



CAASPP in Action

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



California Assessment of
Student Performance and Progress

*Using Interim Assessments to Highlight
Student Expectations and Rigor*
San Juan Unified School District



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Mission Statement

Valuing diversity and excellence, the San Juan Unified School District's mission is to educate and inspire each student to succeed and responsibly contribute to a radically evolving world by providing innovative, rigorous, student-focused instruction and programs in a safe, caring, and collaborative learning community.

Text provided by
San Juan Unified School District

DISTRICT PROFILE

GRADES SERVED **K-12**

SCHOOLS **65**

TEACHERS **2,237**

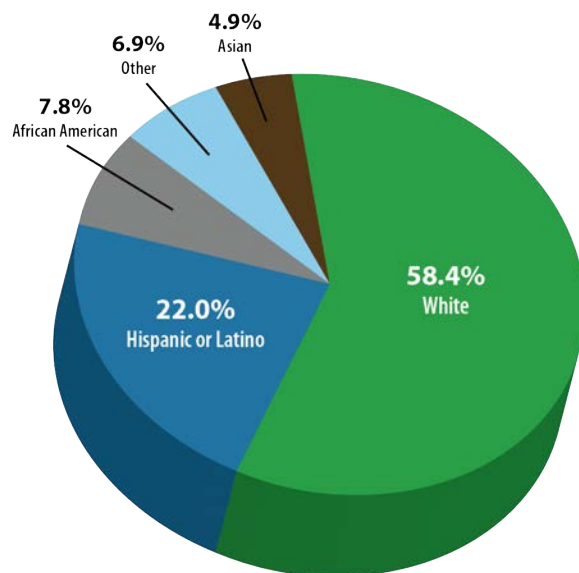
ENROLLMENT **49,564**

ENGLISH LEARNERS **11%**

LOW INCOME **50%**

SPECIAL EDUCATION **12%**

ETHNIC DIVERSITY OF STUDENTS



GOAL

Use the interim assessment blocks (IABs) to help provide teachers a deeper understanding of the Common Core State Standards (CCSS), including student expectations and rigor, to better inform instructional decisions.

IMPLEMENTATION TEAM

San Juan Unified School District's implementation team included representatives with content expertise in English-language arts and mathematics, representatives of historically under-performing student groups (English learners and students with disabilities), a site leader, and the director of the assessment department.

San Juan Unified provides great autonomy for their site administrators including school-level decisions about professional development and assessment plans.

APPROACH

In Spring 2015, San Juan Unified School District developed and administered to their teachers a CCSS implementation survey as part of their work around the Local Control Funding Formula and Local Control Accountability Plan. The survey results revealed that a majority of teachers did not have a solid understanding of the Depth of Knowledge (DOK) of the CCSS, especially DOK 3 and 4 that require strategic thinking, research and investigation, and high-level problem solving skills. These survey results were the driving force behind the district's focus on training teachers about student performance expectations, rigor, and DOK and using the Smarter Balanced Interim Assessments.

Work during the 2015–16 school year focused on

- developing and providing training on student performance expectations and the use of the IABs as one tool to better understand those expectations and gain evidence of student performance that can be used to adjust instruction in the classroom;
- working with a small group of teachers and schools to pilot the IABs.

Training

The implementation team conducted their CAASPP work through an existing monthly meeting for district staff, site administrators, and middle and high school department chairs.

Starting in the fall, work focused on

- evaluating baseline scores from the spring 2015 Smarter Balanced Summative Assessments;
- understanding claims and assessment targets and their relationship to the CCSS;
- communicating student performance expectations to teaching using the threshold achievement level;
- descriptors and examples of performance tasks and associated rubrics.

During these training opportunities, the team's primary purpose was to underscore the importance of focusing on assessment WITH curriculum, not as separate topics. Having the subject-area experts and experts in English language development (ELD) and special education as part of the team during these discussions was key. The ELD expert, for example, provided specific examples of areas where English learners may struggle and suggestions for how teachers can use existing materials/resources to focus on those areas. Staff were encouraged to explore the interim assessments as one tool to better understand student performance expectations.

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APPROACH, continued

Optional, districtwide trainings on IABs were provided to teachers throughout the year. The training sessions provided an overview about all aspects of the interim assessment system such as administration, scoring, and reporting. All training sessions included information about possible methods for administration (i.e., individual, students working with a partner, or teacher demonstrations for whole class administration) and ways to collect more detailed information (i.e., student work, teacher observation recording tool) to more effectively use the information provided by the interim assessments to drive instructional change in the classroom.

Piloting the IABs

Teachers at 16 schools volunteered to pilot one or more of the IABs in their classrooms. Each teacher and/or each school selected the IABs that they felt would work best for them and their students. The district team provided support for these teachers and schools throughout the year on administration, scoring, reporting, and interpreting the results for classroom use and instructional change.

