

Frequently Asked Questions about State Testing at Horace Mann this spring

Who participates in state testing? **When** will it take place?

- Students in grades 3-8 at Horace Mann participate in the state’s testing program, known as CAASPP or SBAC, every spring. They test in English-Language Arts and mathematics.
- 5th and 8th graders also take a test in science.
- Testing will occur in the students’ regular classrooms with their regular teachers as the test proctors.
- The draft calendar [linked here on the main page of hm.bhusd.org](http://hm.bhusd.org) provides the anticipated testing dates.

What can my child expect to see on the test? **How** can he/she practice?

- The exam is very different than the old “bubble in” model. The exam is computer-adaptive, meaning that if the student is getting answers correct, he/she will receive progressively more challenging questions, and if the student is getting answers incorrect, he/she will receive additional questions at the same level until more correct answers are recorded.
- For each of the subject areas tested, there is a “CAT” or computer-adaptive test, as described above, and a “PT” or performance task, which involves [in English] writing a series of short answer responses and one longer essay response, and [in mathematics] solving a creative real-world math problem and then writing a detailed explanation of the process the student used to do the math.
- Parents and students can get a sense of what the test questions look like by taking practice tests at CAASPP.org. [Click here](#) and select the green “Student Interface” button to begin a practice test session. This is also linked at hm.bhusd.org under “Websites for Learning.”

Why is the information learned from state test results valuable to students, teachers, and parents?

- Along with grades, teacher feedback, and many other measures of student achievement, these standardized tests taken by all California students are just one other indicator of student proficiency.
- We certainly consider them as “just a snapshot” of the student’s progress, not “the big picture.”
- The CA Department of Education even puts it this way: “These results are one measure of the student’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 can be used to help inform a conversation with the child’s teacher about how to progress in English language arts/literacy (ELA) and mathematics.”
- With regard to informing a conversation with the child’s teacher, the Student Score Report, which will be mailed in June, will provide valuable and specific information about student strength areas and areas in need of improvement. For instance, looking at the student sample below, this student has shown growth from 4th to 5th grade, but listening comprehension remains a specific area in need of greater work. This is valuable information for parents and teachers to know!

For more information, please don’t hesitate to contact Mr. Foldvary, Horace Mann’s CAASPP testing coordinator!

