

The California Science Test (CAST)

The California Science Test or CAST is part of the state testing program called the California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress or CAASPP. The CAST will be field tested in 2017–18 and be operational in 2018–19.

The CAASPP System is designed to give information to teachers, students, and their families about what students know and are able to do. It also indicates whether they are on track to be ready for success in college or career when they graduate from high school.



CAST	
Who	All students in grades 5 and 8, and once in high school, depending on when they take their last science class.
What	<p>California has adopted science standards called the California Next Generation Science Standards (CA NGSS). These standards tell us what students should know and be able to do in science. The CA NGSS is designed to help students understand how science works in the natural world. They also help students learn the knowledge and skills they need for college and careers.</p> <p>The CAST is aligned with the CA NGSS. The CAST will also test the student's ability to think critically and solve problems like scientists and engineers.</p> <p>This new assessment uses questions that bring together science content and practices. It also focuses on questions that cover more than one scientific area at a time, such as life science, earth and space science, and physical science.</p>
How	The CAST is a computer-based test that has many different types of questions that allow students to interact with the test content in exciting new ways. For example, your child might be asked to write a short response, select multiple answers from a list, or drag sentences into the correct order to form an answer. Testing should take approximately two hours to complete.
When	Each school selects its own testing window. Testing can begin as early as January and continue through the last day of school. You will receive additional information from your school about the specific days and times of testing.
Why	The purpose of the CAST is to measure what students know and can do and to foster science education at every grade level.

Do students with disabilities take the CAST?

Yes, unless the student's individualized education program designates an alternate assessment.

What resources are available for students?

All students have access to a variety of tools; for example, a calculator and reference sheets containing formulas and scientific constants.

Students with disabilities have additional supports such as American Sign Language videos or Braille. All of the accessibility resources help students gain fair access to the test and do not affect the students' scores in any way.

How can I help my child get ready for the test?

You are an important part of your child's education. Some things you can do to help your child are:

- Discuss the test with your child. Make sure they are not scared or anxious.
- Tell your child that you and their teacher have high expectations and that you are both there to help them every step of the way.
- Take a training test with your child. Training tests can be found at <http://www.caaspp.org/practice-and-training/index.html>.
- Make sure your child gets a good night's sleep and a nutritious breakfast before testing.



Additional Information

More information about the CAST can be found on the California Department of Education California Science Test Web page at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/tg/ca/caasppscience.asp>.

Your child's teacher or principal is the best place to start if you have other questions about testing or available accessibility resources.

