

## Independent Evaluation of the California High School Exit Examination (CAHSEE): Second Biennial Report

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## **Independent Evaluation of the California High School Exit Examination (CAHSEE): Second Biennial Report**

### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

In May 2003, California concluded the third year of administering its High School Exit Examination. The requirement that students pass a graduation exam in English-language arts (ELA) and mathematics beginning with the Class of 2004 was established by Senate Bill (SB)-2X passed in 1999 and written into the California Education Code as Chapter 8, Section 60850. This section of the code was further modified through the passage of Assembly Bill (AB) 1609 in 2002. The revised legislation that gave the State Board of Education (the Board) authority to postpone the CAHSEE requirement was based in part on a mandated study of the extent to which both test development and standards-based instruction met the criteria for this type of examination. The study report was issued on May 1, 2003 (Wise et al., May 2003). At its July 2003 meeting, the Board voted to defer the CAHSEE requirement to the graduating class of 2006.

The legislation that authorized the graduation exam also specified an independent evaluation of the CAHSEE. The California Department of Education (CDE) awarded a contract for this evaluation to the Human Resources Research Organization (HumRRO). HumRRO's efforts focus on analyses of data from tryouts of test questions and from the annual administrations of the CAHSEE, and on reporting trends in pupil performance and retention, graduation, dropout, and college attendance rates. The legislation also specified that evaluation reporting will include recommendations for improving the quality, fairness, validity, and reliability of the examination. This document meets the legislative requirement for biennial reports of evaluation activities and findings to be submitted February 1 in even-numbered years. Our report examines results subsequent to those reported in the legislatively mandated January 2002 report covering the 2001 CAHSEE administration (Wise, Sipes, Harris, George, Ford, & Sun, 2002). Additional reports on evaluation findings were provided in annual reports to CDE (Wise et al., June 2002; Wise et al. September 2003) and in the report to the Board (Wise et al. May 2003) submitted in fulfillment of study requirements under AB 1609.

#### **Test Development, Administration, and Scoring**

When the Legislature passed AB 1609 in 2002, it mandated specific changes to the CAHSEE, including a special study of the extent to which the development of the CAHSEE and standards-based instruction met the requirements for a high school graduation test. Evaluation activities were expanded to meet the requirements for this study. A detailed description of the study, along with findings and recommendations, were included in a report to the Board issued May 1 and are not repeated in the present report (Wise et al., May 2003, <http://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/tg/hs/>).

Evaluation activities summarized in the current biennial report include:

*Review of Test Developer Plans and Reports.* HumRRO continued to monitor test development activities and reports. These included changes to test administration procedures, equating alternate forms, changes to reporting procedures, and review of performance standards for ELA and mathematics.

*Analysis of Operational CAHSEE Data.* HumRRO analyzed results from the six operational administrations of CAHSEE from July 2002 through May 2003. These included continued administration to 11<sup>th</sup> graders in the Class of 2004 who had not yet passed one or both parts of the CAHSEE and a census administration to 10<sup>th</sup> graders in the Class of 2005. Results from the analyses of student test results are described in Chapter 2 of this report. Additional analyses of student responses to survey questions are described in Chapter 3.

*Longitudinal Surveys of District and School Sample Personnel.* The annual survey of a longitudinal representative sample of 24 districts and approximately 90 of their high schools continued for the fourth consecutive year; one district's refusal required replacement of that district, including three schools. The surveys, which were administered to principals and English-language arts and mathematics teachers, provided a continuing look at schools' perspectives of the impact of the CAHSEE on their programs. In addition, testing coordinators were surveyed for the second year to identify problems with the administration of the CAHSEE. Results from these analyses are described in Chapter 4 of this report.

*Surveys and Interviews on Instruction.* In winter of 2003, HumRRO conducted a special study of instruction in the content standards covered by the CAHSEE. The instruction survey, conducted to meet AB 1609 requirements, was completed by principals and teachers in 298 California high schools, and also by principals and teachers at 173 middle-grade feeder schools. The teacher surveys covered 3,270 high school courses and 2,006 middle-grade feeder school courses. Information from the survey was supplemented by visits to a smaller sample of schools. Principals and teachers at each site were interviewed to elicit information to confirm and expand on the information obtained through the surveys. A total of 62 schools were visited, including 45 high schools and 17 middle-grade feeder schools, and a total of 499 interviews were conducted at these schools. Results from these surveys and interviews are presented in Chapter 5 of this report.

*Effectiveness of Instruction.* Information from the CAHSEE administrations was also used in assessing standards-based instruction. Passing rates were computed for each of the state's 1,843 high schools and used in assessing the effectiveness of standards-based instruction in each high school together with its associated middle and elementary schools. This information is used extensively in Chapter 6, which discusses the effectiveness of current standards-based instruction.

## **Findings and Recommendations**

The main findings and recommendations stemming from recent evaluation activities are presented in Chapter 7. In brief, the general findings are as follows:

**General Finding 1:** The development of the CAHSEE meets all of the test standards for use as a graduation requirement.

**General Finding 2.** The CAHSEE requirement has been a major factor leading to dramatically increased coverage of the California Academic Content Standards at both the high school and middle school levels and to development or improvement of courses providing help for students who have difficulty mastering these standards.

**General Finding 3.** Available evidence indicates that many courses of initial instruction and remedial courses have only limited effectiveness in helping students master the required standards.

**General Finding 4.** Lack of prerequisite skills may prevent many students from receiving the benefits of courses that provide instruction in relevant content standards. Inadequate student motivation and lack of strong parental support may play a contributing role in limiting the effectiveness of these courses.

**General Finding 5.** While precise comparisons are not possible, by the end of 10<sup>th</sup> grade passing rates for students in the Class of 2005 were slightly lower than passing rates for students in the Class of 2004.

**General Finding 6:** Available evidence indicates that the CAHSEE has not led to any increase in dropout rates. In fact enrollment declines from 10<sup>th</sup> to 11<sup>th</sup> grade for the Class of 2004 were significantly lower than declines for prior high school classes.

**General Finding 7:** More students in the Class of 2005 believed that the CAHSEE was important to them compared to Class of 2004 students when they were in the 10<sup>th</sup> grade. Slightly more said they did as well as they could on the exam. Expectations for graduation and post-high school plans were largely unchanged for the Class of 2005 in comparison to the Class of 2004.

**General Finding 8:** Schools are continuing efforts to ensure that the California Academic Content Standards are covered in instruction and to provide support for students who need additional help in mastering these standards. Many programs that were in the planning stages or only partially implemented a year ago have now been fully implemented.

**General Finding 9:** Teacher and principal expectations for the impact of CAHSEE on students are largely unchanged from prior years.

**General Finding 10:** Professional development in the teaching of the content standards has not yet been extensive.

**General Finding 11:** There were no significant problems with local understanding of test administration procedures, but some issues remain with the provision of student data and the assignment of testing accommodations.

Subsequent to the 2003 administrations, the Board deferred implementation of the CAHSEE requirement to the Class of 2006. Based on information available to date (as summarized in our general findings), we offer four recommendations for future administration of the CAHSEE.

**Recommendation 1: Restarting the exam with the Class of 2006 provides some opportunities for improvement; however, careful consideration should be given to any changes that are implemented.**

The AB 1609 study report (Wise et al., May 2003) included several recommendations for changes that could ensure better alignment of what is tested with what is taught, making it easier for all students to demonstrate adequate mastery of the intended content. At its July 2003 meeting, the Board approved plans to shorten the ELA testing to a single day and to reduce cognitive demands for mathematics questions while still assessing the same standards. Changes to the score scale and possibly even the reexamination of test content specifications are also being considered.

Given the opportunity to restart the CAHSEE for the Class of 2006 next year, consideration of such changes is entirely appropriate. An exact equating of scores from new administrations to scores from prior administrations is not necessary, since the prior administrations no longer “count.” (All students tested to date are no longer required to pass the CAHSEE.) Nonetheless, the time to implement changes is very short. For example, forms for the 2004 administrations must be printed well ahead of time, so there is no time to develop and field test new questions. In addition, current procedures have worked very well. A careful review will be needed to ensure that proposed alternatives will work equally well.

We are particularly concerned that there be adequate technical review of plans to reduce the testing time for ELA to a single day. Members of the original HSEE Standards Panel that recommended the content to be covered by the test felt strongly about the need for students to demonstrate their ability to write coherently. To what extent will eliminating one of the two essay questions increase errors in classifying students as passing or not passing? Will the relative weight assigned to writing versus reading and to the writing standards covered by the essays, in particular, be changed? There is, unfortunately, not time for the Board to seek the advice of another panel of content experts on these matters, but a careful technical review is both feasible and important.

**Recommendation 2: The California Department of Education and the State Board of Education should continue to monitor and encourage efforts by districts and schools to implement effective standards-based instruction.**

Results from the AB 1609 study (Wise et al., May 2003) indicated that standards-based instruction was widely available in both middle and high schools. High school instruction includes significant new efforts to provide second-chance opportunities for students who did not fully master required skills during initial instruction. The study also found, however, that current instruction was not effective in that many students taking the standards-based courses offered still could not pass the CAHSEE. There were indications that instruction was likely to improve for students in high school classes beyond 2004 and 2005. Ensuring that effective

instruction is available to all students remains critical to the successful implementation of the CAHSEE requirements. CDE must monitor further improvements to standards-based instruction, and both CDE and the Board should encourage further efforts in this regard. Providing information on exemplary programs to other districts is one example of how such efforts might be encouraged.

**Recommendation 3: Professional development for teachers is a significant opportunity for improvement.**

Results from the AB 1609 study indicated that many students were taking initial and remedial courses covering the California Academic Content Standards included on the CAHSEE, but were not benefiting fully from these courses. One reason was that the students did not have important prerequisite knowledge or skills. Additional professional development for teachers could help them be more effective in the courses they are already teaching and also could help them identify students needing additional help with prerequisite skills. One particular target of opportunity identified in the AB 1609 study was that a significant number of teachers involved in remedial mathematics had considerable experience with special education students, but less training in mathematics itself.

**Recommendation 4: Further consideration of the CAHSEE requirements for special education students is needed, in light of the low passing rates for this group.**

In our evaluation activities, we have introduced separate consideration of special education students who are able to participate in regular classes and those who cannot. Treating all special education students as a single group may mask solutions that could help those able to master critical content standards, while setting more realistic expectations for students who cannot reasonably be expected to master these standards.

The very low passing rate, particularly in mathematics, for special education students who are African American or Hispanic deserves further investigation. Are these students somehow more severely handicapped? Are they concentrated in less effective schools? How can we best understand and remediate these discrepancies?

Overall, the CAHSEE requirement continues to have a significant impact on instruction and student achievement. Much work remains to be done in helping all students meet the standards for high school graduation that have been established. CDE and the Board face continuing challenges in implementing the CAHSEE requirement.



**Independent Evaluation  
of the California High School Exit Examination (CAHSEE):  
Second Biennial Report  
Table of Contents**

<b>EXECUTIVE SUMMARY .....</b>	<b>I</b>
<b>LIST OF TABLES.....</b>	<b>XI</b>
<b>LIST OF FIGURES.....</b>	<b>XV</b>
<b>CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION .....</b>	<b>1</b>
THE CALIFORNIA HIGH SCHOOL EXIT EXAMINATION.....	1
PRIOR EVALUATION ACTIVITIES AND OUTCOMES .....	1
<i>Summary of Year-1 Activities (June 2000)</i> .....	1
<i>District Baseline Survey Resulting from Year-1 Activities (December 2000)</i> .....	3
<i>Summary of Year-2 Activities (June 2001)</i> .....	4
<i>Summary of Year-3 Activities (June 2002)</i> .....	5
SUMMARY OF YEAR-4 EVALUATION ACTIVITIES.....	7
<i>Special Study of Standards-Based Instruction (May 2003)</i> .....	7
<i>Other Year-4 Activities</i> .....	8
ORGANIZATION AND CONTENTS OF THE SECOND BIENNIAL REPORT .....	8
<b>CHAPTER 2: RESULTS FROM THE 2002–03 ADMINISTRATIONS AND PLANS FOR THE 2004 ADMINISTRATIONS .....</b>	<b>11</b>
INTRODUCTION .....	11
WHO TESTED?.....	11
SCORING CONSISTENCY .....	13
WHO PASSED?.....	15
TESTING ACCOMMODATIONS AND MODIFICATIONS .....	26
RELATIONSHIP OF CAHSEE RESULTS TO OTHER TEST RESULTS.....	29
PERFORMANCE OF REPEAT TEST TAKERS .....	33
PLANS FOR THE 2004 ADMINISTRATIONS.....	34
<i>Administrative Changes</i> .....	34
<i>Passing Standards</i> .....	35
SUMMARY .....	36
<b>CHAPTER 3: STUDENT QUESTIONNAIRE .....</b>	<b>39</b>
INTRODUCTION .....	39
SURVEY ITEMS.....	40
FINDINGS.....	41
<i>Number of Respondents</i> .....	41
<i>Test Preparation</i> .....	41
<i>Importance of the Test</i> .....	44
<i>Plans for High School and Beyond</i> .....	44
<i>Perceived Test Performance and Influencing Factors</i> .....	51
SUMMARY .....	54

<b>CHAPTER 4: PRINCIPAL, TEACHER, AND SITE TESTING COORDINATOR REACTIONS .....</b>	<b>55</b>
INTRODUCTION .....	55
SURVEY DEVELOPMENT .....	55
SAMPLING AND ADMINISTRATION.....	56
PRINCIPAL AND TEACHER FINDINGS .....	57
<i>Background</i> .....	58
<i>Awareness</i> .....	60
<i>Preparation Thus Far</i> .....	61
<i>Use of Results</i> .....	67
<i>Expectations</i> .....	71
<i>Other</i> .....	86
<i>Summary</i> .....	89
SITE TESTING COORDINATOR FINDINGS.....	91
<i>Preparation</i> .....	91
<i>Logistics</i> .....	92
<i>Accommodations and Modifications</i> .....	94
<i>Summary</i> .....	95
<b>CHAPTER 5: IMPACT OF THE CAHSEE REQUIREMENT ON INSTRUCTION AND REMEDIATION .....</b>	<b>97</b>
INTRODUCTION .....	97
<i>Surveys</i> .....	97
<i>Site Visit Interviews</i> .....	99
FINDINGS AT THE SCHOOL LEVEL .....	100
<i>Increasing Coverage of the California Academic Content Standards</i> .....	100
INFORMATION ABOUT SPECIFIC COURSES .....	105
<i>Coverage of Targeted Standards</i> .....	107
<i>Remediation Programs Targeted to the CAHSEE</i> .....	110
<i>Targeted Programs for Students with Disabilities</i> .....	111
<i>Targeted Programs for English Learners</i> .....	116
<i>Other Programs</i> .....	118
SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS .....	120
<b>CHAPTER 6: EVIDENCE OF THE EFFECTIVENESS OF INSTRUCTION FOR THE CLASS OF 2004 .....</b>	<b>123</b>
INTRODUCTION .....	123
PASSING RATES.....	123
RELATIONSHIP OF PASSING RATES TO ALIGNMENT .....	126
FACTORS THAT LIMIT THE EFFECTIVENESS OF CURRENT INSTRUCTION .....	126
<i>Student Preparation</i> .....	126
<i>Teacher Qualification and Experience</i> .....	130
<i>Other Factors</i> .....	133
TEACHERS’ AND PRINCIPALS’ CONCLUSIONS ABOUT THE CLASS OF 2004.....	135
SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS .....	142

**CHAPTER 7: FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS ..... 143**

    GENERAL FINDINGS ..... 143

*Test Development* ..... 143

*Standards-Based Instruction* ..... 143

*Year-4 Findings Based on Further Analyses of 2002-03 Administration Results* ..... 145

    RECOMMENDATIONS..... 147

**REFERENCES ..... 151**



## List of Tables

<i>Table 2.1 Number of Students Taking the CAHSEE ELA Test in 2002–03 by Grade and Administration .....</i>	<i>12</i>
<i>Table 2.2 Number of Students Taking the CAHSEE Mathematics Test in 2002–03 by Grade and Administration .....</i>	<i>13</i>
<i>Table 2.3 Rater Scoring Consistency for Student Essays .....</i>	<i>14</i>
<i>Table 2.4 Percent of Essays Assigned Each Score Level by Each Rater—First Essay .....</i>	<i>15</i>
<i>Table 2.5 Percent of Essays Assigned Each Score Level by Each Rater—Second Essay .....</i>	<i>15</i>
<i>Table 2.6 Passing Rates by Demographic Group—English-Language Arts .....</i>	<i>16</i>
<i>Table 2.7 Passing Rates by Demographic Group—Mathematics .....</i>	<i>17</i>
<i>Table 2.8 Passing Rates for Class of 2005 Students by Student Category and Race/Ethnicity .....</i>	<i>21</i>
<i>Table 2.9 Distribution of Special Education Students by Primary Disability Category for Asian, Hispanic, Black, and White Students Taking the ELA Test .....</i>	<i>22</i>
<i>Table 2.10 ELA Passing Rates by Race for Special Education Students by Primary Disability Category .....</i>	<i>23</i>
<i>Table 2.11 Distribution of Special Education Students by Primary Disability Category for Asian, Hispanic, Black, and White Students Taking the Mathematics Test .....</i>	<i>23</i>
<i>Table 2.12 Mathematics Passing Rates by Race for Special Education Students by Primary Disability Category .....</i>	<i>24</i>
<i>Table 2.13 2002–03 ELA Passing Rates by English Language Fluency .....</i>	<i>25</i>
<i>Table 2.14 2002–03 Mathematics Passing Rates by Highest Math Course Taken .....</i>	<i>25</i>
<i>Table 2.15 Frequency and Passing Rates for Test Accommodations and Modifications—Class of 2004 .....</i>	<i>27</i>
<i>Table 2.16 Frequency and Passing Rates for Test Accommodations and Modifications—Class of 2005 .....</i>	<i>28</i>
<i>Table 2.17 Enrollment Declines from 9th Grade to 10th Grade .....</i>	<i>29</i>
<i>Table 2.18 Enrollment Declines from 10th Grade to 11th Grade .....</i>	<i>30</i>
<i>Table 2.19 Results from the STAR 2003 and 2002 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> Grade ELA Assessments .....</i>	<i>32</i>
<i>Table 2.20 Results from the STAR 2003 and 2002 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> Grade Algebra I Assessments .....</i>	<i>32</i>
<i>Table 2.21 Score Gains for Repeat Test-Takers in Class of 2004 .....</i>	<i>33</i>
<i>Table 3.1 Number of Respondents by Cohort to the Student Questionnaire at the End of the Tests .....</i>	<i>41</i>
<i>Table 4.1 Teacher-Reported Percentages of Highest Level of Education .....</i>	<i>58</i>
<i>Table 4.2 Principal-Reported Percentages of Grades Taught at School .....</i>	<i>58</i>
<i>Table 4.3 Principal-Reported Percentages of Schools’ Student-Counselor Ratio .....</i>	<i>58</i>
<i>Table 4.4 Teacher-Reported Percentages of Student English Fluency .....</i>	<i>59</i>
<i>Table 4.5 Teachers-Reported Percentages of Student Preparation for Proficiency on the CAHSEE .....</i>	<i>59</i>
<i>Table 4.6 Teacher-Reported Percentages of Student Time Spent on ELA or Mathematics Assignments .....</i>	<i>59</i>

<i>Table 4.7 Principal-Estimated Percentage of Students and Parents Familiar with CAHSEE.....</i>	<i>61</i>
<i>Table 4.8 Principal-Reported Percentages of Preparations for Alignment with California Academic Content Standards.....</i>	<i>62</i>
<i>Table 4.9 Percentage of Principals Reporting Similarity between District and State Standards .....</i>	<i>62</i>
<i>Table 4.10a Percentage of Teachers Indicating Coverage of ELA Standards by Curriculum.....</i>	<i>63</i>
<i>Table 4.10b Percentage of Teachers Indicating Coverage of Mathematics Standards by Curriculum.....</i>	<i>63</i>
<i>Table 4.11 Percentage of Teachers Estimating Various Amounts of Time on CAHSEE Activities.....</i>	<i>64</i>
<i>Table 4.12 Percentage of Teachers Rating Quality of Professional Development Experiences.....</i>	<i>64</i>
<i>Table 4.13 Percentage of Principals Undertaking Activities to Prepare Faculty/Staff for CAHSEE Administration.....</i>	<i>67</i>
<i>Table 4.14 Percentage of Principals Indicating Plans for Activities to Assist High School Students Who Do Not Pass the Exit Exam Or Who Do Not Seem Prepared to Take It .....</i>	<i>68</i>
<i>Table 4.15 Principals' Estimates of Percentages of 10<sup>th</sup> grade Students Meeting ELA and Mathematics CAHSEE Standards.....</i>	<i>72</i>
<i>Table 4.16 Teachers' Ratings of Preparedness of Students in the 10<sup>th</sup> Grade (in percentages) .....</i>	<i>73</i>
<i>Table 4.17 Principals' Predicted Impact of CAHSEE on Student Motivation and Parental Involvement (in percentages).....</i>	<i>74</i>
<i>Table 4.18 Teachers' Predicted Impact of CAHSEE on Student Motivation and Parental Involvement (in percentages).....</i>	<i>76</i>
<i>Table 4.19 Principals' and Teachers' Predicted Impact of CAHSEE on Student Retention and Dropout Rates (in percentages).....</i>	<i>78</i>
<i>Table 4.20 Teachers' Predictions of Influence of CAHSEE on Instructional Practices Over Time (in percentages) .....</i>	<i>82</i>
<i>Table 4.21 Principals' 2001 and 2002 Estimates of the Percentage of Students with Instruction in Academic Content Standards (in percentages) .....</i>	<i>85</i>
<i>Table 4.22 Percentage of Principals Indicating Factors Affecting Student Success on CAHSEE.....</i>	<i>86</i>
<i>Table 4.23 Percentage of Principals Indicating Actions to Promote Student Learning .....</i>	<i>87</i>
<i>Table 4.24 Responsibility Felt by Teachers of Subjects Other Than ELA and Mathematics (percentages as perceived by principals and ELA and math teachers).....</i>	<i>89</i>
<i>Table 4.25 Surveyed Teachers' Own and Others' Opinions of the CAHSEE (in percentages) .....</i>	<i>89</i>
<i>Table 4.26 Site Coordinator Responses and Positions.....</i>	<i>91</i>
<i>Table 4.27 Site Coordinator Sources of Information on Administering CAHSEE (in percentages).....</i>	<i>91</i>
<i>Table 4.28 How Schools Handled Students Who Finished the First Section Early (in percentages).....</i>	<i>93</i>

<i>Table 4.29 How Schools Handled Students Who Had Not Finished by Time of Break Between Sessions (in percentages)</i> .....	93
<i>Table 4.30 How Schools Handled Students Who Had Not Finished by Lunchtime (in percentages)</i> .....	93
<i>Table 4.31 How Schools Scheduled Students in Other Grades During CAHSEE Administration (in percentages)</i> .....	94
<i>Table 4.32 Impact of CAHSEE Administration on Attendance in Other Grades (in percentages)</i> .....	94
<i>Table 4.33 Proportion of Eligible EL and SD Students Tested (in percentages)</i> .....	94
<i>Table 4.34 Accommodations Provided (in percentages)</i> .....	95
<i>Table 4.35 Modifications Provided (in percentages)</i> .....	95
<i>Table 5.1 Sample Characteristics by Response Status (High Schools)</i> .....	98
<i>Table 5.2 Characteristics of High Schools by Middle-Grade Feeder School Response Status</i> .....	99
<i>Table 5.3 High School Principal Report of Coverage of CAHSEE ELA Standards</i> .....	100
<i>Table 5.4 High School Principal Report of Coverage of CAHSEE Mathematics Standards</i> .....	101
<i>Table 5.5 Middle-Grade Feeder School Principal Report of Coverage of California ELA Content Standards</i> .....	101
<i>Table 5.6 Middle-Grade Feeder School Principal Report of Coverage of California Mathematics Content Standards</i> .....	101
<i>Table 5.7 How is Student Mastery of Academic Content Standards Tracked?</i> .....	102
<i>Table 5.8 How Fully Developed is Coordination Among Various Programs?</i> .....	102
<i>Table 5.9 Type of Articulation by Subject—High School Teachers (N of responses)</i> .....	104
<i>Table 5.10 Type of Articulation by Subject—Middle-Grade Feeder School Teachers (N of responses)</i> .....	105
<i>Table 5.11 Number of Courses Covered with Survey Responses by School Level and Subject</i> .....	105
<i>Table 5.12 Distribution of Courses by Subject, Type, and Students Served</i> .....	106
<i>Table 5.13 Year Each Type of Course was Introduced</i> .....	107
<i>Table 5.14 Course Coverage of Academic Content Standards by Year Textbook Was Adopted</i> .....	108
<i>Table 6.1 Approximate Passing Rates for the Class of 2004 (Through Jan. 2003)</i> .....	124
<i>Table 6.2 Percent of Schools with High, Moderate, Low, and Very Low Passing Rates</i> .....	125
<i>Table 6.3 Percent of Schools (N=279) with High Passing Rates (&gt; 75%) by Time of Implementation of Standards-Based Instruction (SBI)</i> .....	126
<i>Table 6.4 Teachers' Evaluation of How Well Students are Prepared for Their Course</i> .....	127
<i>Table 6.5 Percent of Students in the Class of 2004 Scoring at Least Basic on the California Standards Test in the Previous Year</i> .....	128
<i>Table 6.6 Interview Responses About the Quality of Student Preparation by High School Subject</i> .....	129
<i>Table 6.7 Interview Responses about the Quality of Student Preparation by Middle-Grade Feeder School Subject</i> .....	129

*Table 6.8 Percent of Teachers Receiving Professional Development in Teaching the Standards (Last 12 Months)..... 130*

*Table 6.9 Proportion of Teachers with Appropriate Credentials..... 131*

*Table 6.10 Teacher Experience with Special Populations ..... 132*

*Table 6.11 Other Factors Limiting Course Effectiveness..... 133*

## List of Figures

<b>Figure 2.1.</b> Cumulative ELA Passing Rates by Gender and Class. ....	18
<b>Figure 2.2.</b> Cumulative Mathematics Passing Rates by Gender and Class. ....	18
<b>Figure 2.3.</b> Cumulative ELA Passing Rates by Race/Ethnicity and Class. ....	19
<b>Figure 2.4.</b> Cumulative Mathematics Passing Rates by Race/Ethnicity and Class. ....	19
<b>Figure 2.5.</b> Cumulative ELA Passing Rates for Special Populations by Class. ....	20
<b>Figure 2.6.</b> Cumulative Mathematics Passing Rates for Special Populations by Class. ....	20
<b>Figure 2.7.</b> Enrollment Declines from 9th to 10th Grade by High School Class. ....	30
<b>Figure 2.8.</b> Enrollment Declines from Grades 10 to 11 by High School Class. ....	31
<b>Figure 3.1.</b> Different cohorts' responses to Question 1 following the ELA test— How did you prepare for this test? .....	42
<b>Figure 3.2.</b> Different cohorts' responses to Question 1 following the math test— How did you prepare for this test? .....	43
<b>Figure 3.3.</b> Different cohorts' responses to Question 2 following the ELA test— How important is this test to you? .....	43
<b>Figure 3.4.</b> Different cohorts' responses to Question 2 following the math test— How important is this test to you? .....	44
<b>Figure 3.5.</b> Different cohorts' responses to Question 3 following the ELA test— Do you think you will graduate from high school? .....	45
<b>Figure 3.6.</b> Different cohorts' responses to Question 3 following the math test— Do you think you will graduate from high school? .....	46
<b>Figure 3.7.</b> Different cohorts' responses to Question 4 following the ELA test— Will it be harder to graduate if you have to pass a test like this?.....	47
<b>Figure 3.8.</b> Different cohorts' responses to Question 4 following the math test— Will it be harder to graduate if you have to pass a test like this?.....	47
<b>Figure 3.9.</b> Different cohorts' responses to Question 5 following the ELA test— What do you think you will do after high school? .....	48
<b>Figure 3.10.</b> Different cohorts' responses to Question 5 following the math test— What do you think you will do after high school? .....	49
<b>Figure 3.11.</b> Different cohorts' responses to Question 6 following the ELA test— How sure are you about what you will do after high school? .....	50
<b>Figure 3.12.</b> Different cohorts' responses to Question 6 following the math test— How sure are you about what you will do after high school? .....	50
<b>Figure 3.13.</b> Different cohorts' responses to Question 7 following the ELA test— How well did you do on this test? .....	51
<b>Figure 3.14.</b> Different cohorts' responses to Question 7 following the math test— How well did you do on this test? .....	52
<b>Figure 3.15.</b> Different cohorts' responses to Question 8 following the ELA test— The main reasons I did not do as well on this test as I could have are.....	53
<b>Figure 3.16.</b> Different cohorts' responses to Question 8 following the math test— The main reasons I did not do as well on this test as I could have are.....	53

*Figure 4.1a. Percentage of principals reporting activities undertaken in preparation for the Spring 2001, 2002, and 2003 administrations of the CAHSEE. .... 65*

*Figure 4.1b. Percentage of teachers reporting activities undertaken in preparation for the Spring 2001, 2002, and 2003 administrations of the CAHSEE. .... 66*

*Figure 4.2. Percentage of principals in 2003 reporting plans for remediation of students who do not pass the CAHSEE. .... 70*

*Figure 4.3a. Percentage of principals predicting increased or strongly increased student motivation and parental involvement in 2000, 2001, 2002, and 2003. .... 75*

*Figure 4.3b. Percentage of teachers predicting increased or strongly increased student motivation and parental involvement in 2000, 2001, 2002, and 2003. .... 77*

*Figure 4.4a. Percentage of principals predicting increased or strongly increased student retention and dropout rates in 2000, 2001, 2002, and 2003. .... 79*

*Figure 4.4b. Percentage of teachers predicting increased or strongly increased student retention and dropout rates in 2000, 2001, 2002, and 2003. .... 79*

*Figure 4.5a. Principals’ predictions of influence of the CAHSEE on instructional practices over time. .... 80*

*Figure 4.5b. Teachers’ predictions of influence of the CAHSEE on instructional practices over time. .... 81*

*Figure 4.6a. Principals’ estimates of the percentage of students who have had instruction in ELA content standards (ordered by least instruction). .... 84*

*Figure 4.6b. Principals’ estimates of the percentage of students who have had instruction in mathematics content standards (ordered by least instruction). .. 84*

*Figure 4.7. Percentage of principals indicating the percentage of teachers who understand the difference between “teaching to the test” and “aligning the curriculum and instruction to the standards” in 2001, 2002, and 2003. .... 88*

## CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

### The California High School Exit Examination

In May 2003, California concluded the third year of administering its High School Exit Examination. The requirement that students pass a graduation exam in mathematics and English-language arts (ELA) beginning with the Class of 2004 was established by Senate Bill (SB)-2X, passed in 1999 and written into the California Education Code as Chapter 8, Sections 60850-60856. This section of the code was further modified through the passage of AB 1609 in 2002. The revised legislation gave the State Board of Education (the Board) authority to postpone the CAHSEE requirement based in part on a study to be conducted of the extent to which both test development and standards-based instruction met standards for this type of examination. The study report was issued on May 1, 2003 (Wise et al., May 2003). In July, after the completion of the 2002–03 CAHSEE testing, the Board voted to defer the CAHSEE requirement until 2006.

The legislation that mandates the requirements for the graduation exam also specifies an independent evaluation of the CAHSEE. The California Department of Education (CDE) awarded a contract for this evaluation to the Human Resources Research Organization (HumRRO). HumRRO's efforts focus on analyses of data from tryouts of test questions and from the annual administrations of the CAHSEE, and on reporting trends in pupil performance and retention, graduation, dropout, and college attendance rates. The legislation also specifies that evaluation reporting will include recommendations for improving the quality, fairness, validity, and reliability of the examination. The legislation required an initial evaluation report in June 2000 and biennial reports to the Governor, Legislature, the Board, and CDE in February 2002 and February 2004. This report is submitted in fulfillment of the requirement for the February 2004 biennial report.

In addition to the legislatively required evaluation reports, the contract for the evaluation requires an annual report of evaluation activities. This report extends findings and recommendations from the most recent annual report (Wise et al., September 2003) and from the AB 1609 report (Wise et al., May 2003). It adds to results and recommendations included in prior evaluation reports (Wise, Hoffman, & Harris, 2000; Wise, Harris, Sipes, Hoffman, & Ford, 2000a; Wise, Sipes, George, Ford, & Harris, 2001; Wise et al., 2002a, Wise et al., 2002b). Findings and recommendations from these prior reports are summarized briefly in the next two sections to provide a context for the continuing evaluation activities.

### Prior Evaluation Activities and Outcomes

#### **Summary of Year-1 Activities (June 2000)**

The Year-1 evaluation activities involved reviewing and analyzing three types of information:

*Review of Test Developer Plans and Reports.* No formal reports were available during the first year; thus, we attended meetings and listened to presentations by the development contractor, American Institutes for Research (AIR), and by CDE. We also monitored

various presentations to the HSEE Panel and to the Board and had direct conversations with members of each of these groups.

*Statewide Data Sources.* An initial source of information for our evaluation was data from the CAHSEE pilot administration. We also examined 1999 Standardized Testing and Reporting (STAR; for details see <http://star.cde.ca.gov/>) results with plans to monitor trends in STAR results over the course of the evaluation.

*District and School Sample.* We selected a representative sample of 24 districts and approximately 90 of their high schools to establish a longitudinal group for study. The baseline surveys, which were administered to principals and English-language arts and mathematics teachers, provided an initial look at schools' perspectives of the impact of CAHSEE on their programs. We also recruited teachers and curriculum experts from these schools and their districts to review test items and tell us if they covered knowledge and skills that not all students would be taught in their current curriculum.

The following summarizes the specific recommendations made at the end of the Year-1 evaluation activities.

*Recommendation 1.* The Legislature and Governor should give serious consideration to postponing full implementation of the CAHSEE requirement by one or two years.

*Recommendation 2.* CDE should develop and seek comment on a more detailed timeline for CAHSEE implementation activities. This timeline should show responsibility for each required task and responsibility for oversight of the performance of each task. The plan should show key points at which decisions by the Board or others are required along with separate paths for alternative decisions that may be made at each of these points.

*Recommendation 3.* CDE and the Board should work with districts to identify resource requirements associated with CAHSEE implementation. The Legislature must be ready to continue to fund activities to support the preparation of students to meet the ambitious challenges embodied in the CAHSEE.

*Recommendation 4.* The Board should adopt a clear statement of its intentions in setting CAHSEE content and performance standards. This statement should describe the extent to which these standards are targeted to ensure minimum achievement relative to current levels or to significantly advance overall expectations for student achievement.

*Recommendation 5.* The Board should exhibit moderation in selecting content standards and setting performance standards for the initial implementation of CAHSEE. Subsequently, standards should be expanded or increased based on evidence of improved instruction.

*Recommendation 6.* Members of the HSEE Panel and its Technical Advisory Committee should participate in developing recommendations for minimum performance standards.

*Recommendation 7.* CDE should move swiftly to establish an independent Technical Issues Committee (TIC) to recommend approval or changes to the CAHSEE development contractor's plans for item screening, form assembly, form equating, scoring, and reporting.

Complete details of the Year-1 effort, including selection procedures for the longitudinal sample, are presented in a primary and a supplemental report describing evaluation activities, findings, and recommendations (Wise et al., 2000a; Wise et al., 2000b). Those two evaluation reports emphasize both the positive aspects of the results, as indicated by several measures of the quality of the test questions, and the amount of work remaining to be done before operational administration of the CAHSEE. The primary apprehension noted in these reports was educators' concern that at that time, students were not well prepared to pass the exam.

### ***District Baseline Survey Resulting from Year-1 Activities (December 2000)***

The results of the baseline survey of teachers and principals in the longitudinal sample of high schools indicated concern with the degree to which students were being provided sufficient opportunities to learn the material covered by the CAHSEE. After reviewing these concerns, the Board and CDE requested an additional survey of all public high school and unified districts in California. HumRRO developed and sent out the CAHSEE District Baseline Survey shortly after the Board adopted specifications for the CAHSEE, which was required prior to October 1, 2000. The survey covered plans for changes in curriculum and other programs to help students pass the examination. We asked that each district have the survey completed by an Assistant Superintendent or Director of Curriculum and Instruction, or the individual at the district level who was most knowledgeable about CAHSEE.

The survey, which built on and benefited from the results of the longitudinal sample survey, addressed five critical topics:

1. *Awareness* of the CAHSEE, its content, administration plans, and requirements for student participation.
2. *Alignment* of the district's curriculum to statewide content standards, particularly those to be covered by the CAHSEE.
3. *Plans and Preparation* for increasing opportunities for all students to learn the material covered by the CAHSEE and to help students who do not initially pass the examination.
4. *Expectations* for passing rates and for the effect of the CAHSEE on instruction and the status of specific programs offered in the district.
5. *Outcome baselines*, including retention and graduation rates and students' post-graduation plans.

The following general conclusions were drawn from results of the district survey:

1. *General awareness* of the CAHSEE is high, but more information is needed, particularly for students and parents, about (a) the knowledge and skills covered by the CAHSEE and (b) plans for administration and reporting.
2. *Districts report high degrees of alignment* of their own content standards to the state content standards. The survey addressed this question at a general level; more work is needed to assess and document the degree to which each district's curriculum covers

- the content standards tested by the CAHSEE and the degree of student access to courses that offer such coverage.
3. *Districts have implemented or are planning a number of programs to prepare students and teachers for the CAHSEE and to assist students who do not initially pass. The most frequently planned activities include more summer school, tutoring, and matching student needs to specific courses.*
  4. *Districts believe the CAHSEE will have a positive impact on curriculum and instruction. Most expect at least half of their students to pass the CAHSEE on their first attempt.*
  5. *Outcome baselines will be used in future years.*

Complete details of the district-wide survey effort are presented in a final technical report describing evaluation activities, findings, and recommendations (Sipes, Harris, Wise, & Gribben, 2001).

