Dear parents and guardians,

Now that the school year is in full swing, we wanted to send you more information about AUSD’s transition to the Common Core State Standards (CCSS). We plan to send out regular newsletters this year and next to help you learn more about this exciting new program.

Today’s newsletter focuses on changes in assessments under CCSS. In a nutshell: During the transition to CCSS, California public schools will partially discontinue the standardized tests during the 2013-2014 school year that they have been administering for more than a decade and replace them with new types of assessments, including ones that ask for more writing, not just multiple choice.

To take a closer look at the new CCSS assessment format, please visit the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium (SBAC) page and view the practice test available to the public:

http://sbac.portal.airast.org/

By selecting the grade and content area, you can view and try examples of questions that students will be asked on the new CCSS assessments. This practice test is a great opportunity to see just what kinds of tests your students will be taking this year.

Please remember that this spring’s CCSS assessments are a field test and are being provided by the state as an important opportunity for districts, schools, teachers, and students to experience and practice this new form of testing.

The chart on the next page shows which tests used to be administered (in the 2012-13 column) and which will administered this year (and beyond).

Several other aspects of assessment will also be changing, including:

Program Improvement The federal government has not yet given clear direction on how to assess schools (and districts) that are in “Program Improvement” under the former assessment system (meaning they have not reached state goals for proficiency for several years in a row). For this year, CCSS assessment scores will not count towards Program Improvement and all schools and districts will remain “frozen” in their current PI status.

Technology Assessments will be administered as computer-based tests starting this spring. Schools will be receiving Chromebooks in April to support this new assessment format; both students and teachers will receive training on how to use the computers for the tests.

We know these sound like big changes, but want to assure you that we are taking a full year to explore, practice, and support our teachers and students as we move forward. We are very much looking forward to working with you, our students’ parents and guardians, as we make this exciting shift!

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### Changes in Assessments for 2013-2014

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2012-13</th>
<th>2013-14 and Beyond</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Standardized Testing and Reporting (STAR)</td>
<td>Transition to CCSS English Language Arts and Mathematics Assessment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>California Standards Tests (CST)</td>
<td>• 2013-14 Field testing in Math and ELA in Grades 3-8, 11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>California Modified Assessment (CMA)</td>
<td>• 2014-15 Full testing in both subjects Grades 3-8, 11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>California Alternate Performance Assessment (CAPA)</td>
<td>• California Alternate Performance Assessment (CAPA) continues both years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Standards-Based Tests in Spanish (STS): English Language Arts &amp; Mathematics</td>
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<tr>
<td>11th Grade CST in ELA &amp; Math for students taking the Early Assessment Program (EAP)</td>
<td>No changes for 2013-14</td>
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<tr>
<td>California Standards Tests (CSTs): Science</td>
<td>Continued in 2013-14 and ongoing - CST/CMA grades 5, 8, 10</td>
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<tr>
<td>California Standards Tests (CSTs): History</td>
<td>No assessment for 2013-14 and 2014-15</td>
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<tr>
<td>California High School Exit Exam (CAHSEE)</td>
<td>No planned changes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>California English Language Development Test (CELDT)</td>
<td>2013-14 Continuation of CELDT with Transition to English Language Proficiency Assessments for California (ELPAC):</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AUSD Benchmark Testing: ELA</td>
<td>2014-15 Field testing of ELPAC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AUSD Benchmark Testing: Math</td>
<td>2015-16 Full implementation of ELPAC</td>
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<td></td>
<td>2013-14 Measured Progress Testlets</td>
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<td></td>
<td>2014-15 Pilot use of SBAC Interim &amp; Benchmark Assessments</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2013-14 CCSS Aligned benchmarks for kindergarten through 8th grade and high school Algebra 1 and Geometry</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SBAC Interim &amp; Benchmarks for Algebra 1 &amp; 2 and Geometry</td>
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### CCSS Professional Development for Teachers

Beginning in February and continuing through December 2014, teachers will receive professional development (PD) to support their implementation of the Common Core State Standards (CCSS). Depending on grade level, content area, and previous PD experience, teachers will attend up to four days of initial training. The majority of AUSD teachers have participated in some previous training through the Inquiry by Design (IBD) and Mathematics Coaching Consortium (MCC) initiatives. These teachers will not require the full number of initial training days. Our Human Resources and Educational Services staff have worked to both minimize the number of teachers out of the classroom on any given day and ensure that there are sufficient substitute teachers to fill all openings.

### Looking for More Information on CCSS?

**AUSD:** “Common Core State Standards Resources”
http://ow.ly/thQQR

**California State PTA:** “Parent Guides to the CCSS”
http://ow.ly/thQIU

**National PTA:** “Parent Guides to Student Success”
http://ow.ly/thQLr

**CA Department of Education:** “CCSS”
http://www.cde.ca.gov/re/cc/

**Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium (SBAC)**
Video for High School Students:
http://ow.ly/u03ZN

Video for Middle School Students:
http://ow.ly/u04aE

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