**California Department of Education**

# Report to the Governor, the Legislature, and the Legislative Analyst’s Office: 2023 California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress Annual Implementation Update and Five-Year Cost Projection



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*Description*: Annual update on the implementation of the California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress that covers the 2023 calendar year and provides a five-year projection of costs

*Authority:* California *Education Code* Section 60604(b)

*Recipient:* The Governor, the Legislature, and the Legislative Analyst’s Office

*Due Date:* On or before March 1 of each year

**California Department of Education**

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## Executive Summary

California *Education Code (EC)* Section 60604(b) requires that the State Superintendent of Public Instruction annually update the California State Legislature on an implementation plan, five-year cost projection, and timeline for implementing the California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress (CAASPP) System. This report covers the 2023 calendar year. It is divided into the following sections:

* **Program Information**—Background information on the CAASPP System, its history, purpose, and components.
* **Implementation Update**—A brief discussion of CAASPP implementation activities during the 2023 calendar year.
* **Contract Costs**—Costs and other information regarding the various types of CAASPP contracts, which includes state-managed services contract costs, extending through fiscal year (FY) 2027–28. The current test administration contract (CN220002) with the testing contractor Educational Testing System (ETS) began on July 1, 2022, and will end on December 31, 2027, for the following administrations: 2023, 2024, 2025, 2026, and 2027.
* **Apportionment Costs**—Annual CAASPP apportionment reimbursements to local educational agencies (LEAs).
* **Five-Year Cost Projection**—Projected annual CAASPP contract and LEA apportionment costs; this includes a timeline of the assessments that are anticipated to be a part of each CAASPP test administration.

You will find this report on the California Department of Education (CDE) Implementation of CAASPP web page at <https://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/tg/ca/caasppimplementation.asp>. If you need a copy of this report, please contact Chad Portney, Associate Director, Assessment Development and Administration Division, at 916-319-0575 or [cportney@cde.ca.gov](mailto:cportney@cde.ca.gov).

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## Program Information

The CAASPP System was established in California *EC* sections 60640 through 60648.5.

The purpose of the CAASPP System is to provide a system of assessments to support educators and administrators in promoting high-quality teaching and learning by using a variety of assessment approaches. Statute provides for the development and administration of assessments through technology, where feasible.

This report provides information on the CAASPP System as it relates to *EC* Section 60604(b), which requires the State Superintendent of Public Instruction to develop and annually provide to the California State Legislature an update on an implementation plan, a five-year cost projection, and a timeline for implementing the CAASPP System.

Per *EC* Section 60605.7, California became a governing state in the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium (Consortium) in June 2011 and worked on the development of English language arts/literacy (ELA) and mathematics assessments. As stipulated in *EC* Section 60640(b)(1), the Consortium assessments measure the Common Core State Standards for ELA and mathematics adopted by the California State Board of Education (SBE). The Smarter Balanced Assessment System comprises three components: summative assessments; interim assessments; and Tools for Teachers, a compendium of formative assessment resources designed to support instruction and professional learning throughout the year.

As addressed in state law, the CAASPP summative assessments include the following:

* Smarter Balanced Summative Assessments for ELA and mathematics
* California Science Test (CAST)
* California Alternate Assessments (CAAs) for ELA, mathematics, and science for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities, as designated in their individualized education programs (IEPs)
* California Spanish Assessment (CSA) for Spanish reading/language arts (optional)

The CAASPP summative assessments are computer-based tests that measure what students know and can do. These assessments produce scores that can be aggregated and disaggregated for the purpose of informing parents/guardians, LEAs, the public, and the state about students’ achievement in their learning of the California academic content standards. The CAASPP summative assessments (1) provide individual student results to students, parents/guardians, and teachers; (2) produce school-, district-, and county-level results that allow for the monitoring of schools’ progress; and (3) produce results to meet the requirements of the federal Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), enacted on December 10, 2015, and the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965. Under the federal requirements of ESSA, all states receiving Title I federal funds for use by LEAs must assess students as follows:

* For ELA and mathematics, assessments are administered annually in grades three through eight and once in high school.
* For science, assessments are administered annually (once in grades three through five, once in grades six through eight, and once in high school [i.e., grade ten, eleven, or twelve]).

CAASPP summative assessments were used to meet federal requirements in   
2022–23 through the administration of the following:

* The Smarter Balanced Summative Assessments and the CAAs for ELA and mathematics in grades three through eight and grade eleven
* The CAST and CAA for Science in grades five and eight and once in high school (i.e., grade ten, eleven, or twelve)

All contracts for the development, purchase, or administration of the CAASPP tests are subject to approval by the CDE, the SBE, and the Department of Finance (DOF), per *EC* Section 60643(b)(1). The SBE’s approval must be obtained for the following work components:

* The test blueprints—excluding Consortium assessments—that specify the standards to be assessed and the number of items to be tested for each standard included in the tests.
* The achievement levels used in the CAASPP System and the threshold scores—excluding Consortium assessments—used to identify students’ achievement levels.
* The regulations, testing period, and calendar of when results are to be delivered to the state, LEAs, and parents/guardians and when results are to be posted for the public.

The ETS contract also calls for the development of a plan for continuous improvement. ETS worked with the CDE to create a plan that supports continuous improvement of the California Assessment System, which includes CAASPP and the English Language Proficiency Assessments for California (ELPAC). In addition to opportunities for improvement identified in the plan, ETS proposed opportunities for program improvements that have emerged over multiple years. More information regarding the CAASPP is available on the CDE CAASPP System web page at <https://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/tg/ca/>.

