



CALIFORNIA EARLY ASSESSMENT PROGRAM

HIGHER EDUCATION
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ISSUE BRIEF

SUMMARY

In an effort to address the issue of the increasing number of incoming college students who require remedial courses in math and/or English, the State of California's Department of Education has worked with the California State University (CSU) system, the California Community College (CCC) system, and the California State Board of Education. The Department has developed the Early Assessment Program (EAP) to determine which students look like they may need to improve their college-readiness. The EAP is a voluntary program that is part of the California Standards Test (CST). A student in the eleventh grade take the CST and then can take a brief set of multiple-choice questions and a writing exercise that are part of the EAP which will assist in determining the student's readiness for college-level English and math.

The purpose of the Early Assessment Program is to increase the readiness of high school students to enter college and subsequently complete a degree. The EAP strengthens college preparation courses in the high school. It also allows the high school and the higher education institutions to determine the preparation status of students. All high school juniors are encouraged to participate in the EAP. The program's three components include early testing, additional preparation (during grade 12), and professional development programs for high school English and math teachers.

PROGRAM DETAILS

During grade 11, students take the California Standards Test. An optional part of the CST includes 15 additional math questions and 15 additional questions together with an analytical essay as part of the English test. After the test, students are notified whether they meet the college-readiness standards or if they need further preparation prior to entering college. Students who need additional preparation are encouraged to utilize web-based courses in expository reading and writing, interactive math, and English. High school English and math teachers can improve their skills to help students prepare through workshops and other programs.

OUTCOMES

The EAP encourages students to graduate from high school prepared and ready to enter college and be successful. For those high school seniors who avail themselves of the services, their final year in high school will be more challenging and meaningful.

In the Spring of 2011, nearly 400,000 students complete the EAP English test, with 23 percent being considered college-ready, compared to 21 percent the year before. Of the 191,000 students who tool the EAP Math test, 58 percent were considered college-ready. In 2010, 57 percent of the students were prepared for college math.

RESULTS

The EAP:

- helps to identify and address the high rate of incoming students needing remediation,
- improves college-preparation programs,
- fosters a more challenging high school senior year,
- provides professional development for high school teachers, and
- helps prepare students to enroll directly in baccalaureate courses.