

CAASPP New Coordinator Training Notetaking Guide

California Department of Education • December 2019

Learning Goals

Educators will understand:

- How to prepare for testing
- The purpose of the Educational Testing Service (ETS) Pretest workshop
- How to support sites during testing
- How to collect feedback after testing is complete

Success Criteria

Educators will be able to:

- Create a plan for testing
- Understand what to focus on at the ETS pretest workshops
- Organize staff to support sites during testing
- Collect and analyze feedback after testing

Preparing for Testing

Test Assignments

Default Test Assignments

- By default, students in grades three through eight and eleven will be assigned to take the Smarter Balanced Online Summative Assessments for English language arts/literacy (ELA) and math.
- Students in grades five and eight will be assigned to take the California Science Test (or CAST).
- High school students will have only one opportunity to take a science test (i.e., in grade ten, eleven, or twelve). LEAs can elect to administer a science test to students in grade ten or eleven. Students in grade twelve, who have not yet taken a science test, will automatically be registered to test.
- Students repeating grade twelve are not eligible to test.
- In TOMS you will specifically assign the California Alternate Assessment (CAA) to students, instead of the default test, if the student meets the criteria to take an alternate assessment.
- The CAA is only for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities who are unable to take the general education assessments even with accessibility resources and whose individualized education program (IEP) indicates assessment with an alternate test.
- The guidance on grade levels is the same: grades three through eight and eleven for the CAAs in ELA and math, and grades five, eight, and once in high school (grade ten, eleven, or twelve) for the CAA in science.
- The California Spanish Assessment (CSA) is an optional assessment in Spanish that measures a student's competency in Spanish language arts and provides student-level data in Spanish competency.

- Students receiving instruction in Spanish and students seeking a measure that recognizes their Spanish-specific reading, writing, and listening skills are eligible to take the CSA. It is a voluntary assessment.

How to Check Test Assignments

- Individually you can search for a student, select the view icon next to their name, and view their test assignments tab.
- In bulk you can go to the reports tab and run the California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress (CAASPP) School Level Test Assignments report. This will give you a report of all students and their test assignments in TOMS.

The CAST in High School

- The science test can be administered to students in grades 10, 11, or 12
- All students must take a science test by the end of grade twelve. Students will have only one opportunity to take a science test in high school.
- It is recommended that students take the test when they are enrolled in their last science course.
- Students in grade twelve who have not yet taken a science test will automatically be registered to test.
- Students who are repeating grade twelve are not eligible to test.
- LEAs can elect to administer a science test to students in grade ten or eleven who have not previously taken a science test in high school.
- If a registered grade ten or eleven student has been designated with a medical exemption (NTE) or a parent/guardian exemption (PGE), the student will no longer be eligible to test in future administrations.
- **If you have a grade 10 or 11 student who has been assigned to take the CAST and they have a medical exemption, remove the CAST from their test assignments. If you do not, then they won't be eligible to take it in future years!!!**
- If a registered grade ten or eleven student did not take the science test (NT), the student is still eligible to test in a future administration. It is best practice to unregister any student who is not taking the test.

Accessibility

Loading Supports Individually

- Log onto the TOMS system
- Search for the student on the 'students navigation tab' on the "navigation bar."
- Select the view icon next to the student
- Select the Test Settings action tab
- Edit settings as needed. You will see only the available settings for each test. If the setting is not available for the test it will be grayed out. These are also organized by type (accommodation, designated supports etc.) and embedded / non-embedded.

- Always be sure to save

Loading Supports in Bulk

- In TOMS go to the students navigation tab and select upload from the action tab.
- For the upload type you will select the Online Test Settings and select the next button
- THIS is where you will get the file template that you need to fill in for all of you students.
- If you select the next button again THIS is where you can validate and upload your file.
- TOMS goes through a file validation before it is loaded to catch any potential errors.

