

## **Annual CAASPP Report for English Language Arts/Literacy and Mathematics Santa Barbara Unified School District | Board Narrative | September 24, 2019**

### **Background**

At the September 10, 2019 Board meeting, we engaged in an [update](#) on California's Assessment and Accountability System as a precursor to this report. We will now review results from the spring 2019 administration of the California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress (CAASPP) for English Language Arts/Literacy (ELA) and Mathematics for students grades 3-8 and 11. The spring 2019 administration is the fifth year in the CAASPP era, with increased rigor and expectations in both the state academic standards and accompanying assessments that indicate the extent to which students met state standards.

This report is structured in the following way to tell our story, and to provide the results as documentation for reference.

- Where we have been
- Where we are
- Where we are going

### **Where We Have Been**

As a state, and therefore as a school district, we have been simultaneously bringing about three of the most complex changes to public PK-12 education that we've seen in over thirty years: funding models, state academic standards, and a new accountability system. At the heart of this work is equity - the pursuit of equal outcomes for all students regardless of background and circumstance - with the recognition that equity means different actions for different students based on students' needs. These major shifts in K-12 education also embody a recognition that as a state, and as a local school district, the design of the systems we have had for decades produce inequitable outcomes, and so we need to transform them in order for all students to be able to benefit from high levels of engagement, learning, and achievement.

### **Where We Are**

We are in a transitional phase in which adults across our district are learning to "see the system" that produces inequitable results, and in response we are collectively forging a path forward toward sustainable whole-systems improvement. We have developed a district instructional vision that "All students read, reason, and communicate to contribute positively to an ever-changing world," and we are redesigning key systems to accomplish our vision. As we engage in this nuanced work to change the culture of how we practice education within and across schools, we see pockets of promising achievement but we do not yet see the organization rising as a whole with regard to student achievement. Indeed, the state assessment results remain relatively flat, and similar to the previous NCLB era, it took about 5-10 years for standardized assessment results to show the schools and districts that were successfully engaged in school reform. So while we are discouraged by the overall lack of growth, we are reminded of how shifts have manifested in the past in relation to test scores, and

we are encouraged by the results we are seeing at multiple schools and with specific student groups district wide.

As we consider the structures and practices we have been building at all schools the past few years to support coherence-making, the Site Leadership Team (SLT) is a key new team that supports our shift towards more instructionally-focused leadership, and therefore stronger collective vision and responsibility for each school's achievement and ultimately the entire district. We are growing in this evidence-based "systems leadership" approach as a core function of how we practice education to improving teaching and learning, with "leading from the middle" (e.g. SLTs) being a key factor. The schools that have seen consistent growth in achievement over time are farther along in this work, having developed more robust collaborative cultures focused on analyzing evidence of student learning in frequent intervals, Multi-Tiered Systems of Support, and making shifts in instruction to respond quickly to student needs.

High level takeaways from the preliminary<sup>1</sup> 2019 CAASPP results are:

- ELA/Literacy ( $n=6,572$ ): Overall achievement levels maintained<sup>2</sup> from the previous year (1% point decrease to 54% Met/Exceeded; 1 point decrease in Distance From Standard (DFS) to +5); increases and decreases in achievement by grade level span both elementary and secondary
  - English Learner students Reclassified as Fluent English Proficient (RFEP) continue to perform above the overall average in grades 3-6, and outperformed English Only (EO) students at 5 elementary schools
  - Students with Disabilities (SWD) increased in DFS by 7 points to -105
- Math ( $n=6,584$ ): Overall achievement levels also maintained, but continue a gradual upward trend (2% point increase to 45% Met/Exceeded; 1 point increase in DFS to -22); all grade levels either maintained or improved from the previous year
  - RFEP students continue to perform above the overall average in grades 3-5, but DFS is not increasing overall in all grades
  - Students with Disabilities (SWD) increased DFS by 9 points to -137
  - English Learners (EL) increased DFS by 4 points to -104<sup>3</sup>
  - Latinx students increased DFS by 4 points to -57

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<sup>1</sup> Results may vary from the CDE's official CAASPP results (public release date not yet set by CDE), and from the CA School Dashboard (next release anticipated December 2019), especially for student groups, as both public reporting platforms use different criteria to determine each group.

<sup>2</sup> According to the CA School Dashboard, if the "Change" in DFS from the previous year is less than 3 points (in either direction), the school/district is considered to have "Maintained" the status level

<sup>3</sup> A friendly reminder that as ELs progress in language acquisition and mastery of academic standards, most reclassify and move into the RFEP category, such that the EL group by nature is an ever-changing group that by definition contains students who are not performing at standard.

## **Where We Are Going**

We are cultivating a culture of inquiry among the adults in our system to help identify and respond to student learning needs with increased precision. As doctors practice medicine, and lawyers practice law, we are refining our educational practice. We are building capacity within the adults in our school system to be able to do this with increasing collective efficacy, meaning in high-functioning collaborative teams (i.e. District Leadership Team (DTL), Principals' Collaborative, SLTs, and Professional Learning Communities (PLCs)). Research shows that teachers' collective efficacy is the strongest predictor of student learning and achievement by a long shot, with principal efficacy also having a strong impact on student learning; we are therefore re-orienting our leadership to cultivate this across our school district.

We are focusing our various partnerships to support this work of building leaders' and teachers' collective efficacy. For example, the Principals' Collaborative and SLTs are examining CAASPP results this month, with an eye towards more actionable information that links directly to specific academic standards; this informs planning SLT and PLC cycles of inquiry for this year. Also embedded in the current SLT cycle is a deeper look at expectations around rigor in the classroom in relation to Depth of Knowledge (DOK); this includes the notion that "task predicts performance," meaning that we must increase the rigor of tasks provided to deepen student learning. In addition, professional learning to support language acquisition through the use of GLAD strategies is aimed at supporting literacy, especially for English Learners (EL), and is tied to working in teams (e.g. PLCs) to build collective efficacy. Also, our work to develop robust Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS) will refine our collaboration informed by data to improve our practices. Finally, we are designing opportunities for students to become fully biliterate through the development of Comprehensive Plan for Multilingual Pathways (CPMP); research shows that biliteracy often renders cognitive and linguistic advantages, especially for English Learners and Reclassified students when biliteracy is rigorously pursued starting in elementary school. Each of these major district wide initiatives are centered on the development of high-functioning teams in order to increase our collective efficacy to address gaps in opportunity and achievement; because developing educators' collective efficacy requires changing culture, structures, and continuous improvement of practices, it is a slow journey, but if done well will lead to sustainable systems that facilitate improvement over time.

As we continue to learn to improve as a system of schools, student learning and achievement for all student groups and at all schools is expected to become more equitable, as demonstrated by the research, and by local evidence of rising culture, practice and results at several schools.