

Assessment Fact Sheet

California Science Test



What Is the CAST?

The California Science Test (CAST) is part of California's system of assessments called the California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress (CAASPP). The CAST measures what students know and can do using the California Next Generation Science Standards, which focus on understanding the scientific concepts found in the Earth and Space Sciences, Life Sciences, and Physical Sciences. These standards integrate the Disciplinary Core Ideas, Science and Engineering Practices, and Crosscutting Concepts to help students understand how science works in the natural world.



Why Is the CAST Given?

The purposes of the CAST are to assess student knowledge and skills in science and to foster science education at every grade level. In addition, the CAST encourages students to build the knowledge and skills needed for college and careers.



Who Takes the CAST?

All students in grades five and eight and one time in high school (i.e., grade ten, eleven, or twelve) will take the CAST unless a student's individualized education program designates the California Alternate Assessment. The California Department of Education (CDE) recommends testing high school students when they are enrolled in their last science course. High schools have the option to test any or all students in grade ten or eleven, as long as all students have been tested by the end of grade twelve.



How Is the CAST Given?

The CAST is a computer-based test that consists of stand-alone questions as well as three or four performance tasks. Performance tasks require students to solve a series of related questions. Testing should take approximately two hours to complete.



When Is the CAST Given?

The CAST will be administered during the school's selected testing window. Most schools will test between the middle of March and the middle of May.

