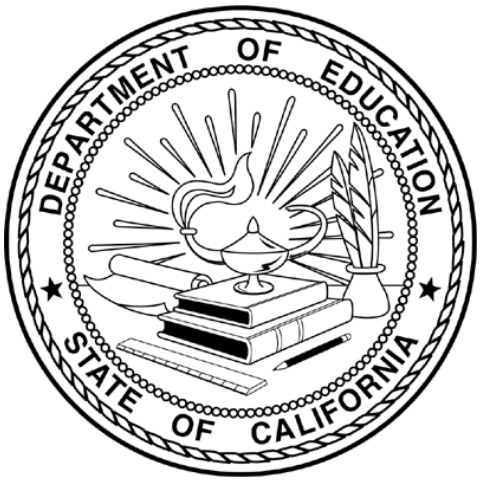
Recommendations for Transitioning California to a Future Assessment System

A Report by State Superintendent of Public Instruction Tom Torlakson

January 2013

California Department of Education

Report to the Governor and the State Legislature: Recommendations for Transitioning California to a Future Assessment System



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District, School, and Innovation Branch

January 2013

Description: Report on recommendations developed for the reauthorization of the statewide pupil assessment program

Authority: Section 60604.5 of the *Education Code*

Recipient: The Governor and appropriate policy and fiscal committees of the Legislature

Due Date: On or before November 1, 2012

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CALIFORNIA
DEPARTMENT OF
EDUCATION

TOM TORLAKSON
STATE SUPERINTENDENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

January 8, 2013

Governor Brown and Members of the California Legislature:

While what we test, how we test, who we test, when we test, and why we test all continue to be subjects of debate, this much is clear: California's system of student assessment has proven to be a powerful tool for improving school accountability and achievement.

When the Standardized Testing and Reporting (STAR) Program began more than a decade ago, only one student in three scored proficient or higher. Today, roughly 900,000 more students are reaching the goals we have set for them now than when the STAR Program began.

As significant as this progress is, the time has come to remake our state's assessment system. As we do, we must set our sights on a new, more ambitious goal—creating a system that fosters high-quality teaching and learning in every classroom.

The first step in this process is to align our assessments to the new Common Core State Standards, which provide a practical way to prepare our students for the challenges of a constantly changing world, equipping them with the real-world skills they need for college and career.

Just as the skills we want our students to master have changed, so too must our tests. The ability to engage in critical thinking and solve complex problems cannot be reliably assessed with the kinds of multiple-choice tests that are the centerpiece of our current system.

The Common Core State Standards ask students to acquire deeper knowledge of the subjects they study and be able to perform more complex tasks using what they have learned. It is critical that we have assessments that measure their progress toward these goals.

But perhaps even more important, I believe this work provides us with the opportunity to develop new assessments that serve as models for the kind of high-quality teaching and learning necessary for a world-class education.

The concept is simple but powerful: if our assessments require students to use problem solving and critical thinking skills to perform well, those same skills are much more likely to be taught in our classrooms day in and day out. The goals we set for our assessment system have profound implications for our students and our schools.

Tests that are scientifically valid and reliable for one purpose cannot necessarily be easily and reliably adapted to another. Creating a system focused principally on fostering critical thinking and problem-solving skills likely means our students will initially find them more difficult. Although they rely less heavily on memorizing specific information than our current

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assessments, they will require deeper understanding of how to access and apply knowledge and skills to real-world tasks and problems.

Tradeoffs are inevitable in this process. Just as it takes a student longer to write an essay than to choose A, B, C, or D on a multiple-choice answer sheet, designing, administering, and scoring these more complex assessments will take more time, and, inevitably, more money. However, the investment in this form of assessment is an investment in the quality of teaching and learning as well, so the costs are balanced by significant benefits.

There are other concerns as well. After all, testing and learning are not one and the same. We must always be mindful that time spent testing generally comes at the expense of time our students would otherwise have spent gaining the very knowledge and skills that are the goal of education.

It is noteworthy that many of the countries leading the world in achievement place little or no emphasis on standardized testing. Where they do test, they use more open-minded measures, sparingly and strategically, and often sample students rather than testing every child. In the absence of current federal requirements, these recommendations offered in this report would no doubt be substantially different.

Indeed, the clear failure of No Child Left Behind to meet its objectives should long ago have spurred federal policymakers to re-examine their requirements that every student be tested in English-language arts and mathematics nearly every year. In the absence of federal action, these recommendations strike a balance – continuing to provide an individual student score each year in the grades and subjects required by federal mandates while providing more thoughtful and flexible alternatives for students in other grades and subjects.

There are many factors to consider, especially in California, which serves such a vast and diverse set of students. It is vital that we address the needs of all students, including English learners and students with special needs, from the outset of this effort.

For this reason, the California Department of Education undertook an extensive process of engagement with education stakeholders and the public in developing these recommendations. I trust you will find their input, which is summarized in the accompanying report, as useful as I did. My staff and I look forward to working with you in considering these recommendations during the upcoming session.

Sincerely,

Tom Torlakson

Tom Torlakson
State Superintendent of Public Instruction

Acknowledgments

This report is the result of a year-long effort to set the stage for California's transition to a new statewide student assessment system, including the collection of input from stakeholders and the forming of recommendations to guide the transition. Appreciation is expressed to the individuals and groups who, through their commitment to creating and implementing a high-quality statewide student assessment system in California, generously contributed to development of this report.

The California Department of Education (CDE) assembled the Statewide Assessment Reauthorization Work Group to consult with specific stakeholders and gather information to guide the development of the recommendations set forth in this report. The Reauthorization Work Group members met throughout 2012 to provide feedback on and suggestions for the reauthorization of the statewide student assessment system. Their professional expertise and perspective was invaluable. The members of the Statewide Assessment Reauthorization Work Group included:

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In addition, gratitude is expressed to the nearly 2,000 individuals who provided insight, expertise, and feedback during the course of this project through one or more of the various ways in which the CDE gathered feedback, including stakeholder focus groups, regional public meetings, the statewide reauthorization survey, the reauthorization e-mail address, or other public comment opportunities.

Many CDE staff members contributed to the development of this report. For their leadership, insight, and guidance in the development of this report, special appreciation is expressed to:

Richard Zeiger, Chief Deputy Superintendent

Deborah V.H. Sigman, Deputy Superintendent, District, School, and Innovation Branch

For their contribution and continued support to the success of the project:

Jessica Barr, Consultant, Statewide Assessment Transition Office

Michelle Center, Administrator, District, School, and Innovation Branch

Erin Gabel, Director, Government Affairs Division

Paul Hefner, Director, Communications Division

Jessica Valdez, Administrator, Statewide Assessment Transition Office

Gratitude is expressed to the following staff members from the Assessment Development and Administration Division who contributed to this report:

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In addition, appreciation is expressed to following CDE staff members for their contributions to this report and/or outreach efforts:

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Jenny Singh, Administrator, Academic Accountability Unit, Analysis, Measurement, and Accountability Reporting Division

Christine Swenson, Director, Improvement and Accountability Division

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The Standardized Testing and Reporting (STAR) and California High School Exit Examination (CAHSEE) Technical Advisory Group (TAG) has provided ongoing support in the evaluation of California's student assessment system. The members of the STAR and CAHSEE TAG are:

Richard Duran, Ph.D., Professor, University of California at Santa Barbara

Pamela Moss, Ph.D., Professor, University of Michigan

Donna O'Neil, Ed.D., Director, Accountability and Organizational Evaluation, San Juan Unified School District

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Richard Wolfe, Ph.D., Associate Professor, University of Toronto

Roger Yoho, Ph.D., Director, Educational Services Department, Corona-Norco Unified School District

A special note of gratitude is extended to **Linda Darling-Hammond, Ph.D.**, Professor, Stanford University, for her continued guidance throughout this project.

Thanks to the San Joaquin County Office of Education for assisting CDE throughout this project, including coordinating outreach efforts, facilitating work group and focus group meetings, and supporting the development and publishing of this report.

Executive Summary

California *Education Code (EC)* Section 60604.5 set forth the requirement that the State Superintendent of Public Instruction (State Superintendent) provide the Legislature with recommendations, including a transition plan, for the reauthorization of the statewide student assessment system. In developing the recommendations, the State Superintendent was required to consult with specific stakeholder groups and consider the inclusion of a variety of specific features in the new assessment system. California's existing assessment system, the Standardized Testing and Reporting (STAR) Program, is scheduled to sunset July 1, 2014; in 2010, California adopted the Common Core State Standards; and, in June 2011, California joined the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium (SBAC) as a governing state. Presented with the requirements of *EC* Section 60604.5 and these events, the California Department of Education (CDE) evaluated its existing statewide student assessment system by drawing upon the experiences and expertise from stakeholders across the state. The State Superintendent considered this feedback as well as federal and state accountability requirements, current research regarding assessment practices, and budget constraints in developing recommendations for the new system.

These recommendations, which are detailed in Section 3 of this report, require a shift from current assessment practices as they call for the implementation of and access to the full range of SBAC assessments; advocate assessments in other curricular areas; support the use of innovative item questions and technology-based resources, such as automated scoring engines; encourage ongoing consultation with stakeholders to develop alternative paths or options for meeting high school graduation requirements; support local use of diagnostic assessments for grade two; encourage developing reporting resources; and advise a suspension of STAR Program assessments not mandated by federal law or the Early Assessment Program.

At the heart of the recommendations is a clear vision and commitment to establishing a bold and innovative assessment system that includes a variety of assessment approaches and item types that model and promote high-quality teaching and student learning and sets a course to ensure that all California students are well prepared to enter college and careers in today's competitive global economy.

This report fulfills the legislative requirement for the State Superintendent to provide recommendations and a plan for transitioning California to a new statewide student assessment system. It reflects the extensive measures taken by the State Superintendent to gather and thoroughly consider feedback from stakeholders to form the recommendations and plan. California's goal through this process is to provide the best and most efficient assessments possible for its teachers and students.

This report can be found on the CDE Statewide Pupil Assessment System Web page at http://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/tg/sa/ab250.asp.

Introduction

Education reform is a national priority. With more than 6 million students in over 11,000 schools, California provides a public education to more students than any other state in the nation, and the California Department of Education (CDE) is responsible for assessing their academic knowledge and skills. As states across the nation strive to ensure that their students are prepared for college and careers in the competitive, global economy of the 21st century, many, including California, have adopted a common set of academic content standards and assessments. In August 2010, California adopted the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) for English–language arts (ELA) and mathematics; and in June 2011, the state joined the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium (SBAC) to assess subjects using a multistate common assessment beginning in the 2014–15 school year.

California's adoption of the CCSS demonstrates its commitment to providing a world-class education to all of its students, including students who are English learners, students with disabilities, and socioeconomically disadvantaged students. Within the CDE and in local educational agencies (LEAs) and classrooms across the state, stakeholders are examining their education programs and preparing for full implementation of the CCSS. Adoption of the CCSS requires that the state revise its current assessments for ELA and mathematics. In addition, the state has an opportunity to rethink the purposes of its assessment system and consider the various ways in which those purposes can be met.

The CCSS are intended to be more focused and in-depth than previous state academic content standards, which might be considered more difficult to fully incorporate into classroom instruction because of their considerable breadth. The CCSS call for a more integrated approach to delivering instruction across all subjects. The CCSS are designed to be robust and relevant to the real world, reflecting the knowledge and skills that young people need for success in college and careers. They require student collaboration; fluency with multimedia and technology; and the development of strong complex reasoning, problem solving, and communication skills. High-level skills such as these transcend subjects and demand a reexamination of the state's existing system of professional learning, curriculum development, assessment, and accountability. The CCSS provide a clear, consistent picture of what students are expected to learn from year to year so teachers, parents, and guardians will better know what they need to do to help students achieve those expectations.

California's active participation in CCSS assessment collaborations, such as SBAC, presents the state with resources to expand and improve on previous efforts to implement academic content standards. California's membership in SBAC allows the state to assess students' achievement of the CCSS for ELA and mathematics in a thorough, thoughtful, collaborative, and cost-effective manner. Currently, the SBAC

program is being designed to provide summative assessment[1] results at the end of each school year as well as optional formative assessments[2] and interim assessments[3] for local and school use. The formative and interim assessments can be customized to provide feedback to teachers and students on students' academic standing through learning progressions and goals. The summative assessments are to include at least one performance task in each content area, incorporating real-life applications, and require students to demonstrate their skills in critical thinking, analysis, and problem solving.

Through a future assessment system that builds on the CCSS as its foundation, California will be able to assess student achievement in a way that is substantially different from approaches used in the current assessment program. The CCSS will not only be incorporated into curriculum and instruction; they will be at the core of the future assessment system. California must plan for and develop a cohesive and adaptable assessment system that prepares its students for college and careers in the 21st century by focusing attention on building and assessing critical thinking skills across all subjects. The Governor, State Superintendent of Public Instruction (State Superintendent), CDE, California State Board of Education (SBE), and California Legislature can work together to design a comprehensive and innovative system that takes into consideration the student as a whole by integrating multiple types of assessments and providing timely and accurate results through the advances of technology.

With the current statewide assessment system, the Standardized Testing and Reporting (STAR) Program, scheduled to sunset July 1, 2014, legislation has been enacted to guide the reauthorization of the STAR Program. California *Education Code* (*EC)* Section 60604.5 requires the State Superintendent to consult with specific stakeholder groups in developing recommendations, including a plan for transitioning to a new system of high-quality assessments. The recommendations must consider 16 specific features, which are detailed in Section 1 of this report. The State Superintendent is required to report the recommendations and transition plan to the Legislature.

[1] "Summative assessment" is an assessment administered at the conclusion of a unit of instruction or multiple units to comprehensively assess student learning and the effectiveness of an instructional method or program.

[2] "Formative assessment" means assessment tools and processes that are embedded in instruction and used by teachers and pupils to provide timely feedback for purposes of adjusting instruction to improve learning (California *EC* Section 60603[i]).

[3] "Interim assessment" means an assessment that is given at regular and specified intervals throughout the school year, is designed to evaluate a pupil's knowledge and skills relative to a specific set of academic standards, and produces results that can be aggregated by course, grade level, school, or LEA in order to inform teachers and administrators at the pupil, classroom, school, and LEA levels (California *EC* Section 60603[k]).

Defining the Purpose of the Future Statewide Assessment System

To appropriately develop its next generation of assessments, California must first decide what information it wants from these tests. The current standardized tests are designed to measure the achievement of individual students against a set of specific grade level standards for a particular subject or content area. Aggregations of the scores serve to indicate how specific groups of students are doing against the same grade level content standards.

The current system of assessments does not measure how much a student has learned from one year to the next. Nonetheless, we place great reliance on the movement of scores within LEAs and schools from one year to the next. In fact, as California's population has changed over the last decade, it has been rewarding to observe the state's steadily increasing test scores and know that these increases represent improvements in the quality of the education we are delivering in California.

With the adoption of the CCSS, the state has agreed that the next generation of tests will be different. The tests in ELA and mathematics are being designed to place individual students along a continuum of knowledge. This continuum will allow us to better determine how much progress a student, or a group of students, is making from year to year. Furthermore, this new generation of tests is being designed to measure in greater depth how much students know and, through the use of performance tasks, more complex cognitive processes such as analysis and evaluation.

These advances in assessment come with a price. The new assessments will be more expensive to develop and administer. They will also take longer to complete than the existing multiple-choice assessments, primarily due to the use of performance tasks.

Since resources available for testing, both in terms of funding and time, are unlikely to substantially increase, the state faces some difficult decisions about what and how much to test. Some fundamental questions about the purpose of testing need to be answered in order to make these decisions. For example:

- Is it important to test in more subjects than ELA and mathematics? These currently are required by the federal government and comprise the totality of the federal accountability system. Yet we know from past experience that what gets tested is what gets taught. In light of that, do we also need to have statewide assessments in areas such as science, history–social science, visual and performing arts, foreign languages, and technology in order to ensure that those subjects also receive the attention they deserve? How often should these be administered and to what group of students?

- What do we plan to do with the test results? Are tests being administered so that we can inform parents about the progress of their individual child? If so, are standardized tests the best way to do this? Are tests being administered to see how well schools and LEAs are performing? If so, what kind of information is most useful and how do we judge success and progress? Have we established an adequate system to account for differences in student populations in making this judgment?
- How do we want the assessment system to impact curriculum and instruction? Are we developing tests that will help create the kind of instruction, both in terms of breath and depth, that we want to see in our classrooms? Do we expect statewide assessments to inform us about the specific knowledge and skills an individual student might lack so that we can provide, early on, appropriate remedial help?

The information gathered from various stakeholders in preparing these recommendations provides some initial answers:

- The system must go beyond the ELA, mathematics, and science assessments required for federal accountability purposes.
- Expanding testing to other federal subjects and grades does not mean that every student must be tested in every subject in every grade. Every effort should be made to use students' testing time as effectively and efficiently as possible.
- Assessments that are not used for accountability can be designed to have a positive influence on instruction by providing diagnostic and more specific information about individual student achievement.

The State Superintendent and the CDE are committed to designing an assessment system that includes a variety of assessment approaches and item types and has as its primary purpose to model and promote high-quality teaching and student learning activities. In accomplishing this purpose, the system also can:

- Produce scores that can be aggregated for the purpose of holding schools and LEAs accountable for the progress of all of their students in learning the California academic content standards.
- Provide assessments and/or assessment tools for multiple grade levels which cover the breadth of the curriculum and serve to communicate clear expectations and encourage teaching the full curriculum.

The delineation of the purposes of the testing system has a direct impact on the types of assessments that should be developed. The validity of an assessment is based on its purpose. While the current STAR Program assessments are valid for comparing school and LEA performance, they are not designed to measure individual student growth, provide diagnostic information, or support instruction that develops 21st century skills.

To meet these needs will require a differentiated system of assessments. Some of the assessments will need to be standardized and highly secure so the results can contribute to school accountability. Other assessments will provide diagnostic information on what individual students need to learn in order to inform instruction, but will not be reported to the state and will not necessarily be administered to every student in every grade. A variety of item types, including performance tasks, in selected subjects will show how well students can evaluate, synthesize, and communicate information.

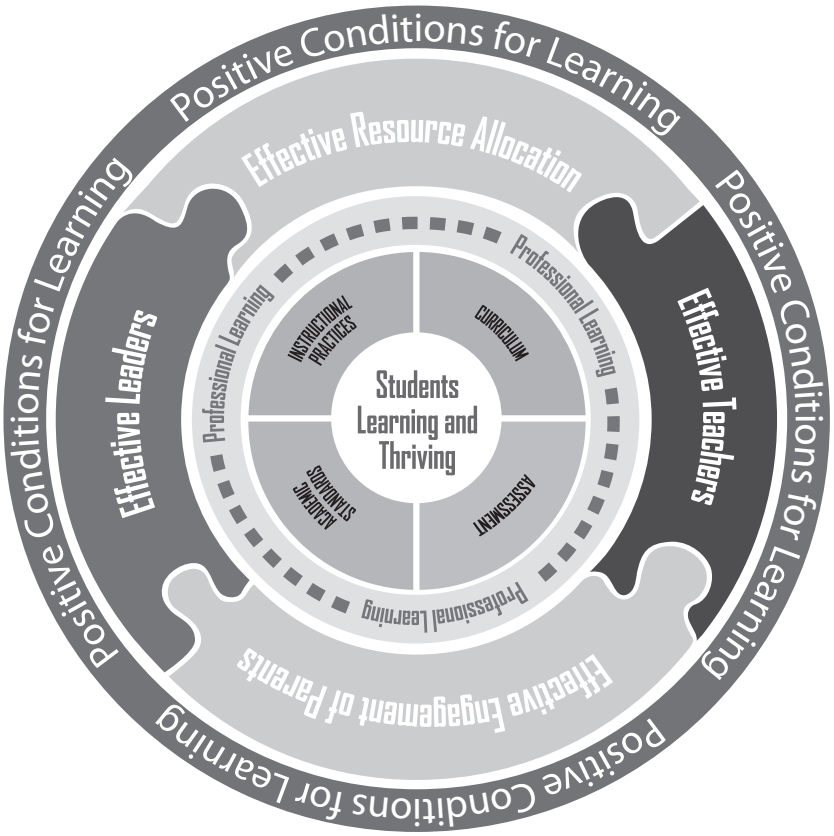
Quality Schooling Framework

Designing a new student assessment system cannot be done in isolation. The recommendations in this report recognize assessment's place in the overall context of a quality schooling experience. Assessment is an integral part of a cycle of standards, curriculum, and instruction that forms an ongoing feedback loop to provide desired information to teachers, parents, and students.

To support coherence and a holistic approach to teaching and learning, the CDE is developing a Quality Schooling Framework (QSF). It is an organizer to guide improvement for all California schools, regardless of baseline performance, level of diversity, size, location, or other factors. The QSF is a conceptual model of the effective California school. It describes various dimensions of quality schooling, provides research and promising practices, and identifies tools and resources to help conduct a needs assessment, strengthen implementation of local practices, and evaluate progress.

Students learning and thriving are at the core of the QSF. Four broad constructs—Instructional Systems, Professional Learning, Leadership and Effective Teaching, and Conditions for Learning—serve as organizers for the ten dimensions of the QSF, as displayed in Figure 1. Over the next year, the CDE will collaborate with schools, LEAs, and other stakeholder groups to refine the draft QSF and to identify resources for potential inclusion. The recommendations in this report are grounded in the overall context of a quality schooling experience.

Figure 1. Quality Schooling Framework Draft



Guiding Principles in Developing a New Assessment System

To provide ongoing monitoring of its assessment systems, the CDE consults with its STAR and California High School Exit Examination (CAHSEE) technical advisory group (TAG). This advisory group consists of internationally renowned assessment and psychometric professionals from higher education institutions throughout the nation as well as assessment and accountability administrators from California's LEAs. The TAG and CDE staff developed the following set of guiding principles to consider in designing assessments.

1. **Conform to rigorous industry standards for test development.**
   The statewide assessments should be valid and reliable. Assessments with high-stakes outcomes for students or schools require the highest levels of comparability, reliability, and security. Assessments of lesser consequence can be implemented at the local level and will not require the level of technical quality and security required for high-stakes statewide testing. This includes formative and interim assessments, which can be administered in a more flexible manner than high-stakes assessments and these assessments can be scored locally.

- Create an assessment framework as a guide for test development. Such a document would clearly demonstrate the link between the content standards and the assessments designed to measure student achievement.
- Ensure that no aspect of the system creates any bias with respect to race, ethnicity, culture, religion, gender, sexual orientation, or socioeconomic status. Insist that contractors provide documentation of the procedures used to eliminate bias and analysis that demonstrate their effectiveness.
- Explore standard setting methodologies that incorporate multiple measurements for students in establishing proficiency.

2. **Incorporate multiple methods for measuring student achievement.** Formative, interim, and summative assessments may require some form of state support. The SBAC assessments will be a key component of the summative level of the system, providing information on student growth in mathematics and ELA achievement. The state needs to develop additional assessments to meet current and anticipated requirements of federal law and to provide information on those subjects beyond SBAC that are critically important to the success of students. At the interim and formative levels, teachers and administrators need more information on the development of formative assessments as well as access to resources and tools that help them select and/or build high-quality interim assessments and performance tasks.
3. **Use resources efficiently and effectively.** Time and money spent on assessment programs need to provide results commensurate with the investment. Student, teacher, and administrator time is precious and should be used as effectively as possible. Continuous improvement to the assessment system requires stakeholders to understand that a balance must be found between the costs of the system and the level of assessment desired. If a given assessment needs to be made more informative and reliable, it is very likely that the test will either need be lengthened or the number of standards assessed reduced. If the test is lengthened, testing time and overall cost likely will be increased.
4. **Provide for inclusion of all students.** To ensure the effective participation of students with disabilities and English learners, all state assessments must be developed with these populations in mind. The system needs to provide an acceptable alternative for severely disabled students or for cases in which one type of test (e.g., a computer-based test) cannot be accessed by a particular student (e.g., the student is blind). A clearly articulated set of variations, accommodations, and modifications should be available for every assessment.

- Conform to the principles of universal design to ensure equity and access.
- Consider linguistic complexity when developing exams.
- Provide appropriate assessments and accommodations as needed for all students with disabilities, including an alternate assessment for students with significant cognitive disabilities.
- Incorporate research on assessment of English learners, students with disabilities, and economically disadvantaged students into state assessment programs.

5. **Provide information on the assessment system that is readily available and understandable to parents, teachers, schools, and the public.** California educators must work to inform the public about the appropriate use and interpretation of the various types of test results. This is of greater importance than ever as the common core assessments go beyond the traditional standardized tests to include new types of items: performance task, extended response, computer-adaptive assessments, interim assessments, and formative assessment tools. Information about the purpose of a test, interpretation of results, and appropriate uses of the test must be readily available. Likewise, teachers and parents will want ready access to cumulative information about the progress of students. The availability of longitudinal data and improvements to California's student data system should be leveraged to provide ready access to assessment results.

   - Provide information for each assessment that describes the purpose of the test, the relationship of the test to the content standards, and a guide to the interpretation and use of results.
   - Provide resources such as sample test items and student responses. Link items to content standards and levels of achievement.
   - Utilize technology to provide results that are easily interpreted by students, teachers, administrators, parents and guardians, and the general public. A reporting application should be developed that integrates results from multiple measures over time and allows users to analyze and compare data, whether from state or SBAC assessments.

In addition to the guiding principles developed by the TAG and CDE staff, the Statewide Reauthorization Work Group convened by the State Superintendent established the following list of desirable features of an assessment system:

- **Integrated system.** Reflect a complementary system of assessments by embracing different methods of assessing students through

computer-based or computer adaptive testing, including various types of assessments for different purposes (e.g., formative, interim, summative) and higher-order thinking and performance skills. To enhance student learning, a coordinated system should include integrated, performance-based assessments that model effective instruction across the curriculum at each grade level. In addition, the system should include matrix testing to allow the assessment of other subjects beyond ELA and mathematics.

- **Teaching and learning.** Help improve teaching and learning by including valid, reliable, and fair assessments that model and promote high-quality teaching and learning activities for teachers, parents, and students. The activities must be specific to their purpose and grade level and must correspond with other assessments in the system. Ensure fairness by allowing all students to demonstrate what they know and can do. Teachers will use the types of tasks included in the assessments in their instruction. For example, if critical thinking, writing, or the scientific process is included in the assessments, these skills will more likely be reflected in classroom activities and teacher-made assessments.
- **Equity and access.** Ensure county offices of education and LEAs equity and access to quality assessments and support for all students and subgroups of students. LEAs and schools must have equal access to the necessary technology for testing and reporting all assessments in the system, and professional learning.
- **High expectations.** Support and communicate high academic expectations for all students, including socioeconomically disadvantaged students, English learners, and students with disabilities. Assessments within the system must be rigorous and meaningful for all students and allow them to demonstrate growth in authentic knowledge and skills. Students and parents must be informed what the expectations are, and the system must include assessments that reflect these expectations.
- **Use of assessments for multiple purposes.** Include assessments that are designed to serve multiple purposes, as appropriate, to ensure the efficient use of time and minimize redundancies in and across testing programs. The intent of each assessment should be to provide meaningful information about students' learning and to ensure that important decisions about each student are based on as much information as possible about each student's skills and knowledge. Ensure that no aspect of the system creates any bias with respect to race, ethnicity, culture, religion, gender, sexual orientation, or socioeconomic status.

- **Multiple measures.** Involve the systematic and thorough collection of direct and indirect evidence of students' learning at multiple points in time, over time, and under various conditions. Multiple measures are critical to understanding what students know and are able to do. Assessments should require the integration of skills reflective of real-world experiences and should include project- and performance-based tasks.
- **Technology.** Include assessment technologies, such as computer adaptive testing, automated scoring (when appropriate), and multiple item types, which in turn allow for more authentic measurement aligned with high-quality teaching and learning experiences. Integrate technology into instruction and assessment in a manner that encourages early experiences with the technology skills necessary to be successful in the 21st century classroom and workplace.
- **Appropriate assessment of students with disabilities.** Provide appropriate assessments for all students with disabilities, including an alternate assessment for students with significant cognitive disabilities, and ensure that accommodations and modifications are research-based, provide appropriate access to the assessments, are aligned with classroom practices, and are made available to all eligible students.
- **Consider linguistic complexity.** Reduce linguistic complexity in all assessments to ensure that English learners can successfully demonstrate what they know and are able to do in the content and grade levels tested. In addition, to help ensure that English learners are given every opportunity to demonstrate their proficiency in English, the assessments must be culturally sensitive and provide the appropriate administration variations needed by English learners.
- **Communication.** Provide timely and accurate information about students, schools, and LEAs in plain language and in a format that is easy for all audiences to understand, including students, parents and guardians, and the public. The system of assessments must be a transparent, continuous process of gathering useful information that enables clear and timely communication about the academic progress of schools and students in the learning of the CCSS.
- **Accurate and timely results.** The accuracy and timeliness of results are critical. In order to continually improve student learning and instruction, student data derived from assessment outcomes must be used to provide timely and accurate feedback to teachers, students, and parents or guardians. Results can be used to (1) direct classroom

instruction; (2) involve students in their learning; (3) monitor program effectiveness; and (4) make decisions about allocating resources and setting policies.

- **Professional learning.** The state and LEAs must share the responsibility for providing professional learning and training, including, but not limited to, the use of technology to provide timely and effective feedback and the use of assessment data for the purpose of adjusting instruction and making other important decisions that positively impact student learning.

Collectively, these principles, features, and the established purpose of the future statewide assessment system will ensure the development of high-quality and fair assessments for California students.

Section 1

California's Statewide Assessment System and Legislative Requirements for Reauthorization

Many states throughout the nation, including California, are preparing for the implementation of the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) and multistate consortia assessments that are scheduled to become operational in the 2014–15 school year. In California, multiple efforts are taking place concurrently at the state level, the majority of them stemming from the adoption and implementation of the CCSS and the California Department of Education (CDE) mission statement, which reads as follows:

> California will provide a world-class education for all students, from early childhood to adulthood. The Department of Education serves our state by innovating and collaborating with educators, schools, parents, and community partners. Together, as a team, we prepare students to live, work, and thrive in a highly connected world.

Guided by this mission and the legislative requirements for the reauthorization of California's assessment system, the state has a unique opportunity to examine its current system and consider what the future system should include. Currently, the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium (SBAC) summative assessments for English–language arts (ELA) and mathematics are to be given to students in grades three through eight and grade eleven. The CDE, in collaboration with multiple stakeholders, has explored the opportunity to create a statewide student assessment system that is comprehensive and extends beyond the SBAC assessments. While California *Education Code* (*EC*) Section 60604.5 specifically addresses the reauthorization of the Standardized Testing and Reporting (STAR) Program, it is appropriate to consider assessments beyond the STAR Program. The recommendations of the State Superintendent of Public Instruction (State Superintendent) reflect this more comprehensive review.

The Evolution of California's Student Assessment System

The first statewide assessment system in California originated in 1961, when the California Legislature required the California State Board of Education (SBE) to establish required instructional standards throughout the state and mandate statewide examinations to establish those standards. From 1962 through 1971 the statewide assessment systems consisted of the use of individual achievement tests chosen by local educational agencies (LEAs) from a state-approved list of published tests.

The evolution of the current statewide assessment system began in 1972 with the development of the California Assessment Program (CAP), which was developed specifically for California by California educators. The use of matrix testing[5] for this program allowed more information to be provided for each subject tested, but it prevented the release of results for individual students. In 1986, the state's first writing test for the CAP was introduced for grade eight, followed by a writing test for grade twelve in 1987.

In 1993, the California Learning Assessment System (CLAS) was launched. This was the first statewide testing program that used multiple types of questions (multiple-choice and constructed-response) and could provide individual student test scores. However, the CLAS was not reauthorized after one year, and funding was cut because of concerns about questions or items that solicited or invited disclosure of a student's, or his or her parents' or guardians', personal beliefs or practices. In response, California *EC* Section 60614 was added to law in 1995 to prohibit certain types of questions on statewide assessments and to establish the Statewide Pupil Assessment Review Panel (California *EC* Section 60606) to review all questions on STAR Program tests.

There was no mandatory statewide testing in 1995. From 1996 through 1997, the Legislature established the Pupil Testing Incentive Program, which would provide reimbursement funding to LEAs that assessed students with tests from a state-approved list of published tests.

In 1997, the Legislature established the STAR Program, which required the SBE to designate a norm-referenced achievement test (NRT) for grades two through eleven. In addition, the Legislature declared its intent that the designated NRT be augmented with items that assess students' achievement of specific state academic content standards adopted by the SBE.

Also in 1997, the State Superintendent was required to select or develop a test that assesses the English language development of students whose primary language is a language other than English. The California English Language Development Test (CELDT) was the test designed to fulfill these requirements. The purposes of the CELDT were to: (1) identify students who are limited English proficient (LEP); (2) determine the level of English language proficiency of students who are LEP; and (3) assess the progress of LEP students in acquiring the skills of listening, reading, speaking, and writing in English. Design work on the CELDT began in late 1999, and the first operational administration occurred in 2001.

