

Common Core Monthly Reporter

Transitioning to the Common Core State Standards

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Why Do We Need to Know About **Assembly Bill 484?**

By Nia Rashidchi, Assistant Superintendent of Educational Services

Assembly Bill 484 was signed into California law on October 2, 2013. It establishes the California Measurement of Academic Performance and Progress (CalMAPP) assessment system. The CalMAPP system replaces the Standardized Testing and Reporting (STAR) program that we have known and worked within for over 10 years.

The primary purpose of the CalMAPP is to assist teachers, administrators, pupils, and their parents by promoting high-quality

teaching and learning through the use of a variety of assessment approaches and item types.

The AB484 law supports districts to focus on transitioning to the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) and the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium (SBAC) assessments, and will take several years to fully implement.

So one might ask, **What is inside the CalMAPP?**

For the 2013-14 school year, the CalMAPP will be comprised of the assessments shown in the table below:

Tests	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
CAPA- for students with disabilities (ELA, Math, Science)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
STS/Optional- for English learners (ELA, Math)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
EAP (ELA, Algebra 2, Summative Math)										✓
CST/CMA Science (Grade Level Only)				✓			✓		✓	
SBAC Field Test (ELA or Math OR Both)		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	*	*	✓

**Small number of 9th and 10th grade students will be selected for scientific sample. (CAPA = California Alternate Performance Assessment, STS = Standards-based Tests in Spanish, EAP = Early Assessment Program)*

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For more information about the CCSS for the West Contra Costa Unified School District, visit <https://sites.google.com/a/wccusd.net/wccusd-common-core-standards/>

Others might state, “We are familiar with the CAPA, STS, EAP, and the CST science tests, but tell me more about this SBAC field test.”

AB484 requires school districts to participate in the spring 2014 Smarter Balanced Field Test (testing window = March 18 – June 6, 2014).

The field test provides all school districts with the opportunity to experience the Smarter Balanced assessments this school year in a low stakes environment.

WCCUSD will be able to gauge our true technology readiness before the actual, high stakes SBAC assessments are fully implemented in the spring of 2015.

More specifically...

- Our **students** will have hands-on experience with the functionality of an innovative, online, computer-based assessment that has technology-enhanced items and newly designed performance tasks with related classroom activities.
- Our **teachers and administrators** will gain valuable exposure to administration logistics during a trial run on the field test to better prepare for smooth and successful participation in the operational assessments that officially begin in the 2014-15 school year.
- Our **district** will benefit from learning where technology gaps may exist, and then can fully prepare for next year’s SBAC operational assessments (spring 2015).

The field test provides all school districts with the opportunity to experience the Smarter Balanced assessments this school year in a low stakes environment.

The field test will assess students in grades 3 through 11.

- **Grades 3–8:** Students are expected to participate.
 - **Grades 9 and 10:** Only students selected by the California Department of Education (CDE) for the scientific sample are expected to participate.
 - **Grade 11:** Students selected for the scientific sample are expected to participate; all others may participate.
- It is important to note the following:**
- Field testing will take place March 18 – June 6, 2014, but shorter windows within this time frame will be assigned to our schools by CDE and Educational Testing Service (ETS).
 - California will not be producing new Academic Performance Indexes (APIs) for the 2013–14 school year.
 - AB484 restricts the comparison of certain scores from the CalMAPP to STAR, as well as prohibits the display of field test scores that would identify students or teachers.

Final question for now... What are we doing to prepare for the field test?

- Our Information Technology (IT) Department is diligently working on upgrading browsers, bandwidth, and other infrastructure components to ensure schools are technologically-ready to participate in the field test.
- Our IT Department is also purchasing the necessary equipment to ensure that students can take the

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computer-based field tests.

- Our Educational Services and K-12 Operations departments are working closely with the IT Department to provide online and in-person professional development for teachers/principals to help get folks ready and comfortable to administer the online tests with their students.
- Our Educational Services and K-12 Operations departments are also creating several districtwide communication tools to disseminate relevant information to our parents and community members about the field tests, the change from STAR to the CalMAPP, and spring 2014 standardized test score results not being available.

Finally, it is important that teachers, administrators and support staff go to the SBAC website and review the SBAC practice tests.

