

INTER-OFFICE CORRESPONDENCE
Los Angeles Unified School District
Office of Data and Accountability

August 12, 2015

TO: Members, Board of Education
Ramon Cortines, Superintendent

FROM: Cynthia Lim, Executive Director

SUBJECT: INFORMATION REGARDING SMARTER BALANCED ASSESSMENTS

In a few weeks, results of the new Smarter Balanced Assessments (SBA) will be released statewide. Students in grades 3-8 and 11 took these online assessments in English Language Arts and Mathematics this past spring. Test results will be available by school on the state website and in the District's MyData system. Parents/caregivers will receive individual student reports mailed to their homes from the Student Testing Branch.

The Smarter Balanced Assessments are based on California's new, more challenging academic standards that are designed to help all students graduate college and career ready. There are several notable differences between these new assessments and the tests we had in past:

1. **Grade Levels Tested** -- In the past, students in grades 2-11 were tested on the California Standards Tests in English Language Arts and Mathematics. The new assessments are given in grades 3-8 and 11.
2. **Computer Based** –The assessments were taken online only. There were no paper and pencil versions of the tests in English Language Arts and Mathematics.
3. **Computer Adaptive** – On the old multiple choice tests, every student got the same set of questions. With computer adaptive testing, the assessment is customized to each student. During testing, the difficulty of questions changes based on student responses. If a student answered a question correctly, the next question is more challenging. If a student answers a question wrong, the next question is easier. Computer adaptive testing provides more precise information about achievement.
4. **Questions in Variety of Formats** – Unlike the old multiple choice tests where choices were provided for students, the new tests ask students to demonstrate their understanding in different ways, such as explaining their solutions or providing rationales in their writing. Students are asked to use graphing skills or listen to an audio recording and then respond to questions about what they heard. Figure 1 below provides an example of the difference between the old test and new test.

Figure 1.

Sample Mathematics Test Item: Old vs. New

Solve for x .

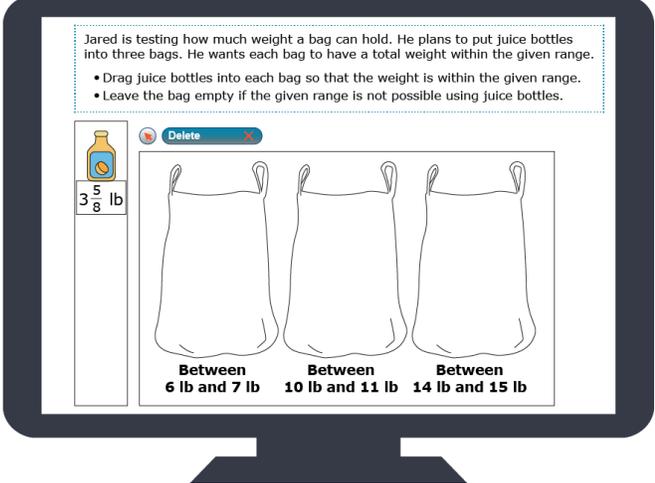
$$6\frac{2}{8} + 3\frac{5}{8} = x$$

(A) $7\frac{2}{8}$
(B) $9\frac{7}{8}$
(C) $9\frac{2}{8}$
(D) $18\frac{7}{8}$

VS

Jared is testing how much weight a bag can hold. He plans to put juice bottles into three bags. He wants each bag to have a total weight within the given range.

- Drag juice bottles into each bag so that the weight is within the given range.
- Leave the bag empty if the given range is not possible using juice bottles.



Sample English Language Arts Test Item: Old vs. New

Which two words are synonyms for heap?

(A) pile
(B) row
(C) corner
(D) mound
(E) pattern

VS

Read the sentences from the passage.

As he neared the hollow tree he heard a growing hum. He made a similar noise and he saw one or two bees land on his bear suit.

What does the use of the word similar suggest? Pick **two** choices.