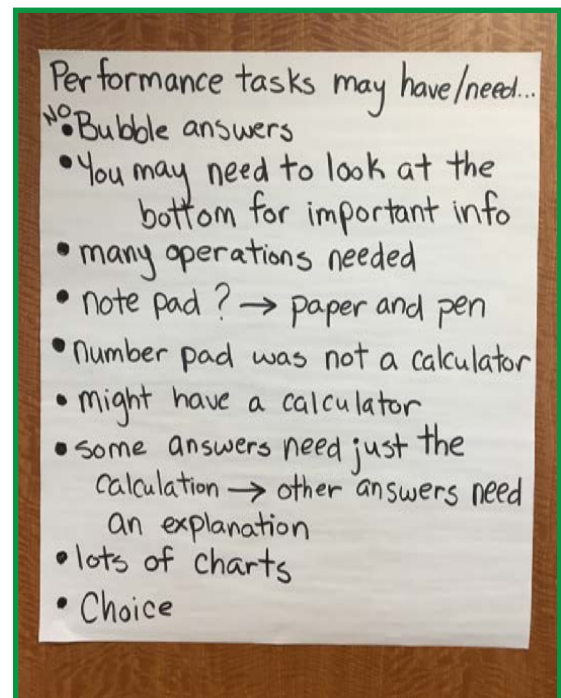
The district implementation team provided teachers with an observation tool (Figure 1) to record observations of their students while the IABs were administered and also encouraged the teachers to debrief with their classes after IAB administration (Figure 2).

Figure 1: Teacher Observation Tool for Interim Assessments

Record observations about how the students did while taking the interim assessment.

<p>Directions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • you may have "choice" in a problem • how to submit test 	<p>Technology</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • number pad looks like calculator • headatop & Lamaria could not log in • one screen enlarged on test (control-minus) • highlighter • not scrolling sometimes to find relevant information
<p>Mathematical Content</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • many operations needed • problems are dependent on one another • some kids were not having #s match up @ the end. I recommended having them double check answers in the beginning. 2 kids found mistakes 	<p>Other</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No "bubble answers" • You may need to look or scroll to the bottom for key info. • some answers need a calculation → others need an explanation • lots of charts (or reference materials) • Is spelling important?

Figure 2: Class Discussion After IAB Administration



IMPACT OF EFFORTS TO DATE

Training efforts with district staff during the once-per-month meetings were very successful and resulted in the buy-in needed to move to the next step and communicate effectively with 65 site administrators. Using results from the summative assessments to drive conversations was very effective, especially when combined with results from the CCSS implementation survey that highlighted areas for improvement related to the CCSS and DOK.

Teachers at 16 of the 65 schools administered at least one IAB. In addition, 5 of the 16 schools administered the performance task IAB as a professional development opportunity to increase teacher awareness of student expectations and scoring guidelines on performance tasks.

The response from participating teachers has been very positive, especially related to the familiarity the students are gaining with the testing interface and the universal tools, designated supports, and accommodations.

Teachers at the five schools that administered the performance task IAB strongly felt that the practice of using the rubric to score student responses has helped them better understand what their students know and are able to do. Most teachers didn't score all their student responses, but they all went through the training on the rubric to understand student performance expectations and scored enough responses to evaluate general student performance.

“Teachers overwhelmingly felt that the information they received from the performance task IAB was useful in helping them make instructional decisions for students.”

LESSONS LEARNED

Developing buy-in takes time. Because there was no district mandate that all teachers administer one or more IABs during the school year, it was imperative for the CAASPP implementation team to work with district leaders to make sure that they understood the work and the rationale for it, so that the district leaders could effectively work with site administrators to promote use of the IABs.

Planning ahead is critical. It's important to plan ahead and coordinate with other plans being developed in the district. The implementation team created an amazing plan, but they found that they couldn't get the time they needed for professional development of district staff and teachers.

Connect assessment to other district initiatives. The key to success in San Juan Unified and throughout California is to tie assessment into other work so that it is connected and not viewed as “just one more thing” that teachers have to do.

Recognize the individual “starting points” for teachers and schools – a “one size fits all” approach does not always work. Customization of training worked well for San Juan Unified because they were able to start the conversation at different points depending on the level of awareness, knowledge, and innovation of the various school teams.

NEXT STEPS

During discussions about CAASPP summative assessment scores with district leaders, site administrators, teachers, and others, the interim assessments will be emphasized as one way to gain more information about student strengths and areas for improvement. The CAASPP implementation team also plans to discuss with administrators and teachers how the Smarter Balanced Interim Assessments can be used in conjunction with the local benchmark assessments and other quizzes and tests that are part of the instructional materials.

- **Embed information about standards, targets, and claims into planned professional development workshops.** San Juan Unified has an educator effectiveness training program that it will use to help further implementation of this goal. In August, professional learning will focus on exploring the CAASPP results from Spring 2016 testing and help teachers gain a deeper understanding of the claims and assessment targets. The Smarter Balanced Teacher Guides will be used as the basis for this work.
- **Continue exposing schools to the interim assessments.** Tailored professional development at school sites upon request will be provided by district staff who have been part of the CAASPP planning team (assessment department or subject area experts). San Juan Unified will use existing resources from the CDE and from Smarter Balanced, but will customize the material based on each school site's "starting point."
- **Evaluate student performance on the summative assessment with exposure to the interim assessments.** At the end of the 2015–16 school year, staff from the assessment department systematically interviewed students and teachers about the summative assessment. One key question included in the interviews with the students was whether the student had participated in an interim assessment during the school year and if they felt that experience had any impact on their experience with the summative assessment. The assessment department plans to undertake a study to see if student performance on the summative assessment is any different for students who were exposed to an IAB during the school year and share out this feedback and research districtwide to demonstrate to teachers the value in administering the interim assessments.

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FOR MORE INFORMATION

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CDE CAASPP Web page
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