### **Summary of Year-2 Activities (June 2001)**

The Year-2 evaluation activities involved reviewing and analyzing three types of information:

*Review of Test Developer Plans and Reports.* We continued to monitor test development activities, ranging from observation of and presentations to the HSEE Panel to observation of the standard-setting workshops to develop recommendations for minimum passing scores for each of the two portions of the CAHSEE test: mathematics and ELA. We reviewed and participated in numerous discussions concerning the equating of alternate forms, the score scale used, and the minimum passing levels.

*Analysis of Field-Test and Operational CAHSEE Data.* We analyzed results from a second field test of new CAHSEE questions, conducted in Fall 2000, and began analyses from the operational administrations of CAHSEE in March and May of 2001. Initial analyses of technical characteristics of the test form used in the March administration and the resulting passing rates were described in our Year-2 Evaluation Report (Wise et al., June 2001).

*Longitudinal Surveys of District and School Sample Personnel.* The representative sample of 24 districts and approximately 90 of their high schools required replacement of one district with three schools. The surveys, which were administered to principals and English-language arts and mathematics teachers, provided a continuing look at schools' perspectives of the impact of the CAHSEE on their programs. In addition, testing coordinators were surveyed to identify issues with the administration of the CAHSEE.

The following summarizes the two general and six specific recommendations made in our report of the Year-2 evaluation activities.

*Recommendation 1.* Stay the course. The Legislature and Board should continue to require students in the Class of 2004 to pass the exam, but monitor schools' progress in helping most or all of their students to master the required standards.

*Recommendation 2.* The Legislature and Board should continue to consider options for students with disabilities and English learners.

*Recommendation 3.* The CAHSEE needs more technical oversight as its development and administration continues.

*Recommendation 4.* For future classes, delay testing until the 10<sup>th</sup> grade.

*Recommendation 5.* Construct a practice test of released CAHSEE items and give it to districts and schools to use with 9<sup>th</sup> graders to identify students at risk of failing the CAHSEE.

*Recommendation 6.* Monitor test administration more extensively and develop a system for identifying and resolving issues.

*Recommendation 7.* Develop and implement a more comprehensive statewide information system that will allow CDE to monitor individual student progress.

*Recommendation 8.* The Superintendent, the Board, and Legislature should specify in more detail how students in special circumstances (e.g., special education, EL) will be treated by the CAHSEE requirements.

Complete details of the Year-2 effort are presented in a primary and a supplemental report describing evaluation activities, findings, and recommendations (Wise et al., June 2001; Wise et al., January 2002a). Those two evaluation reports describe results of the first administration of the CAHSEE to 9<sup>th</sup> graders in the Class of 2004. The reports also described preparation for and reactions to the CAHSEE as reported by principals and teachers. A key concern described in these reports was the relatively low passing rates for the mathematics portion of the exam, particularly for English learners and special education students.

### **Summary of Year-3 Activities (June 2002)**

The first biennial report of the CAHSEE evaluation was issued in February 2002 (Wise et al., 2002a). This report supplemented information on the 2002 administrations from the Year-2 report and included specific recommendations to the Legislature, Governor, and State Board. These were:

*General Recommendation 1:* Stay the course. The Legislature and Board should continue to require students in the Class of 2004 to pass the exam, but monitor schools' progress in helping most or all of their students to master the required standards.

*General Recommendation 2:* The Legislature and Board should continue to consider options for students with disabilities and for English learners.

The first biennial report also included several more specific recommendations:

- More technical oversight is needed.
- For future classes, testing should be delayed until the 10<sup>th</sup> grade.
- A practice test of released CAHSEE items should be constructed and given to districts and schools to use with 9<sup>th</sup> graders to identify students at risk of failing the CAHSEE.

- More extensive monitoring of test administration and a system for identifying and resolving issues is needed.
- The state needs a more comprehensive information system that will allow it to monitor individual student progress.
- The Superintendent, the Board, and Legislature should specify in more detail how students in special circumstances will be treated by the CAHSEE requirements.

Other Year-3 evaluation activities involved reviewing and analyzing four types of information:

*Review of Test Developer Plans and Reports.* We continued to monitor test development activities and reports. These included changes to test administration procedures, equating alternate forms, and changes to reporting procedures.

*Collection and analyses of independent review of test questions.* We assembled two panels of experts in curriculum and instruction, most of whom taught either ELA or mathematics, and asked them to review questions from recent CAHSEE administrations and questions from the (then) new test development contractor that had not yet been used operationally. Ratings indicated the extent to which the questions assessed targeted content standards fairly and completely. In addition, we asked the reviewers to note any specific issues with the quality of the questions or the response options.

*Analysis of Operational CAHSEE Data.* We analyzed results from the operational administration of CAHSEE to 10<sup>th</sup> graders in March of 2002. Initial analyses of technical characteristics of the test form used in the March administration and the resulting passing rates were described in our Year-3 Evaluation Report (Wise et al., June 2002b).

*Longitudinal Surveys of District and School Sample Personnel.* The representative sample of 24 districts and approximately 90 of their high schools required replacement of one district with three schools. The surveys, which were administered to principals and English-language arts and mathematics teachers, provided a continuing look at schools' perspectives of the impact of the CAHSEE on their programs. In addition, testing coordinators were surveyed to identify issues with the administration of the CAHSEE.

The Year-3 report of evaluation activities summarized findings from the data that were analyzed. The report stated that available evidence suggested that the CAHSEE has not yet had any impact on retention, dropout rates, or expectations for graduation and post-high-school plans. Progress in developing the exam continued to be noteworthy. We found no significant problems with the development, administration or scoring of the March 2002 exam. Students made significant progress in mastering the required ELA skills, but less progress in mathematics. For disadvantaged students, initial passing rates continued to be low and progress for repeat test-takers was limited. Teachers and principals remained positive about the CAHSEE's impact on instruction. More of them now expect positive impact on student motivation and parental involvement. Finally, teachers and principals reported planning and/or implementing a number of constructive programs for helping students master the skills covered by the CAHSEE.

Based on these findings, we offered the following two general and four more specific recommendations:

*General Recommendation 1:* Schools need to focus attention on effective ways of helping students master the required skills in mathematics. CDE might consider a “what works” effort with respect to remedial programs, and disseminating information about effective programs and practices.

*General Recommendation 2:* State policymakers need to engage in a discussion about reasonable options for students with disabilities who may not ever be likely to pass the test.

*Specific Recommendation 1:* The score scale needs to be changed for students scoring below 300 (chance levels). A short-term solution is to simply recode scores below 300 to 299. Teachers, students, and parents need to be cautioned against interpreting differences below the 300 level.

*Specific Recommendation 2:* Districts and schools should be asked to supply more complete information on who has taken, is taking, and still needs to take the CAHSEE.

*Specific Recommendation 3:* CDE should work with schools to collect more information on documentation of student needs for accommodations or modifications.

*Specific Recommendation 4:* Educational Testing Service (ETS) should follow up on (a) specific test question issues identified in our item review workshops and (b) specific suggestions for improving their new scoring process from our review of their current online training.

## Summary of Year-4 Evaluation Activities

### ***Special Study of Standards-Based Instruction (May 2003)***

In 2002, the Legislature passed AB 1609, which included several changes to the CAHSEE. Among other things, this bill called for a special study of the extent to which the development of the CAHSEE and standards-based instruction met the requirements for a high school graduation test. Evaluation activities were expanded to meet the requirements for this study. A detailed description of the study, along with findings and recommendations, were included in a report to the State Board of Education (SBE) issued May 1 (Wise et al., May 2003, <http://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/tg/hs/>) and are not repeated in the present report. Key findings from the study were:

*Finding 1:* The development of the CAHSEE meets all of the test standards for use as a graduation requirement.

*Finding 2.* The CAHSEE requirement has been a major factor leading to dramatically increased coverage of the California Academic Content Standards at both the high school and middle school levels and to development or improvement of courses providing help for students who have difficulty mastering these standards.

*Finding 3.* Available evidence indicates that many courses of initial instruction and remedial courses have only limited effectiveness in helping students master the required standards.

*Finding 4.* Lack of prerequisite skills may prevent many students from receiving the benefits of courses that provide instruction in relevant content standards. Lack of student motivation and lack of strong parental support may play a contributing role in limiting the effectiveness of these courses.

*General Finding 5.* Many factors suggest that the effectiveness of standards-based instruction will improve for each succeeding class after the Class of 2004, but the speed with which passing rates will improve is currently unknown.

The report did not offer a specific recommendation on whether the CAHSEE requirement should be deferred. The report suggested the trade-offs between schools losing motivation to pay attention to students not achieving critical skills if the requirement were deferred and educators becoming distracted by debates and legal actions concerning the adequacy of current instruction if the requirement were continued. Balancing these trade-offs required that the Board make a policy decision. The report did offer several specific suggestions for consideration if the requirement were continued and other suggestions if the requirement were deferred. Ultimately, the Board decided to defer the requirement until the Class of 2006. Please see the California Department of Education Web site [[www.cde.ca.gov](http://www.cde.ca.gov)] for further details on this study.

### **Other Year-4 Activities**

*Review of Test Developer Plans and Reports.* We continued to monitor test development activities and reports. These included changes to test administration procedures, equating alternate forms, and changes to reporting procedures.

*Analysis of Operational CAHSEE Data.* We analyzed results from the six operational administrations of CAHSEE from July 2002 through May 2003. These included continued administration to 11<sup>th</sup> graders in the Class of 2004 who had not yet passed one or both parts of the CAHSEE and a census administration to 10<sup>th</sup> graders in the Class of 2005.

*Longitudinal Surveys of District and School Sample Personnel.* The representative sample of 24 districts and approximately 90 of their high schools required replacement of one district with three schools. The surveys, which were administered to principals and English-language arts and mathematics teachers, provided a continuing look at schools' perspectives of the impact of the CAHSEE on their programs. In addition, testing coordinators were surveyed for the second year to identify issues with the administration of the CAHSEE.

### **Organization and Contents of the Second Biennial Report**

The Second Biennial Report covers activities performed in the independent evaluation through December 31, 2003. As described above, one major activity during the past year was development of the legislatively required report in response to AB 1609 (Wise et al., May 2003). Key results of that effort are summarized in the section on Chapter 5 below. See <http://www.cde.ca.gov> for detailed information on this effort.

Chapters 2–4 of the current report describe other activities conducted during Year-4 and present the results of these activities. Chapter 7 describes the main findings from these results and our recommendations based on them. The Year-4 Report satisfies a contractual requirement to report on evaluation activities each year. Results from our activities have led to several recommendations that respond to the evaluation requirement for suggestions to improve the quality and effectiveness of the exam and its use.

**Chapter 2** presents analyses of the 2002–03 CAHSEE administrations. The analyses show passing rates for different demographic groups in the Class of 2004 and the Class of 2005. Results are compared to STAR outcomes for these same students. Average score gains from 10<sup>th</sup> to 11<sup>th</sup> grade for students in the Class of 2004 are compared to score gains from 9<sup>th</sup> to 10<sup>th</sup> grade for students in this same class.

**Chapter 3** presents responses to the student questionnaire administered at the end of each testing session. The questions focus on the students’ preparation, reactions to the test, and plans. The analysis includes changes in expectations for graduation and post-high-school plans for students who completed questionnaires in March and May of 2002.

**Chapter 4** describes results from the third spring survey of teachers and principals participating in the longitudinal study sample. HumRRO continued to organize the evaluation information into five critical areas:

- **Awareness** of and familiarity with the CAHSEE
- **Alignment** of the districts’ curricula to state/CAHSEE content standards
- **Planning and preparation** for the CAHSEE
- **Expectations** of impact on instruction, passing rates, and consequences of the CAHSEE
- **Potential effect on** dropout and graduation rates and college attendance

Observations by test site coordinators on the administration and scoring processes are included.

**Chapters 5 and 6** summarize results from the special study of instruction conducted to meet AB 1609 requirements. Teacher and principal surveys from 298 California high schools and 173 middle-grade feeder schools were analyzed. The teacher surveys covered 3,270 high school courses and 2,006 middle-grade feeder school courses. Information from the survey was supplemented by visits to a smaller sample of schools. Principals and teachers at each site were interviewed to elicit information to confirm and expand on the information obtained through the surveys. A total of 62 schools were visited, including 45 high schools and 17 middle-grade feeder schools with a total of 499 interviews conducted at these schools. Chapter 6 includes an analysis of passing rates.

**Chapter 7** presents our Findings and Recommendations based on the existing state of data analyses and results.



## CHAPTER 2: RESULTS FROM THE 2002–03 ADMINISTRATIONS AND PLANS FOR THE 2004 ADMINISTRATIONS

### Introduction

The legislation establishing the CAHSEE called for the first operational forms of the exam to be administered in spring 2001 to 9<sup>th</sup> graders in the Class of 2004. At the first administration 9<sup>th</sup> graders could volunteer, but were not required, to take both portions of the exam. Students who did not pass the exam in that administration were required to take the exam as 10<sup>th</sup> graders in spring 2002. Preliminary results from the CAHSEE Spring 2001 and 2002 administrations were reported in the Year-2 and Year-3 evaluation reports (Wise et al., June 2001; Wise et al., June 2002b). Results from the 2001 administration were reported more fully in the first of the biennial evaluation reports to the Legislature, Governor, Board, and CDE (Wise et al., Jan. 2002a). More complete results are available on the CDE Web site at [www.cde.ca.gov/](http://www.cde.ca.gov/)

The 2002–03 administrations analyzed for this report included two new features. First, the test was administered year-round, six times from July 2002 through May 2003, rather than just in the spring. For the most part, we have combined results across all six administrations. Most students, particularly students in the Class of 2004, took the exam multiple times. They are thus included more than once in counts of the total number of tests administered.

A second key difference from prior years was that the 2003 test administrations included students from two different high school classes. Students in the Class of 2004 who had not yet passed both parts of the exam continued to retake the exam. The intention was that these students would have up to three chances to take the part(s) of the exam they had not yet passed, although it appears that a few students may have attempted the exam more than three times. All students in the Class of 2005 were supposed to take the exam in either the March or May 2003 administration. Insofar as possible, we show results separately for each high school class.

### Who Tested?

Tables 2.1 and 2.2 show the number of students participating in each of the six CAHSEE administrations during the 2002–03 school year. Counts are shown separately by subject, since many students had passed one of the two parts of the exam and only took the part they had not yet passed. Counts also are shown separately by the grade level reported for each student. Tables 2.1 and 2.2 also show the percent of students who passed each part of the exam and the number who took the test with modifications. Taking the test with modifications invalidates the students' scores, but students receiving these modifications and scoring at a level that would otherwise have been passing (350 or more), may submit a request for a waiver of the requirement to pass the exam. As shown in Tables 2.1 and 2.2, the majority of students taking the test with modifications would not have passed.

Table 2.1 Number of Students Taking the CAHSEE ELA Test in 2002–03 by Grade and Administration

Grade	Administration	No. Tested*	Pct. Pass	No. Tested with Modification	Pct. > 349 W/Modif.
10	July 2002	0		0	
10	Sep. 2002	775	68.5	6	16.7
10	Nov. 2002	1,505	44.7	6	0.0
10	Jan. 2003	289	44.8	0	
10	March 2003	380,038	78.8	1,365	25.9
10	May 2003	22,142	68.9	42	33.3
10	Total**	404,748	78.1	1,419	26.0
11	July 2002	15,145	29.5	117	8.5
11	Sep. 2002	19,635	34.4	195	18.5
11	Nov. 2002	62,139	40.7	633	20.5
11	Jan. 2003	15,310	30.9	216	13.9
11	March 2003	47,721	33.1	933	19.8
11	May 2003	10,497	30.1	234	18.8
11	Total**	170,447	35.3	2,328	18.7
Other	July 2002	127	41.7	0	
Other	Sep. 2002	262	45.0	7	14.3
Other	Nov. 2002	923	51.2	0	0.0
Other	Jan. 2003	477	47.2	1	0.0
Other	March 2003	1,813	55.0	0	0.0
Other	May 2003	149	62.4	0	0.0
Other	Total**	3,751	52.3	8	12.5

\* Includes students tested with modification.

\*\* Totals are counts of total tests administered; students who tested more than once are included multiple times in these totals.

Approximately 16,000 10<sup>th</sup> graders tested from July 2002 through January 2003 administrations; this number was surprising. Even though tenth graders should not have tested until March or May 2003, these students appear to be a mixture of two different groups. First, many students originally in the Class of 2004 may not have completed sufficient course work to be considered 11<sup>th</sup> graders during the 2002–03 school year. This was particularly true for the July 2002 administration, where some students may have been taking makeup courses during the summer. In addition, students in the July 2002 administration may have coded themselves as 10<sup>th</sup> graders since they had not yet started the 2002–03 school year. Second, it appears that some students in the Class of 2005 did get an early start, taking the CAHSEE early in their 10<sup>th</sup> grade school year.

In the analyses that follow, we treated all 10<sup>th</sup> graders in the July 2002 administration and those 10<sup>th</sup> graders in subsequent administrations who had earlier CAHSEE test results, prior to July 2002, as members of the Class of 2004. All other 10<sup>th</sup> graders in the administrations from September 2002 through May 2003 were treated as members of the Class of 2005. The counts are thus approximate for two reasons: 1) Some students who started high school with the Class of 2004 may now not expect to graduate until June 2005, so their status is truly

ambiguous; 2) Some 10<sup>th</sup> grade students who appeared to be first-time test-takers had actually tested previously, at a different school or with a different coding of name or birth date. *Since California does not have statewide student identifiers, it is not possible to track student results across different administrations with complete precision.*

Table 2.2 Number of Students Taking the CAHSEE Mathematics Test in 2002–03 by Grade and Administration

Grade	Admin	No. Tested*	Pct. Pass	No. Tested with Modification	Pct. > 349 W/Modif.
10	July 2002	0		0	
10	Sep. 2002	892	48.3	12	0.0
10	Nov. 2002	2,222	21.7	69	8.7
10	Jan. 2003	363	21.8	7	14.3
10	March 2003	390,875	59.8	5,021	13.0
10	May 2003	23,384	43.5	281	2.5
10	Total**	417,736	58.6	5,390	12.4
11	July 2002	30,774	23.7	461	11.5
11	Sep. 2002	35,726	20.5	616	6.7
11	Nov. 2002	111,570	23.3	3,119	9.9
11	Jan. 2003	28,053	18.7	814	11.4
11	March 2003	92,060	20.8	4,183	10.3
11	May 2003	20,587	18.9	764	12.6
11	Total**	318,770	21.6	9,957	10.3
Other	July 2002	218	21.1	0	
Other	Sep. 2002	378	17.2	6	0.0
Other	Nov. 2002	1,177	19.6	16	6.3
Other	Jan. 2003	589	19.9	5	20.0
Other	March 2003	1,968	23.1	3	0.0
Other	May 2003	169	24.9	0	
Other	Total**	4,499	21.2	30	6.7

\* Includes students tested with modification.

\*\* Totals are counts of total tests administered; students who tested more than once are included multiple times in these totals.

### Scoring Consistency

In past reports, we have examined the accuracy of the scores generated from different parallel forms of the exam. During the Year-4 evaluation, we monitored ETS’s analysis of item-level statistics from each administration and found no significant changes from the results for prior forms. More complete information on test accuracy may be found in technical documentation provided by ETS.

We paid particular attention to consistency in the scoring of student essays. Each student taking the ELA test was required to write two essays, the first involving analysis of an associated text and the second in response to a freestanding question that did not involve text processing. Each essay was graded by at least two different Raters following a four-point

rubric that indicated the response characteristics required for each score level. A score of zero was assigned to responses that were off-topic, illegible, or left blank.

A new ELA test form with new essay questions was used for each of the CAHSEE administrations. Since the scoring rubrics vary from question to question, we monitored the level of agreement between independent Raters for each question used with each administration. Table 2.3 shows how often (what percent of the time) there was exact agreement, how often there was a difference of just one score point, and how often there was a difference of more than one score point. Whenever there was an initial difference of more than one score point, the essay was read again by a third, more experienced reader and the scores assigned by one or both of the initial readers were not used. Thus, all operational scores resulted from two Raters who agreed to within a single score point.

Table 2.3 Rater Scoring Consistency for Student Essays

Administration	Percent of Essays at Each Level of Agreement					
	1st Essay			2 <sup>nd</sup> Essay		
	Exact	+/- 1	+/- > 1	Exact	+/- 1	+/- > 1
July 2002	65.2	33.0	1.8	66.2	32.2	1.6
Sep. 2002	68.2	30.7	1.0	69.0	30.0	0.9
Nov. 2002	71.3	27.9	0.8	68.4	30.8	0.8
Jan. 2003	70.6	28.2	1.1	70.3	28.9	0.8
March 2003	64.5	33.6	1.9	62.2	36.2	1.6
May 2003	70.1	29.2	0.7	69.4	29.9	0.7
Average	65.8	32.5	1.7	63.9	34.7	1.4

Results indicated a generally high level of agreement between the independent Raters. In each administration, on less than two percent of the essays read was there was a significant disagreement (initial scores differing by more than one point). There was minor variation in scoring consistency across the different administrations, with slightly lower consistency for both essays in the July 2002 and March 2003 administrations. For these two administrations, there was significant disagreement on more than 1.5 percent of the essays. The disagreement level for the other administrations was about one percent or less. Differences across administrations could reflect normal variation across different essay questions. The fact that consistency was lower for both essays in these administrations suggests the possibility of somewhat more systematic variation. The demand for rapid turnaround on a very large number of essays in the March 2003 administration may have been a factor. Other factors, such as summer vacations or demand from other testing programs, may have affected results from the July 2002 administration, which did not involve such a large number of students.

Tables 2.4 and 2.5 provide more detailed information on scores assigned by each of the two independent Raters across all administrations. There was near perfect agreement on the essays judged to be unscorable (score level 0). There was generally good agreement on essays assigned to score levels 1 through 3. If the first reader assigned a score at one of these levels, the second reader was most likely to assign the same score. Very few essays were assigned a score of 4 and agreement at this level was correspondingly less. If the first reader assigned a score of 4, the second reader was most likely to assign a score of 3.

One other finding is that scores on the first essay were consistently lower, by a small amount, than scores on the second essay, which did not require reading text beyond the question itself. Since scores on both essay questions are combined with scores from the reading portion of the ELA test, the extra reading load of the first essay does not create an issue.

**Table 2.4 Percent of Essays Assigned Each Score Level by Each Rater—First Essay**

First Rater	Second Rater				
	0	1	2	3	4
0	5.66	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
1	0.00	23.82	7.64	0.40	0.02
2	0.00	7.61	25.47	6.94	0.41
3	0.00	0.41	6.84	9.73	1.72
4	0.00	0.02	0.41	1.72	1.17
Average Score from First Rater					1.82
Average Score from Second Rater					1.82

**Table 2.5 Percent of Essays Assigned Each Score Level by Each Rater—Second Essay**

First Rater	Second Rater				
	0	1	2	3	4
0	3.41	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
1	0.00	11.66	5.73	0.26	0.01
2	0.00	5.57	30.22	8.87	0.44
3	0.00	0.24	8.75	16.36	2.92
4	0.00	0.01	0.43	2.91	2.20
Average Score from First Rater					2.15
Average Score from Second Rater					2.15

**Who Passed?**

A major charge for the independent evaluation was to analyze and report performance on the CAHSEE for all students and for specific demographic groups, including economically disadvantaged students, English learners (EL), and students with disabilities (characterized as “exceptional needs students” in the legislation). Tables 2.6 and 2.7 show, for each portion of the CAHSEE, the passing rates for each of these demographic groups as well as for gender and ethnicity. The passing rates shown in these Tables were calculated by dividing the total number of students who passed each subject by the total enrollment at the beginning of the 10<sup>th</sup> grade. (For economically disadvantaged students, separate fall enrollment statistics were not available. We substituted reported enrollment at the time of the 10<sup>th</sup> grade STAR assessment. Overall, these numbers are slightly lower than initial 10<sup>th</sup> grade enrollments, but the difference is small.)

Table 2.6 Passing Rates by Demographic Group—English-Language Arts

Group	Class	10 <sup>th</sup> Grade Enrollment*	Cumulative Percent Passing by end of:		
			9 <sup>th</sup> Grade	10 <sup>th</sup> Grade	11 <sup>th</sup> Grade
All Students	2004	459,580	51.4	72.6	85.8
	2005	471,648	–	66.9	
Female	2004	223,055	57.5	78.0	90.2
	2005	228,997	–	71.4	
Male	2004	236,533	45.7	67.2	81.3
	2005	242,651	–	62.6	
Asian	2004	39,021	61.1	81.5	92.0
	2005	40,606	–	81.6	
Black	2004	38,240	38.8	59.9	77.1
	2005	39,896	–	54.9	
Hispanic	2004	184,124	39.1	58.8	74.6
	2005	193,227	–	54.0	
White	2004	175,797	63.1	84.8	93.9
	2005	173,996	–	79.2	
Economically Disadvantaged	2004	125,139	43.0	66.5	84.2
	2005	140,933	–	59.9	
English Learner	2004	77,446	18.8	36.1	55.5
	2005	80,592	–	35.6	
Special Education	2004	47,169	17.3	31.2	44.5
	2005	48,818	–	26.1	

Enrollment counts are from CDE’s DataQuest System, except for economically disadvantaged students. DataQuest does not include counts for these students by grade. Counts of economically disadvantaged students included in the 2002 and 2003 STAR results are used as estimates of 10<sup>th</sup> grade enrollment for economically disadvantaged (ED) students. In Tables 2.6 and 2.7 students were sorted into high school classes on the basis of prior test information as well as the indicated grade. Counts will differ slightly from counts above based on grade alone.

The first major result indicated in Tables 2.6 and 2.7 is that the cumulative passing rates for the Class of 2005 were slightly lower than cumulative passing rates for the Class of 2004 at the end of the 10<sup>th</sup> grade. This finding is at odds with the finding reported in our May 2003 report on standards-based instruction (Wise et al., May 2003). In that report, it was suggested that passing rates should increase for classes after 2004 because the extent and effectiveness of standards-based instruction was improving. Note, however, that the comparison is not entirely fair in that significant numbers of students in the Class of 2004 had two (or in a few cases more) chances to pass each subject, while most members of the Class of 2005 had only one chance. Passing rates for the Class of 2005 were higher than initial passing rates for the Class of 2004 from the 2001 CAHSEE administration. This comparison is also not fair, however, because students from the Class of 2004 were only in the 9<sup>th</sup> grade in 2001 and because only “volunteers” participated in the 2001 administration. Further, the Class of 2005 had an additional year of standards-based instruction (to whatever degree it had increased) prior to testing for the first time. ***Thus, there is no very accurate basis for comparing results from the Classes of 2004 and 2005 at this time.***

The second major result shown in Tables 2.6 and 2.7 is that passing rates continued to vary significantly by demographic group. *English learners and students with disabilities (i.e., students receiving special education services) continued to have very low passing rates, particularly in mathematics.* As before, passing rates for females were higher in ELA and about the same in mathematics as passing rates for males. Passing rates for Blacks and Hispanics were significantly lower than passing rates for Whites and Asians. In Mathematics, passing rates of Asians exceeded that of Whites.

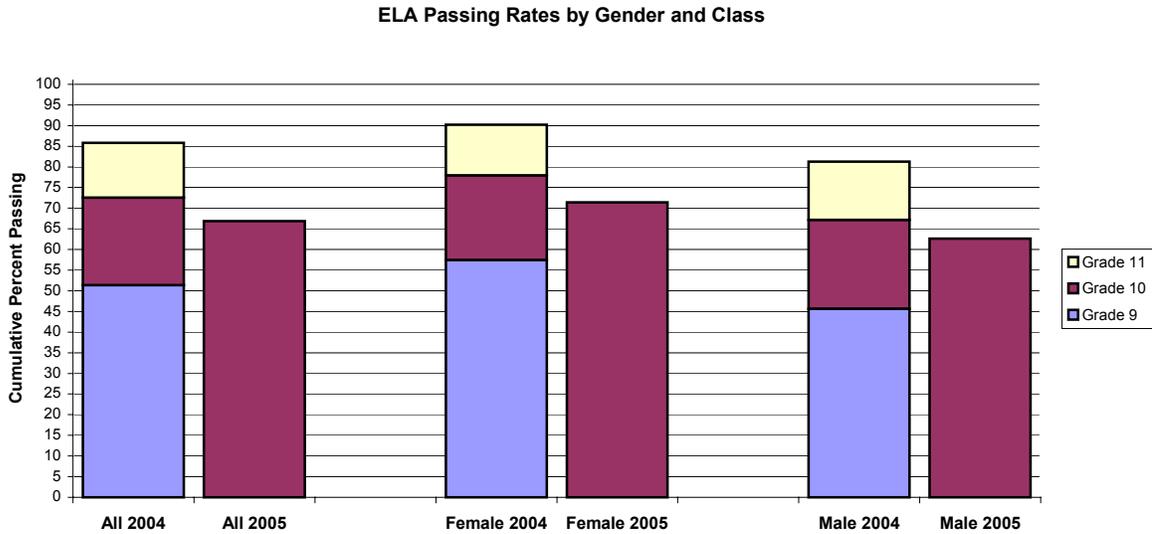
Table 2.7 Passing Rates by Demographic Group—Mathematics

Group	Class	10 <sup>th</sup> Grade Enrollment*	Cumulative Percent Passing by end of:		
			9 <sup>th</sup> Grade	10 <sup>th</sup> Grade	11 <sup>th</sup> Grade
All Students	2004	459,580	35.2	52.6	67.7
	2005	471,648	–	51.9	
Female	2004	223,055	34.4	51.7	67.6
	2005	228,997	–	52.3	
Male	2004	236,533	35.9	53.4	67.5
	2005	242,651	–	51.3	
Asian	2004	39,021	56.6	77.7	90.4
	2005	40,606	–	78.2	
Black	2004	38,240	18.7	31.1	46.1
	2005	39,896	–	30.5	
Hispanic	2004	184,124	20.3	34.1	51.3
	2005	193,227	–	35.3	
White	2004	175,797	48.4	68.9	81.1
	2005	173,996	–	67.5	
Economically Disadvantaged	2004	125,139	24.0	40.8	59.5
	2005	140,933	–	41.2	
English Learner	2004	77,446	10.7	23.3	41.3
	2005	80,592	–	25.8	
Special Education	2004	47,169	9.5	16.0	24.0
	2005	48,818	–	13.7	

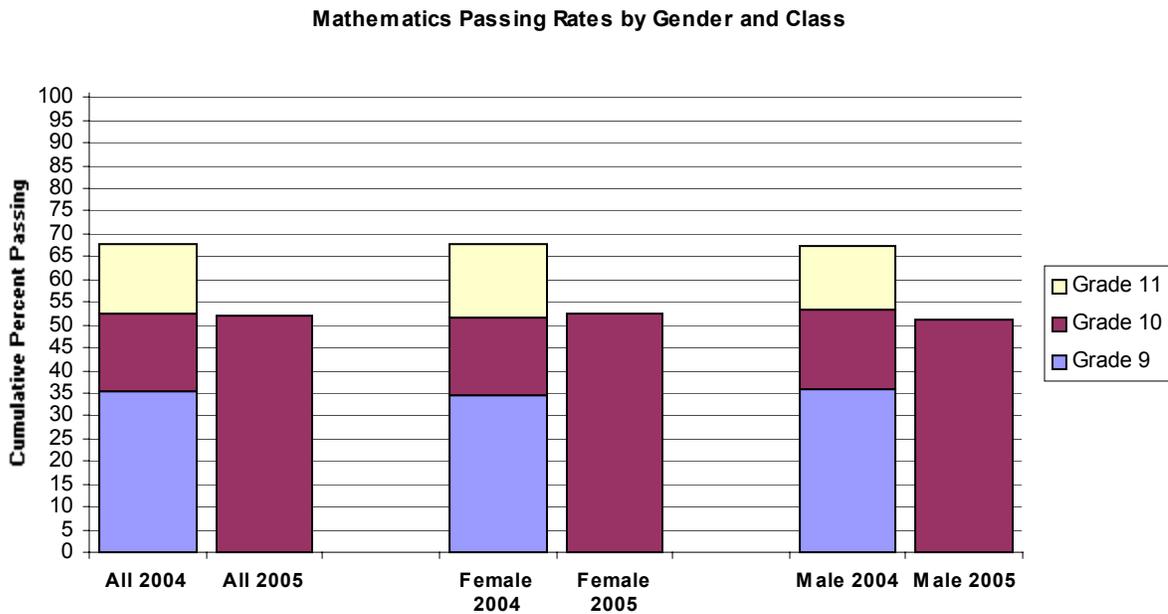
Enrollment counts are from CDE’s DataQuest System, except for economically disadvantaged students. DataQuest does not include counts for these students by grade. Counts of economically disadvantaged students included in the 2002 and 2003 STAR results are used as estimates of 10<sup>th</sup> grade enrollment for economically disadvantaged (ED) students. In Tables 2.6 and 2.7 students were sorted into high school classes on the basis of prior test information as well as the indicated grade. Counts will differ slightly from counts above based on grade alone.

Cumulative passing rates for the Class of 2004 continued to increase at nearly the same annual rate as in 2002. Cumulative passing rates increased 13 percent for ELA and 15 percent for mathematics from the end of 10<sup>th</sup> grade to the end of 11<sup>th</sup> grade, compared to increases of 21 percent and 17 percent respectively from the end of 9<sup>th</sup> grade to the end of 10<sup>th</sup> grade. If the CAHSEE requirement for the Class of 2004 had been continued and there were similar increases in cumulative passing rates during the 12<sup>th</sup> grade, the overall passing rates at the time of graduation may have been about 95 percent for ELA and 80 percent for mathematics. Note that these passing rates are based on all students enrolled in the 10<sup>th</sup> grade in fall 2001.

Some of these students have failed to advance to the 11<sup>th</sup> grade (as indicated in Table 2.14 below). Thus, some students originally in the Class of 2004 who would not have passed the CAHSEE by the end of 12<sup>th</sup> grade would have been denied a diploma anyway for failing to complete required coursework or not meeting other requirements for graduation. The lack of a system of statewide student records, however, makes it impossible to determine how many students would have been denied a diploma due to the CAHSEE requirement alone. Figures 2.1 and 2.2 display cumulative passing rates for the Classes of 2004 and 2005 by gender and race respectively. Figure 2.3 shows similar results for special student populations.



**Figure 2.1.** Cumulative ELA Passing Rates by Gender and Class.



**Figure 2.2.** Cumulative Mathematics Passing Rates by Gender and Class.

ELA Passing Rates by Race/Ethnicity and Class

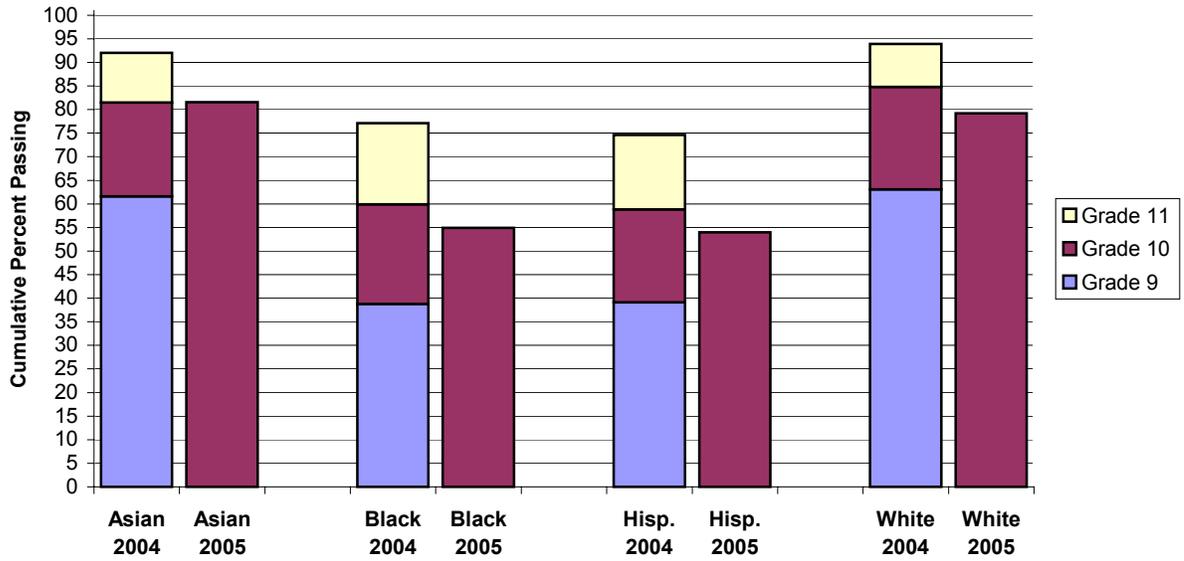


Figure 2.3. Cumulative ELA Passing Rates by Race/Ethnicity and Class.