[5] "Matrix testing" is a measurement format in which a large set of test questions is organized into a number of shorter question sets. Each set of questions is randomly assigned to a subsample of test takers, thereby avoiding the need to administer all items to all test takers in a program evaluation.

In 1999, the California Standards Tests (CSTs) for ELA and mathematics for grades two through eleven became part of the STAR Program by augmenting items from the Stanford Achievement Test, Ninth Edition (SAT/9). In 2001, to address requirements included in the reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), work began to develop three grade-level CSTs for science for grades five, eight, and ten. (The grade five CST for science was first administered in 2004. The grade eight CST for science and grade ten CST for Life Science were first administered in 2006.) Also in 2001, the CSTs for history–social science and science for grades nine through eleven were added to the system. In addition, writing components for grades four and seven were added to the ELA tests, requiring students to write an essay in response to an assigned task.

Beginning with the Class of 2006, California *EC* Section 606851 required students to pass the California High School Exit Examination (CAHSEE) as a condition of receiving a high school diploma. The primary purpose of the CAHSEE is to significantly improve student achievement in public high schools and to ensure that students who graduate from public high schools can demonstrate grade level competency in reading, writing, and mathematics. The CAHSEE was offered for the first time in March and May of 2001 to volunteer ninth graders (class of 2004).

In 2003, the CSTs for ELA and mathematics were administered operationally as stand-alone assessments with no augmentation from a norm-referenced test. Also in 2003, the CST for history–social science for grade nine was replaced with the CST for history–social science for grade eight, and the norm-referenced test component of the STAR Program was switched from SAT/9 to the California Achievement Tests, Sixth Edition Survey.

In 2003, the California Alternate Performance Assessment (CAPA) for ELA and mathematics was administered for the first time to students in grades two through eleven. The CAPA was developed to meet the requirements of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act and was designed to assess students with significant cognitive disabilities who could not participate in the CSTs. Science was added to the CAPA in 2008.

In 2004, the CST for science was added for grade five, the STAR Program was reauthorized, and the development of the Standards-based Tests in Spanish (STS) for mathematics and reading/language arts began. In 2006, the CST for science for grade eight and the CST for life science for grade ten were added.

In 2006, the CELDT was modified to report student results on a continuous scale covering all grades, from kindergarten through grade twelve . The 2005–06 Edition was the transitional form between the original CELDT scale and the new CELDT scale that was created prior to the administration of the 2006–07 Edition.

In 2008, the California Modified Assessment (CMA) was first administered, and in 2009, the NRT component of the STAR Program was eliminated from state law. In 2011, California *EC* Section 60604.5 was amended to extend the STAR Program through July 1, 2014.

Standardized Testing and Reporting Program

The STAR Program is the foundation of the current statewide assessment system. The state assessment system originally was designed to meet state requirements; however, the system was augmented in 2001 (and in subsequent years) to meet federal requirements as stipulated in the federal ESEA reauthorization. All students, including English learners and students with disabilities, must participate in the STAR Program, which has four components that assess California's content standards adopted by the SBE in 1997 and 1998.

- The CSTs measure students' achievement of California's content standards in the subjects of ELA, mathematics, science, and history–social science. The CSTs are administered in English only.
- The CMA is a modified assessment that measures students' achievement of California's content standards on the basis of modified achievement standards in the subjects of ELA, mathematics, and science. The CMA is administered only to eligible students with disabilities who have an individualized education program (IEP) and meet the CMA eligibility criteria adopted by the SBE. The CMA is administered in English only.
- The CAPA is an alternate assessment that measures students' achievement of California's content standards in the subjects of ELA, mathematics, and science. The CAPA is for students with an IEP who have significant cognitive disabilities and who are unable to take the CSTs with the appropriate accommodations and/or modifications and/or the CMA with the appropriate accommodations. In administering the CAPA, examiners provide verbal instructions to students using the same language in which instruction is provided to the students, but written materials, such as cue cards, are provided only in English.
- The Standards-based Tests in Spanish (STS) is a primary language assessment measuring students' achievement of California's content standards for reading/language arts and mathematics. The STS is administered in Spanish to Spanish-speaking English learners who either receive instruction in Spanish or who have been enrolled in school in the United States for less than 12 months. The STS is not currently part of either the state or federal accountability system. All students who take the STS also take their grade level CST.

CSTs

The CSTs, administered in grades two through eleven, measure how well students are achieving the grade-level academic content standards. CST types and format vary as follows:

- CSTs with multiple-choice questions
  - ELA, which is given to students in grades two through eleven (Students taking the CST for ELA in grades four and seven also take the CST for Writing. This writing component contains one open-response writing task.)
  - Mathematics, which is given to students in grades two through eleven.
  - History–Social Science, which is given to students in grades eight, ten, and eleven.
  - Science CSTs, which are currently given to students in grades five, eight, and ten to meet ESEA requirements.
- End-of-course[6] (EOC) CSTs
  - Six mathematics EOC CSTs, which are given to students who are taking the course for which the test was designed. These EOC CSTs include Algebra I, Geometry, Algebra II, and Integrated Mathematics 1, 2, and 3. Students in grades seven through eleven may take these if they are enrolled in an appropriate course.
  - Eight science EOC CSTs, which are given to students who are taking the course for which the test was designed. These EOC CSTs include Biology, Chemistry, Earth Science, Physics, and Integrated/ Coordinated Science 1, 2, 3, and 4. Students in grade nine, ten, or eleven may take these if they are enrolled in an appropriate course.
  - World History EOC CST, which is given to students in grade nine, ten, or eleven depending on when the student is enrolled in the course.
  - The General Mathematics CST, which is administered to students in grades eight and nine not yet completing an Algebra I course.
  - The Summative High School Mathematics CST, which is administered to students in grades nine through eleven who completed Algebra I, Algebra II, and Geometry or Integrated Mathematics 3 courses in any previous year and are currently taking no mathematics or a higher mathematics course.

[6] "End-of-course exam" means a comprehensive and challenging assessment of pupil achievement in a particular subject area or discipline (California *EC* Section 60603[h]).

EAP

The Early Assessment Program (EAP) is a collaborative effort between the California State University, California Community Colleges, the CDE, and the SBE to determine students' readiness for college credit-bearing courses. The EAP assessments are offered to grade eleven students only and are included in the CST booklets of ELA, High School Summative Mathematics, and Algebra II.

Although the CSTs are mandatory, the EAP assessments are voluntary. In addition to selected CST items, the EAP assessments each include 15 additional multiple-choice items, and a 45-minute essay is included in the English portion. The EAP collaborative is recognized across the country for its innovative approach to using California's statewide assessment system to measure readiness for institutions of higher education. It is the model to which both of the national assessment consortia subscribe.

CMA

The CMA for ELA, CMA for mathematics, and CMA for science all contain multiple-choice questions, and the CMA for writing contains a writing performance task. Currently, the CMA includes the following assessments:

- CMA for ELA, which is given to students in grades three through eleven. Students taking the CMA for ELA in grades four and seven also take the CMA for writing. This writing component contains one open-response writing task.
- CMA for mathematics, which is given to students in grades three through seven.
- CMA for Algebra I, which is an EOC given to students in grades seven, eight, nine, ten, or eleven who are enrolled in an appropriate course.
- CMA for Geometry, which is an EOC given to students in grade eight, nine, ten, or eleven who are enrolled in an appropriate course.
- CMA for science, which is currently given to students in grades five, eight, and ten to meet ESEA requirements.

CAPA

The CAPA consists of performance tasks that often require the use of manipulatives, such as index cards and models of toys or animals. The CAPA includes the following assessments:

CAPA Level	Grade Range	Subjects
I	Two through eleven (for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities)	ELA, mathematics, and science
II	Two and three	ELA and mathematics
III	Four and five	ELA, mathematics, and science
IV	Six through eight	ELA, mathematics, and science
V	Nine through eleven	ELA, mathematics, and science

STS

The STS is administered in Spanish, and all questions are multiple-choice. Currently, the STS includes the following assessments:

- STS for reading/language arts, which is given to students in grades two through eleven who meet the statutory requirements.
- STS for mathematics, which is given to students in grades two through seven who meet the statutory requirements.
- STS EOC for Algebra I, which is given to students in grades seven, eight, nine, ten, or eleven who meet the statutory requirements and are enrolled in an appropriate course.
- STS EOC for Geometry, which is given to students in grades eight, nine, ten, or eleven who meet the statutory requirements and are enrolled in an appropriate course.

More information regarding the STAR Program can be found on the CDE STAR Web page at http://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/tg/sr/.

California High School Exit Examination

While the reauthorization legislation specifically refers to the STAR Program, the State Superintendent believes it is appropriate to consider another test that is part of the current statewide assessment system, the CAHSEE, when considering the transition to a new assessment system. Therefore, the outreach efforts included CAHSEE as a deliberate topic for consideration.

State law (California *EC* Section 60850[a]), enacted in 1999, authorized the development of the CAHSEE. The CAHSEE currently has two parts: ELA and mathematics. All students in California's public schools must satisfy the

exit examination requirement as well as all other state and local graduation requirements to receive a high school diploma. The exit exam requirement can be satisfied by passing the CAHSEE or, for eligible students with disabilities, by meeting the exemption requirement pursuant to California *EC* Section 60852.3, receiving a local waiver pursuant to California *EC* Section 60851(c), or receiving a waiver pursuant to California *EC* Section 56101. More information regarding the CAHSEE can be found on the CDE CAHSEE Web page at http://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/tg/hs/.

2012–13 State Assessment System

Today's statewide student assessment system includes the STAR Program with its five components, the CAHSEE, the CELDT, the Physical Fitness Test (PFT), and the California High School Proficiency Examination (CHSPE). In addition, the system includes two national testing programs, the General Educational Development (GED), and the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP). An outline of all the components of the 2012–13 state assessment system is provided in Table 1 on page 20.

Table 1. California Assessment System 2012–13

	Test	Participants	Grade(s)	Content Tested
Standardized Testing and Reporting (STAR) Program	**CSTs**	All students unless their individualized education program indicates assessment with CAPA or CMA.	2–11	**ELA,** grades 2–11; Writing, grades 4 and 7 ■ **Mathematics,** grades 2–7; End-of-course mathematics CSTs: Algebra I, grades 7–11; Geometry, Algebra II, and Integrated Mathematics 1, 2, and 3, grades 8–11; General Mathematics, grades 8–9; High School Summative Mathematics, grades 9–11 ■ **History–Social Science,** grades 8 and 11; End-of-course World History, grades 9–11 ■ **Science,** grades 5, 8, and 10; end-of-course science CSTs: Biology, Chemistry, Earth Science, Physics, and Integrated/Coordinated Science 1, 2, 3, and 4, grades 9–11
	CAPA	Students with significant cognitive disabilities who are unable to take the CSTs even with accommodations or modifications and whose individualized education program indicates assessment with CAPA.	2–11	**ELA,** grades 2–11 ■ **Mathematics,** grades 2–11 ■ **Science,** grades 5, 8, and 10
	CMA	Students whose individualized education program indicates assessment with CMA. For a complete list of criteria, please go to: http://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/tg/sr/participcriteria.asp	3–11	**ELA,** grades 3–11; Writing, grades 4 and 7 ■ **Mathematics,** grades 3–7; end-of-course Algebra I, grades 7–11, or Geometry, grades 8–11 ■ **Science,** grades 5, 8, and 10
	STS	Spanish-speaking English learners (ELs) who either receive instruction in their primary language or have been enrolled in a school in the United States less than 12 months. Optional for other Spanish-speaking ELs.	2–11	**Reading/Language Arts,** grades 2–11 ■ **Mathematics,** grades 2–7; end-of-course Algebra I, grades 7–11, or Geometry, grades 8–11
	EAP	Voluntary for students in grade 11 who are taking particular CSTs.	11	Augmentations to CSTs in: **ELA,** EAP Writing ■ **Mathematics,** Algebra II, Summative High School Mathematics
CELDT		All newly enrolled students whose primary language is not English must take the test within 30 calendar days after they are enrolled in a California public school for the first time. The CELDT also must be given once each year to English learners until they are reclassified.	K–12	**Language Proficiency,** Listening, Speaking, Reading, Writing
CAHSEE		All grade 10 students. Students in grades 11 and 12 and adult students who have not previously passed. Eligible students with disabilities may receive a waiver or be exempt from taking the CAHSEE as a condition of graduation or receiving a high school diploma.	10–12 Adult students	**ELA** ■ **Mathematics**
PFT		All students.	5, 7, and 9	**Health-Related Physical Fitness,** Aerobic Capacity, Body Composition, Abdominal Strength and Endurance, Trunk Extensor Strength and Flexibility, Upper Body Strength and Endurance, Flexibility
CHSPE		Voluntary. Ages 16 and up or completed or near completion of grade 10.	–	**ELA,** Reading, Language ■ **Mathematics**
GED		Voluntary. Age 18. Age 17 if eligible.	–	**Language Arts,** Reading, Writing ■ **Mathematics** ■ **Science** ■ **Social Science**
NAEP		A sample of grade and age eligible students in selected schools.	4, 8, and 12	**Reading** ■ **Mathematics**

Note: Results include individual, school, district, county, and state with the following exceptions: EAP—individual only; NAEP—national and state only; CHSPE—individual, school, and district only; and GED—individual only.

Legend:
STAR—Standardized Testing and Reporting Program
CSTs—California Standards Tests
CAPA—California Alternate Performance Assessment
CMA—California Modified Assessment
STS—Standards-based Tests in Spanish
EAP—Early Assessment Program
CELDT—California English Language Development Test
CAHSEE—California High School Exit Examination
PFT—Physical Fitness Test
CHSPE—California High School Proficiency Examination
GED—General Educational Development
NAEP—National Assessment of Educational Progress

California's Current School Accountability System

It is important to understand the state's current accountability system because California's system will undergo changes as the new assessment system rolls out. The 1999 Public Schools Accountability Act created a new academic accountability system for public education in California in kindergarten through grade twelve. The primary goal of California's accountability system is to measure and report the academic success of California's public schools. The current system includes three major components and is reported each year through the Accountability Progress Report:

- Academic Performance Index (API)
- Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP)
- Program Improvement (PI)

API Report

The API Report shows how much a school is improving from year to year on the basis of its API. A school's API is a number that ranges from 200 to 1000 and is calculated from the results from students on statewide tests. The state has set 800 as the API target for all schools to meet. Schools that fall short of 800 are required to meet annual growth targets until that goal is achieved. API targets vary for each school. The annual API growth target for a school is 5 percent of the difference between the school's API and the statewide performance target of 800 with a 5-point minimum. Schools that meet or exceed an 800 API are expected to maintain that level of achievement and to continue working to improve the academic performance of all students. There are two API reports: (1) the Base API that is released to schools in the spring; and (2) the Growth API that is released in the fall. These two reports show results from two different school years.

The Growth API is compared to the prior year Base API to show how much a school improved from one year to the next. Schools must meet API growth targets for the whole school as well as for all "numerically significant" student groups in the school. Each Base API and Growth API Report includes the school-wide API and the APIs for each numerically significant student group. The Growth API Report determines whether schools met their targets. If a school does not meet or exceed its growth targets and is ranked in the lower part of the statewide distribution of the Base API, it may be identified to participate in state intervention programs.

AYP Report

The AYP Report is required in response to the ESEA. This report shows how well schools and LEAs are meeting standards of academic performance, as measured by whether the school or LEA makes AYP. This standard is based on

the percentage of students reaching the proficient level on ELA and mathematics assessments. Under the current system, each state sets its own definition of proficient. Required AYP targets increase yearly until 2013–14, when all schools must have 100 percent of their students performing at or above the proficient level on statewide tests. Each year, schools and LEAs must meet four sets of requirements to make AYP. The requirements reflect statewide performance levels and are the same for all schools and LEAs of the same type.

PI Report

The PI Report supplements the AYP Report by providing information on the PI status of schools and LEAs. A school or an LEA that receives federal Title I, Part A, Basic, funds is subject to identification for PI if it does not make AYP for two years in a row. A school identified for PI must notify parents and guardians of enrolled students about its PI status and offer certain types of required services during each year the PI school remains in PI. A school or an LEA is eligible to exit PI if it makes AYP for two years in a row.

Strengths, Limitations, and Unintended Consequences of the Current Assessment System

Results of STAR Program assessments are used to measure students' knowledge and skills relative to those specified in the state academic content standards adopted in 1997 and 1998 and to hold schools and districts accountable for the performance of their students. The assessments serve as the basis for monitoring schools' progress in improving student performance and to provide data for program evaluation. The current assessments are designed to measure how well students have learned the academic content standards specific to their grade level. The assessments are built from blueprints that delineate the grade level standards to be tested in each subject and the number of items to be developed for each standard. The STAR Program provides accountability information about the progress of successive cohorts of students for a given grade level and subject. The current statewide assessment system, however, is not designed to measure growth in achievement from year to year for individual students.

With the exception of the CAPA administered to students with significant cognitive disabilities and the writing assessments administered to all students in grades four and seven and as part of the CAHSEE, California's state assessments are paper-and-pencil, multiple-choice (selected response) tests. The current program has strengths as well as limitations and, over the years, has proven to have some unintended consequences.

Strengths

One advantage of the current statewide student assessment system is the relatively inexpensive development, administration, and scoring of the paper-and-pencil, multiple-choice assessments. Further, the assessments yield results that are highly reliable and provide secure measures of achievement. California's STAR and CAHSEE program assessments have been shown to have a high degree of alignment with the standards they are intended to measure and to be technically sound. In addition, the use of multiple-choice assessments has allowed California to offer the wide variety of tests that currently make up the STAR Program while maintaining a high level of reliability and objectivity in the state's accountability system.

Limitations and Unintended Consequences

Despite strong alignment with the standards and a high level of reliability, the use of multiple-choice assessments limits the types of knowledge and skills that can be measured. The current assessments have been criticized for not measuring students' achievement of the standards in sufficient depth. This is a fair criticism and is a reflection of the fact that the tests were designed to determine whether the standards were being taught at a given grade level in a specific subject at the school level. The system has favored breadth over depth as did the prior set of academic content standards on which it was based. This is demonstrated by the fact that the test blueprints generally include a small number of questions for any given standard.

The multiple-choice format also precludes measuring academic content standards that call for students to demonstrate more complex processes, such as critical thinking and problem solving, or application of knowledge in real-world settings. A legitimate concern is that when multiple-choice tests are used, in-depth understanding of subject matter is devalued because it is not easily measured. Likewise, critical thinking and complex problem-solving skills have the potential to become devalued because the STAR Program tests' capacity to measure those attributes is extremely limited.

Assessing more complex instructional concepts would require different types of test items or questions that ask students to provide more complex responses and/or respond to more complex stimuli than the current assessments allow. Such items would require students to provide answers in the form of short responses consisting of a few words or sentences or longer, essay-type responses in which students explain their understanding. Performance tasks are even more involved items that require students to complete a multifaceted assignment or project that demonstrates competence in a variety of areas and demonstrate the application of knowledge. These types of items also have the benefit of informing and supporting instruction to a higher degree than is possible with multiple-choice assessments.

To date, these types of assessments have been used to only a limited extent in various state summative assessment programs, primarily because they are more costly to develop and score than multiple-choice assessments. The cost of using these types of items is elevated when they are part of high-stakes assessments in which standardized administration, high reliability of results, and security are imperative.

The current system of assessments has also been criticized for negatively influencing instruction through the narrowing of the curriculum to only those subjects that are tested, certainly an unintended consequence. Currently, ELA and mathematics are tested at every grade from two through eleven. In the elementary grades, science is tested less than either of these subjects, and history–social science is tested even less.

It can be and is argued that pressure to perform well on the assessments to increase accountability measures (primarily composed of ELA and mathematics test scores) has led to less time spent on other components of the curriculum. Subjects that are not part of the current statewide assessment system include, but are not limited to, civics, economics, career and technical subjects, technology, and those from the visual and performing arts.

Many have expressed a desire for diagnostic information to guide instructors in determining what to teach and how to teach it to individual students. The current tests are neither designed nor intended to provide diagnostic information. To serve diagnostic purposes, tests would have to be administered at the beginning of the school year and again at least once, likely multiple times, throughout the school year, depending on the knowledge and skills to be assessed.

Another unintended consequence of the current system of assessments has been the perceived devaluing of assessments not associated with state or federal accountability. The statewide assessments, because of the high level of attention paid to the results and high level of technical quality ascribed to them, are viewed by some policy makers and educators as an inherently better assessment. This has inadvertently facilitated a shift away from informal assessments that can provide diagnostic information and lend themselves to a variety of item types, such as constructed response items, performance tasks, projects, and portfolios.

Legislative Requirements for Reauthorization

California *EC* Section 60604.5(a) states the Legislature's intent that the reauthorized statewide pupil assessment program include: (1) a plan for transitioning to a system of high-quality assessments; (2) alignment with the CCSS; (3) any common assessments aligned with the CCSS; and (4) conformity

to the assessment requirements of any reauthorization of the federal ESEA or any other federal law that effectively replaces ESEA.

California *EC* Section 60604.5(b) requires the State Superintendent to develop recommendations for the reauthorization of the statewide pupil assessment system. The recommendations are to consider the inclusion of 16 specific areas outlined in statute. These considerations are listed in Figure 2 on the following page.

California *EC* Section 60603(n) defines "statewide pupil assessment system" as follows:

> The systematic achievement testing of pupils in grades 2–11, inclusive, pursuant to the standardized testing and reporting program under Article 4 (commencing with Section 60640) and the assessment of basic academic skills and applied academic skills, administered to pupils in grade levels specified in subdivision 9c) of Section 60605, required by this chapter in all schools within each school district by means of tests designated by the state board.

In addition, California *EC* Section 60603(j) defines "high-quality assessment" as:

> . . . an assessment designed to measure a pupil's knowledge of, understanding of, and ability to apply critical concepts through the use of a variety of item types and formats, including, but not limited to, items that allow for open-ended responses and items that require the completion of performance-based tasks. A high-quality assessment should have the following characteristics:
>
> 1. Enable measurement of pupil achievement and pupil growth.
> 2. Be of high technical quality by being valid, reliable, fair, and aligned with standards.
> 3. Incorporate technology where appropriate.
> 4. Include the assessment of pupils with disabilities and English learners.
> 5. Use, to the extent feasible, universal design principles, as defined in Section 3 of the federal Assistive Technology Act of 1998 (29 U.S.C. Sec. 3002) in its development and administration.

In developing recommendations and a transition plan, the State Superintendent was required to consult with specific stakeholders. The recommendations of the State Superintendent can be used as a policy framework to guide the development of a comprehensive statewide student assessment system.

Figure 2. Sixteen Areas of Consideration for the Reauthorization of California's Assessment System (Required by California *EC* Section 60604.5)

1. Aligning the assessments to the standards adopted or revised pursuant to Section 60605.8.
2. Implementing and incorporating any common assessments aligned with the common set of standards developed by the Common Core State Standards Initiative consortium or other interstate collaboration in which the state participates.
3. Conforming to the assessment requirements of any reauthorization of the federal Elementary and Secondary Education Act (20 U.S.C. Sec. 6301 et seq.) or any other federal law that effectively replaces that act.
4. Enabling the valid, reliable, and fair measurement of achievement at a point in time and over time for groups and subgroups of pupils, and for individual pupils.
5. Allowing the comparison from one year to the next of an individual pupil's scale scores in each content area tested, so as to reflect the growth in that pupil's actual scores over time.
6. Enabling and including the valid, reliable, and fair measurement of achievement of all pupils, including pupils with disabilities and English learners.
7. Providing for the assessment of English learners using primary language assessments.
8. Ensuring that no aspect of the system creates any bias with respect to race, ethnicity, culture, religion, gender, or sexual orientation.
9. Incorporating a variety of item types and formats, including, but not limited to, open-ended responses and performance-based tasks.
10. Generating multiple measures of pupil achievement, which, when combined with other measures, can be used to determine the effectiveness of instruction and the extent of learning.
11. Including the assessment of science and history–social science in all grade levels at or above grade 4.
12. Assessing a pupil's understanding of and ability to use the technology necessary for success in the 21st century classroom and workplace.
13. Providing for both formative and interim assessments, as those terms are defined in this chapter, in order to provide timely feedback for purposes of continually adjusting instruction to improve learning.
14. Making use of test administration and scoring technologies that will allow the return of test results to parents and teachers as soon as is possible in order to support instructional improvement
15. Minimizing testing time while not jeopardizing the validity, reliability, fairness, or instructional usefulness of the assessment results.
16. Including options for diagnostic assessments for pupils in grade 2.

Section 2

Current Transition Efforts

Currently, California is undertaking multiple efforts to facilitate the transition to new content standards and the new statewide student assessment system. This section describes these efforts. They include: (1) approval of curriculum materials to support the teaching of the Common Core State Standards (CCSS); (2) the development of new English-language development (ELD) standards; (3) the development of a curriculum framework for English–language arts (ELA)/ELD; (4) the development of new science standards; and (5) the implementation of the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium (SBAC) assessments. The state is also participating in a multi-state collaborative to develop an assessment for students with significant cognitive disabilities that may eventually replace the California Alternate Performance Assessment (CAPA).

Even though future federal requirements for assessment and accountability are unknown, California must begin conceptualizing the future assessment system now. The Standardized Testing and Reporting (STAR) Program sunsets in July 2014, and this creates the perfect opportunity for designing a new system of assessments. The State Superintendent's goal is to realize the vision of a statewide student assessment system that includes a variety of assessment approaches and item types and has as its primary purpose modeling and promoting high-quality teaching and student learning activities.

Figure 3 on the following page presents an overview of current efforts, specifically the CCSS implementation, the ELD standards, the ELA/ELD framework, the mathematics framework, the approval of instructional materials, Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS), and SBAC. In addition, the California Department of Education (CDE) has committed to work with the National Center and State Collaborative (NCSC) as a Tier II state in the development of an assessment for students with significant cognitive disabilities.

Multistate Standards and Consortia Participation

Common Core State Standards

As part of a multistate initiative, the CCSS were developed to establish consistent and clear academic content standards for ELA and mathematics designed to prepare students for success in college, career, and the competitive global economy. California did augment the CCSS in particular areas. The SBE adopted the standards in August 2010, including the supplemental information.

Figure 3. Current Standards and Assessments Transition Efforts

Reauthorization of California's Future Assessment System: California Law
(California *Education Code* Section 60604.5)

- Requires the State Superintendent of Public Instruction to consult with specific stakeholder groups in developing recommendations for the reauthorization of the statewide pupil assessment system that includes a plan for transitioning to a system of high-quality assessments.
- State Superintendent to report to the fiscal and appropriate policy committees of both houses of the Legislature on or before November 1, 2012.

Common Core State Standards (CCSS): Multistate

- Internationally benchmarked K–12 standards for English–language arts and mathematics.
- The CCSS System Implementation Plan is divided into phases, grounded in seven guiding strategies and encompasses all areas of our educational system.
- Adopted, with California additions, by the California State Board of Education in August 2010.
- The Instructional Quality Commission (IQC), formerly called the Curriculum Development and Supplemental Materials Commission, is an advisory body to the State Board of Education on matters related to curriculum, instructional materials, and content standards. Some of the first activities of the IQC will be revising curriculum frameworks and evaluation criteria aligned with the CCSS with California additions (CA CCSS) for mathematics and English language arts.

Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium (SBAC): Multistate

- A student assessment system aligned with the CCSS in English–language arts and mathematics.
- Focuses on assessing students annually in grades three through eight and grade eleven in English–language arts and mathematics.
- California joined in June 2011.
- Operational in 2014–15 school year.

National Center and State Collaborative (NCSC) or Aligned California Alternate Performance Assessment (CAPA):

- The new alternate assessments will be aligned with the CCSS and assess students with significant cognitive disabilities.
- In September 2012, California joined NCSC as a Tier II member.
- Operational in 2014–15 school year.
- California has not yet determined whether it will administer the NCSC assessment or pursue CAPA alignment.

Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS): Multistate

- New NGSS standards for kindergarten through grade twelve (K–12).
- California *Education Code* Section 60605.85(a) requires the Superintendent to adopt, reject, or modify the science standards on or before November 30, 2013.
- California science standards will be based on the NGSS.

English-Language Development (ELD) Standards: California Law
(Assembly Bill 124)

- Requires an update, revision, and alignment of the English-language development (ELD) standards to the Core Standards by November 2012.
- The state's English-language proficiency assessments will be updated and revised to align to the new ELD Standards.

English-Language Development (ELD) Assessment:

- An assessment system that corresponds to the college- and career-ready Common Core State Standards.
- A diagnostic screener for initial identification and an annual assessment for measuring progress toward learning English will be developed.
- Ready for states to pilot test or use operationally in 2016–17.

The full implementation of the new content standards will take several years, and the process for implementing the new standards will include the development of curriculum frameworks, the adoption of aligned instructional materials, the revision of professional learning supports, and the creation of new statewide assessments. To help guide this work, the CDE developed the Common Core Implementation Plan, which was approved by the SBE in March 2012. This plan is a living document that includes seven guiding strategies to identify major phases and activities in the implementation of the CCSS throughout California's educational system. The plan is located on the CDE CCSS Resources Web page at http://www.cde.ca.gov/ci/cc/.

Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium

In June 2011, California joined SBAC as a governing state. SBAC is a multistate consortium composed of 25 states that have been working collaboratively to develop a student assessment system aligned with the CCSS and used for federal accountability purposes. Of those 25 states, California is among the 21 governing states that are allowed to participate in decision-making. The remaining four states are advisory states. SBAC has established five work groups that oversee the development of the assessment system. The work groups are staffed by governing states, with support from the nine-member Executive Committee and project management from the research and development agency WestEd. The Executive Committee currently has two California representatives.

SBAC is working with the governing and advisory states to create a common, innovative assessment system in grades three through eight and grade eleven for mathematics and ELA/literacy that is aligned with the CCSS and helps prepare students for college and careers. In addition, SBAC will consider using a secured interim item bank so states can assess students in grades nine, ten, and twelve. SBAC involves educators, researchers, policymakers, and community groups in a transparent and consensus-driven process. The consortium's projects are funded by a four-year, $175 million grant from the U.S. Department of Education.

California is actively participating in small-scale trials, pilot testing, field testing, and full implementation through the 2014–15 school year. As a governing state, California is able to participate in multiple activities and meetings during each step in the process.

Beginning with the 2014–15 school year, the assessment system will include:

- A computer adaptive, summative assessment administered during the last 12 weeks of the school year that will be used to produce scores describing student achievement and academic growth toward achieving the CCSS. Scores can provide information to inform program evaluation and

school, local educational agency (LEA), state, and federal accountability information. These assessments are meant to satisfy the accountability provisions of Elementary Secondary Education Act (ESEA) regarding ELA and mathematics proficiency.

- Optional for states, computer adaptive interim assessments administered at locally determined intervals that will provide information about student progress throughout the year.
- Also optional for states, formative assessment practices and tools that will help teachers differentiate instruction and meet the unique needs of each student.
- An online reporting system that will provide access to information about student progress toward college and career readiness.

As the SBAC assessments become operational, participating states will have ongoing responsibilities, including, but not limited to, item development; field testing; submitting instructional resources to the Digital Library; interim assessments; evaluation; reporting; and selecting a contractor to administer and score the assessments

Next Generation Science Standards

Through a multistate, collaborative process, new science standards for kindergarten through grade twelve (K–12), currently under review, span the disciplines and grade levels to provide all students with an internationally benchmarked science education. The Next Generation Science Standards will be based on the *Framework for K–12 Science Education,* developed by the National Research Council. The Next Generation Science Standards are scheduled to be completed in early 2013. California was chosen as one of 26 states to lead a nationwide effort to assist with the development and review of the Next Generation Science Standards. As a lead state partner, California participated in the standard writing process, gathered and provided feedback from state-level committees, and collaborated with other states to address common issues and challenges.

In 2011, California *EC* Section 60605.85 was amended to require the State Board of Education (SBE) to adopt science content standards pursuant to specified requirements. This legislation requires the State Superintendent of Public Instruction (State Superintendent) to convene a group of science experts with whom the State Superintendent will recommend science content standards for adoption to the SBE. To facilitate this process, California *EC* Section 60605.85 requires the State Superintendent to hold at least two public meetings to provide public input on the science content standards. The State Superintendent

must present the recommended science content standards to the SBE by July 31, 2013. The SBE is required to adopt, reject, or modify the standards, as specified in statute, by November 30, 2013.

Mathematics and ELA/ELD Frameworks

In early spring of 2012, four focus groups were held at county offices of education in Orange, Monterey, and Contra Costa counties and at the CDE. The CDE's Curriculum Frameworks and Instructional Resources Division staff synthesized the focus groups' work and drafted a focus-group report for both ELA/ELD and mathematics and also provided the Curriculum Framework and Evaluation Criteria Committee Guidelines for the 2013 Revision of the *Mathematics Framework for California Public Schools, Kindergarten through Grade Twelve,* and the *Curriculum Framework and Evaluation Criteria Committee Guidelines for the 2014 Revision of the Englishï Language Arts/English Language Development Framework for California Public Schools, Kindergarten through Grade Twelve*. The SBE approved both documents in July 2012.

