



# JOURNEY SCHOOL



*Where education is a journey, not a race.*

April 28, 2016

Dear Parent/Guardian:

Each spring, students enrolled in grades 3-8 and 11 in public schools within California participate in the statewide testing program, which is the California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress (CAASPP) System. As a public school, students at Journey School are required to participate in the CAASPP system. It should also be noted that the State of California uses results from these tests to compute the school's Academic Performance Index (API) and the federally required Annual Yearly Progress (AYP) under the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB). For this reason, it is important for all parents and guardians to support their child's participation in the state testing to maintain Journey's charter status. If you have questions regarding participation and/or the ramifications of opting out of participation, please speak with me at your earliest convenience.

The CAASPP testing program incorporates a variety of academic assessments. All students in grades 3-8 will take the Smarter Balanced tests based on California Content Standards, also known as the Common Core State Standards, for mathematics and ELA. The Smarter Balanced tests are typically online tests. However, the California department of Education has granted Journey School a temporary waiver, allowing us to implement a paper/pencil version of the test because of our longstanding approach to technology use in a Waldorf setting. We plan to do so in grades 3-5 this year, while students in grades 6-8 will access the tests using technology. Additionally, students in grade 5 and 8 will take a paper/pencil science assessment.

The tests in the CAASPP System provide information to teachers, parents/guardians, and students about students' academic progress. Keep in mind that scores are but one indicator of achievement and progress at Journey School, a snapshot so to speak, and the results should be balanced with the variety of assessments we employ all year long.

Typically, Journey School students perform at a level that meets the state's standards. However, Journey School recognizes that differences in our unique educational program and curriculum sequence may be reflected in the scoring and results, specifically in the early grades. During the tests, Students will likely encounter questions assessing academic standards that they have not yet to been introduced to. Again, this is to be expected given our specialized co-alignment to Common Core as presented in our charter. As students progress towards our charter outcomes in 8<sup>th</sup> grade, these variations are expected to diminish.

The California Department of Education (CDE) has developed several resources to help students and parents understand the grade expectations of the Smarter Balanced Summative Assessments. For more information please visit the following website [http://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/tg/ca/index.asp?tabsection=3#ssr.](http://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/tg/ca/index.asp?tabsection=3#ssr)



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Lastly – please review the following table, which indicates a general testing window for each class. We appreciate communication with your class teacher about further specifics.

DATE	TIME	CLASS
5/2-5/6	8:30-10:30	6 <sup>th</sup> Grade
5/2-5/12	8:30-10:30	5 <sup>th</sup> Grade (Both Classes)
5/16-5/20	8:30-10:30	7 <sup>th</sup> Grade
5/16-5/20	8:30-10:30	4 <sup>th</sup> Grade (Both Classes)
5/23-5/27	8:30-10:30	8 <sup>th</sup> Grade
5/23-6/3	8:30-10:30	3 <sup>rd</sup> Grade (Nicholson)
5/27-6/3	8:30-10:30	3 <sup>rd</sup> Grade (Collins)
5/18	8:30-10:30	8 <sup>th</sup> Grade Science
5/25	8:30-10:30	5 <sup>th</sup> Grade Science

Please don't hesitate to let me know if you have any questions or concerns.

Sincerely,

Gavin Keller

School Director