



## **North Star Independent Study School**

School Accountability Report Card, 2006–2007  
Amador County Unified School District

» An annual report to the community about teaching, learning, test results, resources, and measures of progress in our school.

# North Star Independent Study School

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Amador County Unified School District

This School Accountability Report Card (SARC) provides information that can be used to evaluate and compare schools. State and federal laws require all schools to publish a SARC each year.

The information in this report represents the 2006–2007 school year, not the current school year. In most cases, this is the most recent data available. We present our school's results next to those of the average high school in the county and state to provide the most meaningful and fair comparisons. To find additional facts about our school online, please use the [DataQuest](#) tool offered by the California Department of Education.

If you are reading a printed version of this report, note that words that appear in a smaller, bold typeface are links in the online version of this report to even more information. You can find a master list of those linked words, and the Web page addresses they are connected to, at:

[http://www.schoolwisepress.com/sarc/links\\_2007\\_en.html](http://www.schoolwisepress.com/sarc/links_2007_en.html)

Reports about other schools are available on the [California Department of Education Web site](#). Internet access is available in local libraries.

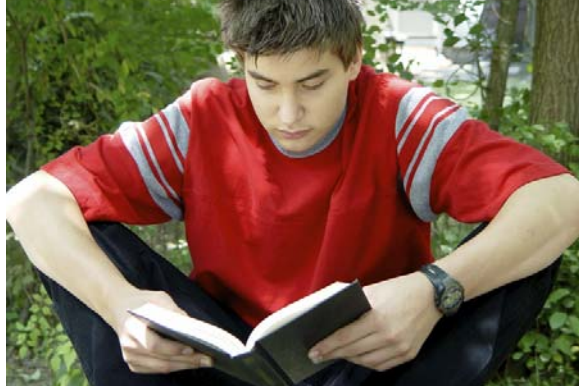
If you have any questions related to this report, please contact the school office.

## How to Contact Our School

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Sutter Creek, CA 95685  
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<http://www.amadorcoe.org>



## » Contents

ONLINE USERS: CLICK ON A TITLE TO JUMP TO THAT SECTION

- 1 Principal's Message**
- 3 Measures of Progress**
- 5 Student Achievement**
- 14 Preparation for College and the Workforce**
- 20 Students**
- 21 Climate for Learning**
- 23 Leadership, Teachers, and Staff**
- 28 Curriculum and Textbooks**
- 29 Resources**
- 30 District Expenditures**
- 31 School Expenditures**



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## » Principal's Message

Our mission at North Star Independent Study School is to provide each of our students with the opportunity to acquire the values, skills, and knowledge necessary to ensure lifelong learning, a sense of self-worth, and a future as a responsible individual.

North Star provides a kindergarten through twelfth grade curriculum for students and families who have academic needs or special circumstances that cannot be accommodated in the daily comprehensive school setting. Students receive individual attention from credentialed, highly qualified teachers in an instructional program designed to meet their specific requirements. Teachers and parents work closely together to help students achieve educational goals.

Sandra Watson, PRINCIPAL

### Grade range and calendar

**K-12**

TRADITIONAL

### Academic Performance Index

**641**

County Average: 743  
State Average: 697

### Student enrollment

**109**

County Average: 536  
State Average: 1,277

### Teachers

**4**

County Average: 21  
State Average: 55

### Students per teacher

**27**

County Average: 26  
State Average: 23

### Students per computer

**4**

County Average: 4  
State Average: 4

### **Major Achievements**

- Our high school classes meet University of California requirements for core subjects.
- North Star is accredited by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges.
- Our graduation rate is currently higher than in previous years.
- The percentage of our students who pass the California High School Exit Exam (CAHSEE) is above the state average.

### **Focus for Improvement**

In the past we have focused on basic skills. With the introduction of the CAHSEE and stricter California Content Standards, we are actively working on staff development for teachers. We are also working on individual learning plans for students so that they can meet and exceed requirements and expectations.

**MEASURES OF PROGRESS**

**Academic Performance Index**

The Academic Performance Index (API) is California’s way of comparing schools based on student test scores. The index was created in 1999 to help parents and educators recognize schools that show progress and identify schools that need help. A school’s API determines whether it receives recognition or sanctions. It is also used to compare schools in a statewide ranking system. The California Department of Education (CDE) calculates our school’s API using student test results from the California Standards Tests, the California Achievement Test, and, for high schools, the California High School Exit Exam (CAHSEE). APIs range from 200 to 1000. The CDE expects all schools to eventually obtain APIs of at least 800. [Additional information on the API](#) can be found on the CDE Web site.

