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Published May 12th, 2010

## **STAR Test Scores on High School Transcripts - Are They Necessary?**

*By Sophie Braccini*

According to John Nickerson, Educational Services Assistant Superintendent of the Acalanes Union High School District (AUHSD), including scores from California's Standardized Testing and Reporting (STAR) tests on students' high school transcripts, which are sent to university admission officers, is not a state requirement; nor is it requested by the University of California, Cal State Colleges, or Community Colleges. Nickerson says he has received no indication that private universities pay attention to these scores. So why did the District re-establish this practice in 2005?

"It is done primarily because we believe student performance on CSTs (STAR tests) is an accurate reflection of student achievement in our core curriculum," said Nickerson. He is echoed by private college admissions advisor Dr. Elizabeth LaScala. "My guess would be that some colleges might use the results to help evaluate prospective applicants," she said, "It may be viewed as a more objective measure of a student's academic performance because, in theory, it draws upon content from the student's academic curricula. Since there is so much test preparation available for the SAT and ACT (and test prep is more commonly seen in more affluent families who can afford this expense), colleges may use STAR testing as another objective measure of student's academic standing over time." Both the Nickerson and LaScala believe that there is a strong correlation between grades, STAR testing and SAT/ACT. "Some parents, whose children do better in those tests than with their grades, are happy to have us include it in the transcript," said Nickerson, who adds that parents can opt-out of the test.

Ricardo Vazquez, a spokesman at the UC Office of the President, confirmed that the UC system does not consider the results of the STAR test in its admission process.

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