California Department of Education

Executive Office

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# **MEMORANDUM**

**DATE:** June 12, 2020

**TO:** MEMBERS, State Board of Education

**FROM:** TONY THURMOND, State Superintendent of Public Instruction

**SUBJECT:** 2018–19 California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress English Language Arts/Literacy: Update on Grade Six Scoring and Reporting.

## Summary of Key Issues

## This Information Memorandum provides an update on the revised scores for some of the grade six writing extended response (WER) items for the 2018–19 California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress (CAASPP) Smarter Balanced English language arts/literacy (ELA) test and the subsequent changes to the California School Dashboard.

**Issue Description**

In early December 2019, testing contractor Educational Testing Service (ETS) found that, within the pool of grade six WER items, six automated-scored WER prompts had low inter-rater reliability estimates for the Conventions dimension scores. Through ETS’s review and analysis of all data transfer and scoring systems, a configuration issue was uncovered in the data transfer system related to those grade six WER prompts. The configuration error was resolved, and the items were rescored. A detailed account of the configuration error, as well as the number of student scores and score reporting systems affected by this configuration error, was provided in an Information Memorandum to the California State Board of Education in February 2020, which can be located at <https://www.cde.ca.gov/be/pn/im/documents/feb20memoadad03.docx>.

In February 2020, revised Smarter Balanced ELA scores were reported for all students whose scale score increased because of rescoring. Consistent with past practice, students whose scale score decreased or remained the same were not re-reported.

Revised data files were provided to the Analysis, Measurement, and Accountability Reporting Division (AMARD) for further analysis in order to determine the impact on the accountability and continuous improvement system. AMARD determined that the revised grade six ELA scores resulted in a change to the ELA performance level color of 200 schools and 40 local educational agencies (LEAs).

The California School Dashboard was updated on April 6, 2020, to reflect the revised ELA academic performance level for each impacted school and LEA. Consistent with the Student Score Reports, no schools or LEAs experienced a change that negatively affected their ELA academic performance level. Only the LEAs that experienced a change in their performance level were notified, by email, of this change. An overview of all academic performance level changes can be found in Table 1. While this update resulted in no change regarding Differentiated Assistance for LEAs, six schools were exited from Comprehensive Support and Improvement as a result of this change.

To prevent a similar issue from occurring in the future, ETS’s corrective action review has identified the following process-improvement opportunities, which are to be implemented moving forward:

* Update quality-control processes, including the increased sampling of test data, and the enhancement of end-to-end data flow testing and rating validations, in an effort to detect and address issues before scoring commences.
* Enhance the preliminary item analysis process for all tests with centralized hand scoring (the Smarter Balanced Assessments for ELA and mathematics, the California Science Test, and the Summative English Language Proficiency Assessments for California) to ensure that any potential issues are flagged earlier in the process, prior to the release of score reports.

**Table 1. Changes to ELA Academic Performance Levels on the 2018–19 California School Dashboard Due to Rescoring of Grade Six WER Items**

| **ELA Academic Performance Level Change for the Student Group “All Students”\*** | **Schools** | **LEAs** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Red to Orange | 6 | 0 |
| Orange to Yellow | 93 | 19 |
| Yellow to Green | 44 | 12 |
| Green to Blue | 57 | 9 |
| **TOTAL** | **200** | **40** |

\*LEAs and schools receive one of five color-coded performance levels on the state indicators. From highest to lowest, the five performance levels are: blue, green, yellow, orange, and red. Performance levels are calculated based on how current-year data compares to prior-year data.

## Attachment(s)

None.