North Star’s API was 641 (out of 1000). This is an increase of 2 points compared to last year’s API. About 96 percent of our students took the test. You can find three years of detailed API results in the Data Almanac that accompanies this report.

**API RANKINGS:** Based on our 2005–2006 test results, we started the 2006–2007 school year with an API base score of 639. The state ranks all schools according to this score on a scale from 1 to 10 (10 being highest). Compared to all high schools in California, our school ranked 3 out of 10.

**API GROWTH TARGETS:** Each year the CDE sets specific API “growth targets” for every school. It assigns one growth target for the entire school, and it sets additional targets for ethnic or socioeconomic subgroups of students that make up a significant portion of the student body. Schools are required to meet all of their growth targets. If they do, they may be eligible to apply for awards through the California School Recognition Program and the Title I Achieving Schools Program.

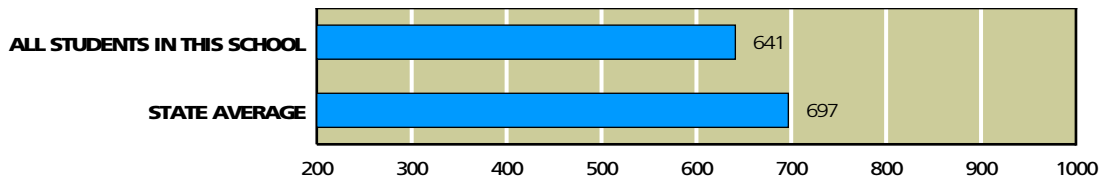
We did not meet some or all of our assigned growth targets during the 2006–2007 school year. Just for reference, 27 percent of high schools statewide met their growth targets.

CALIFORNIA <b>API</b> ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE INDEX	
<b>Met schoolwide growth target</b>	<b>No</b>
<b>Met growth target for prior school year</b>	<b>Yes</b>
<b>API score</b>	<b>641</b>
<b>Growth attained from prior year</b>	<b>+2</b>
<b>Met subgroup* growth targets</b>	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Underperforming school</b>	<b>No</b>

SOURCE: API based on spring 2007 test cycle. Growth scores alone are displayed and are current as of January 2008.

\*Ethnic or socioeconomic groups of students that make up 15 percent or more of a school’s student body. These groups must meet AYP and API goals. R/P - Results pending due to challenge by school. N/A - Results not available.

**API, Spring 2007**



SOURCE: API based on spring 2007 test cycle. State average represents high schools only.  
NOTE: Only groups of students that represent at least 15 percent of total enrollment are calculated and displayed as student subgroups.

### Adequate Yearly Progress

In addition to California’s accountability system, which measures student achievement using the API, schools must also meet requirements set by the federal education law known as **No Child Left Behind (NCLB)**. This law requires all schools to meet a different goal: **Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP)**.

We met all six criteria for yearly progress. As a result, we succeeded at making AYP.

To meet AYP, high schools must meet four criteria. First, a certain percentage of students must score at or above Proficient levels on the California High School Exit Exam (CAHSEE): 22.3 percent on the English/language arts test and 20.9 percent on the math test. All significant ethnic and socioeconomic subgroups of students also must meet these goals. Second, the schools must achieve an API of at least 590 or increase their API by one point from the prior year. Third, 95 percent of tenth grade students must take the CAHSEE. Fourth, the graduation rate for the class of 2006 must be higher than 82.9 percent (or satisfy alternate improvement criteria).

If even one subgroup of students fails to meet just one of the criteria, the school fails to meet AYP. While all schools must report their progress toward meeting AYP, only schools that receive federal funding to help economically disadvantaged students are actually penalized if they fail to meet AYP goals. Schools that do not make AYP for two or more years in a row in the same subject enter **Program Improvement (PI)**. They must offer students transfers to other schools in the district and, in their second year in PI, tutoring services as well.

FEDERAL <b>AYP</b> ADEQUATE YEARLY PROGRESS	
<b>Met AYP</b>	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Met schoolwide participation rate</b>	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Met schoolwide test score goals</b>	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Met subgroup* participation rate</b>	<b>N/A</b>
<b>Met subgroup* test score goals</b>	<b>N/A</b>
<b>Met schoolwide API for AYP</b>	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Met graduation rate</b>	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Program Improvement School in 2007</b>	<b>No</b>

SOURCE: AYP is based on the Accountability Progress Report of January 2008. A school can be in Program Improvement based on students' test results in the 2006–2007 school year or earlier.

\*Ethnic or socioeconomic groups of students that make up 15 percent or more of a school's student body. These groups must meet AYP and API goals. R/P - Results pending due to challenge by school. N/A - Results not available.

