California Department of Education

Report to the Governor, the Legislature, and the   
Department of Finance:

# California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress Annual Implementation Update and Five-Year Cost Projection



**Prepared by the**

**Assessment Development and Administration Division**

**Instruction and Measurement Branch**

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*Description*: Annual update on the implementation of the California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress, covering the 2020 calendar year and providing a five-year projection of costs

*Authority*: California *Education Code* Section 60604(b)

*Recipient*: The Governor, the Legislature, the Legislative Analyst’s Office, the Department of Finance, the State Board of Education, and the respective Chairpersons of the appropriate fiscal subcommittees considering budget appropriations and appropriate policy committees in each house

*Due Date*: On or before March 1 of each year

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## Executive Summary

California *Education Code* (*EC*) Section 60604(b) requires that the State Superintendent of Public Instruction annually update the Legislature on an implementation plan, five-year cost projection, and timeline for implementing the California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress (CAASPP) System.

The“Program Information” section of this report provides background information regarding the CAASPP System, including its history, purpose, and components.

The “Implementation Update” section provides a brief discussion of CAASPP implementation activities during the 2020 calendar year.

The “Contract Costs” section provides costs and other information regarding the various types of CAASPP contracts, including state-managed services contract costs, extending through fiscal year (FY) 2021–2022.

The “Apportionment Costs” section provides information on annual CAASPP apportionment reimbursements to local educational agencies (LEAs).

The “Five-Year Cost Projection” section provides information on projected annual CAASPP contract and LEA apportionment costs. It includes a timeline of the assessments that are anticipated to be a part of each CAASPP test administration and the projected costs, per fiscal year, for the overlapping test administration activities.

Any questions regarding this report or requests for copies should be directed to   
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This report, along with reports from previous years, is available on the California Department of Education (CDE) CAASPP web page at <https://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/tg/ca/caasppimplementation.asp>.

**Impact of the Novel Coronavirus Disease 2019**

On March 17, 2020, school closures associated with the novel coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic resulted in the suspension of all summative testing for the 2019–2020 school year.

On March 18, 2020, Governor Gavin Newsom issued Executive Order N-30-20, announcing California’s intent to pursue a federal waiver of testing requirements. In this executive order, Governor Newsom acknowledged that California’s schools were in the middle of the statewide testing window, and it was therefore necessary to waive state requirements to administer annual statewide assessments in order to allow LEAs to take appropriate actions to prevent and mitigate the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic.

On March 19, 2020, Governor Newsom issued Executive Order N-33-20, which communicated a statewide order for Californians to stay home or at their place of residence to protect the health and well-being of all Californians and to mitigate the impact of COVID-19.

On March 20, 2020, as a result of the unprecedented circumstances surrounding COVID-19 and in conjunction with statements from Governor Newsom and State Superintendent of Public Instruction Tony Thurmond, the CDE suspended all statewide CAASPP, Summative ELPAC, and California High School Proficiency Examination testing. On March 26, 2020, State Superintendent of Public Instruction Thurmond and California State Board of Education (SBE) President Linda Darling-Hammond submitted, on behalf of the CDE and SBE, a waiver for the 2019–2020 school year of the following sections under Elementary and Secondary Education Act Section 8401(b):

* Assessment requirements in Section 1111(b)(2)
* Accountability and school identification requirements in sections 1111(c)(4) and 1111(d)(2)(C) and (D)
* Reporting requirements related to assessments and accountability in Section 1111(h)

The waiver, which was approved by the U.S. Department of Education on March 27, 2020, included assessments for English language arts/literacy, mathematics, science, and English language proficiency and was ratified in Item 03 of the May 2020 SBE agenda. A copy of the full waiver is available for review on the CDE Every Student Succeeds Act web page at <https://www.cde.ca.gov/re/es/>.

## Program Information

The California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress (CAASPP) System was established in statute (California *Education Code* [*EC*] sections 60640–49) in 2013 per Chapter 489, Statutes of 2013 (Assembly Bill 484, Bonilla) and became effective on January 1, 2014, with technical amendments per Chapter 32, Statutes of 2014 (Senate Bill 858, Committee on Budget and Fiscal Review)*.*

The purpose of the CAASPP System is to provide a system of assessments that primarily assists teachers and administrators in promoting high-quality teaching and learning through the use of a variety of assessment approaches. The statute provides for the development and administration of assessments through the use of technology where feasible.

This report provides information about the CAASPP System as it relates to   
*EC* Section 60604(b), which requires the State Superintendent of Public Instruction to develop and annually provide to the Legislature an update on an implementation plan, a five-year cost projection, and a timeline for implementing the CAASPP System.

Per *EC* Section 60605.7, California joined the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium (Consortium) in June 2011 as a governing state, working on the development of English language arts/literacy (ELA) and mathematics assessments. As stipulated in *EC* Section 60640(b)(1), the Consortium assessments measure the Common Core State Standards for ELA and mathematics adopted by the California State Board of Education (SBE). The three components of the Smarter Balanced Assessment System—summative assessments, interim assessments, and Digital Library of formative assessment tools—are designed to support teaching and learning throughout the year. In June 2020, the Consortium replaced the Digital Library with a newly developed website called “Tools for Teachers.” Tools for Teachers now serves as the formative assessment component of the Smarter Balanced Assessment System.

