

# **STRATEGIC PLAN UPDATE: EARLY ASSESSMENT PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION PROGRESS REPORT**

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## ***INFORMATION AND REPORTS***

**Presentation:** *Linda Michalowski, Vice Chancellor, Student Services and Special Programs*  
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### **Issue**

This item provides a status update on the implementation of the *Early Assessment Program* in the California Community Colleges as a strategy under Strategic Plan Goal B, Student Success and Readiness. Presentation panel members will provide information on the Chancellor's Office activities and implementation plans, current research outcomes from California State University, Sacramento, and an overview of one local community college district's plans to implement EAP through a high school and CSU partnership.

### **Background**

Implemented in 2004, the Early Assessment Program is a collaborative effort between the California State University (CSU), the California Department of Education (CDE), and the State Board of Education to determine a high school student's readiness to do college-level work in English language arts and math and to provide students opportunities to improve skills during their senior year. The EAP builds off the state's Standards Testing and Reporting (STAR) accountability program for public K-12 schools. High school juniors taking the California Standards Tests (CST) have the option of completing fifteen additional multiple-choice questions on both the math and English CST, as well as writing an essay if they wish to participate in the EAP. In August before their senior year, students receive information based on their test results indicating whether they meet, or are on track to meet, college-level requirements for math and English. If so, students who go on to attend CSU can enroll directly in college-level classes without taking a placement test. If not, students are advised to seek additional instruction in these subject areas during their senior year of high school.

On September 28, 2008, Governor Schwarzenegger signed Senate Bill (SB) 946 (Scott) to enable the California Community Colleges to implement the EAP. This bill enables community colleges to work with their local high schools and CSU campuses to address the high number of students who are unprepared for college-level course work. SB 946 provides the Chancellor's Office with the authority to access data on 11<sup>th</sup> grade students who take the EAP. Given State budget constraints and that no funding was appropriated to implement a CCC EAP, participation by community colleges is voluntary. Community colleges selected for participation will be able to request EAP data from the Chancellor's Office for students taking the test at high schools within their specific district boundary. Using existing or external resources, participating community colleges must identify an EAP coordinator to work with CSU campuses and local school districts and work within the existing EAP infrastructure of academic opportunities to help students prepare for college-level work. SB 946 requires the Chancellor's Office to coordinate, monitor and support community college participation in the CCC EAP.

Numerous reports and studies have noted how the disconnect between high school curriculum, standards, and assessments and the reality of what it takes to succeed in college leaves many students confused about how to prepare for college (Conley, 2007).<sup>1</sup> State data on high school student participation in EAP and outcomes show that 75 percent of California's 11<sup>th</sup> grade students opt to take the EAP (346,038 students) with only 16 percent demonstrating their readiness for college-level English coursework and 6 percent demonstrating college-level math readiness.<sup>2</sup> Furthermore, recent data shows that over 70 percent of California Community College students require some level of basic skills remediation in math and/or English in order to develop the skills needed to successfully complete courses that require college-level English or math. In addition, the lower the remedial starting point when a student enrolls in a community college, the less likely the student is to ever reach the point of attempting a transfer-level basic skills course. Chancellor's Office data shows that students who begin basic skills math at the arithmetic level have only a 10 percent survival rate to transfer-level math. Students who begin basic skills English at the reading fundamentals level have only a 25 percent survival rate to transfer-level English.

The Obama Administration's goal for higher education, "*By 2020, America will once again have the highest proportion of college graduates in the world,*" emphasizes the need for high school students to be college-ready upon entry. Yet, more than 60 percent of California students are graduating from high school without demonstrating at least proficiency in California's 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> grade content standards<sup>3</sup>, thus creating endemic remediation challenges upon entering postsecondary education. As the majority of high school students entering higher education in California start at a community college, expanding EAP to include community colleges is important to help students make the connection between the relevancy of their EAP test results and their academic futures.

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<sup>1</sup> Conley, D.T. (2007). *The Challenge of College Readiness*. Educational Leadership.

<sup>2</sup> California State University. EAP 2008 Test Results. Data from the CSU online database: <http://eap2008.ets.org/Viewreport.asp>.

<sup>3</sup> California Department of Education. *California Standardized Testing and Reporting Test Scores 2008*. <http://dq.cde.ca.gov/dataquest/>

## **Implementation Update**

To support the implementation of a CCC EAP, the Chancellor's Office, working in coordination with the California State University Chancellor's Office and the California Department of Education, has planned several key activities that include:

1. Convening a CCC EAP Implementation Advisory Committee and a CCC EAP Technical Workgroup
2. Solicitation of interest and selection of community colleges for initial implementation
3. Modification of CST test forms and student notification letters to include community colleges
4. Establishing an agreement with the California Department of Education to allow sharing of high school student EAP results with the Chancellor's Office and participating community colleges
5. Seeking additional funding to support CCC EAP
6. Identification and development of academic strategies that 12<sup>th</sup> grade students can use to prepare for college-level English and math
7. CCC EAP Statewide Forum of community colleges participants in Fall 2010

The planned first year implementation activities for a CCC EAP will help to build the foundation for the program. Ultimately, the goal is to develop collaborative partnerships with CSU and K-12 to communicate to students about what they need to do to prepare for college and careers, the relevancy of their academic studies to their future college and career aspirations, and strategies to ensure that they graduate from high school with the knowledge and skills needed for success in college.