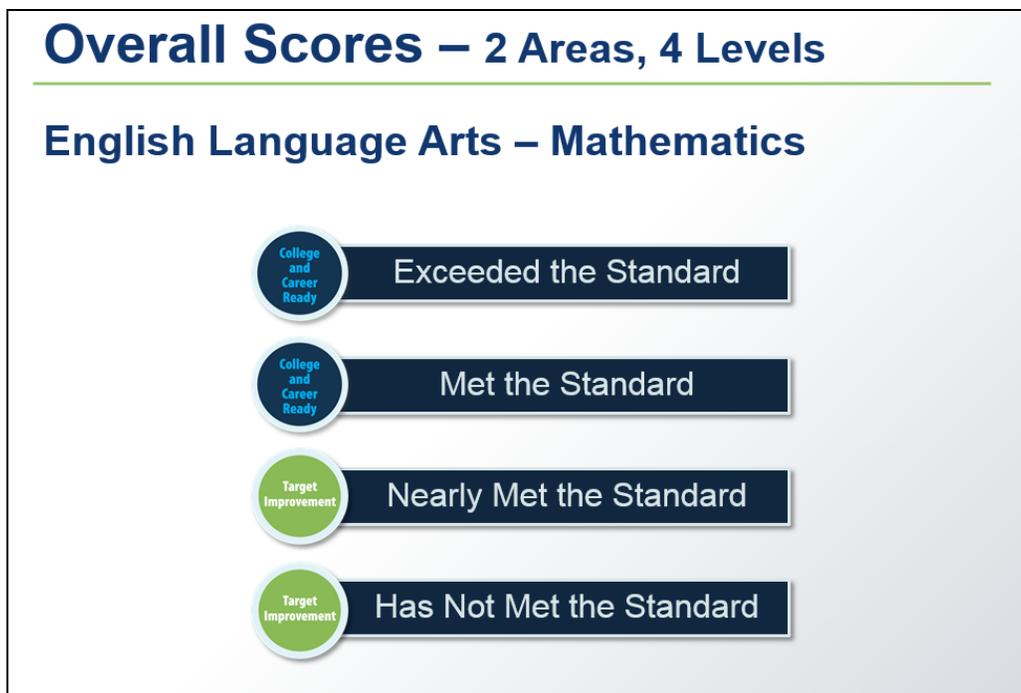
- Coyote was surprised and made an unusual sound.
- The sound Coyote made was meant to calm the bees.
- Coyote made a sound like a bear growling to tease the bees.
- The sound Coyote made blended in with the sound of the bees.
- The sound Coyote made was very loud to scare away the bees.

5. **Performance Bands and Scale Scores** – Students receive an overall score that ranges from 2,000 to 3,000 which is called a scale score. This scale score is different from the scale scores that ranged from 150 to 600 on the old tests. The scale scores are grouped into achievement levels or performance bands. There are four achievement levels for the overall score:

- Standard Exceeded
- Standard Met
- Standard Nearly Met
- Standard Not Met

Students who have met or exceeded the standard are considered to be college and career ready or have demonstrated the knowledge and skills needed for success in future coursework, as shown in Figure 2.

Figure 2.



6. Detailed Information -- The overall scores are broken into more detail for each subject area, called “claims.”

In English Language Arts, there are four claim areas:

- *Reading* – demonstrating understanding of literary and non-fiction texts
- *Writing* – producing clear and purposeful writing
- *Listening* – demonstrating effective communication skills
- *Research/Inquiry* – Investigating, analyzing and presenting information

In Mathematics, there are three claim areas:

- *Problem Solving & Modeling/Data Analysis* – using appropriate tools and strategies to solve real world and mathematical problems
- *Concepts & Procedures* – applying mathematical concepts and procedures
- *Communicating Reasoning* – demonstrating ability to support mathematical conclusions

Each claim is reported as one of three levels: Above Standard, At or Near Standard, or Below Standard.

The many differences between the new Smarter Balanced assessments and the old California Standards Tests means that comparisons **cannot** be made between the old scores and new. The percentage of students who will have “met or exceeded standards” on the new tests will be lower than the proficiency rates we have seen with the old California Standards Tests. We know that many students will need to make significant progress to reach the challenging new goals of meeting or exceeding standards. These results should be used as a baseline measure for the District in terms of future growth and goals for student progress.