Validating Supports

- Conduct audits of the designated supports and accommodations that have been identified for students and ensure that they are appropriately marked in TOMS.
 - One way to conduct these audits and validate the data is to compare information from your student information system and your special education system to the designated supports and accommodations set in TOMS.
 - The TOMS information is available in a downloadable data file.
 - This file is accessible the same way we got the test settings file.
- Log into TOMS.
Select the reports navigation tab.
Select the LEA-level student test settings report.
- When comparing the data across the various sources, be sure to check that all students who have been identified as needing resources are represented including:
 - General education students
 - Students with 504 Plans
 - Students with disabilities
 - English learners

Misc. Preparations

Devices and Equipment

- Ensure student testing devices in your LEA have been updated with the latest secure browser or Chrome application.
- The secure browsers are available on the CAASPP.org website and at the link in your notetaking guide.
- Work with the local technology department to verify the update
- In addition, verify any additional equipment is ready for use at the sites. This will include headphones, and where necessary, speakers, printers for print-on-demand items, text to speech packs, speech to text packs, braille printers, assistive devices, etc.

- Testing things out, prior to testing, is important!
- Confirm with IT staff what students need to do to launch the secure browser on their testing device

Exemptions

- It is essential to know exemptions from CAASPP testing are a legal right of parents and guardians.
- The impact of parent exemptions is that the student will not count as participating in the CAASPP test.
- This can affect the school and school district's participation rates, particularly if a group of parents collectively decide to exempt their children from testing.
- For this reason, it is important to carefully monitor the exemptions that are received.
- The law states that LEAs shall:
 - Notify parents each year of student participation in CAASPP System.
 - Notify parents of the availability of exemptions outlined in California Education Code Section 60615.
 - Not solicit or encourage any written exemption requests on behalf of any child or group of children.
 - This is important to watch over as some teachers have unwittingly done this in the past.
 - This includes IEP Teams. IEP teams may also not recommend exemptions - so keep an eye on that as well.
- If a parent requests that their child be exempted from CAASPP testing, the parent must do the following:
 - Request in writing that their child be exempted for the CAASPP tests
 - Indicate which tests they want their child exempted from. A parent can exempt their child from just one or all the required CAASPP tests. They need to be specific in the request.
 - And the parent needs to sign and date the request.
- Until written exemption from the parent is received, that student should continue to participate in the test administration.

Test Expiration

- The Smarter Balanced Summative Assessments [ELA and math] consists of two parts – a computer adaptive test, or CAT, and a performance task.
- Each of those parts has an expiration date associated with it.
 - The CAT expires 45 days after the student begins or first logs in for that part.
 - The performance task or PT is active for only 10 calendar days after a student starts it.
- The CAST and the CSA also expire in 45 days.

Test Security

There are many elements of the testing system that are secure, and it is imperative to ensure that the security is maintained throughout your LEA and at all of your test sites.

- As training plans are developed, address each of these security related issues:
 Maintaining the security of user accounts and system access.
 Keeping staff from sharing user accounts or providing logins and passwords to others who are not authorized for that level of access?
 Keeping the student login information and scratch paper secure before and during testing?
 What capacity does each school have to shred secure test materials after testing?
 - These materials would include DFAs for the California Alternate Assessment, printed test items, and braille tests.
 Before testing begins, establish protocol that will describe how to:
 - Monitor security issues
 - Track security issues within the school district
 Submit incident reports through the Security and Test Administration Incident Reporting System (STAIRS).

Local Training

- CAASPP test site coordinator training topics should address the following:
 An overview of CAASPP including the various tests and applicable grade levels
 Roles and responsibilities of site coordinators, test administrators and examiners, and proctors
 Accessibility resources, including universal tools, designated supports, and accommodations
 Test security protocol
 Timelines and test windows

Document, Document, Document

- We also recommend that you document your CAASPP trainings by:
 - Maintaining sign-in sheets or training verifications such as online certificates, or sign-in sheets for trainings held elsewhere.
 - Filing CAA training certificates
 - We have heard that some TEs have had trouble downloading their certificate of completion after the TE tutorial, so we have some tips and tricks for you:
 - Make sure emails from Brainshark are whitelisted.
 - Check the junk/spam folder for the email with the certificate.
 - Make sure pop up blocker is turned off so that the certificate can be generated.
 - For CAASPP test audit purposes and for evidence of staff training, you must keep copies of your training materials.

