October 29, 2004

Dear County, Unified District, and High School District Superintendents and Charter School Administrators:

EARLY ASSESSMENT PROGRAM:
RELEASE OF RESULTS OF 11TH GRADE ASSESSMENT

In Spring 2004 we conducted the first statewide administration of the Early Assessment Program (EAP). The results of the first phase of the EAP were recently released. We want to thank you for your support of this historic effort, apprise you of future plans, and suggest some steps that your staff may take to support this service to students.

As you are aware, the EAP is a collaboration among the California Department of Education (CDE), the State Board of Education, and the California State University (CSU). The program is designed to bridge the gap between high school standards and college expectations and, thereby, reduce the number of incoming college students needing remediation in English and/or mathematics. The program consists of three critical components: 11th grade assessment, senior-year academic preparation activities, and professional development for English-language arts and mathematics teachers.

The EAP identifies high school students who are exempt from future placement testing at CSU and, as appropriate, remedial work when they enter college. Based on their performance on the augmented California Standards Tests, students participating in the EAP are designated as exempt or non-exempt for English-language arts, and as exempt, conditionally exempt, or non-exempt for mathematics. Aggregate data for each participating high school will be posted to the CSU Web site at http://www.calstate.edu/eap during the week of November 5, 2004. Also posted will be: (1) a more detailed discussion of exemption; (2) aggregate EAP data for each participating high school; (3) a roster of CSU EAP coordinators for each campus; and (4) available instructional resources.

The 11th grade assessment results represent an essential first step in a comprehensive program. The heart of that program consists of the steps schools and students take during the senior year to ensure full college readiness. We continue with the joint development of lesson modules to customize the senior English course to better meet needs for college preparation. In the coming weeks, we will offer professional development to teachers throughout the state in collaboration with county offices of education (on a regional basis). In mathematics, the CSU Math Success Web site located at http://www.csumathsuccess.org provides information to students and links them with e-learning opportunities. This Web site is currently available for student and high school faculty use, and it includes diagnostic services and an online instructional program that provide specific help to students in meeting CSU placement standards. CSU faculty and curriculum and instruction staff in local educational agencies will
continue to work together to develop resources that address specific student needs and emphases.

Over time, we are confident that more and more graduating seniors will be fully prepared for college. As noted above, the 11th grade assessment is an essential first step. The following are suggestions are offered to move us still closer to that goal:

**District Curriculum and Instruction Staff**

- Please contact your local CSU EAP coordinator to begin planning for professional development opportunities and to access available instructional and student support resources to improve the senior year.

- Contact the language arts coordinator at the local county office of education for information on workshops for teachers of senior-level English who are interested in piloting the modules for the newly developed 12th Grade Expository Reading and Writing Course.

**District Standardized Testing and Reporting (STAR) Coordinators**

- Ascertain that your district has received the following information: (1) EAP data file, a single CD-ROM containing student results; (2) EAP data file layout containing a description of the fields included on the data file; and (3) EAP district reports (green folder/there is a copy of the district report for each subject area tested) and student score reports.

- Please make sure the reports your agency receives are distributed to each of your high schools.

- Be available to inform local high school counselors of student exemption status.

**High School Counselors and/or Principals**

- Please ensure that student score report letters that the district STAR coordinator provides you are distributed to students in a manner consistent with your current practice.

- It is anticipated that high school counselors will work with non-exempt English-language arts and conditionally exempt and non-exempt mathematics students to explore senior year options, while teachers are working closely with CSU EAP coordinators to develop appropriate senior-year instructional activities. We urge high school counselors to work with the district STAR coordinators to access the 11th grade assessment information for planning and counseling at your schools.

- Some districts/schools may already be collaborating with CSU EAP staff to address family/community concerns regarding the EAP. If not, we encourage high school
counselors to work closely with their designated CSU EAP Coordinators and district curricular staff to ensure widespread and accurate student and parent awareness about the EAP.

Summary

Superintendents, principals, district STAR coordinators, curriculum and instructional staff, and high school counselors can play an important role to ensure the success of the Early Assessment Program. In many respects, this first year of statewide EAP testing is a year of capacity building. In the future, we are taking steps to ensure that schools receive results early enough to enable non-exempt students to have the entire senior year to supplement their college preparation.

As previously stated, professional development opportunities are currently being offered through county offices of education for teachers piloting the 12th grade expository reading and writing course modules. We anticipate offering additional professional development in mathematics in the spring. We are sincerely interested in receiving your suggestions regarding how the EAP can be further developed and improved in the future. We encourage you to submit recommendations to the CSU that will enable it to continually improve the program. Please submit questions and suggestions to Jo Ann K. Aguirre, Associate Director, Academic Outreach and Enrollment Management Services, at (562) 951-4724 or by e-mail at jaguirre@calstate.edu.

The California Department of Education program resource contacts for the EAP are: Ron Fox, Administrator, Intersegmental Relations Office, at (916) 323-5635 or by e-mail at rfox@cde.ca.gov, and Joy Salvetti Wolfe, Consultant, Intersegmental Relations Office, at (916) 323-5635 or by-email at jsalvett@cde.ca.gov.

We recognize the hard work and challenges that all of our high schools have before them. To this end, we extend our sincere thanks for your patience and support in developing the EAP. It is our sincere belief that the EAP will greatly benefit and improve the senior year of California’s high schools and students.

Sincerely,

Jack O’Connell            Charles B. Reed
State Superintendent of Public Instruction       The California State University

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cc: High School Principals
    High School Counselors
    District Standardized Testing and Reporting Coordinators
    California State University Early Assessment Program Coordinators