The summative test results provide just one measure of student progress. In the upcoming school year, schools will have access to interim assessments through Smarter Balanced Assessment system to help teachers determine how students are progressing throughout the year. There are two types of interim assessments:

1. **Interim Comprehensive Assessment (ICA)** for grades 3-8 and 11, which uses the same blueprints as the summative test, has the same item types and formats and requires the same amount of administration time.
2. **Interim Assessment Blocks (IAB)** which assess fewer sets of skills, consists of short, focused sets of items and uses the same targets, by grade level, as the summative blueprints. These interim assessment blocks can be used in grades 3-8 and 11. The grade 11 interim assessment blocks can also be used in grades 9 and 10.

Schools will have full flexibility in the use of different interim assessment blocks or may choose to administer the interim comprehensive assessment. A Reference Guide with detailed instructions on all assessments for the 2015-16 school year will be issued shortly from the Division of Instruction.

Attached are sample student reports for grades 5, 4 and 11. If there are additional questions, feel free to contact me at (213) 241-2460.

Using Assessments to Help Students Learn

LOCAL ID #: 12357
 STUDENT #: 4444444444 DATE OF BIRTH: 02/01/1986
 GRADE: 5 TEST DATE: SPRING 2014

Dear Parent/Guardian of Emily King:

The 2015 California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress (CAASPP) included new tests for English language arts/literacy and mathematics. These new, online assessments have replaced former tests in these subject areas to provide better information and help students learn.

FOR THE PARENT/GUARDIAN OF:
Emily King
 1234 W Zoom Road 5th Building
 Alum Rock Union Elementary School District
 Lancaster, CA 95112-9282

New assessments are part of California's comprehensive plan for supporting high-quality teaching and learning. That plan includes more challenging academic standards for English language arts/literacy and mathematics designed to foster college and career readiness. This report shows Emily's achievement on these new tests. The scores should not be compared to results from the Standardized Testing and Reporting (STAR) Program tests in these subject areas. Because this is the first year that all California students in grades 3-8 and 11 are taking these new tests, Emily's overall scores may be viewed as a basis from which to compare the performance in future years.

Additionally, children in grades 5, 8, or 10 took a science test. Emily's results on California's science assessment can be found on the back of this report.

For a complete picture of your child's progress, I encourage you to discuss these results with Emily's teacher(s).

Sincerely,



Tom Torlakson,
 State Superintendent of Public Instruction



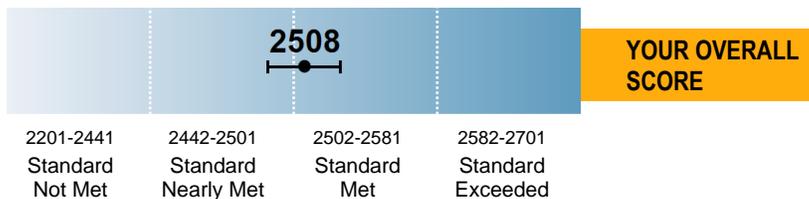
SCHOOL: Valley Academy of Arts and Sciences High School

LEA: Hamilton Unified

Emily's Results on California's Assessments

ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS/LITERACY

Emily's overall score is: **2508**

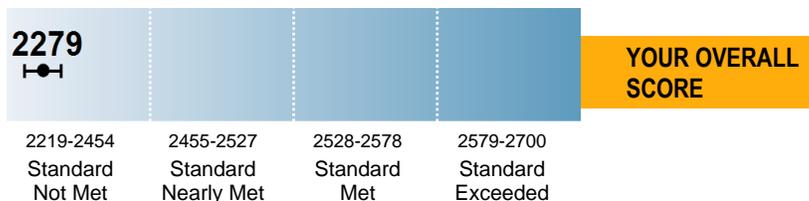


Emily met the achievement standard and demonstrated the knowledge and skills in English language arts/literacy needed for success in future coursework.

Emily's performance on the four areas that comprise this overall score can be seen on the back of this report.