As addressed in state law, the CAASPP summative assessments include the following:

* Smarter Balanced Summative Assessments for ELA and mathematics
* California Alternate Assessments (CAAs) for ELA, mathematics, and science for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities, as designated in their individualized education program (IEP)
* California Science Test (CAST)
* California Spanish Assessment (CSA) for Spanish reading/language arts (RLA)

The CAASPP summative assessments are computer-based tests that measure what students know and can do. They produce scores that can be aggregated and disaggregated for the purpose of informing parents/guardians, local educational agencies (LEAs), the public, and the state about students’ achievement in their learning of the California academic content standards. The CAASPP summative assessments (1) provide individual student results to students, parents/guardians, and teachers;   
(2) produce school-, district-, and county-level results that allow for the monitoring of schools’ progress; and (3) produce results to meet the requirements of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), enacted on December 10, 2015, and the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), enacted in 1965. Under the federal requirements of ESSA, all states accepting Title I federal funds for use by LEAs must assess students as follows:

* For RLA and mathematics—assessment administered annually in each of grades three through eight and once in high school
* For science—assessment administered annually in grades five and eight and once in high school (i.e., grade ten, eleven, or twelve)

Prior to the federal and state waivers of testing, CAASPP tests were used to meet federal requirements in 2019–2020 through the administration of the following:

The Smarter Balanced Summative Assessments and the CAAs for ELA and mathematics in grades three through eight and grade eleven

The CAST and CAA for Science in grades five and eight and one time in high school (All grade twelve students who had not yet taken a science assessment in high school were required to take the CAST or the CAA for Science.)

All contracts for the development, purchase, or administration of the CAASPP tests are subject to approval by the SBE. SBE approval must be obtained for the following work components:

* The test blueprints—*excluding* Consortium assessments—specifying the standards to be assessed and number of items to be tested for each standard included in the tests
* The achievement levels used in the CAASPP System and the threshold scores—*excluding* Consortium assessments—used to identify students’ achievement levels
* The regulations; testing period; calendar of when results are to be delivered to the state, LEAs, and parents/guardians; and when results are to be posted for the public

*EC* Section 60649 also requires (1) the development of a three-year plan for continuous improvement of the CAASPP System, with the approval of the SBE; and (2) the California Department of Education (CDE) to contract for a three-year independent evaluation of the CAASPP System that will provide interim annual reports, a final report on the activities, and an analysis of the three-year independent evaluation. In December 2019, the *CAASPP 2019 Independent Evaluation Report* was posted on the CDE CAASPP Technical Reports and Studies web page web page at <https://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/tg/ca/caaspprptstudies.asp>. Additional information regarding the CAASPP is available on the CDE CAASPP System web page at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/tg/ca/>.

Table 1, below, and Table 2, on the following page, identify the required and optional CAASPP assessments that were administered in 2019–2020.

Table 1. CAASPP Required Assessments Administered in 2019–2020, by Grade and Content Area

| **Test** | **Type** | **Students** | **Grades** | **Content Area(s)** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Smarter Balanced Summative Assessments for ELA and mathematics | Computer adaptive  test | All students, unless they have an IEP indicating an alternate assessment (recently arrived English learner students are exempted from the assessment for ELA) | 3–8 and 11 | ELA and mathematics |
| CAAs for ELA and mathematics | Computer-based  test | Students with the most significant cognitive disabilities whose IEP indicates assessment with an alternate test (i.e., CAA) | 3–8 and 11 | ELA and mathematics |
| CAST | Computer-based test | All students, unless they have an IEP indicating an alternate assessment (i.e., CAA for Science) | 5 and 8 and once in high school | Science |
| CAA for Science1 | Computer-based test | Students with the most significant cognitive disabilities whose IEP indicates assessment with an alternate test (i.e., CAA for Science) | 5 and 8 and once in high school | Science |

1Due to the COVID‑19 pandemic, all statewide testing was suspended in the 2019–2020 school year. As a result, an insufficient number of students were administered the CAA for Science for the CDE and its testing contractor to complete the necessary development work to operationalize the CAA for Science.

Table 2. Optional CAASPP Assessments and Assessment Tools Available in 2019–2020, by Grade and Content Area

| **Test/Tool** | **Type** | **Students** | **Grades** | **Content Area(s)** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Smarter Balanced Digital Library Formative Assessment Tools1 | N/A | All students | K–12 | ELA and mathematics |
| Smarter Balanced Interim Assessments | Computer-based  test | All students | K–12 | ELA and mathematics |

1Replaced by Tools for Teachers in June 2020.

## Implementation Update

### **Content Standards**

There were no changes for this reporting period.

### **Periodic Updates of Assessment Developments**

The 2020 activities carried out in support of periodic updates of assessment developments were as follows:

* In January, the CDE provided the SBE with information for approval of the revisions to the CAST Blueprint and an update on program activities.
* In February, the CDE sought approval from the SBE of the proposed 20192020 apportionment rates for the CAASPP. The CDE also provided an update on assessment program activities with details on CAASPP test administration, federal peer review submission, and CAASPP program contract procurement.
* In February, the CDE sought approval from the SBE to update the Golden State Seal Merit Diploma (GSSMD) eligibility criteria, specifying criteria for students to demonstrate mastery of the science curriculum, using the CAST results to award the GSSMD for graduating students effective March 2020.
* In February, the CDE provided reports to the SBE on the California Assessment System feedback, an update on the 2018–2019 public release for the CAST and the preliminary indicators for the CAA for Science, and updates on the grade six scoring and reporting for the CAASPP ELA assessment, as follows:
* [2019–20 Assessment Coordinators Survey Results Report, January 2020 (PDF; **Posted** 14-Feb-2020)](https://www.cde.ca.gov/be/pn/im/documents/feb20memoadad02a1.pdf)
* [2019 California Assessment Conference Post-Conference Report, January 2020 (PDF; **Posted** 14-Feb-2020)](https://www.cde.ca.gov/be/pn/im/documents/feb20memoadad02a2.pdf)
* [Update on 2018–19 Public Releases for the California Science Test, California Spanish Assessment, and the Preliminary Indicators for the California Alternate Assessment for Science (DOCX; **Posted** 14-Feb-2020)](https://www.cde.ca.gov/be/pn/im/documents/feb20memoadad01.docx)
* [2018–19 California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress English Language Arts/Literacy: Notification and Update on Grade Six Scoring and Reporting (DOCX; **Posted** 14-Feb-2020)](https://www.cde.ca.gov/be/pn/im/documents/feb20memoadad03.docx)
* In March, the CDE provided a summary of developments and updates related to the CAASPP, including Governor Newsom’s executive orders and California’s submission of a federal waiver related to 2019–2020 testing requirements, the 2019 CAST Alignment Study, Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium (Smarter Balanced) Interim Assessment availability to support distance learning, Smarter Balanced Tools for Teachers launch, and the development of formative assessment resources for science.
* In April, the CDE provided memoranda to the SBE on the participation rate for the California Alternate Assessments and the Spanish Assessment score interpretation study:
  + [California Alternate Assessments: Exceeding the 1.0 Percent Threshold, and Less than 95 Percent Participation Rate for Students with Disabilities (DOCX; **Posted** 16-Apr-2020)](https://www.cde.ca.gov/be/pn/im/documents/apr20memoadad02.docx)
  + [California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress Update on the California Spanish Assessment Score Interpretation Study (DOCX; **Posted** 16-Apr-2020)](https://www.cde.ca.gov/be/pn/im/documents/apr20memoadad03.docx)
* In May, the CDE requested that the SBE take the following actions:

