April 22, 2014

Dear Rio Americano families,

End-of-year testing will begin to dramatically change this spring, and I’m writing to help you understand what it means and how you can help your child prepare. This year, instead of pencil-and-paper tests, many of our students will participate in a field test of a new online, computerized assessment that will eventually replace the traditional Standardized Testing and Reporting (STAR) program you and your student are used to.

The Smarter Balanced Field Test will take place throughout San Juan Unified between April 21-May 16 and will include assessments in English-language arts and math.

This new computerized test looks a lot different because it’s being designed to offer students, families and teachers a clearer picture of what students are learning to be successful in college and their careers. For example, while there will be some multiple choice questions, students also will be asked to fill-in tables, write essays, drag and drop and graph. Each test will take three to four hours of your child’s time over multiple days, and they will challenge your student to more deeply demonstrate their knowledge than traditional testing.

Because this is a field test, **there will not be any scores issued this year.** Still, it’s important to take this test seriously: This year’s field test is happening in thousands of schools across California and will help determine how well individual questions allow students demonstrate what they know and still need to learn.

I encourage you to learn more by going online to [www.sanjuan.edu/testing](http://www.sanjuan.edu/testing), where you and your child can take practice tests, watch videos about the new assessment and find answers to common questions about the Smarter Balanced Field Test.

Of course, if you have any questions or concerns, don’t hesitate to contact me at 916-979-8860 or brian.ginter@sanjuan.edu.

Sincerely,

Brian T. Ginter
Rio Americano HS
Principal