Mathematics Passing Rates by Race/Ethnicity and Class

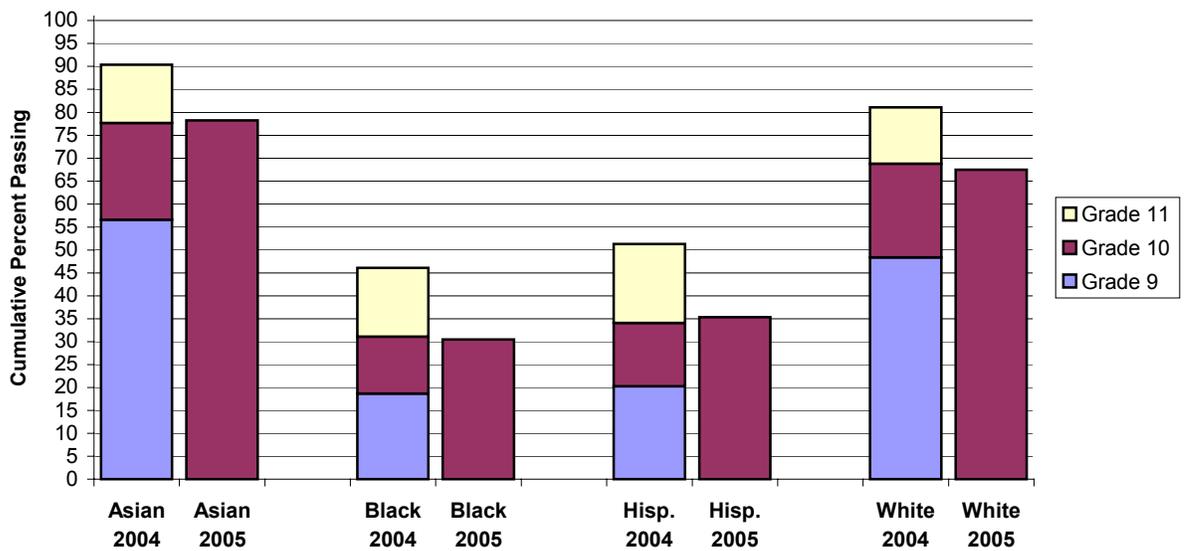


Figure 2.4. Cumulative Mathematics Passing Rates by Race/Ethnicity and Class.

ELA Passing Rates by Special Population and Class

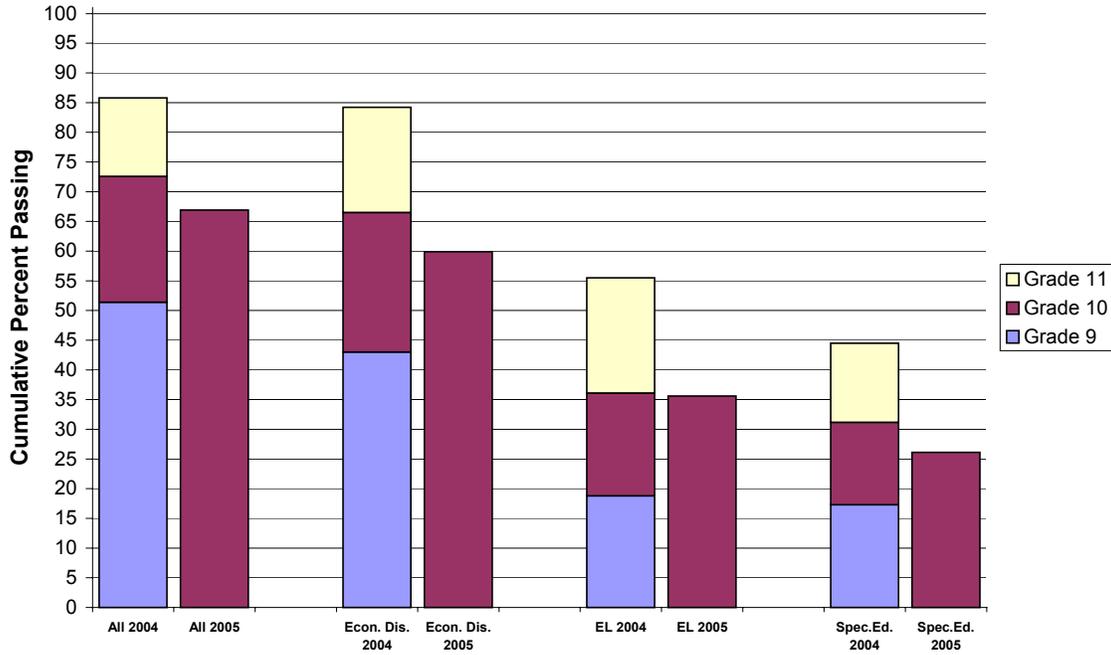


Figure 2.5. Cumulative ELA Passing Rates for Special Populations by Class.

Mathematics Passing Rates by Special Population and Class

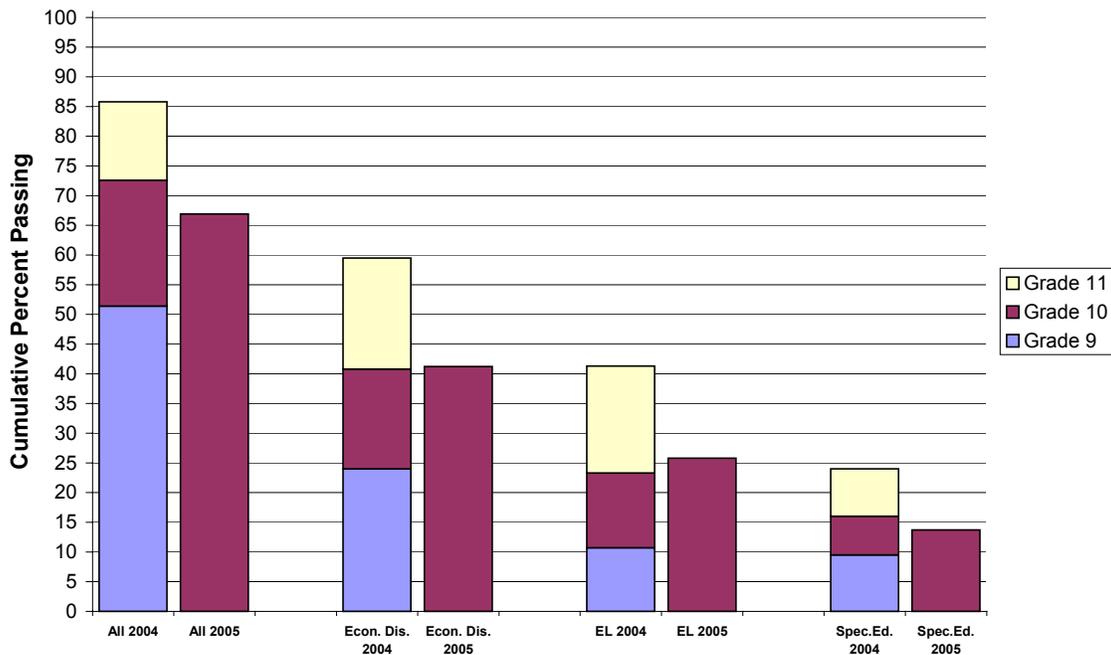


Figure 2.6. Cumulative Mathematics Passing Rates for Special Populations by Class.

The results by race and ethnicity were confounded to some extent due to interactions of race and ethnicity with other demographic characteristics. In particular, a higher proportion of Hispanic students were English learners, a higher proportion of Black and Hispanic students were economically disadvantaged compared to White students, and a higher proportion of Hispanic students were English learners. We further analyzed test results for the census testing of the Class of 2005 to show separate race/ethnicity results within different levels of disadvantaged characteristics as shown in Table 2.8. These levels were defined to be non-overlapping as: (a) Special education students, (b) English learners who were not special education students, (c) Economically disadvantaged students who were neither English learners nor special education students, and 4) Students who were not in any of the preceding categories. Note that in this table, passing rates were based just on those tested since we did not have separate enrollment data for the categories analyzed. Passing rates here were thus slightly higher than rates based on total enrollment.

Table 2.8 Passing Rates for Class of 2005 Students by Student Category and Race/Ethnicity

Student Category	Race / Ethnicity	ELA		Mathematics	
		Number	Percent Passing	Number	Percent Passing
Special Education (SE) Students	Asian	1,079	42.9	1,004	37.0
	Black	3,991	23.8	3,824	7.0
	Hispanic	12,734	23.8	11,930	10.1
	White	13,246	58.2	12,401	36.6
English Learners (EL) <b>not</b> in Special Education	Asian	8,934	57.8	8,995	64.9
	Black	500	41.8	515	20.8
	Hispanic	47,494	42.4	49,396	25.3
	White	2,270	60.1	2,332	53.3
Economically Disadvantaged, but <b>not</b> EL or SE	Asian	7,145	92.1	7,263	83.4
	Black	10,451	67.9	11,015	32.0
	Hispanic	46,296	80.2	48,420	50.1
	White	15,184	86.0	15,810	63.2
All Other Students	Asian	20,932	97.2	21,066	92.7
	Black	16,882	81.0	17,596	47.1
	Hispanic	51,841	85.2	53,837	56.6
	White	120,893	95.8	122,972	82.7

Gaps in passing rates by race and ethnicity were smaller for students who were not disadvantaged than they were when all students in each race/ethnicity category were included. More striking, however, was the extent of racial/ethnic differences among special education students. Passing rates for the ELA test were twice as high for White and Asian

students in this category as they were for Black or Hispanic students. *For math, the passing rate for special education students who were White or Asian was more than three times as high for special education students who were Hispanic and more than five times as high as the passing rate for special education students who were Black.*

There may be many reasons for differences in passing rates by race/ethnicity among special education students, such as differences in the nature or severity of disabilities, or differences in diagnoses and responses to those diagnoses across schools. Tables 2.9 through 2.12 show an analysis of the frequency of each primary disability category and also ELA and Mathematics passing rates by race/ethnicity. There were differences by race in the frequency of different disability categories, with Black and Hispanic students more likely to be coded with Specific Learning Disabilities and less likely to be coded with speech impairments or other health impairments or have no disability indicated at all in comparison to White students. Within each primary disability category, race differences in passing rates mirrored closely overall race differences in passing rates for all special education students.

Table 2.9 Distribution of Special Education Students by Primary Disability Category for Asian, Hispanic, Black, and White Students Taking the ELA Test

Primary Disability Category	Percent of S.E. Students by Disability			
	2. Asian	5. Hisp	6. Black	7. White
None	4.9%	3.0%	3.9%	11.1%
010 = Mental Retardation	0.7%	1.6%	1.6%	1.1%
020 = Hard of Hearing	1.9%	0.8%	0.5%	0.6%
030 = Deaf	2.3%	0.8%	0.4%	0.6%
040 = Speech or Language Impairment	15.6%	4.9%	2.5%	5.7%
050 = Visual Impairment	0.7%	0.4%	0.3%	0.6%
060 = Emotional Disturbance	3.0%	3.1%	7.9%	6.9%
070 = Orthopedic Impairment	1.1%	0.7%	0.4%	0.8%
080 = Other Health Impairment	2.6%	1.6%	2.1%	5.6%
090 = Specific Learning Disability	64.7%	82.2%	79.4%	65.6%
100 = Deaf-Blindness	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
110 = Multiple Disabilities	0.4%	0.4%	0.6%	0.3%
120 = Autism	1.7%	0.2%	0.2%	0.8%
130 = Traumatic Brain Injury	0.4%	0.2%	0.1%	0.2%
U = Unknown	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Total %	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
Total N	1,079	12,734	3,991	13,246

Table 2.10 ELA Passing Rates by Race for Special Education Students by Primary Disability Category

Primary Disability Category	Percent of Students Passing ELA			
	2. Asian	5. Hisp	6. Black	7. White
None	91.1%	61.3%	59.1%	87.1%
010 = Mental Retardation	0.0%	5.0%	4.3%	8.4%
020 = Hard of Hearing	54.5%	24.1%	28.6%	61.2%
030 = Deaf	19.2%	11.2%	0.0%	45.2%
040 = Speech or Language Impairment	66.1%	37.7%	35.2%	66.4%
050 = Visual Impairment	0.0%	60.7%	50.0%	73.1%
060 = Emotional Disturbance	47.1%	34.6%	29.7%	61.3%
070 = Orthopedic Impairment	50.0%	36.7%	33.3%	66.7%
080 = Other Health Impairment	58.6%	44.8%	50.6%	69.3%
090 = Specific Learning Disability	31.8%	20.6%	20.4%	50.9%
100 = Deaf-Blindness	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
110 = Multiple Disabilities	0.0%	20.4%	15.4%	53.2%
120 = Autism	31.6%	44.0%	0.0%	66.4%
130 = Traumatic Brain Injury	0.0%	28.6%	0.0%	59.1%
U = Unknown	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Percentage of Total N	41.8%	23.5%	23.5%	57.5%
Total N	1,079	12,734	3,991	13,246

Table 2.11 Distribution of Special Education Students by Primary Disability Category for Asian, Hispanic, Black, and White Students Taking the Mathematics Test

Primary Disability Category	Percent of S.E. Students by Disability			
	2. Asian	5. Hisp	6. Black	7. White
None	5.3%	3.0%	3.7%	11.0%
010 = Mental Retardation	0.9%	1.7%	1.5%	1.1%
020 = Hard of Hearing	1.9%	0.9%	0.5%	0.6%
030 = Deaf	2.2%	0.8%	0.4%	0.6%
040 = Speech or Language Impairment	15.7%	4.8%	2.4%	5.6%
050 = Visual Impairment	0.7%	0.4%	0.3%	0.5%
060 = Emotional Disturbance	3.0%	3.2%	8.0%	7.1%
070 = Orthopedic Impairment	1.1%	0.7%	0.3%	0.9%
080 = Other Health Impairment	2.6%	1.6%	2.0%	5.7%
090 = Specific Learning Disability	64.3%	82.2%	79.8%	65.5%
100 = Deaf-Blindness	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
110 = Multiple Disabilities	0.3%	0.4%	0.6%	0.4%
120 = Autism	1.6%	0.2%	0.2%	0.8%
130 = Traumatic Brain Injury	0.4%	0.1%	0.1%	0.2%
U = Unknown	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Total %	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
Total N	1,004	11,930	3,824	12,401

Table 2.12 Mathematics Passing Rates by Race for Special Education Students by Primary Disability Category

Primary Disability Category	Percent of Students Passing Mathematics			
	2. Asian	5. Hisp	6. Black	7. White
None	70.5%	30.8%	25.7%	67.7%
010 = Mental Retardation	20.0%	1.7%	0.0%	3.8%
020 = Hard of Hearing	54.5%	13.2%	4.8%	51.2%
030 = Deaf	24.0%	7.8%	5.3%	27.9%
040 = Speech or Language Impairment	61.3%	21.5%	19.3%	47.8%
050 = Visual Impairment	0.0%	18.6%	20.0%	54.5%
060 = Emotional Disturbance	34.3%	11.8%	6.7%	32.4%
070 = Orthopedic Impairment	46.2%	14.0%	7.1%	44.3%
080 = Other Health Impairment	43.3%	18.4%	20.5%	44.8%
090 = Specific Learning Disability	23.7%	7.9%	5.0%	27.2%
100 = Deaf-Blindness	0.0%		0.0%	0.0%
110 = Multiple Disabilities	0.0%	6.1%	3.6%	26.9%
120 = Autism	42.1%	24.0%	20.0%	50.0%
130 = Traumatic Brain Injury	0.0%	5.0%		52.2%
U = Unknown	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Percentage of Total N	34.4%	9.6%	6.6%	34.6%
Total N	1,004	11,930	3,824	12,401

We analyzed the passing rates on the ELA test by English language fluency designation as shown in Table 2.13. For each class, passing rates for the first three categories, each indicating fluency, were very similar. Students who were bilingual and either initially fluent or redesignated as fluent after English language instruction passed at slightly higher rates than students who were fluent in English only. Passing rates for students identified as English learners were about half the rates for students in the other categories. ***These results suggest that if English learners achieve fluency, the ELA portion of the CAHSEE should not pose a significant barrier for most of them.***

Within each fluency category, passing rates for the Class of 2004 were about half the rates shown for the Class of 2005. This is not surprising since students in the Class of 2004 who were still taking the ELA test had not passed, often two or more times. These students clearly had low ELA skills to begin with. Most of the students in the Class of 2005 were taking the exam for the first time. Many of these students had much higher levels of ELA skills than the repeat takers from the class of 2004, and they passed on their first attempt.

Table 2.13 2002–03 ELA Passing Rates by English Language Fluency

English Language Fluency	Class of 2004		Class of 2005	
	Number of Tests Administered	Percent Passing	Number of Tests Administered	Percent Passing
English Only	80,733	44.0%	255,379	85.0%
Initially Fluent	9,734	45.4%	36,381	87.1%
Redesignated Fluent	10,305	46.8%	42,794	87.7%
English Learner	67,459	22.1%	68,075	42.4%
Missing/Unknown	2,210	41.9%	2,115	61.5%
All Students	170,447	35.6%	404,748	78.2%

We also analyzed passing rates on the mathematics part of the CAHSEE for students who had completed different levels of math courses. Table 2.14 shows passing rates for first-time and repeat test-takers by the highest-level mathematics course they had completed or were currently enrolled in.

Table 2.14 2002–03 Mathematics Passing Rates by Highest Math Course Taken

Highest Math Course Taken	Class of 2004		Class of 2005	
	Number of Tests Administered	Percent Passing	Number of Tests Administered	Percent Passing
General Math	20,837	14.7%	12,422	18.4%
Pre-Algebra	62,780	19.1%	47,976	34.7%
Algebra I	74,503	23.3%	112,162	38.5%
Integrated Math I	2,068	24.3%	2,770	55.2%
Integrated Math II	3,016	36.4%	4,857	75.5%
Geometry	40,560	38.0%	124,344	76.1%
Algebra II	8,197	39.0%	72,694	91.0%
Advanced Math	173	45.1%	7,779	98.2%
Unknown	106,636	16.1%	32,732	30.0%
All Students	318,770	21.9%	417,736	58.8%
Total Tests	309,415		425,724	

As in the 2001 and 2002 administrations, passing rates for the 2002–03 administrations were considerably higher for students who completed higher levels of math coursework. For the Class of 2005, passing rates for students who were taking or had taken Geometry, Algebra II, Advanced Math, or the second year of an Integrated Math series were quite high, 75 percent or better, compared to less than 40 percent for students taking Algebra or Pre-algebra and less than 20 percent for students who had taken only general math.

Passing rates were considerably lower for students in the Class of 2004, all of whom had failed to pass the mathematics portion of the CAHSEE one or more times prior to the 2002–03 school year. Passing rates were significantly higher for students who were taking mathematics beyond Algebra I or Integrated Mathematics I. The low passing rates at each

course level suggest that these students may not have had the prerequisite skills to benefit fully from the mathematics courses they were taking.

One other significant difference between the near census assessment of the Class of 2005 and the limited sample of repeat test-takers in the Class of 2004 was that, even though they were in 10<sup>th</sup> rather than 11<sup>th</sup> grade, a much higher proportion of students in the Class of 2005 had taken mathematics courses beyond Algebra. Nearly half of the students in the Class of 2005 were enrolled in Geometry or higher-level courses, compared to only 15 percent of the students tested from the Class of 2004.

### **Testing Accommodations and Modifications**

Students with disabilities who could not be assessed using normal test administration procedures were allowed specific accommodations or, in some cases, modifications to test administration procedures. The difference is that modifications involved changes that would alter the construct measured and so scores from modified administrations were not valid for passing the CAHSEE. (See CAHSEE regulations posted on CDE's Web site.) Tables 2.15 and 2.16 show the number of students tested with each alternative type of test accommodations and also with specific test-administration modifications.

For students in each class, the most frequent accommodation was additional time, followed by additional breaks and having directions read to them. Special education students receiving accommodations for physical limitations, including Braille or large print versions and an answer scribe, had passing rates that were considerably higher than students receiving other, more general accommodations. Special education students in the Class of 2005 receiving these specific accommodations passed at rates above 60 percent, compared to passing rates below 30 percent for students receiving the most common accommodations. Students who took the CAHSEE with modifications had relatively low scores and most did not achieve a score of 350 or higher.

Table 2.15 Frequency and Passing Rates for Test Accommodations and Modifications—  
Class of 2004

Accommoda- tion	Class of 2004											
	Special Ed. (SE) Students				English Learners (EL)*				Neither SE nor EL			
	ELA		MATH		ELA		MATH		ELA		Math	
	Freq	% Pass	Freq	% Pass	Freq	% Pass	Freq	% Pass	Freq	% Pass	Freq	% Pass
<i>Presentation</i>												
• Braille	20	20.0	31	16.1	2	0.0	0	---	4	25.0	6	16.7
• Large Print	74	17.6	97	11.3	3	100.0	2	50.0	7	42.9	13	23.1
• Direction Reading	3,306	14.6	3,233	6.5	103	4.9	103	3.9	238	22.7	254	8.3
• Audio Presentation	---	---	1,283	5.5	---	---	13	0.0	---	---	76	11.8
• Other	356	14.0	378	12.4	42	2.4	43	0.0	52	15.4	64	4.7
<i>Response</i>												
• Marked Answers	340	17.4	380	9.7	12	25.0	11	0.0	40	22.5	45	11.1
• Scribe Answer Doc.	177	23.7	148	16.2	3	33.3	0	---	15	33.3	19	21.1
• Other	143	28.0	69	10.1	24	4.2	28	0.0	28	14.3	30	10.0
<i>Scheduling</i>												
• Additional Time	5,468	17.2	6,130	8.2	172	6.4	164	6.7	458	23.4	495	11.3
• Additional Breaks	3,581	17.2	4,161	8.0	77	7.8	73	1.4	262	15.7	337	10.4
• Other	824	19.5	1,077	8.4	34	8.8	41	7.3	63	20.6	79	8.9
<i>Modification</i>												
• Audio Presentation	1,688	18.0	---	---	20	15.0	---	---	92	15.2	---	---
• Calculator	---	---	8,921	10.2	---	---	208	6.7	---	---	623	12.5
• Other	519	23.1	301	14.3	37	2.7	42	0.0	44	20.5	57	21.1

\* Students coded as both special education and English learners are included under the special education column only.

Table 2.16 Frequency and Passing Rates for Test Accommodations and Modifications—  
Class of 2005

Accommoda- tion/Modifica- tion	Class of 2005											
	Special Ed. Students (SE)				English Learners (EL)*				Neither SE nor EL			
	ELA		MATH		ELA		MATH		ELA		Math	
	Freq	% Pass	Freq	% Pass	Freq	% Pass	Freq	% Pass	Freq	% Pass	Freq	% Pass
<i>Presentation</i>												
• Braille	25	76.0	23	34.8	2	0.0	3	0.0	6	50.0	6	66.7
• Large Print	79	62.0	70	37.1	4	75.0	5	0.0	12	83.3	12	50.0
• Direction Reading	2480	19.0	2145	6.6	82	8.5	74	1.4	158	35.4	129	17.1
• Audio Presentation	---	---	648	5.1	---	---	5	0.0	---	---	20	10.0
• Other	233	27.5	189	17.5	15	6.7	15	6.7	12	41.7	20	20.0
<i>Response</i>												
• Marked Answers	285	29.5	229	12.7	12	33.3	11	18.2	51	62.8	51	43.1
• Scribe Answer Doc.	162	60.5	98	36.7	3	66.7	4	25.0	20	60.0	19	52.6
• Other	120	57.5	21	14.3	1	0.0	0	---	8	50.0	4	50.0
<i>Scheduling</i>												
• Additional Time	4222	27.6	3631	10.7	165	12.1	144	1.4	392	36.7	369	17.1
• Additional Breaks	2649	24.3	2274	8.5	92	8.7	79	3.8	244	29.1	238	12.2
• Other	654	32.0	612	14.4	4	0.0	3	0.0	32	43.8	27	18.5
<i>Modification</i>												
• Audio Presentation	969	24.9	---	---	20	10.0	---	---	45	28.9	---	---
• Calculator	---	---	4806	12.1	---	---	129	5.4	---	---	429	16.3
• Other	406	30.1	99	9.1	22	9.1	12	0.0	27	63.0	15	26.7

\* Students coded as both special education and English learners are included under the special education column only.

Passing rates for English learners receiving specific accommodations (excluding those who were also special education students) were generally lower than passing rates for students with disabilities who received the same accommodation. This result suggests that accommodations do not eliminate the need to learn to read in English to pass each part of the CAHSEE.

One other finding shown in Tables 2.11 and 2.12 is that accommodations were allowed for a small number of students who were neither special education students nor English learners. It may well be that information about disabilities or language fluency or about the provision of testing accommodations was incorrect for these students. Otherwise, the

decision rules used by schools in allowing accommodations were not clearly documented. Since passing rates for these students were still relatively low, there is no evidence that allowing accommodations for students who may not have needed them provided any unfair advantage.

### Relationship of CAHSEE Results to Other Test Results

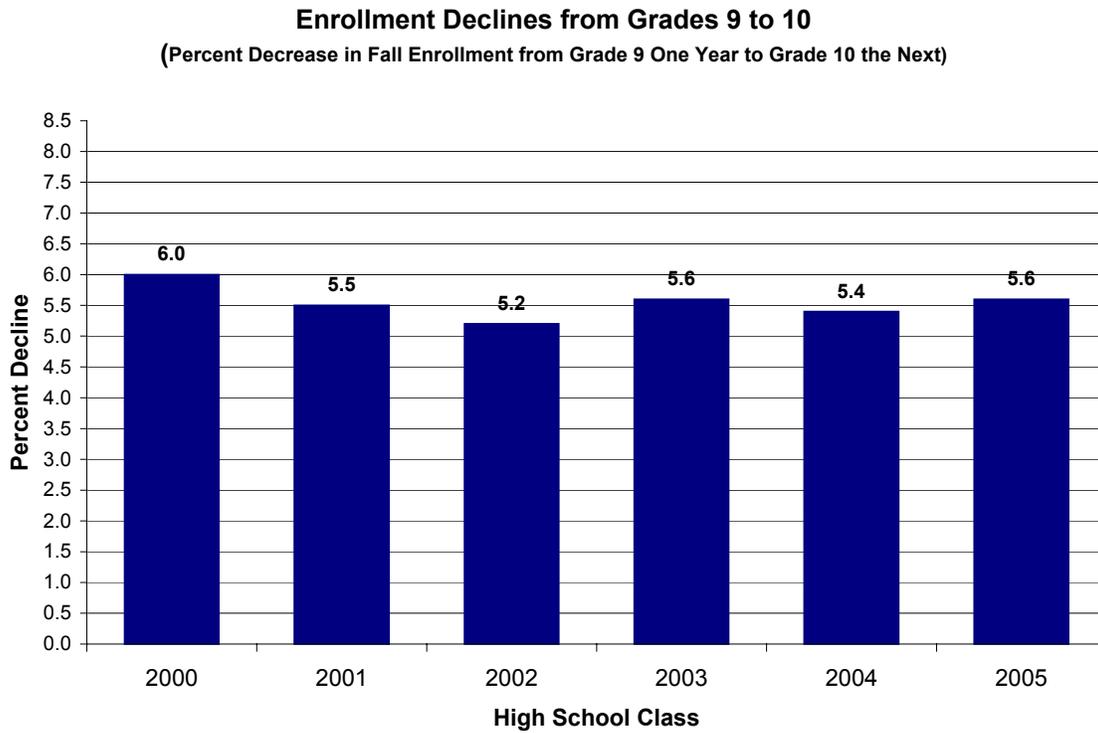
A key question addressed in the independent evaluation of the CAHSEE is the impact of the new graduation requirement on dropout and graduation rates. While we cannot track individual students, overall enrollment figures provide an indication of the extent to which students in each grade do not proceed to the next grade with the rest of their classmates.

Table 2.17 and Figure 2.7 show the decrease in enrollment from the 9<sup>th</sup> to the 10<sup>th</sup> grade. In the text that follows, we refer to this difference as a “drop-off” in enrollment. Some of the difference may be due to students who did not finish coursework and repeat a grade rather than dropping out of school altogether. Results indicate that this drop-off rate is not significantly higher for the Classes of 2004 and 2005 than it was for prior classes. Table 2.14 and Figure 2.8 show similar information for the drop-off between 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> grade enrollments. ***Results show that the drop-off rate between 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> grade enrollments was significantly less for the Class of 2004 than it was for prior classes.***

Table 2.17 Enrollment Declines from 9th Grade to 10th Grade

School Year	High School Class	10 <sup>th</sup> Grade Enrollment	Prior Year's 9 <sup>th</sup> Grade Enrollment	Decrease	
				Number	Percent
2002-2003	2005	471,648	499,505	27,857	5.6%
2001-2002	2004	459,588	485,910	26,322	5.4%
2000-2001	2003	455,134	482,270	27,136	5.6%
1999-2000	2002	444,064	468,162	24,098	5.2%
1998-1999	2001	433,528	458,650	25,122	5.5%
1997-1998	2000	423,865	450,820	26,955	6.0%

Source: California DataQuest System (<http://data1.cde.ca.gov/dataquest>)

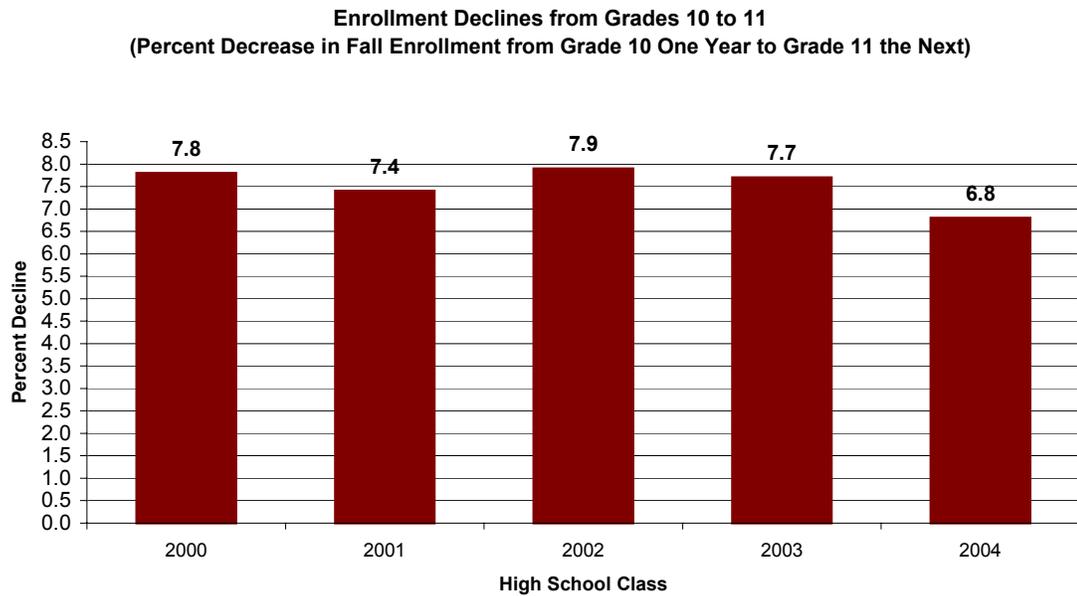


**Figure 2.7.** Enrollment Declines from 9th to 10th Grade by High School Class.

**Table 2.18** Enrollment Declines from 10th Grade to 11th Grade

School Year	High School Class	11 <sup>th</sup> Grade Enrollment	Prior Year's 10 <sup>th</sup> Grade Enrollment	Decrease	
				Number	Percent
2002-2003	2004	428,117	459,588	31,471	6.8%
2001-2002	2003	420,295	455,134	34,839	7.7%
2000-2001	2002	409,119	444,064	34,945	7.9%
1999-2000	2001	401,246	433,528	32,282	7.4%
1998-1999	2000	390,742	423,865	33,123	7.8%
1997-1998	1999	378,819	413,725	34,906	8.4%

Source: California DataQuest System (<http://data1.cde.ca.gov/dataquest>)



**Figure 2.8.** Enrollment Declines from Grades 10 to 11 by High School Class.

It is possible that the CAHSEE requirement, which has led to significantly increased remediation efforts for students at risk of failing, contributed to this reduction in drop-off rate, although additional data and research is required to support this contribution. What is clear is **that the CAHSEE requirement does not appear to increase dropout rates through the 11<sup>th</sup> grade.**

We looked to see whether CAHSEE results for the Classes of 2004 and 2005 were similar to results from STAR, California’s standards-based accountability assessment. STAR results provide an independent view of performance of students in different high school classes. To the extent that results are similar, STAR results may also predict relative performance on the CAHSEE for future high school classes. Table 2.19 shows results from the STAR 2003 ELA assessment for the 10<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> grades in comparison to results from the 2002 assessment. For the 10<sup>th</sup> grade assessment, students in the Class of 2005 were assessed in 2003 and students in the Class of 2004 were assessed in 2002. Results were very similar for these two classes. Sixty-three percent of students scored at least basic for these two classes and the average scale score increased by only 2 points.

Students in the Class of 2006 were assessed in the 2003 9<sup>th</sup> grade assessment. Results from this assessment are compared to results from the Class of 2005 assessed in the 2002 9<sup>th</sup> grade assessment. Results indicate that the Class of 2006 performed significantly better than the Class of 2005. The number of students scoring at least basic increased by 6 percentage points and the average scale score increased by more than 11 points. Taken together, results shown in Table 2.15 suggest that, while ELA performance on the CAHSEE did not increase significantly for the Class of 2005 (given limitations on available comparisons), results for the Class of 2006 should be much better.

Table 2.19 Results from the STAR 2003 and 2002 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> Grade ELA Assessments

STAR Results for Grade 10 ELA			
Assessment Year	2003	2002	
HS Class	Class of 2005	Class of 2004	Gain
% at least Basic	63	63	0
Mean Scale Score	324.5	322.4	2.1
STAR Results for Grade 9 ELA			
Assessment Year	2003	2002	
HS Class	Class of 2006	Class of 2005	Gain
% at least Basic	69	63	6
Mean Scale Score	332.9	321.4	11.5

STAR does not include a common assessment of mathematics skills for all students at the 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> grades. Instead, assessments are targeted to specific courses and administered to students who complete these courses. Table 2.20 shows results for the Algebra I assessment, the most common assessment for students in the 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> grades. For each grade level, performance on the Algebra I assessment decreased slightly in 2003. This is balanced against the fact that more students at each grade level were taking and being assessed in Algebra I. The percent at least basic and average scale scores are higher for students taking Algebra I at earlier grade levels. As the proportion of such students increases, overall mathematics achievement should increase correspondingly. Current STAR results do not, however, provide a clear prediction of CAHSEE performance for future classes.

Table 2.20 Results from the STAR 2003 and 2002 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> Grade Algebra I Assessments

STAR Results for Algebra I			
Assessment Year	2003	2002	Gain
8th Grade	Class of 2007	Class of 2006	
Percent Tested	32	29	3
% at least Basic	67	69	-2
Mean Scale Score	336.8	337	-0.2
9th Grade	Class of 2006	Class of 2005	
Percent Tested	37	32	5
% at least Basic	51	54	-3
Mean Scale Score	306.3	308.9	-2.6
10th Grade	Class of 2005	Class of 2004	
Percent Tested	25	21	4
% at least Basic	35	40	-5
Mean Scale Score	289.5	290.8	-1.3
11th Grade	Class of 2004	Class of 2003	
Percent Tested	13	10	3
% at least Basic	30	35	-5
Mean Scale Score	284.5	286.7	-2.2

**Performance of Repeat Test Takers**

The Year-3 Evaluation report (Wise et al., June 2002b) included extensive analysis of score gains for students taking the CAHSEE for a second time. Data from the 2002–03 CAHSEE administrations provide an additional opportunity to examine the extent to which remediation programs and other activities have increased scores for students who have to repeat the CAHSEE.

Year-round administration makes the analyses of score gains more complicated. Students from the Class of 2004 took the CAHSEE several times, sometimes with relatively short intervening periods. We recomputed score gains from 2001 to 2002 by taking results from the students’ first administration in 2001 and their first administration in 2002. In a few cases, students who tested initially in 2001 did not test again until July or even September of 2002. In the current analyses, these students were added to the sample with gains from 2001 to 2002. For gains from 2002 to 2003, we used results from the students’ first administration from 2002, in most cases March or May of 2002, and their first administration in 2003, in most cases March 2003.

Table 2.21 shows average gains for each part of the CAHSEE from 2001 to 2002 and from 2002 to 2003. As with the results reported last year, scores below 300 (less than random guessing) were set to 299. (See Wise et al., June 2002b for an explanation and analysis of below-chance scores.) Score gains for ELA were lower from 2002 to 2003, 10 scale points compared to nearly 17 scale points for the previous year. Score gains for math were about 10 points in both years. At this rate of increase, the average student starting at a score level of 300 (chance level) would take five years to reach the passing level of 350.

Table 2.21 Score Gains for Repeat Test-Takers in Class of 2004

Test Year	ELA			Mathematics		
	No. Tested	Avg. Gain	S.D.	No. Tested	Avg. Gain	S.D.
2001 to 2002	58,043	16.6	20.0	99,614	10.6	15.8
2002 to 2003	37,297	10.4	17.0	86,067	10.2	16.1

The fact that score gains have not increased for the Class of 2004 does not mean that the effectiveness of remediation programs has not increased. Since students who passed the exam previously are excluded from the computation of score gains, the 2002 to 2003 gains are based on a sample who had not gained enough to pass last year. These students thus were likely to have had more significant deficiencies. The fact that math gains for these students are still as high as they were for a more general population of students actually speaks to the continued effectiveness of remediation. Students in the Class of 2005 are not required to retake the CAHSEE if they did not initially pass. It will be two years before students in the Class of 2006 are retested and score gains can be computed. At that time, summer of 2005, we will be able to determine more definitively the extent to which the effectiveness of remediation programs has increased.

### Plans for the 2004 Administrations

In addition to deferring the CAHSEE requirement to the Class of 2006, the Board approved several changes to the CAHSEE to take effect with the 2004 administrations. Jack O'Connell, State Superintendent of Public Instruction, sent a letter to California county and district superintendents on July 16, 2003. The letter summarized several updates to the CAHSEE system, as a result of State Board of Education actions at its July 2003 meeting. These updates included:

- The requirement to pass the CAHSEE as a prerequisite to earning a high school diploma was deferred to the Class of 2006.
- The exam was to be reduced in length from three days to two days.
- Students in the Classes of 2004 and 2005 would not be permitted to sit for the official exam again. However, districts may opt to acknowledge students who already passed the exam with either a Certificate of Accomplishment or a seal.
- A secure form of the CAHSEE is offered on the ETS secure Web site; districts may use this form of the exam to test additional students in the classes of 2004 and 2005 so that they may earn the district's acknowledgement.
- Districts may not use the CAHSEE as a local graduation requirement for classes prior to 2006.