1. Ratify the Assessment and Accountability Waiver for the 2019–2020 school year of the following sections under ESEA Section 8401(b)

* Assessment requirements in Section 1111(b)(2)
* Accountability and school identification requirements in sections 1111(c)(4) and 1111(d)(2)(C) and (D)
* Reporting requirements related to assessments and accountability in Section 1111(h)

2. Ratify the Federal Funding Flexibility Waiver of the following provisions for the 2019–2020 school year under ESEA Section 8401(b):

* Section 1127(b) of Title I, Part A of the ESEA so the CDE may waive, more than once every three years, if necessary, the 15 percent carryover limitation in ESEA Section 1127(a) for fiscal year (FY) 2019 Title I, Part A funds
* Section 421(b) of the General Education Provisions Act to extend the period of availability of FY 2018 funds for programs in which the CDE participates under its approved consolidated State plan until   
  September 30, 2021
* Section 4106(d) of Title IV, Part A of the ESEA related to LEA needs assessments for the 2019–2020 school year
* Sections 4106(e)(2)(C), (D), and (E) of Title IV, Part A of the ESEA with respect to content-area spending requirements for FYs 2018 and 2019 Title IV, Part A funds
* Section 4109(b) of Title IV, Part A of the ESEA with respect to the spending limitation for technology infrastructure for FYs 2018 and 2019 Title IV, Part A funds
* Section 8101(42) of the ESEA, which defines “professional development,” for activities funded for the 2019–2020 school year
* In July, the CDE provided an update to the SBE on the CAASPP System program activities, including summary data for the 2019–2020 test administration year, an update to the California Educator Reporting System (CERS), the Tools for Teachers launch, and the development of formative assessments for science.
* In August, the CDE provided to the SBE the following updates on the California science assessments:
* [Updates on the California Science Assessments (DOCX; **Posted** 11-Aug-2020)](https://www.cde.ca.gov/be/pn/im/documents/aug20adad01.docx)
* In September, the CDE provided information to the SBE on program developments and updates related to the CAASPP.
* In November, the CDE sought the SBE’s approval of proposed revisions to the blueprints for the Smarter Balanced Summative Assessments for ELA and mathematics. In consultation with the Consortium and testing contractor ETS, the CDE proposed the revisions to the blueprints in order to offer short forms for those assessments to reduce testing time in 2020–2021 and the burden on students and teachers during that unusual year.

### **Informational Materials**

The 2020 activities in support of informational materials were as follows:

* The CDE, in coordination with testing contractor ETS, provided opportunities for teacher participation in the form of item writing workshops, item review workshops, data review, and range finding. In addition, outreach activities—webcasts and pretest and post-test workshops—communicated key information to LEAs and were reported in CAASPP update items, as indicated in the “Periodic Updates of Assessment Developments” section of this report.
* The CDE met with the Regional Assessment Network, a subcommittee of the Curriculum and Instruction Steering Committee of the California County Superintendents Educational Services Association, every two months during the year to elicit feedback on informational materials and activities under development for all California assessments. This committee also is charged with disseminating information on behalf of the CDE.
* The CDE met monthly with representatives from California educational associations to share assessment-related topics and receive feedback to help inform ongoing work of the CDE Assessment Development and Administration Division (ADAD).
* The CDE participated in four Bilingual Coordinators Network meetings to share assessment updates and gather feedback from stakeholders. CDE staff attend these meetings throughout the year.
* The CDE participated in two Consortium collaboration meetings and two Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) meetings. Member states met virtually to collaborate, plan, and prepare for the implementation of and ongoing enhancements to the Smarter Balanced assessments, covering such topics as item and test development, accommodations, and technology. The TAC members provided guidance on technical assessment matters pertaining to validity, reliability, accuracy, and fairness on those assessments.
* Throughout the year, the CDE weekly newsletter *Assessment Spotlight* was disseminated to all ELPAC coordinators and CAASPP listserv subscribers—a total of more than 16,700 recipients—to alert them to the latest information about the testing program.
* In February, the CDE led a discussion about the design of the CAST and introduced the item specifications at the District Science Leadership Network: Access and Equity Around Assessments.
* In February and March, the CDE presented key information on the development of the CAST at the California Teachers Association—Good Teaching conferences, where participants learned how to read and use an item specification and deconstructed a California Next Generation Science Standards performance expectation.
* In July and August, the CDE offered the Interim and Formative Assessment Training Series virtually. Intended primarily for teacher trainers, this training series focused on the design of Smarter Balanced Interim Assessment items, the use of the Smarter Balanced rubrics to score student responses, and how to use the interim assessments and formative assessment resources in the Tools for Teachers website to support teaching and learning.
* In October, the CDE held its second California Assessment Conference virtually. Designed specifically for classroom teachers, this conference offered opportunities for participants to explore the connection between assessments and classroom instruction, hear from other educators about their experiences with the comprehensive assessment system, and learn how to utilize assessment resources.
* In December, the CDE presented to California science educators at the California Science Technology Engineering Art Math (STEAM) Symposium how to deconstruct California Next Generation Science Standards Performance Expectations by employing item specifications used in the development of the CAST questions.

