



Santa Ana Unified School District students participated in the mock trial event at UC Irvine on Saturday. Top row: Sigma Avila, Brenda Rivera, Michael Gonzalez, and Victor Gonzalez; middle row: Omar Zurita; front row: Kenia Suasa, Ana Charco, Daniel Carranza, Odalys Sanchez and Diana Caldreon.

## First leg of Common Core tests begin

BY LAUREN STEUSSY  
STAFF WRITER

After a minor delay, on Tuesday, hundreds of students around Orange County began taking new tests meant to assess students' knack for new standards known as the Common Core.

Though the scores on the tests don't count this year, the schools are taking them to introduce students and staff to the new method of testing, which is computer-based. It also will tell schools what technological and educational gaps they may have to address before the real testing begins next year.

The questions on the tests, created by the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium, are designed to measure how well students are grasping the Common Core philosophy. The standards push students to use the knowledge they learn in the classroom in real life, not just multiple-choice tests.

But adapting to the new style of testing will take some changes. For starters, schools must have enough computer labs to test multiple students at a time. This is a challenge for districts like the Ocean View School District in Huntington Beach, where on average, 16 students shared a computer in the 2012-13 school year, according to the California Department of Education.

In Ocean View, district officials were hurrying to set up schools for the testing, moving around laptops, desks and chairs to make-shift labs days before the testing began at some of its schools, said the district's spokeswoman Roni Ellis.

"We were kind of behind in our technology and now with the tests here, it has kind of forced the issue," Ellis said. "It's a good motivator."



FILE PHOTO: ROD VEAL, STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Testing launched this week to introduce students and teachers to new assessments aligned with Common Core standards.

### Smarter Balanced: Did you know?

The tests replace what students, parents and educators came to know as STAR tests.

While the state's old standards were tested with the STAR assessments, the state's new standards, known as the Common Core, will now be tested with the Smarter Balanced assessments.

Instead of the standardized multiple choice questions, the questions on the new tests are meant to gauge deeper understanding of material, often asking students to write and solve problems.

The scores on this year's Smarter Balanced field tests don't have to be reported to the federal or state government - they're just a practice round.

The goal of the field test this year is to determine how well the test's questions allow students to demonstrate what they know and still need to learn.

Take a practice test and see what it's like here:

[smarterbalanced.org/practice-test](http://smarterbalanced.org/practice-test).  
Source: California Department of Education

The test questions also will be a change for students, said Catherine Holmes, principal at Vista Verde School in Irvine.

Her school participated in a pilot test of the new assessments last school year and generally found the questions to be a lot harder than they were on the old tests, she said.

Teachers also took the test earlier this school year to better prepare their students.

"The tests have multiple parts, multiple steps, and our kids aren't used to answering a question that is 10 problems in one," Holmes said. "And when you take the test as an adult, it really brings home the difference between the new tests and the old tests."

Testing will be staggered across the state in different "testing windows." Within

those windows, schools can vary on the weeks when they will begin testing. Statewide, about 193,000 students will take the tests in the first window, which started on Tuesday and runs till May 16.

The tests were set to begin March 18, but were delayed a week.

The delay only impacted a fraction of the 150 schools across Orange County set to begin testing last week.

The testing consortium delayed the start of testing to run additional quality checks, said Jacqueline King, a spokeswoman for the consortium.

"We didn't discover any problems, things were going fine but we just needed a little more time to finish it up," King said. "We wanted to take the time to check everything carefully."

## Students graduate from UCI weekend law study program

UC IRVINE SCHOOL OF LAW

Fifty ninth-grade students from Santa Ana Unified School District graduated Saturday from the UC Irvine School of Law Saturday Academy of Law program and were recognized in a ceremony.

More than 300 students have graduated from the program since its inception five years ago, to help young students learn about the legal professions as a career choice.

The students participated in a mock trial event and later received congressional recognition certificates signed by Congresswoman Loretta Sanchez.

