



EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

October 31, 2022

The mission of the YPI Charter Schools (YPICS) is to prepare students for academic success in high school, as well as post--secondary education; prepare students to be responsible and active participants in their community; and enable students to become life-long learners. Students at YPI Charter Schools will become active citizens who characterize the ideals of a diverse and democratic society. Students will provide service to their community, take responsibility for their own learning, and develop the habits of mind and body that will empower them to be successful in high school and beyond.

State:

California Department of Education - Assessment Spotlight (Issue 205) ([Back to Top](#))

Posted September 30, 2022

State Board of Education Approves Use of Smarter Balanced Adjusted Form Blueprints

Earlier this month, the California State Board of Education (SBE) approved the continued use of the adjusted form blueprints for the Smarter Balanced Summative Assessments for English Language Arts/Literacy (ELA) and Mathematics for the 2022–23 administration and subsequent years.

The SBE-approved blueprints are identical to the ones used for the 2021–22 administration. The computer adaptive test (CAT) portions of the blueprints are reduced by approximately 50 percent in each claim compared to the full form blueprints. The performance tasks are designed to be integrated tasks; therefore, the blueprints associated with the performance tasks are not adjusted. At this time, claim results will continue to be unavailable at the individual student level but will be available for student groups of 30 or more on the [Test Results for California's Assessments](#) website. Smarter Balanced continues to work with other states on the development of composite claim reporting for the adjusted form blueprints. In addition, the CDE continues to investigate the use of target reports with the adjusted form blueprints.

The adjusted blueprints apply only to the Smarter Balanced Summative Assessments for [ELA](#) and [Mathematics](#). The Smarter Balanced Interim Comprehensive Assessment continues to be based on the full form blueprints. Further details regarding the September SBE meeting—including item

04, with blueprints and other assessment updates—can be found on the [SBE Agenda for September 2022](#) web page.

2022 California standardized test results wipe out years of steady progress - EdSource

Posted October 24, 2022

In another measure of the pandemic’s corrosive impact on learning, California students performed significantly worse in 2022 on Smarter Balanced, the state’s standardized test.

Fewer than half of students met the state standard in English language arts, with a drop of 4 percentage points to 47.1% from pre-pandemic 2018-19, when the state last required the test statewide. Exactly one-third of students performed at standard in math, a decline of 6.5 percentage points. For Black students, it is now 16% and 9.7% for English learners.

The pandemic’s effects were widespread; the scores fell roughly the same – 5 to 7 percentage points among most racial and ethnic groups. But disparities in scores among those groups were already chasmic, and the declines in 2022 wiped out six years of slow, steady progress since Smarter Balanced was introduced in 2014-15. The 69.4% of Asian students who scored at or above standard in 2022 is more than triple the rate for Latino and Black students.

[Moving up its original release date](#), initially set to be released with other state data in December or January, the California Department of Education instead announced the results on the same day as the release of scores on the National Assessment of Educational Progress or NAEP. The results of the different tests cannot be compared, but point to the same conclusion: Covid severely set back progress nationally and in California, indicating it will take extra resources and attention, and probably several years, to recover from the impact. ([See story on NAEP scores](#))

“Now is not the time to take our foot off the accelerator when it comes to doing everything we can to help all our students progress toward mastery of our learning standards and thrive in every way in school,” said California State Board of Education President Linda Darling-Hammond.

The test, administered last spring to 2.9 million students in grades three to eight and 11th grade, showed distressing results in 2 key areas:

- In third grade English language arts, the first statewide measure of children’s ability to read, scores fell 6.5% percentage points to 42.2%, the lowest of any grade.
- In eighth grade math, a signal of students’ preparation for high school math, scores fell 7.4 percentage points, to 29.2, also the worst of any grade.

“Our situation with reading achievement was bad before; now it has gotten worse,” said Todd Collins, a Palo Alto Unified school board member and founder of the California Reading Coalition. “The need is even more urgent for a comprehensive state literacy plan, focused on giving districts and teachers better training and curriculum and backed by what’s been successful in the states that have succeeded.”

“We have unacceptable rates across the board, with a persistent, continuing problem in math,” said Rick Miller, CEO of the CORE districts, a nonprofit learning partnership of California school districts representing more than a million students. “It existed before the pandemic, and the pandemic’s impact was most acute for those who needed the most help.”

He and others said it wasn’t surprising that learning declined more in math and in English language arts. Remote learning showed the importance of high-quality classroom math instruction.

“Students who were bored were more likely to pick up a book to read than do math,” Miller said. Peggy Carr, commissioner of the National Center for Education Statistics, which administers NAEP, agreed. Abundant research “shows that math is just simply more sensitive to schooling. You really need teachers to teach math,” she said. “Parents and the community are more comfortable helping students with reading.”

