



CALIFORNIA STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

JULY 2004 AGENDA

SUBJECT	
Standardized Testing and Reporting (STAR) Program: Including, but not limited to, Program Update	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Action <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information <input type="checkbox"/> Public Hearing

RECOMMENDATION

This item is provided to the State Board of Education (SBE) for information and action as deemed necessary and appropriate.

SUMMARY OF PREVIOUS STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION DISCUSSION AND ACTION

The initial California Legislation authorizing the STAR program was signed into law during September 1997. Since the initial authorization, SBE has designated the achievement test (initially the Stanford 9 and currently the California Achievement Tests, Sixth Edition Survey (CAT/6 Survey) and the primary language achievement test Spanish Assessment of Basic Education, Second Edition (SABE/2), adopted regulations for the Program, approved and monitored the development of the California Standards Tests (CSTs) and the California Alternate Performance Assessment (CAPA), adopted performance levels for the CSTs and the CAPA, and approved a plan to release questions from the CSTs each year beginning with the 2003 administration. After the California Legislature eliminated the Golden State Examination (GSE) Program, the SBE adopted regulations for the Golden State Seal Merit Diploma so that students may use CST, as well as GSE, results to qualify for the diploma. The Board approved the contract amendment to fund continued item development for the CSTs and to support test development for the 2005 and 2006 administrations on the condition that DOF approves the amendment and the Legislature approves the funding.

SUMMARY OF KEY ISSUES

Update 2004 STAR Administration:

CST-CAT/6 testing which began in the third week of February is almost complete. There are approximately 15 districts that have late-testing schools that are scheduled to complete testing after June 25, 2004. These districts will not be included in the August 16 Internet posting of the STAR test results. All districts have completed administering the CAPA and SABE/2. Generally, the August release of the STAR test result includes 99 percent of the districts.

SUMMARY OF KEY ISSUES

Golden State Seal Merit Diploma:

Staff are receiving and processing district requests for Golden State Seal Merit Diploma insignias. As of June 16, 2004, 147 out of 842 districts with grade-12 students had requested insignias for 13,494 qualifying 2004 graduates.

Attached is a document that was created for the purpose of providing information on California's testing system and is submitted to the SBE for their information. It provides a brief summary on the background of our testing program, as well as important things to know and positive results from California's statewide testing.

FISCAL ANALYSIS (AS APPROPRIATE)

All items presented in this program update are funded under current contracts.

ATTACHMENT(S)

[Attachment 1](#): Talking Points on California's Testing System (2 Pages)

Talking Points on California's Testing System

Background

Until 1998 the State of California had no comprehensive, statewide testing and accountability system. As a result, we were very limited in measuring how students were performing compared to their peers statewide or across the nation. We could not directly measure our achievement gap. In addition, schools were not directly held accountable for student achievement results.

In 1998, California first implemented the Standardized Testing and Reporting (STAR) program for all our students. A year later, the Academic Performance Index (API) was implemented to provide a tool to measure annual growth and hold schools accountable for reaching student achievement goals.

Over the next four years the state aligned its testing system to its world-class rigorous content standards, which describe what students should know and be able to do in each grade and subject tested. These standards were developed by a renowned commission of educators, policymakers and school leaders to determine what our students need to know in order to graduate from high school fully prepared to face the challenges of higher education or the workplace. Our standards today are nationally acclaimed and considered amongst the best and most rigorous in the world.

Today parents, educators, policymakers, and the general public are able to measure annual performance at every school and compare results to our statewide goal of proficiency for every child. We also now have valid, reliable data with which to make informed decisions on where education dollars should be focused.

Things you should know about our tests:

- Our California Standards Tests (CSTs) are developed by California educators and test developers specifically for California. They are designed to measure student's acquisition of the skills and knowledge necessary to succeed in the 21st century.
- CSTs are not designed to diagnose individual student's skills, but are intended to hold schools accountable for educating our children.
- A child cannot fail the CST's, rather the tests measure a school's success in educating the child.
- Our testing and accountability system, for the first time, sheds critical light on our achievement gap and forces schools to address this gap by ensuring all their children are adequately educated.
- Students are not punished for a school's poor performance. Rather, additional resources and appropriate interventions are provided to struggling schools.
- Concerns have been raised about teachers "teaching to the test." However, because our CSTs are directly linked to our world-class standards, "teaching to

- the test” now means that teachers are teaching the standards.
- Statewide testing takes most of our students less than 1% of their yearly instructional time.

Positive results of statewide testing:

Since the advent of our statewide system of accountability, schools have focused on student achievement as never before. As a result:

- More children, from all subgroups, are reading at grade level than ever before.
- More than 80% of our lowest performing schools showed improvement.
- English learners and economically disadvantaged students have narrowed the achievement gap at every grade level.
- Statewide test scores are up for five years in a row.
- 78% of our schools reached their target goals for improvement.

Today, all California’s schools share a common and clear expectation of student success – and they are rising to the challenge.