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The practice tests are available at: <https://sbacpt.tds.airast.org/student/> You will need to sign in and then navigate through the login screens.

For more detailed information on the SBAC field tests, go to: <http://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/tg/sa/smarterftqa.asp>

In the meantime, please **Get Your Read On!** with the rest of the *Common Core Monthly Reporter...*

UTR and WCCAA Negotiations: What's **Common Core** Got to Do With It?

By Ken Whittlemore, Assistant Superintendent, Human Resources

The district reached agreement with the United Teachers of Richmond (UTR) and West Contra Costa Administrators Association (WCCAA) in regards to training and support as it relates to the Common Core State Standards. These agreements will have important impacts as we continue to transition to the CCSS.

The **UTR agreement** builds on the positives of the original agreement and includes alterations to address areas of concern. The highlights of the new agreement are:

- One per diem Common Core training day to take place this spring on a non-instructional day. There will be at least four opportunities for teachers to get the training prior to June 30, 2014.
- Two Common Core professional development days will be held August 12 and 13, 2014. These mandatory training days will be compensated at the per diem rate.

The agreements are in line with our board's desire to put the professional development of our people first in expending the Common Core resources.

Over 80% of the \$5.8 million dollars in Common Core Implementation monies, provided by the state, will be spent on professional development. The agreements are serving as the model for other districts' agreements up and down the state of California.

- There will be stipends for the Common Core Working Group teachers, Academic Subcommittee Liaison teachers, Technology Liaison teachers, and the Secondary Department chairs (who will be selected via contractual process).

- Collaboration time at each school.

The **WCCAA agreement** is highlighted by:

- One day of per diem training prior to June 30, 2014. There will be at least two training opportunities available to earn the one day per diem compensation for the training.
- Two Common Core professional development days to happen prior to the beginning of the 2014-2015 contractual days (compensated on a per diem basis).

The district will engage Local One to ensure members

who assist in instruction are also provided the needed CCSS professional development.

These agreements are in line with our board's desire to put the professional development of our people first in expending the Common Core resources.

Over 80% of the \$5.8 million dollars in Common Core Implementation monies, provided by the state, will be spent on professional development. The remainder of the dollars will be spent on preparing for the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium tests, as well as CCSS supplementary materials.

It is important to note that these agreements are serving as the model for other districts' agreements up and down the state of California. We are all proud of the working relationships with the bargaining units and look forward to collaboratively working together in moving ahead with our transition to the Common Core.

Mathematics Benchmark Assessments: A New Look in Transition to Smarter Balanced

By Phil Gonsalves and Drew Kravin, WCCUSD Mathematics Center

As reported in previous issues of the *Common Core Monthly Reporter*, our district mathematics benchmark assessments are changing in format to reflect the state's transition to Common Core State Standards and Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium (SBAC) assessments. Our district model for mathematics reform remains the same—focusing on content, lesson design, coaching, and assessment. Our district vision for assessment remains focused on providing teachers a formative tool for collaboration to create instructional mitigations that transform instruction and increase student understanding, learning, and achievement.

During summer and school year professional development, our district teachers have created a new format for Benchmarks 2 and 3 for all grade levels K through algebra II (at grades K and 1, many questions will still be in the short answer format). The benchmarks will consist of two sections, each in their own booklet for students: Selected Response (SR) and Constructed Response (CR), modeled after SBAC formats. SR questions are multiple-choice questions with more than one correct answer.

Common Core asks students to use multiple strategies to solve problems and sample SBAC questions ask students to identify multiple correct models for a given problem (e.g., “What models show ... 4×6 ?”). SR questions provide students the opportunity to select which answers are correct from among multiple choices. Instead of trying to figure out the “one correct answer” as in a traditional multiple-choice question,

Grade 3 Selected Response Question

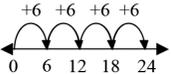
5 - 8 Mark Yes or No.

Is the following a representation of 4×6 ?

5)

6	6	6	6
---	---	---	---

 Ⓐ Yes Ⓑ No

6)  Ⓐ Yes Ⓑ No

7) $4+4+4+4+4+4$ Ⓐ Yes Ⓑ No

8)

 Ⓐ Yes Ⓑ No

3.NBT.2

students are challenged to find all correct answers to a given problem.

