



**GOLETA UNION SCHOOL DISTRICT**  
Instructional Services

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### Assessment ABCs

Smarter Balanced, KSEP, STAR, otherwise known as assessments can be confusing. Assessment systems can sound like alphabet soup for those not familiar with the variety of evaluations administered. Students are evaluated on an on-going process in Goleta Union School District and different assessments serve different purposes. Just as California requires the state tests (Smarter Balanced) to be administered in a specific manner, GUSD's local assessments are administered with specific requirements and purposes.

Our district uses assessment as a primary means to measure whether students are making progress towards meeting the new CA state standards. At the classroom level, teachers monitor the progress their students make throughout the year to coordinate groups and intervene for individual students effectively. Progress monitoring ensures intervention groups are fluid as students' progress and needs change throughout the year. Consistent assessments allow teachers to monitor their students and assess their growth throughout the year as well track a child's progress from year to year. The data is also used so that teachers can create their own professional learning goals in terms of how best to support all students in their grade level.

In a broader context, when we put data together, we can see grade level, school, and district growth as well. We use a district-wide assessment timeline for the year that all sites follow, which supports monitoring progress during the year. Benchmark assessments are administered three times a year to measure overall progress toward end-of-year expectations. Additionally, the larger picture helps to determine whether the core curriculum is effective for the majority of our students. The corresponding results inform curricular decisions, grade level progress, school goals and district wide program effectiveness.

In August and September, we assessed all students using a universal screening tool called **STAR 360** for Reading and Math. For our kindergarteners, we used the Kindergarten Student Entrance Profile (**KSEP**) for incoming kindergarten students and California English Language Development Test (**CELDT**) for our English Learner students. In late October/early November, we administered the Kindergarten Assessment, **Bridges** (Grs. 1-5) or **CPM** (Gr. 6) Benchmark Assessments, **Wonders** Reading Benchmarks, and **Writing Prompts** to determine student progress.

Grades K-6th: **STAR 360** is a computer adaptive program that is a benchmark assessment done four times a year. It is a standards-based assessment tool. The test measures progress towards mastery of state standards that helps teachers pinpoint specific areas of need as well as areas where students may need to be challenged. Once students are familiar with taking the assessment, it usually takes 20-30 minutes per test for students in second through sixth grade (language arts and math). Students in Kindergarten and first grade take one 20-minute test.

Grades K-5th: Bridges As a district, we use Bridges assessments to not only inform individual and classroom performance but to inform grade level and district level curricular and program effectiveness. The highly rated Bridges program is tightly aligned with the mathematics standards, and consequently our report cards and provides broad and precise information as we implement year four of the program.

Grade 6: College Preparatory Mathematics (CPM) Similarly, as a district, we use program assessments to inform individual and classroom performance as well as grade level and district level curricular and program effectiveness. The CPM program provides broad and precise information as we implement year four of the program. CPM is aligned to state standards and consequently to our report cards.

Grades K-6th: Writing Prompts We administer three Writing Prompts a year, narrative (fictional), informative/ expository (realistic, explanatory), or opinion / argument. Like other assessments, the prompts reflect the CA state standards, measure student progress toward end-of-year standards, and are aligned to our report cards.

A prompt is a written statement that explains a situation or topic for the child to respond to in writing. The student's response provides an opportunity to assess his/her ability to write a cohesive document over several days. During the prompt time, students preplan what they want to write, compose, proofread and make changes if they want. Two teachers score each student's response. Once two scores have been determined, the average of the two scores serve as a final score.

Grades Kinder-6th: CELDT (California English Language Development Test) is completed once a year (in the fall) for new students learning an additional language. This is a state-mandated test that measures growth towards language proficiency and serves as a criterion for reclassification as a fluent English speaker. This is the last year to use this specific test. Starting this spring, in 2018, the state requires English Learner evaluation to be conducted using the English Language Proficiency Assessments for California (ELPAC).

#### Grades 1st-6th: Wonders Reading

Our newly adopted ELA/ELD program, Wonders, provides Reading Assessments that are constructed to mirror the Smarter Balanced (state test). The tests measure comprehension of literature and informational text, vocabulary, research skills, text features, conventions, and writing skills. The results of the assessments can be used to inform subsequent instruction, aid in making leveling and grouping decisions, and point toward areas in need of reteaching or remediation. Again, the tests are aligned to the standards and consequently to our report cards.