Tables 1 and 2 identify the required and optional CAASPP assessments that were administered in 2022–23.

**Table 1: CAASPP Required Assessments Administered in 2022–23 by Grade and Content Area**

| **Test** | **Type** | **Students** | **Grades** | **Content Area(s)** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Smarter Balanced Summative Assessments for ELA and mathematics | Computer adaptive  test | All students, unless they have an IEP indicating an alternate assessment (recently arrived English learner [EL] students are exempted from the ELA assessment) | Third through eighth and eleventh | ELA and mathematics |
| CAST | Computer-based test | All students, unless they have an IEP indicating an alternate assessment (i.e., CAA for Science) | Fifth, eighth, and once in high school | Science |
| CAAs for ELA and mathematics | Computer-based  test | Students with the most significant cognitive disabilities whose IEPs indicate assessment with an alternate test (i.e., CAA) (recently arrived EL students are exempted from the ELA assessment) | Third through eighth and eleventh | ELA and mathematics |
| CAA for Science | Computer-based test | Students with the most significant cognitive disabilities whose IEPs indicate assessment with an alternate test (i.e., CAA for Science) | Fifth, eighth, and once in high school | Science |

**Table 2: Optional CAASPP Assessments and Assessment Tools Available in 2022–23 by Grade and Content Area**

| **Test/Tool** | **Type** | **Students** | **Grades** | **Content Area(s)** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Interim Assessments | Computer-based test | All students | Kindergarten through twelfth (K–12) | ELA, mathematics, science, and ELPAC |
| Tools for Teachers | N/A | All students | K–12 | ELA, mathematics, and science |
| CSA | Computer-based test | All students | Third through eighth and high school | Spanish reading/ language arts |

California continues full statewide testing in person. Remote testing continues to be availablethrough a computer-based system where either the student(s) or test administrator is not onsite. Remote administration is intended as an option for LEAs only when students are receiving remote instruction. Students receiving in-person instruction should be tested in person.

## Implementation Update

### Content Standards

There were no changes to the content standards for any of the summative assessments during this reporting period.

#### Periodic Updates of Assessment Developments

The 2023 activities carried out in support of periodic updates of assessment developments were as follows:

* In January, the CDE provided the SBE with an update on the federal peer review process, 2022–23 California Assessment System testing windows, the Smarter Balanced Interim Assessments for ELA and mathematics, the Smarter Balanced Demonstration of Concept Study, and new instructional and professional learning resources to support integrated deeper learning.
* In February, the CDE provided to the SBE reports on the California Assessment System feedback, which provided key information and direction for the CDE to consider in determining future assessment-related outreach efforts. In addition, the CDE provided an update on the development of the interim assessments for CAST and ELPAC.
* In March, the SBE participated in a discussion about the California Assessment System to provide groundwork for emerging trends in K–12 assessment innovation.
* In May, the SBE approved the proposed 2022–23 apportionment rates for the CAASPP. In addition, the CDE provided a summary of program activities, including updates on the CAASPP student score report (SSR) redesign, development of composite claims for the Consortium, California Educator Reporting System (CERS) webinars, interim formative assessment training series, and asynchronous hand-scoring training for educators.
* In June, the CDE provided the SBE with an update on the CAASPP SSRs redesign and development.
* In July, the CDE provided the SBE with an update related to the 2022–23 test results that were made available to LEAs, SSR redesign feedback and development, federal peer review, 2023–24 CERS trainings, interim assessments, and Tools for Teachers.
* In September, the SBE approved the proposed 2023–24 CAASPP SSRs. The CDE also provided information to the SBE about program developments and updates related to the interim assessments for CAST.
* In November, the SBE approved the pursuit of a waiver for the 2023–24 school year of the 1.0 percent cap on the percentage of eligible students with the most significant cognitive disabilities who may be assessed with an alternate assessment aligned with Alternate Academic Achievement Standards for ELA, mathematics, and science. The CDE also provided the SBE with an update on the CAASPP 2022–23 results release.

### Informational Materials

The 2023 activities in support of informational materials were as follows:

