



CAASPP in Action

Sharing Practices
in Implementing
the CAASPP System
to Improve Teaching
and Learning



California Assessment of
Student Performance and Progress

***Interim Assessment
Data Interpretation Protocol
Cupertino Union School District***



Interim Assessment Data Interpretation Protocol Cupertino Union

School District



CUPERTINO UNION
SCHOOL DISTRICT

Mission Statement

The Mission of Cupertino Union School District is to provide a child-centered environment that cultivates character, fosters academic excellence, and embraces diversity. District families, community, and staff join as partners to develop creative, exemplary learners with the skills and enthusiasm to contribute to a constantly changing global society.

DISTRICT PROFILE

GRADES SERVED **K-8**

SCHOOLS **25**

TEACHERS **864**

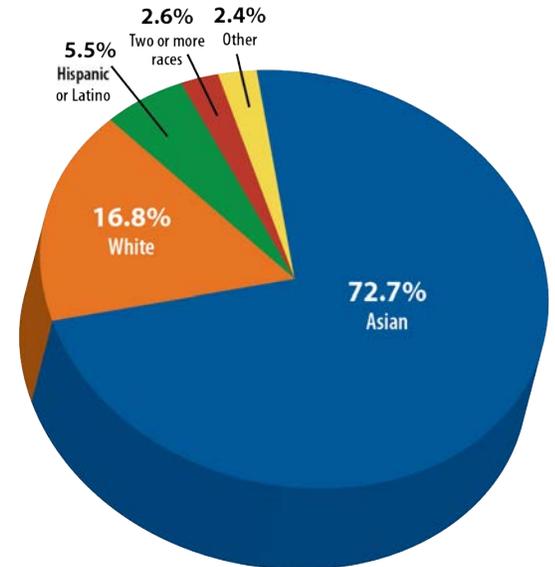
ENROLLMENT **19,079**

ENGLISH LEARNERS **13%**

LOW INCOME **5%**

SPECIAL EDUCATION **7%**

ETHNIC DIVERSITY OF STUDENTS



GOALS

1. Administer the Smarter Balanced Interim Assessment Blocks (IABs) in all grades to help stakeholders understand the connection between assessment and instruction, create a common data point for shared conversations about teaching and learning, and increase familiarity of students and teachers with universal tools and designated supports.
2. Establish a data-driven, decision-making culture by providing staff with the training and tools needed to interpret and evaluate summative and interim assessment results for improving classroom instruction.

IMPLEMENTATION TEAM

The Cupertino Union Director of Assessment and the instructional coaches were involved in the planning, implementation, and administration of the selected IABs and the development, training, and use of the data interpretation protocol. The Director of Instructional Technology and staff in the Assessment and Data Management groups were also involved in the planning and implementation efforts.

Instructional coaches are key players in the district. Including the instructional coaches was critical to the success of the plan because they have credibility with teachers about the appropriate placement of the IABs within the curriculum.

Text and images provided by Cupertino Union School District.

Special thanks to Nicole Johnston, former Director of Assessment for Cupertino Union School District, for her leadership and contributions to this write-up.

APPROACH

Administer the Smarter Balanced Interim Assessments

Traditionally students in Cupertino Union have performed well on statewide tests, but the district lacked a common measure to provide information about student strengths, areas for improvement, and most importantly, to drive conversations about instruction and improved teaching and learning. The district wanted teachers to have a shared learning experience and an opportunity to interact with the assessments to help them better align instruction with the standards. Another important factor driving this decision to implement the Smarter Balanced Interim Assessments districtwide was increasing familiarity of students and teachers with the test interface and universal tools and designated supports.

Cupertino Union's Executive Cabinet had initial conversations about requiring standardized administration of the Interim Comprehensive Assessments (ICAs) in both English-language arts (ELA) and mathematics in the fall. Because of the time investment involved with administration and scoring of the ICAs, the Assessment Department recommended use of the IABs. The final decision for the first year of implementation was to select from each grade level two mathematics IABs that require no hand scoring.

Cupertino Union began its implementation efforts by identifying the IABs that best fit the long term goals of the district. The district decided to create a designated testing window for the IABs similar to the approach taken for the summative assessments. This allowed for targeted training and support during that designated time. The two selected IABs were administered to students in January.