### **Stakeholder Input**

The 2020 implementation activities in support of stakeholder input were as follows:

* Monthly meetings with the Assessment Stakeholder Committee, whose members include representatives from key California educational associations:
  + Advisory Commission on Special Education
  + Association of California School Administrators
  + California Association of Bilingual Educators
  + California Federation of Teachers
  + California Parent Teacher Association
  + California School Boards Association
  + California Science Teachers Association
  + California Small School District Association
  + California Teachers Association
  + Californians Together
  + Special Education Local Plan Area Association

Meetings with representatives from these organizations provided a regular forum for sharing information about state assessment-related developments and receiving feedback from key education stakeholders.

* Bimonthly meetings also were held in 2020 with the Curriculum and Instruction Steering Committee’s Regional Assessment Network, consisting of representatives from all 11 of the network’s regions throughout California. This group meets monthly following the SBE meetings. The CDE ADAD highlighted the latest developments and activities for all statewide assessments at each meeting. The 2020 meeting dates were as follows:
  + January 17
  + March 20
  + May 15
  + September 25
  + November 20
* The CDE ADAD made a presentation in August 2020 to the Advisory Committee on Special Education. Topics highlighted current developments for all assessments, with particular emphasis on the CAAs for ELA, mathematics, and science; the accessibility resources for the Smarter Balanced Summative Assessments for ELA and mathematics; and the CAST.

#### Sample, Practice, and Training Tests

The 2020 implementation activities in support of sample, practice, and training tests were as follows:

* In January, the CSA practice tests and accommodated training tests became available for the first time.
* In February, Smarter Balanced released an update to its Sample Items web page, located at <http://sampleitems.smarterbalanced.org/>, which allows parents/guardians, educators, and other stakeholders to explore and interact with sample questions. Viewers can use search filters to quickly find items on the basis of grade, subject, claim, or item type. The website was updated to allow users to print sample test items.

This website presents a variety of item types used in Smarter Balanced assessments to measure what students know and can do. The samples are not intended to be used as practice tests; rather, stakeholders can use them to better understand how Smarter Balanced measures college- and career-readiness content.

* The CAASPP Online Practice and Training Tests Portal, located at <http://www.caaspp.org/practice-and-training/index.html>, provided practice and training tests as well as scoring guides that mirror the depth and breadth of the content of the operational test. Educators, students, parents/guardians, and other stakeholders can view and try out the tests in the same way students encounter them on the Smarter Balanced Summative Assessments. The portal offers the following practice and training tests:
  + Smarter Balanced Summative Assessments for ELA and mathematics
  + CAAs for ELA and mathematics
  + CAST
  + CAA for Science
  + In November, new online practice tests and updated training tests were made available for the CAST. One test per grade/grade span (grade five, grade eight, and high school) is available. In addition, three performance tasks—one from each science domain—were included in the CAA for Science field test online training performance task, assessing two Science Connectors—Life Sciences and Physical Sciences. The CSA accommodated practice tests were also made available.

### **Regulations**

There were no changes for this reporting period.

### **Contracts**

There were no changes for this reporting period.

### **Technology Readiness**

The 2020 implementation activities in support of technology readiness were as follows:

* The CDE continued to assist the K–12 High Speed Network with the implementation of the Broadband Infrastructure Improvement Grant (BIIG) program. As of December 31, all of the 164 BIIG 1.0 projects were completed; of the 267 BIIG 2.0 projects, 245 were completed.
* The CDE continued to work with its contractor to enhance the Assessment Technology Platform solution to implement efficiencies and improve user experience with the California Assessment Delivery System, including all components required to deliver the Smarter Balanced and non-Smarter Balanced assessments, which include the CAST, CAAs, and CSA.

### **Test Security**

No test security incidents occurred that compromised the integrity of the assessments for this reporting period.

### **Performance Standards**

There were no changes for this reporting period.

### **Reporting of Results**

Due to the statewide suspension of all testing in March 2020, an insufficient number of students completed testing to warrant the publishing of statewide assessment results. Only students who completed testing prior to the suspension of testing received a student score report.

### **Peer Review Status**

#### Federal Peer Review Submission Update

The CDE is required to submit to the U.S. Department of Education (ED) documents demonstrating that California’s assessments meet the requirements for validity, reliability, and fairness established for states by ESSA. As new assessments become operational, the CDE must provide additional evidence for peer review, covering each assessment that is required under ESSA. The peer review process is often an iterative one, with states submitting additional evidence to meet the requirements as it becomes available. The status of each California assessment subject to the peer review process is described below.

* **Smarter Balanced Summative Assessments for ELA and mathematics.** In June 2016, in collaboration with the Consortium, the CDE submitted evidence for peer review of the Smarter Balanced Summative Assessments for ELA and mathematics. There are four possible outcomes of the peer review: meets requirements, substantially meets requirements, partially meets requirements, and does not meet requirements. Both “meets requirements” and “substantially meets requirements” are passing results for peer review. The outcome of this submission was a rating of “substantially meets requirements.” As part of the review, the ED requested additional evidence related to the monitoring of assessment processes for students with special education needs, and the final pieces of evidence were submitted in December 2020.
* **CAAs for ELA and mathematics.** In December 2017, the CDE submitted peer-review evidence for the CAAs for ELA and mathematics, which were first administered operationally in 2016. More than 150 documents were submitted, covering the test development process, test alignment, test administration, test and data security, reporting of results, and analyses of test performance. The outcome of this submission was a rating of “substantially meets requirements.” As part of the review, the ED requested additional evidence for both ELA and mathematics related to the statistical dimensionality of the assessments and the process for determining the scoring reliability for items based on rubrics. Supporting evidence was submitted in December 2020.
* **CAA for Science.** The first operational administration of the CAA for Science was planned for the 2019–2020 school year; however, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, all statewide testing was suspended. As a result, there was an insufficient number of students who were administered the CAA for Science for the CDE and its testing contractor to complete the necessary development work to operationalize the CAA for Science. The CDE expects to submit evidence to the ED for the CAA for Science in 2022–23.
* **CAST.** The CAST was first administered operationally in 2018–19. The ED has requested that the CDE complete the first submission of evidence for the CAST for the next peer review submission cycle in December 2021.