Because data management systems are not yet fully updated to accommodate and score SR questions with a rubric (e.g., 2 points for selecting all correct answers, 1 point for selecting specific answers that show partial understanding, and 0 points for selecting other combinations), we have developed a “work around” for 2013-14. Each SR question will consist of several “yes” and “no” questions, where each of the selected responses will be scored individually (see grade 3 sample). The data from Edusoft will show how students scored on each yes/no question within the SR questions. These data

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Algebra I Constructed Response Question

1 Consider the following incomplete equation:

$$2x + 8 - 5x = 7 + \underline{\hspace{2cm}} ?$$

a.) Fill out the blank portion of the equation so that the equation will have exactly one solution.

$$2x + 8 - 5x = 7 + \underline{\hspace{2cm}}$$

b.) Fill out the blank portion of the equation so that the equation will have no solutions.

$$2x + 8 - 5x = 7 + \underline{\hspace{2cm}}$$

c.) Fill out the blank portion of the equation so that the equation will have all real numbers as its solution set.

$$2x + 8 - 5x = 7 + \underline{\hspace{2cm}}$$

A.REI.3

EdTech Tools—Technology Connections to Common Core

By Laurie Roberts, Program Assistant, Information Technology

The IT Department is all a-flutter this month with the arrival of the laptops, projectors, document cameras, and carts for teachers. The holiday season is definitely getting off to a great start!

But what do these tools have to do with the Common Core? Within the informational text category of the range of text types for grades kindergarten through 5, and then again in the range for grades 6 through 12, you will find “digital sources.” The district-provided edtech tools (laptop, projector, document camera) can be used to show a variety of digital sources (such as articles published on the web, blogs, and informational websites) and aid teachers in demonstrating where and how to find good digital sources on the web. Teachers can show not only digital sources from the Internet (with the laptop

and the projector), but also print sources (with the document camera and projector).

A wonderful resource for digital sources of text that is available now to all teachers and students is **Ed1stop**. Ed1stop is a web portal that includes video streaming (Learn360), an online encyclopedia (World Book Online), and current, copyright-safe image banks (AP Images and Pics4Learning) to name a few. Ed1stop (an educational “1 stop shop”) even has a full page of information offering links to resources organized by Common Core standard (click on the Common Core tab once logged in). For your Ed1stop login information, please email Laurie Roberts at lroberts@wccusd.net.

Sharing is Caring

Found something great you think others should know about? Join the



EdTech tools to be delivered to teachers soon!

EdTech Term of the Month:
1:1 (1-to-1)
One digital device per student

WCCUSD EdTech group on Edmodo by going to <https://edmo.do/j/0p1dcn> to share it out. You will need to join Edmodo (this is a free account, but you will need your school’s code to sign up). Email Laurie Roberts at lroberts@wccusd.net for the code.

Mathematics Benchmark Assessments continued from page 4

will provide much greater detail for teachers to collaborate and develop instructional mitigations than with traditional multiple choice. Other SR formats also include matching and true/false.

The second section, which for this year will be optional but recommended, is the CR component, which will include one or two CR questions. CR questions provide students the opportunity to solve a mathematical problem

and justify their answer in writing—with short phrases, sentences, and/or diagrams, depending on the requirements of the CR question. This CR format also mirrors SBAC question types. A rubric is provided to assist teachers to collaboratively calibrate and score the questions, and more importantly, to use the student work to develop instructional mitigations that will help students continue their mathematics learning.

Over time, we will be developing

new student study guides to accompany our benchmarks. At our mathematics professional development sessions (after school Pizza and Planning) we will also be calibrating and scoring student work, as well as further developing CCSS and SBAC-aligned questions. Please sign in to the online Professional Development Calendar to register for these sessions—we look forward to continued collaboration!

The **ELA Instructional Shifts** and Why **Teachers** are the **Heart** of Transitioning to the **Common Core!**

By Educational Services staff Sonja Neely-Johnson, Coordinator; Lyda Butler, Program Assistant; Cherie Noland, Program Assistant; and Sasha Kirkman, Secondary Literacy Coach

As we transition to the Common Core State Standards, it is important to be aware of the three major shifts that form the foundation of Common Core ELA instruction. These three shifts focus on developing student capacity:

Shift 1—Building knowledge through content-rich informational text.

