The Chico Unified School District’s commitment is to insure ALL students learn the California Content Standards. In order meet this commitment, we adhere to the Professional Learning Community philosophy that our schools need to be places of continual learning for students and staff alike.

We are continually working to find better ways to measure student achievement and find areas where we can do a better job of helping students achieve. The state of California measures student achievement and school quality utilizing student achievement scores on the STAR tests that students take in Late April every year.

As a District, we know we can’t wait until we get the results of the STAR tests the following August to help our students succeed. We have been studying the models used by districts enjoying immense success in the area of student achievement. The common link between all of these districts is a constructive assessment plan that allows teachers to analyze the standards their students are mastering and the standards that students are struggling to learn.

We analyzed our practice as a district and realized we need to build a better assessment plan to help our staff realize where the learning gaps were and give them a chance to build strategies to close these gaps throughout the school year.

The new assessment plan delivers the same STAR-style test to the students three times a year. The first test will help teachers see which standards their students may have mastered before entering their class. The second administration of the test, approximately three months later, will give teachers a chance to see how the students are progressing toward master the state standards, and allow them to adjust their instructional strategies accordingly.

The third test comes a little more than a month before the STAR testing and gives teachers another opportunity to see which standards their students are still struggling to master. This gives teachers time to build strategies to help master the standards the state mandates they should learn.

We owe it to our students to give them every opportunity to achieve success, and believe this type of assessment strategy gives them the best chance to do so.