* The CDE, in coordination with testing contractor ETS, provided opportunities for teacher participation in the form of item writing workshops, item review meetings, data review meetings, and range finding. In addition, outreach activities such as webcasts, pre-test workshops, and the Data Leadership Training Series communicated key information to LEAs and were reported in CAASPP update items for the SBE.
* The CDE met with the Regional Assessment Network, a subcommittee of the Curriculum and Instruction Steering Committee of the California County Superintendents Educational Services Association, five times during the year to elicit feedback on informational materials and activities under development for all California assessments. This committee is also charged with disseminating information on behalf of the CDE.
* The CDE met monthly with representatives from California educational associations to share assessment-related topics and receive feedback to help inform the ongoing work of the CDE Assessment Development and Administration Division.
* The CDE participated in four Bilingual Coordinators Network meetings to share assessment updates and gather feedback. CDE staff attend these meetings throughout the year.
* In coordination with Sacramento County Office of Education, the CDE conducted quarterly meetings for charter school assessment coordinators. These meetings offered targeted support to charter school assessment coordinators and administrators through the sharing of assessment updates, best practices, and support networks.
* The CDE participated in two Consortium collaboration meetings and two Technical Advisory Committee meetings. Member states met once in person and once virtually to collaborate, plan, and prepare for the implementation of ongoing enhancements to the Smarter Balanced assessments. They covered such topics as item and test development, scoring, and reporting. The Technical Advisory Committee members provided guidance on technical assessment matters pertaining to the validity, reliability, accuracy, and fairness of those assessments.
* Throughout the year, the CDE’s weekly newsletter, *Assessment Spotlight,* was disseminated to all CAASPP listserv subscribers and others—a total of more than 17,830 recipients—to alert them to the latest information about the testing programs.
* Throughout the year, the CDE offered training to new CAASPP coordinators to support them in their new roles.
* From January through May, the CDE offered a live training series called Data-Driven Decision-Making. Three modules were presented multiple times for district and site coordinators, curriculum leads, and teacher leaders or coaches.
* During February and March, the CDE offered Interim Assessment Hand-Scoring Workshop sessions for teachers. Understanding the process of hand-scoring Smarter Balanced Assessment items helps teachers deepen their understanding of the content standards, strengthens their evaluation of student work, and uses student results to inform teaching and learning.
* On February 24, the CDE presented to 20 special education educators at the 2023 California Association of Resource and Special Educators Conference in Sacramento on how to support special education students in the classroom and on California assessment with the use of accessibility resources.
* On March 17, the CDE presented to 30 educators at the 2023 Computer-Using Educators Conference in Palm Springs on how to assign the correct accessibility resources to students to help support them with the California assessments. In addition, the CDE managed a table and answered questions from various attendees.
* On March 24 to 26, the CDE presented to 100 California bilingual educators at the 2023 California Association for Bilingual Education Conference in Irvine to support multilingual and EL students with the Tools for Teachers website (<https://www.smartertoolsforteachers.org/>), how the California assessments support multilingual and EL students, and a workshop on accessibility resources.
* On July 7, the CDE presented to 40 Special Education educators at the 2023 Special Education Local Plan Area Conference in Sacramento on updates to the CAAs and the ELPAC, including the new IEP Alternate Assessment Decision-Making Worksheet, a tool to help identify students eligible to take the CAAs, and the ELPAC Domain Exemptions process.
* In July, August, September, October, and November, the CDE offered a virtual Interim and Formative Assessment Training Series. This training for classroom teachers and administrators focused on the design of CAASPP and ELPAC interim assessments, hand-scoring for Smarter Balanced Interim Assessment items for ELA and mathematics, and how to use the interim assessments and formative assessment resources on the Tools for Teachers website to support teaching and learning.
* In August, the CDE hosted a series of sessions for the Assessment and Accountability Information meeting for CAASPP, ELPAC, and accountability coordinators.
* In October, the CDE held its fifth annual California Assessment Conference in Sacramento. This conference for classroom teachers offered opportunities for participants to explore the connection between assessments and classroom instruction, hear from other educators about their experiences with the comprehensive assessment system, and learn how to use assessment resources.
* On October 5, the CDE presented at the 2023 CodeStack Conference in San Diego to 20 California special education educators on the availability of accessibility resources and how to assign accessibility resources and provided an update to the CAAs that included the new Alternate Assessment Decision-Making Worksheet.
* On October 9, the CDE presented at the 2023 California Assessment Conference in Sacramento to 31 California educators on Science Resources in Tools for Teachers.
* On October 21, ETS and the CDE presented to 90 science educators at the 2023 California Science Education Conference workshop on the new CAST Interim Assessments and upcoming innovations. The CDE also presented an automated tool to support three-dimensional student feedback and instruction. The workshop was held in Palm Springs.
* On November 14, the CDE presented to 20 California education researchers and educators at the 2023 California Education Research Association Conference in Anaheim on the new CAST interim assessments. The CDE also presented to 20 educators regarding an automated tool to support three-dimensional student feedback and instruction.

### Interest Holder Input

The 2023 implementation activities in support of interest holder input were as follows:

* The CDE conducted monthly meetings with the Assessment Interest Holder Committee to provide a forum for sharing information about state assessment-related developments and receiving feedback. The members of this committee included representatives from key California educational associations:
  + Advisory Commission on Special Education
  + Association of California School Administrators
  + California Association of Bilingual Educators
  + California Federation of Teachers
  + California Parent–Teacher Association
  + California School Boards Association
  + California Science Teachers Association
  + California Small School District Association
  + California Teachers Association
  + Californians Together
  + Special Education Local Plan Area Association
* Bimonthly meetings were held in 2023 with the Curriculum and Instruction Steering Committee’s Regional Assessment Network, consisting of representatives from all 11 of the network’s regions throughout California. This group meets bimonthly following SBE meetings. The CDE’s Assessment Development and Administration Division highlighted the latest developments and activities for all statewide assessments at each meeting. The 2023 meeting dates were as follows:
  + January 25
  + March 15
  + May 24
  + September 20
  + November 8

### Practice and Training Tests

The 2023 implementation activities in support of practice and training tests were as follows:

* In July, the Consortium made the 2023–24 Smarter Balanced Practice and Training Tests for ELA and mathematics content update and the administration packages available to Consortium members.
* The CAST Training test was updated with new items.
* Each Smarter Balanced item with an American Sign Language (ASL) video was included in the update packages. The ASL videos were updated to be consistent with the ASL videos included in the interim and summative assessments.
* The CSA training test was updated to include a cover page with instructions in English and Spanish, a recording check, a speaking item, and a writing item to support the expansion of the CSA.

### Regulations

Revisions to the CAASPP regulations (described in the 2022 CAASPP Annual Implementation Update and Five-year Cost Projection, which is available on the CDE Implementation of CAASPP web page at <https://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/tg/ca/caasppimplementation.asp>) were approved by the Office of Administrative Law on October 31, 2022, and became effective beginning January 1, 2023. No new changes were made to the CAASPP regulations in 2023.