### Administrative Changes

CDE's Standards and Assessment Division provided additional guidelines to local personnel in a July 2003 reference document:

- Tenth graders may only take the test once while in tenth grade.
- Districts must allow at least four months between test administrations for any given student.
- Districts must provide appropriate remediation or supplemental instruction to students who have not passed the CAHSEE before being retested.

The Standards and Assessment Division also provided a document in July 2003, titled "Questions and Answers for Administrators about the Postponement of the CAHSEE Requirement." The following Q&A appears after a question about students in the classes of 2004 and 2005:

Q: Are school districts/schools still required to provide remediation to students who are not showing progress in learning the academic standards covered by the CAHSEE?

A: Schools are required by state law to provide remediation to students who are at risk of not graduating from high school. In addition to the CAHSEE, other standards-based indicators that can be used to determine a student's level of academic achievement include results of the California Standards Test, district and/or school assessments, course grades, and teacher evaluations.

CDE's August 26, 2003 issue of *Assessment Notes* describes changes to the CAHSEE content and test blueprints resulting from SBE's directive to reduce the test from three days to two. Changes to the ELA portion of the CAHSEE include:

- One writing task rather than two
- Ten fewer multiple-choice, scored questions
- Five fewer multiple-choice, field-test questions
- Various redistributions of items across strands and standards (e.g., elimination of *Prepare a bibliography* and *Integrate quotations and citations into a written text*; increase in *Writing Conventions* from 13 to 15 questions).

Although the length of the mathematics portion of the CAHSEE was unchanged, the distribution of items across standards was modified.

CDE's October 15, 2003 issue of *Assessment Notes* specifies that all tenth grade students are required to be tested in 2004. It further specifies "During the census administration, school districts are asked to submit an answer document for every tenth grade student, regardless of whether or not the student participated... The CDE plans to use the number of CAHSEE answer documents as the denominator for calculating the participation rates for the AYP report. There is no definition in law for determining a tenth grade student, so school districts are advised to use their local definition for determining a student's grade level. For consistency purposes, school districts should use the same definition for both CAHSEE and STAR...."

CDE's November 24, 2003 issue of *Standards and Assessment Update* included the following CAHSEE reminders:

- CAHSEE results for students in the classes of 2004 and 2005 must be maintained in the students' permanent records. However, the district may decide whether these permanent records will be used as transcripts.
- School districts can receive remediation funding for students in the classes of 2004 and 2005, although these students are no longer required to pass the CAHSEE.

### **Passing Standards**

ETS, the contractor for CAHSEE development and administration, conducted a standard setting workshop in the Fall of 2003. There were two reasons for revisiting the issue of passing standards. First, data were now available from a census testing of one high school class. Data on passing rates used in establishing the initial passing standards were based on a partial sample of students from the Class of 2004 who took the CAHSEE on a voluntary basis as 9<sup>th</sup> graders in 2001. The 2003 administrations included nearly all of the 10<sup>th</sup> graders in the class of 2005, providing more comprehensive information on the performance of an entire class. Second, the blueprints specifying the topics to be covered and the number of test questions assigned to each topic were changed, as approved by the Board in July.

HumRRO staff observed the standard setting workshops. By design, these workshops followed the procedures used in the 2001 standard setting workshops as closely as possible. The workshops were highly successful and there were no major problems in their conduct. In the future, however, CDE might consider the use of more recent approaches to standard setting that could further simplify the required judgments.

At its November 2003 meeting, the Board decided to leave the passing rate, as defined by the percent of questions answered correctly, at the level originally established in 2001 (60

percent correct for ELA and 55 percent correct for mathematics). However, blueprint changes that eliminate or reduce coverage of some of the more advanced topics, will effectively lower the standards for passing math, in terms of content mastery. In constructing new forms, ETS was also released from the requirement that it match prior targets for item difficulty, with the result that the questions for many of the continuing content standards may be easier than in the past. The exact extent to which it will be easier to pass the new CAHSEE cannot be determined, however, until data for item calibration are available from the 2004 administrations.

### Summary

Results from all six administrations during the 2002–03 school year were analyzed separately for students in the high school Class of 2004, who took the CAHSEE as 11<sup>th</sup> graders, and students in the Class of 2005, who took the exam as 10<sup>th</sup> graders. For several reasons, *it is not possible to make precise comparisons of results for the Class of 2005 to current or prior results for students in the Class of 2004*. During the past year, the CAHSEE was administered to essentially all students in the Class of 2005. For the Class of 2004, some students took the CAHSEE for the first time as 9<sup>th</sup> graders and others not until the 10<sup>th</sup> grade. By the end of the 10<sup>th</sup> grade, a significant number of students in the Class of 2004 had taken the CAHSEE more than once.

Cumulative passing rates through the end of 10<sup>th</sup> grade for each section of the CAHSEE were slightly lower for the Class of 2005 although, as noted, many students in the Class of 2004 had multiple chances to pass. Results from the STAR assessments also indicate comparable performance for students in the Classes of 2004 and 2005. Special education students and English learners passed the CAHSEE at significantly lower rates than their classmates. Only 27 percent of students with disabilities passed the ELA portion and about 17 percent of these students passed the mathematics portion. In addition, Hispanic and Black students had considerably lower passing rates on both portions of the CAHSEE than did White or Asian students. *The difference in pass rates between racial/ethnic groups among special education students was pronounced.*

As in earlier administrations, ELA passing rates for English learners who had been redesignated as fluent English proficient were comparable to other student groups, suggesting that the lower passing rates for English learners will be erased once they achieve English proficiency. For math, passing levels were once again closely related to level of math coursework completed.

Students in the Class of 2004 who continued to take sections of the CAHSEE showed average score gains of about 10 points in each subject area. ELA score gains from 10<sup>th</sup> to 11<sup>th</sup> grade were less than average score gains from 9<sup>th</sup> to 10<sup>th</sup> grade (about 17 points). Math score gains from 10<sup>th</sup> to 11<sup>th</sup> were the same as from 9<sup>th</sup> to 10<sup>th</sup>.

One final finding in analyzing results from the 2002–03 CAHSEE administrations was that there continue to be some issues with record-keeping and possibly with schools' understanding of CAHSEE regulations and procedures. For instance, some students in the Class of 2005 appeared to have been tested earlier than intended (before the March 2003

administration); in other cases, information on the students' grade level may have been ambiguous. Some students not classified as English learners or special education students were provided with testing accommodations designed primarily for these populations. While these issues were relatively minor in comparison to data accuracy issues in earlier years, there is still considerable room for improving the accuracy and completeness of information on students taking the CAHSEE.



## CHAPTER 3: STUDENT QUESTIONNAIRE

### Introduction

At the end of each part of the CAHSEE, students completed a brief questionnaire that asked for their reactions to the test and their plans for high school and beyond. We examined the responses separately for students in the Class of 2004 (nearly all of whom were repeat test-takers) and students in the Class of 2005 (nearly all of whom were first-time test-takers). For students in the Class of 2005, we also analyzed responses separately for English learners and for students receiving special education services. For comparison, we have included responses from the March 2002 administration separated into repeat test-takers and first-time test-takers. Response frequencies are shown for the following groups of students:

- Class of 2004 students testing in the 2002–03 school year
- Class of 2004 students who were repeat test-takers in March 2002
- Class of 2004 students who were first-time test-takers in March 2002
- Class of 2005 students testing in the 2002–03 school year including:
  - All students
  - English learners
  - Special education students

In this chapter, we present the responses of students in each of these cohorts. The primary intended comparisons are:

- Class of 2004 students in 2002–03 to repeat test-takers in 2002
- Class of 2005 students in 2002–03 to first-time examinees in 2002
- English learners and special education students in the Class of 2005 to all Class of 2005 students.

In making the intended comparisons, Class of 2004 and Class of 2005 students were treated differently for several reasons. First, Class of 2004 students tested in 2002–03 were all repeat test-takers. The most appropriate comparison for these students was the sample of repeat test-takers in the Spring 2002 administrations. By comparison, Class of 2005 students tested in 2002–03 were first-time test-takers. Consequently, we compared their responses to the student questionnaire items to responses of first-time test-takers in spring 2002. Finally, The number of English learners and special education students in the Class of 2004 tested in 2002–03 was judged too small to justify separate analysis of their questionnaire responses. We chose instead to focus on English learners and special education students in the Class of 2005 and compared their responses to responses for the Class of 2005 as a whole.

We made several decisions in defining the samples reported here. First, many students in the Class of 2004 and a few in the Class of 2005 tested more than once between July 2002 and May 2003. We have counted these students each time they responded so the overall counts are larger than the number of different students tested. Second, some students in the

Class of 2005 appear to have tested early, before March 2003. We counted all students in the Sept. 2002 through May 2003 administrations who were listed as 10<sup>th</sup> graders, as members of the Class of 2005. We counted students in the July 2002 administration who were either 10<sup>th</sup> or 11<sup>th</sup> graders, and students in subsequent administrations who were listed as 11<sup>th</sup> graders, as members of the Class of 2004. A small number of students listed in other grades, including adult education, were excluded from these analyses. Finally, we used preliminary data on the demographics of each student. Final corrections to these demographics, including particularly the student's grade level, would have only a small impact on the overall comparisons.

### **Survey Items**

The student survey contained the same eight questions that have been included in prior surveys:

- Question 1. How did you prepare for this test? (Check all that apply.)
- A. A teacher or counselor told me about the purpose and importance of the test.
  - B. I practiced on a sample of the test.
  - C. A teacher spent time in class getting me ready to take the test.
  - D. I did not do anything to prepare for this test.
- Question 2. How important is this test to you?
- A. Very important
  - B. Somewhat important
  - C. Not important
- Question 3. Do you think you will graduate from high school?
- A. Yes
  - B. No
  - C. Not sure
- Question 4. Will it be harder to graduate if you have to pass a test like this?
- A. Yes, a lot harder
  - B. Somewhat harder
  - C. Not much harder at all
  - D. I really don't know.
- Question 5: What do you think you will do after high school?
- A. I will join the military.
  - B. I will go to community college.
  - C. I will go to a 4-year college or university.
  - D. I will go to vocational/technical/trade school.
  - E. I will work full-time.
  - F. I really don't know what I will do after high school.
- Question 6: How sure are you about what you will do after high school?
- A. Very sure
  - B. Somewhat sure
  - C. Not sure at all
- Question 7: How well did you do on this test?
- A. I did as well as I could.

B. I did not do as well as I could have.

Question 8: The main reasons I did not do as well on this test as I could have are (mark all that apply):

- A. I was too nervous to do as well as I could.
- B. I was not motivated to do well.
- C. I did not have time to do as well as I could.
- D. There are questions on this test that cover topics I was never taught.
- E. There are questions on this test that cover topics I was taught, but I did not remember how to answer them.
- F. There were other reasons why I did not do as well as I could.

## Findings

### Number of Respondents

Table 3.1 indicates the number of respondents in each of the test cohort groups. Classification of a 2002 examinee as “first-time” or “repeater” was based on self-report. Students who did not say whether they took the test in 2001 or who did not answer the questionnaire were excluded from analysis. In particular, this latter constraint resulted in the exclusion of many ELA testees who did not complete the second constructed-response item and never reached the questionnaire. Also, students who claimed to be repeaters but could not be matched in the 2001 database were excluded.

Table 3.1 Number of Respondents by Cohort to the Student Questionnaire at the End of the Tests

Cohort	Test Taken	
	ELA	Math
Class of 2004 Testing in 2002–03	164,758	309,415
Repeat Examinees in 2002	32,633	87,718
First-Time Examinees in 2002	61,005	77,288
Class of 2005—All Students Tested	409,380	425,724
Class of 2005—English Learners	70,074	73,344
Class of 2005—Special Education	34,341	35,958

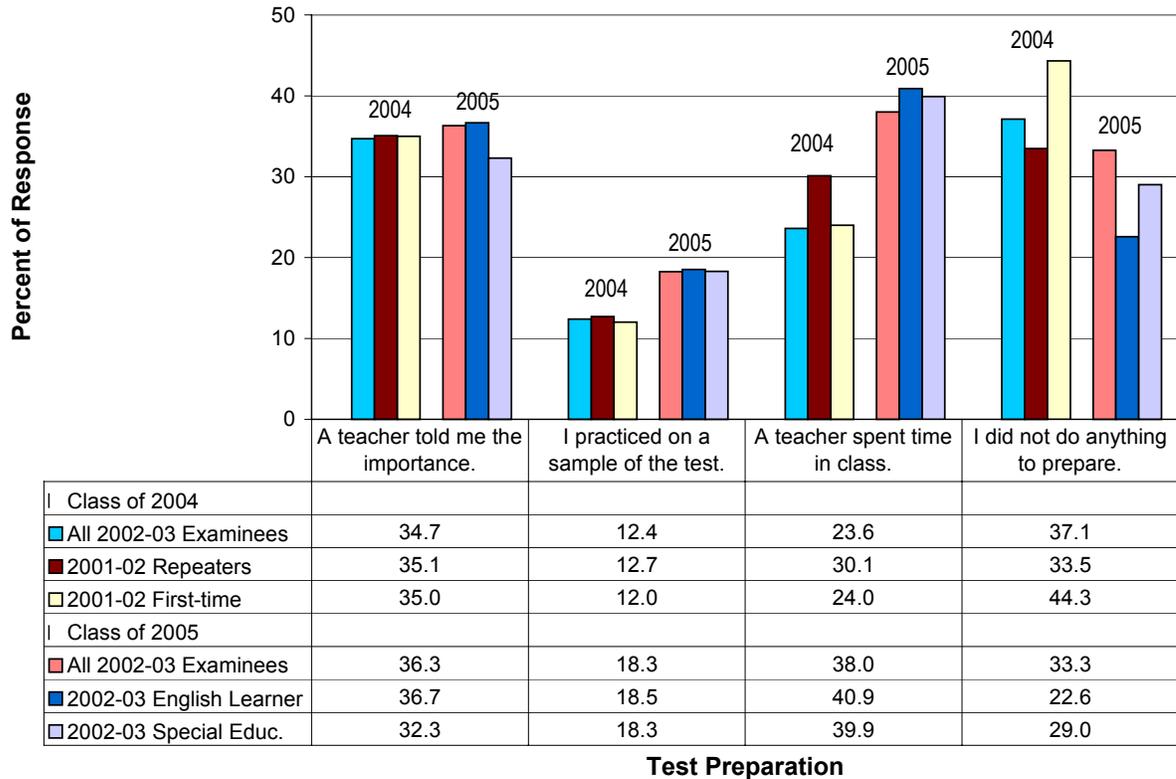
### Test Preparation

The first question on the student survey asked the examinees how they prepared for the exam. Responses after taking the ELA test and the math test are presented in Figure 3.1 and Figure 3.2, respectively. The figures show clear differences in test preparation between the class of 2004 and the class of 2005. The class of 2005 had a larger percentage of students who reported either practicing test samples (18% versus 12%) or spending time with a teacher in class (38% versus 24%) than the class of 2004. At the same time, a slightly smaller percentage of students indicated no preparation activities for the class of 2005 than for the class of 2004 (33% versus 37%).

Among the class of 2004, those who repeated the tests before (including both the all 2002–03 examinees and the 2001–02 repeaters) had a slightly higher percentage of engagement in test preparation activities than those who took the test for first time; consistently, the repeating cohorts (about 35%) were less likely to do nothing to prepare for the test than the first-time cohort (about 45%).

Among all the groups, English learners and special education students indicated they were most likely to engage in test preparation activities and least likely to do nothing for test preparation. Thus lack of preparation effort is not a factor in the lower performance of these students.

The differences described above between the two years’ cohorts can be observed on both the surveys after the ELA and math tests. For the Class of 2005, students reported lower rates of preparation activities for the mathematics test. Over 40 percent reported no preparation activities for the Math test compared to 33 percent for the ELA test.



**Figure 3.1.** Different cohorts’ responses to Question 1 following the ELA test—How did you prepare for this test?

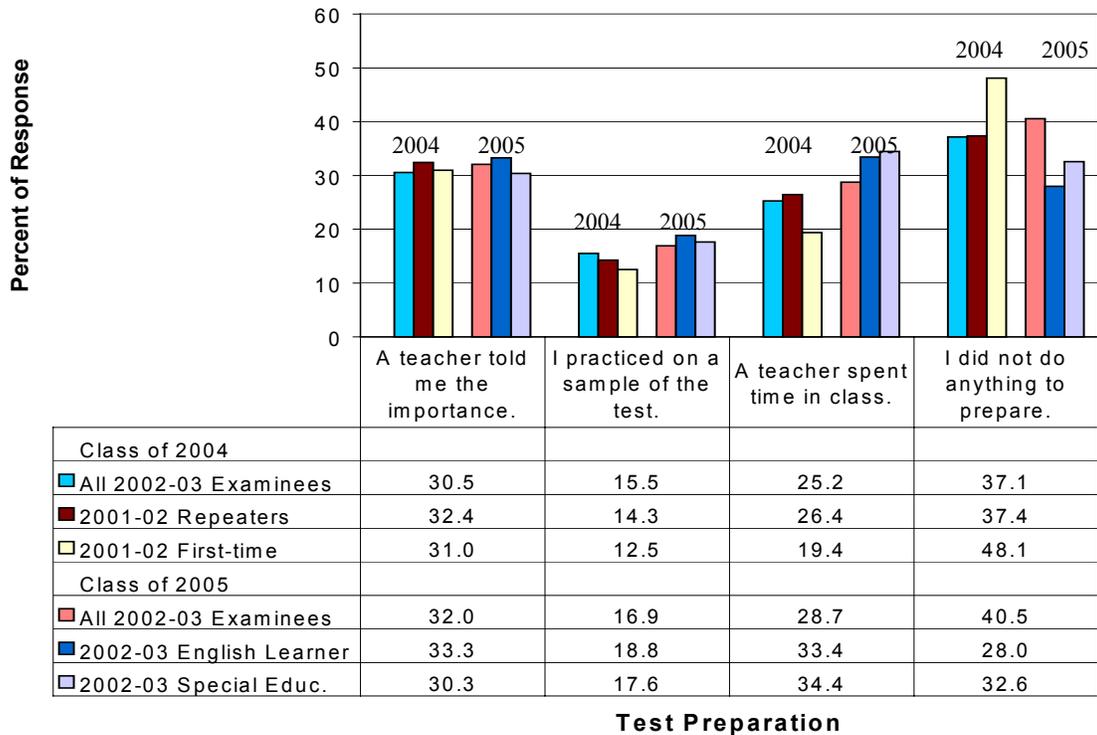


Figure 3.2. Different cohorts’ responses to Question 1 following the math test—How did you prepare for this test?

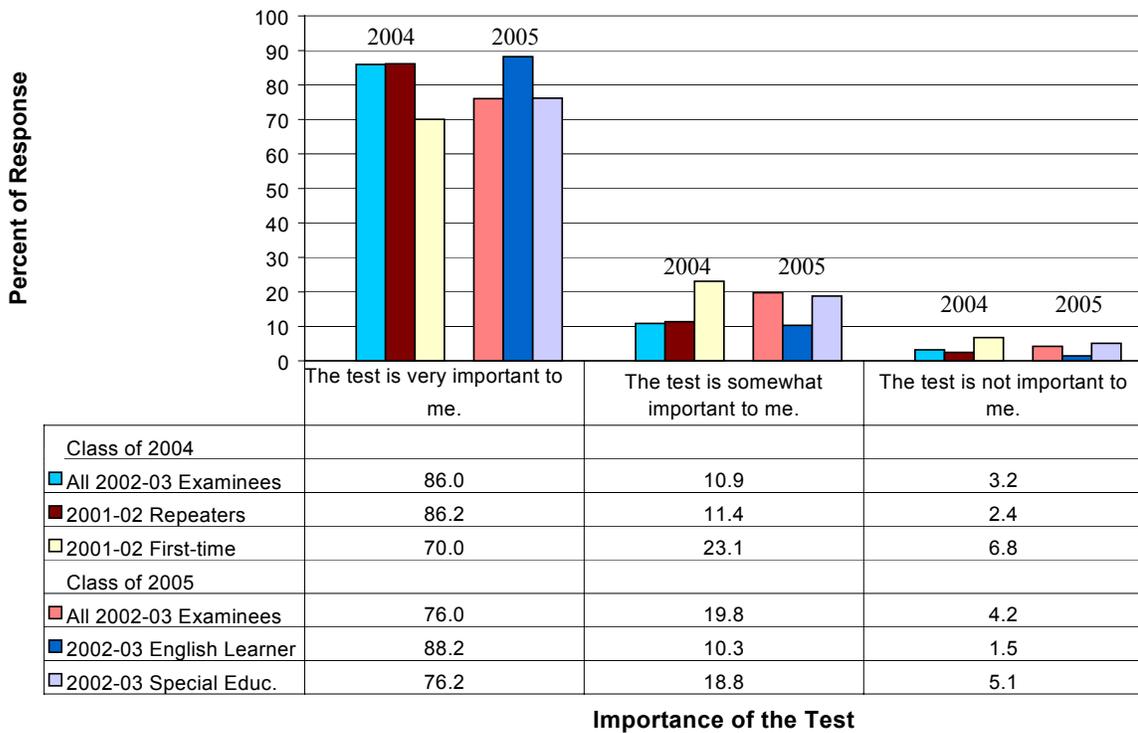
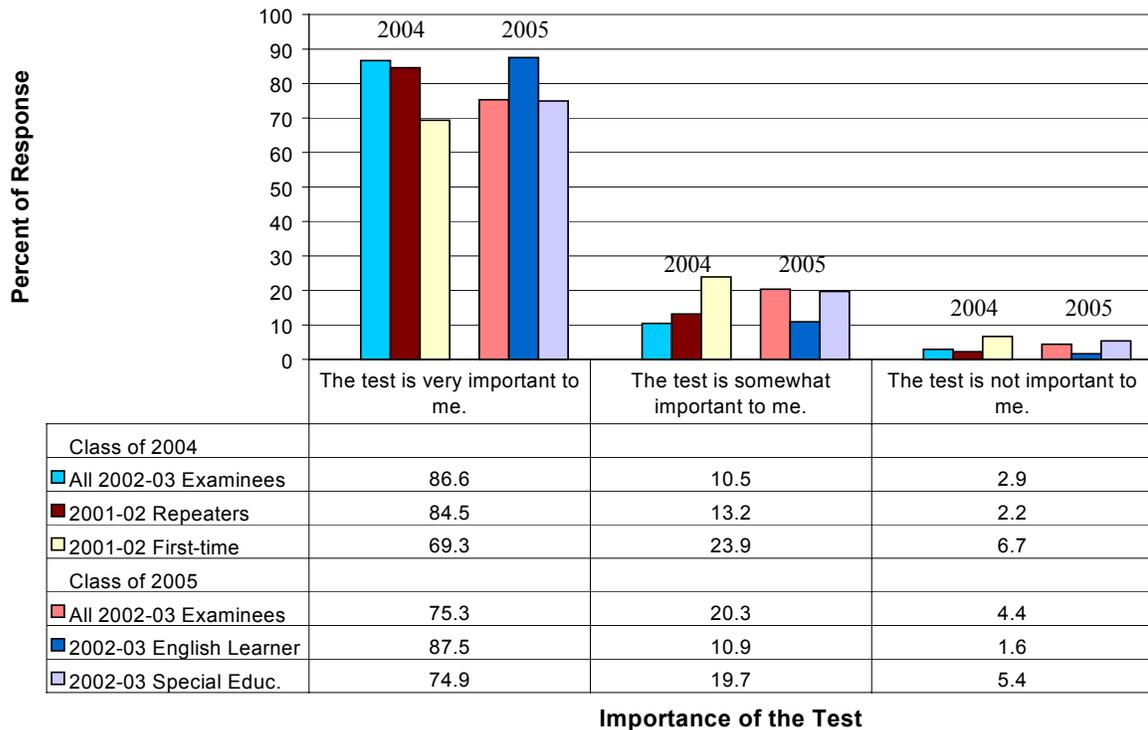


Figure 3.3. Different cohorts’ responses to Question 2 following the ELA test—How important is this test to you?

**Importance of the Test**

The second question of the student survey asked examinees how important the CAHSEE was to them. Responses to the question from different cohorts after the ELA test and after the math test are presented in Figure 3.3 and Figure 3.4, respectively. The two figures show similar response patterns. Generally, an overwhelming majority (70% or above) of all the cohorts viewed the tests as “very important” to them. Only a small proportion of the respondents (below 7%) reported that the tests were “not important” to them. A slightly larger percentage of students who took the tests for the first time in the class of 2005 perceived the tests as “very important” to them than had the first-time test-takers in the class of 2004. Compared to other cohorts, the two repeater cohorts in the class of 2004 and English learner students in the Class of 2005 were more likely to view the tests as “very important” to them and less likely to respond with “somewhat important” or “not important” to them. It is worth noting that, in the class of 2005, students in special education did not show much difference from other students in their perceptions of the importance of the CAHSEE.

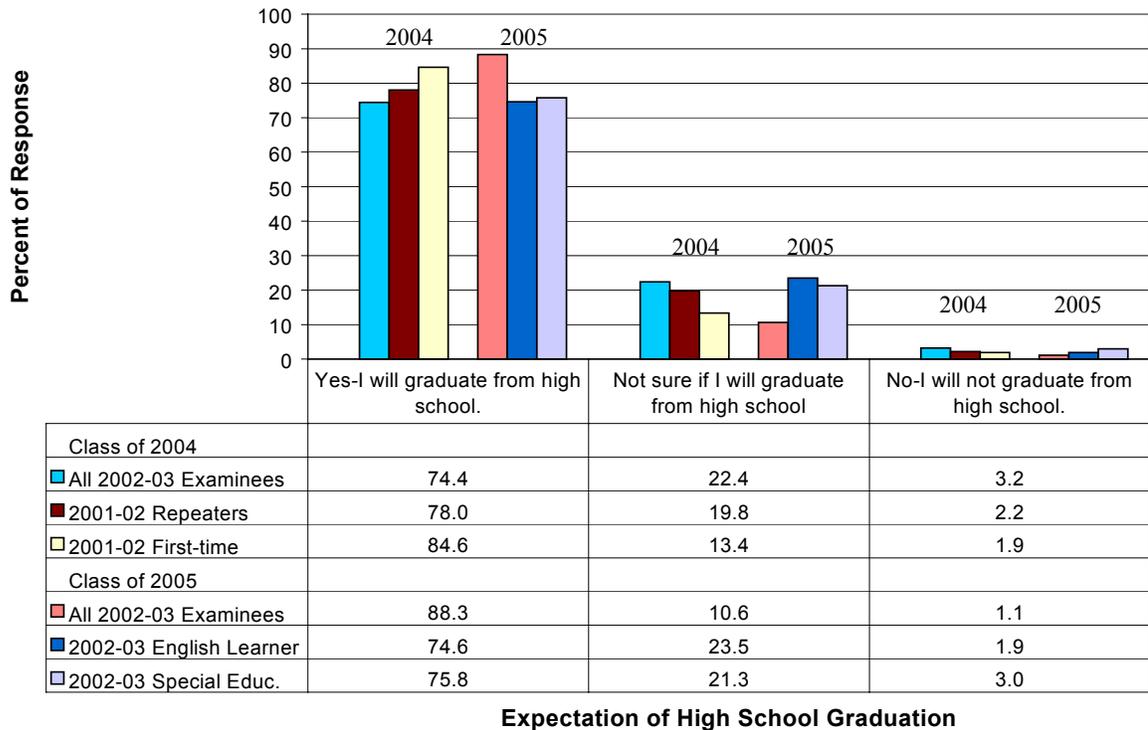


**Figure 3.4.** Different cohorts’ responses to Question 2 following the math test—How important is this test to you?

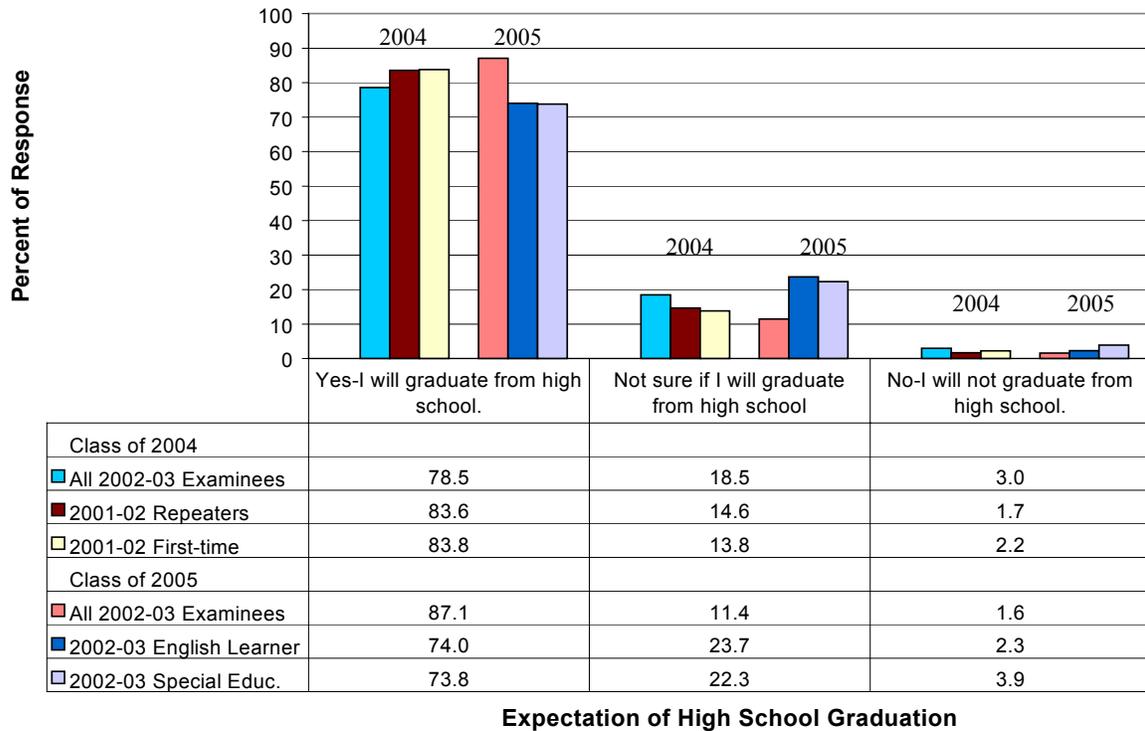
**Plans for High School and Beyond**

Question 3 of the student survey asked examinees how sure they were that they would graduate from high school. Responses to this question from all groups after the ELA test and the math test are presented in Figure 3.5 and Figure 3.6, respectively. Overall, more than 70 percent of all cohorts expected that they would graduate from high school while less than 4 percent thought they would not graduate from high school. Among all the cohorts, the two

groups of first-time test-takers, including the “2001–02 first-time” group in the class of 2004 and the “all 2002–03 examinees” in the class of 2005, were most optimistic about their high school graduation. Students in the Class of 2004 who still had to pass the CAHSEE in the 11<sup>th</sup> grade were less optimistic about their prospects of graduating. The lower expectations of English learners and special education students were also consistent with the significantly lower passing rates for these groups.

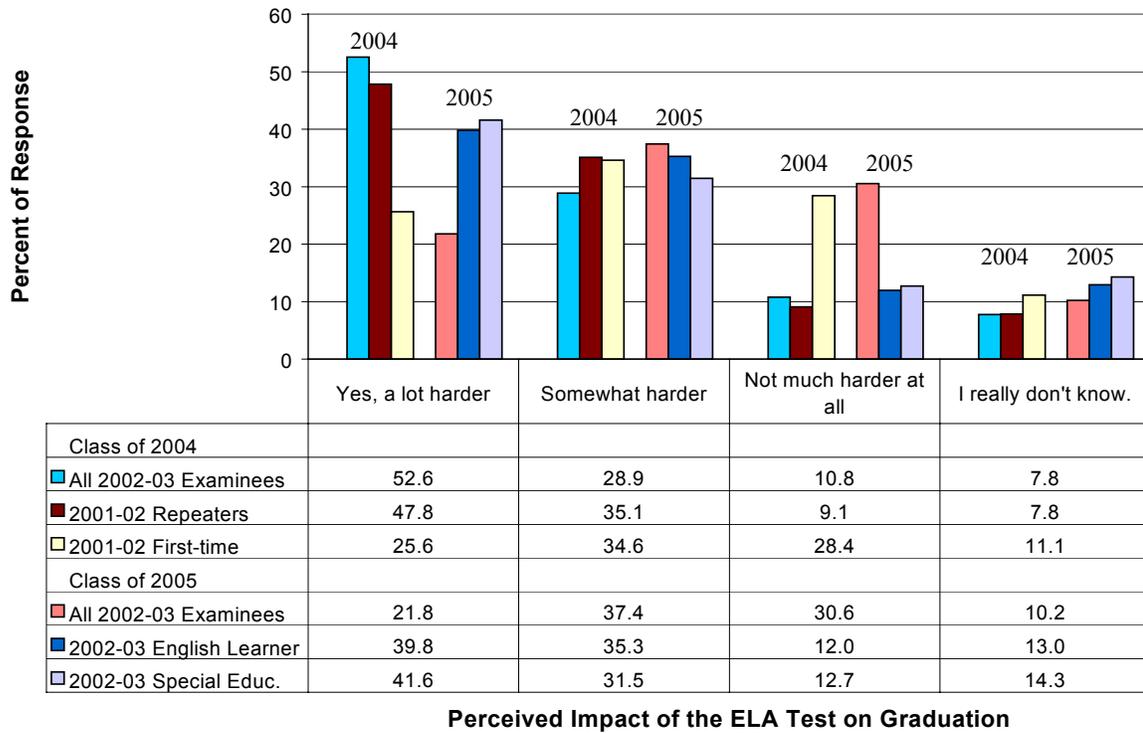


**Figure 3.5.** Different cohorts’ responses to Question 3 following the ELA test—Do you think you will graduate from high school?



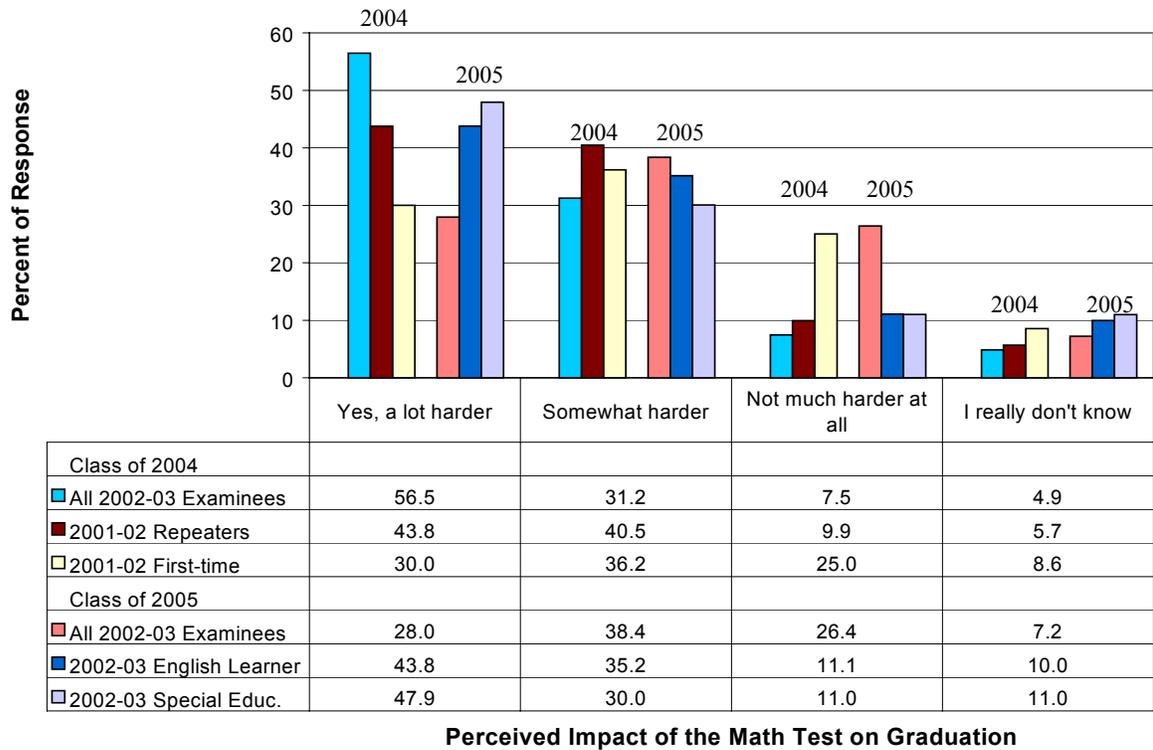
**Figure 3.6.** Different cohorts’ responses to Question 3 following the math test—Do you think you will graduate from high school?

Question 4 of the student survey asked examinees if they believed the requirement to pass a test such as the CAHSEE would make it harder to graduate from high school. Responses from all the cohorts to this question after the ELA test and the math test are presented in Figure 3.7 and Figure 3.8, respectively. The majority of students in the Class of 2004 who had still not passed said that the CAHSEE requirement would make it a lot harder to graduate. Among students in the Class of 2005, English learners and special education students said that the CAHSEE would make graduation difficult at about twice the rate of all students (about 40% compared to 22%). In general, examinees were more likely to indicate “somewhat harder” or “a lot harder” and less likely to report “not much harder at all” to graduate from high school after taking the math test than after the ELA test. This suggests that the math test was more frustrating than the ELA test. This difference is a reflection of the considerably lower passing rates for the math portion of the CAHSEE.



Perceived Impact of the ELA Test on Graduation

Figure 3.7. Different cohorts’ responses to Question 4 following the ELA test—Will it be harder to graduate if you have to pass a test like this?

