

INFORMATION MEMORANDUM

DATE: April 2004

TO: MEMBERS, STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

FROM: Geno Flores, Deputy Superintendent
Assessment and Accountability Branch

SUBJECT: California High School Exit Exam (CAHSEE) Program Update

Background: The CAHSEE was established as the first statewide high school exit exam in California (Senate Bill (SB) 2, Statutes of 1999) and initially applied to students who would graduate in the 2003-2004 school year. In July 2003, State Board of Education (SBE) approved delaying the consequences until the 2005-2006 school year based on the Assembly Bill 1609 Study Report and other available information. Further, SBE also directed California Department of Education (CDE) to shorten the test from three to two days of administration without substantively changing the academic content standards assessed with the CAHSEE.

Update: CAHSEE Testing in 2003-04: Students in the Class of 2006 took the CAHSEE for the first time as tenth graders on either February 3-4, 2004 or March 16-17, 2004. Approximately, 150,000 students in 220 school districts took the CAHSEE in February. For March, approximately 450 school districts ordered testing materials for about 330,000 eligible students. On May 11-12, 2004, any students who were absent in February or March will have a final opportunity to take the CAHSEE for the first time in grade 10.

CAHSEE results are reported annually in October and are provided on the Web site through the DataQuest site maintained by CDE. The 2003-2004 results will be reported separately for February, March, and May 2004. The CAHSEE data will also be used for calculating Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) and Academic Performance Index (API).

CAHSEE Test Contractor: Educational Testing Service (ETS) is the successful bidder for the CAHSEE Administration 2004-2007 contract. CDE is working with ETS to finalize the contract.

SB 964 Study: Proposals were due on March 19, 2004, from bidders interested in conducting the SB 964 Study. One proposal was received by the deadline and it will be reviewed April 15, 2004. Results of the review will be announced the week of April 19, 2004. The SB 964 Study Report must recommend options for graduation requirements and assessments, if any, for students with an Individualized Education Program (IEP) or Section 504 Plan; identify provisions of State and Federal Law and regulations that are relevant to graduation requirements and assessments for students with an IEP or Section 504 Plan; and recommend steps, to the extent applicable, to bring California into compliance with State and Federal law and regulations. The SB 964 Study Report is due no later than May 1, 2005.

CAHSEE Materials: Released Test Questions for both mathematics and ELA were posted on the Internet in March 2004. These documents are a compilation of test questions released in 2001 and 2002, and newly released questions for 2003. All test questions are aligned to the revised test blueprints approved by SBE in July 2003.