MATHEMATICS

Emily's overall score is: **2279**



Emily did not meet the achievement standard and needs substantial improvement to demonstrate the knowledge and skills in mathematics needed for success in future coursework.

Emily's performance on the three areas that comprise this overall score can be seen on the back of this report.

 The bar around a score indicates the extent to which the score might have been different had the test been taken again.

More information about Emily's scores can be found on the back of this report.

Your Guide to Emily's California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress (CAASPP) Score Report

California Department of Education (CDE)

A New Kind of Test for Emily; a New Kind of Report for You

The CAASPP English language arts/literacy (ELA) and mathematics tests that Emily took in the spring more broadly reflect California's state-adopted content standards than California's old tests, with content that will be needed to prepare students for college and the 21st century job market. These new tests contain a wider variety of questions than traditional multiple-choice tests and include tasks and test items that require students to explain how they solve problems. The new tests allow students to demonstrate analytical writing, critical thinking, and problem solving skills along with their knowledge of facts in ELA and mathematics.

These new tests in ELA and mathematics also have a different scoring scale. Because they are based on different academic standards, these scores cannot be compared with scores from the Standardized Testing and Reporting (STAR) Program tests in ELA and mathematics.

These results are **one** measure of Emily's academic performance and provide limited information. Like any important measure of your child's performance, they should be viewed with other available information—such as classroom tests, assignments, and grades—and they may be used to help guide a conversation with Emily's teacher about how to progress in ELA and mathematics.

During this time of transition to new assessments, you will see additional changes in this report next year. California may also develop new assessments in other subjects, including, but not limited to science and history and social science aligned to state-adopted content standards.

Emily's Results on California's Assessments

The following chart provides a further breakdown of Emily's overall scores, represented on the front of this report. Each of the following areas may be represented as Above Standard, At or Near Standard, or Below Standard. To learn more about these tests, visit CAASPP Summative Assessments Web page at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/tg/sa/sbacsummative.asp>.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS/LITERACY

Emily's overall score is: **2508**

AREA	PERFORMANCE
Reading <i>Demonstrating understanding of literary and non-fiction texts</i>	Above Standard
Writing <i>Producing clear and purposeful writing</i>	Above Standard
Listening <i>Demonstrating effective communication skills</i>	At or Near Standard
Research/Inquiry <i>Investigating, analyzing and presenting information</i>	Above Standard

MATHEMATICS

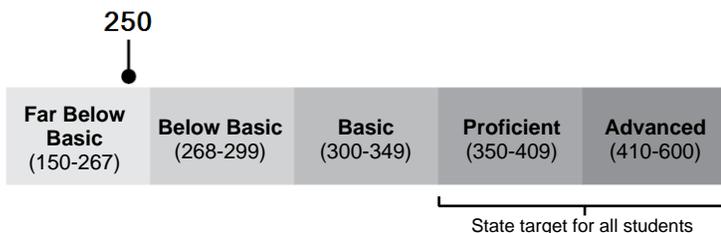
Emily's overall score is: **2279**

AREA	PERFORMANCE
Problem Solving & Modeling/Data Analysis <i>Using appropriate tools and strategies to solve real world and mathematical problems</i>	Below Standard
Concepts & Procedures <i>Applying mathematical concepts and procedures</i>	Below Standard
Communicating Reasoning <i>Demonstrating ability to support mathematical conclusions</i>	Below Standard

Emily's Results on the California Standards Test (CST)

SCIENCE

Emily's score is **250 - Far Below Basic**



Emily's score of 250 is in the Far Below Basic level on California Standards Test for science.

To meet federal test requirements, California administered the California Standards Test for science to all students in grades 5, 8, and 10. This test is not aligned with California's recently adopted Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS). Assessments based on these standards are being developed.

Using Assessments to Help Students Learn

LOCAL ID #: 12356

STUDENT #: 6666666666

GRADE: 4

DATE OF BIRTH: 02/01/1986

TEST DATE: SPRING 2014

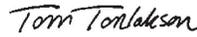
Dear Parent/Guardian of Emily Thomas:

The 2015 California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress (CAASPP) included new tests for English language arts/literacy and mathematics. These new, online assessments have replaced former tests in these subject areas to provide better information and help students learn.