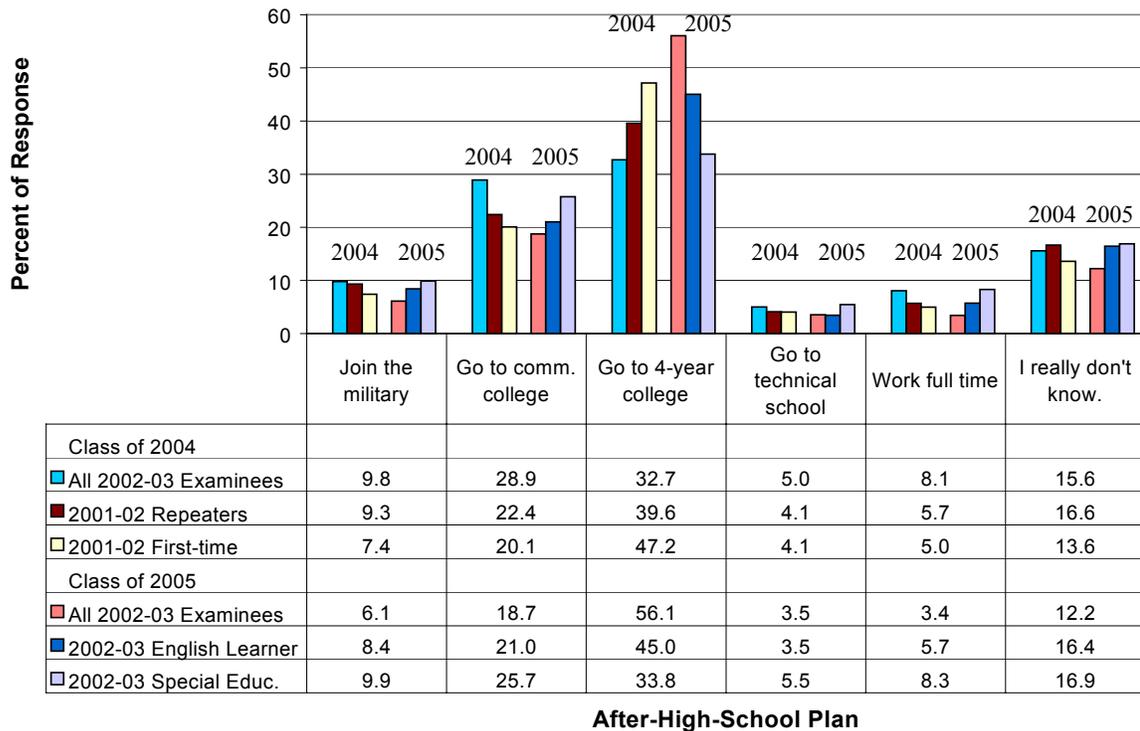


Perceived Impact of the Math Test on Graduation

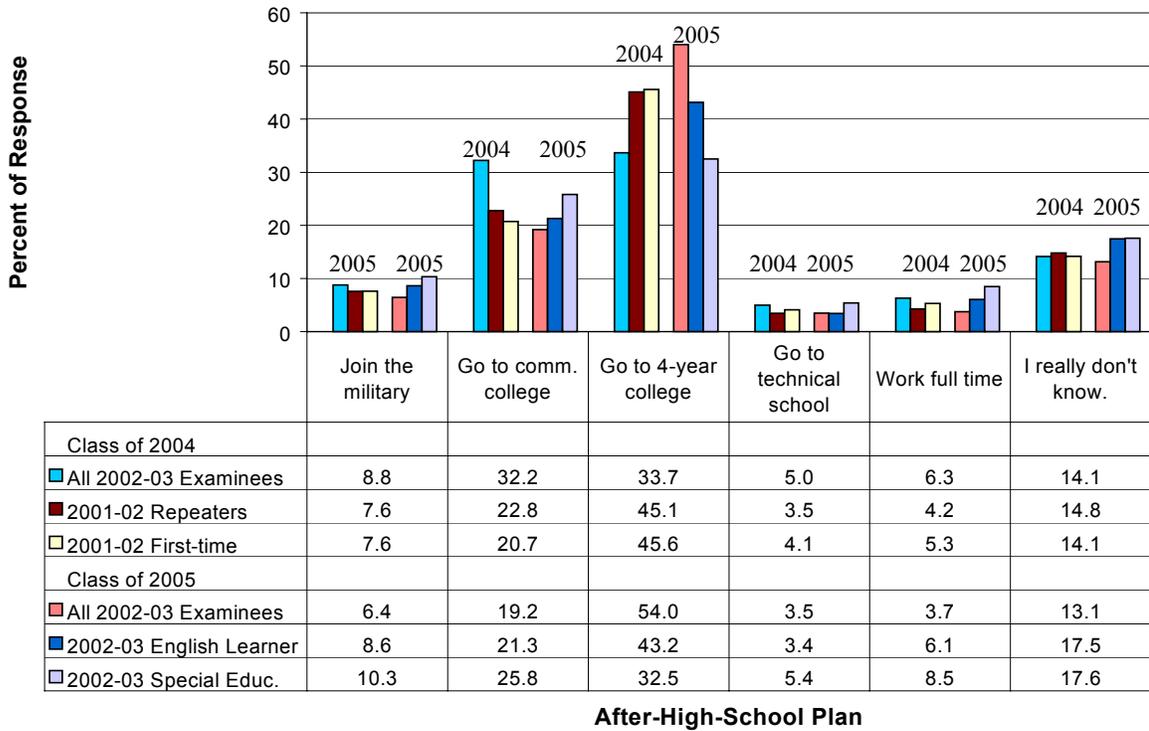
Figure 3.8. Different cohorts’ responses to Question 4 following the math test—Will it be harder to graduate if you have to pass a test like this?

Question 5 of the student survey asked examinees about their plans after high school. The results (see Figure 3.9 and Figure 3.10) showed that, across all the cohorts, “go to 4-year college” was the most popular choice and “go to community college” was the second most popular choice. Those first-time test-takers were more likely to plan to go to 4-year college after high school than other cohorts of respondents. About 55 percent of the category, “all 2002–03 examinees” in the class of 2005 and about 45 percent of the “2001–02 first time” respondents indicated they planned to go to 4-year college. Between the two groups of repeat test-takers in the class of 2004, the “2001–02 repeaters” were more likely to indicate they would plan to go to 4-year college” and less likely to go to community college than the “all 2002–03 examinees.” A comparison of the three groups in the class of 2005 showed that students receiving special education services had the lowest rates of expectation for a “4-year college” life after high school while the rates of English learner students’ expectation for a “4-year college” stood between the “all 2002–03 examinees” and students in special education.

Special education students in the Class of 2005 and students in the Class of 2004 who were still testing as 11<sup>th</sup> graders were more likely to expect to join the military (about 10%), work full time (about 8%) or go to a technical school (about 5%) in comparison to students in the Class of 2005 overall (6, 4, and 3% respectively). The pattern of responses after the mathematics section was very similar to responses given after the ELA section.



**Figure 3.9.** Different cohorts’ responses to Question 5 following the ELA test—What do you think you will do after high school?



**Figure 3.10.** Different cohorts’ responses to Question 5 following the math test—What do you think you will do after high school?

Question 6 of the student survey asked examinees how sure they were about what they would do after high school. Figure 3.11 and Figure 3.12 show that, overall, there was not much difference in responses to this question across cohorts either after the ELA test or the math test. Not surprisingly, a slightly higher percentage of 11<sup>th</sup> grade students felt “very sure” about their life after high school in comparison to the other cohorts (all of whom responded as 10<sup>th</sup> graders).

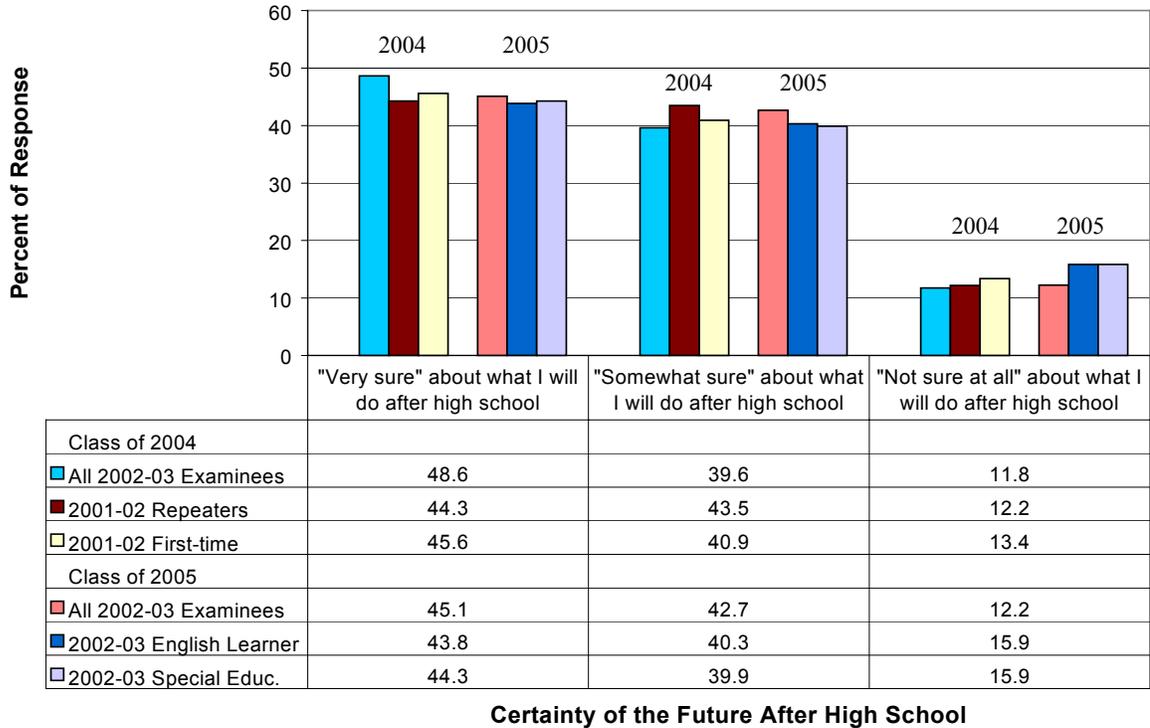


Figure 3.11. Different cohorts’ responses to Question 6 following the ELA test—How sure are you about what you will do after high school?

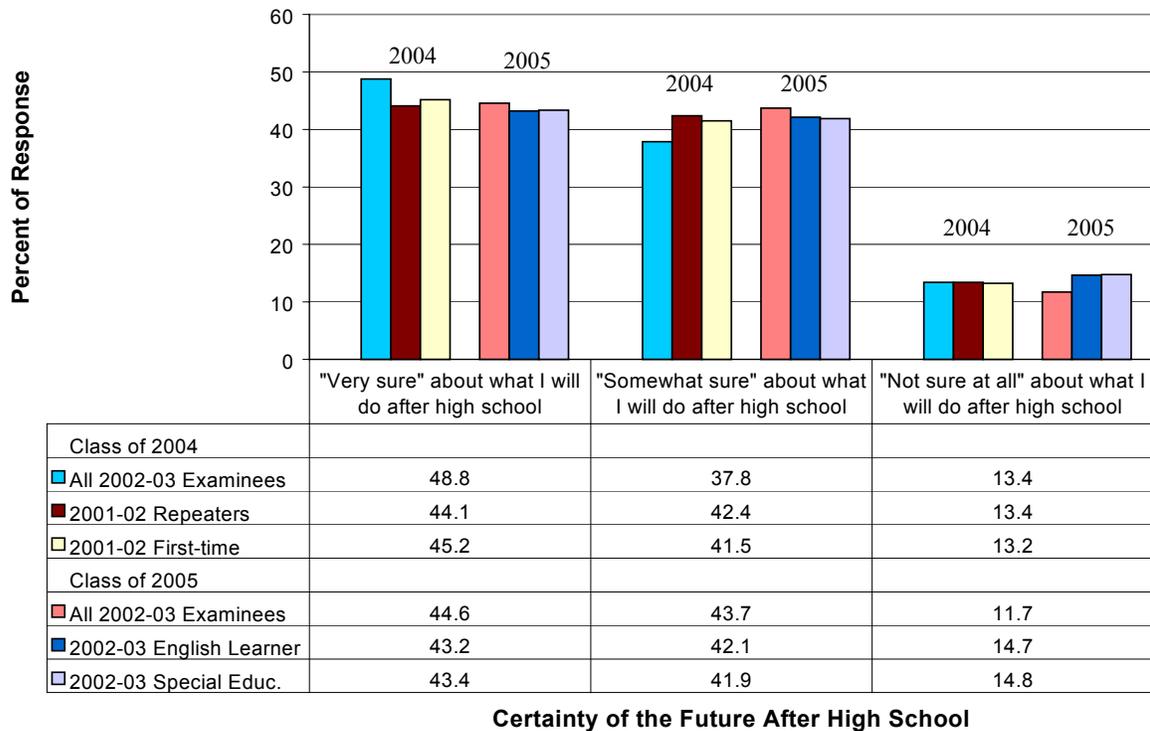
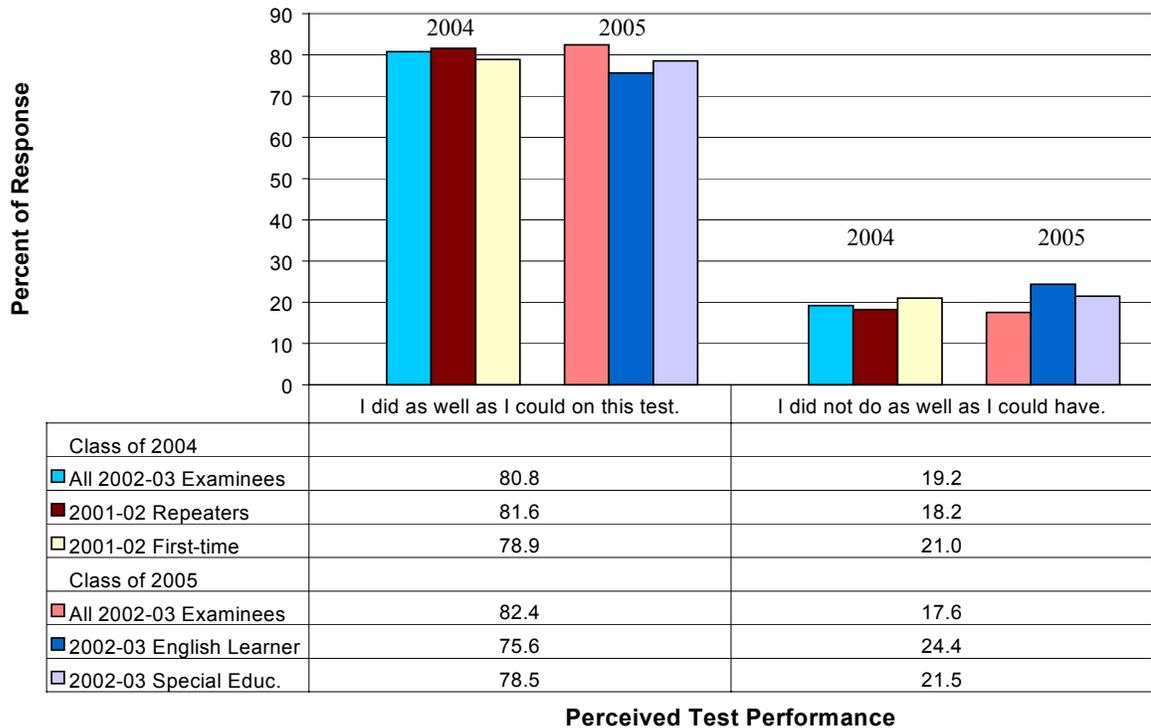


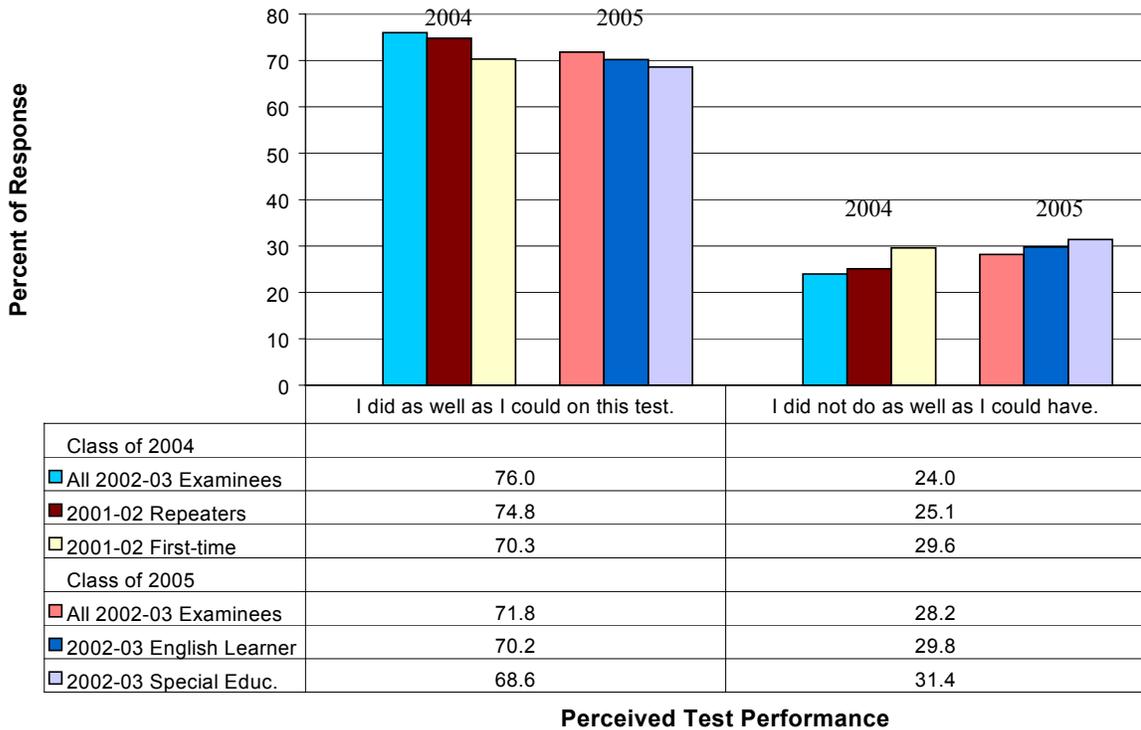
Figure 3.12. Different cohorts’ responses to Question 6 following the math test—How sure are you about what you will do after high school?

**Perceived Test Performance and Influencing Factors**

Question 7 of the student survey asked examinees if they performed as well as they could have on the test. Responses from all the cohorts to this question after the ELA test and the math test are presented in Figure 3.13 and Figure 3.14, respectively. More than three quarters of the respondents from each cohort indicated that “I did as well as I could on this test” after the ELA test. About 70 percent had a similar appraisal of their effort after the math test. Generally speaking, there was not much difference in responses to this question across different cohorts.



**Figure 3.13.** Different cohorts’ responses to Question 7 following the ELA test—How well did you do on this test?



**Figure 3.14.** Different cohorts’ responses to Question 7 following the math test—How well did you do on this test?

Question 8 of the student survey asked examinees what factors affected their test performance. Responses to this question from all the cohorts after the ELA test and the math test are presented in Figure 3.15 and Figure 3.16, respectively. Regardless of the “other reasons” category, the most often indicated factors were “too nervous,” “topics had not been taught,” and “did not remember what was taught.” Among the three options, the “too nervous” option was reported most frequently by the ELA respondents while the “topics had not been taught” option and the “did not remember” option were reported more often by the math respondents. Compared to the two 2001–02 cohorts in the class of 2004, students from the class of 2005 and the “all 2002–03 examinees” cohort in the class of 2004 were more likely to use all the given factors to explain why they did not do as well as they could have on the tests. Compared to the all 2002–03 examinees in the class of 2005, students receiving special education services and English learners showed disadvantages because they felt more nervous and needed more time; and they (especially the respondents also receiving special education services) were also more likely to report that topics which had not been taught were on the test.

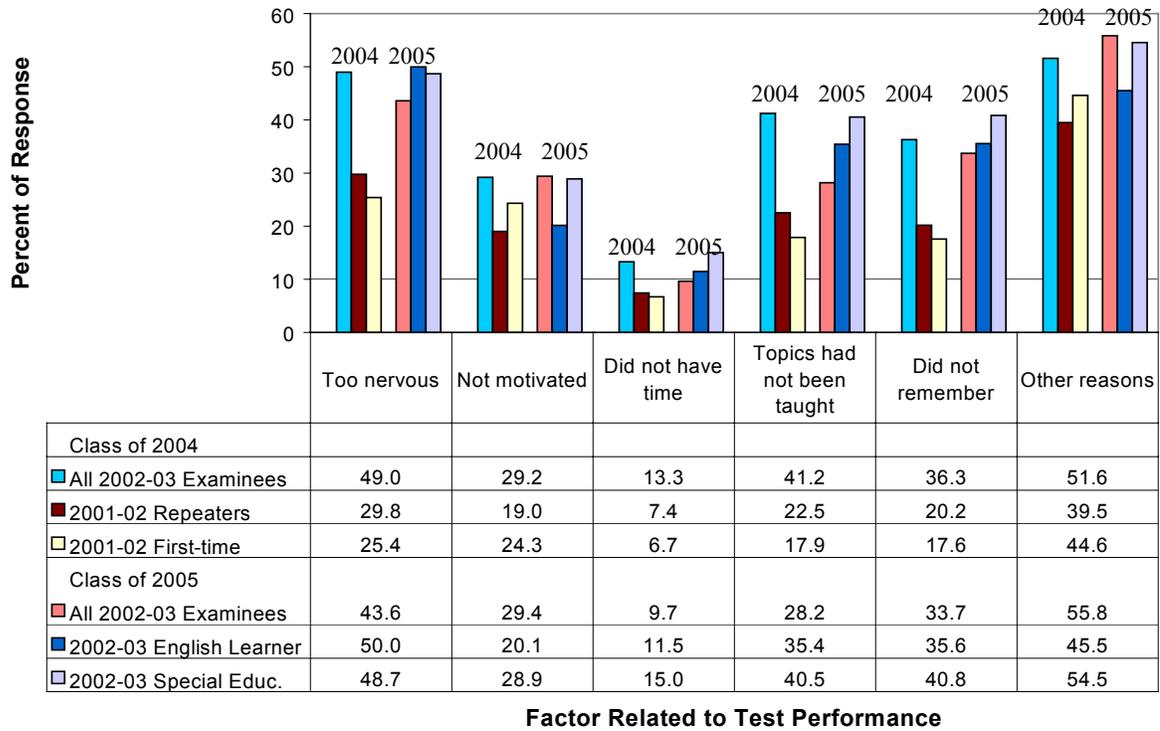


Figure 3.15. Different cohorts’ responses to Question 8 following the ELA test—The main reasons I did not do as well on this test as I could have are...

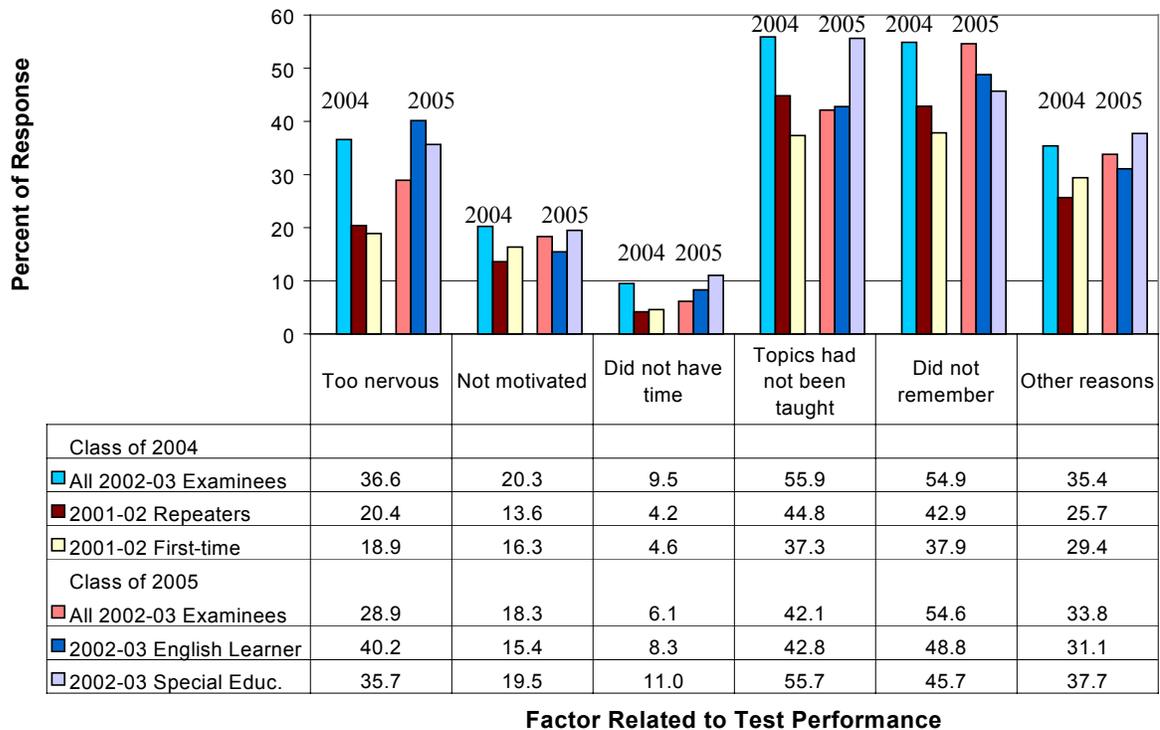


Figure 3.16. Different cohorts’ responses to Question 8 following the math test—The main reasons I did not do as well on this test as I could have are...

## Summary

In general, student responses to questions about preparation and effort for the test and plans for graduation and beyond have been relatively constant.

*For students overall:* More than three-quarters expect to graduate from high school, although up to half of the students most at risk of not passing the CAHSEE believe that graduation will be harder because of the CAHSEE. More than 60 percent of all students expect to go to either a four-year or a community college. About three-quarters of the students thought they did as well as they could have on the test with about 60 percent indicating they took specific steps to prepare for the test. About one-quarter of the students reported not doing as well as they could have on the assessment. Of these, about 40 percent (about 10% overall) felt they had not been taught some of the material on the test. A slightly higher proportion reported having been taught the knowledge and skills assessed by CAHSEE, but having forgotten some of what they were taught.

*For EL students and students with disabilities:* There were a few notable differences for students in the Class of 2004 who were English learners and students with disabilities within the Class of 2005. These students were less sure about graduation and fewer expected to go to college. More of them reported that they were nervous and may not have done as well as they could have on the exam.

## CHAPTER 4: PRINCIPAL, TEACHER, AND SITE TESTING COORDINATOR REACTIONS

### Introduction

As in previous years of the evaluation, principals, teachers, and site testing coordinators within a sample of schools completed surveys to report current experiences, impressions, and expectations regarding the CAHSEE exam. The longitudinal survey was initiated with principals and teachers prior to the first administration of the CAHSEE to gather baseline and planning information. Thus, this was the fourth administration for principals and teachers. The longitudinal survey was initiated with site testing coordinators following the first administration of the CAHSEE, and this was the second administration for them. To the maximum extent possible, survey items were retained intact from previous years to facilitate comparisons over time.

To identify trends over time, we established a longitudinal sampling base. We selected this representative sample of 92 high schools from 27 districts to be surveyed each spring. We collected Year-1 data from this sample in spring 2000, Year-2 data in spring 2001, Year-3 data in spring 2002, and Year-4 data in spring 2003. Three surveys were administered to capture Year-4 data: one for principals, one for teachers in the same schools, and another for CAHSEE school site testing coordinators in the same schools. The survey for principals requested information about issues such as preparation for, planning for, and expected impact of the CAHSEE. The teacher survey emphasized classroom practices as well as issues regarding the preparation and planning for, and the predicted impact of the CAHSEE. The site-coordinator survey asked for feedback on training and guidance, students tested, and the general approach to conducting the examination. All surveys contained several open-ended questions to allow respondents to clarify their responses and to indicate any additional information they felt was worth sharing.

### Survey Development

Following are the main question categories addressed in the surveys:

1. What is the extent and type of current preparation for the CAHSEE?
2. What degree of awareness of the CAHSEE do students and parents currently have?
3. What activities have schools undertaken to prepare students for the first administration of the CAHSEE?
4. How do schools anticipate addressing the issue of students who are unsuccessful on the CAHSEE?
5. What are schools' predictions for first administration pass rates?
6. What are schools' predictions for the impact of the CAHSEE?
7. What are schools' predictions for influence of the CAHSEE on instructional practices?

8. What are schools' estimates of the percentage of students, by various student subgroups, who have had instruction in each of the content standards?

To the extent possible, survey items on the spring 2003 surveys were identical to those on the spring 2000, 2001, and 2002 surveys. This matching served to maximize comparability across years, so trends could be inferred. However, some items were improved in response to earlier feedback. Where questions have been revised substantially, the changes are noted.

### **Sampling and Administration**

The goal for the sampling plan was to select districts for inclusion in the CAHSEE evaluation data collection efforts that would be as representative as possible. A complete description of the sampling procedure is presented in Wise, et al. (June 2000a). In short, a representative sample of 27 districts was selected in spring 2000 for intensive study over the course of the CAHSEE evaluation. Replacements were identified for each district in case the targeted district could not participate. In each original and replacement district, we selected 1–15 high schools, depending on district size, to create a representative sample of 92 schools. Where possible, we identified replacements for each selected school. In small districts containing only one or two high schools, all schools were in the original sample. Sampling ratios were established so that each school would represent approximately the same number of 10<sup>th</sup> grade students. In this way, simple averages across the schools in the sample would provide estimates for all 10<sup>th</sup> grade students in the state.

We surveyed the principals and teachers of these schools in spring 2000; results are reported in Wise et al. (June 2000a). Schools from all but three districts participated at that time. In spring 2001, all of the previously participating districts as well as two of the previously nonparticipating districts indicated a willingness to participate. One nonparticipating district was replaced (Wise et al., June 2001). One district declined to participate in the spring 2002 survey, and we identified and contacted a replacement district. Details of the three participating schools were not confirmed in sufficient time to allow teachers and the principals to complete the surveys. In spring 2003, two districts declined to participate, and a replacement was made for the one that declined early in the process. Six individual schools declined to participate and replacements were made for three.

The respondent sample for the surveys comprised 26 districts. Initial contact was made with a district contact person to inform them that it was time for the longitudinal survey and to ensure that it was acceptable to contact the schools in the sample from that district. Once approval from the district had been verified, we made initial contact with the schools' principals through a faxed or mailed information packet. We offered to provide the surveys in either print or electronic formats, and asked principals to indicate their preference for survey format when they confirmed their schools' participation.

The web-based (Internet) survey was based on the paper version of the survey. We e-mailed instructions, a unique password, and the Web address (i.e., Uniform Resource Locator or URL) of the survey to those respondents who preferred the Internet version. The on-line survey went live on April 21, 2003 and remained on-line until May 28. The paper-based survey packets were shipped in April 2003 to the attention of the principal or designee. The packets included the following:

- Cover letter and instructions to principal
- One principal survey
- Cover letter and instructions to teachers
- Four teacher surveys—two labeled for English-language arts (ELA) and two labeled for mathematics
- One school site testing coordinator survey
- Instructions and packaging for returning evaluation materials

We asked principals to complete their questionnaires or to designate someone to do so. We asked them to identify one or two teachers of Algebra I, or another appropriate mathematics course, and one or two 9<sup>th</sup> or 10<sup>th</sup> grade ELA teachers to complete the teacher surveys (if faculty size was sufficient). We also asked the principals to identify the person in their school responsible for administration of the CAHSEE. Each survey was contained in a sealable envelope to be returned to the principal for return shipment; the sealable envelope was intended to facilitate candid responses. The cover letters to each group encouraged respondents to contact a HumRRO project member if they had questions or concerns. A copy of each survey instrument is included in Appendices A, B, and C.

We requested that evaluation materials be returned to HumRRO by April 24. Schools planning May 2003 administrations were asked to delay completion of the school site testing coordinator survey until testing was complete. In late April we initiated follow-up faxes and telephone calls to schools that had not responded, to encourage completion of their evaluation materials.

### **Principal and Teacher Findings**

Forty-two high school principals, 110 teachers, and 35 test coordinators representing 55 schools across 25 districts completed surveys. Results are reported in the following areas:

- Background
- Awareness
- Preparation
- Use of Results
- Expectations
- Other

We have reported the results in three ways, as summaries of principal, teacher, and test coordinator responses to the spring 2003 survey. In addition, as appropriate, we compared the 2003 responses with comparable questions on the spring 2000, 2001, and 2002 surveys to provide information regarding trends and stability of responses over time. Note that these comparisons are presented at a summary level; that is, changes in responses from individual schools or districts are not presented.

Of the 92 targeted schools that received the spring 2003 principal, teacher, and test coordinator surveys, 55 (60% of the original sample, from across 25 of the 27 districts [92 %]) returned surveys. The remaining schools in the sample were unable to complete the surveys due to heavy staff demands at the end of the school year. One or more teacher surveys were received from 31 schools (34%).

**Background**

Principals indicated that they have held principal or other school-level administration positions for 1–30 years, with a mean of 11 years. They reported 3–32 years of teaching experience, 1–26 years working in their present schools, and 3–38 years of working in public schools.

Teachers were asked to provide demographic information. Table 4.1 shows that most respondents reported education beyond a bachelor’s degree. For primary subject area, 49 percent indicated that the primary subject area they taught was English or language arts and 51 percent specified mathematics as their primary subject area. Ninety-two percent indicated that they are certified in their primary subject area. Both ELA and math teachers reported a mean of 17.7 years of teaching experience.

Table 4.1 Teacher-Reported Percentages of Highest Level of Education

Bachelor’s	Some Graduate	Master’s	Doctorate	Other
12	36	46	3	3

Principals were asked to provide background information on their schools. Table 4.2 indicates that most schools taught grades 9–12. The current number of teachers on staff ranged from 1 to 235, with a mean of 72 (SD=57). Principals reported that the percentage of teachers with advanced degrees ranged from 0 percent to 88 percent (median=45%). Principals also reported that 0–100 percent of their teachers were certified in the subject they are teaching (median=95%).

Table 4.2 Principal-Reported Percentages of Grades Taught at School

Grades 9–12	Grades 10–12	Other Grade Combination	No Response
76	12	10	2

As shown in Table 4.3 the majority of principals reported counselor-student ratios greater than 300:1. Eighty-eight percent of the responding schools currently have a testing coordinator. Principals reported, on average, a graduation rate of 67 percent (SD=31), with rates varying by racial/ethnic group. Mean estimated mobility rate of seniors was 32 percent (SD=36).

Table 4.3 Principal-Reported Percentages of Schools’ Student-Counselor Ratio

Less than				Greater than	
50:1	50–100:1	101–200:1	201–300:1	300:1	No Response
7	2	10	10	60	12

The survey asked principals to indicate whether their schools offered various specialty education programs. The most frequently listed programs were:

- special education programs (94%)
- remedial courses (72%)
- Advanced Placement (70%)

- English learner programs (68%)
- school/community/business partnerships (43%)
- targeted tutoring (32%)
- magnet programs (30%)
- multicultural/diversity-based programs (15%)
- International Baccalaureate (4%)
- other (19%)

Teachers were asked to provide some information about their own classes. Table 4.4 shows their responses regarding the average percentage of students in their classes that speak English fluently. The average ELA class size was 22 students; the average math class had 32 students.

Table 4.4 Teacher-Reported Percentages of Student English Fluency

100% English Fluent	90–99% English Fluent	75–89% English Fluent	50–74% English Fluent	Less Than 50% English Fluent
12	53	20	12	2

Teachers were asked to estimate the level of preparation of their students to pass the CAHSEE. Table 4.5 provides their responses by ELA and mathematics.

Table 4.5 Teachers-Reported Percentages of Student Preparation for Proficiency on the CAHSEE

Subject	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor
ELA	21	26	27	21
Math	32	27	28	35

Note: Since these mean percentages were based on each teacher’s estimate, they will not add up to 100 percent.

The survey asked teachers to estimate the amount of time, on average, they believed students spend working on assignments in the subject they teach (as opposed to total homework time) outside the classroom each week. The results are shown in Table 4.6.

Table 4.6 Teacher-Reported Percentages of Student Time Spent on ELA or Mathematics Assignments

More Than 3 Hours	1–3 Hours	Less Than 1 Hour	None
11	53	27	9

Teachers were asked to estimate how often they plan for students to participate in specific types of activities. The activities rated most frequently as being done once or twice a week or almost every day were:

- do work from textbooks (91%)
- do work from supplemental materials (81%)
- apply subject area knowledge to real-world situations (76%)
- work in pairs or small groups (70%)
- take quizzes or tests (69%)

- write a few sentences (66%)
- do work on the computer [new question on the 2003 survey] (23%)

Most of these estimates are highly consistent with estimates provided a year earlier. The largest difference was an 8 percent increase for the “take quizzes or tests” response.

### **Awareness**

Principals were asked to estimate how aware their students and parents were of the CAHSEE. Ten percent estimated that their students knew nothing about the exam, one-third estimated that their students had at least general information, and a substantial proportion of respondents estimated their students had specific knowledge of the exam (e.g., 79% reported the students knew what knowledge and skills are covered; 71% indicated they knew the time of year when the exam is given; 81% of students knew which students have the opportunity to take the exam). Twelve percent of principals estimated that their students’ parents knew nothing about the exam, 62 percent estimated their students’ parents had at least general information, and an additional 26–60 percent estimated that their students’ parents had advanced knowledge of the exam (e.g., 26% reported that parents knew what knowledge and skills are covered, 57% indicated they knew the time of year when the exam is given, and 60% believe parents know which students have the opportunity to take the exam). In general, principals’ ratings of student and parent familiarity with CAHSEE have improved over prior years. See Table 4.7 for comparison of the 2002 and 2003 data on this question. Principals were asked to estimate the percentage of students and parents in their school who know what knowledge and skills are covered by the exam. The 2003 mean estimate of student familiarity was 63 percent (SD=25.67) compared to the 2002 estimate of 41 percent (SD=24.25); the 2003 mean estimate of parent familiarity was 43 percent (SD=29.94) compared to the 2002 estimate of 29 percent (SD=26.37).