Contrary to the statewide pattern, in Long Beach Unified, students meeting state standards in English language arts dropped 11 percentage points, nearly triple that of math. To address that, the district is expanding preschool to better prepare students for TK and kindergarten and shifting its instructional focus to phonics and phonemic awareness, an approach that helps students learn to read by connecting letters to sounds. Third and 4th grade both had the highest percentage of students not meeting standards.

The district has also hired instruction and intervention coordinators across its elementary and middle schools and has provided small group tutoring across grades handled both by teachers and contracted providers, Superintendent Jill Baker said.

Heather Hough, director of Policy Analysis for California Education, described the scores as a clear signal that education in California must change radically if students are to overcome the challenges wrought by school closures and the pandemic. The stakes are especially high for students who were disproportionately impacted, such as Black and Latino students and those from low-income families, she said.

“What we have been doing has not worked,” she said. “We’ve been talking about accelerated learning, but we have no experience with accelerated learning, and our track record with closing the achievement gap is not good. ... We cannot revert to business as usual because that did not work. This requires large-scale, systemic change.”

The state’s recent infusion of money into K-12 schools will likely not be enough, she said. The changes need to be widespread and long-lasting, particularly regarding staffing. Prospective school counselors, for example, need to know their jobs will exist a decade from now.

California’s overall results were better than the average of nine of the 10 other Smarter Balanced states that had released scores. Their average decline in reading was 5.4 percentage points and 7.3 percentage points in math. Those states include Oregon (down 7.4% in reading, 8.8% in math) and Washington (down 9.3% in English language arts, 11.3% in math), according to data for grades 3 to 8 collected by Doug McRae, a retired standardized test publisher who lives in Monterey. Several states either offer the test in 10th grade or use the SAT or ACT as an alternative to Smarter Balanced in 11th grade.

California skipped Smarter Balanced statewide during two years of Covid. The state canceled the test in spring of 2020, when all schools closed and switched to remote learning, and made the statewide test optional in 2020-21.

Most districts in California continued in remote learning for much of, if not all of, 2020-21. Covid created the most havoc in low-income Black and Hispanic neighborhoods, which also had the least access to the internet. Chronic rates of student absenteeism continued in the last school year.

Megan Bacigalupi, director of CA Parent Power, an Oakland-based nonprofit that grew out of parents' frustration with school closures, pointed to prolonged remote learning in California as the cause of lower test scores.

"Any parent who was home with their child ... saw what a failure online school was. Parents should look at these scores and know that statewide leaders failed our children," she said. "Parents should also ask hard questions of their school districts. ... We should be treating this as a statewide crisis."

Some school districts saw their scores improve during Covid. Cold Spring School District in Santa Barbara, a TK-6 school with about 200 students, was a high performing school prior to the pandemic and most scores inched higher in 2022. In 2019, for example, 67% of students exceeded the state standard in reading, and three years later that number rose to 70%.

Superintendent Amy Alzina attributed students' success to the school staying open for most of Covid. The district had recently endured wildfires and a deadly mudslide, and Alzina knew that the school had provided stability and a refuge for students experiencing hardship. She and the board decided to reopen in September 2020 despite the risks.

In addition to masks and social distancing, students attended classes outdoors throughout the year, even in rain and cold. The PTA purchased jackets for teachers and others who needed them.

State Superintendent of Instruction Tony Thurmond said data did show an encouraging sign from limited data. Although districts with fewer than a quarter of the state's students took for 2020-21 test, the state was able to track the scores of those who did using unique student identifiers. It found that their scores began to rebound by spring 2022, especially in reading, from the even larger losses recorded in the spring of 2021 test. But that did not happen in math in eighth grade, where the decline continued from 2021 to 2022 and further dropped in 11th grade in both English language arts and math.

State officials stressed that the current state budget alone includes more \$12 billion in one-time and ongoing funding that districts can use to remediate or accelerate learning and for mental health. This includes \$7.9 billion in a Learning Recovery Block Grant, tied to a district's proportion of low-income students, and \$4 billion for low-income districts to add three hours per day for after-school learning and six weeks of added learning. In addition, they have \$15.3 billion that Congress funded through 2024 under the American Relief Plan Act.

"California's investments in important initiatives, such as high-dose tutoring, professional development for teachers, and expanded learning time, and in such areas as mental health and wellness, are critical to lifting up academic performance across the board while supporting students' well-being," Darling-Hammond said in a statement.

California has started [College Corps](#), which has recruited 1,500 college students to tutor in 33 school districts and community after-school programs, but there aren't enough tutors to meet the demand. Los Angeles Unified has been slow to roll out tutoring, and San Diego Unified is relying on teachers to do it after school.

Anticipating learning loss issues, Lodi Unified Assistant Superintendent Robert Sahli said the district initiated student supports during the pandemic and expanded efforts with a return to in-person instruction. These include tutoring, expanded afterschool and summer opportunities, teacher training on literacy, and the adoption of a new K-8 math curriculum.