### Adequate Yearly Progress, Detail by Subgroup

● MET GOAL ● DID NOT MEET GOAL — NOT ENOUGH STUDENTS

	English/Language Arts		Math	
	DID 95% OF STUDENTS TAKE THE CAHSEE?	DID 22.3% ATTAIN PROFICIENCY ON THE CAHSEE?	DID 95% OF STUDENTS TAKE THE CAHSEE?	DID 20.9% ATTAIN PROFICIENCY ON THE CAHSEE?
<b>SCHOOLWIDE RESULTS</b>	●	●	●	●

SOURCE: AYP release of January 2008, CDE.

The table at left shows our success or failure in meeting AYP goals in the 2006–2007 school year. The green dots represent goals we met; red dots indicate goals we missed. Just one red dot means that we failed to meet Adequate Yearly Progress.

Note: Dashes indicate that too few students were in the category to draw meaningful conclusions. Federal law requires valid test scores from at least 50 students for statistical significance.

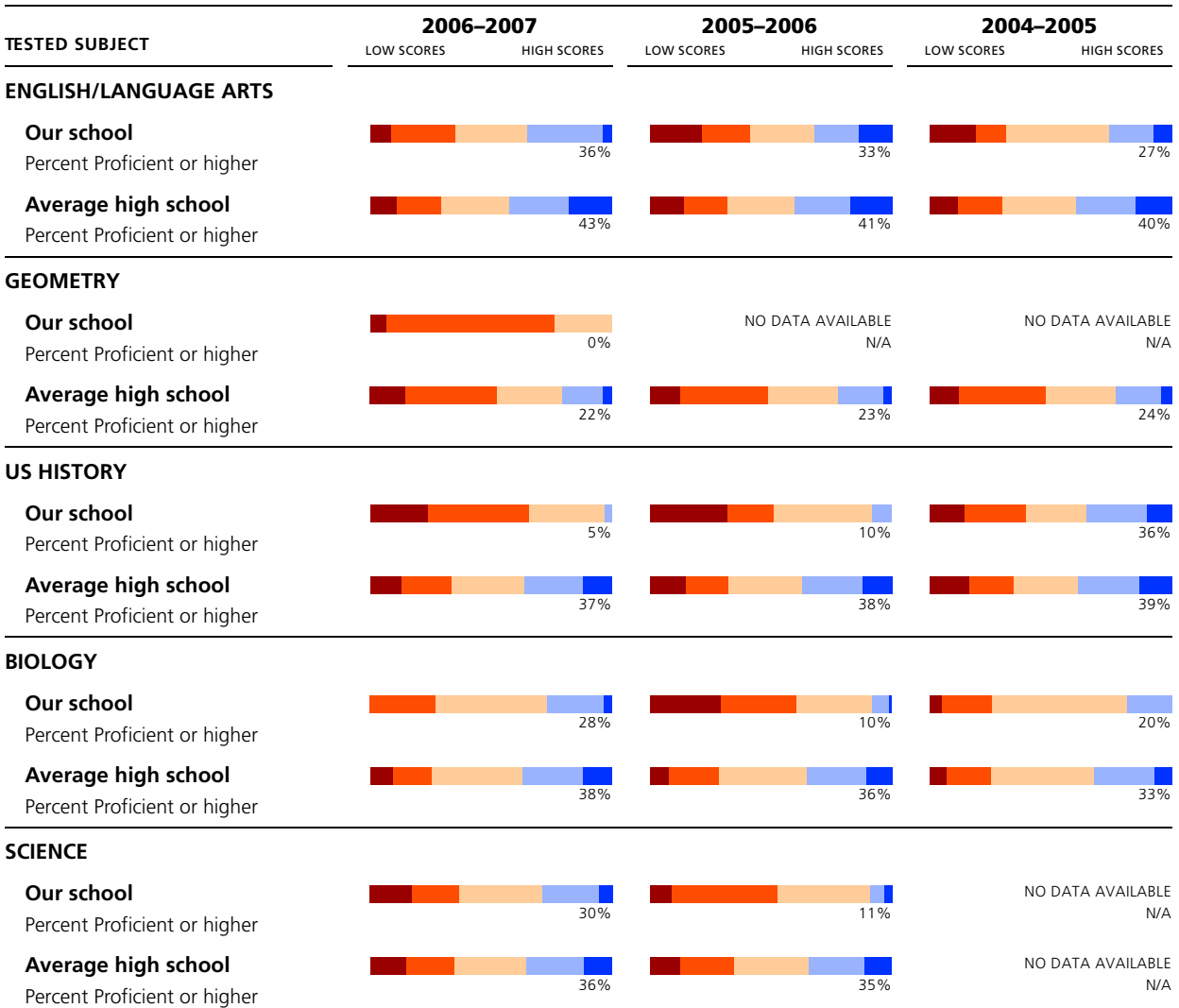
## STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

