

Ventura County Special Education Local Plan Area
Community Advisory Committee (CAC)

Information Alert for Parents of Special Education Students

Updated Fall 2017

How Will My Child with Special Needs Participate in Statewide Standardized Achievement Testing?

State and federal laws require that **all** children participate in statewide tests that measure how children are progressing in learning the state's Common Core State Standards (CCSS). These tests are designed to assess how well the school system is doing, and to ensure that all children are being held to the same high standards. In California, all children grades 3-8, 10, 11 and 12 participate. As a parent of a child who is participating in the Special Education program for all or part of the school day, you may wonder how your child may participate in a way that is fair and assesses what he or she knows. The Individualized Education Program (IEP) team may not **exempt** a child from participating, but needs to specify on the IEP **which test and with what supports** your child will participate.

There are five different assessments for English Language Arts/Literacy, Mathematics and Science in California. They are all part of the **California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress System**, known as "**CAASPP**" by many. The CAASPP System replaced the Standardized Testing and Reporting (STAR) Program in 2014.

The **Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium (SBAC)** summative assessments are delivered by the computer and assess students in English Language Arts/Literacy (ELA) and Mathematics based on the California Common Core State Standards in grades 3-8 and 11. All students participate unless it is determined they will participate in alternate assessments. Students have access to a full range of assessment supports called **Universal tools, Designated supports, Accommodations (UDAs)**, and **unlisted resources**. All students have universal tools and designated supports available and students who require accommodations or unlisted resources must have them designated in the IEP.

The **California Alternate Assessments (CAA/CalAlt)** are alternate assessments based on standards derived from the Common Core State Standards. The alternate assessments are designed for students with significant cognitive disabilities who are unable to take the SBAC with accessibility supports, whose IEP indicates assessment with an alternate test. Students with significant cognitive delays who are learning content derived from CCSS, the Core Content Connectors (CCCs) and required extensive, direct individualized instruction and substantial supports to achieve measurable gains in grade level curriculum are considered by the IEP team for participation in the alternate assessment. The alternate assessments are delivered on the computer with a 1:1 student-assessor ratio and assess students in English Language Arts/Literacy (ELA) and Mathematics in grades 3-8 and 11. Students assessed with the CAA have access to UDAs and accommodations or unlisted resources designated in the IEP.

All students in grades 5, 8, 10 or 11 and 12 are assessed in science and will take the **California Science Test (CAST)** unless their IEP indicates alternate assessment. Students with an IEP may take the CAST just as any other student, or may be allowed to have **accommodations** determined by the IEP team. Students with significant cognitive disabilities who are unable to take the SBAC with accessibility supports and considered for the alternate (CAA) in science. Science tests are administered in the same manner as ELA and math. on the *Next Generation Science Standards*.

Be sure to talk with your child's special education teacher or Case Manager to discuss the most appropriate way for your child to participate in Statewide Testing. The goal is for your child to participate in a way that is not frustrating to him or her and accurately reflects progress that he or she has made.

[Click here to see a matrix](#) from the California Department of Education for allowable supports for statewide testing.

We have lots of informational materials for you! Go to our website and click on "For Families."

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