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April 23, 2021

Via E-Mail: [dfisher@saccityta.com](mailto:dfisher@saccityta.com)

David Fisher, President  
Sacramento City Teachers Association  
5300 Elvas Avenue  
Sacramento, CA 95819

Re: District-wide Assessments for Students

Dear Mr. Fisher,

This letter concerns the pressing need to initiate mandated state and federal student assessments this spring..

As you know, the California State Board of Education (CDE) recently voted to give California school districts the opportunity to use either state tests or other standards-aligned assessments to gauge student learning this spring. In relevant part, the CDE provides that:

*The Board is seeking to allow districts to use the best assessment tool available for the local context this spring, . . . Options include the state's Smarter Balanced Summative Assessments and California Alternate Assessments for English language arts and mathematics, the Smarter Balanced interim assessments, or other diagnostic, benchmark, or interim assessments that: . . .*  
***Are uniformly administered across a grade span, school, or district.***

Additionally, the State Board of Education (SBE) – following the CDE's recommendation – approved a waiver to the U.S. Department of Education allowing districts to administer local assessments in lieu of the Smarter Assessment (SBAC) during the 2020-2021 school year.<sup>1</sup> SBE's approval was based on various reasons, which included the following:

- Students will not be returned to full in-person learning in order to participate in the SBAC on-campus
- The SBAC secure browser is incompatible with Zoom technology
- The independent steps students would need to take to remotely log into the SBAC are in excess of 20 individual tasks, even at the grade 3 level and also for English Learner students
- The SBAC secure browser is not compatible with all student devices
- Parents might not allow a camera feed set up by the state to be used for their students

Indeed, other California districts are using the CDE and SBE-provided flexibility for administering local assessments for various grade levels.

- **Chico** – using local assessments for grades 3-8; attempting the SBAC for grade 11
- **Roseville City School District (K-8)** – using local assessments for all grade levels

<sup>1</sup> Districts may only administer local assessments in lieu of SBAC during the 2020-2021 school year if they meet the following conditions: are aligned with the Common Core State Standards in ELA and Math; are available to assess students in grades 3-8 and 11; are uniformly administered across the selected grade level; and provide results that can be reported to parents, guardians, and educators about individual students and to the public by school and by district and disaggregated by student group.

- **Folsom-Cordova** – using local assessments for all grade levels
- **Stockton** – leaning toward using local assessments for all grade levels; attempting the SBAC for grade 11
- **Yuba City Unified** – using local assessments for grades 3-8 and 11 for ELA; attempting SBAC for grade 11 Math

With respect to our students, it is worth noting that on or around April 8, 2021, the CDE provided the window for such assessments is between January 1 and July 30, 2021.

Pursuant to the 2016 Assessment MOU the District may implement state mandated assessments. Based on the above outlined issues with the SBAC, however, the District plans to use local assessments in place of the SBAC because it believes these are more beneficial to students and teachers. See Exhibit A for Math exams and Exhibit B for ELA exams. District-wide assessments will meet state and federal guidelines and provide the data regarding student performance and progress in critical ELA and Math skills.

The District must begin conducting these mandated assessments by May 3, 2021 to ensure that they are completed as required by the end of the year. Please let us know by April 30, 2021 your position as to whether the SBAC is the only allowable option under the Assessments MOU in order to properly prepare for the administration of these assessments and communicate with our families and staff.

Sincerely,



Jorge A. Aguilar  
Superintendent

**Exhibit A**

<p>Grades 3-5 (Math) <b>Math Interim #2</b></p>	<p><i>Allow for “retake” opportunities; Acknowledge limited scope of <a href="#">standards assessed</a></i></p>
<p>Grade 6 (Math) <b>MDTP<sup>2</sup> Gr. 7 Readiness Test (7M40A15)</b> In Illuminate #52022</p>	<p><i>Part of <a href="#">6th grade math recommendation process</a>; assessment administration scheduled for May 3-14, 2021</i></p>
<p>Grade 7 (Math) <b>MDTP Gr. 8 Readiness Test (8M40A15)</b> Grade 8 (Math) <b>MDTP IM 1 Readiness Test (AR45A19)</b> Grade 11 (Math) <b>MDTP Mathematical Analysis Readiness Test (MR45A08)</b></p>	<p><i>District common assessments are by course, not grade, at the secondary level; thus, they cannot be used as designed. The MDTP assessments are familiar to our secondary teachers and students and computer scored. (Need to be migrated to Item Bank vs. Flex Assessments in Illuminate to avoid bandwidth loading issues experienced in Fall 2020.)</i></p>

<sup>2</sup> *MDTP is the [Mathematics Diagnostic Testing Project](#); Local affiliate, UCD; Project house at UCSD.*

**Exhibit B**

Grade Level & Assessment Identification Number	Rationale
Grade 3, ELA Interim 3 (#81330)	<p><i>Using Interim 3 and EOY gives a more current and accurate picture of the learning loss and learning opportunities from this school year. This data can be used to better support with placement and making academic decisions for the start of the next school year.</i></p>
Grade 4, ELA Interim 3 (#81510)	
Grade 5, ELA Interim 3 (#81327)	<p><i>Reclassification opportunities can have a significant impact on our English Learner Students. Currently we are reclassifying only 10%. Our Long Term English Language Learners (LTEL) stands at an alarming 23%.</i></p>
Grade 6, ELA Interim 3 (#81329)	
Grade 7, ELA EOY Interim (#62366)	<p><i>Using Interim 3 can serve as the exam to use for English Learner reclassification for all grade levels listed, as well as the following grade levels that are normally not assessed on CAASPP:</i></p>
Grade 8, ELA EOY Interim (#62367)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Kindergarten</i></li> <li>• <i>First Grade</i></li> <li>• <i>Second Grade</i></li> <li>• <i>Ninth Grade</i></li> <li>• <i>Tenth Grade</i></li> </ul>
Grade 11, ELA EOY Interim (#62370)	
<p><i>Interim 3 can be used for GATE identification.</i></p>	