Establish a Data-Driven, Decision Making Culture

To address interpretation and use of the data resulting from the IABs, the Director of the Assessment Department and a few of the instructional coaches designed a data interpretation protocol. The protocol was designed to familiarize teachers with the IABs, the data they receive from the IABs, and help them understand how this assessment data fits into the narrative of a student's learning progress.

Previously the district had only used standardized assessments for federal or state mandates or for retention or placement of students – all with an accountability focus and outcome, not an instructional focus. Teachers were still "stuck in California Standards Test (CST)/No Child Left Behind (NCLB) mode." There was a lot of education that needed to happen around data and its potential use for improving instruction.

The implementation team crafted guiding questions within the data interpretation protocol. The team also considered what resources classroom teachers would need to help make instructional decisions based on the data points available to them through the interim assessments.

For a long time assessment had been seen as separate from instruction. One of the main goals of the Cupertino team was to help all stakeholders understand that assessment and instruction are not separate topics that are talked about in isolation but that they should be integrated.

One of Cupertino's main goals was to communicate to teachers that assessment and instruction go hand in hand.

APPROACH, continued

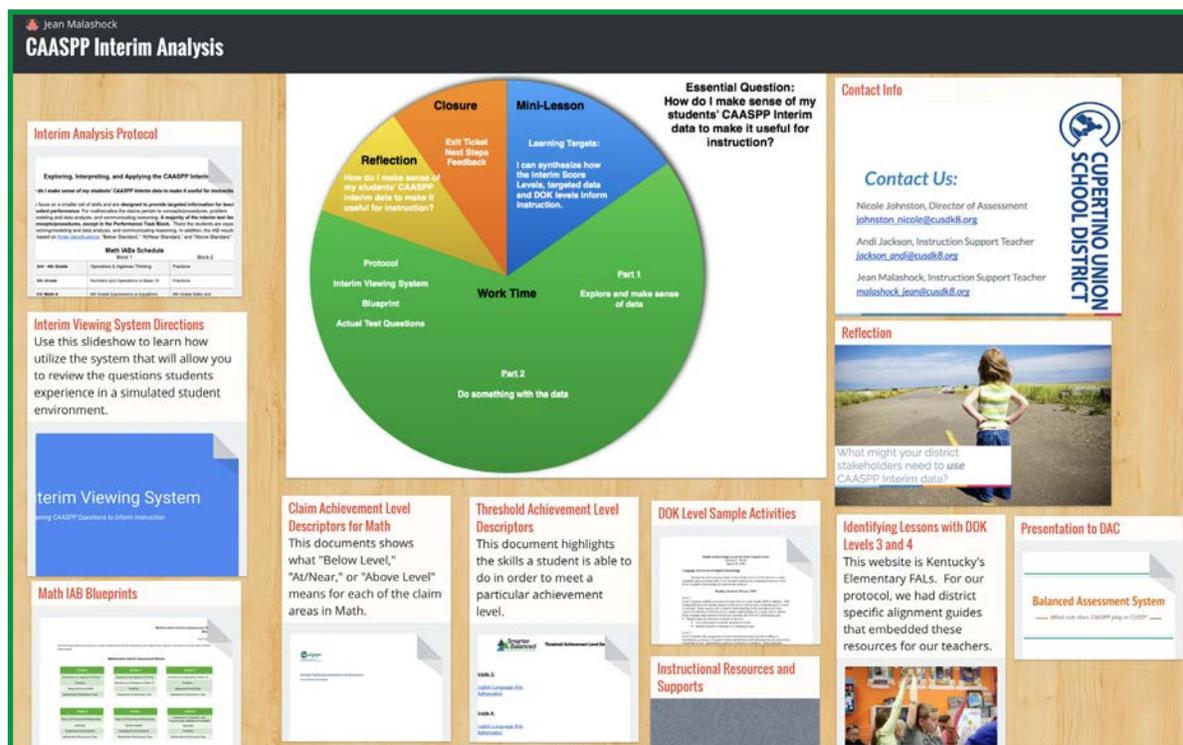
Once the resources were identified, they were placed on Padlet—a free Web application that allows users to create an online bulletin board that can display information and resources (e.g., documents, images, videos) on any topic—which acted as a “one-stop shop” for information (Figure 1).

Use of Padlet allowed the district to combine the data interpretation protocol with other critical resources that together would help drive conversations about the data and what it means for changes in instruction. Most importantly it provided all the relevant resources in one place, including information about

- Depth of Knowledge (DOK) and sample activities associated with different DOK levels;
- claim and threshold achievement level descriptors from Smarter Balanced that demonstrate the expectations associated with each level of performance;
- the Smarter Balanced test blueprints for the IABs in mathematics;
- other presentations and resources to support access and use of the interim assessment system.