Table 4.7 Principal-Estimated Percentage of Students and Parents Familiar with CAHSEE

Familiarity	2001		2002		2003	
	Students N=45	Parents N=45	Students N=45	Parents N=46	Students N=42	Parents N=42
They know which students have the opportunity to take the exam.	49	18	67	54	81	60
They know the time of year when the exam is given.	38	38	67	63	71	57
They know what knowledge and skills are covered by the exam.	33	18	51	17	79	26
Have general information only	67	78	60	89	33	62
No familiarity	2	7	4	4	10	12

Note: Respondents could select multiple responses, thus the columns total more than 100 percent.

***Preparation Thus Far***

The spring 2001 survey asked about preparation that has already been initiated. One precursor to a successful program is to align school curricula with the state content standards to ensure that students are being taught what will be tested. Thus respondents were queried about alignment with state content standards. Table 4.8 presents comparison data of responses given in 2000, 2001, 2002, and 2003 regarding preparations made to align curricula with the California Academic Content Standards. The 2003 percentage of principals that reported efforts to align with state content standards is slightly lower than the 2002 percentage.

Principals were asked to compare their district standards with the state content standards. Table 4.9 presents comparison data on the similarity between district and state standards across the four survey years. Responses were largely consistent between 2001 and 2002, with more than two thirds of respondents indicating their districts had adopted the California Academic Content Standards. In 2003, there was a slight increase in the number of principals reporting that their district had adopted state content standards. There were no reports that principals’ districts do not have an official set of standards, although 3 percent of principals indicated they could not judge the status of mathematics standards.

Table 4.8 Principal-Reported Percentages of Preparations for Alignment with California Academic Content Standards

Preparation	2000 N=33	2001 N=45	2002 N=47	2003 N=42
Districts/schools encourage the use of content standards	100	91	96	93
Textbooks align well with content standards	74	56	81	74
In process of aligning curriculum with standards	81	56	74	38
Adopted Algebra as a graduation requirement	N/A	N/A	74	81
In process of aligning curriculum across grade levels	N/A	N/A	72	38
Assigning teachers only in their certified field	N/A	N/A	49	60
Cover all content standards with a mix of textbooks and supplemental materials	38	44	47	50
Have plans to ensure all high school students receive instruction in each of the content standards	52	40	45	57
Hiring only teachers certified in their field	N/A	N/A	43	60
Have plans to ensure that all pre-high school students are prepared to receive instruction in each of the content standards	N/A	N/A	30	36

Table 4.9 Percentage of Principals Reporting Similarity between District and State Standards

Similarity between standards	2000		2001		2002		2003	
	*	ELA N=45	Math N=45	ELA N=46	Math N=46	ELA N=39	Math N=39	
District adopted state standards	69	67	71	72	74	79	79	
District standards include more than state standards	19	29	22	17	15	21	18	
State standards include more than district standards	7	2	5	2	2	0	0	
Two sets of standards are different	N/A	N/A	N/A	2	4	0	0	
District has no official set of standards	0	2	2	2	2	0	0	
I cannot judge	N/A	N/A	N/A	4	2	0	3	

\* Subjects were not separated for this year.

Along similar lines, teachers were asked at what level their schools' current curriculum covers the standards tested by the CAHSEE. Tables 4.10a and 4.10b provide further information on this item for ELA and mathematics, respectively. The majority of the teachers indicated that almost all of the standards are covered by their school's curriculum. The responses indicated that ELA coverage was more complete than that of mathematics. None of

the ELA teachers reported that their school’s curriculum covered less than one quarter of the content standards whereas four percent of math teachers estimated that their school’s curriculum covered less than a quarter of the content standards. Another four percent of math teachers indicated that they had no knowledge of the content standards.

Table 4.10a Percentage of Teachers Indicating Coverage of ELA Standards by Curriculum

Coverage of Standards	2001 N=35	2002 N=76	2003 N=54
Almost all	60	54	57
About $\frac{3}{4}$	20	28	28
About $\frac{1}{4}$ – $\frac{1}{2}$	11	13	15
Less than $\frac{1}{4}$	6	4	0
No knowledge of standards	3	1	0

Table 4.10b Percentage of Teachers Indicating Coverage of Mathematics Standards by Curriculum

Coverage of Standards	2001 N=37	2002 N=78	2003 N=56
Almost all	57	72	64
About $\frac{3}{4}$	14	17	13
About $\frac{1}{4}$ – $\frac{1}{2}$	16	9	16
Less than $\frac{1}{4}$	5	3	4
No knowledge of standards	8	0	4

In the open-ended remarks about specific changes made to instructional practices, the most common responses were “standards-based curriculum” and “test taking strategies” (ELA= 55%; math=48%). Twenty-eight percent of ELA teachers and 20 percent of math teachers indicated that increased writing and math practice across subjects and teacher collaboration improved instruction. Ten percent of ELA teachers and 24 percent of math teachers identified referral to remedial classes and interventions as having improved instruction.

Respondents were asked how much time they personally spent during the 2002–2003 school year in activities related to the CAHSEE (e.g., meetings, discussions, curriculum review, professional development). Just over one fifth of principals reported spending more than 35 hours (21%). Just over a quarter reported spending between 16 and 35 hours (26%) and just over another quarter reported spending between 6 and 15 hours (26%) Twenty-eight percent reported spending fewer than 6 hours. No principals reported spending none of their time in CAHSEE related activities. Table 4.11 indicates teachers’ estimates of the number of hours spent on classroom instruction and the number of hours spent on other activities related to the CAHSEE.

Table 4.11 Percentage of Teachers Estimating Various Amounts of Time on CAHSEE Activities

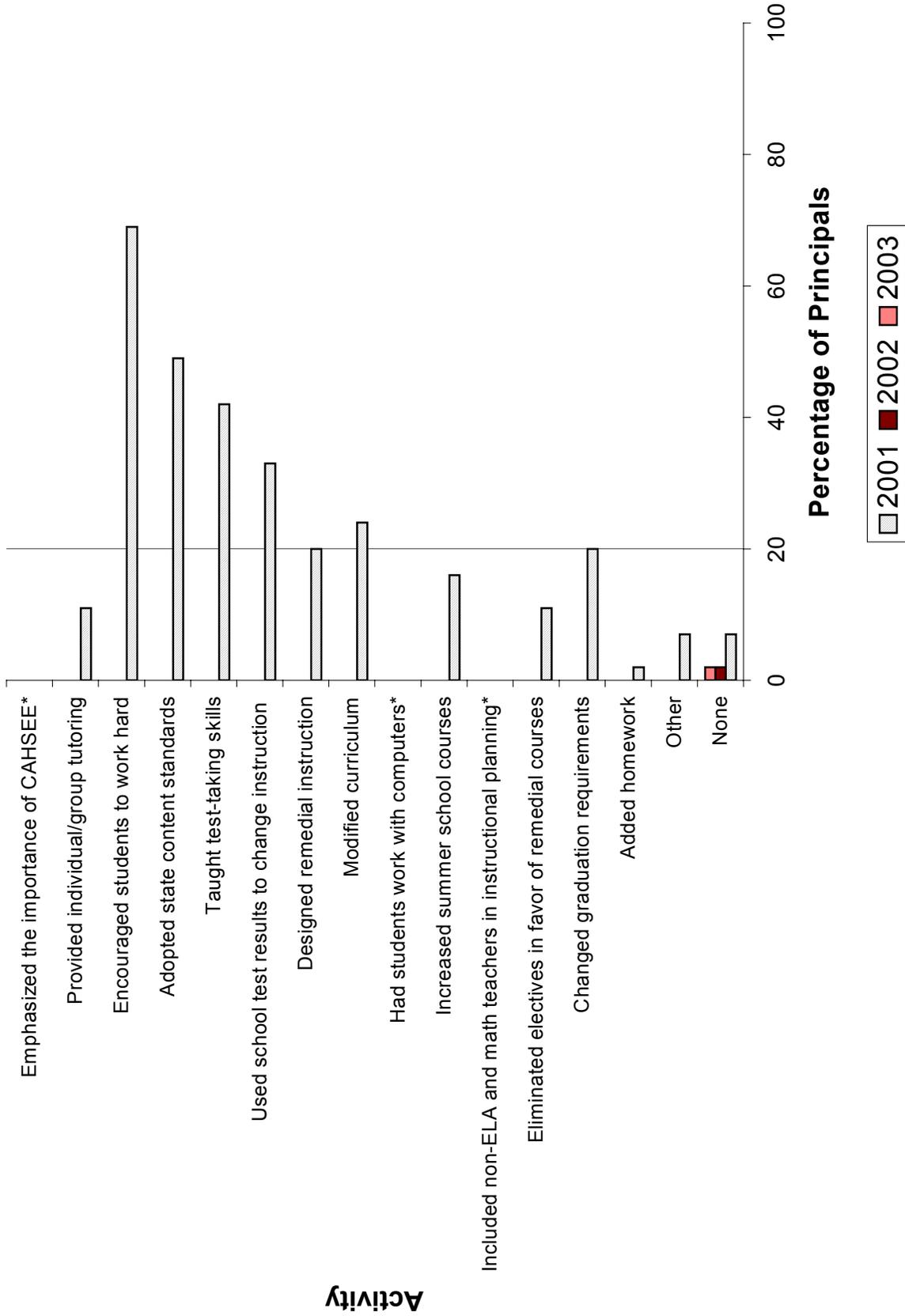
Activity	Academic Year	None	Fewer than 6 Hours	6–15 Hours	16–35 Hours	More than 35 Hours
Total classroom instruction time spent on activities you would not have engaged in if it weren't for the CAHSEE (e.g., unit or course review)	2001–2002 N=159	28	35	25	6	2
	2002–2003 N=105	24	41	14	14	7
Time spent on activities related to the CAHSEE (e.g., faculty and department meetings, discussions, staff development)	2001–2002 N=159	2	40	31	13	8
	2002–2003 N=108	3	34	30	19	14

Teachers were asked to rate the quality of CAHSEE-related professional development they have received this year from local and state sources. Table 4.12 indicates that local professional development activities were more highly rated than those provided by the state. The 2001-2002 survey did not have “None” as a response option. In 2003, over one quarter of teachers indicated that they did not receive professional development from local sources and over 40 percent indicated that they did not receive professional development from state sources.

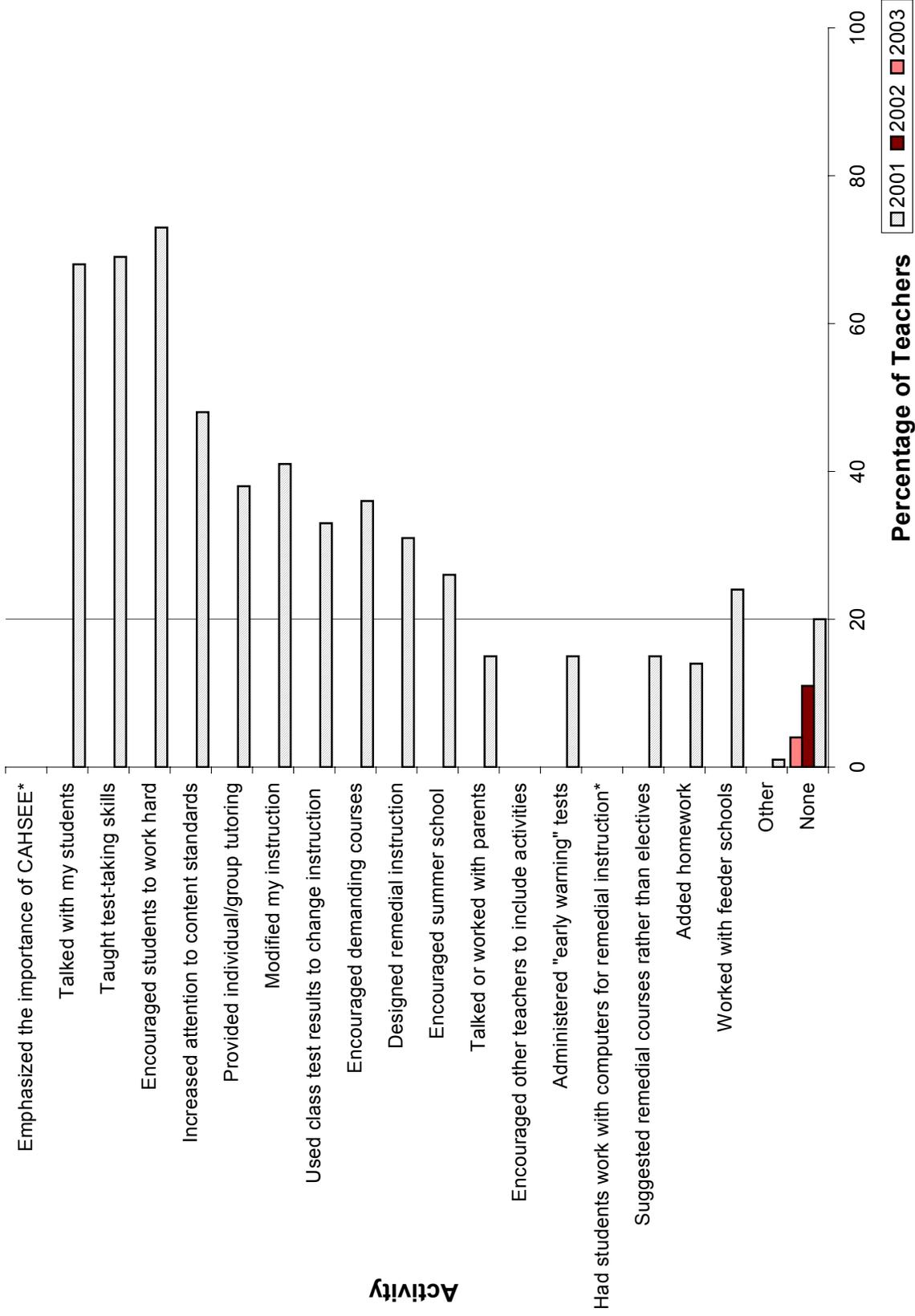
Table 4.12 Percentage of Teachers Rating Quality of Professional Development Experiences

Quality of Professional Development You Have Received	From Local Sources		From State Sources	
	2001-2002	2002-2003	2001-2002	2002-2003
	N=159	N=110	N=159	N=110
Excellent	6	14	2	2
Good	35	26	15	26
Fair	35	20	36	12
Poor	16	12	38	16
None	N/A	26	N/A	44
No response	9	2	9	4

Respondents were asked to identify the specific activities they had undertaken to prepare students for the Spring 2003 administration of the CAHSEE. Most principals reported initiating some activities; only 2 percent of principals indicated that they did not implement any activities to prepare students for the Spring 2003 CAHSEE. Figure 4.1a presents the percentage of principals who reported implementing each activity, in descending order of endorsement; Figure 4.1b presents teachers' responses.



**Figure 4.1a.** Percentage of principals reporting activities undertaken in preparation for the Spring 2001, 2002, and 2003 administrations of the CAHSEE.  
 \*Note: Question not asked in all years.



\*Note: Question not asked in all years.

**Figure 4.1b.** Percentage of teachers reporting activities undertaken in preparation for the Spring 2001, 2002, and 2003 administrations of the CAHSEE.

Principals also identified the three activities they consider the most important in CAHSEE preparation. One hundred percent indicated that *added homework* was among the top three; 45 percent identified *individual/group tutoring*, and 41 percent selected *emphasizing the importance of CAHSEE*. Teachers also were asked to indicate the three most important activities. According to their ratings, these activities were *emphasizing the importance of CAHSEE* (43%), *teaching test-taking skills* (38%), and *increased classroom attention to content standards covered by the CAHSEE in the weeks preceding the CAHSEE* (28%).

Principals were also asked to indicate the types of activities their school undertook to prepare faculty/staff for the Spring 2003 administration of the CAHSEE. Table 4.13 indicates that 2003 responses were largely consistent with 2002 responses. However, more principals indicated that they were employing local workshops on CAHSEE content. More principals also indicated that some other special preparation was being implemented.

Table 4.13 Percentage of Principals Undertaking Activities to Prepare Faculty/Staff for CAHSEE Administration

Activities	Spring 2001 Administration N=45	Spring 2002 Administration N=46	Spring 2003 Administration N=42
Administrators participated in test administration workshops	71	70	67
Provided test taking strategies	42	61	67
Delivered local workshops on test administration	58	48	43
Delivered local workshops on CAHSEE content (e.g., used Teacher Guides as a focal point for discussion)	36	41	62
Other	7	8	12
No special preparation	9	4	5

### Use of Results

In addition to any preparatory steps taken thus far, the surveys inquired about future plans to deal with this new requirement. In particular, the survey queried principals on efforts to prepare teachers and others for the exam and about remediation plans subsequent to the first exam administration.

The survey provided principals with a list of possible remedial practices for students who do not pass the CAHSEE and asked which they planned to use. Of the 42 principals who responded, 9 (21%) did not respond to this series of survey items. None of the principals indicated that they had no special plans to remediate students who do not pass the exam; in 2001 7 percent had no plans; in 2002, the number had dropped to 1 percent. Table 4.14 lists the percentage of principals who indicated plans to implement each activity in 2001, 2002, and 2003. Figure 4.2 presents the same information for 2003 only, as a percentage of those responding. Activities are listed in descending order of endorsement; thus, those activities that all responding principals indicated plans to implement are listed first. (We use percentages to report results—with 100% referring to all of the 42 respondents.)

Table 4.14 Percentage of Principals Indicating Plans for Activities to Assist High School Students Who Do Not Pass the Exit Exam Or Who Do Not Seem Prepared to Take It

Activities	2001 N=45 Planned	2002 <sup>1</sup> (21)			2003 <sup>2</sup> (31)				
		No Plan to Implement	Plan to Implement	Partially Implemented	Fully Implemented	No Plan to Implement	Plan to Implement	Partially Implemented	Fully Implemented
Increased high school remedial courses	1	33	24	33	10	20	10	37	33
Reduced high school electives in favor of remedial classes	16	74	16	5	5	27	27	33	13
Increased high school summer offerings	40	30	10	15	45	25	32	0	43
Provided individual/group tutoring	47	10	24	38	29	6	32	16	45
Had students work with computers	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	10	17	50	23
Added homework	4	58	21	10	10	88	12	0	0
Adopted California Academic Content Standards	42	0	0	55	45	0	0	18	82
Altered high school curriculum	31	5	29	62	5	14	14	38	34
Included teachers other than ELA and math in instructional planning for the CAHSEE	N/A	0	42	42	16	13	29	32	26
Worked with feeder middle schools	40	30	10	55	5	32	21	29	18

<sup>1</sup> Percentages of 2002 respondents are based on the 21/47 respondents who answered this series of questions.

<sup>2</sup> Percentages of 2003 respondents are based on the 33/42 respondents who answered this series of questions.

Table 4.14 (continued) Percentage of Principals Indicating Plans for Activities to Assist High School Students Who Do Not Pass the Exit Exam or Who Do Not Seem Prepared to Take It

Activities	2001 N=45 Planned	2002 <sup>1</sup> (21)			2003 <sup>2</sup> (32)				
		No Plan to Implement	Plan to Implement	Partially Implemented	Fully Implemented	No Plan to Implement	Plan to Implement	Partially Implemented	Fully Implemented
Developed parent support program	22	25	50	25	0	50	25	25	0
Used school test results to change high school instruction	51	0	30	65	5	6	19	50	25
Evaluated high school students' abilities and placed them in courses/programs accordingly	44	14	19	43	23	3	13	27	57
Ensured that students are taking demanding courses from the beginning	36	10	20	50	20	7	13	27	33
Ensured we are offering demanding courses from the beginning	33	0	20	55	25	7	10	40	43
Other (1 principal: After school classes and workshops)	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	100

<sup>1</sup> Percentages of 2002 respondents are based on the 21/47 respondents who answered this series of questions.

<sup>2</sup> Percentages of 2003 respondents are based on the 33/42 respondents who answered this series of questions.

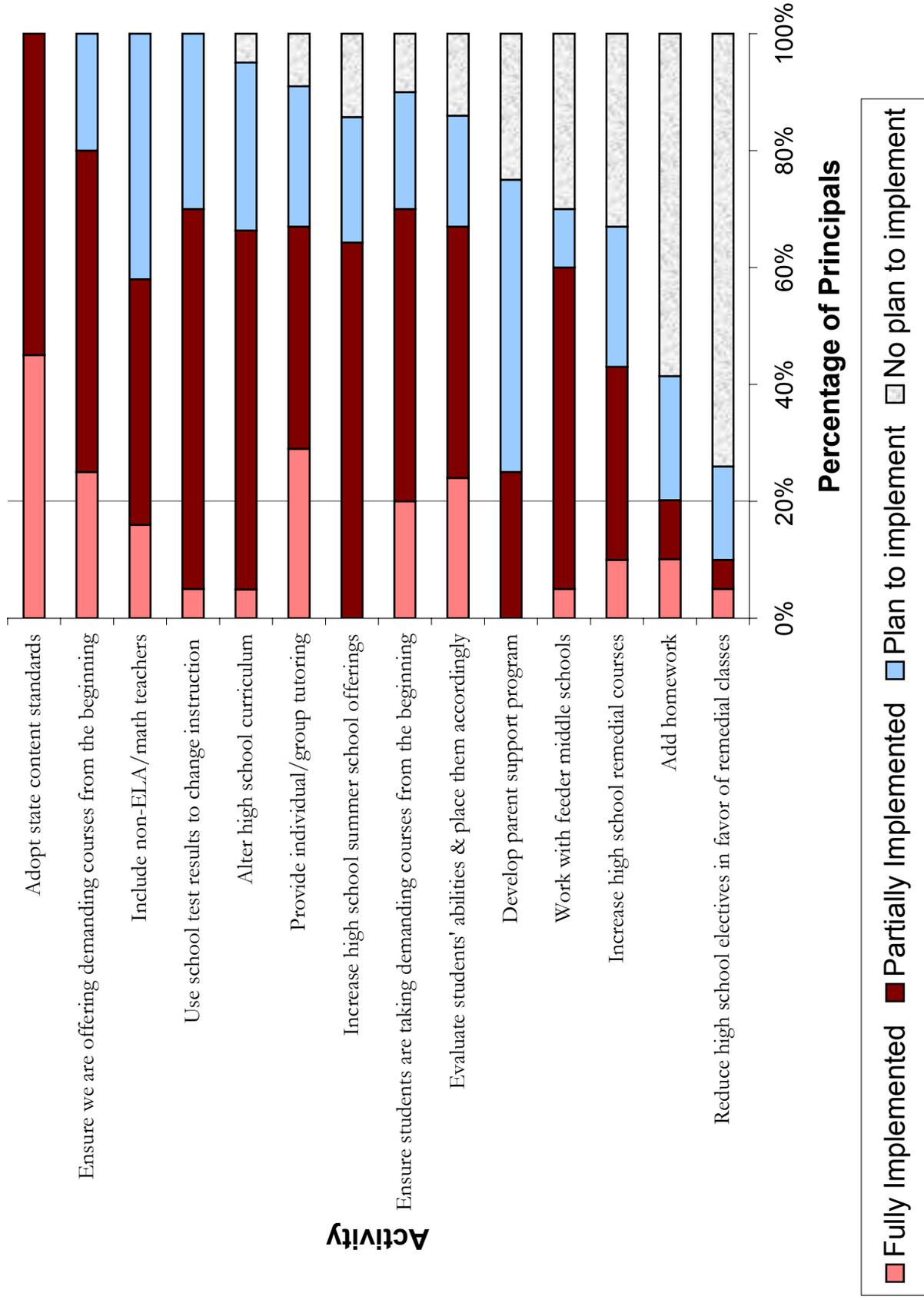


Figure 4.2. Percentage of principals in 2003 reporting plans for remediation of students who do not pass the CAHSEE.

Thirty-six principals (86%) responded to a question about plans or strategies for Individual Education Program (IEP) or 504 Plan changes that will address the CAHSEE participation of students with disabilities. Of these respondents, 25 percent stated that they had a strong process for building accommodations into the IEP/504 or that plans had been fully implemented. Another 25 percent stated that they are in the beginning stages or are following recommendations from special education staff. Nineteen percent stated there is no plan or that accommodations are not addressed. Seventeen percent of comments indicated that more students are being mainstreamed. Eight percent of comments indicated that schools are following state guidelines or district policies. Three percent of comments stated that math labs and summer classes were being offered and another three percent said that program development was ongoing.

A similar question asked principals about plans or strategies to help English learners overcome language barriers in order to succeed in meeting the requirements of the CAHSEE. Forty-two percent of principals' comments stated that there are special academic work programs (e.g., tutoring or summer school). Thirteen percent stated that they have a plan or are starting to implement a plan. Eleven percent indicated that they have teachers of English as a Second Language handle or work closely with faculty who are trained in Cross-Cultural Language in Academic Development (CLAD). Another 11 percent stated that there were few or no EL students; 8 percent said that they have staff development or are working with language specialists; 5 percent indicated that the school is following state guidelines or district policy. The remaining 10 percent is divided equally among principals who indicated that all EL students are fluent and those who indicated that they do not have a plan to address the barriers.

Many principals' comments regarding the CAHSEE individual and group score report were positive. Half of the comments indicated that the report was "clear/understandable/well done/useful." Another 22 percent described the report as "okay/fine/helpful." The remaining comments were that the report "turnaround time took too long" (13%), "needs to be clearer/more specific/Spanish version" (13%), and 3 percent indicated that they had not seen the report.

### ***Expectations***

Several survey questions queried the respondent's expectations for the exam: anticipated pass rates, impact of the exam on student motivation and parental involvement, and so on.

Principals were asked to estimate the percentage of students who would meet the ELA and mathematics standards assessed by the CAHSEE by the end of 10th grade. Table 4.15 presents these estimates from 2000 through 2003. Regarding the ELA portion of the 2003 exam, 33 percent of principals predicted that fewer than 50 percent of 10<sup>th</sup> grade students would pass; 36 percent predicted 50–74 percent of students would pass; 31 percent predicted 75–95 percent would pass; 0 percent predicted that more than 95 percent of 10<sup>th</sup> grade students would pass the 2003 exam. No principals indicated that they were unsure as to what percent of students would pass the ELA test. The mathematics test estimates were noticeably different from the English estimates and also from the 2002 math test estimates. Fifty-six percent, compared to 45 percent in 2002, of principals predicted that fewer than 50 percent of

10<sup>th</sup> grade students would pass the mathematics portion of the 2003 exam. Thirty-one percent, compared to 26 percent in 2002, predicted 50–74 percent of 10<sup>th</sup> grade students would pass. Only 10 percent, compared to 28 percent in 2002, predicted that 75–95 percent would pass. No principals believed that more than 95 percent of their 10<sup>th</sup> grade students would pass the math portion of the 2003 exam.

Table 4.15 Principals’ Estimates of Percentages of 10<sup>th</sup> grade Students Meeting ELA and Mathematics CAHSEE Standards

Percent Expected to Meet Standard	2000	2001		2002		2003	
	ELA/Math N=41	ELA N=45	Math N=45	ELA N=47	Math N=47	ELA N=39	Math N=39
>95%	5	4	4	0	0	0	3
75-95%	14	18	11	30	28	31	10
50-74%	29	29	36	36	26	36	31
<50%	50	49	47	32	45	33	56
Unsure	—	0	2	2	2	0	0

In the principals’ open-ended remarks about specific challenges their schools and students face in successfully meeting the requirement of the CAHSEE, the 34 comments grouped into three areas:

1. Academic Issues (44%)
  - inadequate preparation
  - working with students receiving special education services
  - increasing numbers of students who are below grade level proficiency
2. School/district/state-related Issues (32%)
  - articulation
  - small school constraints
  - teacher motivation
  - scheduling
  - raising expectations
  - identifying interventions to help failing students
  - too much testing
3. Behavior Issues (24%)
  - low student motivation
  - lack of parent support
  - high mobility
  - poor attendance

Regarding benefits to their schools and students associated with the requirement of the CAHSEE, just over a quarter (26%) of the 31 comments said it “helps focus instruction” and “provides for standards-based curriculum.” Thirteen percent said it provides statewide,

common standards for all California students.” Thirteen percent indicated that it “provides accountability” and increases students’ seriousness.” Another 13 percent indicated that it raises expectations and the academic achievement level for all students.” Yet another 13 percent stated that it provides no benefit. Ten percent said that it results in “the ability to individually work with students.”

Teachers rated 10<sup>th</sup> grade students’ preparedness to pass the CAHSEE. Table 4.16 compares responses to this question over three years of teacher surveys. The 2000 survey was administered before the CAHSEE was ever administered to any students, so reflected the least-informed expectations. The comparison of teacher responses in 2001, 2002, and 2003 shows fluctuation in the preparedness ratings. The spring 2002 rating was an estimate of how prepared that year’s freshmen would be in the 10<sup>th</sup> grade. The 2003 rating indicates how prepared teachers’ current 10<sup>th</sup> graders are. Ratings among the four years (2000–2004) are very consistent for the categories of Very Well Prepared and Not at all prepared. There seems to be a small increase in the percentage of Well Prepared ratings from 2000 to 2003. The changes in the Prepared and Not well-prepared categories are not as clear.

Table 4.16 Teachers’ Ratings of Preparedness of Students in the 10<sup>th</sup> Grade (in percentages)

Preparedness	2000 N=141	2001 N=72	2002 N=151	2003 N=107
Very well prepared	1	3	5	5
Well prepared	9	17	15	21
Prepared	30	47	38	44
Not well prepared	47	28	39	26
Not at all prepared	5	5	3	4

Principals and teachers were also asked to predict the impact of the CAHSEE on student motivation and parental involvement, under various circumstances: prior to the first administration of the exam, for students who pass, and for students who do not pass. Table 4.17 lists the percentage of respondents selecting each possible impact, for each of the four survey years. Figures 4.3a and 4.3b reflect the percentage of respondents who predicted “increased” or “strongly increased” impact. Response patterns are included for all four years of survey administration. Principals’ estimates of “motivation prior to first administration” were effectively the same for 2002 and 2003. Principals’ estimates of motivation for “students who pass on the first attempt” decreased. Their estimate of the motivation of “students who fail on the first attempt” likewise declined from 2002 to 2003.

Teachers seemed to be less optimistic than principals regarding student exam motivation and parental involvement (see Table 4.18 and Figure 4.3b). Teachers’ predictions of student motivation remained steady from 2002 to 2003. There was a steady increase in the number of teachers who felt that there would be no effect on the parental involvement of students who pass the exam on the first attempt.

Table 4.17 Principals' Predicted Impact of CAHSEE on Student Motivation and Parental Involvement (in percentages)

Impact	Student Motivation				Parental Involvement			
	2000	2001	2002	2003	2000	2001	2002	2003
Impact prior to first administration	N=42	N=45	N=45	N=38	N=41	N=40	N=44	N=38
Strongly positive/Strongly increased	2	4	11	24	0	5	7	3
Positive/Increased	45	42	69	55	31	23	39	29
No effect	19	29	20	13	55	68	52	63
Negative/Decreased	17	20	0	8	7	3	8	3
Strongly negative/Strongly decreased	17	4	0	0	5	3	0	3
Impact for students who pass on 1st attempt	N=42	N=44	N=44	N=38	N=42	N=43	N=42	N=37
Strongly positive/Strongly increased	12	7	7	13	12	5	2	3
Positive/Increased	50	50	54	42	33	37	24	19
No effect	33	32	36	42	50	56	74	68
Negative/Decreased	5	9	2	3	2	0	0	8
Strongly negative/Strongly decreased	0	2	0	0	2	2	0	3
Impact for students who do not pass on 1st attempt	N=42	N=44	N=44	N=37	N=42	N=43	N=43	N=39
Strongly positive/Strongly increased	2	2	11	11	2	2	12	5
Positive/Increased	33	34	59	54	41	42	56	56
No effect	17	18	16	14	14	16	26	33
Negative/Decreased	36	34	11	16	36	30	7	3
Strongly negative/Strongly decreased	10	11	2	5	7	9	0	3

Note: Wording of response options was changed from Positive/Negative to Increased/Decreased in 2002 survey administrations.

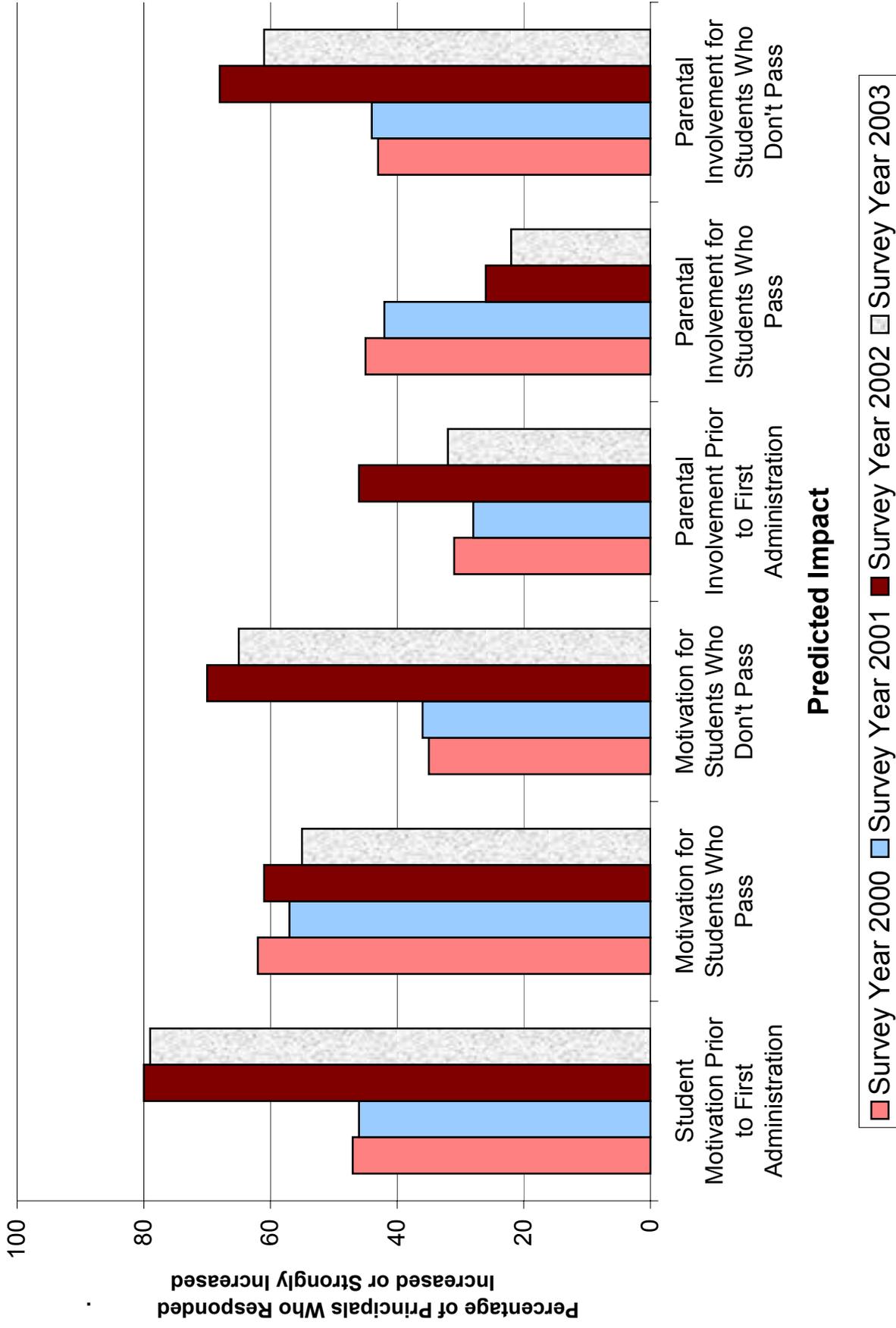
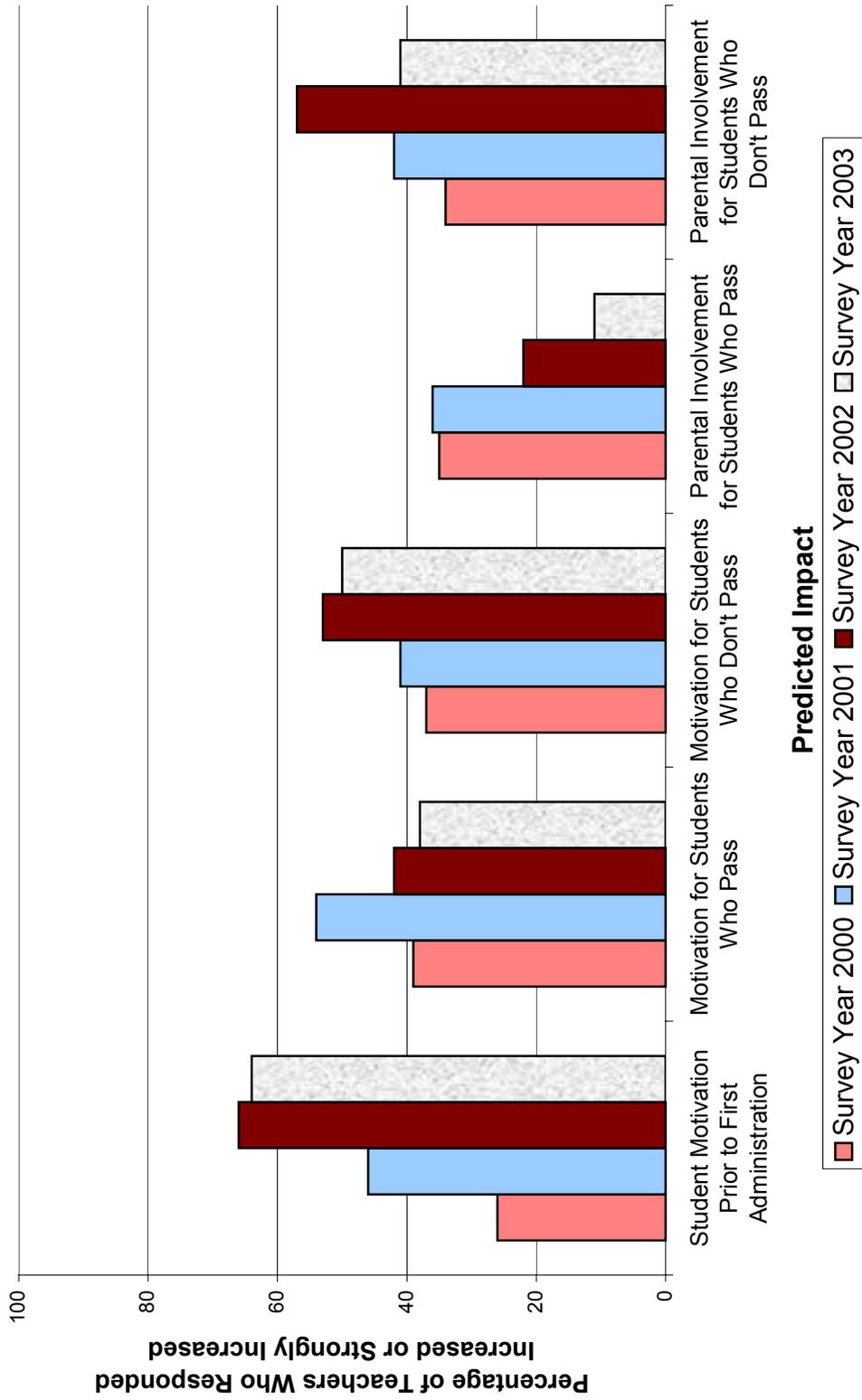


Figure 4.3a. Percentage of principals predicting increased or strongly increased student motivation and parental involvement in 2000, 2001, 2002, and 2003.