### **Independent Evaluation**

The 2020 implementation activities in support of the independent evaluation were as follows:

* Pursuant to *EC* Section 60649, as the independent evaluator of the CAASPP System (from July 2018 through December 2020), the Human Resources Research Organization (HumRRO) continued its three-year independent evaluation to provide objective technical advice and consultation on activities supporting the implementation of the CAASPP System.
* HumRRO produced the *CAASPP 2020 Independent Evaluation Report,* which describes the work conducted during the year.
* HumRRO produced the *CAASPP 2018*–*2020 Comprehensive Final Report*, which summarizes the work conducted during the three-year contract term.
* HumRRO produced the *CAST Alignment Study Report* and the *CAA for Science Alignment Study Report*, which evaluate the assessments relative to their respective standards and blueprints.
* The above-mentioned reports were posted on the CDE CAASPP Technical Reports and Studies web page at <https://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/tg/ca/caaspprptstudies.asp>.

### **Smarter Balanced Summative Assessments, Interim Assessments, and Digital Library/Tools for Teachers**

The 2020 implementation activities in support of the Smarter Balanced Summative Assessments, interim assessments, and Digital Library (replaced by Tools for Teachers) were as follows:

**Summative Assessments**

* Educators from Consortium member states convened virtually for several annual development activities, including item writing training, item review, data review, and range finding. California educators participated in these educator involvement events.
* In March, the Consortium convened a Remote Proctoring Policy Task Force to establish use cases regarding how interim assessments might support remote learning. In addition, the task force will develop strategies and procedures that reduce risk for the remote administration of Smarter Balanced interim and summative assessments. The task force considered issues and concerns related to emergent needs surrounding the following:
  + Distance teaching and learning
  + Accessibility and equity
  + Student and adult interactions
  + Smarter Balanced and member responsibilities
* In April, the Consortium released a new Remote Teaching and Learning website at <https://remote.smartertoolsforteachers.org/>. The website provides educators with suggestions regarding the use of Smarter Balanced resources while teaching remotely.
* Improvements were made to the Individual Student Assessment Accessibility Profile (ISAAP) Tool. Specifically, the ISAAP Tool has been converted from a macros-enabled spreadsheet to a user-friendly online application. These improvements further support the process of identifying and assigning accessibility resources for students in alignment with their needs.
* In December, the Consortium approved the remote administration of summative assessments for the 2020–21 school year.

**Interim Assessments**

* Until March 17 of the 2019–2020 school year (when summative testing was suspended due to COVID-19), the number of interim assessments administered had surpassed the number of tests administered during the same period during the previous school year. By April 2020, most California LEAs had transitioned to distance learning. In April 2020, at the direction of the CDE, the testing contractor reconfigured the test administration system to allow California schools to administer interim assessments remotely.
* During the 2020–21 school year, the interim assessments remained available for use during distance learning. By December 31, 2020, approximately 719,000 interim assessments had been administered since the beginning of the 2020–21 school year. This count is significantly lower than the number of interim assessments administered within the same time frame during the previous school year but can be largely attributed to the various challenges faced by educators in 2020 that required educators to focus on other priorities.
  + In August 2020, Smarter Balanced released the Interim Assessment Item Portal, a secure website that allows educators to easily search through all interim assessments by using filters to identify specific items that align with the content of their interest.

**Transition of the Digital Library to Tools for Teachers**

* The Digital Library was retired in May 2020 and replaced in June 2020 by the user-friendly Tools for Teachers website for educators in California LEAs. Tools for Teachers provides instructional lesson plans and professional learning activities using the formative assessment process with embedded strategies for instructional differentiation. Useful links to additional Smarter Balanced resources, including the Interim Assessment Item Portal, also are provided on the Tools for Teachers website at <https://smartertoolsforteachers.org/>.
* The Consortium added 42 new Connections Playlists to the Digital Library for the 2019–2020 school year—one for each of the Interim Assessment Blocks (IABs). The new Connections Playlists are aligned with the new focused IABs, which feature 126 new instructional resources for ELA and mathematics. Developed in collaboration with educators from Consortium member states, the new playlists support educators in their use of the Smarter Balanced Interim Assessments in conjunction with instructional resources. The Connections Playlists are available on the Tools for Teachers website at <https://smartertoolsforteachers.org/>.

### **California Alternate Assessments for English Language Arts and Mathematics**

The 2020 implementation activities in support of the CAAs for ELA and mathematics included the following:

* Educators from throughout the state convened virtually for item writing and item review workshops. These workshops supported the ongoing development work for the CAAs for ELA and mathematics in refreshing the item banks and practice tests.

