The Sky is Not Falling
The Test Scores are Not Dropping
Avoiding Pitfalls and Misinterpretations of the New Assessment System

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March 12, 2015

Motivations for Common Core State Standards started with College and Career readiness

- Gaps between reading/literacy levels in high school and expectations of text complexity for college & careers
- High rates of mathematics remediation at colleges and universities despite HS credit
- 21st Century Skills and Competencies
- Critical thinking and evidence-based arguments

Our Challenge:
Leading productive conversations around interpretation of assessment results in ways that honor the commitment and progress we are making toward these increased expectations

Changing Culture in State Policy and Practice

- Culture of Compliance (w/ Sanctions & Rewards)
- Mutual Accountability & Local Control

LCFF and LCAP
Common Core, Curriculum Frameworks, Instructional Materials
Changes to Assessment and Accountability
"It is the intent of the Legislature … to provide a system of assessments of pupils that has the primary purposes of assisting teachers, administrators, and pupils and their parents; improving teaching and learning; and promoting high-quality teaching and learning using a variety of assessment approaches and types."

– CA ELA/ELD Framework, July 9, 2014 page 2

Assessment ≠ Accountability

API to be replaced
Move away from a single index based solely on test scores
To Multiple Measures that reflect the complexity of school quality & performance

Major shift in the intent of statewide assessment

Achievement Level Descriptors

Productive
Starting point for discussion of individual & group performance
Recognizing that NCLB required 4 bands and cut scores
Understanding that level bands have broad descriptors; Looking at scale scores
Talking about “more rigorous measures”

Unproductive
Characterizing students/their achievement by single measure
Assuming that a change in band represents significant differences in understanding
Equating achievement levels (1,2,3,4) with being at/above “grade level”
Talking about scores “dropping”

Summative Assessment
(End of Year)

Interim Assessments
(Aligned assessments - flexible use)
(2 types - comprehensive & blocks)

Digital Library
of Formative Assessment Resources and tools for learning process
Unlike CST - these tests will allow us to measure growth over years.

Estimates based on 14-15 Field Test (21 states)

The Increased Rigor of the Standards and Assessments might mean that we have fewer students in the top bands than we had on the CSTs...

- Not an indictment of the Common Core
- Instead - a realization of more rigorous, meaningful targets
- Results on the two tests (CST and Smarter Balanced) cannot be compared
- This is NEW BASELINE…

In California, policy is aligning with new beliefs about Assessment and Accountability

Large-scale assessments do not have to be high-stakes to provide valuable feedback in these first years of implementation

Learning culture and growth mindsets flourish in a culture that provides high expectations, data, feedback and resources, not just sanctions and rewards

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Thank you

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