User Registration

- If you haven't yet loaded your users, you will need to do so.

- If you loaded users as the Interim Assessment Only role you will want to change that to Test Administrator if they will be administering the Summative Assessments.

Test Site Planning

Keys for Success

- Acquaint yourself with the LEA's plan.
- The first step in this process is to provide site coordinators with the test administration windows as set in TOMS.
- There are several important resources to provide help to set the best possible test schedule for their site. These resources include:
 - Estimated testing time for assessments (regular and alternate). On www.caaspp.org is a chart that shows, on average, how long each test part will take by grade level.
 - Test schedule requirements, and deadlines for completion. This should include considerations such as make-up days, spring break, and testing on Mondays and Fridays, as well as any school district test administration policies, for example, grade three tests first and grade eight tests last.
- Providing guidance to site coordinators in terms of sample test schedules will be greatly appreciated.
- Some test schedule considerations might include:
 - Schools can choose their dates within the LEAs selected test administration windows
 - The LEA may set test dates within the window or provide schedule options

Communication

With LEA Staff

- Once schools' testing schedules have been set, share them out with school and school district administration and leadership teams and with facilities and technology services staff
- Other departments like maintenance and grounds departments should know about the testing schedule.
- The communication of schools' test schedules may also include:
 - Posting them to the school district and school's websites
 - School district staff and parents appreciate advanced notice of testing dates and times so that they can schedule direct testing support or appointments accordingly.

With Parents

- Before testing begins, there are several communication activities, including reminders and resources, to share with stakeholders.
- One communication will be the notification to parents about the upcoming CAASPP administration.
- Parents should be informed about:
 - The test schedules

- Resources that they can access for information about the test and links to practice tests
- A general idea of when they might receive their student's test results
- Parents should also be notified that, should they have any questions about their child's SSR, like "I didn't get it yet, where is it?", should contact the school or district where their child tested. This is especially relevant for students transferring or promoting from one school to another or graduating.
- How they can support their student during testing such providing a good breakfast, or telling their child that they know he or she will try his or her best
- The CDE makes letter templates available on their Web site that you could use as a starting point.

With Site Coordinators / TAs / TEs

- In addition to communicating to parents, also communicate with site coordinators, Test Administrators, and Test Examiners to keep them informed about:
 - System downtimes and known issues with the website
 - The posting of DFAs, manuals, and secure materials. These may not be posted until after your training has occurred so e-mailing a notification to the site coordinators and others who need to know will be greatly appreciated.
 - New resources about CAASPP testing that can be of value to educators or parents.
 - Starting Smarter <https://ca.startingsmarter.org/> is a new resource for parents (although educators would also benefit).
 - For educators, the Smarter Content Explorer <https://contentexplorer.smarterbalanced.org/> is another great new resource.
 - The Assessment Spotlight emails are a great way to stay informed.
 - Other reminders to share include:
 - The value of the Practice and Training Tests. Some teachers have created a homework assignment out of the Practice Tests. We all know practice matters and reinforcing the value of the Practice Tests is important.
 - Entering parent exemption codes into TOMS before students begin their tests
 - About the school district's CAASPP testing security practices and test incident and irregularity practices

Support During Testing

Who and When

- Once testing is launched, there will be a need for initial support and on-going support to the sites. That support can come from a variety of individuals.
- The main support will come from the LEA CAASPP Coordinator
- Think about:
what support is needed during the first couple of days of testing at a school site? and
what support is needed ongoing after the site has started?
- Consider what issues have occurred in the past, to be prepared with support needed if they were to happen again.