New assessments are part of California's comprehensive plan for supporting high-quality teaching and learning. That plan includes more challenging academic standards for English language arts/literacy and mathematics designed to foster college and career readiness. This report shows Emily's achievement on these new tests. The scores should not be compared to results from the Standardized Testing and Reporting (STAR) Program tests in these subject areas. Because this is the first year that all California students in grades 3-8 and 11 are taking these new tests, Emily's overall scores may be viewed as a basis from which to compare the performance in future years.

For a complete picture of your child's progress, I encourage you to discuss these results with Emily's teacher(s).

Sincerely,



Tom Torlakson,
State Superintendent of Public Instruction



FOR THE PARENT/GUARDIAN OF:

Emily Thomas
1234 W Zoom Road 5th Building
Alum Rock Union Elementary School District
Lancaster, CA 95112-9282

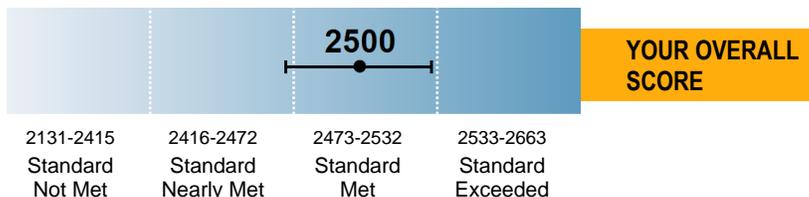
SCHOOL: Valley Academy of Arts and Sciences High School

LEA: Hamilton Unified

Emily's Results on California's Assessments

ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS/LITERACY

Emily's overall score is: **2500**

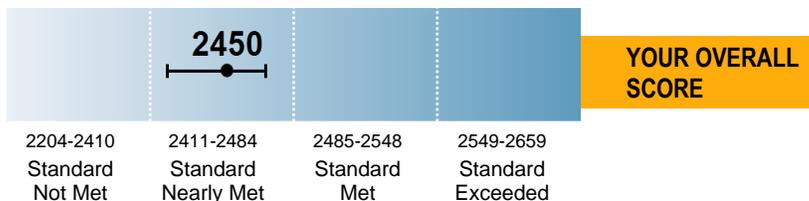


Emily met the achievement standard and demonstrated the knowledge and skills in English language arts/literacy needed for success in future coursework.

Emily's performance on the four areas that comprise this overall score can be seen on the back of this report.

MATHEMATICS

Emily's overall score is: **2450**



Emily nearly met the achievement standard and may require further development to demonstrate the knowledge and skills in mathematics needed for success in future coursework.

Emily's performance on the three areas that comprise this overall score can be seen on the back of this report.

 The bar around a score indicates the extent to which the score might have been different had the test been taken again.

More information about Emily's scores can be found on the back of this report.

To learn more about these tests, visit the CAASPP Summative Assessments Web page at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/tg/sa/sbacsummative.asp>.

Find complete results for schools, local education agencies (LEAs), and statewide at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/tg/cal> and your School Accountability Report Card (SARC) on the CDE SARC Web page at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/ac/sa> or ask for a copy of the SARC at your child's school.

Your Guide to Emily's California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress (CAASPP) Score Report

California Department of Education (CDE)

A New Kind of Test for Emily; a New Kind of Report for You

The CAASPP English language arts/literacy (ELA) and mathematics tests that Emily took in the spring more broadly reflect California's state-adopted content standards than California's old tests, with content that will be needed to prepare students for college and the 21st century job market. These new tests contain a wider variety of questions than traditional multiple-choice tests and include tasks and test items that require students to explain how they solve problems. The new tests allow students to demonstrate analytical writing, critical thinking, and problem solving skills along with their knowledge of facts in ELA and mathematics.

These new tests in ELA and mathematics also have a different scoring scale. Because they are based on different academic standards, these scores cannot be compared with scores from the Standardized Testing and Reporting (STAR) Program tests in ELA and mathematics.