### Contracts

In the 2023 calendar year, the California Assessment System was working under three contracts: one Consortium-managed contract and two state-managed contracts.

In January 2022, the SBE approved the contract extension for the Consortium-managed services contract with the Regents of the University of California (CN170202) through June 30, 2027, to continue the customization, configuration, and implementation of the CERS.

The California Assessment System was operating under two contracts with ETS (CN150012 and CN220002). The contract for the 2022 administration, CN150012, concluded on June 30, 2023. The SBE approved the negotiated contract (CN220002) in November 2021. Work under this negotiated contract with ETS began on July 1, 2022, and will end on December 31, 2027, for the following administrations: 2023, 2024, 2025, 2026, and 2027. The CDE underwent a contract transition and closed out the deliverables from the last contract while beginning a new contract to ensure smooth implementation of all statewide assessment activities.

### Technology Readiness

The 2023 implementation activities in support of technology readiness were as follows:

* The CDE worked with the K–12 High-Speed Network to successfully complete all of the 267 Broad Infrastructure and Improvement Grant (BIIG 2.0) projects as of December 31. This brings the total completed projects to 430, which benefited 94,525 students served.
* The CDE continued to work with its contractor to enhance the Assessment Technology Platform solution to implement efficiencies and improve user experience with the California Assessment Delivery System, which includes all components required to deliver the Smarter Balanced and non-Smarter Balanced assessments (which include the CAST, CAAs, CSA, and ELPAC).

### Test Security

No test security incidents occurred that compromised the integrity of the assessments for this reporting period.

### Performance Standards

There were no changes for this reporting period.

### Reporting of Results

For the 2022–23 administration, all CAASPP results were reported through SSRs, CERS, and the Test Results for California Assessments website. Results for each of the CAASPP assessments are reported as an overall scale score and an overall achievement level. Results for the Smarter Balanced Summative Assessments for ELA and mathematics and the CAST also include subscores—known as claim results for the Smarter Balanced Assessments for ELA and mathematics—and domain results for the CAST. For example, the four reported claims for the Smarter Balanced Assessment for ELA are Reading, Writing, Listening, and Research/Inquiry, and the three reported domains for the CAST are Earth and Space Sciences, Life Sciences, and Physical Sciences.

In September 2022, the SBE approved the continued use of the adjusted form blueprint for the Smarter Balanced Summative Assessments for ELA and mathematics. Due to fewer items on the adjusted form blueprints for the Smarter Balanced Summative Assessments for ELA and mathematics, claim results were only available on the Test Results for California’s Assessments website for student groups of 30 students or more.

Target reports for Smarter Balanced ELA and mathematics were reintroduced to CERS for the 2022–23 administration after not being available in 2020–21 and 2021–22 due to California revaluating target reporting using the adjusted blueprint. An assessment target defines the grade-specific knowledge, skill, or ability that students should know or be able to demonstrate within a domain in either ELA or mathematics. The assessment target reports provide educators with additional information about groups of students at the more granular target level.

In 2023, the CDE and ETS began the redesign of SSRs for all CAASPP assessments. All revisions to CAASPP SSRs originated from feedback gathered from parents, guardians, students, educators, and interest holders. In September 2023, the SBE approved the redesigned SSRs, which are scheduled to go into effect beginning in the 2023–24 school year. Enhancements to the SSRs include improved visual displays for student scores and score history, score comparisons with state and school score averages, scores for the Smarter Balanced ELA essay question, as well as Lexile and Quantile measures. Beginning in 2023–24, subscores for ELA and mathematics will again be provided on SSRs with the addition of composite claim results for the Smarter Balanced Summative Assessments for ELA and mathematics.

### Peer Review Status

The CDE’s assessments are required to undergo a federal peer review process during which the CDE submits documents to the U.S. Department of Education (ED) demonstrating that California’s assessments meet the federal requirements for validity, reliability, and fairness established for states by ESSA. As new assessments become operational, the CDE must provide additional evidence for peer review and cover each assessment that is required under ESSA. Peer review is often an iterative process with states submitting additional evidence to meet the requirements as the evidence becomes available. The four possible outcomes are “meets requirements,” “substantially meets requirements,” “partially meets requirements,” and “does not meet requirements.” Both “meets requirements” and “substantially meets requirements” are passing results for peer review. The status of each California assessment subject to the peer review process is as follows:

* **Smarter Balanced Summative Assessments for ELA and mathematics**—In November 2022, the ED notified the CDE that it met all requirements for these assessments based on the full form blueprints. Continued use of the adjusted blueprints will require additional evidence submissions. The CDE, in partnership with the Consortium, will submit supplemental evidence related to the adjusted blueprints in 2024.
* **CAAs for ELA and mathematics**—In November 2022, the ED notified the CDE that a small number of additional documents are required to fully meet requirements (e.g., evidence related to procedures for hand-scored items). The CDE submitted this additional evidence in June 2023 and anticipates feedback from ED in early 2024.
* **CAA for Science**—The 2020–21 administration was the first operational field test of the CAA for Science. However, due to the pandemic and the requirement to test students in person for the CAA for Science, the number of students who completed testing was insufficient to complete the standard-setting process. Therefore, the CAA for Science had a second operational field test year beginning in September 2021. The CDE submitted its first submission for the CAA for Science in June 2023 and anticipates receiving feedback from ED in early 2024.
* **CAST**—The CAST was first administered operationally in 2018–19. The CDE submitted over 200 documents in support of the CAST peer review in December 2021. In November 2022, the CDE received a rating of “substantially meets requirements” from the ED for this submission. The CDE submitted additional documents to fulfill the ED’s outstanding requirements in June 2023 and anticipates receiving feedback from ED in early 2024.