### **California Science Test**

The 2020 implementation activities in support of the CAST were as follows:

* In January, the SBE approved the CDE-recommended changes to the CAST design and blueprint for implementation in the 2020–2021 administration.
* In January, an in-person item writing workshop was conducted in Sacramento with 17 California science educators participating. The educators received training on how to write test questions for future CAST administrations.
* On January 7, the CAST operational assessment became available to LEAs; testing was suspended on March 20, 2020. One hundred fourteen LEAs administered the CAST, and 26,738 students completed testing.
* In February, CDE staff presented updates on the CAST at a Community of Practice—Science Subcommittee Meeting attended by 135 subcommittee members.
* In February, CDE staff presented updates on the CAST at the Next Generation Science Standards Leadership Conference, which was attended by 100 conference participants.
* In June, CDE staff presented a science assessment update at the Curriculum and Instruction Steering Committee—Science Sub-Committee meeting, given the suspension of testing and the suspension’s effect on high school students meeting the state and federal science testing requirement. CDE staff also provided an update on the development of new science instructional resources for California educators.
* In June, CDE staff met with staff from the Washington Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction to provide an update on the development of science instructional resources for the Smarter Balanced Tools for Teachers repository.
* In December, testing contractor ETS conducted a virtual three-day item review meeting with 27 California science educators to review items and performance tasks that may be field-tested for the 2021–22 administration of the CAST.

### **California Alternate Assessment for Science**

The 2020 implementation activities in support of the CAA for Science were as follows:

* On September 8, the CAA for Science test became available to LEAs; testing was suspended on March 20, 2020. This test consisted of three performance tasks. Two hundred ten LEAs administered the CAA for Science, and 1,227 students completed testing.
* In February, an in-person item writing workshop was conducted in Sacramento with 25 California special education and science educators participating. The educators received training on how to write test questions for future CAA for Science administrations.
* In March, an in-person item review meeting was conducted in Sacramento with 10 California special education and science educators participating. The educators received training on how to write test questions for future CAA for Science administrations.

### **California Spanish Assessment**

The 2020 implementation activities in support of the CSA were as follows:

* In January, California educators participated in the Item Writer Workshop in advance to the 2020 operational administration of the CSA. This workshop provided educators with the opportunity to learn how to develop test items and write items for possible inclusion in the CSA.
* In October, a virtual Item Review Meeting was conducted with educators to review items for content, bias, and sensitivity of new test items in preparation for field testing in 2021.

**California Educator Reporting System**

In fall 2019, the system previously known to LEAs as the Interim Assessment Reporting System was renamed “CERS.” This secure system is used by California LEA staff to view individual and aggregate student results from the Smarter Balanced Interim Assessments for ELA and mathematics.

By the end of the 2020 calendar year, CERS replaced the Online Reporting System, which was previously used for summative assessment results. In addition, by the end of 2020, the historical summative assessment results for CAASPP and ELPAC were loaded into CERS, and CERS was configured to receive future regular data feeds of the test results for these testing programs.

The CERS Sandbox training tool, introduced in July 2019, remains available to help educators become familiar with the features and functions of CERS in a nonsecure environment. The Sandbox is available on the Smarter Reporting System Sandbox web page at <https://reporting-demo.smarterbalanced.org/sandbox-login?sandbox=CA_S004>.

### **Early Assessment Program**

Due to the suspension of testing, EAP results were not available for the 2019–2020 testing year.

### **California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress Expansion**

The CDE continued the expansion of CAASPP with the development of the CAA for Science and the CSA.

### **Grade Two Diagnostic Assessments for Language Arts and Mathematics**

There were no changes for this reporting period.

## Contract Costs

CAASPP contract costs require SBE approval and are contingent on the review of the contract by the Department of Finance (DOF) during contract negotiations. Per *EC* Section 60643, the CDE, in consultation with the SBE, may make material amendments to the contract that do not increase the contract cost. Contract amendments that increase contract costs may be made only with the approval of the CDE, the SBE, and the DOF. As of the date of this report, the CAASPP System includes the following contracts: (1) Consortium-managed services, (2) state-managed services, and (3) independent evaluation.

### **Smarter Balanced Consortium-Managed Services Contract**

The Consortium-managed services contract is a multiyear, sole-source contract with costs based on an annual fee structure for Consortium services provided by a Consortium-selected contractor. For the 2017–18 through 2019–2020 test administrations, the selected contractor was (and continues to be) the Regents of the University of California on behalf of the Santa Cruz campus. This contract provides California with access to Smarter Balanced Summative Assessment items for statewide testing; the ongoing refreshment of Smarter Balanced test items, validation research, blueprint alignment, accommodations and accessibility research, and so forth; access to Smarter Balanced Interim Assessments (for K–12 teachers) for optional use; and access to formative tools in the Smarter Balanced Digital Library (Tools for Teachers)—also for K–12 teachers’ optional use.

The current CDE contract with the Regents of the University of California, on behalf of the Santa Cruz campus, for Smarter Balanced began on July 1, 2017, and will end on June 30, 2022. In November 2018, the SBE approved a request by the CDE to amend the contract to include activities related to the reporting of assessment results to educators. In July 2019, the contract was amended to include the reporting activities, and the total contract stands at $50.3 million for a period of five years, which includes a total of $1.8 million for CAASPP-related educator reporting activities. It is anticipated that the annual cost for the membership will not exceed the current annual cap of $9.55 million.

Table 3, on the following page, provides a breakdown of the current Regents of the University of California, on behalf of the Santa Cruz campus, contract costs per fiscal year.