These results are **one** measure of Emily's academic performance and provide limited information. Like any important measure of your child's performance, they should be viewed with other available information—such as classroom tests, assignments, and grades—and they may be used to help guide a conversation with Emily's teacher about how to progress in ELA and mathematics.

During this time of transition to new assessments, you will see additional changes in this report next year. California may also develop new assessments in other subjects, including, but not limited to science and history and social science aligned to state-adopted content standards.

Emily's Results on California's Assessments

The following chart provides a further breakdown of Emily's overall scores, represented on the front of this report. Each of the following areas may be represented as Above Standard, At or Near Standard, or Below Standard. To learn more about these tests, visit CAASPP Summative Assessments Web page at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/tg/sa/sbacsummative.asp>.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS/LITERACY

Emily's overall score is: **2500**

AREA	PERFORMANCE
Reading <i>Demonstrating understanding of literary and non-fiction texts</i>	Above Standard
Writing <i>Producing clear and purposeful writing</i>	Above Standard
Listening <i>Demonstrating effective communication skills</i>	Below Standard
Research/Inquiry <i>Investigating, analyzing and presenting information</i>	Above Standard

MATHEMATICS

Emily's overall score is: **2450**

AREA	PERFORMANCE
Problem Solving & Modeling/Data Analysis <i>Using appropriate tools and strategies to solve real world and mathematical problems</i>	At or Near Standard
Concepts & Procedures <i>Applying mathematical concepts and procedures</i>	At or Near Standard
Communicating Reasoning <i>Demonstrating ability to support mathematical conclusions</i>	At or Near Standard

A Comprehensive Plan for Student Success

These new assessments are just one part of California's comprehensive plan for supporting high-quality teaching and learning. The plan also includes higher academic standards, more decision-making in the hands of schools and communities, and more resources dedicated to schools and students with the greatest needs.

Gradually, California is providing more support for teachers, more resources for students and more access to technology. As a result, exciting changes have begun to take place. Along with reading to follow a story, students are learning to read to cite evidence and draw logical conclusions. They are learning to use math to solve real-world problems rather than merely pick out the right multiple-choice answer.

Making these changes will take time and effort, but they are designed to help students succeed in the long run and achieve their dreams of college and a career. Find out more at your child's school, or online at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/>.

Using Assessments to Help Students Learn

LOCAL ID #: 12348
 STUDENT #: 5555555555 DATE OF BIRTH: 02/01/1986
 GRADE: 11 TEST DATE: SPRING 2014

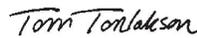
Dear Parent/Guardian of Emily Smith:

The 2015 California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress (CAASPP) included new tests for English language arts/literacy and mathematics. These new, online assessments have replaced former tests in these subject areas to provide better information and help students learn.

New assessments are part of California's comprehensive plan for supporting high-quality teaching and learning. That plan includes more challenging academic standards for English language arts/literacy and mathematics designed to foster college and career readiness. This report shows Emily's achievement on these new tests. The scores should not be compared to results from the Standardized Testing and Reporting (STAR) Program tests in these subject areas. Because this is the first year that all California students in grades 3-8 and 11 are taking these new tests, Emily's overall scores may be viewed as a basis from which to compare the performance in future years.

For a complete picture of your child's progress, I encourage you to discuss these results with Emily's teacher(s).

Sincerely,



Tom Torlakson,
State Superintendent of Public Instruction



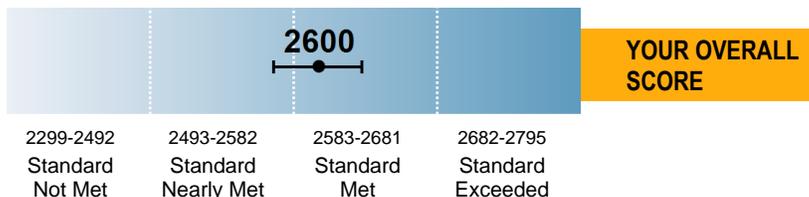
FOR THE PARENT/GUARDIAN OF:
Emily Smith
 1234 W Zoom Road 5th Building
 Alum Rock Union Elementary School District
 Lancaster, CA 95112-9282

