Carmel Unified School District

Smarter Balanced Assessment

At-A-Glance

A Communication for Parents

1. Smarter Balanced Assessment starts in the spring of 2015. It is the new standardized testing for the State of California. It is designed to assess student performance on the Common Core State Standards in English and math. It replaces the former STAR (Standardized Testing and Reporting) which was based on the California Content Standards.

2. Smarter Balanced Assessment is part of CUSD's plan to prepare all students for success in college and careers.

3. While Smarter Balanced is a summative assessment given close to the end of the school year, it also provides teachers with resources throughout the year to help students demonstrate understanding of the Common Core State Standards.

4. There is no way to compare performance on Smarter Balanced with the former STAR results. Smarter Balanced includes different standards, different assessments, different grade levels and different approaches to measuring student understanding. The results from the 2015 assessments will establish baseline results for our students and schools.

5. As the Common Core State Standards are more rigorous and the Smarter Balanced assessments reflect this rigor, results might indicate lower levels of student understanding than past measures. This does not mean students are "doing worse." It simply establishes the baseline that we will use as we consider the demands of college and career readiness.

6. For parents interested in digging deeper into the Smarter Balanced Assessment, here are a few related links that provide relevant information.

   - **Smarter Balanced factsheet for parents**
     - » http://www.smarterbalanced.org/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2012/03/Smarter-Balanced-Parents-Factsheet.pdf
   - **Council of the Great City Schools**
     - » Common Core Video
       http://www.commoncoreworks.org/domain/157
     - » Parent Roadmaps
       http://www.cgcs.org/Page/330
       http://www.cgcs.org/Page/330
   - **PTA**
     - » Parents' Guide to Student Success
       http://www.pta.org/parents/content.cfm?ItemNumber=2583
     - » State Assessment Guides
       http://www.pta.org/advocacy/content.cfm?ItemNumber=3816