

## Questions for FAQ – 10-25-13

The following questions were asked at the 17<sup>th</sup> PTA District meeting held at SMCOE on October 23. There were about 100 people there of many ethnic and national backgrounds. At least one school district, Belmont-Redwood Shores, publicized the meeting to its parents.

- Will the Smarter Balanced test be the criteria for class placement? [Each district determines the criteria for class placement.](#)
- How will schools get enough and the right computers to manage this? (Anne told me that ½ of the schools in SMC have enough computers already to handle this.) [Each district will have to plan how to provide sufficient access to appropriate technology.](#)
- If students do not know how to keyboard, can they take the test via paper and pencil? [This type of assessment is computer based and computer-adaptive \(which means that the items adjust in difficulty based on students' previous responses to give a better sense of what they know and are able to do\). The tests will be entirely computer based in the 13-14 school year for field testing. While the plan is for all assessments to be administered by computer, beginning with the first "operational year" \(2014-2015\), there will be a paper-pencil option available for districts that aren't ready yet in terms of technology. While this will be an option, it is the hope that districts will be prepared as the computer adaptive functionality of the tests won't be possible in the paper-pencil version. After three years, the tests will be 100% computer based.](#)
- Can Title 1 funds be used to pay for the computers or networking needed? [Districts were provided with specific funds to support the transition to the CCSS. These funds can be used to address a wide variety of needs. Districts also have general funds, which could be used to support technology needs. We are unaware of any ability to use Title I funds to support technology needs for all students.](#)
- What does this mean for college entry? [The Early Assessment Program will still exist.](#)
- Will the SATs be changing their approach, too? [We are currently unaware of any plans related to the SAT's, however the increased rigor of the CCSS should support students in performing better on the current SAT's.](#)
- Who decides on the curriculum and materials? [The state is currently planning to adopt new ELA materials in 2015 and new Math materials in 2014. Each district typically adopts materials from the state approved list.](#)
- How will special needs children be successful? [Special education students with very specialized needs, whose IEP's call for it, will be assessed with an alternate assessment. Currently that is the California Alternative Performance Assessment \(CAPA\). Students who are in the Resource Specialist Program will participate in the Smarter Balanced Assessment Program.](#)

- In terms of deciding what students need to know, is this based upon the average student or those in the AP track? It is the goal, and part of the reasoning behind CCSS, to help ensure all students are college and career ready by the end of high school.
- Will students still need to take a science test if the STAR tests are discontinued? Students in grades 5, 8 and 10 will still take the science test.
- Who will decide if answers on the Smarter Balanced test are correct? There will be a scoring process which includes establishing appropriate criteria which trained readers apply. In addition some sections will be computer scored.
- Why are the tests being given on computer only? Performance tasks are hand-written. The desire to have a computer adaptive-test that bases questions on prior response in order to provide the clearest picture possible of student mastery requires the use of a computer.

The following questions were asked at the 6<sup>th</sup> PTA District Evergreen Council meeting on October 7, 2013. There were 13 people representing eight school that are either feeders to or schools in the Eastside Union High School District

- If schools have a waiver, then that mean no API scores? There will be no API's calculated for two years.
- What about NCLB? The implications for the waiver have not been determined yet.
- How will this affect juniors and seniors and the college application process? CST scores are not currently factored into the college application process. The Early Assessment Program will still exist. These voluntary assessments in English language arts and mathematics have been augmentations to the grade eleven English language arts CST, the Algebra II CST and the Summative High School Mathematics CST.
- Do private schools have to teach in the same way? Private schools have greater flexibility. The implementation of the Common Core is driven largely by depth and rigor needed to prepare all students for current and future college and career demands.
- How much professional development is being offered? This varies by district, but districts have already started training and supporting teachers to implement the Common Core. County Offices of Education are an important resource in these efforts.
- Do charter schools have to embrace CCSS? Charter schools, like traditional public schools in California, will be administering the Smarter Balanced Assessment and therefore to properly prepare their students would likely embrace CCSS.
- Most children know how to compute via touch screen, not mouse and keyboard. How will this be addressed? Each district will plan how to best prepare students for the assessment.