Coordinator Support

- The LEA Coordinator role is to be on-call during testing hours to assist site coordinators with whatever issues may arise.
- The role is also to know about resources available to answer the questions from site as quickly and as accurately as possible.
- Note: if a student writes a response to a question that causes concern, LEAs will be contacted by ETS in writing.
- These “concern” letters go to both the superintendent and LEA coordinator.
- While this is not a common occurrence, have a plan in place about how to handle this should you get one of these letters.
- This plan should include communicating with the superintendent about next steps as well as communicating to the school site coordinator.

Technology Support

- It is important as the LEA Coordinator to plan with technical staff and decide ahead of time who is doing what role for testing and during testing.
- It will be important for the assessment team and tech team to decide how to handle phone calls.
- The only recommendation is to log all of the calls received by both tech and assessment to be proactive with issues that are occurring frequently. Also consider reaching out to experienced coordinators for FAQs or common issues that occur during testing.

District Staff Support

- It is important as a district that you carefully identify staff that could help during testing (curriculum staff, teachers on special assignment, clerical staff, etc.) and who is available when and who can be on call if needed.
- Any staff members who will be present in a testing room will need to sign a Test Security Affidavit and receive some form of training prior to being on site on the first day of testing.

Special Populations

Special Ed

- Site coordinators should follow the student's IEP to determine whether the student should receive the Smarter Balanced or the CAAs.
- Establish procedures, or documentation about how this is done.
- Communicate with your principal or administrator and your special education coordinator. You want to keep everyone in the loop.

NPS

- “Nonpublic, nonsectarian school” means a private, nonsectarian school that enrolls individuals with exceptional needs pursuant to an individualized education program.
- Contact with all NPS sites must be established prior to testing.
- Develop procedures of how you will keep track of NPS students and their test completion status.
- Build a relationship with the NPS coordinators, so they can maintain an open line of communication.

Planning for Issues

New Students

- From the time of enrollment, it can take up to 3–5 days before the student will appear in TOMS and the Testing Platform—CALPADS to the testing system, alone, takes at least 24–48 hours to communicate. It's important that LEA CALPADS administrators make timely updates in CALPADS to ensure students are eligible to test.
- Once the student is registered in TOMS and in the Testing Platform as your district's student you will be able to see if a student completed a test in another district. Tests already completed will be grayed out on the student's screen and the student will not be able to access that assessment in this summative administration.
- Sites can call the previous student's score to see if the student completed testing or not. Sometimes this will help with scheduling and planning for testing.

Accessibility Changes

- It will be important to have a plan for how to deal with accessibility changes ahead of time including what LEA or site coordinators will do what.
- For students new to the LEA their information will come with them in TOMS if their IEP or 504 is still valid.
- Make sure site coordinators confirm with their special education teacher that the correct resources are in TOMS.
- Make sure their IEP/504 documentation keeps up with what is in the system and that any change made in the system is documented in their paperwork.

- For students who have a newly written IEP or 504 or who have had changes made since the information was loaded in TOMS, you will want to have a process to follow set up.

Status Changes

- Once testing starts, LEA and site coordinators will receive emails regarding a change in student status.
 - The change in status means that either a student's Special Education Status or their 504 Status has changed, meaning that they are no longer listed as Special Education or with a valid 504 plan.
 - These changes are usually caused by the plans expiring.
 - Due to the change in status, all the student's accommodations that had been assigned are dropped from TOMS.
 - The report will show you why they were dropped and what accommodation they had.
 - It is important to note not all students listed on the status change report will have had accommodations or designated supports assigned to them.
 - If the reason for the drop of status is corrected (like an expired IEP updated) the student accommodations will need to be reset in TOMS.
 - This is also the case with students who are assigned the CAA. If they had a change in status, they will lose their CAA assignment and it will need to be reset in TOMS once they have their special education status corrected.
- Another reason for a status change could be related to a change in the level of program (like moving from an SDC environment or RSP and now taking the SBAC instead of the CAA)