Table 3. Consortium-Managed Services Contract Costs

| **Fiscal Year** | **Total Cost** | **Package** | **Per-Student Rate** | **Students1** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 2017–18 | $9,550,000 | Summative, Interim, and Digital Library | $6.20 Summative and  $3.35 Interim and Digital Library | 1 million (cap) |
| 2018–19 | $9,550,000 membership fee and $02 educator reporting activities | Summative, Interim, Digital Library, and educator reporting | $6.20 Summative and  $3.35 Interim and Digital Library | 1 million (cap) |
| 2019–2020 | $9,550,000 membership fee and $369,865 educator reporting activities | Summative, Interim, Digital Library,3 and educator reporting | $6.20 Summative and  $3.35 Interim and \*Digital Library | 1 million (cap) |
| 2020–21 | $9,550,000 membership fee and $518,780 educator reporting activities | Summative, Interim, Tools for Teachers, and educator reporting | $6.20 Summative and  $3.35 Interim and Tools for Teachers | 1 million (cap) |
| 2021–22 | $9,550,000 membership fee and $531,346 educator reporting activities | Summative, Interim, Tools for Teachers, and educator reporting | $6.20 Summative and  $3.35 Interim and Tools for Teachers | 1 million (cap) |

1 California tests approximately 3.2 million students annually with Smarter Balanced summative assessments.

2 Total reflects a one-time membership credit applied toward the costs to develop the CERS for CAASPP.

3 The Digital Library, which previously was the formative assessment component of the Smarter Balanced Assessment System, was replaced by Tools for Teachers June 2020.

**State-Managed Services Contract**

The state-managed services contract is a multiyear contract for the annual administration of all CAASPP assessments, including the Smarter Balanced Consortium assessments. This contract was competitively bid through a Request for Submission process with input from CDE and SBE staff. In that process, the SBE designated the contractor. As allowed in state law, the final Scope of Work and budget were then negotiated and approved by the CDE, the SBE, and the DOF.

The current state-managed services contractor is ETS. The contract was awarded in May 2015 for the 2015–16 through 2017–18 test administrations. In January 2018, the SBE approved the renewal of the contract with ETS for a period of two years to cover the 2018–19 and 2019–2020 CAASPP test administrations. In November 2018, the SBE approved an amendment to the renewed contract with ETS for an additional two-year period to cover the 2020–21 and 2021–22 test administrations.

The 2018–19 Budget Act provided approximately $82.8 million for the ongoing administration of all components of the CAASPP System. Some key enhancements are as follows:

* Expanded the capacity of the CAASPP Assessment Delivery System from the previous dedicated support for 500,000 concurrent users to the dedicated support for 2,000,000 concurrent users.
* Piloted access to Student Score Reports for LEAs and their authorized student information vendors in electronic formats suitable for loading directly into their local student information system.
* Explored additional studies and analyses to inform CAASPP assessments.
* Performed the calculations to inform growth models.
* Developed practice tests and updated training tests for the CAST.
* Developed training performance tasks for the CAA for Science.

Table 4, on the following page, provides a breakdown of the current contract costs per fiscalyear.

Table 4.State-Managed Services Contract Costs

| **Fiscal Year** | **Total Cost** | **Cost Breakdown per Test Administration** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| 2017–18 | $77,273,778 | * $5,754,766 for 2016–17 test administration costs * $71,519,012 for 2017–18 test administration costs |
| 2018–19 | $82,754,000 | * $5,380,178 for 2017–18 test administration costs * $77,373,822 for 2018–19 test administration costs |
| 2019–2020 | $76,846,831 | * $1,578,399 for 2018–19 test administration costs * $75,268,432 for 2019–2020 test administration costs |
| 2020–21 | $76,565,323 | * $2,369,536 for 2019–2020 test administration costs * $74,195,787 for 2020–21 test administration costs |
| 2021–22 | $76,674,757 | * $2,651,082 for 2020–21 test administration costs * $74,023,675 for 2021–22 test administration costs |
| 2022–23 | $3,000,000 | * $3,000,000 for 2021–22 test administration costs |

### **Independent Evaluation Contract**

The independent evaluation contract is a multiyear contract to provide independent, objective technical advice and consultation on activities to be undertaken in implementing the CAASPP System per *EC* Section 60649. The contract requires  
interim annual evaluation reports and a final report on the activities and analysis of the three-year evaluation, including recommendations to ensure the quality, fairness, validity, and reliability of the assessments. This contract was competitively bid through a Request for Proposal process with input provided by CDE and SBE staff. The contractor selected was HumRRO as the responsible bidder with the lowest-cost bid. In December 2020, the contract was amended, extending the contract through June 30, 2022. The total contract amount is $2,244,000.

Evaluation activities include five studies: California Science Test Alignment Study, Impact on Instruction and Student Learning Case Study, California Alternate Assessment for Science Alignment Study, ELPAC Alignment Study, and Alternate ELPAC Alignment Study.

Table 5, below, provides a breakdown of the current contract costs per fiscal year.

Table 5.Independent Evaluation Contract Costs

| **Fiscal Year** | **Total Cost** |
| --- | --- |
| 2018–19 | $681,000 |
| 2019–2020 | $767,000 |
| 2020–21 | $574,000 |
| 2021–22 | $222,000 |

## Apportionment Costs

The CAASPP apportionment costs are funded in the annual Budget Act as part of the assessment apportionments schedule that includes funding for apportionments to LEAs for the CAASPP System. State testing apportionments for any particular year are not paid to LEAs until the following fiscal year, after all testing has been completed for the school year and the final number of students tested has been certified by the LEAs. *EC* Section 60640(l)(2) states that the SBE shall annually establish the amount of funding to be apportioned to LEAs for specified CAASPP assessments, which include the optional CSA. However, state law does not authorize LEA apportionments for the optional Smarter Balanced Interim Assessments or Digital Library (Tools for Teachers).

State law (*EC* Section 60644) also specifies that the savings realized from the elimination of the grade two standards-based achievement tests shall be used by LEAs to administer, at the option and cost of the LEA, a grade two diagnostic assessment identified by the CDE as meeting the requirements of *EC* Section 60644. State CAASPP regulations authorize the CDE to provide this funding to LEAs through the annual CAASPP apportionment process. Approximately 290 LEAs received an apportionment for the grade two diagnostic assessment in the 2017–18 school year.