Assembly Bill (AB) 124 (Chapter 605, Statutes of 2011) updates, revises, and aligns the state's current ELD standards by grade level to the state's ELA standards. The revised framework addresses both the CCSS for ELA and California's new ELD standards. The ELA/ELD Curriculum Framework and Evaluation Criteria Committee then developed a framework that meets the requirements in the guidelines.

Senate Bill (SB) 1200 (Chapter 654, Statutes of 2012) authorizes the State Superintendent to recommend to the SBE modifications to the CCSS for mathematics for California. SB 1200 is specific about the changes the SBE may make. Redundant standards must be eliminated, each grade level must have only one set of standards, and Algebra I must be based on the CCSS. The Mathematics Framework Committee reviewed the California additions to the mathematics standards and recommended a number of changes, including the deletion of and rewriting of some standards as well as moving some standards into different conceptual categories in higher mathematics.

AB 1246 (Chapter 668, Statutes of 2012) authorizes the SBE to adopt instructional materials aligned with the mathematics CCSS for kindergarten through grade eight. The adoption process is established by state statutes to support the goals of transparency and fairness in the process and the involvement of teachers and other educators in the review of instructional materials.

The Mathematics Framework Evaluation Criteria, the Mathematics Subject Matter Committee, and the Instructional Quality Commission Committee will give feedback to the Curriculum Frameworks and Instructional Resources Division

for revisions. The feedback will then be posted for 60 days for public review and comment. The revised draft will be reviewed by the Instructional Quality Commission for discussion, and additional revisions will be made before it is sent to the SBE. This draft of the framework will be posted for a second 60-day public review period before the SBE takes action by November 2013. The SBE will take action on the ELA/ELD framework by May 2014, after it proceeds through the same process as the mathematics framework.

Supplemental Instructional Materials

In October 2011, SB 140 (Chapter 623, Statutes of 2011) called for the SBE to approve evaluation criteria for the review of supplemental instructional materials. In November 2012, the SBE approved twelve ELA and seven mathematics supplemental programs that were recommended by review panels. SB 140 is not a state adoption. It is a list of recommended supplemental instructional materials programs. The approved materials will not be added to the current adoption lists; they are resources that can help LEAs in their transition to the CCSS. AB 1246 allows LEAs to use categorical program flexibility funds, unrestricted general funds, Proposition 20 lottery funds, or other funds to purchase the materials. These supplemental instructional materials include the minimum amount of additional content needed to fully address the CCSS when used in conjunction with existing adopted materials.

National Center and State Collaborative

In September 2012, the CDE joined the National Center and State Collaborative (NCSC) consortium as a Tier II state. The NCSC is responsible for developing alternate assessments based on alternate achievement standards for students with significant cognitive disabilities. The NCSC assessments will be operational in 2014–15. Representing a Tier II state, the CDE will:

- Dedicate a staff member to coordinate the work.
- Work directly with members of the Special Education Administrators of County Offices of Education and with directors of special education local plan areas to build a community of practice.
- Meet directly with the field implementers every other month with technology supported meetings in between and as needed.
- Deliver electronically the comprehensive curriculum, instruction, and professional development modules available from the NCSC on the CCSS expected by fall 2012.

California expects, as do other Tier II states, to develop an individualized plan to implement the professional development and curriculum and instruction

resources, including formative assessment strategies and progress monitoring tools. The CDE's Assessment Development and Administration Division and Special Education Division will collaborate on this project to provide support and information to the field and to work with the NCSC. It is anticipated that California will be able to adopt the NCSC-developed alternate assessment. However, the decision to adopt the assessment developed by NCSC will be made upon completion of the assessment instrument.

ELD Standards

California *EC* Section 60811.3 requires the State Superintendent, in consultation with the SBE, to update, revise, and align the state's current ELD standards by grade level to the state's ELA standards, by November 2012. ELD standards help guide curriculum, instruction, and assessment for English learners who are developing the English language skills needed to engage successfully with state subject matter standards for college and career readiness.

To fulfill the requirement, the CDE convened focus groups, consisting of educators across the state, and held two public hearings to provide input on the revision of the ELD standards. In addition, the CDE convened a panel of experts to update, revise, and align the ELD standards with the CCSS for ELA. The SBE then adopted the new ELD standards in November 2012. The California English language proficiency assessments will need to be aligned with these new standards. The assessments also will need to be linked to the CCSS in mathematics as well as the NGSS once they are adopted by the SBE.

Transition Efforts Underway

An essential element of planning California's future assessment system is a plan for transition. The transition plan involves several integrated efforts to provide ongoing, high-quality, aligned, and sustained efforts to support educators, chiefly classroom teachers, but also site administrators, paraprofessionals, and instructional coaches.

The future student assessment system must align with CCSS and reflect a commitment to informing and supporting teaching and learning in a balanced manner. Together, state policy and resources can facilitate the development of a high-quality assessment system, capacity building at the local level, and efficient implementation. A well-planned transition to the future system is essential for creating a system of assessments that builds on what California has learned works well in the current system, and is composed of assessments that are meaningful and ensure that students are learning what they will need for success in college and the workforce.

The transition plan includes several integrated efforts to provide ongoing, high-quality, aligned, and sustained efforts to support educators, chiefly classroom teachers, but also site administrators, paraprofessionals, and instructional coaches.

The State Superintendent recognizes the extraordinary time and resources this transition will require. While SBAC assessments will be an integral part of California's future assessment system, the system must expand beyond SBAC by providing assessments of subjects other than ELA and mathematics (e.g., science and history–social science). In order to ensure the success of the transition and enable the CDE staff and constituents to focus time and resources on moving forward instead of reinventing the past, the State Superintendent believes it will be in the best interest of California students, teachers, and parents to suspend all STAR Program assessments with the exception of those required to meet ESEA and Early Assessment Program (EAP) requirements.

This would allow staff and stakeholders to focus efforts on building a new system without having to maintain the current system. It will allow schools and LEAs time to focus on implementing the CCSS. It will allow California to build a state-of-the-art assessment system that truly honors the purpose set forth in this document; that is, to design and implement an assessment system for California that is composed of a variety of assessment approaches and item types that serve the purpose of modeling and promoting high-quality teaching and student learning.

While this suspension is critical to maximizing efficient and effective uses of resources, the CDE has also been looking at ways to use the current set of assessments to transition to implementation of the CCSS.

STAR Program Transition

The STAR Program staff and testing contractor are making a variety of efforts to ease the transition for California schools and LEAs from the California content standards assessments to the CCSS assessments.

First, to give California schools and LEAs experience with the next generation of large-scale assessments and to explore a better way of assessing science inquiry, the testing contractor, on behalf of the CDE and SBE, administered a computer-based testing (CBT) tryout in October 2012 for science in grades five and eight and for high school biology. The data collected by the CBT tryout will help the CDE and SBE better assess participating LEAs' preparedness for online testing. The CBT tryout also gives students and schools a preview of what innovative items may look like as California transitions from testing with traditional multiple-choice items to assessments that use technology enhanced items.

Second, the testing contractor proposed the introduction of a new paperless aggregate reporting system for 2013 in order to streamline the reporting of the 2013 STAR results, reduce costs, and be more environmentally responsible. Aspects of this proposal were piloted and demonstrated to a cross section of LEAs throughout the state in October of 2012. If the demonstrations generate adequate interest from the field, the CDE and LEA staff may opt to use a browser-based graphical user interface to manipulate and view test data online as soon as data are available through the use of a Data Manager for STAR.

STAR staff and the testing contractor also plan to expedite the reporting of STAR results by using pre-equated forms that will enable a quicker turnaround time of student-level CST scores in 2013. The use of pre-equated forms will allow LEAs to receive student-level CST scores as part of a secure electronic file as soon as two weeks after they return testing materials to the testing contractor for scoring. These early reports will provide preliminary scores for individual students in an electronic format but will not include state-, county-, or district-level aggregate reports or any paper reports.

Third, the testing contractor has developed a plan, under the direction of the CDE, to help familiarize California schools and LEAs with the CCSS and their similarities to the California state content standards by way of the STAR Program assessments. The testing contractor, with outside verification from educators, will identify California content standards that align with the CCSS for K–12 education. The testing contractor will use that information to carefully analyze the STAR item bank and determine the number of viable items that assess students' achievement of standards contained in the CCSS. The hope is that with a psychometrically adequate number of test questions that measure both the California standards and the CCSS standards, the STAR Student Reports in 2013 might provide a mini-snapshot of the student's performance on CCSS-aligned items. Finally, as part of this plan, the testing contractor also will review previously released CST test questions for possible alignment with the CCSS and provide this information to educators on the STAR Sample Question Web site.

CAHSEE Transition

At some point, the CAHSEE may be modified to reflect the CCSS pursuant to California *EC* Section 60850(e)(3). Therefore, the CDE is limiting new item development that is aligned with the current California academic content standards and has instead refocused efforts toward alignment of existing items with the CCSS. The existing inventory of more than 20,000 operational items is more than sufficient to build the test forms needed for the administrations remaining through 2013.

English Language Proficiency Assessments Transition

The California English Language Development Test (CELDT) was not considered in the State Superintendent's recommendations. However, transition efforts have begun to address the newly adopted ELD standards. The CDE will revise the CELDT to ensure the alignment of the test questions to the new ELD standards adopted by the SBE in November 2012. The CDE also is working with the test contractor and teachers to separate the CELDT's kindergarten through grade one grade-span test into two independent tests for kindergarten and grade one. These new tests will be fully aligned to the new ELD standards and may be ready for operational administration in 2015–16. Pending additional funding, the following are the next steps in the alignment process:

- Analyzing the existing CELDT item database for test questions that align to the new ELD standards;
- Developing new test blueprints for all grades;
- Field testing new test questions that are aligned to the new ELD standards for kindergarten, grade one, and grade two in 2013–14; and
- Developing and field testing new test questions that are aligned to the new ELD standards for grades three through eight in 2014–15 and for grades nine through twelve in 2015–16.

By 2016–17, the CDE plans to complete the alignment of the new California English language proficiency assessments with the 2012 ELD standards for all grade levels.

Collectively, these transition efforts will support the state's transition to a new statewide assessment system.

Section 3

State Superintendent Recommendations for the Reauthorization of California's Assessment System

Introduction to the State Superintendent's Recommendations

California's current student assessment system has proven to be a powerful tool for improving school accountability and student achievement. Nevertheless, it must evolve to meet the changing educational needs of our students and our state. Our assessment system must be responsive to the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) that call for deeper learning, problem solving, and critical thinking.

The Governor and Legislature recognized this need in Assembly Bill (AB) 250 (Brownley, 2011, enacted as California *Education Code* (*EC*) Section 60604.5), which has guided the work of the California Department of Education (CDE) for the last year in the preparation of this report and the recommendations of the State Superintendent of Public Instruction (State Superintendent).

What we test, how we test, who we test, when we test, and why we test all continue be subjects of intense debate among policymakers, educators, and the public. These ongoing discussions spring, in part, from the fact that—whether intended or not, what is tested deeply impacts what is taught and how it is taught.

Because the objectives we set for our assessments have profound implications for our students, parents, teachers, and schools, the foremost purpose of our assessment system should be to model and promote high-quality teaching and learning activities across the entire curriculum. The concept is simple but powerful: If our assessments require students to use problem solving and critical thinking skills to perform well, those same skills are much more likely to be taught in our classrooms day in and day out.

Despite the strengths of the existing summative assessment system, a single multiple-choice assessment at the end of the year cannot fulfill this purpose. The pedagogical utility of the current set of assessments is limited not only by the current test format, content, and item types, but also by the current one-time test administration during the year.

To promote high-quality teaching and learning, assessment items need to elicit behaviors that students exhibit when they engage in high-quality instruction. Innovative assessment approaches such as collaborative student-relevant

performance tasks, constructed-response items, and technology-enhanced items must be a primary component of our new assessment system.

The Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium (SBAC) will provide these features for English–language arts (ELA) and mathematics. To achieve these benefits across the curriculum (e.g., science and history–social science), the state will need to invest resources to develop and administer these types of assessments.

To successfully impact teaching and learning, the future statewide student assessment system will also need to include not only end-of-year grade level summative assessments for accountability, but also interim and formative tools. Item banks and intact interim assessments are being created by SBAC to provide students, teachers, schools, and LEAs results that will display current student performance relative to end-of-year goals as well as the summative assessment.

Formative tools, also being developed through SBAC, will include teaching resources such as innovative item types, exemplars, rubrics, and professional development modules. In order for these tools to benefit all students, additional resources must be invested. If the same benefit for ELA and mathematics is desired for science, history–social science, and other curricular areas, similar investments in changing the assessments must be made for these subjects as well.

The development of these new tools creates a wide new range of options – and raises intriguing new questions for policymakers to consider, each with distinct advantages and disadvantages.

AB 250 called for the State Superintendent to consider an assessment system that met the requirements of the reauthorized federal Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA). Unfortunately, there has been no reauthorization of ESEA, and California must continue to meet the unrealistic and burdensome requirements of No Child Left Behind (NCLB), a law so flawed that its academic targets no longer discern between low and high performing schools.

Given this situation, while the State Superintendent has put forth a set of recommendations that meet ESEA's requirements, he encourages policymakers and the public to question the current regimen of testing all students, every year, in ELA and mathematics. This approach has unquestionably narrowed the curriculum in many classrooms, and just as unquestionably has failed to achieve the objectives set forth in NCLB. Inexplicably, neither Congress nor the federal Administration has made a commitment to re-examine this approach, and the State Superintendent again urges them to do so.

In the absence of federal action to provide greater flexibility to California, it will be difficult to fundamentally reconsider the state's role in assessing students. Confined to a one-size-fits-all federal model, policymakers are all but denied an opportunity to define for themselves the state's role in assessment and accountability systems.

Nevertheless, the importance of this discussion prompted the State Superintendent to offer a different approach to assessment, which is provided in Appendix A. This approach includes sampling students (i.e., not testing every student, every year) and defining a schedule that would not assess every subject every year. This same approach is included in recommendation 7 for curricular areas other than ELA and mathematics. The State Superintendent urges policymakers and the public to consider the wide range of options and advantages that might be available to the state and LEAs in developing an assessment system less bound by a set of strict federal mandates.

Our current fiscal climate is an important reality; therefore, the State Superintendent recommends a tiered or multi-year approach to changing California's assessment system; that is, it is recommended that not every aspect of the statewide student assessment system change at once. Taking a tiered, multi-year approach to implementation will move California in the right direction in a sensible, fiscally responsible, and practical way. With this tiered approach, it is expected that the development process for assessments outside of those provided by SBAC will take several years.

The State Superintendent recognizes that developing the right assessment system for California will take time. The recommendations that follow demonstrate the desire to embrace a new system that assesses students at a deeper level of understanding and reveals what students truly know and are able to do while offering opportunities and methodologies to produce a more balanced assessment system that places a greater focus on teaching and learning across the full curriculum.

Consultation with Stakeholders

In developing recommendations for the transition to California's new statewide student assessment system, the State Superintendent carefully considered feedback and suggestions provided by stakeholders across the state. The CDE, on behalf of the State Superintendent, used extensive outreach strategies to seek input from stakeholders statewide, including educators, parents, students, assessment experts, representatives of the business community, and the general public. In addition, multiple opportunities were provided for stakeholders to collaborate and dialog with CDE staff regarding the transition to the future assessment system. Stakeholder groups included:

- Teachers and administrators
- Higher education faculty
- Assessment experts
- Parents and students
- Business leaders
- Advocacy leaders

The CDE used a variety of methods to collect and analyze the information and insight gathered from these various stakeholders. The outreach included:

- The Statewide Assessment Reauthorization Work Group Meetings (the members of this group fully represented the stakeholders with whom the State Superintendent was legislatively required to consult)
- Stakeholder focus groups
- Statewide survey
- Regional public meetings
- Reauthorization e-mail account for public comments
- Additional stakeholders/technical or policy experts

The stakeholders provided a great amount of insight and feedback which is detailed in Appendices B through E. Additionally, CDE staff has presented information requiring the AB 250 work publicly at regularly scheduled California State Board of Education (SBE) meetings (see Appendix F for a summary of SBE reauthorization items) and gathered feedback from SBE members and through public comments. The feedback gathered through these different processes revealed many consistencies in the trends and topics mentioned or addressed by the different stakeholders. The following points highlight common themes where considerable consistency was observed across stakeholders and stakeholder groups:

- All statewide assessments should include a statement that communicates a clear and explicit purpose for the assessment, and the use of the assessment results should be aligned with this purpose. In addition, all statewide assessments should be aligned with the adopted standards and 21st century skills.

- The reauthorized assessment system should offer a new level of functionality at the local level. For example, the new system should include (1) diagnostic assessments in reading, writing, and mathematics for the primary grades; (2) formative tools and practices for all grades; (3) a variety of item types beyond multiple-choice items; and (4) assessments in science and history–social science in multiple grades.
- Data and results should be available to monitor students' progress within a school year and over time. More information and greater detail should also be provided in the reports, such as reporting at the level of selected standards.
- The needs of all students, including students who are learning English and students with disabilities, should be taken into consideration in designing the statewide student assessment system. This means that consideration should be given to factors such as access to technology, alternate assessments, and the linguistic complexity of the test questions.
- Developing and rolling out a reauthorized assessment system will take time. Activities should be prioritized, with careful consideration to the infrastructure needs for the new system and a clear plan for communication at each step of the process.

Some stakeholders' input was determined to be beyond the scope of the requirements of the legislation. For example, issues of accountability for English learners, availability of assessment professional development activities, and expansion of what determines a highly-effective school were raised by various stakeholders. While these were determined to be beyond the legislative requirements, the State Superintendent has directed staff to consider each of these issues separately and determine any appropriate action to be taken.

The State Superintendent's Recommendations

Recommendation 1 – Suspend Portions of the Standardized Testing and Reporting Program Assessments and Adjust the Academic Performance Index to Reflect Suspension of Such Assessments

Beginning in the 2013–14 school year, suspend all Standardized Testing and Reporting (STAR) Program state academic assessments that are not required to meet ESEA,or used in the Early Assessment Program (EAP). The following STAR assessments required for ESEA would continue to be administered until the new SBAC, alternate, and science assessments are fully developed and implemented:

- California Standards Test (CST) / California Modified Assessment (CMA) / California Alternate Performance Assessment (CAPA) in ELA and mathematics in grades three through eight

- CST/CMA/CAPA in science in grades five, eight, and ten
- CAPA in ELA and mathematics in grade ten

For the purpose of continuing the highly successful EAP, allow schools to offer the following STAR Program assessments to meet the EAP requirements. These would include the following assessments for **students in grade eleven only**:

- Grade 11 CST in ELA
- CST Algebra II
- CST High School Summative Math

In addition, adjust Academic Performance Index (API) calculations and reporting to accommodate suspension of any assessments. Suspending assessments and adjusting API reporting in this way will allow staff and stakeholders to focus attention, efforts, and resources on building a new assessment and accountability system.

Recommendation 2 – Beginning in the 2014-15 School Year, Fully Implement the SBAC ELA and Mathematics Assessments

Use the multistate consortium, SBAC, for ELA and mathematics summative assessments to assess all students in grades three through eight and grade eleven. These assessments would assume the responsibility for federal accountability measures. Individual scores would be made available. For those students who are unable to access a computer, provide for a paper and pencil version of the assessment for up to three years. If developed by SBAC, assessments for additional high school grades should be made available to LEAs for local use.

Recommendation 3 – Use the Grade Eleven SBAC ELA and Mathematics Assessments as an Indicator of College Readiness

Use the grade eleven SBAC ELA and mathematics assessments to serve as the indicator of college readiness for entry into college credit-bearing courses, a task that is currently fulfilled through the CST/EAP assessments. All grade eleven students would take the grade eleven SBAC and, therefore, all grade eleven students would be provided with an indicator of college readiness.

Recommendation 4 – Develop and Administer Science Assessments Aligned to the New Science Standards, Once Adopted

Develop new state science assessments consistent with new science standards, once adopted by the SBE in the fall of 2013, that include item types consistent with the SBAC assessments (e.g., short and extended constructed-response items and performance tasks).

Once developed, administer the new state science assessments described above to all students in grades five, eight, and once in grades ten through twelve, as required by ESEA. Consult with education experts and stakeholders to identify potential end-of-course assessments as a possible way to meet the current ESEA high school science assessment requirement.

Recommendation 5 – Develop or Use Multistate Consortia Alternate Assessments in ELA, Mathematics, and Science for Students with Severe Cognitive Disabilities

Students with severe cognitive disabilities and identified as eligible and appropriate through the Individualized Education Program (IEP) are currently assessed by the CAPA. Determine if the National Center and State Collaborative (NCSC) alternate assessment, once it is developed, is appropriate for California students and teachers. Should the NCSC assessment not be suitable, pursue alignment of CAPA to the CCSS using a variety of item types.

Administer the alternate assessment described above in grades three through eight and eleven in ELA and mathematics to all students with severe cognitive disabilities and identified as appropriate through the student's IEP.

Develop new state science alternate assessments consistent with new science standards, once adopted by the SBE in the fall of 2013. Administer the new state science alternate assessments to all eligible students in grades five, eight, and once in grades ten through twelve, as required by ESEA.

Recommendation 6 – Determine the Continued Need and Purpose of Academic Assessments in Languages Other than English Once the SBAC Assessments Are Operational

SBAC will contain optional customized language supports and accommodations for English learners in the ELA and mathematics assessments, making the assessments more accessible. In addition, it is anticipated that translation options for mathematics items will be made available, minimally in Spanish and American Sign Language. Once SBAC assessments are fully developed and administered, consult with stakeholders and English learner experts to determine if stand-alone academic assessments in primary languages (languages other than English) are needed to supplement the SBAC assessments; and if so, determine the appropriate purpose for such assessments.

Recommendation 7 – Assess the Full Curriculum Using Assessments that Model High-Quality Teaching and Learning Activities

Over the next several years, consult with stakeholders and subject matter experts to develop a plan for assessing grade levels and curricular areas beyond those

required by the ESEA (i.e., ELA, mathematics, and science) in a manner that models high-quality teaching and learning activities. Areas for consideration should include the visual and performing arts, world languages, technology, science, and history–social science. The plan should include the use of various assessment options such as computer-based tests, locally-scored performance tasks, and portfolios. In order to address feasibility and fiscal concerns, the plan should explore the use of a state-determined assessment calendar that would schedule the assessment of non-ESEA required subjects over several years.

For example, the 2016 assessment calendar could include a technology portfolio in grade five, a history–social science assessment in grade seven that includes constructed-response items, and a chemistry locally-scored performance task. The 2017 assessment calendar might include a computer-based science test in grade four and a visual arts performance task in grade eight. This approach would have the benefit of addressing the concern that limiting the assessment system to those ESEA required assessments narrows curriculum to ELA and mathematics while also acknowledging the fiscal constraints to developing and administering assessments in other subject areas.

To further address the concern of the amount of time students spend taking assessments, the CDE should consult with stakeholders and assessment experts to explore ways to more efficiently assess the non-ESEA required content. One approach may be to sample students or schools in the grades and subjects on the state-determined assessment calendar. Another approach may be to use matrix sampling whereby different groups of students are administered different parts of an exam. The use of matrix sampling allows the state to assess more content without increasing the time any one student spends on testing.

Regardless of the approach used, release a sample of items to encourage the use of rubrics and related material in professional development activities.

Recommendation 8 – Invest in Interim, Diagnostic, and Formative Tools

Create a state-approved list of grade two diagnostic assessments for ELA and mathematics for use at the local level. These diagnostic assessments would be voluntary for LEAs to use and purchase locally.

Acquire the SBAC interim item bank and formative tools. California must take full advantage of the SBAC interim item bank and formative tools allowing complete access for all public schools. It is not the intent of this recommendation to mandate any LEA or school to use such tools or for any data to be collected at the state level. It is the intent to take full advantage of the tools offered through the consortium so that all LEAs in California will have equitable and equal access and local discretion on use.

Recommendation 9 – Consider Alternatives to the Current California High School Exit Examination

While AB 250 did not require the State Superintendent to specifically consider the California High School Exit Examination (CAHSEE), the CDE determined that Consideration #15—*Minimizing testing time while not jeopardizing the validity, reliability, fairness, or instructional usefulness of the assessment results*—provided an opportunity to discuss CAHSEE in envisioning a new assessment system. Based on the numerous comments received during outreach efforts and the input of the Statewide Assessment Reauthorization Work Group, the State Superintendent recommends a consideration of alternatives to the CAHSEE for measuring students' demonstration of grade level competencies and where possible, reduce redundancy in testing and use existing measures. These alternatives include, but are not limited to the following:

- Instead of administering a stand-alone High School Exit Examination (CAHSEE), use the SBAC ELA and mathematics high school assessments to determine academic readiness for high school graduation.
- As a proxy for meeting high school exit requirements, use the results of other voluntary exams (e.g., PSAT, SAT, ACT, or AP). These would need to be used in conjunction with a state-administered assessment, such as the SBAC high school assessments, as all students would not choose to take the voluntary exams.
- Consider the successful completion of specific courses to determine if students meet minimum high school requirements for graduation. Successful completion would need to be defined.
- Consider the use of any relevant end-of-course assessments that may be developed in the future to determine high school exit requirements.
- Consider the use of matriculation examinations, if developed, to satisfy high school exit requirements (see Recommendation 10).

Recommendation 10 – Explore the Possible Use of Matriculation Examinations

Matriculation or qualification examinations are used in numerous countries to assess student acquisition of prerequisite knowledge and skills for entrance into college, career, and/or upper high school levels. The use of such examinations in the United States is rare, but the potential benefits of this type of examination to students, LEAs, colleges, and business alike suggests that consideration be

given to the idea of introducing them in California. Matriculation examinations can provide students with evidence of their requisite skills for prospective colleges or employers; in turn, these exams could make assessment relevant to students in a way that few other past state exams have.

In California, the concept of matriculation examinations was most recently introduced during the 2011-12 legislative session by Assembly Member Bonilla in Assembly Bill (AB) 2001. AB 2001 called for California's statewide assessment reauthorization legislation to include:

> (a) A plan to bring together elementary and secondary school policy leaders, the community colleges, the California State University, the University of California, private colleges and universities, and postsecondary career technical and vocational programs to develop criteria and create non-punitive pathways in which assessments taken by middle and high school students are aligned with college and career readiness and may be recognized as one of a number of multiple measures for entry into college, placement in college-level courses, and career training.
>
> (b) A plan for transitioning to a system of high-quality, non-punitive assessments that has tangible meaning to individual middle and high school students, including, but not limited to, recognition and rewards for demonstrating mastery of subject matter and progress toward mastery of subject matter.

Assembly Bill 2001 was not enacted into law, but as the state considers its next generation of assessments, it is recommended that further research and discussion take place regarding matriculation examinations, including exam format (i.e., written, oral), cost, fee coverage (e.g., student, LEA), and ways in which such exams could be used to meet high school exit requirements.

Recommendation 11 – Conduct Comparability Studies

It is recommended that comparability studies be conducted linking performance on the STAR assessments with performance on SBAC. To conduct these studies, a representative sample of students across California would need to take both tests, at approximately the same time in the same school year. The results would allow the relative performance of students on each test to be compared. The information from the compatibility study will provide a means of interpreting the results of the new tests relative to past performance. The information will also help with the interpretation of performance levels set for the SBAC assessments.

Recommendation 12 – Maintain a Continuous Cycle of Improvement of the Assessment System

Provide for a continuous cycle of improvement to the statewide student assessment system, including, but not limited to:

- Ongoing collection of data and information to evaluate aspects that are working as intended and aspects that need to be reviewed and improved (unintended consequences).
- Provide for periodic independent evaluations of the assessment system to ensure system remains relevant and valid.

Table 2. Summary of State Superintendent Recommendations

Recommendation Number	Subject/Content	Assessment Type	Recommendation Summary
1	ELA Mathematics Science History-Social Science	N/A	Beginning in the 2013–14 school year, suspend portions of the STAR Program assessments and adjust the API to reflect suspension of such assessments.
2	ELA Mathematics	Summative (SBAC)	Implement the SBAC ELA and mathematics assessments to all students in grades three through eight and grade eleven.
3	ELA Mathematics	Summative (SBAC) as college readiness indicator	Use the grade eleven SBAC ELA and mathematics assessments as an indicator of college readiness.
4	Science	Summative	Develop science assessments aligned to the new science standards, once adopted. Administer the new assessments to all students in grades five, eight, and once in grades ten through twelve.
5	ELA Mathematics Science	Alternate summative	Develop and/or use multistate consortia alternate assessments aligned with the CCSS in ELA, mathematics, and science for students with severe cognitive disabilities. Administer the assessments to all eligible students in grades three through eight and grade eleven.
6	TBD	Summative	Determine the need for academic assessments in languages other than English (e.g., replacement of Standards-based Test in Spanish).
7	TBD	Summative	Assess full curriculum (e.g., history–social science, science, arts, technology) using assessments that model high-quality teaching and learning
8	ELA Mathematics	Diagnostic Interim (SBAC) Formative (SBAC)	Provide a list of state-approved diagnostic assessments for grade two. Provide access for all schools to the SBAC interim and formative tools.
9	ELA Mathematics	TBD as high school exit requirement	Explore alternatives to the California High School Exit Examination.
10	TBD	Matriculation	Explore the possible use of matriculation examinations.
11	ELA Mathematics	Summative (SBAC)	Conduct comparability studies to link performance on STAR and SBAC assessments.
12	All	Summative	Maintain a continuous cycle of improvement of the assessment system through ongoing data collection and independent evaluations.

Summation

These recommendations reflect an assessment system that would meet the requirements of the current ESEA and Race to the Top initiatives, including assessments supported through federal grants, and provide a measurement of growth for all students in the areas of ELA and mathematics. The recommendations address the 16 considerations required by California *EC* Section 60604.5 and are reflective of the vast amount of input the CDE received over the past year.

The proposed assessment system would provide substantial benefits over the current system. Data from the SBAC assessments will provide a longitudinal record of performance for all students and the ability to follow and report academic growth in ELA and mathematics for individual students each year. This will allow California to implement accountability models that include student academic growth as a measure of performance. The use of student growth scores will provide a degree of precision that we currently do not have. Assessing all students will also yield subgroup scores for demographic subgroups, certainly at the LEA level, but also at the school level in most cases.

The addition of innovative item types will encourage and model high-quality teaching and learning activities; however, testing every student in certain grade levels primarily in ELA and mathematics in this fashion may continue to narrow the curriculum and discourage broader instructional opportunities. To address this issue, the State Superintendent's recommendations require that other subjects be assessed in a manner that would encourage the teaching of the full curriculum to all students. Assessing subjects and grade levels in a manner that encourages teaching the depth and breadth of the curriculum will require a commitment to a better assessment system.

The State Superintendent recognizes that concerns will be raised regarding the cost of assessing all students using computer-based or adaptive testing methodologies. However, the benefits of a computerized assessment system in terms of accuracy and efficiency must also be acknowledged. While the initial investment in technology requirements will be considerable, the benefits gained will help to affirm California's position as a leader in education.

The State Superintendent has established a vision for an innovative, 21st century assessment system that addresses the needs of all of California's students. The system is intended to provide information about the results of instruction while, at the same time, making a positive impact on the process of teaching and learning. To make this vision a reality will require close collaboration among stakeholders in all areas of California's education system.

There will be numerous challenges to overcome to make each element of the new statewide student assessment system a reality. Future requirements for federal accountability will need to be negotiated, and the state accountability system will need to be adjusted to use data from the new assessments. LEAs, schools, and teachers will need to learn how to implement the new assessments and interpret the results.

This report begins the necessary collaborative process, and the recommendations provide a focus for further discussion going forward. Because of the significant resources required and the critical importance of education to California, the leadership of the state must form a clear, commonly held vision of the new assessment system in order to negotiate for the resources needed to ensure that all students are well-prepared to enter colleges and careers in today's competitive global economy.

Appendix A

Considerations for Future Discussion

Similar to the recommendations presented in Section 3, the alternative approaches described in this appendix are consistent with the intended purpose of the statewide student assessment system and guiding principles. However, these alternative approaches propose testing a representative and statistically valid and reliable sample of students (hereinafter referenced as a state-defined sample) for the purpose of providing the state with the necessary data to inform the public on statewide academic achievement as well as local educational agencies (LEAs) in the state. In addition, the alternative approaches propose that schools and LEAs be provided with the option of administering the various assessments to students outside the state-defined sample for local purposes (hereinafter referenced as a voluntary sample).

Using a state-defined sample for accountability purposes for English–language arts (ELA), mathematics, and science has the principal advantage of reducing the number of students who need to be tested in any given year. Sampling could greatly reduce the testing burden in larger schools and LEAs. This would in turn reduce the technology requirements associated with computer-based testing. State resources saved by sampling could be dedicated to other uses, such as supporting LEAs' use of interim assessments and formative assessment tools.

If used as proposed for accountability purposes, small schools would likely need to assess every student or be excluded from accountability reporting. A minimum sample of 50 students would likely be required for each grade level and subject to provide results suitable for comparison from one year to another. Sampling would also require explaining results in terms of statistical significance. For smaller subgroups, even comparatively large numerical gains (or losses) in performance would often be nonsignificant.