## Smarter Balanced Assessments

The 2023 implementation activities in support of the Smarter Balanced Summative Assessments, interim assessments, and Tools for Teachers were as follows:

### Summative Assessments

* Educators from Consortium member states convened virtually for several annual development activities that included item writing training, item review, data review, and range finding. California educators participated in these events.

### Interim Assessments

* In 2023, the Smarter Balanced Interim Assessments for ELA and mathematics remained available to LEAs for both in-person and remote-based learning. Over 200 Smarter Balanced Interim Assessments were available for use, which included 114 for ELA and 95 for mathematics.
* In October 2023, the CDE made available to LEAs the first nine interim assessments for CAST.
* By December 31, 2023, LEAs had administered the following numbers of interim assessments since they became available for the 2023–24 school year:
  + More than one million Smarter Balanced ELA interim assessments
  + More than one million mathematics interim assessments
  + More than 23,000 CAST interim assessments

### Tools for Teachers

* The Tools for Teachers website continued to provide instructional lesson plans and professional learning activities using the formative assessment process with embedded strategies for instructional differentiation.
* In June 2023, the CDE conducted a science formative assessment resource development workshop and added 10 science instructional resources for kindergarten through high school to Tools for Teachers. As of December 30, 2023, 78 science instructional resources were available to educators in Tools for Teachers for California LEAs.
* The Consortium added 60 new ELA and mathematics instructional resources for grades three through twelve.

### California Alternate Assessments for English Language Arts and Mathematics

The 2023 implementation activities in support of the CAAs for ELA and mathematics included the following:

* On January 10, the CAAs for ELA and mathematics became available to LEAs to begin administration.
* On June 27 and 28, the CDE conducted a virtual Alternate Assessments data review meeting where participants reviewed data on the performance of items on the CAAs for ELA and mathematics.
* From October 3 to 5, educators throughout the state convened virtually for item writing and item review workshops. These workshops supported the ongoing development work for the CAAs for ELA and mathematics by refreshing the item banks and providing practice tests.

### California Science Test

The 2023 implementation activities in support of the CAST were as follows:

* On January 10, the CAST became available for administration by LEAs.
* On January 17–18, January 24–25, March 16–17, and March 21, the CDE conducted virtual item review meetings with educators to evaluate CAST assessment items for the field test segments.
* On April 4 to 6, the CDE conducted a virtual Phase 1 CAST range finding meeting with 29 California science educators to score student responses for constructed-response items and identify samples of student responses for training purposes.
* From May 9 to 11, the CDE conducted a virtual CAST item writing workshop involving 25 educators to support the ongoing development of the CAST by refreshing the item banks. These workshops also provide professional development for California educators about the test development process.
* From June 21 to 22, the CDE conducted a virtual CAST data review meeting with 21 California science educators where participants reviewed data on operational CAST items to discuss how they performed.
* From June 27 to 29, the CDE conducted a virtual Alternate Assessments data review meeting that included 22 California science educators. During this meeting, participants reviewed data on operational CAA for Science items to discuss how they performed.

### Science Instructional Resources

The CDE continues to add resources to support the CAST. In June 2023, the CDE conducted the 2023 Science Instructional Resource Development Workshop in Sacramento with 16 California educators. This was a hybrid workshop that included asynchronous training and three days of in-person training. The workshop was designed to develop science resources spanning from kindergarten through high school for inclusion on the Tools for Teachers website. These resources cover all three science domains (Earth and Space Sciences, Life Sciences, and Physical Sciences) and include Engineering, Technology, and Applications of Science. The CDE posted 10 new resources on the Tools for Teachers website. A total of 78 science formative assessment resources are now available for teachers to use in the classroom.

### Development of Science Interim Assessments

The CDE released the first set of interim assessments aligning with the California Next Generation Science Standards. Grades three, four, and five have one interim assessment per grade, each of which covers all three California Next Generation Science Standards domains—Earth and Space Sciences, Life Sciences, and Physical Sciences. Middle and high schools have three interim assessments each, with one for each domain. The purpose of these interim assessments is to improve teaching and learning in the classroom. A second set of interim assessments will be released in 2024–25.

### California Science Test Assessment Innovations

Throughout the year, the CDE worked with ETS to conduct a review of existing performance tasks (PTs) and assemble a framework for the use of PTs in assessment systems approved in the new contract. A group of science educators and assessment experts identified features that they recommend should be prioritized for implementation in the contexts of classroom and summative assessment use. The CAST Innovations Concept Paper, required in the California Assessment System contract, was presented to the SBE for approval of receipt at the January 2024 SBE meeting. This concept paper describes the research conducted by the contractor and a proposal for an innovative approach for future design and development of the CAST. The proposed approach would include PTs embedded in learning that provide teachers and students with authentic and engaging experiences through science. The CDE also requested feedback and direction from the SBE on next steps in relation to the concept paper.

### California Alternate Assessment for Science

The 2023 implementation activities in support of the CAA for Science were as follows:

* On June 28 and 29, the CDE conducted a virtual CAA for Science data review meeting with seven California special education and science educators to review data on the performance of operational items from the PTs. In September, the CAA for Science test became available to LEAs.
* On October 24 and 25, the CDE conducted a virtual CAA for Science item writer workshop with 12 California special education and science educators. Participants developed items aligned with the specifications for operational PTs.