Table 4.18 Teachers' Predicted Impact of CAHSEE on Student Motivation and Parental Involvement (in percentages)

Impact	Student Motivation			Parental Involvement				
	2000	2001	2002	2003	2000	2001	2002	2003
Impact prior to first administration	N=141	N=77	N=146	N=106	N=141	N=75	N/A	N/A
Strongly positive/Strongly increased	3	4	6	6	3	3	N/A	N/A
Positive/Increased	23	42	60	58	21	28	N/A	N/A
No effect	26	35	29	25	48	61	N/A	N/A
Negative/Decreased	32	16	3	9	13	7	N/A	N/A
Strongly negative/Strongly decreased	7	4	1	2	5	1	N/A	N/A
Impact for students who pass on 1st attempt	N=141	N=77	N=148	N=107	N=141	N=74	N=142	N=105
Strongly positive/Strongly increased	11	5	4	1	6	4	3	1
Positive/Increased	28	49	38	37	29	32	19	10
No effect	38	39	54	58	49	64	75	86
Negative/Decreased	11	5	3	3	4	0	4	3
Strongly negative/Strongly decreased	3	0	1	1	4	0	0	0
Impact for students who do not pass on 1st attempt	N=141	N=75	N=145	N=106	N=141	N=73	N=145	N=107
Strongly positive/Strongly increased	4	4	5	5	2	4	7	3
Positive/Increased	33	37	48	45	32	38	50	38
No effect	16	23	24	24	28	32	51	55
Negative/Decreased	30	28	21	21	21	19	1	4
Strongly negative/Strongly decreased	7	8	3	6	6	7	1	0

Note: Wording of response options was changed from Positive/Negative to Increased/Decreased in 2002 survey administration. Due to missing responses, some columns do not total to 100 percent.



**Figure 4.3b.** Percentage of teachers predicting increased or strongly increased student motivation and parental involvement in 2000, 2001, 2002, and 2003.

Principals and teachers were also asked to predict the impact of the CAHSEE on student retention and dropout rates. Responses remained negative overall in 2003. Table 4.19 provides detailed response patterns over the four survey years. Principals' 2003 responses were more negative than those in 2002 (also see Figure 4.4a). They predicted slightly higher retention and dropout rates than they did in 2002. Across the four years of the survey, principals responded more negatively than did teachers regarding student dropout rates. Principals' 2003 retention rate responses were more negative than those in 2002. In 2003, 51 percent of principals predicted that the CAHSEE would have a negative impact on retention rates whereas 35 percent predicted a negative impact in 2002.

Teachers' 2003 predictions of the retention rate were slightly less negative than those in 2002. In 2003, 35 percent of teachers predicted that the exam would result in an increase in the retention rate. In 2002, 45 percent of teachers predicted that the exam would result in an increased retention rate. Between 2002 and 2003, there was no real change in teachers' predictions of the change in dropout rate as a result of the CAHSEE. In 2003, 60 percent of teachers predicted an increased dropout rate compared to 58 percent in 2002.

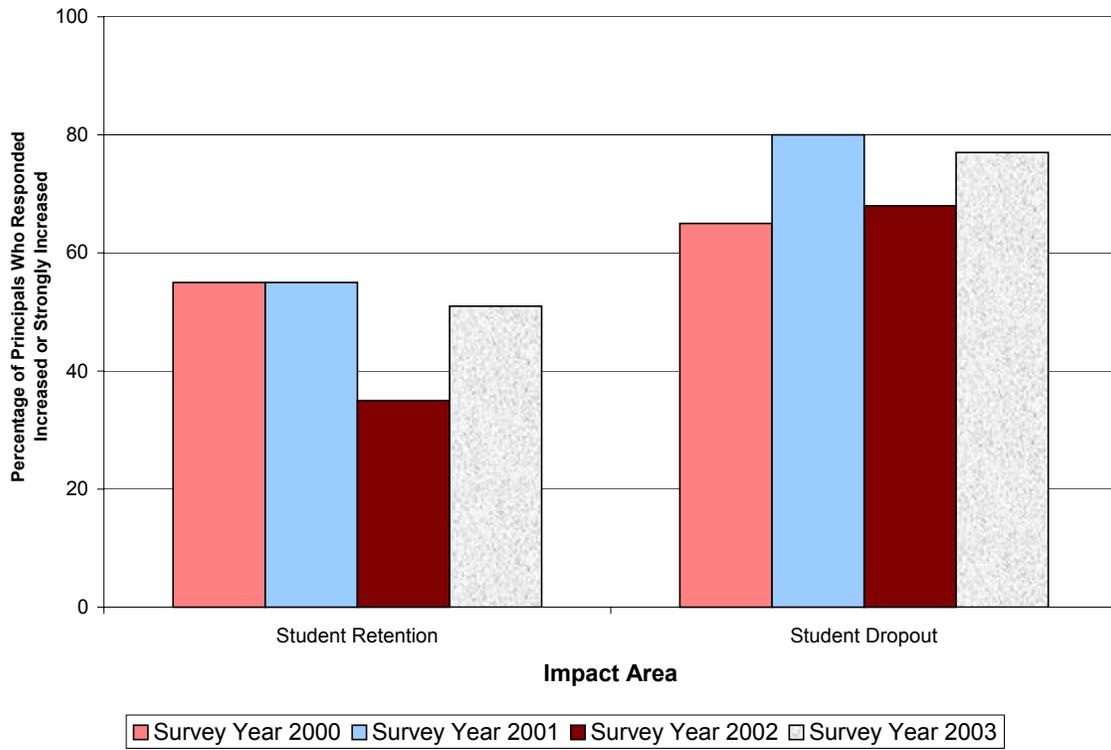
Table 4.19 Principals' and Teachers' Predicted Impact of CAHSEE on Student Retention and Dropout Rates (in percentages)

	<i>Principals</i>							
	Student Retention				Student Dropout			
	2000 N=42	2001 N=42	2002 N=43	2003 N=39	2000 N=42	2001 N=44	2002 N=44	2003 N=39
Strongly positive/Strongly decreased	2	2	0	0	2	5	0	0
Positive/Decreased	14	7	19	18	12	9	7	8
No effect	29	36	46	31	21	7	25	15
Negative/Increased	41	41	26	38	41	50	52	51
Strongly negative/Strongly increased	14	14	9	13	24	30	16	26

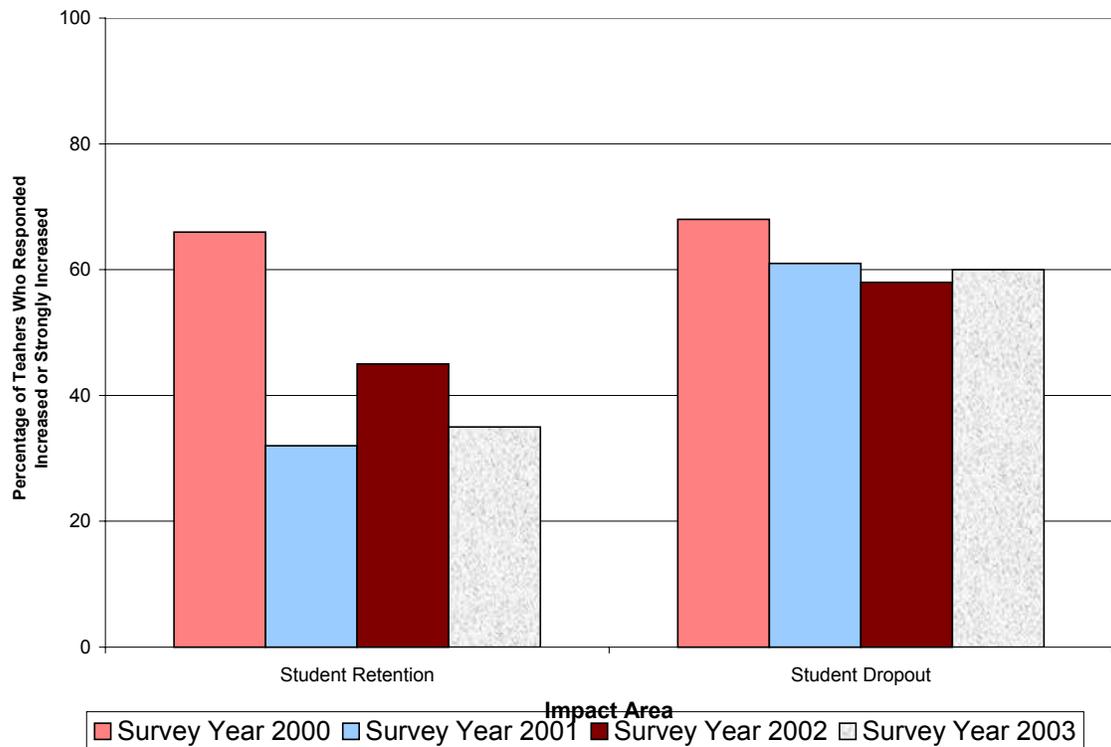
  

	<i>Teachers</i>							
	Student Retention				Student Dropout			
	2000 N=141	2001 N=74	2002 N=143	2003 N=103	2000 N=141	2001 N=72	2002 N=145	2003 N=101
Strongly positive/Strongly decreased	0	1	1	0	1	1	1	0
Positive/Decreased	11	14	14	14	9	11	4	3
No effect	20	53	40	51	20	26	37	38
Negative/Increased	44	27	41	29	44	43	46	44
Strongly negative/Strongly increased	12	5	4	6	14	18	12	16

Note. Some columns total less than 100 percent due to missing responses.



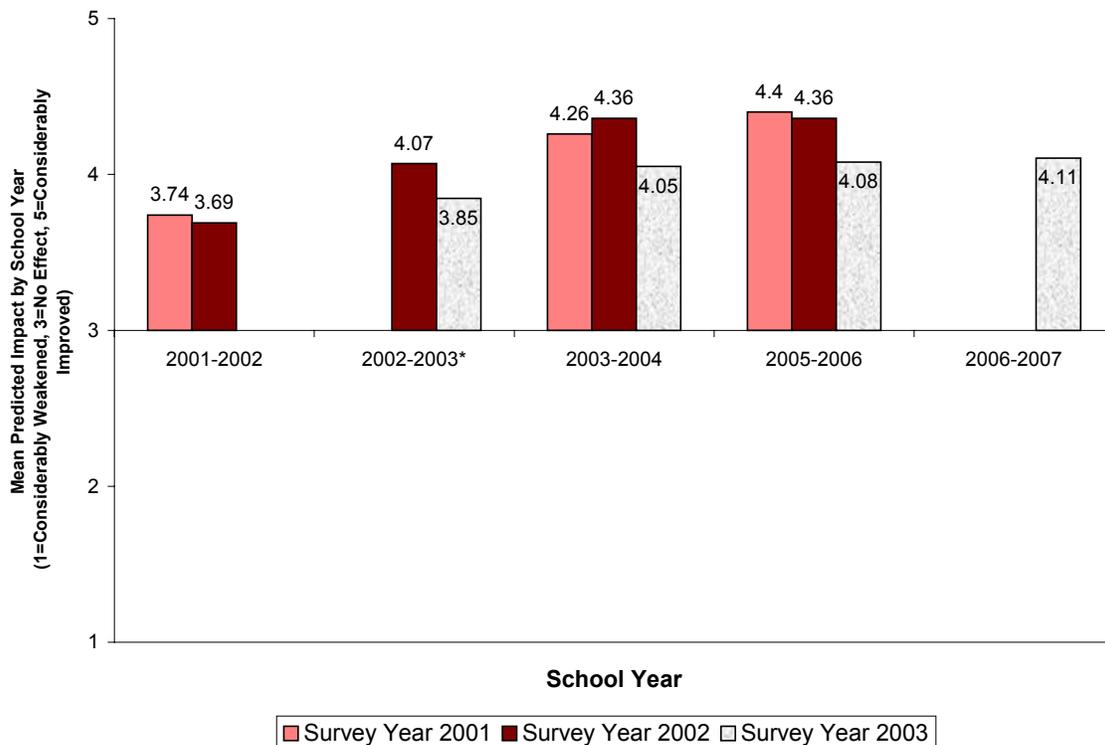
**Figure 4.4a.** Percentage of principals predicting increased or strongly increased student retention and dropout rates in 2000, 2001, 2002, and 2003.



**Figure 4.4b.** Percentage of teachers predicting increased or strongly increased student retention and dropout rates in 2000, 2001, 2002, and 2003.

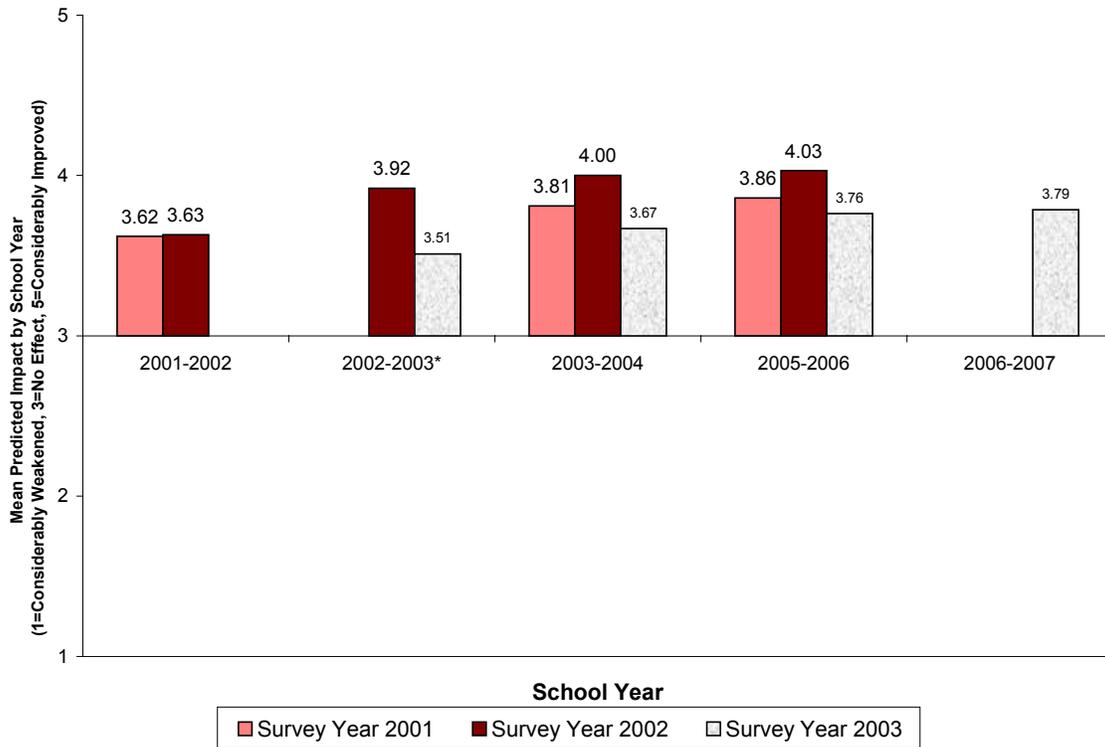
Principals were asked to predict, based on what they knew about their schools, the influence of the CAHSEE on classroom instructional practices over time. Only one of the principals who completed the 2003 survey indicated that practices would be weakened as a result of CAHSEE. Figure 4.5a presents a summary of the mean ratings made by principals for each school year for which they were surveyed: 2001, 2002, and 2003 (1=Considerably Weakened, 2=Weakened, 3=No Effect, 4=Improved, 5=Considerably Improved). Note that the survey did not inquire about the effect on every school year, but rather identified a few years to rate. In general, principals responding to the 2003 survey indicated that classroom instructional practices would be improved as a result of CAHSEE.

Teachers were asked the same question about the influence of the CAHSEE on instructional practices for the four school years. A comparison of teachers' responses to this question from 2001 through 2003 is presented in Table 4.20. Figure 4.5b presents a summary of the average ratings made by teachers for each school year they were surveyed: 2001, 2002, and 2003. Teachers also predicted that the overall effect of the CAHSEE would be an improvement, but a number of teachers indicated that they thought the result would be to weaken instructional practices.



\*Note: Prediction for 2002-2003 not asked on 2001 survey; prediction for 2004-2005 not asked.

**Figure 4.5a.** Principals' predictions of influence of the CAHSEE on instructional practices over time.



\*Note: Prediction for 2002-2003 not asked on 2001 survey; prediction for 2004-2005 not asked.

**Figure 4.5b.** Teachers’ predictions of influence of the CAHSEE on instructional practices over time.

Table 4.20 Teachers' Predictions of Influence of CAHSEE on Instructional Practices Over Time (in percentages)

Effect	2001					2002					2003				
	2001-2002	2002-2003	2003-2004	2005-2006	2001-2002	2002-2003	2003-2004	2003-2004	2005-2006	2002-2003	2003-2004	2003-2004	2003-2004	2005-2006	2006-2007
Considerably Improved	4	N/A	10	21	6	16	23	26	26	3	6	6	16	21	
Improved	58	N/A	58	45	46	52	47	43	43	46	56	56	45	36	
No effect	24	N/A	13	14	38	20	18	16	16	44	29	29	30	34	
Weakened	4	N/A	4	1	1	2	2	2	2	3	5	5	5	4	
Considerably Weakened	3	N/A	3	5	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	

Note: Some columns total less than 100 percent due to missing responses. The 2001 survey did not ask for predictions for the 2002-2003 school year and none of the surveys asked for predictions for the 2004-2005 school year.

One of the concerns when implementing a new exam is whether there is a differential impact on various subgroup populations. We asked principals to estimate the percentage of 10<sup>th</sup> grade students who have had instruction in the ELA and mathematics standards; the question was broken down to respond regarding the total student population, as well as for specific subgroups: students with disabilities (those in Special Day Classes—SDC and Resource Specialist Program—RSP), EL students, economically disadvantaged students, and minority students. Figures 4.6a and 4.6b present the results for ELA and mathematics, respectively. Each student subgroup is represented by a horizontal bar containing four segments. The leftmost segment indicates the percentage of principals who estimate that greater than 95 percent of their student population (within that demographic subgroup) have had instruction that covers the CAHSEE Academic Content Standards; the next segment represents 75–95 percent; the next, 50–74 percent; and the rightmost segment indicates fewer than 50 percent. Principals estimate that fewer students with disabilities and EL students are prepared in ELA; and that fewer students with disabilities and economically disadvantaged students have had sufficient instruction in mathematics.

Comparisons among principals' 2001, 2002, and 2003 estimates of instruction received, by student groups, are presented in Table 4.21.

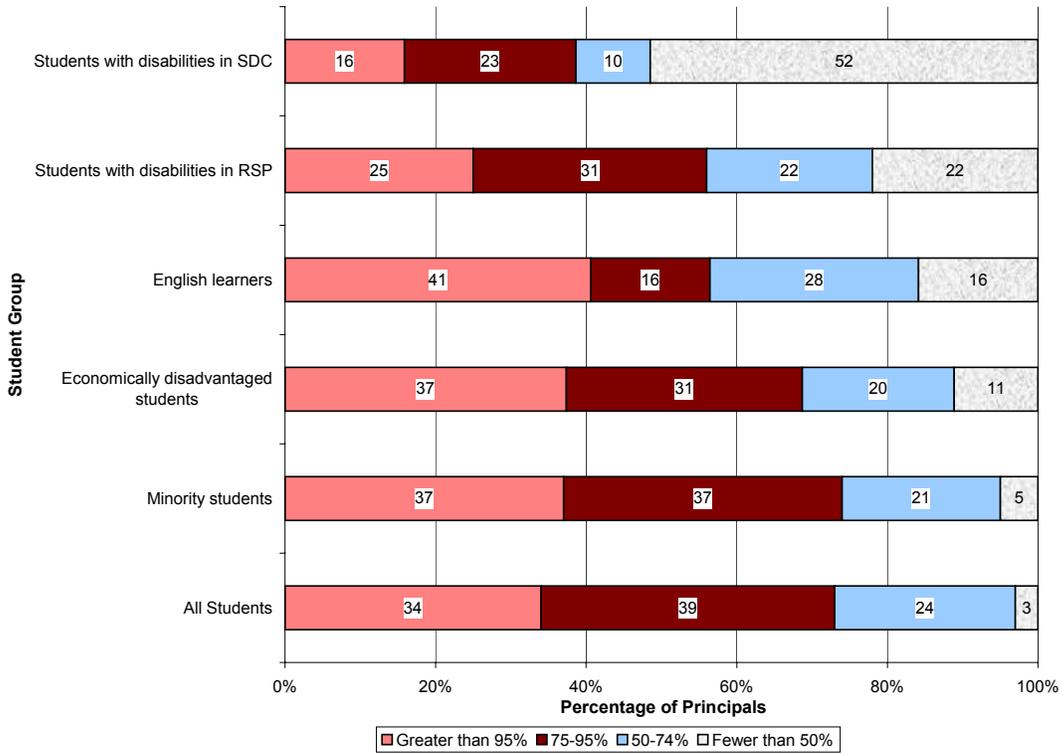


Figure 4.6a. Principals’ estimates of the percentage of students who have had instruction in ELA content standards (ordered by least instruction).

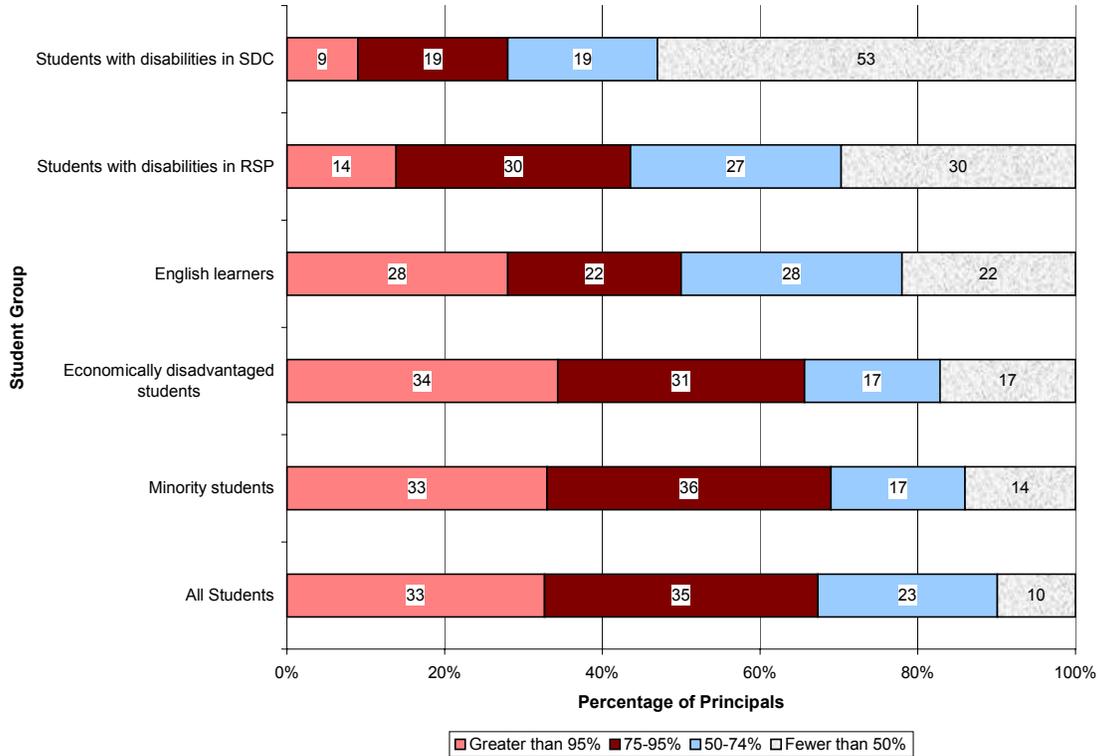


Figure 4.6b. Principals’ estimates of the percentage of students who have had instruction in mathematics content standards (ordered by least instruction).

Table 4.21 Principals' 2001 and 2002 Estimates of the Percentage of Students with Instruction in Academic Content Standards (in percentages)

Student Group	2001		2002		2003	
	ELA N=44	Math N=42	ELA N=44	Math N=46	ELA N=38	Math N=40
<b>Economically disadvantaged students</b>						
Greater than 95%	13	8	37	21	37	34
75–95 %	36	36	26	23	31	31
50–74 %	18	20	23	30	20	17
Fewer than 50%	33	36	14	26	11	17
<b>English learners</b>						
Greater than 95%	8	6	28	22	41	28
75–95%	18	29	15	22	16	22
50–74 %	18	15	30	32	28	28
Fewer than 50%	56	50	28	24	16	22
<b>Minority students</b>						
Greater than 95%	19	10	39	20	37	33
75–95%	36	41	26	29	37	36
50–74%	17	18	21	27	21	17
Fewer than 50%	28	31	14	24	5	14
<b>Students with disabilities (in SDC for 2003 columns)*</b>						
Greater than 95%	12	5	26	14	16	9
75–95%	22	23	14	19	23	19
50–74%	24	28	24	21	10	19
Fewer than 50%	42	44	36	45	52	53
<b>Students with disabilities in RSP</b>						
Greater than 95%	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	25	14
75–95%	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	31	30
50–74%	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	22	27
Fewer than 50%	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	22	30
<b>All students</b>						
Greater than 95%	16	9	43	22	34	33
75–95%	36	43	23	30	39	35
50–74%	27	17	25	26	24	23
Fewer than 50%	21	31	9	22	3	10

\*Note: The 2003 survey separated students with disabilities into two sub-categories: Students with disabilities in Special Day Classes (SDC) and Students with disabilities in Resource Specialist Programs (RSP). The 2001 and 2002 surveys had only one overall category.

**Other**

Principals were asked to rate the likelihood that specific factors would affect their students’ success in meeting the requirements of CAHSEE. The results are presented in Table 4.22. Factors for which the majority of principals indicated “definitely a factor” included poor attendance, language barriers, lack of motivation, and lack of preparation. Language barriers increased in salience for a second straight year since 2001. Almost half of the principals indicated “too many tests to prepare for” as definitely a factor.

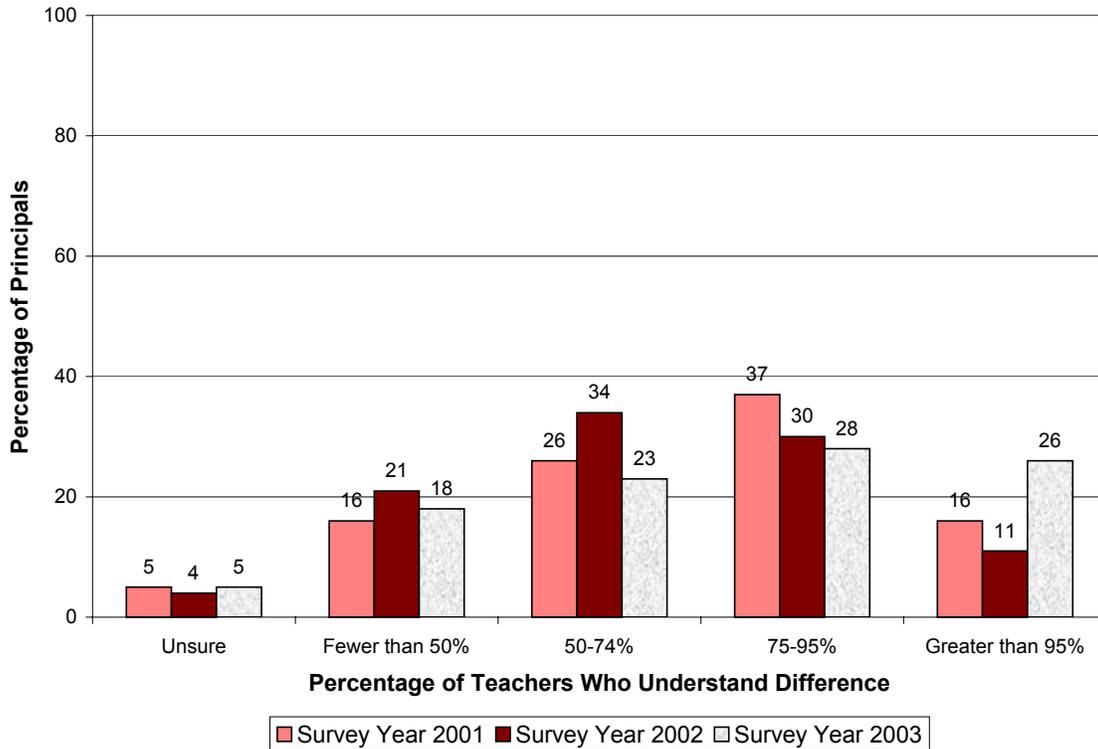
Table 4.22 Percentage of Principals Indicating Factors Affecting Student Success on CAHSEE

Factor	Definitely a Factor		
	2001 N=45	2002 N=45	2003 N=38
Poor attendance	67	61	68
Language barriers	39	50	62
Too many tests to prepare for	53	48	47
Lack of motivation	47	43	57
Lack of preparation needed to pass	48	42	54
Lack of credentialed ELA teachers	N/A	N/A	0
Lack of credentialed math teachers	N/A	N/A	5
District’s current level of standards in math or Algebra	14	25	14
District’s current level of standards in English or writing	14	20	11

Principals were asked to indicate what actions the school plans to take or has implemented to promote learning for all students. The results are presented in Table 4.23. Principals’ responses indicate that while many actions have already been undertaken to promote student learning, in many cases these actions still have been only partially implemented.

Table 4.23 Percentage of Principals Indicating Actions to Promote Student Learning

Action	Fully Implemented		
	2001 N=44	2002 N=44	2003 N=40
Encouragement of all students to take Algebra I	56	65	72
Teacher access to in-service training on content standards	50	58	60
School, teacher, and student access to appropriate instructional materials	54	57	54
Teacher access to in-service training on instructional techniques	47	45	50
Individual student assistance	27	33	43
Teacher and school support services	24	29	41
Administrator and teacher access to in-service training for working with diverse student populations and different learning styles	33	23	49
Student and parent support services	17	5	10



**Figure 4.7.** Percentage of principals indicating the percentage of teachers who understand the difference between “teaching to the test” and “aligning the curriculum and instruction to the standards” in 2001, 2002, and 2003.

Principals were asked what percentage of their teachers they thought understood the difference between “teaching to the test” and “aligning the curriculum and instruction to the standards.” The results from the 2001, 2002, and 2003 surveys are displayed in Figure 4.7. In 2003, 26 percent (up from 16 % in 2001 and 11 % in 2002) indicated greater than 95 percent; 28 percent indicated 75–95 percent, 23 percent indicated 50–74 percent, 18 percent indicated fewer than 50 percent, and 5 percent were unsure of what percentage of their teachers understood the difference between the two concepts.

Principals and teachers were asked to what degree teachers other than those in ELA and math view themselves as sharing responsibility for student success on the CAHSEE. Table 4.24 indicates that principals perceive more shared responsibility by the teachers than the teachers of ELA and math perceive.

Table 4.24 Responsibility Felt by Teachers of Subjects Other Than ELA and Mathematics (percentages as perceived by principals and ELA and math teachers)

Level of Perceived Responsibility	2002		2003	
	Principals N=47	Teachers N=146	Principals N=37	Teachers N=107
Very responsible	11	10	22	16
Somewhat responsible	70	32	49	28
Slightly responsible	13	41	27	36
Not at all responsible	6	16	3	20

Surveyed teachers were asked to characterize their own opinion of the CAHSEE, and to compare those opinions to those of other teachers in their departments. Table 4.25 compares responses to these two questions. The rightmost column indicates the distribution of teachers' opinions. Overall, the opinions tend to be neutral-to-positive; 27 percent are (very) negative; 37 percent, neutral; and 36 percent, (very) positive. The bottom row summarizes the comparison of the respondents' opinions to their colleagues. Fifty-seven percent of teachers report that their own opinions are about the same as other teachers in their departments; 7 percent, somewhat/much more negative; and 27 percent, somewhat/much more positive.

Table 4.25 Surveyed Teachers' Own and Others' Opinions of the CAHSEE (in percentages)

How You think Your Opinion Compares To Other Teachers In Your Department (N=101)							
Your Opinion of CAHSEE N=109	Do not know	Much more negative	Somewhat more negative	About the same	Somewhat more positive	Much more positive	Total
Very negative	2	1	1	6	0	0	10
Negative	1	0	4	11	1	0	17
Neutral	5	0	1	25	5	1	37
Positive	1	0	0	15	10	2	28
Very positive	0	0	0	1	3	5	9
Total	9	1	6	58	19	8	101*

\* Due to rounding

**Summary**

Data from 2001 through 2003 suggest that both students and parents are more aware of the various aspects of the CAHSEE. According to principals' estimates, the percentage of students and parents who know which students have the opportunity to take the exam has increased each year. Principals also indicated that there has been an increase in the percentage of students who know what knowledge and skills are covered by the CAHSEE.

Preparation for the CAHSEE appears to be improving. Over 90 percent of the principals reported that districts and/or schools encourage the use of content standards. The number of schools that indicated that they are in the process of aligning curriculum with standards dropped from 74 percent in 2002 to just under 40 percent in 2003. Over half of principals surveyed indicated that they are assigning teachers only in their certified fields. Over half of principals have also indicated that they are hiring only teachers that are certified in their field.

More than 75 percent of both ELA and math teachers indicated that their curriculum covers about three fourths or more of the standards. There were no ELA teachers who reported that there was less than one-quarter coverage on the standards but four percent of math teachers did report that there was less than one quarter coverage of the standards.

It is notable that nearly 40 percent of teachers indicated that they had either no professional development or poor professional development from local sources in 2003. Half of teachers indicated that they received no professional development or poor professional development from state sources in 2003.

Some activities to prepare for administering the CAHSEE increased from 2002 to 2003 while others decreased. The 2003 survey included some activities that were not mentioned on prior year surveys (i.e., emphasizing the importance of CAHSEE and having students work with computers). Most principals still reported encouraging students to work hard and prepare, adopting California Academic Content Standards, and teaching test-taking skills. Significantly more principals than in previous years reported providing individualized or group tutoring. Teacher-reported activities were also generally higher than prior year estimates; the most frequently-indicated activities were emphasizing the importance of CAHSEE, talking with students, teaching test-taking skills, encouraging students to work hard, and increasing classroom attention to content standards.

Principals indicated a greater degree of implementation of programs that are designed to assist students who do not pass the exit exam or who are not prepared to take it. Notably, more principals reported fully implemented high school remedial courses, individual and group tutoring, and evaluation of student abilities for appropriate course placement. More principals also reported full implementation of plans to reduce high school electives in favor of remedial classes.

Teacher and principal estimates of student preparedness were slightly more optimistic than last year's estimates. In 2003, more teachers indicated that 10<sup>th</sup> grade students were at least prepared for the test. Fewer teachers rated students as being "not well prepared."

Teachers' and principals' responses about the impact of the test on students and their parents were very similar to last year's predictions. Most principals and teachers predicted no effect on parental involvement for students who pass the exam on the first attempt. Principals seemed more optimistic than teachers about the impact for students who did not pass on the first attempt.

**Site Testing Coordinator Findings**

The survey of teachers and principals in the longitudinal sample of schools included the second administration of a survey of site coordinators. The site-coordinator survey asked for feedback on training and guidance, students tested, and the general approach to conducting the exam. There were 17 participating districts both years with 42 schools in 2002 and 35 schools in 2003. Table 4.26 summarizes the responses received in each year of the survey.

Table 4.26 Site Coordinator Responses and Positions

	2002	2003
<b>Most Common Position Held</b>		
Test Coordinator	20	15
Assistant Principal	18	14

Note: Respondents could mark more than one position.

The point of reference for the survey was the March 2003 administration of the CAHSEE. All schools reported administering both the ELA and mathematics parts of the CAHSEE in 2003. In 2002, there was one missing response, but all other schools administered both parts of the exam.

Of the test coordinators who responded to an open-ended question asking about specific factors they felt influenced the school’s planning or performance on the CAHSEE, 24 percent noted economic/community/parental factors; 17 percent mentioned (a) weak academic foundation, (b) motivation or attendance, and (c) testing facilities or environment; and 13 percent referred to loss of instructional days, budget cuts, and EL and special education challenges.