In March 2020, the SBE approved the LEA apportionment rates for CAASPP for the 2019–2020 school year. The estimates for the CAST and the CAA for Science are based on the estimated number of students tested in grade ten or grade twelve only; students in these grades are not required to take an additional CAASPP test. The estimates for the Smarter Balanced Summative Assessments and CAAs for ELA and mathematics apportionments already include an LEA apportionment reimbursement for students in grades five, eight, and eleven who also will take the CAST or CAA for Science. Table 6, on the following page, provides a breakdown of estimated apportionment costs by assessment.

Table 6.Estimated Apportionment Costs for 2019–2020 CAASPP Testing

| **Assessment** | **Per-Pupil Rate** | **Estimated**  **2019‒2020 Pupil Population** | **Estimated Apportionment** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Smarter Balanced Summative Assessments for ELA and mathematics | $4.00 | 21,000 | $84,000 |
| CAST | $2.00 | 27,000 | $54,000 |
| California Alternate Assessments for ELA and mathematics | $5.00 | 800 | $4,000 |
| CAA for Science | $5.00 | 1,400 | $7,000 |
| CSA | $5.00 | 1,300 | $6,500 |
| Grade 2 diagnostic assessments (*EC* 60644) | $2.52 | 2,500 | $6,300 |
| Students not tested due to medical emergency and parent/guardian exemptions | $1.00 | 3,250,000 | $3,250,000 |
| Total: | N/A | 3,304,000 | $3,411,800 |

## Five-Year Cost Projection

The annual Budget Act provides funding for both contract costs and LEA apportionment costs. Cost projections are refined annually as contracts are negotiated and approved and as activities are completed for each implementation phase of the CAASPP System.

Cost projections for the state-managed services contract are from the approved state-managed CAASPP contract services (see Table 4, p. 26). State-managed services contract costs include funding for the development of the CAST, the CAA for Science, and the CSA. The costs for 2018–19 and 2019–2020 include reporting the results of the CAAs for ELA, mathematics, and science. Table 7, on the following page, provides an updated five-year projection of CAASPP contract costs.

Table 7.Five-Year Projection of CAASPP Contract Costs

| **Fiscal Year** | **Consortium-Managed Services Cost** | **State- Managed Contract Cost** | **Independent Evaluation Cost** | **Total  CAASPP Contract Cost** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 2018–19 | $9.6 million | $82.8 million | $681,000 | $93.2 million |
| 2019–2020 | $9.9 million | $76.9 million | $767,000 | $87.6 million |
| 2020–21 | $10.1 million | $76.6 million | $760,0001 | $87.5 million |
| 2021–22 | $10.1 million | $76.7 million | $760,0002 | $87.6 million |
| 2022–23 | $10.1 million | $76.7 million3 | $760,000 | $87.6 million |

1 Total reflects a one-time membership credit applied toward the costs to develop the CERS for CAASPP.

2 Contract cost estimates for 2021–22 are based on current contractobligations. Actual contract costs for 2021–22 and future years will be determined through a future competitive bid process.

3 Contract costs for 2022–23 include $3 million in current contract obligations, as shown in Table 4, and a projected $73.7 million in contract costs. Actual contract costs for 2022–23 and future years will be determined through a future competitive bid process.

Table 8.Five-Year Projection of CAASPP LEA Apportionment Costs

| **Fiscal Year** | **LEA Apportionment Cost** | **Test Administration Reimbursed** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| 2018–19 | $16.5 million | 2017–2018 test administration |
| 2019–2020 | $16.6 million | 2018–2019 test administration |
| 2020–21 | $17.8 million | 2019–2020 test administration |
| 2021–22 | $17.8 million | 2020–2021 test administration |
| 2022–23 | $17.8 million | 2021–2022 test administration |

These projections are based on the current, approved CAASPP apportionment rates.  
The SBE may modify the amount to be apportioned in subsequent years to address changes to LEA test administration activities. Any adjustment to the CAASPP apportionment rates that will increase the total amount apportioned annually will require DOF approval. The CDE provided the DOF with estimated assessment apportionments for fiscal year 2018–19, including approximately $15.5 million in estimated costs for the CAASPP System.

The 2019 Budget Act appropriation of $15.5 million is sufficient funding for the CAASPP apportionments to LEAs for the specified CAASPP assessments.

## Cost Projection Variations of Proposed Budgets, 2016–2020

The 2016 Budget Act, 2017 Budget Act, 2018 Budget Act, 2019 Budget Act, and 2020 Budget Act all provided sufficient funding for CAASPP contract costs and apportionment costs. The total Budget Act funding, per year, for various CAASPP contract costs were as follows:

* 2016—$93.03 million
* 2017—$87.73 million
* 2018—$86.1 million
* 2019—$87.5 million
* 2020—$87.1 million

## California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress Timeline

The CAASPP timeline shown in Table 9, below, provides information on the assessments that are anticipated to be a part of each CAASPP test administration per fiscal year.

Table 9.CAASPP Timeline

| **Fiscal Year** | **Test Administrations** | **Operational Assessments** | **Assessments Undergoing Census or Sample Pilot and Field Testing** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 2018–19 | 2017–18 test administration and  2018–19 test administration | Smarter Balanced, CAAs for ELA and mathematics, CAST, and CSA | Field test: CAA for Science and CSA |
| 2019–2020 | 2018–19 test administration and  2019–2020 test administration | Smarter Balanced, CAAs for ELA and mathematics, CAST, CAA for Science1, CSA | None |
| 2020–21 | 2019–2020 test administration and  2020–21 test administration | Smarter Balanced, CAAs for ELA and mathematics, CAST, CAA for Science, CSA | None |
| 2021–22 | 2020–21 test administration and  2021–22 test administration | Smarter Balanced, CAAs for ELA and mathematics, CAST, CAA for Science, CSA | None |
| 2022–23 | 2021–22 test administration and  2022–23 test administration | Smarter Balanced, CAAs for ELA and mathematics, CAST, CAA for Science, CSA | None |

1 Due to suspension of testing, the implementation of the CAA for Science as an operational was delayed until 2020–2021.