Generally, sampling reduces the reliability of the accountability system because of the introduction of sampling error. Sampling also excludes the possibility of using student growth scores as part of the accountability system. Another consequence would be the inability to provide longitudinal snapshots of student performance across grade levels as is currently done through the California Longitudinal Pupil Assessment Data System.

While this sampling approach has advantages, the State Superintendent of Public Instruction recognizes that this approach does not meet current Elementary Secondary Education Act (ESEA) requirements, nor does it meet the current SBAC Memorandum of Understanding that requires the assessment of all students. In addition, certain provisions of California *Education Code* (*EC*) Section 60604.5(b) are not met, in particular:

- Consideration #3 – Conforming to the assessment requirements of any reauthorization of the federal ESEA (20 U.S.C. Sec. 6301 et seq.) or any other federal law that effectively replaces that act;
- Consideration #4 – Enabling the valid, reliable, and fair measurement of achievement at a point in time and over time for groups and subgroups of pupils, and for individual pupils; and
- Consideration #5 – Allowing the comparison from one year to the next of an individual pupil's scale scores in each content area tested, so as to reflect the growth in that pupil's actual scores over time.

Nonetheless, the State Superintendent offers this as a topic for discussion, particularly as we weigh in to the converse regarding the reauthorization of ESEA.

Alternate Approaches for Discussion

Alternate Approach to Assessing ELA and Mathematics

Administer the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium (SBAC) summative assessments in grades three through eight and high school for ELA and mathematics to a state-defined sample for purposes of providing the state with the necessary data to inform the public on statewide academic achievement as well as LEAs in the state, including data on all significant subgroups. No individual scores would be made available.

Provide schools and LEAs with the option of administering the ELA and mathematics SBAC Assessments to a voluntary sample of students. Additional information would be available for these voluntary samples at both the school level as well as the student level. If schools or LEAs were to administer assessments to a voluntary sample, they would have to cover the additional assessment costs and the data from the voluntary sample will not be reported to the state. The voluntary sample would be necessary for the Early Assessment Program (EAP) proxy.

Alternate Approach Administering New Science Assessments

Once new science assessments are developed, administer them to a state-defined sample of students in grades three through eleven for purposes of providing the state and LEAs with the necessary data to inform the public on academic achievement.

Provide schools and LEAs with the option of administering the new state science assessment to students outside of the state-defined sample for local purposes. Additional information would be available for these voluntary samples at both the school level as well as the student level. If schools or LEAs were to administer assessments to a voluntary sample, they must cover the additional assessment costs, and the data from the voluntary sample will not be reported to the state.

Alternate Approach for Assessing the Full Curriculum

Over the next several years, develop grade-level and course-specific history–social science assessments for students in grades three through eleven. Administer the history–social science assessments described above to a state-defined sample of students for the purpose of providing the state with the necessary data to inform the public on statewide academic achievement as well as LEAs in the state. No individual scores would be made available.

Provide schools and LEAs with the option of administering these assessments to a voluntary sample of students outside the state-defined sample for local purposes. Additional information would be available for these voluntary samples at the school level as well as the student level. If a school or LEA were to administer assessments to their voluntary sample, they would have to cover the additional assessment costs, and the data from the voluntary sample would not be reported to the state.

Alternate Approach for Administering Alternate Assessments

Administer the alternate assessment (developed or use one developed by a multistate consortium) in grades three through eight and high school in ELA and mathematics to a state-defined sample of students with severe cognitive disabilities and identified as appropriate through the individualized education program for purposes of providing the state with the necessary data to inform the public on statewide academic achievement as well as LEAs in the state. No individual scores would be made available.

Provide schools and LEAs with the option of administering the alternate assessment to students outside of the state-defined sample for local purposes. Additional information would be available for these voluntary samples at both the school level as well as the student level. If schools or LEAs were to administer assessments to a voluntary sample, they would have to cover the additional assessment costs and the data from the voluntary sample would not be reported to the state.

Alternate Approach to College Readiness Indicators

Use the grade eleven SBAC summative ELA and mathematics assessments to serve as the indicator of college readiness for entry into college credit-bearing courses, a task that is currently fulfilled through the California Standards Test (CST)/EAP assessment.

Students not selected as part of the state-defined sample to take the grade eleven SBAC assessment could volunteer to participate in the assessments at the school's expense and direction.

Appendix B

Statewide Assessment Reauthorization Work Group Description and Recommendations

Work Group Description

California *Education Code (EC)* Section 60604.5 required the State Superintendent of Public Instruction (State Superintendent) to consult with specific stakeholders in developing recommendations for the reauthorization of the statewide student assessment system. To facilitate that consultation, the California Department of Education (CDE) formed the 19-member Statewide Assessment Reauthorization Work Group (Work Group) representing:

- The State Board of Education
- The Public Schools Accountability Act Advisory Committee
- Measurement experts from California's public and private universities
- Individuals with expertise in assessing students with disabilities
- Individuals with expertise in assessing students who are English learners
- Teachers, administrators, and governing board members from California's local educational agencies (LEAs)
- Parents

Table B-1 on page 56 lists the names and affiliations of each Work Group member. The task of the Work Group was to apply professional expertise and perspective while providing feedback and suggestions regarding the reauthorization of the statewide student assessment system. Six Work Group meetings were held between March and September 2012. The meetings, which were open to the public, allowed members opportunities for in-depth discussions and multiple avenues for providing input on the reauthorization. Typically, those opportunities followed a presentation or a large- or small-group discussion.

Work Group members received digests regarding the 16 areas of consideration (see Figure 2 on page 26), which they used to inform their discussions. The digests included background information, guiding principles, and resources for each of the areas of consideration to assist in the development of ideas and suggestions. In addition, because the Work Group was asked to offer ideas and suggestions based on their expertise and without the

restriction of federal or state law and regulations, some of which were still evolving at the time of the Work Group meetings, the Work Group members recognized that some of the recommendations they put forth might not be feasible or might already be established or resolved by the publication date of this report. The schedule, agendas, presentation slides, and other documents from the Work Group meetings and the reauthorization effort are available on the CDE Statewide Student Assessment System Web page at http://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/tg/sa/ab250.asp.

Table B-1. Work Group Members with Roles, Titles, and Affiliations

Name	Work Group Role	Title	Affiliation
Blanca Anderson	Teacher	Teacher, English Language Development, grade 4	William Metteer Elementary School, Red Bluff Union Elementary School District
Sally Bennett-Schmidt	Administrator	Assessment Director	San Diego County Office of Education
Frank Donavan	Expert in assessing students with disabilities	Executive Director	Greater Anaheim Special Education Local Plan Area
Martha Fluor	Governing board member from a California local educational agency	Member, Local Governing Board	California School Boards Association Newport-Mesa Unified School District
Norm Gold	Expert in assessing English learners	Consultant	Norm Gold Associates
Susan Heredia	Governing board member from a California local educational agency	Member, Local Governing Board	California School Boards Association Natomas Unified School District
Martha Hernandez	Expert in assessing English learners	Director	Ventura County Office of Education
Alastair Inman	Teacher	Teacher, science, grades 7 and 8	Lexington Junior High School, Anaheim Union High School District
Linda Kaminski	Administrator	Superintendent	Azusa Unified School District
Michael Kirst	President, State Board of Education	President	California State Board of Education
Magaly Lavadenz	Expert in assessing English learners	Professor	Loyola Marymount University
Cecelia Mansfield	Parent	Member	California State Parent Teacher Association
Kathy Moffat	Parent	Member	California State Parent Teacher Association
Tara Nuth	Teacher	Teacher, English–language arts (ELA), grades 9 and 10	Fortuna High School, Fortuna Union High School District
Russell Rumberger	Expert in measurement	Professor	University of California, Santa Barbara
Patricia Sabo	Teacher	Teacher, mathematics, grade 8	Healdsburg Junior High School, Healdsburg Unified School District
Barbara Schulman	Expert in assessing students with disabilities	Teacher, special education, adult transition	Esperanza Special Education, Saddleback Valley Unified School District
Ting Sun	Co-Chair, Public Schools Accountability Act Advisory Committee	Executive Director	Natomas Charter School, Natomas Unified School District
Mark Wilson	Expert in measurement	Professor	University of California, Berkeley

Work Group Meeting Dates

Six Work Group meetings were held on the following dates in the Sacramento area and were open to the public.

- March 21–22, 2012
- April 17–18, 2012
- May 22–23, 2012
- June 12–14, 2012
- July 25–26, 2012
- September 6, 2012

Work Group Recommendations

The Work Group made the following general recommendations:

- The assessments that constitute the reauthorized statewide student assessment system should ensure a broad-based curriculum by incorporating literacy, visual and performing arts, world languages, health education, and English-language development (ELD), in addition to ELA, mathematics, science, and history–social science.
- The reauthorized statewide student assessment system should be developed to yield valid and reliable information about the performance of all students, including socioeconomically disadvantaged students, English learners, and students with disabilities.
- The reauthorized statewide student assessment system should: (1) include a clear statement of purpose and assessment for all learners, (2) be aligned with the Common Core State Standards (CCSS); (3) promote high-level cognitive skills; (4) promote innovative and multiple ways for students to demonstrate their knowledge; (5) minimize redundancies; (6) produce timely results; and (7) be linked to the highest quality of teaching and learning. The design of the reauthorized assessment system should also allow for matrix testing, as appropriate.
- The reauthorized statewide student assessment system should emphasize performance-based assessments that require students to extend beyond the application of basic skills and concepts and demonstrate their critical thinking and reasoning abilities.

English Learners and Students with Disabilities

The Work Group recognized the unique needs and issues related to testing students who have disabilities or whose first language is not the language of the test. To ensure that the reauthorized statewide student assessment system is designed with consideration for the needs of these students, the Work Group offered the following key recommendations for each group:

- California's 1.5 million English learners constitute a significant subgroup. As a group, students who are English learners often perform lower than other subgroups on academic tests and other academic indicators, such as high school graduation rates. These students have well-documented language needs that often inhibit their ability to demonstrate their knowledge when they are tested with assessments that are designed for native speakers of English.
- It is imperative, therefore, that the reauthorized statewide student assessment system yield valid and reliable information about the performance of English learners. The needs of all students, including English learners, should be considered from the outset of designing the reauthorized system to include assessments for this population of students. In addition, any other components or resources, such as an item bank[1] and interim and formative assessments, should support the design of valid and reliable assessment instruments, given students' levels of English proficiency. Therefore, the Work Group offered the following additional recommendations to ensure these goals are achieved:
    - In the reauthorized assessment system, English learners should be excluded from the academic assessments administered in English until they have scored above the equivalent of early intermediate (currently California English Language Development Test [CELDT] level 2) on the English–language proficiency assessment. This exclusion would be for no more than three years after the date the student first enrolls in a public school in the United States.
    - The reauthorized assessment system should include a valid and reliable English proficiency assessment that all English learners take annually to ensure monitoring of the ELD process and participation in the academic assessments.
    - The reauthorized assessment system should put in place specific research-based test variations and accommodations for English learners, consistent with Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium

[1] "Item bank" is a repository of test questions used to build tests.

(SBAC) guidelines, and should not compromise test validity and reliability. These guidelines highlight the need to attend to the clarity of language overall; to vocabulary, syntax, idiomatic expressions; and to cultural references and the use of the primary language of students in test directions and items.

- The test variations and accommodations for English learners on content assessments should include the following provisions:
  - Home language translation of test directions or authentic bilingual versions of the test directions in written and oral formats
  - Originally developed primary language versions of test items, translations or trans-adaptations of test items, or bilingual versions of these, as appropriate to the constructs and content areas
  - High-quality, language proficiency-leveled glossaries for all subjects tested
  - Modification of instructions, test items, and expected responses to control for linguistic complexity when English learners complete a test in English. (This needs to be included as a specific, carefully designed accommodation and not solely addressed through universal design principles.)

- The state should fully fund and support the effective rollout and consistent promotion of the accommodations.

California's nearly 690,000 students with disabilities also constitute a significant subgroup. This subgroup also often performs lower than other subgroups on academic tests and other academic indicators, such as high school graduation rates. These students have varying degrees of needs, all of which are documented either in their individualized education program (IEP) or Section 504 plan. The reauthorized statewide student assessment system should be designed with this subgroup's needs in mind as well, specifically incorporating universal design principles. Therefore, to ensure that these goals are achieved, the Work Group offered the following recommendations:

- The reauthorized assessment system should yield valid and reliable information about the performance of students with disabilities.
- The needs of all students, including students with disabilities, should be considered from the outset of the reauthorized assessment system instead of retrofitting an assessment system to include assessments for special populations.

- The reauthorized assessment system, including the assessments targeting content knowledge and any resource bank (i.e., items, assessments, lessons), should provide valid and reliable instruments and results, given the nature of students' disabilities.
- The state system should be designed to include appropriate assessments that can be supported by accommodations and/or modifications.
- The state should join the National Center and State Collaborative consortium, charged with developing alternate assessments for students with significant cognitive disabilities, as soon as possible.

Professional Learning

Although professional learning was not explicitly stated in the 16 areas of consideration (see Figure 2 on page 26), the Work Group felt the design of the assessment system must incorporate professional learning as a consistent, ongoing support for teachers and for site administrators. Teachers must be provided with student- and classroom-level data to improve practice and create an environment in which they have the ability to nurture the process of collective responsibility. Therefore, to ensure that these goals are achieved, the Work Group offered the following recommendations:

- 21st century skills should be an integral part of and be modeled in professional learning and administrator preparation, and every effort should be made to promote the effective integration of the full range of 21st century skills into the curriculum. One suggested approach for accomplishing this task would be through state-supported collaboratives composed of LEAs in partnership with colleges and universities.
- The state, county offices of education, and LEAs should provide professional learning that would include the use of technology to provide timely feedback and the use of evidence for the purpose of adjusting instruction.
- The state should provide guidance and professional learning to create assessments and common scoring rubrics to support multiple measures of students' achievement of 21st century skills, which are an important part of the CCSS.
- The state should allocate appropriate resources for professional learning designed to assist teachers in providing students with classroom experiences that support success on the assessments.

- The state should provide professional learning to ensure that multiple measures are appropriately used by LEAs to monitor student progress and determine the effectiveness of instruction and the extent of student learning.
- County offices of education should provide professional learning on diagnostic testing, which includes technical assistance, guidance, and support for LEAs.

Table B-2. Areas of Consideration by Cluster

Cluster	Areas of Consideration
Alignment	1. Aligning the assessments to the standards adopted or revised pursuant to Section 60605.8 (California's Common Core Content Standards, including additional California standards) [*EC* Section 60604.5 (a)(1)]
	2. Implementing and incorporating any common assessments aligned with the common set of standards developed by the Common Core State Standards Initiative consortium or other interstate collaboration in which the state participates.
	3. Conforming to the assessment requirements of any reauthorization of the federal Elementary and Secondary Education Act (20 *U.S.C.* Sec. 6301 et seq.) or any other federal law that effectively replaces that act.
Measurement of Pupil Achievement	4. Enabling the valid, reliable, and fair measurement of achievement at a point in time and over time for groups and subgroups of pupils, and for individual pupils.
	5. Allowing the comparison from one year to the next of an individual pupil's scale score in each content area tested, to reflect the growth in that student's actual scores over time.
	6. Enabling and including the valid, reliable, and fair measurement of achievement of all pupils, including pupils with disabilities and English learners.
	7. Providing for the assessment of English learners using primary language assessments.
	8. Ensuring that no aspect of the system creates any bias with respect to race, ethnicity, culture, religion, gender, or sexual orientation.
	10. Generating multiple measures of pupil achievement, which, when combined with other measures, can be used to determine the effectiveness of instruction and the extent of learning.
Content and Design	9. Incorporating a variety of item types and formats, including, but not limited to, open-ended responses and performance-based tasks.
	11. Including the assessment of science and history–social science in all grade levels at or above grade 4.
	12. Assessing a pupil's understanding of and ability to use the technology necessary for success in the 21st century classroom and workplace.
	13. Providing for both formative and interim assessments, as those terms are defined in this chapter, in order to provide timely feedback for purposes of continually adjusting instruction to improve learning.
	16. Including options for diagnostic assessments for pupils in grade 2.
Results for Diverse Purposes	14. Making use of test administration and scoring technologies that will allow the return of test results to parents and teachers as soon as is possible in order to support instructional improvement.
	15. Minimizing testing time while not jeopardizing the validity, reliability, fairness, or instructional usefulness of the assessment results.

The recommendations that follow, which are organized by the four clusters displayed in Table B-2, were provided by Work Group members as a result of their discussions and pertain to each of the 16 areas of consideration outlined in statute.

Cluster: Alignment Considerations 1, 2, and 3

Work Group members recognized the importance of having an assessment system aligned with academic content standards and federal requirements. Having an aligned system greatly enhances the likelihood that students will be provided with the resources and opportunities to learn the knowledge and skills of the content standards and that the assessments will provide a more accurate picture of what students have learned as a result of instruction. Alignment of the assessment system is, therefore, central to the fairness and validity of the system. The Work Group recommendations for this cluster address the role and responsibilities of the state unless another entity is specifically called out in the recommendation.

Consideration 1: Aligning the assessments to the standards adopted or revised pursuant to Section 60605.8 (The CCSS, including additional standards specific to California) (*EC* Section 60604.5[a][1]).

Key Work Group Recommendations:

- A plan should be developed for addressing the 15 percent of the CCSS for ELA and mathematics that are specific to California. This plan should deal with, but not be limited to, the importance of teaching and assessing these standards, guidelines for developing rubrics, and the use of the information to judge the effectiveness of instruction.
- All assessments, including those based on the CCSS, including the 15 percent, should be aligned with 21st century skills (e.g., such as those in the Partnership for 21st Century Skills) and designed to promote research-based instructional practices. For example, if the state designs assessments that focus on scientific thinking, this would be more likely reflected in classroom practices.

Consideration 2: Implementing and incorporating any common assessments aligned with the CCSS developed by the Common Core State Standards Initiative Consortium or other interstate collaborations in which the state participates.

Key Work Group Recommendations:

- The reauthorized statewide student assessment system should be based on the CCSS, using the SBAC assessments and augmented with assessments in other grade levels and subjects that are aligned with the SBAC assessments in terms of item types and rigor. For kindergarten through grade two, the statewide assessment system should include developmentally appropriate formative assessments that can be used to better differentiate instruction.
- The reauthorized statewide student assessment system should include diagnostic assessments at all grade levels to be used as needed. Testing at different grade levels should be for different purposes and should employ different approaches. At the secondary level, the assessment system should be aligned with college and career readiness, address 21st century skills, and have meaning for students (e.g., end-of-course [EOC] exams), including those enrolled in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics courses.
- The state should provide leadership, guidance, recommendations, and resources for LEAs to use, as locally determined, to create and administer formative and interim assessments at all grades, which are aligned with the CCSS.
- The reauthorized statewide student assessment system should include writing assessments that permit valid year-to-year comparisons and can inform graduation requirements and college and career readiness determinations.

Consideration 3: Conforming to the assessment requirements of any reauthorization of the federal Elementary and Secondary Education Act (20 *U.S.C.* Section 6301 et seq.) or any other federal law that effectively replaces that act.

Key Work Group Recommendations:

- The reauthorized statewide student assessment system should be compliant with any current or future federal Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) requirements and regulations and adhere to the guiding principles and recommendations established for the reauthorized system.

- The reauthorized statewide student assessment system should promote student buy-in as well as the meaningful use of results, as appropriate. For example, the assessments at the secondary level should produce results, which can also serve higher education needs. (e.g., placement, admissions, program evaluation)

Cluster: Measurement of Pupil Achievement Considerations 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, and 10

The most fundamental consideration of any assessment system is the valid, reliable, and fair measurement of students' academic performance. The Work Group understood and wholeheartedly supported this tenet and established key recommendations designed to ensure that validity, reliability, and fairness would remain at the forefront and center of the new system. Furthermore, in crafting their recommendations, the Work Group wanted to ensure that the sound and ethical use of the results from the reauthorized system would be held as the joint responsibility of the state and LEAs, higher education, researchers, schools, staffs, parents, students, business community, public officials, and any other entity using the results from this system.

Consideration 4: Enabling the valid, reliable, and fair measurement of achievement at a point in time and over time for groups and subgroups of pupils, and for individual pupils.

Key Work Group Recommendations:

- The reauthorized statewide student assessment system should provide valid and reliable results that can be used to inform a variety of decisions and expectations, including end-of-course expectations, graduation determinations, college admissions or placement, and career readiness.
- A matrix-testing configuration should be used to reduce testing time/burden, meet accountability requirements, and provide valid and reliable performance data at the individual student level for reporting to parents and guardians. Matrix testing can also produce standard-by-standard information or more detailed data at the grade, school, or LEA levels.
- The reauthorized statewide student assessment system should supplement the SBAC system with valid formative assessment practices and tools and an interim assessment resource bank that LEAs may use, as locally determined, for selected grades and subjects.

Consideration 5: Allowing the comparison of an individual pupil's scale score in each content area tested from one year to the next, so as to reflect the growth in that pupil's actual scores over time.

Key Work Group Recommendations:

- The reauthorized statewide student assessment system should be technically designed to support valid year-to-year comparisons for individual students.
- Methods for accurately measuring student growth should be investigated further for cost effectiveness and feasibility.

Consideration 6: Enabling and including the valid, reliable, and fair measurement of achievement of all pupils, including pupils with disabilities and English learners.

Key Work Group Recommendations:

- The reauthorized statewide student assessment system should provide valid, reliable, and fair measurements for all students, including at least two distinct groups of students—English learners and students with disabilities. To meet this goal, the state should:
  - Ensure that all students who are English learners and students with disabilities have access to the CCSS.
  - Ensure that all students have access to the appropriate supports needed to reach proficiency on the CCSS through rigorous and quality instruction, opportunities to learn, and accommodations, modifications, and alternate assessments, as needed.
  - Ensure that English learners have assessments, including accommodations or alternate measures, as needed, to appropriately measure their skills and knowledge. From the onset, all assessments should be designed to eliminate linguistic complexity, which may interfere with measuring academic knowledge.
  - Ensure that students with disabilities have assessments, including accommodations, modifications, or alternate measures, as needed, to appropriately measure their skills and knowledge.
- The state should join the National Center and State Collaborative consortium, charged with developing alternate assessments for students with significant cognitive disabilities, as soon as possible.
- English learners who are below the intermediate level of English proficiency on the state's English-language proficiency assessments (ELPAs) should be assessed with an alternate assessment aligned with the students' linguistic proficiency.

Consideration 7: Providing for the assessment of English learners using primary language assessments.

Key Work Group Recommendations:

- Primary language assessments should be provided for eligible English learners who are receiving instruction in their primary language during the current school year or those who have been instructed in their primary language any time during the two prior school years in California or elsewhere. These assessments should:
  - Be developed in the students' primary languages (i.e., not translated or transadapted) for reading/language arts. Translated or transadaptive should be available in subjects other than ELA.
  - Be offered at all grade levels assessed by the SBAC and other statewide assessments.
  - Include accommodations and/or modifications, including an oral administration.

Consideration 8: Ensuring that no aspect of the system creates any bias with respect to race, ethnicity, culture, religion, gender, or sexual orientation.

Key Work Group Recommendations:

- The rigorous processes used for current California assessments should be maintained to address potential bias and sensitivity issues and avoid unnecessary complexities of question formats and wording. The steps taken to eliminate bias or sensitivity should be communicated to educators and the public.
- The state should continue the ongoing bias and sensitivity review panels to ensure that all test items are free of potential biases related to age, gender, race, ethnicity, English learner status, and socioeconomic status.
- The state should ensure that sufficient technology resources and opportunities are provided to schools, classrooms, and students in all LEAs.

Consideration 10: Generating multiple measures of pupil achievement, which, when combined with other measures, can be used to determine the effectiveness of instruction and the extent of learning.

Key Work Group Recommendations:

- The reauthorized statewide student assessment system should include multiple measures generated from national assessments, SBAC assessments, other state-level measures, and local assessments or measures. This includes, but should not be not be limited to, performance-based assessments that integrate real-world learning experiences, teacher-driven classroom assessments, interim assessments, student portfolios, Advanced Placement tests, and demonstrations.
- The state should provide resources (e.g., item bank, links, free digital library) and guidelines on selecting, using, and combining multiple measures to ensure that LEAs use multiple measures appropriately to monitor student progress and determine the effectiveness of instruction and the extent of learning.
- The state should provide guidelines to inform how multiple measures are to be used in the accountability system.

Cluster: Content and Design Considerations 9, 11, 12, 13, and 16

The Work Group recommendations for this cluster are centered on designing a comprehensive, cohesive, and coherent assessment system. The Work Group envisioned a system that promotes a broad curriculum and rigorous instruction and provides useful and timely information about student achievement for teachers, parents, and students. Figure 1 on page 6 provides a more detailed picture of the components of this system.

Consideration 9: Incorporating a variety of item types and formats, including, but not limited to, open-ended responses and performance-based tasks.

Key Work Group Recommendations:

- The reauthorized statewide student assessment system should include a variety of item types and formats, including, but not limited to, open-ended responses and performance-based tasks.
- The state should allocate appropriate resources for professional learning and student learning experiences to ensure success on the assessments.
- The state should consider a multiyear or multiphase plan for rolling out the statewide student assessment system by subjects and grade levels.

Consideration 11: Including the assessment of science and history–social science in all grade levels at or above grade four.

Key Work Group Recommendations:

- To avoid increasing testing time, the state should use test administration strategies (e.g., matrix testing) to provide detailed standard-by-standard data on performance in science and history–social science at the grade, school, and LEA levels and summary performance data at the individual student level.
- State-level assessments in science and history–social science should be administered in grades three through eight and with EOC exams for secondary courses. These assessment results should be included in state accountability. Local assessments should be considered for science and history–social science in kindergarten through grade two.
- To broaden and enrich student learning in all subjects and to provide multiple measures of student achievement, state assessments for science and history–social science should include performance-based and constructed-response components, including high-quality lab assessments.

Consideration 12: Assessing a pupil's understanding of and ability to use the technology necessary for success in the 21st century classroom and workplace.

Key Work Group Recommendations:

- The state should ensure that sufficient technology resources and opportunities are provided to schools, classrooms, and students in all LEAs.
- The state should provide guidance and resources to ensure that the new technology supports learning and mastery of content and that all students acquire the information, media, and technology skills needed for success in the 21st century classroom and advancement to college and/or careers.
- The state should determine which information, media, and technology skills should be assessed on state-level assessments and which ones should be assessed on local assessments. For example, ensuring that students have the skills to critically evaluate the credibility of all resources, including Web-based resources, should be a local responsibility.

Consideration 13: Providing for both formative and interim assessments, as those terms are defined in this chapter, in order to provide timely feedback for purposes of continually adjusting instruction to improve learning.

Key Work Group Recommendations:

- The state should fund and provide an item bank that is aligned with the CCSS. This would include providing the capability for LEAs to add information and customize the item bank for use in developing local formative and interim assessments. In addition, all LEAs should have equitable access to the item bank.
- The state should develop common prompts and scoring rubrics that are designed with teacher and administrator input and for LEAs to use with their formative and interim assessments.
- LEAs should allocate time and training for teachers to collaboratively plan the assessments, adjust them, and analyze the results for the purpose of adjusting instruction to improve learning.

Consideration 16: Including options for diagnostic assessments for pupils at grade two.

Key Work Group Recommendations:

- The summative component of the reauthorized statewide student assessment system and resulting accountability system should begin no earlier than grade three.
- The state should provide diagnostic assessments for grade two as well as for all other grade levels, designed with teacher and administrator input and aligned with the CCSS.
- Diagnostic assessments for students at all grade levels should include appropriate accommodations and modifications.
- The state should establish guidelines regarding diagnostic administration and data use and provide the needed tools and resources.
- The county offices of education should provide professional learning on diagnostic testing, which includes technical assistance, guidance, and support for LEAs.
- LEAs, with teacher and administrator feedback, should determine the subjects and grade levels for diagnostic assessments and establish local administration policies and procedures.

Cluster: Results for Diverse Purposes Considerations 14 and 15

Results from the reauthorized statewide student assessment system will be used for various purposes including instructional improvement, progress monitoring, and program evaluation. All of these purposes will require results that are returned promptly and with sufficient detail to serve the intended purpose. The Work Group saw technology as a means of expediting the reporting of assessment results. The Work Group also wanted to eliminate redundancies in the system and maximize the information provided to students, parents, and teachers.

Consideration 14: Making use of test administration and scoring technologies that will allow the return of test results to parents or guardians and teachers as soon as is possible in order to support instructional improvement.

Key Work Group Recommendations:

- The reauthorized statewide student assessment system should consider a combination of scoring approaches that includes teacher judgments and automated scoring engines.
- The reauthorized system should leverage the use of technology in both test administration and scoring to promote the timely reporting of test results.
- The state should ensure that all LEAs and schools have the technology required for test administration and scoring.

Consideration 15: Minimizing testing time while not jeopardizing the validity, reliability, fairness, or instructional usefulness of the assessment.

Key Work Group Recommendations:

- The reauthorized statewide student assessment system should reflect a more even distribution of testing time across grades and, where appropriate, include computer adaptive and matrix testing. The state should consider the use of performance tasks that address multiple subjects.
- The state should establish a task force, including secondary and postsecondary education faculty and administrators, to develop EOC assessments for ELA for grades nine and ten; develop EOC assessments for ELA, mathematics, science, and history–social science for other high school courses, as needed; and identify assessments that can be used for multiple purposes (e.g., EOC assessments to meet graduation

requirements). This effort also should take into consideration systems for documenting and tracking assessment results.

- The state should define multiple pathways of evidence for demonstrating the required competencies for high school graduation, addressing the following criteria:
  - Students should be allowed to demonstrate the high school graduation competencies before grade eleven.
  - A rubric or guidelines should be established to define the sources of evidence for the high school graduation competencies, including any required cut scores for the evidence.
  - The high school graduation competencies should be broader than ELA and mathematics and be aligned with 21st century skills.
  - Students should be able to demonstrate different levels of proficiency with the high school graduation competencies that could satisfy minimum proficiency for high school graduation and that may be considered for college placement or admissions.
  - Competency evidence could include SAT, Advanced Placement, and other existing assessment results.
  - The system should be evaluated for differential impact on students who are English learners, students with disabilities, and those who are socioeconomically disadvantaged.

Appendix C

Stakeholder Focus Groups Feedback

The California Department of Education (CDE) conducted focus groups during the summer of 2012. Participants included teachers, administrators, parents, students, business leaders, and higher education faculty. The purpose of the focus groups was to gather information from specific stakeholders related to the areas of consideration outlined in statute. Focus group meetings took place in Sacramento and Los Angeles. Translation and interpretation for non-English-speaking participants were provided. Table C-1 indicates the number of participants by group.

Table C-1. Participants by Group Represented

Group Represented	Number of Participants
Teachers/Administrators	42
Parents/Students	26
Business Leaders	3
Higher Education Faculty	15
Total	**86**

The focus group meetings were two-hour meetings that began with a brief presentation designed to provide the participants with the background and impetus for the focus group, the expected outcomes of the input provided, and an overview of concurrent educational reform efforts in California and nationwide. The participants' input was then guided by questions aligned with the considerations regarding the reauthorization of California's statewide student assessment system. The questions paralleled those on the reauthorization survey, which was open to all Californians. Participants' questions also were welcomed and addressed, as appropriate. The summary notes that follow are for each of the focus groups.

Focus Group Feedback

Teachers and Administrators Focus Groups
July 19 and August 9, 2012
Summary Notes

Participants

Two focus group meetings were held in Los Angeles and Sacramento on July 19, 2012, and August 9, 2012, respectively. The two meetings were attended by 26 teachers and administrators.

Outcomes

What information about student achievement is most important that the statewide assessment system provide to you and why?

- There is a need for assessments that can be used to gauge progress or growth within the year and from year to year, especially for English learners, students with disabilities, and other subgroups. It is also important that the assessment system provide information about progress toward college and career readiness.
- More detailed results are needed that can be used to determine whether students, especially those at risk of not succeeding in school, are making progress with respect to specific standards and skills within the standards. The details would help teachers know whether they are teaching students the specific skills they need.
- Timeliness of results is critical. To be most informative to teachers in terms of student learning, the results must be available before the students have moved on to another course or grade level.
- To establish confidence in the validity of the results provided by the new assessment system, it is important that information about the new assessments (e.g., exemplars, timeline, grades, subjects, computer infrastructure, accessibility for special populations) be communicated to teachers, administrators, and all other stakeholders.
- California should focus on the Core Common State Standards (CCSS) and the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium (SBAC) assessments. This will ensure that vertically articulated assessments are available to monitor student progress over time.
- Information and guidance about how to transition to the new assessments must be made available to local educational agencies (LEAs).
- History–social science teachers are in “limbo” because they do not yet know what changes are forthcoming for this subject area.

