



Curriculum and Assessment News

We ask that all students in grades 3-8 and grade 11 to complete the Smarter Balanced Practice and Training Tests at home with their parents. Use of the Smarter Balanced practice and training tests for English language arts/literacy (ELA) and mathematics will help familiarize students and their families with the testing interface, the format and type of questions, and the available accessibility resources. The practice tests may also form the foundation of a good “family conversation” and may help you create instructional materials to use at home with your students. Students who complete the practice test and know what to expect have less anxiety and feel more confident on test day, helping them perform better overall.

Quick Reference Guides are available online for Training and Practice Tests.

[Starting a Practice Test Video](#)

To learn more about how to start a training or practice test, and to view scoring guides, visit the [Test Administrator and Test Examiner Resources for the Online Practice and Training Tests](#) webpage.

The Practice Tests provide students with grade-specific testing experiences with content.

The Training Tests provide students with the opportunity to become familiar with the testing tools.

	Practice Tests	Training Tests
Purpose	Provide students with a grade-specific testing experience similar in structure and format to the summative assessments.	Provide students with an opportunity to quickly become familiar with the software and interface features. There are no performance tasks.
Grade Levels	One test for each of grades 3 through 8 and grade 11	One test for each of three grade bands: 3-5, 6-8 and high school
Items	Approximately 30 items each in ELA and Math per grade level, as well as one performance task for each subject per grade level.	Approximately 15 items per test (6 in ELA and 8–9 in math); no performance tasks are included.

Results	Results are not scored, but answer keys and scoring rubrics are available.	Results are not scored; no scoring rubrics or answer keys are available.
Universal tools, designated supports, and accommodations are available on all practice and training tests.		

Have you signed your student up for the “Grasp the CAASPP” workshops yet?

We are excited to continue our Second Annual “Grasp the CAASPP” workshops. We want to encourage all of our 3-8th and 11th grade students to actively participate. Students can win prizes and, most importantly, can increase their state assessment scores, all while having fun!

Students attend live “gaming” sessions online via Moodle where they will participate in games to practice their grade-level skills. Games include Kahoot!, Trivia, Jeopardy and more. Students will have fun practicing for the state assessment and acquiring raffle tickets to try to earn prizes.

For more information and to sign up, visit our [Grasp the CAASPP](#) website.

Click on the Live Session Schedule Tab on the website to find your grade level session dates, topics and links to join the Live Sessions. Students automatically earn “virtual tickets” when they join live sessions by completing an attendance form (provided by the instructor-facilitator) at the end of the session.

Spotlight on Curriculum

Looking for a way to make math meaningful? Check out this cool website. [Yummy Math](#) takes real life current events and challenges students in grades 3-12 with problem solving that is engaging and meaningful. Best of all, much of the content is free (and did we mention it’s yummy?)!

As always, if you have any questions regarding curriculum, please feel free to contact me via phone or e-mail at any time. You can reach me, Shoni Johnson, Curriculum and Assessment Director, at sjohnson@connectingwaters.org or call me at 800-808-9895 x252.



English Department News

All of our students in grades 4-11 have a complimentary, fully-funded, MyAccess writing license. On January 14 - CW, CV, and CWEB schools began hosting weekly writing contests using this awesome program! Winners are to be announced monthly in listserves, newsletters, and in Parent Square. They will also receive gift card prizes.

The fun began January 14 and continues until the end of April.

Weekly announcements with information and names of new prompts will be posted every Tuesday until the end of April.

The purpose of our schoolwide writing contest is:

- To provide students with fun writing opportunities.
- To allow students to demonstrate their writing talents and receive awards.
- To provide opportunities to identify strengths and weaknesses.
- To improve student writing.

[MyAccess & School](#)

username: studentID#cwcs

password: studentID#

Please encourage your student to participate in this fun activity as often as they want.

Email tmatranga@cwcharter.org if you have questions.



English Learner Department News

February 2020 CA ELD Standards and You

As a California public school, Connecting Waters Charter Schools (CWCS) follow the California state standards. These standards are a guide for you, as the parent educator, to ensure that your child is obtaining the content knowledge that they need to proceed smoothly from one grade level to the next.

Adopted in 2012, the California English Language Development Standards are the state of California's groundbreaking work that provides English learners with their own set of standards. These standards are different from the state's already established English standards. The purpose of these standards is to address language skills. In a message attached to these standards, state superintendent Tom Torlakson stated, "Last year's adoption of the California English Language Development Standards (CA ELD Standards) maintains California's commitment to providing English learner students with a high-quality program that will enable them to attain proficiency in English— developing the skills and confidence in listening, speaking, reading, and writing that are at the core of achievement inside and outside the classroom."

If you notice, the standards are broken down into the four areas of language: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. The English Language Development Standards take these areas (reading, writing, speaking, and listening) and break them down into stages

of proficiency: emerging, expanding, and bridging. Your student's ELPAC scores will give you their level of acquisition.

CWCS encourages you to use these standards to help you guide your child as they develop their English skills. Knowing what your child's level of proficiency is, can help you to tailor their learning to fit them more exactly, personalizing their learning just for them!



Dodge Ridge Ski Trip

February 28 is our next planned ski trip. Students can use their school funds to learn how to ski or snowboard. It's a fun family event and a good way to spend a day with other children.

Information for this trip can be found on Parent Square for our upcoming ski trip. You will find pricing, paperwork requirements, and participation information.

If you have any questions, you may email Daneen Campa @ dcampa@cwcharter.org or call 209-402-5633