Parental Exemptions

- Once testing is underway, parents may still elect to exempt their child from testing.
- As the LEA CAASPP Coordinator, establish a process of how those parent exemptions will be recorded in TOMS as soon as they are received so that students aren't accidentally tested.
- If a parent or guardian submits an exemption request after testing has begun, any test(s) completed before the request is submitted will be scored and the results reported to the parent or guardian and included in the pupil's records.
- You will not be able to enter the exemption into TOMS if a student has already completed a test.
- This is not a reported incident to STAIRS and the test can't be invalidated or removed.
- Note—Once the exemption is entered in TOMS, 24 hours later the test will not be available for the student to take in the testing platform.
- Please Note: This is not to be confused with significant medical emergency which does not impact participation rate

- Another type of exemption is the significant medical emergency exemption where the medical condition prevents the student from testing, the condition code is NTE.

Name Changes

- It is important for a staff member to have a caring conversation with family in advance of testing to inform them that the official name is required for login, appears on every testing screen, and appears on score reports.
- It's an uncommon occurrence that is becoming more common.
- Also, keep in mind that the student address is printed on the SSR and any parent that has access to the SSR will see that address.

Uncommon Issues

- As a LEA coordinator have a plan for how to handle uncommon issues, especially if you are out of the office.
- Remember, only LEA coordinators can call CALTAC with an issue. Have all calls come to the LEA Coordinator to make sure all the information possible is collected before a call is placed to CALTAC.

Monitoring and Security Reporting

- There are two types of monitoring needed:
- The first is grade/test completion.
 - This is where completion rate is found.
- The other type of monitoring is individual student completion.
- There are two important parts to this. One is knowing if any tests have expired and knowing which students have not completed certain tests.

Completion Status

1. Log into the TOMS system
2. Select the **Reports** link in the upper navigation bar
3. Select the **Completion Status Report** you would like to run (Status Report or Status Summary Report)
4. Select the **LEA** you would like the report run for from the drop down menu
5. Select the **Request New Report** button
6. Once the report is complete select the **Download** button

Site Progress

- The test completion rate report can be run for the district or for all schools at one time or for a single school.
- This tool provides completion rates by grade level and type of test.
- It must be run separately for Smarter Summative (which is the ELA and Math), CAA and CAST.
- It is important to note that these rates are not instant, and they are updated nightly.
- Keep in mind that NTE and PGE students will be part of the denominator, but not the numerator, in completion rate calculations.

The report will show by each grade test the total number of students who should test, the number started, and the number completed.

- It is important to note the total student's column will change as students move in and out of the school/district during testing.
- This report does not show which students are missing tests.
- Some larger districts export the reports into a database to create a combined report that gives a more complete overall picture of the district and of schools.
- There are reports available in TOMS that combine the completion status of all parts of a test.

CAASPP Student Completion Status Report—provides the testing status of all students for that LEA and its schools (SB, CAA, and CSA)

CAASPP Student Completion Status Summary Report - provides a summary of the testing status of all students, at either the LEA level or state level.

Student Progress

- The other report available is the Plan and Manage Testing Report. This report will allow a drill down to the individual student level.
- This report is a great report to ensure all students have completed their test as well as monitor any test that might be close to expiring.
- Like the completion status report, this report must be run separately for Smarter Summative (the ELA and Math), CAA and CAST.
- There are many different options of reports to run.
- The online resources have a report titled Testing Status Definitions that will explain all of the statuses that will appear.
- Performance Tasks expire only after 10 calendar days from when the student started the test.
- The ramifications of expired tests can include students not being able to complete a test and receive a score based on the questions completed prior to expiration, which may not be indicative of the student's actual ability.
- Additionally, the expiration of a test may result in the filing of a report in the Security and Test Administration Incident Report System (STAIRS) to request the re-opening of the expired test.
- The approval of a re-opening by the CDE is based on a limited number of reasons such as prolonged, unexpected student illness.