- The new assessment (and accountability) system needs to be easy to explain to teachers, parents, and students. A highly complex system makes it difficult for teachers and administrators to understand the impact of their work.
- Information is needed that can be used for program evaluation (i.e., intervention programs) and for teachers to use to inform their instruction and evaluate their own teaching effectiveness.
- A clear statement of the purpose of the assessment system must be provided, and then it must be ensured that the assessments are used for that purpose.
- Because item analysis provides useful information to teachers and administrators, individual item results are needed to allow for this type of analysis.
- To ensure that the assessments are valid for English learners and students with disabilities, the test blueprints should include information on the underlying or prerequisite skills and knowledge.

Which grade levels and subjects should be assessed?

- Science and history–social science should be assessed in all middle school grades and in grades nine and ten in high school. The assessment system needs to provide feedback on how students are progressing in these subjects.
- The decisions about which grade levels and subjects to assess should start with SBAC assessments and should be driven by the goals of bringing focus and coherence to the whole system and minimizing testing. Assessments should be used for multiple purposes to reduce redundancies, keeping in mind that any additional test will take away from instructional time.
- Support was expressed for SBAC assessments because teachers will be able to include more authentic items within instruction. Also, participants supported SBAC's focus on literacy and real-world skills, with science and history integrated into literacy. This integrated approach may allow testing science and history every year as well.
- Assessments should be available for kindergarten through grade two that provide information to parents and teachers to improve instruction, but the results should not be used for accountability.
- Consideration should be given to the technical skills students will need for computer-based assessments. There is a need to start making these skills part of the curriculum and developing the skills early to ensure that students are prepared.

How important it is that consideration be given to including diagnostic, interim, formative, and summative assessments in the statewide assessment system?

- Teacher access to a robust item bank and interim or progress-monitoring assessments would be welcomed resources, but any results should not be used for accountability purposes. The results could be shared among teachers in collaborative settings, but they would not be publicly displayed or reported.
- Interim assessments are needed and could be used locally to document student growth. The state could provide CCSS-aligned items and assessments, research-based guidance, and a menu of resources, but the decision about which interim assessments used should remain a local responsibility.
- Formative assessments are the purview of teachers; therefore, these tools should not be state-driven. Formative assessments also should be aligned with the CCSS.
- Summative assessments should be used for accountability and be the primary responsibility of the state.
- Many of the newer teachers have been required to use pacing guides and boxed curricular materials and have been instructed about the importance of fidelity to the curriculum. Assessments have been used to hold them accountable. These teachers will need tools, guidelines, professional learning support, and time to learn to use these tools to support standards-based teaching and learning.
- Any costs associated with these resources will result in some equity and access challenges unless the state provides support to cover the costs.
- All assessments need to be broadened beyond tests and should include projects, research papers, and other ways for students to demonstrate what they know.
- Secondary teachers will have more challenges than elementary teachers in using diagnostic and formative assessments. Many high school teachers rely on semester finals and have a limited understanding of diagnosing and identifying weaknesses.
- County offices of education could have responsibilities related to interim assessment development and professional learning. LEAs also could take responsibility for professional learning.

What are the most important factors that should be considered to ensure that all students could demonstrate what they know on statewide assessments?

- Technology is critical and can make a difference for students with disabilities in assessing their knowledge and progress. It needs to be an integral part of instruction and assessment for all students.
- It is important for all students that the assessment is kept within the reach of a student's ability to complete an assessment and not at the student's frustration level.
- All students should be provided with opportunities to learn through rigorous, high-quality instruction.
- Teachers should be provided training to address the needs of English learners and students with disabilities. That training could be provided online, but it should be provided in a manner that allows teachers to be compensated for their training efforts.
- Guidelines should be provided on variations, accommodations, and modifications and a process established to ensure that the adjustments provided in the classroom do not deprive students of the rigor they need.
- The needs of English learners who are not Spanish-speaking and students on the high end of the achievement spectrum must be considered, too.

Additional Comments

- Consider using the statewide assessment results to raise or improve grades. Doing so would make the test more meaningful to students.
- Performance tasks, such as the current writing assessment, do not provide teachers information about how to improve their teaching.
- Provide information about teacher scoring and about the need for calibration and the role it will play in the SBAC assessments.

Parent and Student Focus Groups
July 19 and August 9, 2012
Summary Notes

Participants

Two focus group meetings were held in Los Angeles and Sacramento on July 19, 2012, and August 9, 2012, respectively. The two meetings were attended by 26 parents, high school students, and students who had recently graduated.

Outcomes

What information about student achievement is most important that the statewide assessment system provide you and why?

- With the SBAC assessments, students would receive information about their academic performance in high school only in grade eleven. Parents noted that this would only allow one year (i.e., grade twelve) for students to address weaknesses and catch up. Parents felt it is important to obtain assessment results or information earlier to know whether students are on track to go to college or into the workforce.
- Interim, diagnostic, and formative assessments, which give more immediate and earlier information about what students are learning, are important for ensuring that early and targeted remediation and support are provided.
- Parents indicated that to better prepare students for college or the workforce, it is important to receive information about their students' performance on a more global scale (i.e., compared to other countries), especially in the core subjects, as well as information about their students' readiness for college and careers.
- In order to focus on areas of improvement, it would help students after the administration of the tests to have access to the questions and see exactly which items they got wrong. This would help students learn from their mistakes and better understand why they missed certain questions.
- The results could provide students and their parents with more detailed information, as described in the following suggested examples:
    - Some indication of the courses and career choices to consider, given student strengths based on the test results.
    - Clear indication of the students' performance relative to peers taking the same course sequence. This specificity could be more helpful to students individually in evaluating themselves and their abilities than a comparison to a more general population of students.

- More specific information on the weaknesses (i.e., skills and concepts) and recommendations of what to do given the results (e.g., areas for tutoring).
- A "roadmap" of where the student is going with his or her achievement and a collective accumulation of the assessment results that could be used to help "paint" a more complete picture of the student's progress.
- A report on progress toward the ability to synthesize information, analyze, problem solve, transfer knowledge, and use other higher-level cognitive skills within real-life contexts and applications. This would require implementing tests designed to get at this type of information.
- Current reporting kept to a performance level, as this is used to identify students for certain programs and activities (e.g., Academic Decathlon).
- Information on the mastery of the specific skills and concepts that are more readily transferable to careers is needed, especially for students with disabilities.

- More frequent and better communication to students is needed about the importance of the tests and the information the tests provide to them and their parents.
- There is a desire to evaluate student change or growth from the beginning to the end of the year and track progress over time. One way would be to include pretests and posttests within an academic year.
- The results need to come back much sooner in order to be useful to students, parents, and teachers. There also needs to be clearly communicated purpose(s) for the assessments.
- Parents are interested in the scores of their children as well as the scores of the school. (Are all students moving forward?) It is helpful to know how the resources should be allocated to help the whole school improve.

How important is it that consideration be given to including diagnostic, interim, formative, and summative assessments in the statewide assessment system?

- The system should provide parents and teachers with ongoing information so that students who are falling behind are identified as early as possible. Testing should occur, at the very least, every other year.
- Parents support the movement toward LEAs administering interim assessments (i.e., benchmark assessments), sharing the results with students, and using the results to monitor progress and adjust instruction.

What are the most important factors that should be considered to ensure that all students could demonstrate what they know on statewide assessments?

- Provide clear guidelines with respect to accommodations and modifications for English learners and students with disabilities.
- Ensure that accommodations and modifications are consistently provided in the classroom as well as in statewide assessments.
- Provide teachers with the training they need to provide accommodations and modifications to English learners and students with disabilities.

What would make these assessments or tests more useful and important to you?

- Make sure teachers are not teaching only to the content tested. There should be a broad focus to the instruction. The assessments should be a snapshot of what is taught. Standards tested could be randomly selected from year to year.
- Focus assessments on critical thinking skills and enlist students in developing the questions.
- If test results were to weigh less in assessing the quality of schools, people would be more invested in them. Consider additional indicators of school quality in addition to test results.
- Include multiple-choice and performance-type questions in the tests. The performance and constructed-response questions require analysis and critical thinking. Be sure to include in the test items more white space, interesting passages, and graphics, which are more motivating to students.
- Gear assessments toward the whole child. Everything is test driven because of how the results are used. Current assessments are not, for some students, a good measure of what students know and can do.
- It is important to get the results back faster and with more detailed information.
- Attention should be paid to how teachers present the tests to the students, including how they will help each student in the future (i.e., these tests are not just for the state's information, which is what students often are told). To help students take the test more seriously, consider making the tests a priority and better communicating their importance. Also, a related aspect is communicating the importance of taking certain courses and why students need to learn certain skills. The tests should be advertised well in advance and through the teachers (i.e., not through administrators or via a form letter).
- Match the vocabulary level of test questions to the grade level of the student. Currently, the vocabulary level is too high.

- Do not include assessments that cover multiple grades (e.g., history test in grade eight) or assess content covered in previous grades. Assessments should not cover content that has not been taught in the current grade. Following this suggestion would ensure that the assessments are better aligned with what the teacher is teaching and the student is learning.
- Clearer directions would be helpful to students.
- Provide information on areas in which interventions must take place if a student is not making satisfactory progress.
- Provide examples of the types of assessments that will be part of the statewide assessment system, including those designed to assess higher-level cognitive skills.
- Consider positive incentives for students to achieve high performance on the assessments, such as bumping up a grade by one letter; receiving extra credit in the following year's course; having summer school requirements waived; or using the performance in initial screening for gifted and talented or other programs.

English–Language Arts (ELA) Teachers Focus Group
August 10, 2012
Summary Notes

Participants

Nine ELA teachers, representing all grade spans, attended the focus group meeting held in Sacramento on August 10, 2012.

Outcomes

What information about student achievement is most important that the statewide assessment system provide you and why?

- Teachers need information that can be used to inform and plan their instruction for the students they are currently teaching. In addition, they need information about their students' progress, their academic performance in the previous school year (i.e., standards that were mastered), and their level of college readiness.
- The writing scores they receive now tell teachers only how well their students take tests about writing, not how well they can write. The test results need to provide teachers information about students' abilities to construct coherent and well-developed essays.

- The CCSS seem to focus too much on informational text. ELA teachers want to ensure that the assessments balance student interaction and knowledge about informational text and literature.
- The reports of results need to show as much specificity as possible, including the students' reading levels. Teachers need results that can be analyzed by student and by class so they can identify the needs of individual students and student groups.
- Teachers need detailed data, including diagnostic information, to help them define the gaps, strengths, and needs of students coming into their classrooms. This is more important than receiving information on the students they had the previous year. Having information that is current is critical in order for teachers to have a chance to improve the knowledge and skills of their students.
- Information is needed that can be used to evaluate growth. A suggested approach is to have accurate pretests and posttests. Also, seeing their own growth would empower students.

At what grades should ELA be assessed? How important it is that consideration be given to including diagnostic, interim, formative, and summative assessments in the statewide assessment system, and who should have the primary responsibility for these components?

- Some LEAs have quarterly benchmark assessments, which provide very useful information if they are properly designed. These benchmarks are the basis for item analysis to determine whether the scores are the result of poorly written questions, the students, or other factors. The benchmarks also provide feedback to teachers and students, which help in making instructional adjustments and affirming that learning has occurred. The state's role in interim assessments needs to balance local responsibility for designing quality interim assessments, aligned with pacing plans, with the need to ensure that interim assessments are of high quality and can be used for comparisons across LEAs.
- Teachers expressed concern that grade eleven is the only high school grade assessed by SBAC and that there is a significant gap in testing between grades eight and eleven. Therefore, they would like to see ELA assessments continue in grades nine and ten.
- It is critical to include a variety of assessment types in the system; however, care should be given to include a variety of assessment types without increasing the amount of testing being done.
- Generally, ELA teachers felt the interim and formative assessments should be local responsibilities (although, as noted earlier, concerns were expressed about the quality of local interim assessments).

- Diagnostic assessments should be in place for all grade levels and should be a state responsibility. Some areas of California have high transiency rates, so having state responsibility of the diagnostic component would ensure that the data are centrally located for access by different schools. In addition, if diagnostic and summative assessments were under state control, their design would be parallel and better aligned because the same testing vendor would create them.
- Writing is important across all curricula, including career, vocational, and technical education. Therefore, the assessments should include common rubrics that can be used for scoring writing in different subjects. (For example, a common persuasive writing rubric that could be used to score essays in history–social science or science.)
- Teachers requested assurance that if California adds tests to grade levels not tested by SBAC and/or to align with the 15 percent additional standards, any California testing additions will align with and "mirror" the SBAC assessments (e.g., same terminology, format).
- Generally, ELA teachers supported the CCSS because they integrate content, make connections, and promote creative problem solving. These are the types of skills students will need for success beyond school.

Additional Comments

- ELA teachers requested assurance that the infrastructure is in place or will be in place to support the technology-based assessments.
- Teachers suggested a need to change local school cultures so that all teachers can see and use the data for all students. This would help in identifying colleagues who are doing terrific work that focuses on school-wide, learner-centered needs.
- African American and Latino students may need more orientation for taking tests, as their test performance does not always reflect what they know and can do.
- Our current assessments have promoted a classroom environment in which students are provided with very few opportunities to read and analyze long, sustained text, as the assessment passages (e.g., excerpts) are typically short in length. ELA teachers would like to see longer passages used in the ELA assessments.
- The language of the assessments does not always match the language of the classroom. For example, "controlling impression" is the term used in the curriculum, compared to "thesis statement" on the test. Students and teachers need to be made aware when such terminology does not match.

- ELA teachers called for strategies to increase students' investment in the assessments. Students need to see the value of the information they receive from the summative assessments.
- ELA teachers suggested eliminating the California High School Exit Examination (CAHSEE) in its present form, given the amount of testing already taking place and because students "shut down" after they pass this test.
- Conversely, they also noted that the CAHSEE is the one test about which all high school students care. If statewide assessments are not given a meaningful use, students will not take them seriously, especially those who may not be planning to go to college. Anything considered to replace the CAHSEE, however, would need to include multiple opportunities to pass the test.

Mathematics Teachers Focus Group
August 10, 2012
Summary Notes

Participants

Seven mathematics teachers, representing secondary grades, attended the focus group meeting, held in Sacramento on August 10, 2012.

Outcomes

What information about student achievement is most important that the statewide assessment system provide you and why?

- Better timeliness of the information or results is essential. For example, schools need these results promptly for accreditation, to determine the proper placement of students, and to make instructional planning decisions based on students' weaknesses and needs.
- Teachers could use the information from formative and diagnostic assessments throughout the year for students currently in their classrooms. This would be most productive for their instructional planning.
- Information is needed that can be used to evaluate how individual students are progressing during the school year and have progressed in past years.
- Teachers would like to see the types of questions to be included in the assessments. Knowing the cognitive levels at which students will be tested (e.g., comprehension, application, synthesis) also would be helpful to teachers in preparing their students.

- Of particular need for high school districts is access to a database of information about students coming into their LEA. Often, teachers get little or no information about incoming students' prior performance. Having access to grade eight results would be very helpful to grade nine teachers.

At what grades should mathematics be assessed? How important it is that consideration be given to including diagnostic, interim, formative, and summative assessments in the statewide assessment system, and who should have the primary responsibility for these components?

- Grade nine can be an especially difficult year for students. Therefore, it would be helpful to have good diagnostic and formative tools to determine how best to support these students and monitor their progress.
- Consider giving the CAHSEE to grade nine students so they will have more time to work on passing the examination, and have the administration of the mathematics portion of the exit examination occur soon after students successfully complete an Algebra I course. Also, if the exit examination needs to be realigned with the CCSS, ensure that it focuses on the fundamental skills and concepts students need to succeed beyond high school.
- For the grade levels in which there is not an SBAC summative assessment, interim assessments should be available for use in place of summative assessments.
- Some LEAs have diagnostic tests for courses such as Algebra I and Geometry. In addition, many LEAs have benchmarks that are either created by teachers or purchased through a vendor who provides the data management system. These benchmarks typically are administered three times per year or every six weeks. Some LEAs also have mid-year and summative assessments, such as for Algebra I, which the teachers can score themselves to obtain fairly immediate results. Often, these assessments are available for use by teacher or school choice.
- The diagnostic, formative, and interim assessments set up by LEAs may not have the rigor and standards alignment of the statewide assessments. Therefore, it would be desirable if the state were to provide diagnostic, formative, and interim assessments similar to those already used by LEAs, but being in alignment with standards and having the rigor of the summative statewide assessments. At the very least, the state should provide an electronic test bank that LEAs could use. This would address the potential equity concern over some LEAs having different types of assessments in place, and others not, and the range of quality of the assessments different LEAs are using.

What are the implications of the 15 percent for the future assessment system? How important is it that the assessment system includes a pre-Algebra assessment or will the grade eight SBAC assessments be sufficient?

- There is a considerable amount of assessment already occurring and planned under SBAC. Furthermore, assessment is very important and needs to be done carefully. The mathematics teachers felt the CCSS need to be put into practice before making any changes to the standards. Similarly, at least initially, the SBAC assessments need to be rolled out as designed.
- If assessing the 15 percent is left up to the LEAs, it will create equity concerns because some LEAs will emphasize them and others will not. If California moves forward with the 15 percent in mathematics, they need to be incorporated into the statewide assessment system.

Additional Comments

- To motivate students to do their best on statewide assessments, the results could be used to change grades, depending on how the students scored on statewide assessments the previous year. For example, if students moved up a performance level or score proficient or advanced only, they could petition to raise their grade by one letter in the course or subject. Another consideration would be to incorporate statewide assessment results into the graduation requirement so the tests would matter to students the way the CAHSEE does.
- Statewide assessments need to assess what is being taught at each grade level. For example, social studies and high school summative mathematics tests cover material from multiple grade levels, which teachers and students generally do not support.
- Mathematics teachers would like to see a more open and transparent system for providing feedback to the CDE about potential errors on the assessments.

Higher Education Faculty Focus Group
August 29, 2012
Summary Notes

Participants

This focus group meeting was held in Sacramento on August 29, 2012. The meeting was attended by 15 faculty and administrators from California institutions of higher education. One additional participant, who could not attend in person, submitted responses via the reauthorization e-mail account. All participants represented the university and community college systems.

Outcomes

Do you presently use student or school test results, and, if so, for what purpose?

- The Early Assessment Program (EAP) was developed by The California State University (CSU) system. The CSU system uses the results of the EAP to determine whether grade eleven students are ready for college-level work in English and mathematics. If students are determined to be ready or conditionally ready (which requires that students successfully complete specific courses in grade twelve), they are considered proficient; therefore, they are exempt from the CSU placement tests. The state's community college system has recently begun accepting the EAP results as well, thereby allowing students the possibility of enrolling in college-level classes without the requirement of a placement test. Sacramento State University reported that it had carried out a small-scale EAP study that revealed that EAP-exempt students were overwhelmingly successful in their college-level English and mathematics courses. Focus group participants observed that the EAP has served as an effective model for collaboration between the K–12 and higher education systems and has exemplified a deliberate effort to use information already collected and available.
- Higher education faculty involved with school improvement projects use the outcomes of statewide assessment results in research and evaluation of strategies that promote student learning and close achievement gaps.
- Statewide, school-level data are used to do research in accountability policy design, and student-level data are used to conduct research about features of accountability policy and how those policies may create incentives for schools to make certain decisions (e.g., placement decisions in middle school mathematics).
- As part of the process of gathering validity evidence, higher education faculty have used statewide assessment data to examine the usefulness and consequences of high school assessments (e.g., the impact of the CSTs and CAHSEE) on college and labor market outcomes, especially for underrepresented and language minority groups.
- To study the impact of LEA and school reform efforts and to develop an understanding of the existing assessment and accountability systems, teacher education programs have used test results to inform teacher credential candidates of academic areas in which there are gaps and students struggle.
- Professional learning providers have used the statewide assessment results to help teachers better align their grades, practices, and expectations for performance and to broaden their understanding of what higher education considers a proficient student.

Which type of high school assessments would be meaningful and useful, and for what purpose?

- It is important to be able to track students and measure student growth. Currently, the assessment system allows only for comparisons of cohorts (e.g., this year's grade eight students to last year's grade eight students), which is not useful to those engaged in school improvement and evaluation efforts.
- High school assessments that demonstrate specific, rather than general, end-of-course competencies would be helpful to higher education and those conducting research on effective practices promoting such competencies.
- Assessments that include constructed-response items and performance-based assessments that require students to generate a product (e.g., write an essay, including a cross-disciplinary argument; carry out critical analysis; synthesize information from multiple sources; solve mathematics problems) that requires more time would give clear signals to high school teachers about the kinds of teaching and learning that should be promoted for students. In developing such assessments, care should be taken to ensure that they focus on higher-level skills and measure the full range of student performance. Furthermore, teachers should be included in the scoring as part of their ongoing professional learning.
- Consideration also should be given to a collection of assessments, or portfolio assessments, which would be scored and evaluated over time. The state could provide guidance and examples for assembling and standardizing a collection or portfolio. Such an approach promotes student ownership of their learning and understanding of assessment. Examples of standardized portfolio systems that can be examined as possible models are available (e.g., La Guardia, Envision, New Tech, Big Picture Schools).
- It is important to have an integrated system of assessments that begins in the early years and measures the extent to which the students are on track for college-level work. That system should include assessments that provide information on basic school readiness (i.e., skill levels of students entering kindergarten) and early learning that are not used for accountability; address the gap between grade eleven and the start of college (i.e., senior year); and include formative assessments for the skills students should be building in grades nine and ten.
- Clear markers are needed for the criteria that determine when a student is ready for abstract thinking (e.g., algebra readiness) and has attained sufficient knowledge for college-level work. Then, assessments, including interdisciplinary assessments, that indicate when the student hits this marker in high school would be very useful, and, if students are performing

below this marker, the results would indicate that more information is needed by the community colleges to determine student placement. (Community colleges currently use quantifiable multiple measures to place students. Some of the most common multiple measures include high school grade point average, highest courses completed, and grades in those courses.) Portfolios, which are more qualitative and quantitative, could be used for admissions rather than placement decisions, as they provide a more holistic picture of students' knowledge.

- Assessments are needed that can be used to support the type of professional learning that brings together staff from higher education, schools, and LEAs with the intent of achieving a common understanding and standardized expectations (e.g., scoring performance tasks). Assessments also can serve as a tool for preparing school leaders who need to understand the system and provide teachers with support.
- Currently, there is considerable variation in the form and quality of local assessments. At the very least, it would be helpful if local assessments administered at the end of courses were more consistent across LEAs.
- Rolling out the tightly constructed CCSS all at once means there will be students who will not perform as expected for a period of time. This must be accounted for. In addition, there will be a period of disconnect because teacher candidates, who are currently in a preparation program, are learning about the current standards, not the CCSS.
- The modeling of statewide assessments after the performance-based California Teacher Performance Assessment should be considered. It is linked to California Teacher Performance Expectations. Teacher candidates know the meaning of their scores, and the information is used to advance or remediate the candidates. The results are available to the student and instructors at the end of each quarter. High school teachers and university faculty have been trained to reliably score the tasks and activities of the California Teacher Performance Assessment. Further, the results are used to discuss trends and what should be continued or done differently.

How meaningful is a separate high school exit exam that measures minimum proficiency? What do high school assessment results need to yield for you to make placement decisions?

- The CAHSEE is not an exit exam, but a minimum proficiency exam. The CAHSEE gives students the impression they are done with high school at the point they pass the exam, which may be as early as grade ten. A cut score on the CSTs may be more meaningful. Further, high school assessment results need to yield some sort of predictability about students being successful beyond high school.

- The CAHSEE may be putting certain minority students or subgroups at a disadvantage. Research has revealed that Latino and African American students disproportionately fail the CAHSEE. These unintended consequences, if supported by further research, should be sufficient reason to eliminate the CAHSEE.
- The California Academic Partnership grant for schools with low APIs found that in schools that implemented the expository reading and writing course (i.e., focus on the EAP), students did better on the CAHSEE than in schools where the focus was solely on passing the CAHSEE.
- Because of the CCSS's target of preparing students for college and careers, the CAHSEE should be at the level of college and career readiness.
- The reauthorized statewide student assessment system is an opportunity to become more coherent and integrated, define purposes and clarify the uses for assessments, bring pre-kindergarten through grade twelve and higher education together, and have fewer assessments that can provide information to make better decisions. From this perspective, the new assessment system is not likely to require the CAHSEE.
- A very high correlation exists between a school's API (Academic Performance Index) score and the percentage of students eligible for the National School Lunch Program. (The current assessments are, in essence, measuring family income.) Therefore, the reauthorized assessment system should provide more diverse ways for students, especially socioeconomically disadvantaged students, to accurately demonstrate their knowledge. Socioeconomic status, participants noted, is a major bias factor not listed in the legislative considerations. Family education is also very important.

Additional Comments

- An important aspect of the validity of certain assessments is the predictability of students' future performance in higher education or careers. This aspect of validity should be considered and planned for in the design of the assessments from the outset. In addition, the purposes of the assessments need to be clearly stated along with validating the assessments for the purposes intended.
- Student motivation is a concern at the high school level. Therefore, consideration should be given to an assessment system that can be designed to encourage students' interests. The National Academy Foundation has a performance-based student certification system that can be viewed as a model for this goal.

- A reauthorized statewide student assessment system needs to produce longitudinal data that are connected, useful, and meaningful. If the goal is to assess students, the system should be able to track individual student performance. If the goal is to evaluate schools and LEAs, doing so does not require testing every student every year and in every subject. In addition, science, history–social science, physical education, and other subjects need to be weighted more in line with ELA and mathematics.
- If the reauthorized statewide student assessment system is used to inform quality instruction, the hallmarks of quality instruction should be identified and should inform the design of the assessment system.
- Community college and university faculties in California need to be an integral part of the conversation and involved with the planning and design of the reauthorized statewide student assessment system.
- The reauthorized statewide student assessment system needs to be evaluated on a regular basis and, if at any point it is deemed not effective, a comprehensive overhaul should be considered.
- Lessons should be learned and unintended consequences identified from the existing assessment system, and not just for subgroups, but also for all groups of students and for education in a broad, general sense. No Child Left Behind may have contributed to a narrowing of the elementary curriculum. The implementation of CCSS has the potential to take curriculum and assessments in a positive, new direction.
- There is a need for high-quality professional learning on the creation of assessments and their implementation and use, especially in promoting reflective practices in the classroom. Beyond assessments, teachers need professional learning to understand what they need to do differently. They also need access to appropriately developed curriculum and instructional resources.

Business Leaders Focus Group
October 3, 2012
Summary Notes

Participants

Three representatives of business organizations participated in the focus group meeting, held in Sacramento on October 3, 2012. Two business leaders participated in person and one by phone.

Focus Group Responses

Student achievement information from a statewide assessment system considered most important by the business community and why:

- As employers, business leaders emphasize and look at behavioral qualities such as absenteeism and tardiness to determine whether an individual is going to be a good employee.
- The abilities to think critically, problem solve, work on a team, and interact with other people are important.
- Attitude and interpersonal skills (e.g., making eye contact, shaking hands, smiling, basic customer service skills) are key. If the students do not have basic interpersonal skills, they will not get a job. This is extraordinarily important. Teachers do not demand and the assessments do not measure these skills.
- Financial literacy is critically important for the economic well-being of families, individuals, and the community.
- The business leaders support the *Framework for 21st Century Learning*, which is similar to ConnectEd's *College and Career Readiness: What Do We Mean? A Proposed Framework*. Included in these frameworks are such topics as productive self-concept, self-knowledge, self-management, self-esteem, self-efficacy, goal setting, time management, study skills, taking initiative, self-direction, resourcefulness, and task completion. In addition to incorporating those topics, the statewide student assessment system needs to measure effective organizational social behaviors, such as leadership, flexibility, adaptability, ethics, and responsibility.
    - These measures do not show up in the current assessment system.
    - Most people think these measures are additive in nature and crowd or compete with academic content. However, the business leaders would argue that through project-based and team-based learning, students would learn the academic subjects in deeper, more meaningful ways and would develop career readiness skills at the same time.
- More work-based learning opportunities for all students in the form of internships at the high school level are needed.
    - Students learn valuable skills from hands-on experiences in which they interact with adults in a learning environment.
    - Far more collaboration between employers and high schools is needed in the form of pathway programs. Regional partnerships and compacts are essential.
    - A formal assessment system could be created that flows from this type of work-based education.

What academic content and standards would business like students to know in addition to 21st century skills?

- There is too much focus on content standards and the memorization of information. Business leaders recommend that teachers cover less content but do it in a way that allows them to go into more depth.
  - Business needs students who have mastered basic content and skills. For instance, students need to know core mathematics standards so they can use the skills and understand complex ideas and problem solving in order to apply them.
  - It is not as important for students to know the breadth of the content standards.
  - Academics need to be taught in a way that students can apply them to a purpose or to solve a problem. This allows mastery to occur because students see the value in learning and because there is context for the new knowledge to be retained. This also allows students to graduate with the ability to apply what they have learned to new situations.
- In regard to ELA, teaching students how to write long dissertations is not enough. Business needs graduates who can also write short summaries or brief outlines to express complex ideas in a simple, clear way.
  - Our students are stuck in a five-paragraph system.
  - Students need to be taught to write with emotion, conviction, and voice to get their points across.
  - ELA should be changed to “English Communications” because it is not just about reading and writing but also about listening and speaking.
- Content knowledge is changing rapidly, so a greater premium should be placed on learning styles and dispositions.
  - Do students have a positive disposition toward learning? Do they enjoy mathematics or science? Are they creative and challenging themselves to learn more and keep growing? Assessments need to test for the ability to grow and learn over time. This is quite different than the current testing.
  - Current teaching methods, with an emphasis on facts and multiple-choice tests, cause students to think that learning is boring.
  - We need to identify each student’s learning style and place each one in a setting in which he or she can flourish.

The most critical elements that should be included in California's future assessment system:

- Performance and authentic assessments must be included in the assessment system:
  - Students may have knowledge or skills, but if they cannot use or apply the knowledge or skills in a work setting, the knowledge or skills are of little use to employers.
  - The current "fill in the bubble" tests do not measure students' ability to apply the knowledge or skills they have learned. These types of assessments also have crowded out the kind of teaching and learning that allow individuals to acquire critical thinking skills.
  - Items should be dynamic and more interactive with more graphics—more game-like in nature. These types of items will capture students' attention and allow them to show what they know and can do.
- With today's environment, we need to develop an assessment system that is able to change from year to year. The CSTs were created and then locked down, and we have continued with this for a long time. We need a system that can change and adapt more rapidly.
- The assessment should emphasize project-based learning.
- There is a need for more competitive-type assessments in which we create games or competitions and in which schools can compete with one another to show what students know and bring out their best. The games should be centered on solving real-world or fabricated problems and coming up with creative solutions.
- Accountability should not be a "gotcha," as it is now. There must be multiple markers used to indicate success. Measuring growth is very important, but some higher performing schools are complacent. Longitudinal data systems, such as the California Longitudinal Pupil Achievement Data System (CALPADS) and the California Longitudinal Teacher Integrated Data Education System (CALTIDES), are essential for improving educational (kindergarten–grade sixteen) and workplace practices.

Importance of a separate high school exit examination that measures minimum proficiency:

- It is very tricky to have one test on which a student is measured, such as the CAHSEE, and another test on which teachers and schools are measured, such as the CSTs for ELA and mathematics. The same test should do both so that the motivation is the same.

- Business leaders are not sure that the CAHSEE is meaningful to the business community because it is not testing the right things; it is not indicative of the finished product.
- It would be better to save the money spent on the CAHSEE and use it on other assessments that measure 21st century skills and on college-to-career readiness frameworks.

Appendix D

Statewide Assessment Reauthorization Survey Results

A survey was designed and distributed to provide stakeholders throughout California with an opportunity to provide their suggestions and feedback on the reauthorization of the statewide student assessment system. The survey included two demographic questions and seven questions that elicited respondents' thoughts on (1) information about student achievement needed from the reauthorized system; (2) grade levels and subjects that should be tested; (3) the importance of different types of assessment components; (4) factors that should be considered to ensure that the assessments are valid for students who are English learners, students with disabilities, and other student subgroups (as identified); and (5) uses of the results from the reauthorized system.

The English and Spanish surveys were posted on the California Department of Education (CDE) Statewide Student Assessment System Web page at http://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/tg/sa/ab250.asp. The survey was launched on July 5, 2012, and closed on September 4, 2012. It was distributed electronically to stakeholder agencies, networks, and organizations, along with a request to forward the links to the survey to others who may be interested in responding. Announcements about the availability of the survey also were made to the Statewide Assessment Reauthorization Work Group (Work Group) members and focus group participants and distributed through the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium (SBAC) Listserv.

Survey Results

A total of 1,637 responses were received, with a median response time of 10 minutes. Table D-1 on page 97 displays the role breakdown for the 1,636 respondents who identified their role. Respondents who selected the "Professional Organization or Other" category indicated that they were representatives of specific educational organizations; school staff, such as counselors or other support personnel; university or college personnel; retirees; consultants; or individuals who fit multiple role categories.

Table D-1. Demographic Characteristics of Survey Respondents

Role	Number	Percent
Teacher K–8	477	29
Teacher 9–12	261	16
Site Administrator	258	16
District/County Office of Education Administrator	439	27
Professional Organizations/Other	113	7
Parent	49	3
Student	2	–
Community Member	37	2
Total	**1,636**	**100**

Respondents who identified themselves as teachers or administrators also were asked to identify their years of experience. Of those 1,435 respondents, 1,389, or 97 percent, indicated that they had six or more years of experience.