SCHOOL: Valley Academy of Arts and Sciences High School
 LEA: Hamilton Unified

Emily's Results on California's Assessments

ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS/LITERACY

Emily's overall score is: **2600**

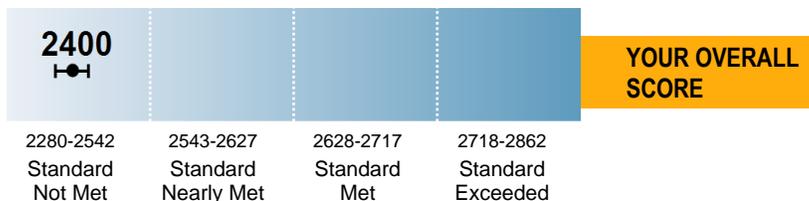


Emily met the achievement standard and demonstrated the knowledge and skills in English language arts/literacy needed for success in entry-level credit-bearing college coursework after high school.

Emily's performance on the four areas that comprise this overall score can be seen on the back of this report.

MATHEMATICS

Emily's overall score is: **2400**



Emily did not meet the achievement standard and needs substantial improvement to demonstrate the knowledge and skills in mathematics needed for success in entry-level credit-bearing college coursework after high school.

Emily's performance on the three areas that comprise this overall score can be seen on the back of this report.

 The bar around a score indicates the extent to which the score might have been different had the test been taken again.

More information about Emily's scores can be found on the back of this report.

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These new tests in ELA and mathematics also have a different scoring scale. Because they are based on different academic standards, these scores cannot be compared with scores from the Standardized Testing and Reporting (STAR) Program tests in ELA and mathematics.

These results are **one** measure of Emily's academic performance and provide limited information. Like any important measure of your child's performance, they should be viewed with other available information—such as classroom tests, assignments, and grades—and they may be used to help guide a conversation with Emily's teacher about how to progress in ELA and mathematics.

During this time of transition to new assessments, you will see additional changes in this report next year. California may also develop new assessments in other subjects, including, but not limited to science and history and social science aligned to state-adopted content standards.

Emily's Results on California's Assessments

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ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS/LITERACY

Emily's overall score is: **2600**

AREA	PERFORMANCE
Reading <i>Demonstrating understanding of literary and non-fiction texts</i>	At or Near Standard
Writing <i>Producing clear and purposeful writing</i>	At or Near Standard
Listening <i>Demonstrating effective communication skills</i>	Above Standard
Research/Inquiry <i>Investigating, analyzing and presenting information</i>	Above Standard

MATHEMATICS

Emily's overall score is: **2400**

AREA	PERFORMANCE
Problem Solving & Modeling/Data Analysis <i>Using appropriate tools and strategies to solve real world and mathematical problems</i>	Below Standard
Concepts & Procedures <i>Applying mathematical concepts and procedures</i>	Below Standard
Communicating Reasoning <i>Demonstrating ability to support mathematical conclusions</i>	Below Standard

Grade 11 – Early Assessment Program Status

The California State University (CSU) and participating California Community Colleges (CCCs) will use the English language arts/literacy and mathematics assessments of the CAASPP System to determine Emily's 2015 EAP status, which will provide an indicator of Emily's predicted readiness to take college-level English and mathematics courses when Emily begins college.

The CAASPP overall score for English language arts/literacy and mathematics on the front of this report may be used to provide an early indicator of Emily's readiness for college-level coursework, as described below.

Standard Exceeded: Ready for English and/or mathematics college-level coursework.	Standard Met: Conditionally Ready for English and/or mathematics college-level coursework.
Standard Nearly Met: Not yet demonstrating readiness for English and/or mathematics college-level coursework.	Standard Not Met: Not demonstrating readiness for English and/or mathematics college-level coursework.

Review the information at <http://CSUSuccess.org/> to see how this information can help avoid the need for additional testing upon entering a CSU or CCC.