### California Spanish Assessment

The 2023 implementation activities in support of the CSA were as follows:

* On January 10, the CSA became available to LEAs for administration.
* In March and April, the CDE conducted an item review meeting with educators to review items for issues related to content, bias, and sensitivity that may affect the performance of particular groups of students.
* In April, a usability pilot was conducted at two schools to ensure that the integration of Speaking assessment items into the CSA would be successful.
* In June, the CDE conducted a data review meeting with California educators to discuss the performance of items that had been field-tested in the spring 2023 administration.

### Expansion of Speaking and Writing Domains

The CDE is in the second year of expansion of the CSA. The CSA is an optional assessment administered to students in grades three through eight and high school who seek a measure of their Spanish skills in reading, writing mechanics, and listening. This expansion will include an assessment of speaking and writing. Once the expanded CSA becomes operational, the CDE will recommend to the Legislature that the CSA be included as one of the options to meet, in part, the requirements for the State Seal of Biliteracy.

In 2023, ETS conducted a rigorous item development process that produced items for the new speaking and full-write essay items with educators. These items will be field tested during the 2023–24 administration. Additionally, a usability pilot was conducted based on the high-level test design that proposed the administration of speaking items in a group setting. Results were positive and confirmed this approach.

### Early Assessment Program

Grade eleven Smarter Balanced Summative Assessments for ELA and mathematics results continued to be used for the Early Assessment Program in collaboration with the California State University. Results are only used to determine a student’s placement after he or she has been admitted to a California State University. Some (not all) California Community Colleges accept Early Assessment Program scores. Students may submit a copy of their score report to a California Community College if requested.

### Grade Two Diagnostic Assessments for English Language Arts and Mathematics

With the sunset of the Standardized Testing and Reporting Program for ELA and mathematics in 2013, the requirement that students in grade two participate in the summative assessment was eliminated. To ensure that teachers have information about the developing language arts and computational skills of their grade two students, *EC* Section 60644 required the CDE to gather information regarding existing diagnostic assessments, evaluate that information to ensure that the legal requirements and other criteria are met, and make the information available to LEAs.

The requirement was met in 2014, as described in the CDE memo to the SBE with the subject line “Plan for Senate Bill 247 Grade Two Diagnostic Test List” (<https://www.cde.ca.gov/be/pn/im/documents/memo-dsib-adad-oct14item03.doc>). The CDE continues to receive inquiries from testing vendors about the possible inclusion of their assessment on the list that appears on the CDE Grade Two Diagnostics Assessments web page at <https://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/tg/da/>. The CDE’s response to those inquiries is that funds must be appropriated by the Legislature to repeat the evaluation. Apportionment records show that these assessments are administered to more than 185,000 students during most testing years.

#### Contract Costs

CAASPP contract costs require SBE approval and are contingent on the review of the contract by the DOF during contract negotiations. Per *EC*Section 60643, the CDE, in consultation with the SBE, may make material amendments to the contract that do not increase the contract cost. Contract amendments that increase contract costs may be made only with the approval of the CDE, the SBE, and the DOF. As of the date of this report, the CAASPP System includes the following contracts: (1) Consortium-managed services, (2) state-managed services, and (3) independent evaluation.

### Smarter Balanced Consortium-Managed Services Contract

The Consortium-managed services contract is a multiyear, sole-source contract with costs based on an annual fee structure for Consortium services provided by a Consortium-selected contractor. This contract provides California with access to Smarter Balanced Summative Assessment items for statewide testing; the ongoing refreshment of Smarter Balanced test items, validation research, blueprint realignment, and accommodations and accessibility research; access to Smarter Balanced Interim Assessments for K–12 teachers for optional use; and access to formative tools in the Smarter Balanced Tools for Teachers website, which also are for K–12 teachers’ optional use.

The original CDE contract with the Regents of the University of California, which represented the Santa Cruz campus for the Consortium, began on July 1, 2017, and ended on June 30, 2022. In November 2018, the SBE approved a request by the CDE to amend the contract to include activities related to the reporting of assessment results to educators. In January 2022, the SBE approved the contract extension through June 30, 2027, to continue the customization, configuration, and implementation of the CERS. The total contract amount is $94,817,000.

Table 3 provides a breakdown of contract costs for the current Regents of the University of California, on behalf of the Santa Cruz campus, per FY.

**Table 3: Consortium-Managed Services Contract Costs**

| **Fiscal Year** | **Total Cost** | **Package** | **Per-Student Rate** | **Students[[1]](#footnote-2)** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 2022–23 | $4,534,292[[2]](#footnote-3) membership fee and $495,255 educator reporting activities | Summative, Interim, Tools for Teachers, and educator reporting | $9 Summative, Interim, and Tools for Teachers | 1 million (cap) |
| 2023–24 | $9,000,000 membership fee and $507,001 educator reporting activities | Summative, Interim, Tools for Teachers, and educator reporting | $9 Summative, Interim, and Tools for Teachers | 1 million (cap) |
| 2024–25 | $9,000,000 membership fee and $524,117 educator reporting activities | Summative, Interim, Tools for Teachers, and educator reporting | $9 Summative, Interim, and Tools for Teachers | 1 million (cap) |
| 2025–26 | $9,000,000 membership fee and $541,942 educator reporting activities | Summative, Interim, Tools for Teachers, and educator reporting | $9 Summative, Interim, and Tools for Teachers | 1 million (cap) |
| 2026–27 | $9,000,000 membership fee and $560,517 educator reporting activities | Summative, Interim, Tools for Teachers, and educator reporting | $9 Summative, Interim, and Tools for Teachers | 1 million (cap) |

### State-Managed Services Contract

The state-managed services contract is a multiyear contract for the annual administration of all CAASPP assessments, including the Smarter Balanced assessments. This contract was competitively bid through a Request for Submission process with input from CDE and SBE staff. In that process, the SBE designated the contractor. As allowed by state law, the final Scope of Work and budget were then negotiated and approved by the CDE, the SBE, and the DOF.