For the quantitative data, which are the responses to questions 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, and 9, where the respondents could select from choices, the number and percent of respondents who selected each choice are broken down by role.

For the qualitative data, which include the responses to questions 3 and 11 and additional comments provided for questions 7, 8, and 9, a qualitative coding scheme was used. For these questions, the initial coding categories are based on themes and topics that had emerged from other input opportunities and expanded as patterns clearly emerged during the review and analysis of the responses, which suggested additional coding categories. Multifaceted or extended responses to these questions often were associated with more than one coding category. If appropriate, the qualitative data also are presented by role. The only role for which quantitative and qualitative data are not provided is for students, as only two respondents identified themselves as students. With the qualitative data, quotes from the responses, found to exemplify typical responses, also are provided. These quotes were edited, as needed, for spelling errors.

For the selected-response questions 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, and 9, the number of respondents by role is provided in the column labeled “Number.” For open-ended questions 3 and 11, and the comments submitted for questions 7, 8, and 9, the number of respondents is included as a column in the tables. Because some respondents skipped part or all of a question, the number of respondents by role may vary from question to question.

Results for Question 3—What information do you need the statewide assessments to provide about student achievement?

Scores That Can Be Used to Measure Year-to-Year Growth and Multiple Year Growth

Respondents called for an indicator, one that could be used to judge individual student progress from one year to the next, to track individual student progress over time and provide some sense of whether the student is progressing at an adequate pace toward such targets as college and career readiness. The current system, it was noted, allows only for comparisons of cohorts within a grade level, and what is needed is a way to compare a student to him or herself in the previous year. It also was noted that comparing the current year to a previous year might not make sense for some students, such as secondary student who might be in two very different courses from one year to the next (e.g., Algebra I the previous year and Geometry this year). Comments from the administrators about growth went beyond individual students to the growth of schools and local educational agencies (LEAs) and the desire for comparisons to external markers such as the state, county, and other LEAs. Table D-2 displays the number and percent within each role (e.g., 27 percent of the teachers in kindergarten and grades one through eight [K–8] who provided comments) that mentioned growth scores in their responses to question 3.

Table D-2. Growth Score Information

Role	Number of Respondents	Number Commenting	Percent
K–8 Teachers	361	97	27
9–12 Teachers	203	32	16
Site Administrators	199	73	37
District/County Office of Education Administrators	349	164	47
Professional Organizations/Other	96	28	29
Parents	31	8	26
Community Members	17	5	29

The following are quotes from the responses that exemplify this category of responses to question 3:

> *Statewide assessment should provide a general overview of a student's long-term development and growth. (K–8 Teacher)*

I think it is also important to be recognized for student growth even if they do not attain proficiency. I receive many students working well below grade level, and would like to be able to celebrate their progress instead of having to tell them year after year they are still below basic. (9–12 Teacher)

All students enter school with a wide variety of experiences and readiness levels. Students' backgrounds make a big difference. While all students are capable of learning at high levels some start way behind and begin school with a huge gap. The amount of growth students achieve each year is a very good indicator of the impact of schools. The growth model of achievement is one that should be highlighted more. (District/County Office of Education Administrator)

It would be extremely helpful if tests could be used to track improvement year to year. (Parent)

Overall Scores That Indicate Student End-of-Year Achievement, Mastery, and/or Proficiency of the Adopted Standards by Key Subject or Course

Respondents indicated that it was important that this information be detailed enough to determine whether individual students and groups of students are exceeding, meeting, or not meeting, grade-level standards and how far above or below-grade-level students are performing. Such details could be used to identify pupils who are at risk of failing as well as those who could be served in a gifted program. Respondents further indicated a need to know about student mastery of essential standards and skills, preparedness for college and careers, or a well-defined body of knowledge. Comments focused mainly on needing to know students' English–language arts (ELA) (reading and writing), mathematics, and English language development levels. Administrators also noted the need to have that information in aggregate for teachers, grade levels, schools, and LEAs. Table D-3 on page 100 displays the number and percent of respondents within each role who mentioned overall mastery results in their responses to question 3.

Table D-3. Overall Mastery Information

Role	Number of Respondents	Number Commenting	Percent
K–8 Teachers	361	80	22
9–12 Teachers	203	44	22
Site Administrators	199	69	35
District/County Office of Education Administrators	349	140	40
Professional Organizations/Other	96	29	30
Parents	31	17	55
Community Members	17	7	41

The following are quotes from the responses that exemplify this category of responses to question 3:

> *I need to know where my students are when they enter my class. A far below basic score on a sixth grade test could mean the student is reading at a fourth grade level or at a Kindergarten level. If I have a student who comes in at the 2nd grade level, I want to know so I can teach accordingly and make proper goals. (K–8 Teacher)*
>
> *Even with 100 percent of students performing proficient or advanced, educationally important individual differences will still exist and should be accurately measured and addressed. (Professional Organization/Other)*
>
> *How well are individual children meeting performance standards, and how well is the school or district meeting those standards, overall. (LEA Administrator)*

Information About Students' Strengths and Weaknesses with Respect to Specific Skills, Essential or Key Standards, Clusters, Strands, or SBAC Claims

Respondents commented on the need for detailed, specific, or diagnostic information about strengths and weaknesses for all students, including English learners and students with disabilities. Such detail would inform the identification of learning gaps and misconceptions and aid in planning and differentiating instruction and targeting remediation and intervention. Several respondents also commented on the instructional value of knowing how pupil responded to specific assessment questions or items, including distractor reports for multiple-choice questions. Table D-4 displays the number and percent of respondents within each role who mentioned strengths and weaknesses in their responses to question 3.

Table D-4. Detailed Strengths and Weaknesses

Role	Number of Respondents	Number Commenting	Percent
K–8 Teachers	361	125	35
9–12 Teachers	203	55	27
Site Administrators	199	82	41
District/County Office of Education Administrators	349	130	37
Professional Organizations/Other	96	20	21
Parents	31	8	26
Community Members	17	0	–

The following are quotes from the responses that exemplify this category of responses to question 3:

> *I need the statewide assessment to differentiate among low-level basic skills for math students. For example, knowing that a seventh grade student scores far below basic is not helpful in diagnosing whether she needs help in simplifying fractions or whether she simply has not memorized her multiplication tables to automaticity. (K–8 Teacher)*

> *But, more importantly, there needs to be feedback on how the student did on specific standards. This is the only way that teachers and administrators can tailor instruction and intervention to help students improve in the areas where needed. (LEA Administrator)*

> *These assessments should provide information related to the performance of our students: their strengths, needs, interests, best modes of learning, and what needs to be worked on in the future. (Professional Organization/Other)*

Information About Higher-Level Skills and Knowledge and Other Important Capabilities and Dispositions

Respondents commented on the need for information and assessments that provide a broader and more complete picture of students' abilities and knowledge of processes and skills. A range of capabilities and dispositions were mentioned, including student motivation; conceptual understanding; critical thinking; logical reasoning; communication skills; information gathering; creative applications; problem solving; teamwork; emotional and social development; the visual and performing arts; 21st century skills; and the skills needed to be successful beyond high school, to be college and career ready, and to compete on a global level. Respondents called for assessments that involve hands-on activities and

applications to real life and novel situations. In addition, respondents noted that the types of understanding and knowledge that need to be assessed will require tests that go beyond multiple-choice questions to constructed-response items and writing and other performance tasks. Table D-5 displays the number and percent of respondents within each role who mentioned the need for assessing higher-level skills in their responses to question 3.

Table D-5. Assessing Higher-Level Skills

Role	Number of Respondents	Number Commenting	Percent
K–8 Teachers	361	84	23
9–12 Teachers	203	68	33
Site Administrators	199	18	9
District/County Office of Education Administrators	349	33	9
Professional Organizations/Other	96	27	28
Parents	31	8	26
Community Members	17	5	29

The following are quotes from the responses that exemplify this category of responses to question 3:

The ability to think analytically and problem-solve critically in math; reading comprehension and analysis, and critical thinking in ELA, with both literature and expository text; understanding of concepts and theory and application of concepts in science. Along with making causal relations and attributions between natural phenomena and scientific principles. (K–8 Teacher)

I need results from authentic assessment and not from multiple-choice (guess) standardized assessments. I want to know if my students can apply the mathematics they learn to real-life situations and to novel situations. (9–12 Teacher)

Students do not graduate with the ability to problem solve or give back to their community because they only skills they have learned are writing five paragraph essays and answering multiple-choice questions. (9–12 Teacher)

To truly measure students' aptitude for success in the college, career, and civic life in the 21st century, we need to know the level of knowledge and critical thinking, communication, creativity, and cooperation skills in and across all subject areas including social studies, civic education, science, visual and performing arts, health, and physical education. (LEA Administrator)

Science thinking and processing skills should be incorporated as well as writing. Things like claims, evidence, and reasoning; graphs and summary statements; observational writing; and charts and tables. It appears that whatever gets assessed is what gets taught, so let's assess some of the skills and thinking processes that we want kids to have. Assessments should be reasonable in length and used to help support and guide instructional practices. (LEA Administrator)

I'm tired of tests that don't tell me about how well my child has been taught to think and reason. (Parent)

Disaggregations and Comparisons of Data

Respondents commented on the need for information that can be disaggregated and would allow comparisons of individual students and groups of students to their peers at the same grade level or on the basis of other variables, such as, but not limited to, students with the same disabilities, English–language proficiency, home language, mobility, Title I participation, socioeconomic levels, gifted and talented participation, race/ethnicity, or gender. Requests for comparative achievement data also mentioned information that could be used to compare and identify effective schools and LEAs as well as compare schools and districts to data from states, the nation, and other countries. Such disaggregation and comparisons would support the early identification of achievement gaps, evidence that achievements gaps are being closed, students who may be at risk of not succeeding, and trends across grade levels and schools. Table D-6 displays the number and percent of respondents within each role who mentioned the need for disaggregated and comparative data in their responses to question 3.

Table D-6. Data Disaggregations and Comparisons

Role	Number of Respondents	Number Commenting	Percent
K–8 Teachers	361	29	8
9–12 Teachers	203	16	8
Site Administrators	199	30	15
District/County Office of Education Administrators	349	68	19
Professional Organizations/Other	96	15	16
Parents	31	6	19
Community Members	17	0	–

Results Need to Be Received Sooner, Faster, or in a Timelier Manner

Timeliness was mentioned because of the need for the information to help in making decisions at the beginning of the school year, such as placement and decisions related to instructional adjustments during the course of the year. For some respondents, the comments about the need for detailed information were made in conjunction with the need to receive the results faster. Table D-7 displays the number and percent of respondents within each role who mentioned the desire for more timely results in their responses to question 3.

Table D-7. More Timely Results Needed

Role	Number of Respondents	Number Commenting	Percent
K–8 Teachers	361	21	6
9–12 Teachers	203	16	8
Site Administrators	199	18	9
District/County Office of Education Administrators	349	22	6
Professional Organizations/Other	96	4	4
Parents	31	2	6
Community Members	17	0	–

The following are quotes from the responses that exemplify this category of responses to question 3:

> *I cannot wait until the following school year to see where I could have made a course correction in my instruction. Although it helps me as a teacher, receiving assessment results only once a year helps with reflecting what I can do differently if I had the same group of students again. This reflection will not necessarily help me with the new batch of students that I receive at the beginning of each school year. (K–8 Teacher)*

> *The information currently derived from the tests is useful, but it comes too late for response and placement considerations. (Site Administrator)*

Provide Teacher-Friendly Resources, Including Professional Learning

Resources mentioned included those designed to help with planning instruction and preparing students for the tests, such as blueprints, scoring rubrics, study guides, sample test questions, breakdown of the skills and concepts underlying the tested standards, typical error patterns on statewide assessments, guidance on appropriate test preparation, information about the logistics of an online test

administration, and technology requirements. Respondents also mentioned the need for resources designed to help with the interpretation of results and with how to improve programs. Finally, respondents commented on the need to receive information on learning activities based on proven strategies and techniques to help all students, particularly the lowest achieving at the secondary level, master the standards. In addition to the resources described above, respondents indicated that administrators and teachers needed easier access to such materials. All of these resources were noted as particularly important to the successful implementation and administration of the new reauthorized statewide student assessment system. Table D-8 displays the number and percent of respondents within each role who mentioned the need for resources in their responses to question 3.

Table D-8. Teacher Resources Needed

Role	Number of Respondents	Number Commenting	Percent
K–8 Teachers	361	19	5
9–12 Teachers	203	12	6
Site Administrators	199	13	7
District/County Office of Education Administrators	349	27	8
Professional Organizations/Other	96	3	3
Parents	31	2	6
Community Members	17	2	12

The following are quotes from the responses that exemplify this category of responses to question 3:

> *For areas of weakness, all teachers, regardless of what district they work for, should have resources (materials/professional learning) easily available in order to strengthen their instruction, and support their students in being successful. (K–8 Teacher)*

> *I want to know what is being covered and the levels and complexities of the questions, as well as some indication of the variance among the questions. Sample tests would be extremely helpful. (K–8 Teacher)*

> *We need to know how to improve our program to better serve our students. (Site Administrator)*

I am a county coordinator and want to learn more about the most current information so I can support the school districts in our county. (LEA Administrator)

How teachers, parents, community, and students themselves can be prepared for the assessments. Also, how they will be used and how students benefit from taking them. (Community Member)

Testing all Subjects at Regular Intervals

Respondents commented on the need to include assessments targeting subjects beyond ELA and mathematics, which are the two SBAC subjects. Additional subjects mentioned included science, history–social science, geography, civics, economics, and nutrition. Respondents indicated the need for a well-rounded curriculum that is reflected by the tests that compose the assessment system. Further, respondents who mentioned testing broader subjects often indicated that these additional subjects do not necessarily need to be tested in every grade, every year; rather, they often suggested that those subjects be tested at regular intervals and in a manner that allows the valid monitoring of student progress. Table D-9 displays the number and percent of respondents within each role who mentioned the need for testing subjects beyond ELA and mathematics in their responses to question 3.

Table D-9. Testing All Subjects

Role	Number of Respondents	Number Commenting	Percent
K–8 Teachers	361	22	6
9–12 Teachers	203	21	10
Site Administrators	199	4	2
District/County Office of Education Administrators	349	15	4
Professional Organizations/Other	96	17	18
Parents	31	3	9
Community Members	17	1	6

The following are quotes from the responses that exemplify this category of responses to question 3:

We can support matrix sampling [testing], however, we like the idea of testing all students and sending only a sample of student data to the state for certain subjects to ensure we can continue to gage individual student growth. We are concerned about testing in every subject in every year and could support the

concept where one grade level is tested in the lower grade spans but we do not support continuing the current grade span testing in science and history–social science in which three grade levels of content are tested in just one grade. (Professional Organization/Other)

Summative state testing at every grade level is not necessary, especially if formative tests are available to use throughout the school year for all grade levels. Testing two grade levels in elementary, and one grade level each in middle and high school should be sufficient to provide summative information for accountability purposes. (LEA Administrator)

Data to Evaluate Programs and Instructional Effectiveness

Respondents mentioned a need for information that can be used by teachers to evaluate their own effectiveness; by sites to determine professional learning needs; and by schools and LEAs to evaluate programs and how well they are doing in educating significant subgroups of students. Table D-10 displays the number and percent of respondents within each role who mentioned the need for data that can be used to evaluate programs and instruction in their responses to question 3.

Table D-10. Data for Program and Instructional Evaluation

Role	Number of Respondents	Number Commenting	Percent
K–8 Teachers	361	4	1
9–12 Teachers	203	4	2
Site Administrators	199	10	5
District/County Office of Education Administrators	349	15	4
Professional Organizations/Other	96	3	3
Parents	31	1	3
Community Members	17	2	12

Formative and Interim Achievement Information

Respondents indicated the need for interim assessment information about how student achievement is progressing during the year and formative information that can be used to more frequently monitor learning and guide instruction. This included information on students' academic standing when they begin the year and their standing at the end of the year (i.e., pretest and posttest). If formative and interim assessments are provided through SBAC, the state should provide guidance and support, if possible, to ensure access for all LEAs. In addition, any

formative or interim tools would need to focus on essential standards and learning progressions. Table D-11 displays the number and percent of respondents within each role who mentioned the need for formative and interim data about student achievement in their responses to question 3.

Table D-11. Formative and Interim Data

Role	Number of Respondents	Number Commenting	Percent
K–8 Teachers	361	38	11
9–12 Teachers	203	15	7
Site Administrators	199	26	13
District/County Office of Education Administrators	349	40	11
Professional Organizations/Other	96	8	8
Parents	31	2	6
Community Members	17	0	–

The following are quotes from the responses that exemplify this category of responses to question 3:

> *Ideally, the assessments should help us improve the learning of students. (LEA Administrator)*

> *Let's put assessments back into the classroom to help teachers inform instruction and to differentiate for their students. Spend the $$ on bringing in the "testing experts" to collaborate with the "teaching experts" to determine a measurement system that will improve instruction, student learning, and student achievement while driving professional development efforts for staff (teachers, aides, administrators, district leader . . .) (LEA Administrator)*

Statewide Data Information System

Respondents called for a system that will allows LEAs to readily obtain testing data and other related information on all student, including those with high mobility. Table D-12 displays the number and percent of respondents within each role who mentioned the need for a statewide data system in their responses to question 3.

Table D-12. Statewide Data System

Role	Number of Respondents	Number Commenting	Percent
K–8 Teachers	361	1	0
9–12 Teachers	203	1	0
Site Administrators	199	2	1
District/County Office of Education Administrators	349	3	1
Professional Organizations/Other	96	1	1
Parents	31	0	–
Community Members	17	0	–

The following is a quote from a response that exemplifies this category of responses to question 3:

> *Once a student has entered the public school system, their data should be available to any school that has enrolled this student as well as available follow up to future school enrollment (transfer/college, etc.). (Site Administrator)*

Authentic and Fair to All Students, Particularly English Learners

Respondents commented the need to ensure that all students, regardless of race or background, can be successful on the tests and understand what is expected of them. Respondents addressed the need for test questions to be worded as simply as possible so that a subject test (e.g., science) does not become a reading comprehension test as well for English learners. Table D-13 on page 110 displays the number and percent of respondents within each role who mentioned the need for assessments that are authentic and fair to all students in their responses to question 3.

Table D-13. Authentic and Fair Testing

Role	Number of Respondents	Number Commenting	Percent
K–8 Teachers	361	7	2
9–12 Teachers	203	4	2
Site Administrators	199	2	1
District/County Office of Education Administrators	349	3	1
Professional Organizations/Other	96	3	3
Parents	31	0	–
Community Members	17	0	–

The following are quotes from the responses that exemplify this category of responses to question 3:

> *Authentic information will include the students' academic achievement in their primary language as well as their progress in English, once they have gained enough language skills in order to take a test in English and make it meaningful. (K–8 Teacher)*
>
> *The questions need to be authentic and worded in such a way that all students understand how to answer correctly. (K–8 Teacher)*
>
> *The assessments need to be matched to the language of instruction, including assessments in the students' primary language. (LEA Administrator)*
>
> *Growth indicators that are sensitive to first and second language development that take in to account the years in US schools, type of services provided and English proficiency level. (Professional Organization)*

Student Motivation

Respondents indicated a need to link test results to a purpose that encourages students, particularly secondary students, to do their best on the test. Respondents wanted to ensure that secondary assessments are personally meaningful to high school students. Suggested incentives included linking test results to academic grades, class placement, and college admissions. Table D-14 displays the number and percent of respondents within each role who mentioned the need for assessments that are authentic and fair to all students in their responses to question 3.

Table D-14. Student Motivation

Role	Number of Respondents	Number Commenting	Percent
K–8 Teachers	361	1	0
9–12 Teachers	203	8	4
Site Administrators	199	1	1
District/County Office of Education Administrators	349	4	1
Professional Organizations/Other	96	2	2
Parents	31	0	–
Community Members	17	1	6

The following are quotes from the responses that exemplify this category of responses to question 3:

> *The only way to make it accurate information is to guarantee students try their best on the test. It must count for a consequence—a grade in the course and on a score on their transcript . . . (9–12 Teacher)*

> *Students must have a stake in their own testing; at present, their test results don't affect their grades, class placement, or transcripts in the least, and they are well aware of this by about fourth grade. Students MUST have a clear and significant stake in their own performance, or the results are meaningless. (9–12 Teacher)*

> *Unless the assessment system is meaningful and incentive based for our high school students, including greater articulation with higher education and career technical programs we are wasting students' time and millions of hours and test costs for very little. (Professional Organization).*

Providing Results in Plain Language for Teachers, Parents, and Students to Understand

Respondents commented on the need for reports of results that are easy, especially for parents, to understand and access. Technology was cited as being particularly helpful in making such reports accessible. In addition, the reports should include a complete description of all conditions under which the test was given, such as information about the student's proficiency in the language of the assessment, the type of assessment administered, and whether the test was given with accommodations or modifications. Table D-15 on page 112 displays the number and percent of respondents within each role who mentioned the need for assessment results that are clear and complete in their responses to question 3.

Table D-15. Clear and Complete Reports

Role	Number of Respondents	Number Commenting	Percent
K–8 Teachers	361	3	1
9–12 Teachers	203	3	1
Site Administrators	199	2	1
District/County Office of Education Administrators	349	12	3
Professional Organizations/Other	96	2	2
Parents	31	2	6
Community Members	17	1	6

The following are quotes from the responses that exemplify this category of responses to question 3:

> *A concise report should be available for parents that includes steps they can take, day to day, to support their child's learning. (K–8 Teacher)*
>
> *Both online and hard copies of pictorial data such as graphs, bar charts and trends would be very helpful. Bottom line, easier, user-friendlier, standards-based reports. (LEA Administrator)*
>
> *It would be great if we could get simple, 1–2 page reports that give us total and disaggregated student data, district total and site data, overall and per standard data, and item type data. (LEA Administrator)*
>
> *The results never seem to make it to the teachers, who might be able to use it, and parents are given little guidance in how to help their students improve in areas of weakness. (Parent)*

Data from Multiple Measures

Respondents indicated that statewide assessments should not be the only indicator of student, teacher, or school achievement. Other indicators could be attendance, student involvement in leadership development, primary language of students, high school graduation rates, technology skills of teachers and students, teacher turnover rates, participation in interventions, language level, time spent in current district and school, a–g completion rates, and physical fitness test results. Table D-16 displays the number and percentage of respondents within each role who mentioned the need for multiple measures in their responses to question 3.

Table D-16. Data from Multiple Measures

Role	Number of Respondents	Number Commenting	Percent
K–8 Teachers	361	5	1
9–12 Teachers	203	6	3
Site Administrators	199	4	2
District/County Office of Education Administrators	349	7	2
Professional Organizations/Other	96	2	2
Parents	31	0	–
Community Members	17	1	6

Results for Question 4—Which content would you like to see assessed and at which grade levels (Kindergarten and Grades One through Eight)?

The responses to question 4 are organized into Tables D-17 through D-25 on pages 114 through 118, one for kindergarten and grades one through eight. The percentages were calculated by dividing the number selecting each grade and content by the total number of respondents for each role that did not skip any part of question 4. For example, Table D-17 on page 114 shows that 28.0 percent of the 393 district/county office of education administrators who responded indicated they would like to see ELA assessed for kindergarten.

Table D-17. Kindergarten: Percentages of Respondents by Role

Role	ELA	Mathematics	Science	History–Social Science
K–8 Teachers (n = 441)	21.8	20.0	5.0	4.5
9–12 Teachers (n = 214)	26.6	20.1	9.3	7.0
Site Administrators (n = 235)	23.0	20.9	3.8	1.7
District/County Office of Education Administrators (n = 393)	28.0	25.4	2.8	2.5
Professional Organizations/ Other (n = 101)	28.7	25.7	9.9	5.9
Parents (n = 37)	29.7	24.3	10.8	8.1
Community Members (n = 24)	20.8	25.0	12.5	16.7

Table D-18. Grade One: Percentages of Respondents by Role

Role	ELA	Mathematics	Science	History–Social Science
K–8 Teachers (n = 441)	32.0	33.3	8.2	6.3
9–12 Teachers (n = 214)	34.6	31.3	13.6	10.7
Site Administrators (n = 235)	30.1	28.1	5.1	3.0
District/County Office of Education Administrators (n = 393)	34.4	33.6	4.8	4.1
Professional Organizations/ Other (n = 101)	34.7	34.7	14.9	7.9
Parents (n = 37)	40.5	37.8	16.2	13.5
Community Members (n = 24)	29.2	29.2	16.7	12.5

Table D-19. Grade Two: Percentages of Respondents by Role

Role	ELA	Mathematics	Science	History–Social Science
K–8 Teachers (n = 441)	44.7	42.9	14.3	10.7
9–12 Teachers (n = 214)	49.5	45.8	22.9	18.7
Site Administrators (n = 235)	48.9	49.4	10.6	6.0
District/County Office of Education Administrators (n = 393)	51.1	50.4	9.7	6.9
Professional Organizations/ Other (n = 101)	48.5	48.5	22.8	17.8
Parents (n = 37)	45.9	45.9	21.6	18.9
Community Members (n = 24)	50.0	58.3	29.2	33.3

Table D-20. Grade Three: Percentages of Respondents by Role

Role	ELA	Mathematics	Science	History–Social Science
K–8 Teachers (n = 441)	76.4	77.6	29.3	21.3
9–12 Teachers (n = 214)	61.7	62.6	35.5	30.4
Site Administrators (n = 235)	83.0	81.3	22.6	17.4
District/County Office of Education Administrators (n = 393)	93.6	93.4	28.8	19.1
Professional Organizations/ Other (n = 101)	77.2	75.2	44.6	32.7
Parents (n = 37)	83.8	86.5	40.5	29.7
Community Members (n = 24)	75.0	79.2	50.0	37.5

Table D-21. Grade Four: Percentages of Respondents by Role

Role	ELA	Mathematics	Science	History–Social Science
K–8 Teachers (n = 441)	80.7	80.0	43.5	42.0
9–12 Teachers (n = 214)	62.1	63.1	43.5	40.7
Site Administrators (n = 235)	81.3	80.4	37.9	31.5
District/County Office of Education Administrators (n = 393)	89.3	89.1	39.9	93.1
Professional Organizations/ Other (n = 101)	69.3	70.3	57.4	52.5
Parents (n = 37)	73.0	70.3	40.5	40.5
Community Members (n = 24)	66.7	75.0	54.2	62.5

Table D-22. Grade Five: Percentages of Respondents by Role

Role	ELA	Mathematics	Science	History–Social Science
K–8 Teachers (n = 441)	83.7	84.4	60.1	50.8
9–12 Teachers (n = 214)	60.7	61.7	50.0	47.7
Site Administrators (n = 235)	87.2	88.9	60.0	46.4
District/County Office of Education Administrators (n = 393)	93.1	93.9	64.4	49.1
Professional Organizations/ Other (n = 101)	75.2	77.2	65.3	57.4
Parents (n = 37)	81.1	86.5	62.2	51.4
Community Members (n = 24)	70.8	79.2	70.8	66.7

Table D-23. Grade Six: Percentages of Respondents by Role

Role	ELA	Mathematics	Science	History–Social Science
K–8 Teachers (n = 441)	82.8	82.3	56.2	56.2
9–12 Teachers (n = 214)	63.1	62.6	50.5	50.9
Site Administrators (n = 235)	84.7	82.6	54.0	50.6
District/County Office of Education Administrators (n = 393)	90.6	90.1	48.6	51.9
Professional Organizations/ Other (n = 101)	71.3	73.3	61.4	53.5
Parents (n = 37)	81.1	78.4	62.2	54.1
Community Members (n = 24)	75.0	83.3	58.3	66.7

Table D-24. Grade Seven: Percentages of Respondents by Role

Role	ELA	Mathematics	Science	History–Social Science
K–8 Teachers (n = 441)	80.7	82.1	62.1	57.6
9–12 Teachers (n = 214)	56.5	58.4	53.7	48.6
Site Administrators (n = 235)	83.0	83.0	60.0	51.9
District/County Office of Education Administrators (n = 393)	89.3	90.1	57.3	49.5
Professional Organizations/ Other (n = 101)	72.3	73.3	57.4	47.5
Parents (n = 37)	78.4	81.1	56.8	54.1
Community Members (n = 24)	66.7	75.0	75.0	62.5

Table D-25. Grade Eight: Percentages of Respondents by Role

Role	ELA	Mathematics	Science	History–Social Science
K–8 Teachers (n = 441)	84.8	85.9	71.4	72.1
9–12 Teachers (n = 214)	84.6	89.3	78.5	74.3
Site Administrators (n = 235)	87.2	84.3	71.5	71.1
District/County Office of Education Administrators (n = 393)	90.8	91.3	74.0	74.8
Professional Organizations/ Other (n = 101)	86.1	87.1	82.2	80.2
Parents (n = 37)	86.5	83.8	67.6	64.9
Community Members (n = 24)	83.3	95.8	79.2	87.5

Results for Question 5—Which content would you like to see assessed and at which grade levels (Grades Nine through Twelve)?

The responses to question 5 are organized into Tables D-26 through D-29 on pages 119 through 120, one each for nine through twelve. As with question 4, percentages were calculated by dividing the number selecting each grade and content by the total number of respondents for each role who did not skip any part of question 5.

Table D-26. Grade Nine: Percentages of Respondents by Role

Role	ELA	Mathematics	Science	History–Social Science
K–8 Teachers (n = 379)	86.3	86.0	66.8	57.3
9–12 Teachers (n = 232)	65.9	69.4	53.9	40.9
Site Administrators (n = 204)	86.8	87.7	64.7	52.9
District/County Office of Education Administrators (n = 382)	85.1	84.8	62.0	50.0
Professional Organizations/ Other (n = 103)	69.9	70.9	56.3	47.6
Parents (n = 38)	84.2	84.2	65.8	55.3
Community Members (n = 22)	72.7	72.7	77.3	68.2

Table D-27. Grade Ten: Percentages of Respondents by Role

Role	ELA	Mathematics	Science	History–Social Science
K–8 Teachers (n = 379)	85.2	86.3	68.3	66.2
9–12 Teachers (n = 232)	74.6	76.7	68.1	61.1
Site Administrators (n = 204)	83.8	83.3	69.1	64.2
District/County Office of Education Administrators (n = 382)	84.6	83.2	72.8	67.3
Professional Organizations/ Other (n = 103)	74.8	77.7	68.0	58.3
Parents (n = 38)	81.6	86.8	63.2	63.2
Community Members (n = 22)	68.2	77.3	68.2	63.6

Table D-28. Grade Eleven: Percentages of Respondents by Role

Role	ELA	Mathematics	Science	History–Social Science
K–8 Teachers (n = 379)	85.0	84.4	72.3	68.1
9–12 Teachers (n = 232)	73.7	77.2	67.7	70.3
Site Administrators (n = 204)	90.7	91.7	75.5	71.1
District/County Office of Education Administrators (n = 382)	89.3	87.4	70.4	73.8
Professional Organizations/ Other (n = 103)	75.7	76.7	69.9	67.0
Parents (n = 38)	81.6	81.6	63.2	60.5
Community Members (n = 22)	90.0	90.0	95.5	95.5

Table D-29. Grade Twelve: Percentages of Respondents by Role

Role	ELA	Mathematics	Science	History–Social Science
K–8 Teachers (n = 379)	69.4	66.8	51.7	54.9
9–12 Teachers (n = 232)	59.5	56.9	47.0	48.7
Site Administrators (n = 204)	59.3	54.9	44.6	43.6
District/County Office of Education Administrators (n = 382)	52.6	49.2	39.3	41.6
Professional Organizations/ Other (n = 103)	56.3	55.3	47.6	43.7
Parents (n = 38)	60.5	63.2	52.6	50.0
Community Members (n = 22)	54.5	63.6	50.0	54.5

Results for Question 6—How important is it that diagnostic, interim, formative, and summative assessments are included in the statewide student assessment system?

The responses to question 6 are organized in Table D-30. Respondents rated each type of assessment (i.e., diagnostic, interim, formative, and summative) as "Very Important," "Important," "Somewhat Important," "Somewhat Unimportant," and "Not Important." Respondents were provided concise and clear definitions for each assessment type. The percentages in Table D-30 were calculated by combining the percentages of respondents by role who rated each particular type of assessment as important or very important.

Table D-30. Percentages of Respondents Who Rated Assessment Type as Important or Very Important

Role	Diagnostic	Interim	Formative	Summative
K–8 Teachers (n = 457)	83.6	56.5	77.6	75.7
9–12 Teachers (n = 250)	79.8	52.1	70.6	71.4
Site Administrators (n = 251)	90.7	74.6	84.0	88.8
District/County Office of Education Administrators (n = 409)	87.2	74.4	87.7	88.3
Professional Organizations/ Other (n = 109)	85.2	55.1	88.1	79.4
Parents (n = 43)	83.7	61.0	75.6	69.8
Community Members (n = 25)	84.0	40.0	80.0	80.0

Results for Question 7—What are the most important factors that should be considered (including accommodations and modifications) to ensure assessments are valid for English learners?

