



COMMON GROUND

A Communication Toolkit for Connecting San Mateo County to the New California Standards and SBAC

This week's essential question: "How can teachers communicate effectively with stakeholders about the new standards and assessments?"



Really, nothing has changed for teachers when it comes to how to keep students and their families informed about student progress after SBAC testing concludes. Everyday instruction still provides the most compelling feedback regarding student learning. Still, it is essential for students and families to understand that this year's SBAC standardized testing establishes a new baseline for measuring student growth going forward. Scores on this year's SBAC tests cannot be compared to scores from the STAR tests, and this first year's SBAC results will not be used to gauge a school's performance.

VIDEO WALKTHROUGH

Some of the websites with information on the Smarter Balanced assessments and the CAASPP can be a little hard to navigate at times. What if you just want to show a parent some examples of questions their kids might see on the new tests? Former National Teacher of the Year Sarah Brown Wessling to the rescue! Check out her video walkthrough of sample mathematics and English questions. Bonus: It's perfect for sharing with parents.

SBAC VIDEO

ROLE-PLAYING

Parents can ask tough questions when it comes to a child's education, and teachers want to be ready when those questions come. Consider using the following sample scenarios from the California Department of Education as a way to help teachers gain confidence when engaging with parents about the Common Core and Smarter Balanced assessments. Sample topics include the amount of time devoted to testing, the computer-based nature of the test, and the fact that scores might be lower than they were on previous tests.

SAMPLE SCENARIOS

You can also find many of these resources on the San Mateo County Office of Education website. Just visit <http://bit.ly/1EpMdXx>, and click on Common Ground!

DIGITAL LIBRARY

The Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium has created a Digital Library full of resources to help educators enhance their teaching and learning around the new state standards and assessments. Teachers will need to contact their district coordinators to get login credentials, but the sample resources below provide a sneak peek of what's available.

SAMPLE RESOURCES

FUN FACTS

Even though the State Board of Education approved the suspension of the Academic Performance Index (API) during this first year of testing, the scores your students receive are real and will be used to help determine their academic growth from year to year.

Teachers can further empower student learning by using SBAC results—along with data from the interim assessments given throughout the year—to inform and hone instruction.

Studies have shown that students engaged in this type of feedback loop saw up to a 29 percentile gain in their learning.



Image credit: California Department of Education

ASSESSMENT TIMELINE

Teachers can use available resources, including relevant score report data and the CDE's Digital Library, to inform instruction, lesson plans, etc. for the next year