UCI Law School community partners and SAL supporters who attended the event include: Scott Leslie, vice president, mergers and acquisitions at Experian; Diana Lopez and Norma Guillen Garcia, executive board members of the Orange County Hispanic Bar Association; Orange County Superior Court Judge Gail Andler, and Jose Alfredo Hernandez, vice president of the SAUSD governing board. The keynote speaker was Monica Lukoschek, founding partner of the U.S. Immigration Law Group LLP.

UC Irvine School of Law offers the Saturday Academy in two six-week sessions during the academic year, one in the fall and another in the spring. Students that successfully complete SAL receive extra credit when applying to any of the Uni-



PHOTOS: COURTESY OF UC IRVINE SCHOOL OF LAW

Santa Ana Unified School District students from left, Alejandro Aguilera, Veronica Pulido and Sebastian Garcia participate in a mock trial exercise at UC Irvine's School of Law during a celebration of their completion of the school's Saturday Academy of Law.



Santa Ana Unified School District teacher Megan Blash presents the certificate of completion to UC Irvine Saturday Academy of Law student Ana Berrelleza, as Brenda Rivera, at left, awaits her turn.

versity of California campuses because SAL is a UC-sponsored outreach program. In addition, several SAL graduates were chosen to participate in the highly selective Project SELF program, which provides internships for high school juniors at law firms.

The most recent report from the American Bar Association found that the nation's practicing bar is not representative of the diversity in the United States. SAL was created as an opportunity to expose stu-

dents from diverse backgrounds to the practice of law and to help them to understand that a career as an attorney is a viable option.

Santa Ana Unified School District is the sixth largest school district in California with more than 57,000 students. The district is primarily Latino (95 percent) with 82 percent of students identified as English language learners, and 87 percent qualifying for free or reduced cost lunch.

- Submitted by UC Irvine School of Law

## Crean Lutheran senior selected as National Merit Scholarship finalist

CREAN LUTHERAN HIGH SCHOOL

Kevin Kim, a Crean Lutheran High School senior, was selected as a finalist in the 2014 National Merit Scholarship Program.

Kim is one of about 15,000 students of the more than 1.5 million who entered the competition by taking the 2012 Preliminary Scholastic Aptitude Test/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test (PSAT/NMSQT) and who are now also being recognized for their overall academic excellence.

Kim recently received a Letter of Commendation from the school and National Merit Scholarship Corp.

(NMSC), which conducts the program, at a special school ceremony.

"The Crean Lutheran High School community is exceedingly proud of Kevin" said Jeffrey Beavers, founding principal of Crean Lutheran High School. "His success is well-deserved, and it is based upon strong intellectual curiosity, an uncommon work ethic, and a strong partnership between family and school."

Kim's achievement represents the second straight year that Crean Lutheran High School has honored a National Merit finalist. A year ago, Callahan McDonough was selected as a National Merit finalist, which earned him a full scholarship to Pepperdine University.

- Submitted by Crean Lutheran High School



Kim

## Christian Science Church

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Reading Room 10-4 M-F, 10-1 Sat. 949.262.9542

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Wednesday testimony meetings 7:30 PM

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## 7 Deadly Mistakes That Will Cost You Thousands When You Sell Your Home This Summer

Orange County - (CA)

A new report has just been released which reveals 7 costly mistakes that most homeowners make when selling their home, and a 9 Step System that can help you sell your home fast and for the most amount of money.

This industry report shows clearly how the traditional ways of selling homes have become increasingly less and less effective in today's market. The fact of the matter is that fully three quarters of home sellers don't get what they want for their homes and become disillusioned and - worse - financially disadvantaged when they put their home on the market.

As this report uncovers, most home sellers make 7 deadly mistakes that cost them literally thousands of dollars. The good news is that each and every day one of these mistakes is entirely preventable. In answer to these issues, industry insiders have prepared a free special report entitled "The 9 Steps to Get Your Home Sold Fast and For Top Dollar".

To hear a brief recorded message about how to order your FREE copy of this report call toll-free 1-800-730-8078 and enter 2000. You can call any time, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Get your free special report NOW to find out how you can get the most money for your home.



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