



# San Diego Unified School District

## Fact Sheet

### Student Testing

Students in the San Diego Unified School District take a variety of tests each school year. Some tests are required by the state and the district; others are required to sample student performance across the country; and some tests are voluntary.

#### Nationally-Mandated Tests

The purpose of a national assessment is to see how students across the country are doing academically; comparisons may be made between and among states or regions, or in some cases with other countries.

- **National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP):** Criterion-referenced, performance-based tests in reading, writing, mathematics, science, history, and geography given at selected grade levels (Grades 4, 8, and/or 12) each year across a nationally stratified sample of schools/students. Since 2003, the district has participated in the NAEP Trial Urban District Assessment (TUDA). This administration of NAEP TUDA to a larger number of students than required by regular NAEP testing enables the district to receive results which can be compared with national, state, and other large urban district results.

#### State-Mandated Tests

These tests show how students statewide are doing in meeting the state academic standards as well as how California students perform in relation to national samples of students; comparisons may be made across schools and districts, and across student populations.

- **California Standardized Testing and Reporting (STAR) Program** consists of four parts:
  - **California Standards Tests (CSTs):** Standards-based, criterion-referenced multiple-choice tests in English Language Arts and Mathematics (Grades 2-11), science (Grades 5, and 8-11), and history-social science (Grades 8, 10, and 11). The English Language Arts test includes a written essay at Grades 4 and 7.
  - **California Achievement Test, Sixth Edition (CAT/6):** Standardized, norm-referenced test in reading/language, spelling, and mathematics for Grades 3 and 7.
  - **California Alternate Performance Assessment (CAPA):** Performance assessment for students with significant disabilities who are receiving primarily a functional or life skills curriculum.
  - **Standards-Based Test in Spanish (STS):** Standards-based, criterion-referenced multiple-choice tests in language arts and mathematics (required for Spanish-speaking English learners who have been enrolled in a California school less than 12 months or who are enrolled in a biliteracy program), in grades 2-4.
  - **Aprenda: La prueba de logros en español, Tercera edición (Aprenda 3):** Norm-referenced, multiple-choice, primary language achievement test that is required for all Spanish-speaking English Learners who have been enrolled in a California school for less than 12 months or who are enrolled in a biliteracy program), Grades 5-11.

The results of the STAR Program's tests are used to measure the academic performance and progress of individual schools through the Academic Performance Index (API).

- **California High School Exit Exam (CAHSEE):** Standards-based, criterion-referenced tests in English Language Arts and Mathematics given at Grades 10-12 until passed. Beginning with the graduating class of 2006, all students in California public schools must pass the CAHSEE to receive a high school diploma. Beginning with the 2002 Base API, pass rates on the CAHSEE have been part of the calculation of a school's API.

### KEY TERMS

- ❖ **Criterion-referenced Tests (e.g., CST, STS, CAHSEE):** compare a student's performance to set criteria (e.g., state standards) rather than to the performance of other students.
- ❖ **Norm-referenced Tests (e.g., CAT 6, Aprenda 3),** compare an individual student's results to a nationally representative reference group of students in the same grade.
- ❖ **Standards-based Tests (e.g., CST, STS, CELDT):** assess students' knowledge and skills in relation to the state content standards. Most standards-based tests are criterion-referenced rather than norm-referenced.
- ❖ **Academic Performance Index (API):** a score on a scale of 200 to 1000 that annually measures the academic performance and progress of individual schools in California.

-More Student Testing Information on the back-



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- **California English Language Development Test (CELDT):** Standards-based, criterion-referenced test of English reading, writing, speaking, and listening; used for identifying and monitoring the progress of English learners in developing English language proficiency, Grades K-12.
- **FITNESSGRAM:** Standard-based, criterion-referenced test of physical fitness for Grades 5, 7, and 9.

### District-Mandated Tests

Districtwide assessments provide for common evaluation within and across schools, grades, and student populations. They help determine the extent to which students are meeting academic standards, and help teachers and schools make decisions about students' learning needs. They supplement the state tests to provide more information about student performance and progress.

- **Developmental Reading Assessment (English)(DRA)/Evaluación del desarrollo de la lectura (Spanish)(EDL):** Individually-administered reading assessment, Grades K-3. The assessment is administered by the student's teacher three to four times a year to determine a student's instructional reading level and to document progress over time. A student's instructional reading level is based on the text that he/she is able to read and understand with direct teacher support, not the level at which a student can read independently.
- **Degrees of Reading Power (DRP):** Group-administered reading assessment, Grades 4-8. The assessment provides reading levels for individual students and classes of students. It was administered in Spring 2005 for the first time. The DRP is administered in early fall and late spring in order to provide pre- and post-assessment data.
- **Analytical Reading Inventory (ARI)/Informal Reading Inventory (IRI):** Individually-administered reading assessments for Grades 4-8 (ARI) and 9-10 (IRI), used by teachers to determine a student's reading skills and reading level.
- **District Mathematics Test (DMT):** Standards-based, criterion-referenced mathematics test for students in Grades 5 and 6.
- **Mathematics Diagnostic Testing Project (MDTP) Algebra Readiness Test:** Criterion-referenced, multiple choice test of pre-Algebra, given at the end of Grade 7.
- **End-of-Course Exams:** District-developed, standards-based assessments in English 1,2; English 3,4; and Algebra 1-2. End-of-course exams in World History and Geography 1,2 were piloted in Spring 2006.
- **Practice California High School Exit Exam (Practice CAHSEE):** Assessment that contains items from previous administrations of the CAHSEE that have been released by the California Department of Education. Given at Grades 9 and 10 to help identify students who are in need of additional supports to pass the CAHSEE.

### Voluntary Tests

There are some tests that students take on a voluntary basis. These tests inform the college admission process.

- **Early Assessment of Readiness for College English and Mathematics Program (EAP):** Identifies whether a student is prepared for college. The test augments the California Standards Tests (CSTs) administered in Grade 11. Students may earn an exemption from California State University (CSU)-required English and/or mathematics placement tests.
- **Advanced Placement (AP) & International Baccalaureate (IB) Examinations:** Content area exams covering English language arts, mathematics, science, history-social science, foreign language, fine and performing arts, for students enrolled in Advanced Placement or International Baccalaureate courses, which are college-level courses offered to high school students, Grades 10-12. Students may meet certain college entrance requirements and/or receive college credit if they score well on these tests.
- **Preliminary Scholastic Assessment Test (PSAT), Scholastic Assessment Test (SAT I), American College Test (ACT):** College-entrance examinations Grades 10-12.

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