reading and Math diagnostics tests;
- Grades 6 - 8: Students will complete iReady Reading and Math diagnostic tests;
- Grade 11: Students will complete the CAASPP assessments in English Language Arts and Math;
- The CAA will be provided for those students with disabilities per the student IEP or for those enrolled in District modified programs and curriculum;

- The District will not be administering the California Science Test for grades 5, 8, 11 or 12 due to the same constraints that we have with the CAASPP assessment.
- The District will implement local assessments in lieu of the CAASPP except for grade eleven.

PASSED AND ADOPTED by the Capistrano Unified School District Board of Trustees this day April 21, 2021.

AYES: ()
NOES ()
ABSENT ()
ABSTAIN ()

I, Kirsten M. Vital Brulte, Secretary of the Capistrano Unified School District Board of Trustees, hereby certify that the above and foregoing Resolution was duly and regularly adopted by the said Board at the meeting on the 21st day of April, 2021, by a roll call vote.

Gila Jones
Clerk of the Board of Trustees

Kirsten M. Vital Brulte
Superintendent
Secretary of the Board of Trustees