The responses to question 7 are organized in Table D-31 on page 122. Respondents were allowed to mark any or all of the six factors that applied, from their perspective. The following six factors were provided:

1. Clear guidelines are provided about English learner eligibility for accommodations and modifications.
2. Primary language assessments are available for eligible English learners.
3. Teachers regularly use English learner assessment accommodations and modifications in the classroom.
4. English learners are provided with the opportunity to learn with rigorous high-quality instruction.
5. Professional learning is available about teaching English learners and providing appropriate accommodations and modifications.
6. A research-based rationale supports the selection of curriculum, teaching practices, and use of accommodations and modifications for English learners.

Table D-31. Valid Assessments for English Learners: Percentages of Respondents by Factor

(See the correlating number and description of each factor, listed above.)

Role	1	2	3	4	5	6
K–8 Teachers (n = 453)	70.4	58.3	57.4	71.5	63.4	62.0
9–12 Teachers (n = 247)	67.6	49.4	48.2	68.0	62.4	57.5
Site Administrators (n = 250)	77.2	50.4	62.0	80.4	73.6	68.8
District/County Office of Education Administrators (n = 409)	81.2	52.3	72.6	81.9	76.5	74.8
Professional Organizations/ Other (n = 107)	78.5	67.3	68.2	79.4	81.3	75.7
Parents (n = 38)	55.3	47.4	39.5	68.4	57.9	65.8
Community Members (n = 25)	76.0	64.0	52.0	88.0	84.0	64.0

Respondents also were allowed to add factors they considered important to the validity of assessments for English learners. The comments received in response to this open-ended question are discussed in the five subsections that follow, which are organized by respondents' roles.

K–8 Teachers

In this group, 101 respondents provided additional comments for question 7. The comments from K–8 teachers were mostly related to the practice of requiring students who did not have enough English proficiency to take the state academic tests. The consensus was that for many English learners, who are at the early and developing stages of English, the tests of academic content (e.g., California Standards Tests [CSTs]), which are administered in English, are tests of English proficiency rather than of academic knowledge. Furthermore, the decision about when a student has enough English proficiency to take the academic tests is one that teachers ought to make in consultation with parents. Until the students have achieved a certain level of English proficiency, the academic tests could be available in the student's primary language. It was also noted that Spanish is not the only primary language for which assessments are needed.

The K–8 teachers responses included providing appropriate and carefully designed accommodations for English learners, such as home language translations of test directions, authentic bilingual versions of the assessments, bilingual glossaries, and attending to possible cultural and ethnic biases and unnecessary language complexity during the process of developing test questions. In addition, this group of respondents highlighted the importance of teacher training in the use of Specially Designed Academic Instruction in English, study skills development, and other techniques to support English learner success within mainstream classrooms; providing adequate funding to English learner programs; involving parents in helping and supporting English learners; and providing tools for more frequent assessments of English learners.

The following quotes exemplify the comments submitted by K–8 teachers:

> *ELA should be in English but other subjects should be in native language as well as English if they are not fluent in English.*
>
> *Unless tested in their native language, EL students should be exempted from standardized testing for the first three years enrolled in a California school. Their command of the language and testing conventions is often insufficient to express their true learning.*
>
> *Non-language tests must be designed to assess content, not language facility.*
>
> *Best practices for ELs are also best practices for all learners and should be embedded into all instruction. EL students shouldn't need to miss core instruction to attend separate classes.*

9–12 Teachers

In this group, 52 respondents provided additional comments. As with the K–8 teachers, the majority of the comments received from the high-school teachers addressed exempting English learners from the academic tests in English until the students have acquired a sufficient level of English proficiency and providing appropriate accommodations, such as word lists, glossaries, extended time, and translated test directions. Also mentioned were attending to the language level and cultural biases of test questions, generating valid data that can be used to evaluate English learner programs; including hands-on activities and performance tasks to motivate students; and providing primary language assessments in other languages in addition to Spanish. The following quotes exemplify the comments submitted by 9–12 teachers:

> *Exempt ELs new to the country or who are at the beginning stages of English from taking tests.*
>
> *The state should provide an allowed list of words for EL students to translate and stick to words on that list when writing the test for all non-English subject areas. For example, I teach science and having a list of words like: variables, increasing, decreasing . . . that would be used on the test as general vocabulary so that students can be familiar with these words and not have to be familiar with the extreme variety of alternate ways to describe something: factors, incrementally larger, diminishes. Using familiar words would help make these assessments true to learning.*
>
> *Change test format from multiple-choice to a product-based assessment—have students produce something (e.g., a lab, a picture book, describe how to solve a math problem, work with others on a project).*
>
> *If primary language assessments are available, I would like the possibility of having them in other languages in addition to Spanish (other languages with relatively large numbers of speakers, such as Hmong, Cantonese, Mandarin, Korean, Punjabi).*

Site Administrators

In this group, 34 respondents commented on this question. Their comments addressed providing a high-quality curriculum and systematic English-language development instruction and the need for formative tools to monitor progress in English proficiency. Overwhelmingly, however, site administrators' comments focused on not testing English learners with the English academic assessments for two or three years or until the students had achieved an appropriate level of English proficiency. The following quotes exemplify the comments submitted by site administrators:

We should not test EL students until they have learned the English language.

I do not feel that testing a first year EL student is productive beyond language development issues unless the testing is identical to the non-EL assessments and in the primary language. Otherwise it presents a very frustrating experience for the learner and provides very little useable information to the site.

District/County Office of Education Administrators

In this group, 56 respondents offered a variety of comments, with the majority centered on better preparation for teachers to differentiate instruction for all English learners (including the gifted) and struggling students in general; better tools for monitoring the progress of English learners; making primary language assessments available in multiple languages for eligible English learners in place of, not in addition to, the English content assessments; and establishing an appropriate level of English proficiency before requiring English learners be tested on the English content assessments. The following quotes exemplify the comments submitted by district/county office of education administrators:

Teachers must have professional development available to them in order to improve the quality of instruction in the classroom. These strategies would help ELs and other struggling students.

Good teaching is the same for all populations. A good background in differentiation and varied delivery of material is probably a better way to address EL issues.

Primary language assessments should be available for all students, that includes English only students and re-designated students who are receiving instruction in Spanish or other languages.

The assessments should be based on language ability so that we can see growth of content. If a child speaks very little English, he or she might have a great deal of content knowledge that is never accessed.

Professional Organizations/Other, Parents, and Community Leaders

Representatives from professional organizations, parents, and community members also provided comments consistent with much of the commentary made by respondents in other roles. These comments included the following suggestions for the state:

- Provide professional learning to teachers to show them how to better reach out to the parents of English learners.

- Allow LEAs the flexibility to identify assessments that will best serve their populations of English learners.
- Provide adequate funding to implement high-quality programs tailored to meet the needs of local English learner populations.
- Provide LEAS with translated directions and bilingual glossaries to assist English learners during testing.
- Pay close attention to the linguistic complexity of the test questions.

Results for Question 8—What are the most important factors that should be considered (including accommodations and modifications) to ensure assessments are valid for students with disabilities?

The responses to question 8 are organized into Table D-32. Respondents were allowed to mark any or all of the six factors that applied, from their perspective. The following six factors were provided:

- Clear guidelines are provided about eligibility of students with disabilities for accommodations and modifications.
- Modified assessments are available for eligible students with disabilities.
- Teachers regularly use assessment accommodations and modifications in the classroom for students with disabilities.
- Students with disabilities are provided with the opportunity to learn with appropriate and rigorous high-quality instruction.
- Professional learning is available about teaching students with disabilities and providing appropriate accommodations and modifications.
- A research-based rationale supports the selection of curriculum, teaching practices, and use of accommodations and modifications for students with disabilities.

Table D-32. Valid Assessments for Students with Disabilities: Percentages of Respondents by Factor
(See the correlating number and description of each factor, listed above.)

Role	1	2	3	4	5	6
K–8 Teachers (n = 448)	72.3	83.7	65.0	71.2	65.4	61.8
9–12 Teachers (n = 245)	73.1	74.7	58.0	63.7	62.0	58.0
Site Administrators (n = 250)	80.1	86.8	72.8	78.4	74.8	67.6
District/County Office of Education Administrators (n = 407)	85.0	84.5	76.4	80.6	76.9	72.7
Professional Organizations/ Other (n = 107)	81.3	86.0	73.8	77.6	78.5	73.8
Parents (n = 37)	70.3	73.0	59.5	70.3	81.1	81.1
Community Members (n = 26)	76.9	76.9	61.5	84.6	76.9	65.4

Respondents also were allowed to add factors they considered important to the validity of assessments for students with disabilities. The following exemplify the comments received in response to this open-ended part of question 8, organized by role.

K–8 Teachers

In this group, 78 respondents provided commentary with respect to additional factors considered important to the validity of the assessments for students with disabilities. By far, the most frequent comments were about the validity of testing students with disabilities with assessments that reflect the student's ability or functioning level, per the student's IEP rather than his or her chronological age or grade level. K–8 teachers also noted the importance of smaller class sizes for students with disabilities in order to provide the personal attention and support needed by these students; the role of parents in supporting students with disabilities and in understanding their rights to opt out of testing; and the use of reading technologies during the test administration to ensure content assessments focused on a single subject. The following quotes exemplify the comments submitted by K–8 teachers:

> *Tests should reflect the level the student is functioning at, not simply the age/ grade.*

Testing should be based on student ability, not chronological age.

Smaller class sizes would allow the teacher to focus on more of the individual needs.

9–12 Teachers

In this group, 38 respondents provided comments about factors important to the validity of assessments for students with disabilities. Those factors touched on a broad range of topics, including expanding the allowable accommodations and modifications to include calculators; ensuring that the determination of assessments is based on individual student needs; providing clear guidelines, including for students who have a combination of considerations, such as English learners who also are students with disabilities; and expanding the use of technology to provide accommodations such as modifying fonts and reading items aloud, as needed.

Site Administrators

In this group, 27 respondents wrote comments for question 8. Generally, the comments centered on providing assessments for students with disabilities that are based on the students' IEP goals and ability levels instead of grade-level standards, the importance of assessing for growth, providing students with the appropriate modifications based on need, and properly funding programs for students with disabilities.

District/County Office of Education Administrators

In this group, 41 respondents provided comments on factors affecting the validity of assessments for students with disabilities. Their comments echoed those shared by other respondents, particularly with respect to following IEP goals in determining which tests and accommodations or modifications to administer to students with disabilities. This quote exemplified this sentiment in the comments received:

The IEP and functional levels of students should be the guide on what and how testing occurs.

LEA administrators also reiterated the importance of aligning curriculum and assessments, providing appropriate funding for programs and support for teachers, and acknowledging the value of using formative assessments for all students with disabilities to monitor progress toward their IEP goals.

Other Respondents

Among other respondents, 18 representatives from professional organizations, 6 parents, and 5 community members also provided commentary on factors affecting the validity of assessments for students with disabilities. Their comments are reflective of the thoughts and opinions already described under the role categories above.

Results for Question 9—What are the most important factors that should be considered (including accommodations and modifications) to ensure assessments are valid for other significant subgroups? Identify the factor(s) and subgroup(s).

This was presented as an open-ended question. Table D-33 displays the number and percent of respondents within each role (e.g., 42.8 percent of the K–8 teachers) who provided commentary in question 9.

Table D-33. Valid Assessments for Significant Subgroups: Percent of Respondents Giving Comments Percent of Respondents Giving Comments

Role	Number of Respondents	Number Commenting	Percent
K–8 Teachers	477	204	43
9–12 Teachers	261	122	47
Site Administrators	258	102	40
District/County Office of Education Administrators	439	170	39
Professional Organizations/ Other	113	53	47
Parents	49	13	27
Community Members	37	9	24

Less than half of the respondents for each role provided comments in response to question 9. And about 30 percent of the commentary submitted for question 9 did not apply to this question, as respondents submitted comments that dealt with school or LEA accountability issues, were unclear, repeated comments previously shared for question 7 (English learners) or question 8 (students with disabilities), or were related to other factors, such as a respondent not believing in the concept of a subgroup.

The following are the significant subgroups identified in response to question 9, listed in order from the most to the least frequently mentioned:

- Socioeconomically disadvantaged students, including transient students, students with high mobility, students with attendance issues because of poverty and homelessness, and students from rural areas
- High-achieving and gifted and talented students
- At-risk students, including independent study students, students with poor attendance, and students at risk of dropping out of school
- Other subgroups, including African American students, Latino students, standard English learners, Native Americans, home-schooled students, and students who represent multiple subgroups

The factors listed below are in order from the most to the least frequently mentioned. They emerged from the themes coded in the responses and are provided for all roles combined.

Factor: Assessments and Questions Are Carefully Designed

Across all roles, about 25 percent of the comments about the validity of assessments for the subgroups identified were regarding the designing of assessments and questions that are appropriately rigorous for all students, especially those who perform above and below grade level. The design of the assessments needs to consider the background knowledge and culture of student subgroups as well as the different ethnic and religious backgrounds and sensitivities. Audio support should be considered for the administration of assessments to ensure that in subjects other than ELA, reading is not a barrier to performance on the assessment. Consideration also should be given to portfolios, short answer questions, projects, and performance-based tasks in order to allow a variety of ways for students to demonstrate their knowledge. A key theme in the commentary provided was that assessments and tasks need to be designed to maximize student access to the tests.

One K–8 teacher eloquently described the barriers experienced by their socioeconomically disadvantaged students:

> *As a Title I school, a significant population that should be considered for modifications and accommodations are our children of poverty. At our school site we recognize the needs of our Title I students by providing parent-student CST assessment informational events, newsletters with "tips" on how to prepare their student for testing, and an incentive program to motivate our students to achieve. Also at our school site, all students are served*

a nutritional breakfast by the Parents' Club each morning prior to testing. However, our Title I students have very limited experiences outside our small, rural town. Thus, the students encounter difficulties making connections to the text, understanding specific vocabulary (such as a bus token), and providing reasons and [revealing] understanding to a problem that they would have limited exposure to due to their impoverished living conditions. As a teacher, I understand that is my responsibility to expand our students' broad knowledge, provide them with strategies that enable them to connect to new experiences, and encourage them to reason and problem solve. Yet, for a Title I student to achieve as well on the CST as an affluent student, the barriers to learning must be eliminated, or all text must be without a personal connection. An example of an accommodating text would be science fiction, which is outside all students' frame of reference, or historical fiction, which insists on all students creating a connection to something they have learned in the classroom. By modifying the CST to [reflect] classroom learning and not to outside experiences, all students are assessed on what they have been taught, and not what they have experienced outside of the classroom.

Factor: Students Receive High-Quality Curriculum and Instruction

Approximately ten percent of respondents noted the importance of high-quality curriculum and instruction to the validity of assessment results for all subgroups. The comments called for ensuring that all students have access to a high-quality curriculum that prepares them to attain the goals established by the CCSS. These comments also noted that the strong alignment that should exist between assessments, curriculum, and instruction, and instruction that is responsive to individual needs is key to success on the assessments and in learning the content of the standards. High quality also means a broad curriculum, including science and history–social science and a focus on creativity and critical thinking; reduced class sizes; time for collaboration; and teachers who are well versed in providing appropriate instructional support and strategic teaching skills for a range of students.

Factor: Clear and Consistent Guidelines

Close to ten percent of respondents also commented on the need to have clear and consistent guidelines for the variations, accommodations, and modifications. These guidelines are needed to ensure that accommodations and modifications are based on the needs of the students and are consistent with any documented plan for the student. They also should clearly address eligibility criteria. Similarly, clear and consistent guidelines should be provided for the test administration, including documentation for accommodations and modifications; opportunities for makeup tests; testing students new to the school or country; and handling of parent waiver requests. A factor also frequently mentioned in relation to providing clear and consistent guidelines was ensuring that test administrators and teachers

are appropriately trained and understand how to interpret and implement the guidelines and use accommodations and modifications as tools to support classroom instruction and assessments.

Factor: Professional Learning for Teachers and Administrators

Approximately five percent of respondents observed that in order to provide high-quality instruction, teachers need access to professional learning in designing lessons that incorporate appropriate instructional support, literacy strategies, critical thinking skills, collaboration, communication, creativity, and critical thinking. Further, teachers need professional learning to be able to address the varied backgrounds and academic levels of students in the classrooms. Research-based professional learning for helping teachers and administrators close the achievement gap also should be available.

Factor: Measuring Individual Student Growth

Close to five percent of respondents indicated that assessments are needed just for measuring and monitoring growth toward clearly identified targets for learning (i.e., standards), including the administration of pretests and posttests and using interim or progress-monitoring tools. It was mentioned that gifted students, in particular, may know the material before it is studied in the classroom. Therefore, a pretest may help identify a student who "tests out" at the start of a unit so accommodations can be made to provide that student with an alternative curriculum. One administrator's comments succinctly summed up the focus of the comments for this factor: "All students can learn, so the assessments should measure growth."

A number of other factors were coded in the respondents' comments, but with less frequency than the factors described above. These factors included extending the allowable testing times; providing shorter and more frequent testing segments during state assessments; using computer-adaptive technology to deliver assessments; allowing the use of calculators for all students; gathering more frequent information via diagnostic and formative tools, especially to determine reading levels and proper placement of students in content assessments; ensuring that the purpose of any assessment is clearly stated and followed; using disaggregation tools to examine which strategies have the greatest impact on subgroups; providing the research-based rationales for accommodations and modifications; sharing frequent feedback with students and parents; using texts and resources that are meaningful and motivating to students; and actively communicating with and involving parents and families in supporting their students' successes.

Results for Question 10—How should the results from the future assessment system be used?

Respondents were allowed to mark any or all of the seven options that applied, from their perspective. The following seven options were provided:

1. Feedback to students, parents, or teachers
2. Public information on quality of schools or LEAs
3. Rewards/awards for students or schools
4. Accountability for schools
5. Accountability for students (e.g., classroom academic grades)
6. Accountability for teachers
7. Accountability for administrators

Table D-34 displays the percentages of respondents marking the options listed above.

Table D-34. Use of Results from Future Assessment System: Percentages of Respondents by Option
(See the correlating number and description of each factor above.)

Role	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
K–8 Teachers (n = 427)	95.6	35.8	20.8	40.5	52.7	30.0	30.4
9–12 Teachers (n = 242)	93.0	41.3	30.6	40.1	69.8	31.4	26.9
Site Administrators (n = 240)	98.8	54.2	32.9	65.4	61.3	59.2	55.0
District/County Office of Education Administrators (n = 397)	97.7	61.2	27.5	71.5	60.5	62.2	54.9
Professional Organizations/Other (n = 106)	95.3	56.6	23.6	54.7	47.2	47.2	45.3
Parents (n = 41)	92.7	56.1	14.6	53.7	41.5	48.8	51.2
Community Members (n = 26)	100.0	65.4	11.5	69.2	50.0	50.0	53.9

Respondents also were allowed to add ways in which results from the reauthorized statewide student assessment system should be used. The following exemplify the comments received in response to this open-ended question. These are not organized by role, for the suggestions about additional ways in which the results from the future assessment system should be used were very consistent across the different roles.

Approximately 30 percent of respondents provided additional comments. Of the comments submitted, the majority included comments that repeated the options provided or did not explicitly include additional ways to use the results. Rather, many comments articulated some hesitations about the reliability and validity of the results from the current assessment system; reiterated the importance of turning around assessment results in a timely manner for teachers to use to inform and adjust instruction; and expressed concerns with the fairness of elements in the current accountability systems (e.g., similar school rankings) and offered suggestions for improvements (e.g., should consider different school and LEA demographics).

In these additional comments, there were multiple references to expanding accountability to include parents and families and accountability for administrators, including site-level as well as LEA-level administrators. Student accountability, however, was commented on more than any other accountability use. Respondents felt students need to be motivated to perform well on statewide assessments in order for the results to reflect a more accurate indication of what students have learned. Further, respondents suggested that approaches to motivate students should focus on incentives, such as college grants or scholarships, course credits or admission points, and certificates of achievement.

Generally, respondents supported the notion of holding teachers and administrators accountable, but did so provided that the focus be placed on student growth and value added using quality pre- and post-assessments embedded in the system.

One LEA administrator's comment reflects this point:

> *I agree that the assessment system should be used to determine accountability for teachers and administrators, but only if it focuses on the growth model. Teachers and administrators should not feel pressured by assessments to play a "numbers" game, where instructional attention is primarily given to making a score for an evaluation. Rather, the assessment should reflect good, first teaching, and give a clear measure of how improvements can be made while taking into consideration where the student started out.*

In addition, respondents highlighted the need for an accountability system to factor in multiple measures (e.g., demographics, attendance, involvement in professional learning, parent participation, utilization of research-based practices); not using achievement results for any punitive purposes; using results for the purposes intended by the assessments; shifting the focus to local testing and accountability; and using results to determine professional learning needs, funding, and allocation of resources (i.e., ensuring support to the neediest schools).

The comment submitted by one professional organization captures the essence of the comments submitted in response to question 10:

> *While we support all of the [options] above, [organization name] does not support continuing a punitive top down use of aggregate date to punish schools from the state level or by researchers who do not have an understanding or complete picture of the school climate. Even with SBAC there will always be indicators of quality and success such as student engagement that cannot be measured on an index such as the API at the state level. We support minimal data sent to the state for basic accountability purposes with the majority of the data used locally to inform instruction. The assessment data can be used locally as one measure of meeting student achievement goals and standards but should never be the sole indicator.*

Results for Question 11—Additional comments about the reauthorization of the California assessment system.

Perhaps because question 11 was the last question in the survey, about 20 percent of respondents repeated comments shared in response to previous questions, such as ensuring the appropriate reading level for the test items; including items are that are culturally relevant; providing alternate or modified assessments, including primary language assessments; and having clear guidelines for accommodations and modifications. For some of the respondents, comments addressed strategies or activities that were not likely to be feasible, such as California opting out of No Child Left Behind, abolishing all state-mandated testing, or were critical of the structure and format of the survey. Also mentioned in the comments were restoring the Golden State Exams and California Learning Assessment System tests and, in a few cases, the comments acknowledged the enormous challenges faced by the state to develop an assessment system that works for the needs of all stakeholders.

Consider Reductions to the Academic Testing Program

Clearly, for all of those who responded in this category, too much testing occurs under the current program. Suggestions in the responses to this category included not testing students in kindergarten, grade one, and/or grade two, except with the possibility of diagnostic assessments administered locally; using results from selected CSTs or SBAC to replace the California High School Exit Examination (CAHSEE); testing every two or three years instead of yearly; testing at selected grade levels instead of all grades; not testing algebra in grade eight; alternating subjects from year to year; and reducing the length of the tests. Respondents noted that tests should be better balanced across grade levels and could serve multiple purposes; therefore, using existing academic assessments in place of the CAHSEE was a reasonable and laudable goal. As mentioned more explicitly in the next category (Provide Meaningful Results and Consequences), this would also motivate high school students to do better on the academic tests. Under the current testing system, it was noted, there was too much stress being placed on students, teachers, and administrators. Reducing testing would relieve this stress and save money. Other respondents suggested shifting the time and money saved to learning and instruction.

Table D-35 displays the number and percent within each role (e.g., 16 percent of the K–8 teachers who provided comments) that mentioned reductions and balance to the testing program in their responses to question 11.

Table D-35. Reduce Testing Program

Role	Number of Respondents	Number Commenting	Percent
K–8 Teachers	173	27	16
9–12 Teachers	112	18	16
Site Administrators	69	10	14
District/County Office of Education Administrators	144	31	22
Professional Organizations/ Other	54	8	15
Parents	21	2	10
Community Members	8	1	13

The following are quotes from the responses that exemplify this category of responses to question 11:

> *We need to make the statewide assessment meaningful for high school students, such as making this also the high school exit exam. One test for two purposes: Proposal - Students that score proficient in ELA and math two times (between 9th – 11th grades) pass the exit exam. If not, they will give the exam two additional times in 12th grade to meet proficiency (like the current exit exam) and one more time in July after the school year ends. Right now the California Standards Tests (CSTs) means nothing to high school kids who take Advanced Placement (AP) tests, the CAHSEE, SAT and ACT. This will truly show us how much our students know. (District/County Office of Education Administrator)*
>
> *The 'testing season' has become overwhelming for a high school like mine. (Professional Organization/Other)*

Provide Meaningful Results and Consequences

Often, participants responded in a manner that indicated they viewed the consequences of the testing program as comparable to those of the accountability system. But generally, for those who responded in this category, it was important that the results from academic testing are used to motivate, help, and inform and not for punitive purposes. Meaningful consequences, especially for high school students, included using the results as part of college admissions, to award scholarships, or to allocate tuition discounts. Another clear message was not using the results for teacher evaluation. In terms of accountability, respondents noted that some of the penalties have resulted in questionable practices such as student placement in courses for which they are not prepared. Also noted was doing away with the similar schools list, as it encourages scores to be used outside of the context and realities of schools. Table D-36 on page 138 displays the number and percent of respondents within each role who mentioned providing meaningful results and consequences in their responses to question 11.

Table D-36. Provide Meaningful Consequences

Role	Number of Respondents	Number Commenting	Percent
K–8 Teachers	173	14	8
9–12 Teachers	112	23	21
Site Administrators	69	14	20
District/County Office of Education Administrators	144	20	14
Professional Organizations/ Other	54	6	11
Parents	21	5	24
Community Members	8	0	–

The following are quotes from the responses that exemplify this category of responses to question 11:

> *Let's make it meaningful. It has to be important to students, not just adults. It needs to help us help students and be a source of information to guide our practice. (District/County Office of Education Administrator)*
>
> *Tests should be tailored to indicating the academic needs of individual students, and instruction and curriculum should result that helps increase student learning. (9–12 Teacher)*
>
> *Results really need to be used to help guide future instruction, not for rewards/ penalties. (Parent)*
>
> *Administrators and teachers need to be able to focus on using the results for planning and delivering appropriate instruction. When results are used to reward and sanction, the focus changes to schools and districts "making it" and not seeing the assessment data as useful as part of the instructional cycle. (Professional Organization)*

Coordinate and Align with Other Initiatives

Respondents commented on the need for California to not duplicate the assessment efforts already under way with SBAC; to align any California-developed assessments with the Core Standards; to adopt the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS); and to be sure to include academic subjects such as science and history–social science in the state testing program so they are not marginalized in educational programs. Also mentioned were the need to include

testing for grades nine and ten; include the SBAC interim assessment piece; and consider additional assessments that integrate such subjects as science and history–social science into literacy and mathematics assessments. Respondents were explicit about not wanting to see a dual assessment system, even for a short period of time; not adding standards beyond the Core Standards; and eliminating assessments that span multiple grades. Table D-37 displays the number and percent of respondents within each role who mentioned coordinating and aligning with other initiatives in their responses to question 11.

Table D-37. Coordinate with Other Initiatives

Role	Number of Respondents	Number Commenting	Percent
K–8 Teachers	173	28	16
9–12 Teachers	112	8	7
Site Administrators	69	6	9
District/County Office of Education Administrators	144	24	17
Professional Organizations/ Other	54	9	17
Parents	21	2	10
Community Members	8	1	13

The following are quotes from the responses that exemplify this category of responses to question 11:

> *The assessment system should completely align with the Common Core Standards. We should NOT have to give state tests in addition to the required federal exams. (District/County Office of Education Administrator)*

> *Please remember that the students of our classrooms today will be the leaders and voters of tomorrow, if they don't learn history and social sciences they will not be able to learn from our mistakes. (K–8 Teacher)*

Assess Higher-Order Thinking through Performance Assessments

This category emerged earlier in response to question 3. Respondents commented on the need to include more performance assessments, project-based assessments, and portfolios that allow students to demonstrate critical thinking, problem solving, collaboration, and communication skills in a more realistic and complete manner. Several respondents mentioned that for students to become successful in the 21st century, they will need to learn how to apply

their knowledge to the task at hand. Multiple-choice assessments do not work as well to get at these applications or other higher-order skills. In addition, with using these types of assessments, it is more likely that we will see comparable changes in classroom practice. Table D-38 displays the number and percent of respondents within each role who mentioned assessing higher-order thinking in their responses to question 11.

Table D-38. Assess Higher-Order Thinking

Role	Number of Respondents	Number Commenting	Percent
K–8 Teachers	173	28	16
9–12 Teachers	112	16	14
Site Administrators	69	6	9
District/County Office of Education Administrators	144	12	8
Professional Organizations/ Other	54	10	19
Parents	21	3	14
Community Members	8	1	13

The following are quotes from the responses that exemplify this category of responses to question 11:

> *I teach science, and I have seen a shift in students' attitudes and abilities since mandatory testing was implemented. My students, today, are great test takers. But, they often lack creativity and problem-solving skills while they are working in the lab. I would like to see the students involved in less testing and more learning from firsthand experiences. (K–8 Teacher)*

> *All testing should mimic learning. The administration of a statewide test should be the same as an interval test from the publisher or developed by the teacher. There should be no surprises. Testing should show what has been learned and applied and not just what is remembered. (Professional Organization/Other)*

Improve Turnaround of Feedback and Results

This category also emerged in response to question 3. Comments submitted in this category dealt with the need to include interim and formative assessments in the system, so the feedback and results would be available for use by teachers to guide instruction and by students and parents to monitor progress. But even the summative results, it was noted, needed to be returned in a more timely manner

so teachers would be able to use the information while the students were still in their classrooms. Table D-39 displays the number and percent of respondents within each role who mentioned improving the turnaround of results in their responses to question 11.

Table D-39. Improve Turnaround of Results

Role	Number of Respondents	Number Commenting	Percent
K–8 Teachers	173	14	8
9–12 Teachers	112	16	14
Site Administrators	69	9	13
District/County Office of Education Administrators	144	13	9
Professional Organizations/ Other	54	3	6
Parents	21	2	10
Community Members	8	0	-

The following are quotes from the responses that exemplify this category of responses to question 11:

> *Having testing at more regular intervals and receiving results quickly will vastly improve the current system. (9–12 Teacher)*
>
> *If it cannot provide better instructional information for teachers to use to improve support of students' learning gaps throughout the year, it would be difficult to see how this system would be any different than the last one . . . (Parent)*
>
> *We absolutely need seamless, imbedded assessment that provides results quickly to teachers so that they can use the data to guide instruction. (Professional Organization)*

Evaluate Progress Using a Growth or Improvement Model.

This category also emerged in response to question 3. The comments in this category, which called for a growth or improvement model, applied to individual students as well as subgroups and schools in accountability. Respondents commented on the current system challenge of comparing different cohorts (e.g., current-year grade eight students to previous-year grade eight students). More than one respondent described this as comparing apples to oranges.

Table D-40 displays the number and percent of respondents within each role who mentioned a growth or improvement model in their responses to question 11.

Table D-40. Evaluate Progress

Role	Number of Respondents	Number Commenting	Percent
K–8 Teachers	173	8	5
9–12 Teachers	112	8	7
Site Administrators	69	11	16
District/County Office of Education Administrators	144	19	13
Professional Organizations/ Other	54	3	6
Parents	21	0	–
Community Members	8	2	25

The following are quotes from the responses that exemplify this category of responses to question 11:

> *Should be a growth model for accountability purposes. As long as a student/ school is showing growth, that is good. It is unrealistic to expect ALL students to be proficient. (Site Administrator)*

> *The testing system needs to be statistically valid and not used solely for a comparability measure of schools. The information could be useful to students if we got the scores sooner and if year-to-year scores were comparable to suggest student progress. (District/County Office of Education Administrator)*

> *Assessment system needs to hold all parties accountable for at least one year's progress in the subject area and account for those able to achieve far more so they don't backslide. (Community Member)*

Institute Changes to Classroom Instruction

In this category, respondents indicated that all students deserve to have challenging and engaging classrooms; that interdisciplinary approaches to instruction are important; and that teachers need to provide time for appropriate interventions and remediation to help students acquire the content and skills of the standards. Often mentioned by respondents was the need to reduce testing costs and the amount of instructional time devoted to preparing for and testing and the reallocation of the time and money saved to instruction. Changing

instruction also means ensuring that teachers have access to curriculum materials that are aligned with the Core Standards, that student needs drive instructional decisions, and that resources are allocated to smaller class sizes. Table D-41 displays the number and percent of respondents within each role who mentioned changes to instruction in their responses to question 11.

