



Progress Update

Engagement ▫ Performance ▫ Well-being

January 2015

Measuring and Reporting Student Progress

In 2015, there will be a lot of talk about “accountability” – how we will measure and report student progress. What are the tests that our students will take? What are the surveys that our families and staff members will complete? How do we know if our schools are doing well? Even though these questions are familiar to us, many of the details are complex, so we want to provide simple explanations that help everyone understand what is happening.

Overall, our accountability model focuses on the **engagement**, the **performance**, and the **well-being** of our students. Starting in February, we will hear more about two important topics: Smarter Balanced Assessment and CORE surveys.

Smarter Balanced Assessment

Beginning with a field test in 2014, LBUSD students in grades 3 through 11 began the process of taking the “summative assessment” that was developed by the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium (SBAC).

A summative assessment measures cumulative skills and knowledge at the end of a defined instructional period like a unit or course. This online assessment satisfies the state testing requirement. SBAC, as it is familiarly called, is used across more than a dozen states and is an online assessment that helps teachers, administrators and families know how well their students are doing in meeting the Common Core State Standards (CCSS). Because the same assessment is now given across a number of states, there is an increased opportunity to gauge students’ performance from a national perspective. An additional benefit of students taking the assessment online is that the results will return to the school district sooner than in past years, which means that teachers and families also will have results sooner so they can help students to move forward in their learning.

The CCSS are challenging. These standards set a high bar for student performance so that all students will be prepared for success in college and careers when they graduate from LBUSD. Our teachers and administrators have been working diligently to make certain that all classrooms are transitioning to the newer standards. While we expect our students to make great strides in meeting the new standards as soon as possible, we also know and expect that for the first couple of years, our test scores may create the perception of a decline in performance. Remember that the newer and tougher standards combined with new assessments represent a complete recalibration. This means that the first year or two of test scores will essentially serve as a new baseline of data.

From the field test that was given to three million students in the spring of 2014, the data below illustrate this point.

	2013 CST Proficient and Advanced (State of California)		SBAC 2014 Field Test Levels 3 & 4 (including all states participating in field testing)	
	English	Math	English	Math
Grade 4	65%	72%	41%	37%
Grade 6	60%	55%	41%	33%

What are some ways that we are helping students prepare for the newer SBAC assessments?

*All of our schools have at least one dedicated computer lab (some as many as three) where students will take the online assessment. Many teachers will take students into the lab during the months of January and February to take practice tests and to practice using the skills necessary for success on SBAC.

*A number of technology resources are available for teachers and families at lbschools.net. Go to Technology Instruction in the A-Z index, then Curriculum Documents.

We encourage you to support your students by talking about their results later this year, but do not worry if you see an initial decline in your individual student's test scores. While the bar is being raised in our expectations, it takes some time for both teaching and learning to adjust to these expectations.

Surveys

LBUSD received a renewal of a federal waiver for the 2014-15 school year that gives the school district greater flexibility to use resources based upon students' needs. The school district has redirected federal funds toward school-based interventions for students. As part of this waiver (familarly known as the CORE Waiver) and its associated accountability, many students, staff and parents will take a survey in the days ahead. This year's surveys are all considered field tests. That means that the results will give teachers and administrators great information to review, but the results are only used as baseline information, not for official accountability.

Different than the academic tests that students regularly take, this year's surveys will cover:

- Students in grades 4-12 – Social-emotional Well-being and School Climate and Culture
- School Staff (Teachers and all other staff) – School Climate and Culture
- Parents: Social-emotional Well-being of Students and School Climate and Culture

The survey questions that will be used this spring have been tested in other school districts and studied by researchers. The questions will cover topics that help teachers and administrators better understand how students feel at school, how comfortable they are with their own learning and progress and how things might be improved at their school so that student learning is accelerated.

When and how will the CORE surveys be administered?

*You will receive more specific information from your school, via School Loop and School Messenger (phone), about how to take the parent survey. Stay tuned!

*Students will take their survey in their school computer lab.

Both the SBAC tests and the surveys are part of the school district's Local Control and Accountability Plan, a requirement that comes with our state funding. They are also part of the School Quality Improvement Index, which helps us meet federal obligations in place of No Child Left Behind.

Most importantly, both the SBAC and the surveys reflect our mission "to support the personal and intellectual success of every student, every day."

For more information, please visit lbschools.net.