Shift 2—Regular practice with complex text and its academic language.

Shift 3—Reading, writing, and speaking grounded in evidence from text, both literary and informational.

These shifts must be embraced by all content area teachers. The responsibility for attaining literacy no longer falls just to English teachers. By high school, 70% of students' reading and writing should include informational text. To do this work effectively, literacy instruction has to occur in other content areas to ensure that our students are leaving our pre-K through 12 system college and career ready.

To this end, secondary English lead teachers began developing 4-6 week instructional modules last spring for grades 6 through 12 that address these instructional shifts. In order to address the increase in content-rich nonfiction and informational text called for in Common Core, the working group selected a broad essential question for each grade level's module. The use of

essential questions allowed for the integration of relevant nonfiction sources with the literature selections from Prentice Hall. Sources included advertisements, images, newspaper and magazine articles, and political cartoons.

The Prentice Hall CCSS-aligned bridge materials purchased for this year include CCSS Companion Workbooks for students, updated teacher's manuals with Common Core information and strategies, and highly engaging online resources for teachers and students, including many options for differentiation.

Within the modules, the working group identified key CCSS-aligned instructional strategies. To address

The new standards call for us to not throw out our effective research-based practices, but to apply them in a more purposeful and strategic way for all students.

Shifts 2 and 3, scaffolding strategies, such as the *Frayer Model* for vocabulary and close reading, are embedded into each grade level's instructional module.

Common Core Performance Tasks are also being developed for each instructional module. These assessments are designed to prepare students for the SBAC performance tasks.

Key changes in the structure of these assessments include the following:

- Performance tasks take place over 2-3 days and include some of the targeted instructional strategies and a writing prompt.
- In Part A, students determine central ideas, identify supporting details from given sources, and cite textual evidence by writing 3-5 constructive responses.

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Richmond High teachers hard at work transitioning to the CCSS.

Three for Three: Time for a Little Check-in Fun, with Rewards!

Answer three questions about our district's transition to the Common Core State Standards. The first three respondents who answer all three questions correctly will win a prize! Be the first to email your three correct answers to nrashidchi@wccusd.net!

1. What's different between Math Benchmark #1 and Math Benchmarks #2 and #3?
2. Is it important for an educator to know about AB484? Why?
3. Professional development (PD) is a critical piece of our work to transition to the CCSS. What percent of the CCSS monies provided by the state is going to PD?

Winners of the October 2013 Three for Three Check-in

- Karen VanWinkle from Ohlone
- Valerie Collura from Stewart
- Christi Thomas from Fairmont

The **ELA Instructional Shifts** and Why **Teachers** are the **Heart** of Transitioning to the **Common Core!** continued from page 6

- Part A is as much an *instructional tool* as it is for assessing student progress. A gradual release model is recommended. Teachers are encouraged to work with students on the first source, allow small group work for another, and partner work around a third to address speaking and listening skills.
- On the second day, students independently write an essay that addresses the essential question and requires them again to cite evidence to support their claims (Part B).
- A modified SBAC rubric will be used for scoring the assessments. A collaborative scoring model calls for essays to be read by two teachers for the purpose of calibration and data analysis.

In addition to the **professional development** that has taken place with the English teacher working group and with English teachers at their sites, the following CCSS mini-modules will also be facilitated throughout the year:

- The Special Place of Argument in Common Core/Argument Writing
- Informational Text
- Academic Vocabulary/Collaborative Conversations
- Literacy in Content Areas
- Brokers of Expertise Professional Learning Module debrief sessions

ELA secondary **coaching** will utilize an **instructional toolkit** that focuses on the following:

- Support implementation of the instructional modules—**formative assessments**.

- Increase writing skills with emphasis on summarizing and synthesizing **informational text through close reading**.
- Support teachers with **student engagement** strategies that are common core-aligned.

All of these elements are important, but the most essential piece is the role that teachers play. The new standards call for us to not throw out our effective research-based practices, but to apply them in a more purposeful and strategic way for **all** students. This is going to require collaboration, professional development, and ongoing support. Our teachers are leading this critical work, making them the heart of the transition to the Common Core.