Incident Reporting

- Once an incident happens it needs to be reported to the state.
- The process is first to file a report in TOMS using the STAIRS tab.
- They will ask you what type incident it is, grade level, test and number of students involved. Depending on the type of incident they might also ask for SSID numbers of the student.
- Once a STAIRS report is submitted, a STAIRS incident number and directions on how to proceed will be provided.
- Establish a process for how the different type of incidents are handled.

- In the online resources there is one example of the form a district might use to record incidents that are called into their office as well as a sample log to track STAIRS reports.
- The most important thing for addressing and resolving security incidents is consistency and knowing who is responsible.
- There are many types of incidents and they range from mild to severe.
 - Mild:
 - Accessibility Issues,
 - Student Disruption
 - Administration Error and
 - Incorrect SSID Number,
 - Test Expiration,
 - Disruption or Technical Issues, or
 - An incorrect test assignment (Smarter Summative and CAA or CAST and CAA) that involve a Reset or a Reopening of a test.
 - Moderate:
 - Cheating
 - Access to unauthorized Electronic devices
 - Moderate incidents involve invalidating a test.
 - This means a student will receive a score with a footnote and the score will not be included in the aggregate results.
 - Severe:
 - Exposing Test Content,
 - Accidental Access
- These are reportable issues which are monitored by CDE and districts will be notified as what will happen or if any appeals need to be submitted.

Communication

- As an LEA CAASPP Coordinator, communication will be key in keeping stakeholders informed and avoiding test issues.
- When providing information, consider the audience in crafting your communication.
- To provide the appropriate level of information, be mindful of who is receiving this information.
- Additionally, it is important within the district to establish a chain of command for the dissemination of information during testing. This will facilitate the delivery and accuracy of the message.
- During testing, new and updated information will be released by the CDE, ETS, and your LEA.
- Information from the CDE and ETS is presented weekly in the Assessment Spotlight which is typically released every Wednesday.
- Additionally, both the CDE and ETS will send e-mails to LEA CAASPP Coordinators with new or updated information.

- Consider the frequency and format of e-mails as to not overwhelm site coordinators.
- Consider using highlighting, bullet points, and check-off formats to draw attention to critical information.
- LEA CAASPP Coordinators can post messages to site coordinators and Test Administrators via the TOMS Banner that are general messages relevant to the entire testing system, like scheduled downtimes, or that are specific to your LEA.

Collecting Post Test Feedback

Gathering Feedback

- For the Smarter Balanced Summative Assessments and CAST, it is important to collect information from participants in the testing: both teachers and students about their perception of the test and what might or might not have been difficult. Understanding this can help put the results in context and help determine next steps.
- Collecting perception data can be done by surveys or by having class discussions and recording the answers.
- These are most effective if done within 1–2 weeks of when testing was done.
- Some of the essential questions that might be asked include:
 - What did you think about the tests?
 - How did these tests compare to tests you took during the year in your class?
 - What did you find hard about the items? Computer, reading, not understanding the question or the content might be probes you use to drill down more.
 - What do you think your teacher could have done during the school year that would have help you on the test?

Reporting Feedback

- One use for this type of data is to include the data in your presentation of the testing results as a section called "what we learned from students" or "what we learned from staff".
- When including both student and staff feedback, it is important to connect them together.

Making Tweaks based on Feedback

- It is important as a LEA coordinator to debrief after testing is completed, while things are still fresh in your mind.
- Districts want to think about how things went and how they might change things for next year...things like district training for site coordinators, how they support coordinator especially new coordinators, technology issues that need to be addressed, test windows, etc.
 - Districts will also want to collect and summarize any feedback that they think is critical for ETS or CDE to know.

CAASPP in Action

- There is a report series that highlights district practices. This series, called CAASPP in Action, highlights different district programs and practices related to CAASPP.
- You can find all districts that are profiled in the CAASPP in Action series on the CDE's CAASPP in Action Web Page.