The contract for the 2022 administration, CN150012, concluded on June 30, 2023. The SBE approved the negotiated contract (CN220002) in November 2021, with the work under this contract with ETS beginning on July 1, 2022, and ending on December 31, 2027.

Tables 4 and 5 provide a breakdown of the current contract costs per FY.

**Table 4: State-Managed Services Contract Costs for CN150012**

| **Fiscal Year** | **Total Cost** | **Cost Breakdown per Test Administration** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| 2018–19 | $82,754,000 | * $5,380,178 for 2017–18 test administration costs * $77,373,822 for 2018–19 test administration costs |
| 2019–20 | $76,846,831 | * $1,578,399 for 2018–19 test administration costs * $75,268,432 for 2019–20 test administration costs |
| 2020–21 | $76,565,323 | * $2,369,536 for 2019–20 test administration costs * $74,195,787 for 2020–21 test administration costs |
| 2021–22 | $76,674,757 | * $2,651,082 for 2020–21 test administration costs * $74,023,675 for 2021–22 test administration costs |
| 2022–23 | $3,000,000 | * $3,000,000 for 2021–22 test administration costs |

**Table 5: State-Managed Services Contract Costs for CN220002**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Fiscal Year** | **Total Cost** | **Cost Breakdown per Test Administration** |
| 2023–24 | $66,124,917 | * $193,703 for 2022–23 test administration costs * $65,417,111 for 2023–24 test administration costs * $514,103 for 2024–25 test administration costs |
| 2024–25 | $66,846,717 | * $202,085 for 2023–24 test administration costs * $66,101,719 for 2024–25 test administration costs * $542,913 for 2025–26 test administration costs |
| 2025–26 | $66,326,669 | * $210,864 for 2024–25 test administration costs * $65,607,690 for 2025–26 test administration costs * $508,115 for 2026–27 test administration cost |
| 2026–27 | $66,704,081 | * $223,057 for 2025–26 test administration costs * $66,481,024 for 2026–27 test administration costs |
| 2027–28 | $2,026,705 | * $1,029,716 for 2026–27 test administration costs * $996,989 for 2027–28 test administration costs |

### Independent Evaluation Contract

The independent evaluation contract is a multiyear contract to provide independent, objective technical advice and consultation on activities to be undertaken in implementing the CAASPP System. The contract requires interim annual evaluation reports and a final report on the activities and analysis of the three-year evaluation that includes recommendations to ensure the quality, fairness, validity, and reliability of the assessments. This contract was competitively bid through a Request for Proposal process with input provided by CDE and SBE staff. The contractor selected as the responsible bidder with the lowest cost bid was HumRRO. The contract concluded on June 30, 2023. The total contract amount was $2,242,000.

Evaluation activities included five studies and corresponding reports: CAST Alignment Study, Impact on Instruction and Student Learning Case Study, CAA for Science Alignment Study, ELPAC Alignment Study, and Alternate ELPAC Alignment Study. All reports have been completed and posted on the CDE CAASPP Technical Reports and Studies web page at <https://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/tg/ca/caaspprptstudies.asp> and the CDE ELPAC web page at <https://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/tg/ep/>.

Table 6 provides a breakdown of the contract costs per FY.

**Table 6: Independent Evaluation Contract Costs**

| **Fiscal Year** | **Total Cost** |
| --- | --- |
| 2018–19 | $681,000 |
| 2019–20 | $767,000 |
| 2020–21 | $554,000 |
| 2021–22 | $92,000 |
| 2022–23 | $148,000 |

#### Apportionment Costs

CAASPP apportionment costs are funded annually within the Budget Act as part of the assessment apportionments schedule that includes funding for apportionments to LEAs for the CAASPP System. State testing apportionments for a specific year are not paid to LEAs until the following FY—after all testing has been completed for the school year and the final number of students tested has been certified by the LEAs. *EC*Section 60640(l)(2) states that the SBE shall annually establish the amount of funding to be apportioned to LEAs for specified CAASPP assessments, which include the optional CSA.

*EC* Section 60644 also specifies that the savings realized from the elimination of the grade two standards-based achievement tests shall be used by LEAs to administer, at the option and cost of the LEA, a grade two diagnostic assessment identified by the CDE as meeting the requirements of *EC* Section 60644. State CAASPP regulations authorize the CDE to provide this funding to LEAs through the annual CAASPP apportionment process. Approximately 380 LEAs will receive an apportionment for the grade two diagnostic assessment in the 2022–23 school year.

In May 2023, the SBE approved the LEA apportionment rates for CAASPP for the 2022–23 school year. The estimates for the CAST and the CAA for Science are based on the estimated number of students tested in grade ten or grade twelve only; students in these grades are not required to take an additional CAASPP test. The estimates for the Smarter Balanced Summative Assessments and CAAs for ELA and mathematics apportionments already include an LEA apportionment reimbursement for students in grades five, eight, and high school who also will take the CAST or CAA for Science.

Table 7 provides a breakdown of estimated apportionment costs by assessment.