Table D-41. Institute Changes to Instruction

Role	Number of Respondents	Number Commenting	Percent
K–8 Teachers	173	18	10
9–12 Teachers	112	6	5
Site Administrators	69	3	4
District/County Office of Education Administrators	144	7	5
Professional Organizations/ Other	54	4	7
Parents	21	5	24
Community Members	8	0	–

The following are quotes from the responses that exemplify this category of responses to question 11:

We need to find a way to test less and teach more. Testing is the focus and students are being taught to take tests. More time should be spent teaching how to become problem solvers and use good critical thinking. (K–8 Teacher)

As a teacher, I often bemoan what my district believes should drive my daily instruction—first it was the standards, then it was the textbook publishers, and now it is state testing. I would so very much like my instruction to be guided by the needs of the students. (K–8 Teacher)

Instead of spending money on testing we need to help our students become successful. This is the time for reform not by implementing new testing but by implementing smaller more personal classrooms where students are not afraid to ask for help. Too many students are falling through the cracks because the focus is on testing not learning. (9–12 Teacher)

The system should be about HELPING teachers to improve student learning and to ensure that everyone is getting access to high-quality rigorous learning opportunities in a way that connects with their funds of knowledge and experience. (Parent)

The basic idea that I walked away with is that the purpose of educational assessment is the improvement of instruction. I think the key question, therefore, at every point, at every turn, should be: Exactly how does this piece, this component, help the classroom teacher improve his/her practice? (Professional Organization/Other)

Ensure Adequate Technology Resources

Generally, respondents expressed positive comments about the promise of computer adaptive or computer-based testing and the use of technology to deliver assessments and provide a quick turnaround of results. But respondents also expressed concerns with all students and schools having the hardware and infrastructure needed under the timelines proposed, especially given the current budgetary realities. Table D-42 displays the number and percent of respondents within each role who mentioned technology resources in their responses to question 11.

Table D-42. Ensure Adequate Technology Resources

Role	Number of Respondents	Number Commenting	Percent
K–8 Teachers	173	10	6
9–12 Teachers	112	4	4
Site Administrators	69	7	10
District/County Office of Education Administrators	144	9	6
Professional Organizations/ Other	54	3	6
Parents	21	0	–
Community Members	8	1	13

The following are quotes from the responses that exemplify this category of responses to question 11:

If the state moves to an online assessment system, it has an obligation to see that all its public schools have adequate, speedy connection to the Internet. If not, rural schools are at a distinct disadvantage because they will either require pencil and paper versions of the tests, or they will need to transport students to another location for testing. Both of those options are unfair and unacceptable. (District/County Office of Education Administrator)

I'm enthusiastic about the integration of technology tools to support the State's assessment system. (Site Administrator)

Computer-based assessments would be beneficial, as this is more engaging for the students and the modality they are getting more used to. (K–8 Teacher)

I have concerns about the technology readiness of many schools to administer online assessments, and the costs and problems associated with technology readiness and maintenance. (Community Member)

Provide More and Regular Communication

Respondents emphasized that given the changes anticipated that with the Core Standards, SBAC, and the reauthorized statewide student assessment system, an effective system of regular communication will need to be established. Respondents were particularly interested in seeing sample test questions, knowing how and when the results will be reported, and having access to communication resources such as videos to share with parents. Table D-43 displays the number and percent of respondents within each role who mentioned the need for regular communications in their responses to question 11.

Table D-43. Provide Regular Communication

Role	Number of Respondents	Number Commenting	Percent
K–8 Teachers	173	4	2
9–12 Teachers	112	7	6
Site Administrators	69	4	6
District/County Office of Education Administrators	144	10	7
Professional Organizations/ Other	54	1	2
Parents	21	2	10
Community Members	8	0	–

The following are quotes from the responses that exemplify this category of responses to question 11:

Be accurate and communicate with the districts when changes or decisions have been made. (District/County Office of Education Administrator)

Teachers and students should know exactly what will be measured and how they will be expected to demonstrate their mastery. (Site Administrator)

Provide . . . some kind of introductory materials for students who will have to take this new test in a new format. (Parent)

Change the Testing Window

The majority of respondents, who commented about changing the testing window, requested that the window be moved from 80 percent of the school year to the very end of the course or school year in order to allow enough time to adequately teach the standards; consider the results for students' grades, if they are returned promptly; and not lose valuable instructional time, which often occurs with the days between when the tests are administered and the end of the academic year. Respondents also suggested a fall testing window so the information would be available to teachers for instructional decision-making. They suggested considering greater local flexibility in determining when would be the best time to test students as well. Table D-44 displays the number and percent of respondents within each role who mentioned changing the testing window in their responses to question 11.

Table D-44. Change the Testing Window

Role	Number of Respondents	Number Commenting	Percent
K–8 Teachers	173	7	4
9–12 Teachers	112	10	9
Site Administrators	69	2	3
District/County Office of Education Administrators	144	1	1
Professional Organizations/ Other	54	5	9
Parents	21	0	–
Community Members	8	0	–

The following are quotes from the responses that exemplify this category of responses to question 11:

It is IMPERATIVE that end-of-course assessments be administered at the END of a course, not 3/4 of the way through the course (as has been the current practice of years). Testing students in April (who will not complete the course until June) means those students are assessed on material

they have not learned and/or mastered. Thus, the assessment is not a true measure. (9–12 Teacher)

Summative assessments should be at the end of the year, not 85 percent. The current system forces teachers to try to teach a year's worth of material in 85 percent of the year and leads to wasted time and resources after testing. (Professional Organizations/Other)

Other Comments

A few other comments touched on a range of suggestions, some repeating suggestions or comments offered in response to previous questions. The following is a summary of the additional comments provided:

- Professional learning should be available for teachers and administrators on data interpretation and use, scoring responses, creating classroom level assessments, and effective practices to best prepare students for the CCSS and new assessments. (21 comments)
- Consideration should be given to a transition plan that lifts accountability until the CCSS and the new assessment system are fully aligned and developed; establishes clear priorities; and includes a well-thought-out and reasonable phase-in for the new assessments. (16 comments)
- Teachers should be more involved in designing and reviewing the academic assessments. This would provide a good professional learning opportunity and enhance the alignment of the test questions with classroom instruction. (16 comments)
- Multiple measures should be used to provide a more complete picture of each student, school, and LEA. (16 comments)
- Take into account alternative high schools, charter schools, and court and community schools in designing the assessment system. For many of these schools, on-demand assessments meet their needs better than annual assessments. (4 comments)

Appendix E

Statewide Assessment Reauthorization Public Comment Opportunities and Feedback

In addition to the survey described in Appendix D and opportunities during State Board of Education meetings, members of the public were provided three additional venues to respond and provide input and feedback on the reauthorization of the statewide student assessment system. Public comment opportunities were provided in the Statewide Assessment Reauthorization Work Group meetings, at the Regional Public Meetings and through the reauthorization e-mail account. This appendix includes a description of these venues and examples of the commentary received from members of the public at these venues.

Work Group Meetings Public Comment Period

As described in Appendix B, each of the Work Group meetings included presentations and discussions about the sixteen areas of consideration specified in California *Education Code* 60604.5. During the Work Group meetings, which were announced in advance, handouts and seating space were available to the members of the public. Once or twice each day during the Work Group meetings and typically following a presentation and Work Group discussion, time for public comment was offered. Each speaker's comments were limited to two minutes. The following bulleted items exemplify the comments made during the comment period:

- Designing a new assessment system will require weighing alternatives, selecting among choices, and making clear decisions. Establishing a clear purpose is a critical first step in this process.
- Although the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium (SBAC) is scheduled to deliver new assessments by 2015, the California Department of Education (CDE) should consider an alternative or backup plan just in case the SBAC timeline will not be fully realized as intended.
- Assessments designed to inform instruction (i.e., formative, interim, diagnostic) should be locally controlled and not state mandated. Summative assessments require state control to ensure standardization and comparability.
- Rather than designing summative assessments to be administered at a given grade level, consideration should be given to designing the assessments to be administered by a given grade level. This will not only ensure that assessments follow instruction and not vice versa, but also will

require rethinking accountability and how such summative assessments are factored into accountability. For example, the current accountability system includes a negative consequence for the results from grade eight and nine students who take the California Standards Test for General Mathematics. In some local educational agencies (LEAs), accountability penalties such as this one have driven instructional decisions, resulting in underprepared students being placed in Algebra I to avoid the accountability penalty. If assessments were to follow instruction and such penalties were eliminated, students would more likely be placed in the proper class.

- Science and history–social science should be assessed with the same equivalence as English–language arts (ELA) and mathematics.
- Multiple pathways should be considered for demonstrating high school proficiency. It is also important that studies be carried out to ensure the comparability of multiple pathways.
- Matrix testing, or sampling, has been suggested; however, matrix testing is a complex idea that requires considerable expertise in order to be implemented properly. A careful analysis should be conducted of the possible approaches to matrix testing available to a state such as California, including the number of test forms and schools needed to produce valid and reliable results.

Regional Public Meetings

In April and May 2012, the CDE held five public meetings throughout the state. Those public meetings were announced in advance and were designed specifically to provide the public with information on the reauthorization transition and to collect input and feedback. The meetings were scheduled from 1 to 4 p.m., and held between April and May 2012, as follows:

April 3, 2012
Sacramento County Office of Education
Sacramento, CA

April 10, 2012
Fresno County Office of Education
Fresno, CA

April 24, 2012
San Diego County Office of Education
San Diego, CA

April 25, 2012
Orange County Department of Education
Costa Mesa, CA

May 15, 2012
Contra Costa County Office of Education
Pleasant Hill, CA

Each Regional Public Meeting began with an overview from the CDE about the reauthorization legislation and efforts. Following the presentation, members of the public were given the opportunity to provide comments and/or suggestions. The following bulleted items exemplify the public comments made during the Regional Public Meetings:

- Include stand-alone assessments for history–social science and science in grades four and above; assessments for core subjects for students in grades nine and ten (as these grades are not currently part of the SBAC summative system); and diagnostic assessments for reading, writing, and/or mathematics in grade two.
- Establish an assessment system that is valid, reliable, and fair for all students, including students with disabilities and English learners.
- Use the new technologies to administer and score the assessments. However, consideration should be given to a system that appropriately combines automated scoring (i.e., scoring mechanics of writing) with teacher scoring (i.e., scoring development of argument or ideas as a check on the automated scoring).
- Incorporate approaches designed to streamline and reduce the amount of testing and time devoted to testing (e.g., matrix testing, replacement of the California High School Exit Examination with selected end-of-course tests).
- Strengthen the articulation of the new assessment system with California's postsecondary institutions.
- Maintain state control over the summative assessments to ensure standardization and comparability, with local control focusing on the formative, interim, and diagnostic components because they provide feedback that better serves instructional decision making.
- Go beyond selected-response tests to include different types of assessments (e.g., constructed-response, performance-based) that can be used to evaluate and promote critical thinking, problem solving, communication, collaboration, and creativity skills).
- Ensure that the system provides prompt and timely results and feedback for students, teachers, administrators, and parents or guardians.

Reauthorization E-mail Account

The reauthorization e-mail account (reauthorization@cde.ca.gov) was another way for the general public to provide input on the reauthorization of the statewide student assessment system. This e-mail account was disseminated to members

of the public through multiple avenues, including, but not limited to, the regional public meetings, Work Group, and stakeholder focus group meetings. The following bulleted items represent the comments and input submitted to the e-mail account from the public:

- Students in grades two through twelve should be assessed in science. If separate tests are not possible at all grade levels tested because of cost and time limitations, science questions could be embedded in ELA and mathematics assessments. Civics education should also be included in the reauthorized statewide student assessment system.
- The statewide assessment system should be aligned with the Common Core State Standards and 21st century skills.
- The reauthorized assessment system should include writing and performance-based assessments. The absence of performance-based assessments challenges efforts to implement a problem-solving curriculum. They are needed to allow students to demonstrate their critical thinking and problem-solving skills.
- Teachers should have access to a statewide set of suggested activities, particularly hands-on activities, for improving their instruction and preparing their students to learn the content and skills of the standards for better performance on the assessments. Furthermore, student interest is important at the secondary level, and hands-on activities help advance student interest.
- Assessments should be designed to support the determination of progress, not whether a student is performing at grade level. Furthermore, saying a student with disabilities should be at grade level raises some concern because when a student with disabilities is able to perform at grade level, he or she is exited from the special program.
- California should place a priority on providing quality and timely data so teachers can use the results for grades and course evaluations and to inform instruction.
- An assessment for grade two should be considered for formative and diagnostic purposes only.
- California should use results from selected SBAC summative assessments to satisfy the high school exit exam criteria rather than using a separate assessment. This will help minimize the testing burden on the system.

- California should encourage SBAC to create, where possible, common guidelines and resources, such as a common matrix of test accommodations, modifications, and variations for students with disabilities and English learners. This would promote consistency both within and across states.
- California should work to strengthen articulation between assessments and curriculum programs in kindergarten through grade twelve and at postsecondary institutions.

Appendix F

State Board of Education Reauthorization Item Summaries

Assembly Bill 250 (Brownley, 2011) required the State Superintendent of Public Instruction (State Superintendent) to develop recommendations, including a transition plan, for the reauthorization of the statewide pupil assessment system. Throughout the development process, the California Department of Education (CDE) provided a series of regular updates to the State Board of Education (SBE) via agenda items from January through November 2012 to gather feedback from its members as well as the public. Summaries of those presentations follow.

SBE Reauthorization Item Summaries

January 11–12, 2012

Item 12 (DOC): http://www.cde.ca.gov/be/ag/ag/yr12/documents/jan12item12.doc

Subject: Reauthorization of the Statewide Pupil Assessment System: Development of the State Superintendent of Public Instruction Recommendations.

Type of Action: Action, Information

This presentation provided a brief overview of Assembly Bill 250, which modified California *Education Code* (*EC*) Section 60604.5 to clarify the legislative intent that the new statewide student assessment system conform to requirements of state and federal laws and be aligned to Common Core State Standards (CCSS). The State Superintendent was charged in state statute with developing a transition plan, which addressed 16 areas of consideration; the plan was to be developed in consultation with specified stakeholders. Toward this end, the State Superintendent determined to select a Work Group with ongoing dialog with the SBE; that Work Group was to be comprised of, but not limited to, the specified stakeholders. A proposed timeline and activities for developing the State Superintendent's recommendations were presented to the SBE.

March 7–8, 2012

Item 4 (DOC): http://www.cde.ca.gov/be/ag/ag/yr12/documents/mar12item04.doc

Subject: Reauthorization of the Statewide Pupil Assessment System: Development of the State Superintendent of Public Instruction Recommendations.

Type of Action: Action, Information

This presentation highlighted planned CDE activities for developing recommendations for the reauthorization of the statewide student assessment system. The activities described included selection of the stakeholder advisory committee (Assembly Bill 250 Work Group), establishing Work Group meetings, drafting a strategic plan to assist the Work Group, and conducting public meetings throughout California. In addition, the plan called for technical and accountability advisory groups to provide technical and policy expertise, and collaboration across CDE branches to plan for implementing Assembly Bill 250, the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium (SBAC), newly revised English Language Development Standards, and the next generation science standards. Tentative schedules for Assembly Bill 250 Work Group meetings and public meetings also were provided.

> **Item 4 Addendum** (DOC):
> http://www.cde.ca.gov/be/ag/ag/yr12/documents/bluemar12item04.doc
> The State Superintendent provided a tentative list of Assembly Bill 250 Work Group members, comprised of, but not limited to, specific stakeholders identified in statute.

May 9–10, 2012

Item 5 (DOC): http://www.cde.ca.gov/be/ag/ag/yr12/documents/may12item05.doc

Subject: Reauthorization of the Statewide Pupil Assessment System: Update for the State Superintendent of Public Instruction Recommendations.

Type of Action: Action, Information

This update summarized key information and action items of the SBE related to the adoption of CCSS, California's participation as a governing state in the SBAC, and requirements in statute related to the State Superintendent's recommendations, including a transition plan, for the reauthorization of the statewide student assessment system.

> **Item 5 Addendum** (DOC):
> http://www.cde.ca.gov/be/ag/ag/yr12/documents/bluemay12item05.doc
>
> Board members also received an update on the first meeting of the Assembly Bill 250 Work Group, held on March 21–22, 2012, with copies of all of the presentations given at that meeting. Following each presentation and discussion at the March Work Group meeting, time for public comment was offered. In addition, the SBE received public feedback from the first two of five regional public meetings scheduled throughout the state.

July 18–19, 2012

Item 1 (DOC): http://www.cde.ca.gov/be/ag/ag/yr12/documents/jul12item01.doc

Subject: Update on the Activities of the California Department of Education and SBE Regarding Implementation of Common Core State Standards Systems.

Type of Action: Action, Information

This presentation summarized previous SBE discussions and actions related to the adoption and implementation of the CCSS from May 2009 through May 2012. The presentation also included a brief analysis of the fiscal implications of implementing the CCSS statewide. In addition, the SBE received the "Common Core State Standards Systems Implementation Plan Highlights: May–July 2012" and a one page overview of implementation outreach activities.

> **Statewide Implementation System for Assessment, Standards, and Accountability Programs Flowchart** (PDF): http://www.cde.ca.gov/be/ag/ag/yr12/documents/jul12item01flowchart.pdf
>
> A flow chart, prepared by SBE staff and presented by Board President Michael W. Kirst, highlighting ongoing efforts to coordinate assessment programs, accountability systems, and the CCSS.

Item 4 (DOC): http://www.cde.ca.gov/be/ag/ag/yr12/documents/jul12item04.doc

Subject: Update on the Activities of the California Department of Education Regarding the Development of the Superintendent's Recommendations on the Future Assessment System in California, Including, but Not Limited to, the Specific Categories of Measurement and Content and Design.

Type of Action: Action, Information

This update focused on the legislative requirement (*EC* Section 60604.5) for the State Superintendent to develop recommendations, including a plan to transition to a new system, for the reauthorization of the statewide student assessment system. (These recommendations are to consider 16 specific areas outlined in statute.) For this presentation, the SBE received a brief update on the variety of avenues in place for gathering feedback from key stakeholders, including a summary of discussions from the May and June 2012 Assembly Bill 250 Work Group meetings and the regional public meetings.

> **Item 4 Addendum** (DOC): http://www.cde.ca.gov/be/ag/ag/yr12/documents/bluejul12item04.doc

Transitioning to New Assessments (PDF): http://www.cde.ca.gov/be/ag/ag/yr12/documents/sbeassessreauthupdatejul2012v3.pdf

Slide presentation by Patrick Traynor, Ph.D., Director of the Assessment Development and Administration Division, to provide an update on assessment reauthorization activities to date.

September 12–13, 2012

Item 4 (DOC): http://www.cde.ca.gov/be/ag/ag/yr12/documents/sep12item04.doc

Subject: Update on the Activities of the California Department of Education Regarding the Development of the Superintendent's Recommendations on the Future Assessment System in California.

Type of Action: Information

This presentation provided the latest information about the Assembly Bill 250 Work Group meetings, regional public meetings, and focus groups, which had taken place to date. The SBE also received suggestions from the June 12–14 Work Group meeting, regarding minimizing testing time and making use of test administration and scoring technologies. Other updated information included feedback and suggestions from the July 25–26 Work Group meeting regarding aligning the assessments to the CCSS. In addition, the SBE was given preliminary results from the assessment reauthorization survey and focus groups and draft purpose(s) and themes regarding the 16 consideration areas.

Item 4 Addendum (DOC): http://www.cde.ca.gov/be/ag/ag/yr12/documents/bluesep12item04.doc

Data Correction for Preliminary Results for the Assessment Reauthorization Survey and Focus Groups.

Transitioning to New Assessments (PDF): http://www.cde.ca.gov/be/ag/ag/yr12/documents/sbeassessreauthupdatesep2012.pdf

Slide presentation by Patrick Traynor, Ph.D., Director of Assessment Development and Administration Division, to provide an update on assessment reauthorization activities to date.

November 7–8, 2012

Item 8 (DOC): http://www.cde.ca.gov/be/ag/ag/yr12/documents/nov12item08.doc

Subject: Update on Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium Activities.

Type of Action: Information

This presentation covered a brief history of the activities and issues related to the development of SBAC assessments. The update highlighted the state-led initiative, with 21 governing states and four advisory states participating, which is developing an assessment system aligned to CCSS in English–language arts (ELA)/literacy and mathematics in grades three through eight and eleven. Other features of the system that were addressed included summative assessments for accountability purposes, optional interim assessments for instructional use, and the use of computer adaptive testing technologies for test administration, scoring, and reporting. The presentation also provided a description of activities and a timeline required for creating and developing the SBAC system to have the assessment system operational in 2014–15.

> **SBAC Update Presentation** (PDF): http://www.cde.ca.gov/be/ag/ag/yr12/documents/nov12item08presentation.pdf
>
> Slide presentation by Deb Sigman, Deputy Superintendent of the District, School, and Innovation Support Branch.

Item 11 (DOC): http://www.cde.ca.gov/be/ag/ag/yr12/documents/nov12item11.doc

Subject: Discussion Regarding Priorities for California's Future Assessment System.

Type of Action: Information

This presentation previewed the State Superintendent's purposes and guiding principles for the development of the new assessment system. The SBE also received background information on the history of the state's current assessment system, which was not designed to measure growth for individual students. The presentation further highlighted California's participation in SBAC, state's involvement with the National Center and State Collaborative (NCSC) that is focused on developing alternative assessments for students with significant cognitive disabilities, and the guiding principles for defining and developing the new assessment system, formed by the CDE with guidance from the STAR/CAHSEE Technical Advisory Group.

Revised Item 11 Attachment 2 (PDF):
http://www.cde.ca.gov/be/ag/ag/yr12/documents/nov12item11a02rev.pdf

Item 11 Attachment 2 (PDF):
http://www.cde.ca.gov/be/ag/ag/yr12/documents/nov12item11a02.pdf

Transitioning to a New Assessment System Presentation Slides (PDF): http://www.cde.ca.gov/be/ag/ag/yr12/documents/nov12item11presentation.pdf

Slide presentation by Deb Sigman, Deputy Superintendent of the District, School, and Innovation Support Branch

The Statewide Pupil Assessment System Reauthorization Web page at http://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/tg/sa/ab250.asp provides information on the various efforts by CDE to inform the public about the transition and offer opportunities for the public to give feedback.

Glossary

alternate assessment. A test used to evaluate the performance of students who are unable to participate in general state assessments even with accommodations or modifications. Alternate assessments provide a mechanism for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities, and for other students with disabilities who may need alternate ways to access assessments, to be included in an educational accountability system.

California Alternate Performance Assessment (CAPA). An alternate assessment component of the Standardized Testing and Reporting (STAR) Program. The CAPA measures test takers' achievement of California's content standards for English–language arts, mathematics, and science. It is for students with an individualized education program (IEP) who have significant cognitive disabilities and are unable to take the California Standards Tests or the California Modified Assessment with accommodations or the California Standards Tests with accommodations and modifications.

California English-Language Development Standards (CA ELD standards). The standards that describe the key knowledge, skills, and abilities in English language development for English learners. The CA ELD standards are aligned with the Common Core State Standards for English–language arts, but they do not replace the Common Core State Standards. The three parts of the standards (Interacting in Meaningful Ways, Learning About How English Works, and Using Foundational Literacy Skills) should be interpreted as complementary and interrelated dimensions of what must be addressed in a robust instructional program. The CA ELD standards can be viewed on the California Department of Education (CDE) Web page at http://www.cde.ca.gov/sp/el/er/eldstandards.asp.

California English Language Development Test (CELDT). A test that measures limited English-proficient (LEP) students' achievement of CA ELD Standards for kindergarten through grade twelve (K–12). Three purposes for the CELDT are specified in state law: (1) identifying students as LEP; (2) determining the level of English-language proficiency for students who are LEP; and (3) assessing the progress of LEP students in acquiring the skills of listening, speaking, reading, and writing in English.

California High School Exit Examination (CAHSEE). The high school exit examination for California, which contains two parts: English–language arts and mathematics. Passing both parts of the CAHSEE is a requirement that all students in California public schools, except eligible students with a disability, must satisfy in order to earn a California high school diploma. Students take the CAHSEE beginning in grade ten. The purpose of the CAHSEE is to improve student achievement in high school and help ensure that students who graduate can demonstrate grade-level competencies in the content standards for reading, writing, and mathematics.

California Modified Assessment (CMA). An alternate assessment and a component of the STAR Program. The CMA measures test takers' achievement of California's content standards for English–language arts, mathematics, and science on the basis of modified achievement standards for eligible students who have an IEP and meet additional CMA eligibility criteria.

California Standards Tests (CSTs). The cornerstone of the STAR Program. The CSTs are designed to measure how well students in grades two through eleven are achieving California's content standards for English–language arts, mathematics, science, and history–social science.

Common Core State Standards (CCSS). English–language arts and mathematics standards developed collaboratively with the National Governors Association, the Council of Chief State School Officers, teachers, school administrators, and other experts. The CCSS define the knowledge and skills students should acquire during their education in K–12 in order to graduate from high school with the ability to succeed in entry-level, credit-bearing academic college courses and/or in workforce training programs. California adopted the CCSS in 2010.

constructed-response items. Test items that require students to write a response to a prompt. Constructed-response items range from supplying a missing word in a sentence to writing an extensive essay. Students are directed to demonstrate what they know in their own words.

criterion-referenced test. A test that represents information within a specific domain (e.g., second grade mathematics standards) and allows for score interpretation in relation to an absolute level of performance (e.g., proficient versus not proficient) without reference to other individuals.

diagnostic assessments. As defined in California *Education Code* (*EC*) Section 60603, diagnostic assessments are interim assessments of the current level of achievement of a pupil that serve both of the following purposes: (1) the identification of particular academic standards or skills a pupil has or has not yet achieved; and (2) the identification of possible reasons that a pupil has not yet achieved particular academic standards or skills.

Early Assessment Program (EAP). A voluntary opportunity for grade eleven students in California public schools to measure their readiness for college-level English and mathematics so they can improve their skills during grade twelve, if necessary. The EAP, which is optional, is a collaborative effort by the State Board of Education (SBE), the CDE, the California State University, and California Community Colleges. Given as an augmentation with the CST for English–Language Arts at grade eleven, the EAP for English includes a brief set of multiple-choice questions and a writing exercise. The EAP for Mathematics also is given in grade eleven as an augmentation with the end-of-course CST for Algebra II or the CST for Summative High School Mathematics.

Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA). The major federal statute governing public education in the United States. The ESEA was reauthorized in 2002 and is known as No Child Left Behind. In 2010, the Obama administration released a blueprint for revising ESEA, providing guidance for its reauthorization. Currently, the ESEA provides funding to 90 percent of the nation's public and parochial schools to address the educational needs of educationally disadvantaged or "at risk" students, to libraries for updating materials and audio/visual equipment, to colleges and universities for educational research, and to state departments of education. The most recent policy proposals in the reauthorization bill encourage reform to improve teacher and principal effectiveness, implement college and career readiness standards, and improve student achievement in America's lowest-performing schools.

end-of-course (EOC) assessment. According to *EC* 60603(h), EOC assessments are comprehensive and challenging assessments of pupil achievement in a particular subject area or discipline.

English learner. A student in K–12 who, based on an objective assessment, has not developed listening, speaking, reading, and writing proficiencies in English sufficient for participation in the regular school program. State and federal law require that local educational agencies (LEAs) administer a state test of English language proficiency to newly enrolled students whose primary language is not English and to English learners as an annual assessment. Since 2001, this test for California's public school students has been the CELDT.

fairness in test scores. Test scores yielding score interpretations that are valid and reliable for all students taking the test. Regardless of race, national origin, gender, or disability, academic tests must measure the same knowledge of content for all students who take the test. Test scores must not systematically underestimate or overestimate the knowledge of students of a particular group.

formative assessment. As defined in *EC* 60603(i), "formative assessment" refers to assessment tools and processes that are embedded in instruction and used by teachers and pupils to provide timely feedback for purposes of adjusting instruction to improve learning.

grade-level assessment. A test that measures specific skills and knowledge defined for each grade level in accordance with the content standards.

high-quality assessment. As defined in *EC* 60603(j), a high-quality assessment is an assessment designed to measure a pupil's knowledge of, understanding of, and ability to apply critical concepts through the use of a variety of item types and formats, including, but not limited to, items that allow for open-ended responses and items that require the completion of performance-based tasks.

individualized education program (IEP). An IEP is a written plan that is designed by an LEA team to meet the unique educational needs of a student with disabilities, as defined by federal regulations. The IEP must be tailored to the individual student's needs as identified by the evaluation process and should describe how the student learns, how the student best demonstrates what is learned, and what teachers and service providers must do to help the student learn more effectively.

individual student testing. When the purpose of the test is to produce individual scores, students need to be administered all of the test items. Individual student testing includes norm-referenced testing (i.e., comparing individual student scores to scores from the norming sample), criterion-referenced testing (i.e., evaluating student mastery of the curriculum), and diagnostic testing (i.e., evaluating individual academic needs). These three types of tests require test scores to be compared to scores of a representative sample or to the achievement of curricular goals or objectives. The easiest way to ensure comparability is to administer the same set of items to all test takers. The population tested can either be a sample or a census, depending on the purpose of the test scores.

Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). A federal law to ensure that appropriate services are provided to students with disabilities throughout the nation. The IDEA governs how states and public agencies provide early intervention, special education, and related services to eligible infants, toddlers, children, and youths with disabilities.

interim assessment. As defined in *EC* 60603(k), an interim assessment is an assessment that is given at regular and specified intervals throughout the school year, is designed to evaluate a pupil's knowledge and skills relative to a specific set of academic standards, and produces results that can be aggregated by course, grade level, school, or LEA in order to inform teachers and administrators at the pupil, classroom, school, and LEA levels.

learning progression (or continuum). A map or description of the skills and knowledge in the sequence in which they typically develop from novice to more expert performance. Well-articulated learning progressions are invaluable to teachers for quality instructional planning.

local educational agency (LEA). A government agency that supervises local public primary and secondary schools in the delivery of instructional and educational services. LEAs include school districts, county offices of education, state special schools, and independent public charter schools.

matrix testing. A measurement format in which a large set of test questions is organized into a number of shorter question sets. Each set of questions is randomly assigned to a subsample of test takers, thereby avoiding the need to administer all items to all test takers in a program evaluation.

National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP). A measure of student achievement that allows comparisons of students in California to that of students across the nation or in other states. NAEP is a testing program sponsored by the U.S. Department of Education. The ESEA requires that Title I LEAs participate in the NAEP reading and mathematics assessments in grades four and eight.

National Center and State Collaborative (NCSC). A project led by five centers and 27 states (18 core states and 9 Tier II states) to build an alternate assessment based on alternate achievement standards (AA-AAS) for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities.

Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS). A collaborative, state-led process to develop new K–12 science standards that will be rich in content and practice and arranged in a coherent manner across disciplines and grades to provide all students with an internally benchmarked science education. The NGSS will be based on the Framework for K–12 Science Education, developed by the National Research Council.

norm-referenced test. A test in which score interpretation is based on a comparison of a test taker's performance to the performance of other test takers. For example when a student scores in the 62nd percentile, it means the student's score was equal to or better than 62 percent of the students in the norming sample.

performance-based tasks. A constructed-response task that challenges students to apply their knowledge and skills to respond to real-world, more demanding problems. Performance tasks in reading, writing, and mathematics will be part of the SBAC summative, year-end assessment and optional interim assessments throughout the year. Performance-based tasks will be delivered by computer and may take up to two class periods to complete.

primary language assessment. An assessment explicitly designed for native speakers or second language learners. The Standards-based Tests in Spanish are an example of a primary language assessment designed for Spanish-speaking English learners.

reliability. The degree to which test scores for a group of students or scorers (i.e., readers) are consistent over repeated test administrations and hence inferred to be dependable and repeatable for an individual student or scorer; the degree to which scores are free of errors of measurement for a given group. It is the test score that is or is not reliable, not the test.

scale score. A score to which raw scores are converted by numerical transformation (e.g., conversion of raw score to percentile ranks). The purpose of transforming raw scores to scale scores is to facilitate meaningful interpretation and minimizing misinformation.

selected-response items. Test items that require students to select an answer to an item prompt. Selected-response items include true/false, matching, and multiple-choice items. Multiple-choice items have a correct answer (i.e., from a list of alternatives) and several wrong answers (or distractors).

Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium (SBAC). A multistate consortium working collaboratively to develop next-generation assessments, aligned with the CCSS, that accurately measure students' progress toward college and career readiness. SBAC involves educators, researchers, policymakers, and community groups. California joined SBAC in 2011 as a governing state.

Standardized Testing and Reporting (STAR) Program. An academic testing program administered to public school students in grades two through eleven and aligned with California's content standards. The STAR Program assesses how well schools are covering instruction and how well students are achieving state academic content standards for English–language arts, mathematics, science, and history–social science. The STAR Program consists of four operational components: (1) California Standards Tests; (2) California Modified Assessment; (3) California Alternate Performance Assessment; and (4) Standards-based Tests in Spanish.

Standards-based Tests in Spanish (STS). A component of the STAR Program. These tests, which are administered in Spanish, measure students' achievement of California's content standards for reading/language arts and mathematics. They are administered to Spanish-speaking English learners who either receive instruction in Spanish or who have been enrolled in school in the United States less than 12 months.

summative assessment. An assessment administered at the conclusion of a unit of instruction to comprehensively assess student learning and the effectiveness of an instructional method or program.

universal design principles. The concept of designing assessments to be accessible to the greatest extent possible to all students, regardless of disability or English proficiency. Rather than retrofitting existing assessments through accommodations or alternative tests so all students can participate, universal design calls for new assessments to be designed and developed from the beginning to allow for the participation of the widest possible range of students.

validity. The degree to which evidence and theory support the interpretations of test scores. Interpretation is dependent on the proposed uses of test scores. It is the interpretation of the test score and how it is used that is validated, not the test.