Here you'll find a three-year summary of our students' scores on the California Standards Tests (CST) in selected subjects. We compare our students' test scores to the results for students in the average high school in California. On the following pages we provide more detail for each test, including the scores for different subgroups of students. In addition, we provide links to the California Content Standards on which these tests are based. If you'd like more information about the CST, please contact our principal or our teaching staff. To find [grade-level-specific scores](#), you can refer to the Standardized Testing and Reporting (STAR) Web site. Other tests in the [STAR program](#) can be found on the California Department of Education (CDE) Web site.

### California Standards Tests

BAR GRAPHS BELOW SHOW THESE PROFICIENCY GROUPS (LEFT TO RIGHT):

■ FAR BELOW BASIC ■ BELOW BASIC ■ BASIC ■ PROFICIENT ■ ADVANCED



SOURCE: The scores for the CST are from the spring 2007 test cycle. State average represents high schools only. Whenever a school reports fewer than 11 scores for a particular subgroup at any grade level, the CDE suppresses the scores when it releases the data to the public. Missing data makes it impossible for us to compile complete schoolwide results. Therefore, the results published in this report may vary from other published CDE test scores.

## Frequently Asked Questions About Standardized Tests

**WHERE CAN I FIND GRADE-LEVEL REPORTS?** Due to space constraints and concern for statistical reliability, we have omitted grade-level detail from these test results. Instead we present results at the schoolwide level. You can view the results of far more students than any one grade level would contain, which also improves their statistical reliability. Grade-level results are online on the [STAR Web site](#). More information about student test scores is available in the Data Almanac that accompanies this report.

**WHAT DO THE FIVE PROFICIENCY BANDS MEAN?** Test experts assign students to one of these five proficiency levels, based on the number of questions they answer correctly. Our immediate goal is to help students move up one level. Our eventual goal is to enable all students to reach either of the top two bands, Advanced or Proficient. Those who score in the middle band, Basic, have come close to attaining the required knowledge and skills. Those who score in either of the bottom two bands—Below Basic or Far Below Basic—need more help to reach the Proficient level.

**WHY ARE THE CALIFORNIA STANDARDS TESTS (CST) AND THE CALIFORNIA ACHIEVEMENT TEST (CAT/6) SCORED DIFFERENTLY?** When students take the CST, they can score at any of the proficiency levels: Advanced, Proficient, Basic, Below Basic, or Far Below Basic. In theory all students in California could score at the top. The CAT/6 is a nationally normed test, which means that students are scored against each other nationally. This scoring method is similar to grading “on the curve.” CAT/6 scores are expressed as a ranking on a scale from 1 to 99.

**HOW HARD ARE THE CALIFORNIA STANDARDS TESTS?** Experts consider California’s standards to be among the most clear and rigorous in the country. Just 45 percent of elementary school students scored Proficient or Advanced on the English/language arts test; 53 percent scored Proficient or Advanced in math. You can review the [California Content Standards](#) on the CDE Web site.

**ARE ALL STUDENTS’ SCORES INCLUDED?** No. Only students in grades two through eleven are required to take the CSTs. When fewer than 11 students in one grade or subgroup take a test, state officials remove their scores from the report. They omit them to protect students’ privacy, as called for by federal law.

**CAN I REVIEW SAMPLE TEST QUESTIONS?** Sample test questions for the CST are on the [CDE’s Web site](#). These are actual questions used in previous years.

**WHERE CAN I FIND ADDITIONAL INFORMATION?** The CDE has a wealth of resources on its Web site. The STAR Web site publishes detailed reports for schools and districts, and assistance packets for parents and teachers. This site includes explanations of [technical terms](#), scoring methods, and the [subjects](#) covered by the tests for each grade. You’ll also find a [guide](#) to navigating the STAR Web site as well as help understanding how to [compare test scores](#).

**WHY ARE ONLY SOME OF THE TEST RESULTS PRESENT?** California’s test program includes many tests not mentioned in this report. For brevity’s sake, we’re reporting six CST tests usually taken by the largest number of students. We select at least one test from each core subject. For science, we’ve selected biology (an elective) and the tenth grade life science test. For math, we’ve selected two courses, both of them electives: Algebra I, which students take if they haven’t studied and passed it in eighth grade; and Geometry, often the most popular math course because it follows Algebra I. In social studies, we’ve selected US History, which is taken by all juniors (eleventh graders). English/language arts summarizes the results of students in grades nine through eleven.

































