Miller said additional resources matter, but one-time funding alone won't fix a long-term math problem. He cited the need for high quality curriculums and continuing professional development for existing teachers and those in training and facing up to a long-existing "math phobia" among early elementary teachers.

Also released Monday were the science assessments and the English Language Proficiency Assessments for California, the ELPAC, measuring the progress of English learners.

Students have not performed well on the science test, which is aligned to the Next Generation Science Standards and is given in fifth, eighth and each year in high school. The good news is that districts did not lose ground in 2022; 29.5% of students met or exceeded standards, compared with 29.9% in 2019, the first time the test was given.

Students who speak a language other than English at home are required to take the ELPAC every year until they are deemed proficient in English. In 2022, 15.57% of English learners achieved a proficient score. That's up from 14% during the year of distance learning, but similar to the year before the pandemic, 2018-19, when 16.4% achieved a proficient score.

YPICS:

Simonsen Departure:

Dear YPICS Staff,

Sadly, I am writing to inform you that Larry Simonsen, "Professor Simonsen," is leaving YPICS, effective this **Friday, October 7, 2022**. Larry has decided to return to being the Master Teacher of Science that he is and will serve Homeless and Foster Youth in South Central LA. Unfortunately, it is not the best time for us. However, it is absolutely the right opportunity for Larry. Therefore, as of **Monday, October 10, 2022**, Mr. Duenas will serve as the Interim Executive Administrator at the High School until we can secure a replacement. We aim to continue the vision, not supplant or dismiss what Larry has implemented and what the Charter Petition outlines are the school's philosophy and purpose. Please join me via slack to offer our farewells and best wishes to Professor Simonsen. We appreciate all the hard work Larry has done for us over the last seven years, and he will be missed. He has played an integral role in the founding and development of the High School and our work in social justice for scholars. Namely, Standards Based Grading and Learning and equity in instructional practices. He will be challenging to replace. I would personally like to wish Larry Simonsen the best of success in all future endeavors.

Sincerely,

Yvette King-Berg

Assessment Review:

SBAC data is now available. Data analysis of YPICS performance will be discussed in-depth at the next YPICS Board Academic Excellence Committee Meeting on November 7th and returned to the next full board meeting in December. Finally, YPICS will provide all members of our school community regarding the CA School Dashboard during November (What is it? What does it measure? How will it be different for 2022-23? When will it return to “normal”?)

NOVO Teacher Retention Grant and SEL Conference Attendance:

YPICS Senior Leaders participate in a 110 Accelerator Administrative Networking and Think Tank Group with charter leaders in the LA Metro area. Last year the group identified Teacher Retention as an area that many schools struggle. The group collectively wrote for a Teacher Retention Grant and received it in May 2022. MLC (the Multicultural Learning Center) is the grant lead. Executive Director King-Berg is conducting research through listening empathy sessions with teachers and staff on all three campuses, which the Education First Foundation is leading. All research findings are to improve teacher retention at each of the participant schools and organizations.

One of the themes that have been consistent thus far is that our teachers experience the most joy when they see their scholars learning, understanding, and critically engaging in intellectual conversations in the classroom. When they responded to one thing, they would like to be different, this was also very consistent amongst all three schools. They articulated that they wanted more time to get to know their colleagues in person, interact more, play, and have fun as a team. We heard their requests and intentionally added engagement, freedom of choice, and joy to our Total Professional Development Days (TPD).

Grant participants had to attend the SEL in Action Conference in New Mexico on October 11-14, 2022. Ms. King-Berg participated in the conference on behalf of YPICS. Two teachers were invited to accompany her, but both declined the offer because the conference dates were held during the YPICS October Parent Conferences Week. The Board will receive updates about parent conferences in the Executive Administrator's Reports.

Trunk or Treat:



On October 21, 2022 the Learning and Support Team supported the BCCS Trunk or Treat event. LSC had car and the theme was COCO. Members of the team not only passed out candy to the families and children, but Ms. Gachuzzo and her friends performed two Baile Folklorico dance numbers for the community. The High School also entered three cars. It was amazing to have both the LSC and HS supporting this event, which well attended by our families and our community partners.



YPICS Total Professional Development Days:

All three schools' teachers, administrators, and staff members participated in two-days of total professional development (instruction, climate and culture, and operations) on October 24th-25th. Day 1 focused on equity as it shows up in outcomes. YPICS reviewed all data, SBAC, grades, attendance (absenteeism & perfect attendance). Each department created smart goals and created action plans which will be used reviewed during the next TPD Equity Pause day; January 9, 2023. Day 2 focused on instructional strategies that work. Teacher participants had an opportunity to choose sessions to enhance their practice. YPICS Operations Teams had an opportunity to further develop their plans to increase attendance and enrollment. Finally, the School Climate and Culture Teams were trained in NCIS to better prepare to deescalate challenging behaviors on campus.