March 8, 2006

Dear Eleventh Grade Students:

THE EARLY ASSESSMENT PROGRAM FOR 2006

If you are interested in being as ready as possible for college or the world of work, please read this letter carefully. This is an important opportunity for you.

Shortly, you will be taking a series of California Standards Tests (CSTs) in several subjects you have been studying. Two of the major subjects are English and mathematics. In English, you will be taking the eleventh grade CST in English-language arts. In mathematics, you may be taking either the CST in Algebra II or Summative High School Mathematics.

When you take these tests, you will be given an opportunity to participate in a program called the Early Assessment Program (EAP) that is sponsored by the California Department of Education, State Board of Education, and California State University (CSU). This program will let you know if your English and mathematics skills are about where they should be at the end of eleventh grade as you consider entering the workforce or college after graduating from high school.

How do you participate in the Early Assessment Program?

When you take the eleventh grade CST in English-Language Arts and the CSTs in Algebra II or Summative High School Mathematics you will find that each test is followed by a brief set of optional multiple-choice questions. To participate in the EAP, all you have to do is:

- Answer the additional 15 multiple-choice questions in the test booklets.
- Write an essay based on a short non-fiction passage (under 100 words) explaining the author's argument and evaluating that argument in terms of your own readings, experiences, and observations.

Together, the questions that you answer on the CSTs plus the additional, multiple-choice questions and written essay are called the EAP.

Taking the additional multiple-choice questions and writing an essay are voluntary. However, students who completed the EAP last year tell us that it gave them information about their readiness for college and work in time to work on strengthening their skills in twelfth grade. On the answer sheet, please make sure you:
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- Complete both the CSTs and EAP multiple-choice questions.

- Mark the circle that authorizes the results of your EAP to be released to the California State University or other colleges.

Be sure that you also complete the EAP essay that will be done at a different time, if you are participating in the EAP for English.

Why should you participate in the Early Assessment Program?

The EAP provides valuable information to your high school and to you about your readiness for employment after high school or for college-level English and mathematics, if you decide to go to college. The EAP report enables you, your family, and your high school to identify any need for additional preparation in English and mathematics while you are still enrolled in high school.

Students who are determined to be college-ready on the basis of the EAP are exempt from taking the California State University’s placement tests in English and mathematics and move directly into college-level classes upon enrollment without having to take remedial classes. Students who are not college-ready at the end of eleventh grade have the opportunity to strengthen their skills in twelfth grade, which will help to increase their mastery of the subjects and their ability to demonstrate proficiency on the CSU English and mathematics placement tests.

We invite you to learn more about the EAP on the CSU Web site at http://www.calstate.edu/eap. In addition, we have created two Web sites that provide valuable information to students on how to further prepare to be successful in English and mathematics. These Web sites can be found at http://www.csumathssuccess.org and http://www.csuenglishsuccess.org.

Please consider completing the EAP when you take the CSTs. If you have any questions regarding the EAP, we encourage you to talk with your English and mathematics teachers, counselor, or a CSU EAP Coordinator near you. A list of coordinators can be found on the CSU Web site at http://www.calstate.edu/eap/documents/eap_roster0506.pdf.

Sincerely,

[Signatures]

JACK O’CONNELL
State Superintendent of Public Instruction

CHARLES B. REED
Chancellor
The California State University

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