**Table 7: Estimated Apportionment Costs for 2022–23 CAASPP Testing**

| **Assessment** | **Per Pupil Rate** | **Estimated 2022‒23 Pupil Population** | **Estimated Apportionment** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Smarter Balanced Summative Assessments for ELA and mathematics | $4.00 | 3,190,000 | $12,760,000 |
| CAST | $2.00 | 1,507,000 | $3,014,000 |
| CAAs for ELA and mathematics | $5.00 | 34,000 | $170,000 |
| CAA for Science | $5.00 | 15,000 | $75,000 |
| CSA | $5.00 | 47,000 | $235,000 |
| Grade two diagnostic assessments (*EC* Section 60644) | $2.52 | 423,000 | $1,065,960 |
| Students not tested due to medical emergency and parent/guardian exemptions | $1.00 | 24,000 | $24,000 |
| Total |  |  | $17,343,960 |

#### Five-Year Cost Projection

The annual Budget Act provides funding for both contract costs and LEA apportionment costs. Cost projections are refined annually as contracts are negotiated and approved and as activities are completed for each implementation phase of the CAASPP System.

Cost projections for the state-managed services contract are from the approved state-managed CAASPP contract services (see tables 4 and 5). State-managed services contract costs include funding for the development of the CAST, the CAA for Science, and the CSA. The costs for 2022–27 include reporting the results of the CAAs for ELA, mathematics, and science. Tables 8 and 9 provide an updated five-year projection of CAASPP contract and apportionment costs.

**Table 8: Five-Year Projection of CAASPP Contract Costs**

| **Fiscal Year** | **Consortium-Managed Services Cost** | **State- Managed Contract Cost** | **Independent Evaluation Cost** | **Total  CAASPP Contract Cost** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 2022–23 | $5.1 million[[3]](#footnote-4) | $67.4 million[[4]](#footnote-5) | $148,000[[5]](#footnote-6) | $72.7 million |
| 2023–24 | $9.6 million | $66.2 million | NA[[6]](#footnote-7) | $75.8 million |
| 2024–25 | $9.6 million | $66.9 million | NA | $76.5 million |
| 2025–26 | $9.6 million | $66.4 million | NA | $76.0 million |
| 2026–27 | $9.6 million | $67.8 million | NA | $77.4 million |

**Table 9: Five-Year Projection of CAASPP LEA Apportionment Costs**

| **Fiscal Year** | **LEA Apportionment Cost** | **Test Administration Reimbursed** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| 2022–23 | $17.4 million | 2021–22 test administration |
| 2023–24 | $17.4 million | 2022–23 test administration |
| 2024–25 | $17.4 million | 2023–24 test administration |
| 2025–26 | $17.4 million | 2024–25 test administration |
| 2026–27 | $17.4 million | 2025–26 test administration |

These projections are based on the current approved CAASPP apportionment rates. The SBE may modify the amount to be apportioned in subsequent years to address changes to LEA test administration activities. Any adjustment to the CAASPP apportionment rates that will increase the total amount apportioned annually will require DOF approval. The CDE provided the DOF with estimated assessment apportionments for FY 2022–23 that included approximately $16.3 million in estimated costs for the CAASPP System.

The 2023 Budget Act appropriation of $16.3 million was sufficient funding for the CAASPP apportionments to LEAs for the specified CAASPP assessments.

## Cost Projection Variations of Proposed Budgets, 2019–23

The 2019 Budget Act, 2020 Budget Act, 2021 Budget Act, 2022 Budget Act, and 2023 Budget Act all provided sufficient funding for CAASPP contract costs and apportionment costs. The total Budget Act funding, per year, for various CAASPP contract costs, were as follows:

* 2019: $87.6 million
* 2020: $87.2 million
* 2021: $87.0 million
* 2022: $72.9 million
* 2023: $75.1 million

## California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress Timeline

The CAASPP timeline shown in Table 10 provides information on the assessments that are anticipated to be a part of each CAASPP test administration per FY.

**Table 10: CAASPP Timeline**

| **Fiscal Year** | **Test Administrations** | **Operational Assessments** | **Assessments Undergoing Census or Sample Pilot and Field Testing** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 2022–23 | 2021–22 test administration and  2022–23 test administration | Smarter Balanced ELA and mathematics; CAST; CAAs for ELA, mathematics, and science; CSA | CSA—pilot of Speaking and full-write items for Writing |
| 2023–24 | 2022–23 test administration and  2023–24 test administration | Smarter Balanced ELA and mathematics; CAST; CAAs for ELA, mathematics, and science; CSA | CSA—field test of Speaking and full-write items for Writing |
| 2024–25 | 2023–24 test administration and  2024–25 test administration | Smarter Balanced ELA and mathematics; CAST; CAAs for ELA, mathematics, and science; CSA | CSA—operational with the inclusion of Speaking and full-write items for Writing |
| 2025–26 | 2024–25 test administration and 2025–26 test administration | Smarter Balanced ELA and mathematics; CAST; CAAs for ELA, mathematics, and science; CSA | None |
| 2026–27 | 2025–26 test administration and 2026–27 test administration | Smarter Balanced ELA and mathematics; CAST; CAAs for ELA, mathematics, and science; CSA | None |

1. California tests approximately 3.2 million students annually with Smarter Balanced Summative Assessments. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
2. Total reflects a one-time membership credit applied toward the membership cost. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
3. Total reflects a one-time membership credit applied toward the membership cost. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
4. Contract costs for 2022–23 include $3 million in previous contract obligations, as shown in Table 4, and $64.4 million in current contract costs. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
5. Contract cost estimate for 2022–23 is based on current contractobligations. Actual contract costs for 2023–24 and future years will be determined through a future competitive bid process. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
6. There is no contract for an independent evaluator in these years. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)