



CROCKER HIGHLANDS ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

March 11, 2018

Dear Crocker Highlands Community:

Over the past several years, our teachers and staff have been working to implement California's Common Core State Standards in our classrooms. In addition to teachers' observations of student work and district benchmark assessments, schools in California administer standardized tests intended provide additional data to schools as they examine how well they are learning what we teach. To prepare for these assessments, in addition to the incredible teaching and learning that has been happening at Crocker all year, our 3rd, 4th and 5th graders practice keyboarding/typing skills and each spring spend some time practicing how to answer SBAC test questions in collaboration with their teacher and peers.

CAASPP End-of-Year State Tests

The California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress, or CAASPP, is in its fourth year of implementation. CAASPP is a state-mandated testing program intended to provide information that can be used to monitor student progress and ensure that all students leave high school ready for college and career. In elementary schools, CAASPP includes computer-based tests for 3rd-5th graders in English Language Arts (ELA) and Math. People often call this set of assessments SBAC, because it was created by the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium.

Computer-Based Assessments in Elementary Schools

Third through fifth grade students are required to participate in the SBAC/Smarter Balanced Assessments or the CAA/California Alternate Assessment of ELA and Math. English Learners in California who are in their first 12 months of attending a school in the U.S. will not take the ELA portion of the test, but they will take the Math section.

Pilot Assessment in Elementary Science – 5th Grade Only

Since the adoption of the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS), the California Department of Education has been developing a new science assessment based on these standards. The CAASPP System described above also includes federally required science assessments in 5th grade. This new science assessment is called the California Science Test (CAST), and this year's administration of it is considered a field test. My understanding is that this means that schools and families will not receive student results, but the California Department of Education will collect data to inform what needs to be adjusted in the test before they "count."

We encourage you to have your child tested because we believe that test results provide valuable information about your child for both you and the school. Participation is confidential and your child's report cards will not be affected. Parents/guardians may request their child not be tested with any CAASPP test or any specific content area (English, Math or Science). If you don't want your child to take one or more CAASPP tests, submit a written request to the school prior to testing, ideally before March 31, 2018. Include the child's/children's name(s), birth date, grade, teacher's name, the name of the specific test(s) or content area(s) they are to be exempted and a way to contact you such as your cell phone number or email address. You do not need to provide a reason for your request. Be sure to sign and date the request. Please note that, per state guidelines, if your request is received after testing has begun, any test(s) started before the request is received will be completed, scored and the results reported to you and included in the student's records.

Our district's CAASPP testing window begins April 9 and ends in May 4. Our school will administer the SBAC Summative tests from April 13 to May 3. Here is our schedule:

April 13: 5th Grade Science

April 16-19: 5th Grade ELA and Math

April 23-26: 4th Grade ELA and Math

April 30 – May 3: 3rd Grade ELA and Math

If you know your child will be absent for a medical appointment or any other reasons during their testing window, please notify the teacher right away. We will arrange for the student to take the assessment at another time during the testing window.

To get a sense of what the SBAC tests looks like on your own, you and your child can view the practice test online on the state's Smarter Balanced Practice Test Web page at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/tg/sa/practicetest.asp>.

Individual student score reports from this spring's assessments are expected to be mailed home in the Fall of 2018. By March 31, 2018, please email office@crockerschool.org or call us at (510) 451-5900 if you need to update your address so we are sure scores are sent to the right place.

If you have any questions, please feel free to speak to your child's teacher or to contact me at principal@crockerschool.org.

Sincerely,

Joci Kelleher, Principal

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