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High School Seniors Get Early Signal About College Preparation

*Results of CSU Early Assessment Program
encourage students to make best use of senior year*

(September 5, 2008) -- The California State University Early Assessment Program (EAP) is successfully working hand-in-hand with public high schools to improve student proficiency in English and mathematics. By volunteering to take the EAP test, public high school juniors can find out if they are on track for college entry in 2009 without the need to attend remedial classes.

For the third consecutive year, results reflect an increase in the number of students tested. A record 356,169 (76 percent) of 2008's 11th graders who took the state-mandated California Standards Test (CST) volunteered to take CSU's Early Assessment test, which requires students to write an essay and to answer an additional 15 questions in both English and math.

"I'm pleased that more students are taking the opportunity to participate in this test that will prepare them to make better use of their senior year and become better prepared for college," said Jack O'Connell, state superintendent of public instruction. "California's high schools are working hard in partnership with the CSU and many other organizations to ensure more students take and succeed in the rigorous courses that will prepare them to succeed in higher education."

The test provides an evaluation of students' readiness for college, letting them know if they are on track at the end of 11th grade to meet the English and math skills expected of first-year college students.

"The purpose of the EAP is to give some students a wake-up call to go to college," said CSU Chancellor Charles B. Reed. "What we want is for more students to participate in the EAP test so they can understand that they need a more rigorous curriculum during their senior year to get ready to transition to college."

The 2008 EAP results show that of 352,943 students taking the EAP English test, 60,392 (17 percent) had attained college-level proficiency early, at the end of 11th grade, a 2 percent increase over the results in 2006.

Math results have held steady for the last three years. Of 147,885 students who took the EAP math test this year, 19,442 (13 percent) had attained college-level proficiency early, at the end of the 11th grade. Another 62,660 (42 percent) were judged conditionally proficient, which means that they need one more year of mathematics and earn a grade C or better, to be confirmed as

ready for college when they graduate. The CSU, however, encourages all high school seniors to complete a fourth year of math to keep their skills current.

Students admitted to the CSU as first-time freshmen must demonstrate they are ready for college English and mathematics prior to enrolling in credit-bearing classes. They can meet this requirement in several ways, including showing proficiency in the EAP test, passing the CSU’s placement test, or by obtaining a qualifying score on the SAT or ACT test.

About 60 percent of the approximately 50,000 first-time freshmen enrolling at the CSU each year do not show proficiency in these assessments, even though they have earned at least a B in the required college preparatory curriculum. As a result, each year more than 25,000 freshmen must attend remedial classes, which do not count as college credit, and add cost and time to earning a degree. Once in remedial classes, most students wish they had prepared better while in high school to avoid them.

“This stuff you should already know,” said [Natalie Tegeda](#), while taking remedial classes in English at Cal State Long Beach. “If I would have done just a little better, I could have avoided all of this.”

[Daniel Gordon](#), who completed remedial classes in math at Fresno State, said: “If I would have known that I would have to take this class for both semesters, I would have gotten more prepared... Study and prepare for it a little bit more... that’s the best advice I can give.”

Statewide EAP Results – Last Three Years

	2006	2007	2008
ENGLISH			
Tested	312,167	342,348	352,943
Proficient	48,072 (15%)	55,206 (16%)	60,392 (17%)
MATH			
Tested	137,067	141,648	147,885
Proficient & Conditional	74,942 (55%)	77,870 (55%)	82,102 (55%)

EAP Results for Hispanic and African American Students

Participation in the English test has increased among Hispanic students from 72 percent in 2006 to 77 percent in 2008, and also has risen among African American students from 72 percent in 2006 to 75 percent in 2008. The scores show that 8 percent of the students in each group were proficient in English, and both groups had an increase of 1 percent over the prior year.

The participation rate among African American students in the math test increased from 61 percent in 2007 to 64 percent in 2008, and 33 percent were proficient this year compared to 31 percent in 2007. The participation rate of Hispanic students in the math test held steady at 71 percent, with a 2 percent increase in proficiency to 39 percent, over last year.

Related Links and Information:

More on the EAP

- About the [Early Assessment Program](#)
- [EAP website](#)

See 2008 EAP Test Results

- [2008 Schools, Counties, Districts and State](#)

What Students Are Saying

- [Hear from high school students about the EAP](#)
- College freshman talk about [Math](#) and [English](#) remedial classes

Preparing for Math and English College-Entry Exams

- [Math Placement Test](#)
- [English Placement Test](#)

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