A training about the data interpretation protocol and related resources on Padlet was conducted for all site administrators and instructional coaches. The data interpretation protocol was modeled for use with teachers. The district wanted administrators to develop the capacity to lead discussions around data with their staff with support from instructional coaches, as needed.

Figure 1: Screen Shot of Cupertino Union’s Padlet* with Resources to Support Data Review and Interpretation



* http://padlet.com/malashock_jean/CAASPPInterimAnalysis

CHALLENGES

One of the biggest challenges had to do with shifting the narrative around standardized testing and building efficacy and understanding around data-driven decision making—instead of making decisions based on assumptions and beliefs. Figure 2 shows one slide from a presentation for parent groups about data-driven decision making. The district goal was to help administrators and teachers see the value in this data point and take it under consideration with other data they’ve collected.

Figure 2: Excerpt from a Presentation to Parents About Data-Driven Decision Making

Data-Driven Decision Making Creates a...	
SHIFT FROM...	SHIFT TO...
a teaching focus	a learning focus
teaching as a private practice	teaching as a collaborative process
school improvement as an option	school improvement as a requirement
accountability	responsibility

To address this challenge the implementation team showed administrators and teachers how to interpret the data in order to act upon it immediately. The data interpretation protocol is flexible, and the guiding questions it contains can be used with nearly any data point, with minimal tweaking (see the Interim Analysis Protocol https://padlet.com/malashock_jean/CAASPPInterimAnalysis/wish/98047060 in Padlet).

IMPACT OF EFFORTS TO DATE

Cupertino Union was very encouraged by the progress made during the first year of implementation. Teachers not only administered the selected IABs but engaged in successful and productive conversations about the common data points—something that had never happened in the district before because common measures of achievement were non-existent. Several schools decided to administer additional IABs on their own and many individual teachers decided independently to administer additional IABs.

Use of data interpretation and the data interpretation protocol were also very successful. The administrators were appreciative that the protocol and guiding questions were designed with them in mind, and the resources are easy to use with teachers. Administrators and teachers both commented how much they liked Padlet because it contained all the resources and was easily accessible.

The use of the data interpretation protocol created a common understanding of the learning progressions for particular standards and each teacher’s individual role in ensuring that students are learning and are able

Implementing the IABs and developing and using the data interpretation protocol are the “most transformative practices we have done in years”!

to succeed at the next grade level. The discussions around the data points have been so rich and rewarding for teachers that they are asking for additional data points to further inform and guide their instruction.

LESSONS LEARNED

- **Create tools for administrators designed for immediate use.** While this sounds like a “no-brainer,” administrators are often stumped when searching for tools to help them interpret and use assessment data and facilitate meaningful conversations with teacher teams. Cupertino Union found that when principals are given tools along with the understanding of how and why these tools are helpful, they feel competent in supporting assessment work. The development of the district protocol and guiding questions embedded with other resources on a single platform, Padlet, was a huge undertaking with an even bigger impact!
- **Creating a common mindset about assessment and instruction takes time.** Breaking out of old mindsets takes time and a continued commitment to the use of common language. Through continued training and talking the same language, the administrators and teachers are seeing the connection between assessment and instruction and realizing that when both are done right, the line between them begins to blur.

“Assessment isn’t something
we do TO students; we assess
WITH our students.”

NEXT STEPS

Cupertino Union will build upon their success by continuing work in the following areas:

- Expand implementation of the IABs into ELA with hand scoring.
- Show teachers and administrators different ways to utilize IABs in their classroom for instructional purposes including nonstandardized administration.
- Continue to provide professional learning experiences for teachers that illustrate the connection back to the standards. Explore grouping information into smaller segments and offering training online.
- Create and examine learning progressions to determine new knowledge and skills required at various grade levels so that all teachers understand the responsibility for their specific grade in the chosen progression.
- As more data from both summative and interim assessments is obtained, support teachers and administrators in determining the learning journey of each student and identifying specific next steps in instruction for students, including ways to extend learning for students who have already mastered the content.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

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Padlet

http://padlet.com/malashock_jean/CAASPPInterimAnalysis

CDE CAASPP Web page

www.cde.ca.gov/ta/tg/ca

CAASPP Portal

www.caaspp.org