**Preparation**

Site coordinators received information on how to administer the CAHSEE mainly through the sources shown in Table 4.27.

Table 4.27 Site Coordinator Sources of Information on Administering CAHSEE (in percentages)

Information Source	2002	2003
ETS Test Administration Training workshop	13	5
ETS Video	2	10
CDE update meetings	1	2
School Coordinator’s Manual	39	35
District workshop	26	23

Note: Respondents could mark more than one source of information.

District workshops were the most frequently cited sources of helpful information. In 2003, 46 percent (12) of coordinators who commented said they considered the workshop the most useful source of information, largely because of the chance to ask questions and request

follow-up guidance from the district. This compares to 54 percent of the coordinators who listed the workshops as most helpful in 2002.

Twelve site coordinators who commented cited the *Directions for Administration and School Coordinator's Manual* as the most helpful source of information. This was similar to the number (12) citing this source in 2002.

### Logistics

The observations and surveys provided information on seven aspects of logistics:

1. type of test facility
2. security
3. preparation of proctors/monitors
4. use of precoded answer sheets
5. handling different finishing times
6. impact of the revised schedule
7. problems encountered

The question about *test facility* asked where schools administered the CAHSEE—on- or off-site classrooms or large rooms such as a library, cafeteria, or gymnasium. All of the site coordinators who responded (34) tested in on-site classrooms or large rooms. Thirty-seven percent used only classrooms; 35 percent used only large rooms; and 34 percent used both. This result was similar to last year's results where all site coordinators who responded (35 of 42) said they tested in on-site classrooms or on- and off-site large rooms.

None of the site coordinators in either year of the site testing coordinator survey thought that they had real *security* issues. One comment this year suggested that it would be better to have a separate answer book for math or at least a two-day gap between the ELA and math tests, noting that it takes several hours to reorganize math booklets and answer documents, which is difficult to accomplish during the school day because most students need several hours to complete the ELA test.

This year we added an item on preparing proctors and monitors for the administration of the CAHSEE. The response choices were (a) no preparation, (b) conducted workshop, (c) distributed excerpts of directions for test administrators, (d) developed step-by-step procedures, (e) described general requirements, and (f) other. Respondents could mark more than one approach. All site coordinators (35) indicated that their schools did something to prepare the proctors and monitors. Seventeen percent used a single approach; 83 percent used multiple approaches distributed fairly evenly across the workshop (51%), excerpts (57%), step-by-step procedures (66%), and general requirements (60%).

When asked about taking advantage of the precoding option for answer sheets, 65 percent of the test coordinators reported that they used the precode option for this year's CAHSEE administration. This is considerably lower than the report for last year's administration, in which 86 percent of the test coordinators indicated using the option. However, 83 percent of this year's test coordinators said they plan to take advantage of the precode option for next year. This is the same percentage as reported by last year's test coordinators.

In both years, site testing coordinators were asked three questions about how their schools dealt with variations in students' finishing times on the CAHSEE. Tables 4.28 through 4.30 present their responses.

Table 4.28 How Schools Handled Students Who Finished the First Section Early (in percentages)

	2002	2003
How Handled Students Who Finished Early	N=42	N=35
Go directly to second section	7	17
Stay in room until scheduled break	76	77
Wait outside room until scheduled break	12	5
Other	5	0

Table 4.29 How Schools Handled Students Who Had Not Finished by Time of Break Between Sessions (in percentages)

	2002	2003
How Handled Students Who Had Not Finished by Break	N=42	N=35
All finished by break	47	23
Delayed break until all finished	5	14
All took break and finished after, if needed	5	14
Students not finished worked through break	13	17
Moved students not finished to another room	18	31
Other	11	0

Table 4.30 How Schools Handled Students Who Had Not Finished by Lunchtime (in percentages)

	2002	2003
How Handled Students Who Had Not Finished by Lunchtime	N=42	N=35
All finished by lunch	60	40
Went to lunch and finished after	31	29
Worked through lunch	10	17
Other	0	11

The surveys for both years asked test coordinators how their schools handled the schedules of other grades during the period when the CAHSEE was being administered and what impact the CAHSEE schedule had on attendance of students in other grades. Table 4.31 shows how the schools handled scheduling, and Table 4.32 presents the reported impact on attendance.

Table 4.31 How Schools Scheduled Students in Other Grades During CAHSEE Administration (in percentages)

	2002	2003
How Scheduled Other Grades	N=42	N=35
Special schoolwide activity	0	3
Regular classes but revised schedule	15	40
Regular classes and regular schedule	76	57
Other	10	0

Table 4.32 Impact of CAHSEE Administration on Attendance in Other Grades (in percentages)

	2002	2003
Impact on Attendance in Other Grades	N=42	N=35
Higher attendance than normal	5	0
No impact	77	82
Lower attendance than normal	18	18

The survey included a question about problems that were not covered by guidance documents for the CAHSEE administration. The only comment mentioned that if there were any questions, they were handled by the district coordinator and staff, who were always available by phone or e-mail.

### ***Accommodations and Modifications***

Accommodations include changes to test presentation, response, or scheduling to provide a more appropriate assessment of students with disabilities. Modifications are changes that also change what is being measured and so invalidate the resulting test scores. According to CDE regulations, the decision to grant accommodations or allow modifications must be based on the student's Individual Education Program (IEP) or Section 504 Plan. Students whose plans require test modifications cannot pass the exam directly, but may apply for a waiver if their test scores and other evidence suggest that they have mastered the required skills.

This year's test coordinators estimated their schools tested most of the eligible EL students and students receiving special education services. Table 4.33 shows the results and compares the responses to last year's. The results indicate that more EL and students receiving special education services were included in the CAHSEE program this year.

Table 4.33 Proportion of Eligible EL and SD Students Tested (in percentages)

	2002	2003
Proportion of Eligible EL and SD Students Tested	N=42	N=35
None	10	3
Fewer than half	15	6
About half	0	15
Most	61	55
All	15	21

The accommodations and modifications used in the surveyed schools are reported in Tables 4.34 and 4.35. Setting and timing/scheduling continued to be the most frequent accommodations. In the modification category, some schools allowed some students to use calculators for math and audio or oral presentation for ELA, but the number decreased greatly.

Table 4.34 Accommodations Provided (in percentages)

Accommodations Provided	2002	2003
	N=42	N=35
Large print	9	24
Test item enlargement	0	0
Braille	3	8
Markers, mask or other visual attention	24	8
Reduced numbers of items per page	24	0
Audio or oral presentation (math only)	19	36
Verbal, written, or signed responses	6	12
Assistive devices and technologies regularly used during testing	3	12
Setting	75	60
Timing/scheduling	72	80
None	0	0

Note: Respondents could mark more than one accommodation.

Table 4.35 Modifications Provided (in percentages)

Modifications Provided	2002	2003
	N=42	N=35
Calculators for math	83	36
Audio or oral presentation for ELA	42	24
None	[not an option]	49
Other	8	9

Note: Respondents could mark more than one accommodation.

This year's survey asked site testing coordinators if there were any special education students who were unable to take the test even with accommodation or modification. Fifty-nine percent responded "no," and 41 percent noted students categorized as severely handicapped were unable to test. In addition, some parents opted out of having their children take the CAHSEE.

### Summary

In preparation for the CAHSEE administration, both years' responses cited the coordinator's manual as providing helpful information. However, this year more site testing coordinators used the ETS training video and fewer attended the training workshop. Responses from both years for the site testing coordinator were very similar for logistics regarding their testing facilities and test security. There was a dramatic decrease in the

number of schools that used the precode option for the answer sheets, even though a large proportion of the coordinators indicated last year that they would take advantage of this option. There were slight changes this year in the way site coordinators handled students who had not finished a test session by the break or lunchtime. More schools this year used a revised schedule on CAHSEE testing days for students in other grades. Setting and timing/scheduling were the most frequent accommodations used in both years. This year there were large increases in the use of the large print version and in audio or oral presentation for math. There were large decreases in the use of markers or other visual attention and reduced number of items per page. Test coordinators provided far fewer modifications this year. More than half of the site testing coordinators indicated that they did not have a situation of a special education student being unable to take the CAHSEE even with an accommodation or modification.

## CHAPTER 5: IMPACT OF THE CAHSEE REQUIREMENT ON INSTRUCTION AND REMEDIATION

### Introduction

Results from the AB 1609 survey of instruction and the interviews to confirm and extend survey results are presented in this chapter. Particular attention is given to the impact that the CAHSEE requirement may have had on changes in curriculum and instruction.

Before turning to information about specific courses, we present a brief description of the schools responding to the survey and the schools in which interviews were conducted in the validation effort.

### Surveys

As described in Chapter 1, HumRRO conducted a survey of high school principals and teachers and of principals and teachers at schools feeding into the high schools. Copies of the survey instruments are provided in Wise et al. (2003a).

### Response Sample

**Schools.** A sample of 600 schools was selected to represent the entire state. The sample was stratified by district so that at least one school was included from each of the 483 high school districts that include grade 10. The sampling design also assured that, across all districts, the sample would match overall state distributions for academic performance (based on results from the 2002 10<sup>th</sup> grade ELA STAR assessment), school size, and the percent of English learners (EL). Responses were obtained from 298 of the 600 high schools (50%) in the original sample including 263 of the state's 483 school districts that include grade 10 (54%). Appendix C in Wise et al. (2003a) contains the response frequency tables for the survey results.

Table 5.1 shows the distribution of high schools participating in the survey in comparison to the original sample. Slightly fewer of the responders were small schools, probably because small schools had fewer personnel resources to devote to the survey. Also, schools with relatively high passing rates were somewhat more likely to respond. Nonetheless, the sample of responders includes schools at each level in terms of size and CAHSEE passing rates.

Survey responses were also received for 173 middle-grade feeder schools. We attempted to find one middle-grade feeder school for each high school in the sample, but some of the high schools were continuation or other special schools that received students from other high schools more than from middle-grade feeder schools. In addition, interest in the middle-grade feeder schools appears to be more focused on the content standards overall rather than more specifically on the CAHSEE, which is a greater interest at the high school level. Table 5.2 shows characteristics of the high schools for which middle-grade feeder school responses were obtained.

Table 5.1 Sample Characteristics by Response Status (High Schools)

School Category	% in Sample	% of Responders
School Size (2002 Grade 10 Enrollment)		
1–99	23%	20%
100–500	44%	49%
> 500	33%	32%
CAHSEE ELA Pass Rates (Through Jan. 2003)		
< 50%	11%	8%
50–75%	14%	11%
> 75%	75%	81%
CAHSEE Math Pass Rates (Through Jan. 2003)		
< 50%	26%	21%
50–75%	34%	33%
> 75%	40%	48%
CAHSEE ELA Pass Rates for Special Education Students		
< 20%	8%	5%
20–50%	30%	28%
> 50 %	62%	67%
CAHSEE Math Pass Rates for Special Education Students		
< 20%	27%	23%
20–50%	40%	42%
> 50 %	33%	35%

NOTE: Percent totals may not equal 100 due to rounding.

Table 5.2 Characteristics of High Schools by Middle-Grade Feeder School Response Status

School Category	% in Sample	% of Responders
School Size (2002 Grade 10 Enrollment)		
1–99	23%	17%
100–500	44%	42%
> 500	33%	42%
CAHSEE ELA Pass Rates (Through Jan. 2003)		
< 50%	11%	5%
50–75%	14%	9%
> 75%	75%	85%
CAHSEE Math Pass Rates (Through Jan. 2003)		
< 50%	26%	16%
50–75%	34%	37%
> 75%	40%	48%
CAHSEE ELA Pass Rates for Special Education Students		
< 20%	8%	6%
20–50%	30%	26%
> 50 %	62%	68%
CAHSEE Math Pass Rates for Special Education Students		
< 20%	27%	24%
20–50%	40%	44%
> 50 %	33%	33%

NOTE: Percent totals may not equal 100 due to rounding.

### Site Visit Interviews

Site visits were conducted at 45 high schools—including charter, continuation, and juvenile authority—and 17 middle-grade feeder schools, resulting in 499 total interviews. (Interview protocols are provided in Appendix B in Wise, et al., 2003a.) Survey and interview data were collected from principals, ELA teachers, and mathematics teachers. Respondents were asked to focus on “initial or primary” instruction on the standards covered by the CAHSEE and on “remedial or intervention” instruction. Interviews also were conducted with high school and middle-grade feeder school special education (SE) teachers, EL teachers, the CAHSEE remediation teachers (high school only), and special program teachers.

Interviews were analyzed using N5, produced by QSR International Pty. Ltd. (QSR), (formerly known as NUD\*IST, or Non-numerical Unstructured Data Indexing Searching and Theorizing), the fifth version of a qualitative data analysis software program that allows researchers to develop their own coding system using a hierarchical tree design. Prior to the site visits, a preliminary coding scheme for the interviews was developed that included some demographic information, such as interview type (principal, math teacher, special education teacher, etc.) and school level (high school, middle-grade feeder school, etc.). QSR refers to this information as “base data.” The scheme also included coding by content, or what was being said. In QSR each item in the hierarchical tree is called a “node,” and each node has a unique “address.” The hierarchical tree can be changed as needed during the life of the

project; for example, nodes can be added, deleted, moved, or merged with one another. Both automatic and highlighting QSR coding methods were used on this project. Selected results from the interviews are presented in this chapter. Refer to Appendix D in Volume 2 for the complete summary of interview responses.

Sixty-five documents were coded as principal interviews. Of those documents, 50 were coded as high school principals and 15 as middle-grade feeder school principals. In five high schools, researchers conducted separate interviews with the principal and an assistant principal; both these interviews were coded as principal interviews, thus accounting for the difference between the number of principals (50) and the number of high schools (45). At only one middle-grade feeder school did we fail to obtain an interview with a principal.

We interviewed 86 high school and “other” ELA teachers, 36 middle-grade feeder school ELA teachers, 86 high school and “other” math teachers, and 35 middle-grade feeder school math teachers and entered their responses into the database.

### Findings at the School Level

In addition to supplying a list of relevant courses, principals responded to a number of questions about their curriculum in general. Specific questions included the extent to which instruction covering the California Academic Content Standards, including those assessed by the CAHSEE, has increased over the past several years; how student mastery of these standards is tracked; and how coordination with middle-grade feeder schools on curriculum issues is handled.

### Increasing Coverage of the California Academic Content Standards

#### Survey Results

Principals reported increasing coverage of both the ELA and the mathematics content standards for CAHSEE (at the high school level) and the California Academic Content Standards in general (at the middle-grade feeder school level) as shown in Tables 5.3 through 5.6. Since CAHSEE blueprints were adopted in December 2000, the percentage of schools reporting *High* (at least 90%) coverage of the standards has risen from about 5 percent to 50 percent. Similarly, the percentage of schools reporting at least *fair* coverage (75% or more) has risen from about 19 percent to about 83 percent. Reported increases in the coverage of the California Academic Content Standards at the middle-grade feeder school level show similar very significant increases.

Table 5.3 High School Principal Report of Coverage of CAHSEE ELA Standards

School Year	Percent of CAHSEE ELA Standards Covered				
	< 25%	25–74%	75–90%	> 90%	Missing/Unknown
Before 1999	15%	27%	15%	4%	40%
1999–2000	13%	34%	23%	7%	23%
2000–2001	6%	37%	32%	12%	14%
2001–2002	2%	23%	42%	26%	8%
2002–2003	0%	11%	34%	49%	6%

NOTE: Percent totals may not equal 100 due to rounding.

Table 5.4 High School Principal Report of Coverage of CAHSEE Mathematics Standards

School Year	Percent of CAHSEE Mathematics Standards Covered				
	< 25%	25–74%	75–90%	> 90%	Missing/Unknown
Before 1999	14%	27%	15%	5%	39%
1999–2000	14%	30%	23%	8%	24%
2000–2001	6%	35%	31%	13%	15%
2001–2002	3%	22%	38%	29%	8%
2002–2003	1%	11%	31%	50%	7%

NOTE: Percent totals may not equal 100 due to rounding.

Table 5.5 Middle-Grade Feeder School Principal Report of Coverage of California ELA Content Standards

School Year	Percent of California ELA Content Standards Covered				
	< 25%	25–74%	75–90%	> 90%	Missing/Unknown
Before 1999	15%	30%	13%	4%	38%
1999–2000	15%	39%	21%	6%	19%
2000–2001	6%	38%	31%	13%	12%
2001–2002	1%	22%	50%	20%	7%
2002–2003	0%	5%	43%	49%	3%

NOTE: Percent totals may not equal 100 due to rounding.

Table 5.6 Middle-Grade Feeder School Principal Report of Coverage of California Mathematics Content Standards

School Year	Percent of California Mathematics Content Standards Covered				
	< 25%	25–74%	75–90%	> 90%	Missing/Unknown
Before 1999	13%	30%	16%	4%	38%
1999–2000	11%	35%	26%	6%	21%
2000–2001	3%	37%	36%	11%	13%
2001–2002	1%	18%	48%	25%	8%
2002–2003	0%	7%	44%	46%	3%

NOTE: Percent totals may not equal 100 due to rounding.

In addition to asking about general coverage of standards, we asked how the districts, schools, and/or teachers track mastery of each standard for each individual student. Table 5.7 shows the responses to this question in the principal surveys. Note that in some cases more than one method was marked indicating either shared or multilevel systems. Overall, 95 percent reported some system for monitoring mastery of specific content standards.

Table 5.7 How is Student Mastery of Academic Content Standards Tracked?

Approach	Percent of Principals Selecting Each Option	
	High School	Middle-Grade Feeder School
Tracked by the District	27%	52%
Tracked by the School	34%	49%
Tracked by Departments	30%	38%
Tracked by Teachers	56%	74%
Other System for Tracking	5%	5%
No System for Tracking	5%	5%

Principals were also asked about coordination with the middle-grade feeder school curriculum, coordination between special programs and their general education program, and coordination between alternative or continuation school programs and their general education program. Table 5.8 summarizes their responses to these questions.

Table 5.8 How Fully Developed is Coordination Among Various Programs?

Coordination between:	Percent of Principals Responding			
	Fully Developed	Partially Developed	Not Developed	Not Applicable
High School Principals				
Feeder School and High School	14%	65%	17%	3%
Special Ed. And General Ed.	18%	73%	6%	3%
EL Staff and General Ed.	16%	58%	13%	13%
Alt./Cont. and General Ed.	9%	48%	24%	19%
Middle-Grade Feeder School Principals				
Feeder School and High School	26%	62%	13%	0%
Special Ed. And General Ed.	29%	64%	6%	1%
EL Staff and General Ed.	24%	61%	7%	7%
Alt./Cont. and General Ed.	6%	29%	20%	45%

NOTE: Percent totals may not equal 100 due to rounding.

### Site Visits

In the interviews, we asked principals a series of questions regarding the use of standards-based instruction (SBI) in their schools. First, they discussed when SBI had been implemented. Next, the principals rated on a scale of 1 to 5 (1—not at all implemented, 5—fully implemented) where they felt they were in the implementation process and how long it would take before they were fully implemented. Finally, we asked how they monitored students’ mastery of standards and how they assisted students who did not master standards. Responses to each of these questions are summarized here.

#### *When was standards-based instruction implemented?*

Responses to this question varied from as recently as 1 year ago to as many as 6 years ago, with 34 high school principals responding with an average response of 3.0 years. It is important to note that some responses were difficult to interpret cleanly or with absolute certainty. For example, some schools or districts began implementing standards-based instruction in only one department and gradually phased it in over several years in the

remaining departments. There was evidence that in some instances a motivated teacher served as the initiator of SBI within his or her department, and that implementation then gradually spread to other departments at the school. So, while one department may indeed have been using SBI for 4 or 5 years, other departments in the same school may have less experience with it. In other cases, principals who had arrived at their school in the past couple of years typically found that SBI had already been implemented at least to some degree, but they were unable to state with certainty when SBI actually began at their school.

*What rate of implementation has your school achieved?*

The 36 high school principals responding to this question gave themselves an average rating of 3.6. Many felt that with a little more time, perhaps 2 years or so, they would be able to report a higher rating. Many principals reported that implementation varies among content areas, therefore providing different ratings for specific content areas. This raised the question of whether one particular content area, English or mathematics, would have consistently high or low implementation ratings. After further review, no such pattern was found. Thirteen middle-grade feeder school principals responded to this question with an average response of 3.7 years.

*When will standards-based instruction be fully in effect?*

Twenty-four principals gave specific timeframe estimates resulting in an average response of 18 years. Five principals discussed the difficulty of getting teachers to “buy into” SBI, while one each mentioned the importance of working with the teachers’ union and ensuring that other supporting changes are made. In this case, the supporting change was the creation of a standards-based report card. The recognition of additional supporting changes is one of the eight stages in the change process posited by Kotter in his books, *Leading Change* (1996) and *The Heart of Change* (2002).

The average middle-grade feeder school principal responses were very similar to the high school principal responses: 1.8 years to fully implement standards-based instruction. Their challenges were, again, similar to what the high schools reported.

*How do you track mastery of content standards?*

Mastery of standards goes beyond simply being exposed to the standards. It implies that students are being held to a certain level of performance before being able to advance to other classes and that they are provided with opportunities for remediation if they do not achieve mastery. The principals we interviewed reported a variety of methods being used to track student mastery as well as to remediate students who do not master the standards. Thirty-three high school principals discussed systems either in place or currently being developed to track student mastery of the California Academic Content Standards. The most frequently mentioned method of tracking student mastery, with 18 responses, is the development of common semester finals, end-of-course finals, or benchmark exams. The second most commonly mentioned method described, with 13 responses, is the use of standardized tests to track student mastery.

There were 13 middle-grade feeder school principal responses to the “mastery of standards” question. As was found in the high school principal responses, most middle-grade feeder school principals reported using several methods, ranging from individual teacher

efforts to those imposed by the district. Six principals reported using or currently developing some form of common assignment, rubrics, or benchmark tests to measure the mastery of standards. These common measures may have been created at the school or district level. Six principals also reported using results from standardized tests as a measure of mastery.

*Have you made changes in the curriculum as a result of SBI?*

High school principals described efforts to target students considered at risk of not passing the CAHSEE (14 comments) as well as efforts to remediate students who had already had not passed the CAHSEE (20 comments) by placing them in the CAHSEE remediation courses. One alternative school noted that focusing on at-risk students and those who had not passed the CAHSEE is not anything different than what they have always done. Principals then described their efforts to coordinate instruction across the curriculum, for example greater consistency from class to class, more alignment of classes across the board, and more consistency across curriculum at school and district levels. Another issue was the apparent narrowing of the curriculum in response to SBI; principals cited concern for the loss of elective classes that are important to many students. Other issues mentioned by high school principals begin with comments regarding their efforts to make Algebra more accessible to students (19 comments). This entailed the addition of various math programs (e.g., Essentials in Math), two-year Algebra 1 classes, and a variety of after school and weekend workshops. Another issue (five principal comments) was the concern to provide good professional development opportunities for teachers. Finally, there were two comments regarding new programs that are designed for parents. These programs provide information on parenting, life skills, reading, and job-seeking skills.

Middle-grade feeder school principals presented similar comments on similar topics as the high school principals. Six of the middle-grade feeder school principals specifically noted they have or are planning to obtain textbooks that are aligned with the state standards. Middle-grade feeder school principals also reported targeting at-risk students (five comments), concerns with the loss of electives in response to focusing more on SBI (five comments), and efforts to bring Algebra into their programs (five comments).

*How do teachers ensure coverage both across and within grades?*

Teachers sometimes described these articulation efforts in very general terms, such as attending department meetings, and sometimes in more specific terms, such as using a benchmark exam or pacing guide (within same grade/course) or meeting with middle-grade feeder school teachers in their subject (across grades/courses). We used these three categories—general, within, and across—to sort responses. Table 5.9 shows that high school ELA and math teachers most frequently mentioned some form of within grade/course articulation.

Table 5.9 Type of Articulation by Subject—High School Teachers (N of responses)

Subject Area	General Articulation	Within Grade/Course	Across Grade/Course	Lack of Articulation	Total
ELA	24	35	25	25	109
Math	20	45	26	12	103

Middle-grade feeder school teachers also were asked about articulation, and a similar analysis procedure of responses was used, placing responses into general, within grade/course, and across grade/course categories. There were 29 and 22 responses from middle-grade feeder school ELA and math teachers, respectively. Table 5.10 shows slight differences between ELA and math, with math responses grouped more tightly among the three categories than are ELA responses. We note that middle-grade feeder school responses were very similar to high school responses, with general articulation indicating some type of reliance on standards, text, or generic department meeting; meeting with same-grade/subject teachers or use of benchmarks or common exams indicating within grade/course articulation, and meeting with teachers in other grades or courses as examples of across grade/course articulation.

Table 5.10 Type of Articulation by Subject—Middle-Grade Feeder School Teachers (N of responses)

Subject Area	General Articulation	Within Grade/Course	Across Grade/Course	Lack of Articulation	Total
ELA	10	20	12	6	48
Math	12	10	9	5	46

### Information about Specific Courses

Survey data were received on a total 5,276 middle-grade feeder school and high school courses or programs. Table 5.11 shows the breakout of courses by subject for each school level. Of course, many of the courses had the same titles, but were taught in different schools, possibly using different texts and/or covering different portions of the texts that were used. Obviously, one of the challenges in evaluating the adequacy of instruction is analyzing in any depth the very large number of different courses in which CAHSEE Academic Content Standards are covered.

Table 5.11 Number of Courses Covered with Survey Responses by School Level and Subject

School Level	ELA	Math	Total
Middle-Grade Feeder School	1,089	917	2,006
High School	1,894	1,376	3,270
Total	2,983	2,293	5,276

The teacher survey included information on specific courses. Courses were classified by subject (ELA or mathematics) and by course type (primary course taken by most students, an alternative to the primary course, a supplemental or remedial course, and other courses or programs). We also looked at whether the course targeted primarily special education students (> 50 % of course enrollment), English learners (> 50% of course enrollment), or students in general (the remaining courses). Table 5.12 shows the distribution of courses across these categories.

At the high school level, 13 percent of the ELA courses and 10 percent of the mathematics courses targeted special education students and 9 percent of the ELA courses and 14 percent of the mathematics courses targeted English learners. Note that the number of courses may not be indicative of the number of students taking these courses. There might be

a single ESL course taken by most or all English learners and several different mathematics courses targeting this population, each with many fewer sections and lower total enrollment.

Table 5.12 Distribution of Courses by Subject, Type, and Students Served

Course Type	Number of Courses	Percent of Courses Targeting Special Populations		
		Special Educ.	Engl. Learners	Not Targeted
<b>High School ELA Courses</b>				
Primary	1,055	1%	8%	90%
Alternative	403	18%	44%	38%
Suppl./Remedial	280	14%	30%	57%
Other	156	13%	23%	64%
Total	1,894	13%	9%	64%
<b>High School Mathematics Courses</b>				
Primary	618	2%	11%	87%
Alternative	396	18%	14%	69%
Suppl./Remedial	237	17%	17%	66%
Other	125	11%	20%	69%
Total	1,376	10%	14%	76%
<b>Middle-Grade Feeder School ELA Courses</b>				
Primary	626	1%	12%	87%
Alternative	238	27%	47%	26%
Suppl./Remedial	143	12%	35%	53%
Other	76	7%	22%	71%
Total	1,083	8%	24%	68%
<b>Middle-Grade Feeder School Mathematics Courses</b>				
Primary	624	1%	11%	88%
Alternative	167	29%	18%	53%
Suppl./Remedial	68	24%	15%	62%
Other	58	7%	9%	84%
Total	917	8%	13%	79%

NOTE: Percent totals may not equal 100 due to rounding.

The majority of courses described in our survey were regular, long-established courses. Some courses, however, particularly courses targeting special education students and English learners, were more recently developed. Table 5.13 shows the distribution of each type of course by the year in which the course was first introduced.

At the high school level, more than a quarter of the ELA courses and a third of the mathematics courses targeting special populations were introduced in the past two years. The majority of these were new in the 2002-2003 school year. At the middle-grade feeder school level, recent development has been relatively even across the different course types. Significantly more of the middle-grade feeder school mathematics courses were introduced in the past three years. This is likely the result of efforts to accelerate the mathematics curriculum so that Algebra can be taught at the 8<sup>th</sup> rather than 9<sup>th</sup> grade.

Table 5.13 Year Each Type of Course was Introduced

Population Targeted	Number of Courses	Percent Introduced:				
		Before 1999	1999–2000	2000–2001	2001–2002	2002–2003
<b>High School ELA Courses</b>						
Special Education	135	64%	4%	5%	10%	16%
English Learners	379	63%	5%	5%	8%	20%
Not Targeted	1,319	78%	5%	4%	6%	7%
<b>High School Mathematics Courses</b>						
Special Education	128	54%	6%	6%	12%	23%
English Learners	183	47%	4%	9%	15%	24%
Not Targeted	1,013	61%	7%	6%	13%	14%
<b>Middle-Grade Feeder School ELA Courses</b>						
Special Education	89	66%	7%	10%	7%	10%
English Learners	250	69%	3%	8%	8%	11%
Not Targeted	718	73%	6%	5%	5%	11%
<b>Middle-Grade Feeder School Mathematics Courses</b>						
Special Education	75	65%	3%	9%	9%	13%
English Learners	111	47%	5%	20%	16%	13%
Not Targeted	696	53%	7%	10%	17%	13%

NOTE: Percent totals may not equal 100 due to rounding.

**Coverage of Targeted Standards**

We asked teachers the extent to which each course was aligned with the content standards that the course was intended to cover. For about half of the courses, teachers indicated that the alignment was very great (more than 90%). Teachers were also asked when the textbook for the course was adopted. As shown in Table 5.14, there was a clear relationship between how recently the textbook was adopted and the likelihood that the course would be rated as having very great alignment.

Table 5.14 Course Coverage of Academic Content Standards by Year Textbook Was Adopted

Year Textbook was Adopted	ELA		Mathematics	
	No. of Courses	Percent with Very Great Alignment	No. of Courses	Percent with Very Great Alignment
High School Courses				
2002–2003	288	67%	141	72%
2001–2002	159	54%	330	65%
2000–2001	126	49%	160	63%
1999–2000	108	44%	71	44%
Before 1999	489	37%	303	50%
N.A. (no Text)	366	38%	151	39%
Total	1,536	46%	1,156	57%
Middle-Grade Feeder School Courses				
2002–2003	346	74%	136	77%
2001–2002	139	64%	329	66%
2000–2001	49	37%	127	65%
1999–2000	58	38%	58	62%
Before 1999	216	36%	87	54%
N.A. (no Text)	120	36%	67	40%
Total	928	54%	804	64%

### Site Visits

**High School Teacher Interviews.** There was a surprising range of answers to the question, *When did this course begin using Standards-Based Instruction (SBI)?* Answers at each end of the range proved difficult to analyze with accuracy. Several experienced teachers, for example, stated that they had always used SBI throughout their careers, some of which began as long as 30 years ago. In further comment, most of these teachers explained that they had always followed an established curriculum guide, most often developed by their districts.

Since our focus is on the Class of 2004, the question becomes: Were the teachers using SBI for these students? For high school teachers to have used SBI for the Class of 2004, the 9<sup>th</sup> grade teachers would have had to start during the 2000–2001 school year. In an attempt to get a school response, we grouped teachers’ responses by school. We coded responses into three categories: (a) started before the Class of 2004, (b) probably started with the Class of 2004, and (c) started after the Class of 2004.

#### *English-Language Arts*

Sixty-two ELA teachers at 37 high schools provided an answer to the question of when they started using SBI in their course. We coded responses from 14 schools as indicating that ELA teachers at the high school began using SBI prior to the Class of 2004. Responses at another 12 high schools indicated that ELA teachers at the school appeared to start using SBI

with the Class of 2004. Teachers at the remaining 11 schools gave responses that indicated that they started using SBI after beginning to teach the Class of 2004 or were not using SBI.

*Mathematics*

Sixty-six math teachers at 34 high schools provided an answer (that we could code) to the question of when they started using SBI in their course. We coded responses from math teachers at 15 high schools as indicating that they began using SBI prior to the Class of 2004. Responses from 13 high schools indicated that the teachers began using SBI with the Class of 2004. Responses from six high schools indicated that they began SBI after students in the Class of 2004 were 9<sup>th</sup> graders.

We asked ELA and math teachers to *rate the implementation of SBI* in their courses, using a 5-point Likert-type scale. In the scale, a 1 indicated, “not at all implemented” and a 5 indicated, “completely implemented.” Most of the 68 high school ELA teachers rated their implementation of SBI very near a 4. Most of the 72 high school math teachers rated implementation just over a 4. No high school math teachers provided a rating of ‘1.’

**Middle-Grade Feeder School Teacher Interviews.** Middle-grade feeder school teachers would have had to start using SBI in the 7<sup>th</sup> grade by school Year-1998–1999 to use it with the Class of 2004. We again grouped the teacher responses by school and coded the schools in the same three categories as before.

Middle-grade feeder school teachers rated the implementation of SBI in their courses, using the same 5-point Likert-type scale as used by high school teachers. Responses for middle-grade feeder school teachers were slightly higher, with 33 middle-grade feeder school ELA teachers responding with an average of 4.4 , and 31 middle-grade feeder school math teachers responding with an average of 4.9. No ratings of ‘1’ or ‘2’ were given by high school ELA or math teachers.

*English-Language Arts*

For the ELA teachers, we received responses from 31 teachers from 15 middle-grade feeder schools. As could be expected, teachers from only 3 of those 15 schools indicated they started using SBI in time for the Class of 2004. We did not code any school as starting prior to the Class of 2004. Thus, responses from 12 of the 15 middle-grade feeder schools indicated that they had started using SBI after the Class of 2004. Most of the responses indicated that the schools had begun implementing SBI sometime within the last three to four years. Many times that implementation corresponded with the adoption of new textbooks.

*Mathematics*

Twenty-eight math teachers at 15 middle-grade feeder schools provided responses to when they started using SBI in their courses. Only two middle-grade feeder schools’ responses indicated that the teachers had implemented SBI for the Class of 2004. We did not code any middle-grade feeder school as starting SBI prior to the Class of 2004. Responses from the remaining 12 schools were coded as starting to use SBI since the Class of 2004. Again, most responses indicated that teachers at the school started to use SBI in the last two years.

### **Remediation Programs Targeted to the CAHSEE**

The site visits included interviews with high school teachers who were working to help students having difficulty passing the CAHSEE. Interviews focused on those who had taught courses or programs designed to help students considered at-risk of not succeeding on the CAHSEE subsequent to their taking and not passing the exit exam. In all, 21 high school teachers in this category were interviewed.

Fifteen of 21 CAHSEE remediation teachers referred to their CAHSEE remediation program as a “course”, though it was not always clear if the course was held during regular school hours or after school. Some schools had a 7<sup>th</sup> “after school” period during which they may have chosen to offer remediation. Two programs were held on Saturday, while another was described as a pull-out program held during students’ elective or gym period. Below are some comments describing how some programs/courses are organized:

- Students must take the course during their junior year if they have not passed the CAHSEE.
- The class was a 2-hour intercession course conducted from 1 p.m. to 3 p.m. Monday through Friday. There were two teachers teaching 80 students in the cafeteria. This was the only class conducted during those hours in the cafeteria.
- This course is held after school so it doesn’t interfere with the other scheduled classes.
- Class is held on Monday, Wednesday, Thursday and Saturday for eight weeks.
- The school is doing this course on a pull-out basis—from gym or elective.

Programs ranged from 14 to 170 students being served. However, not all respondents had a complete count of students in the programs. In some situations, teachers only had a count of the number of students in their section of a remedial course.

Eighteen of 21 CAHSEE remediation teachers reported the use of the California standards in their course or program. Those few that did not refer specifically to the use of standards often spoke of using the CAHSEE released items or the CAHSEE blueprints as a means of targeting the needs of their students. Several stated that they used a standards-aligned text that helped them stay focused on standards-based instruction. Five of 21 teachers rated the implementation level for standards-based instruction within their course or program, on a 1 to 5 scale (5 being full implementation). Their average score was 4.6. The following comments provide good representation of teachers’ input regarding increasing alignment to California Academic Content Standards:

- The district team—teachers from all the schools—focused on getting familiar with the standards. They used the standards, the exit exam blueprint—and mapped them to a course, sequenced the lessons, and produced a daily calendar for what content is covered and tested. This teacher took the course design and embellished it by formalizing lesson plans to relate directly to specific standards.
- I take it straight off the exit exam. I work on the test blueprint outline.
- The teacher lets the book keep track of the standards since it is aligned to the content standards.

The consensus among the CAHSEE remediation teachers seemed to be that accountability in itself is a good thing; some thought the Class of 2004 was ready, others did not, and still others were somewhere in between. A few CAHSEE remediation teachers offered a prediction of when they thought students would be ready to be held accountable to the CAHSEE.

- Now that we have standards-based instruction, I would delay the CAHSEE for a year or two.
- In 6 years, if students work, they can pass the CAHSEE.

Though not all remediation courses had begun the evaluation process, several had used or planned on using student performance on the CAHSEE, or on the CAHSEE released items, as a means of measuring program effectiveness. The following responses provide examples of evaluation methods used by the CAHSEE remediation teachers:

- There are plans to look at the CAHSEE scores following student enrollment in this course.
- Passing the CAHSEE is the ultimate evaluation.
- 75 percent of summer students passed the math test.
- 60 percent of students taking this course are passing the CAHSEE on their second try.
- We will accumulate data for this course comparing the performance on the CAHSEE between students who took the remediation course and students who did not.
- The course will involve a pre- and post-test based on the released items.
- Records have not been kept on student performance after the course yet.

Other evaluation was ongoing throughout the course, including in-class testing, pre-and post-tests, individualized assignments, and keeping student work on file. Below are examples of during-class evaluations used by the CAHSEE remediation teachers:

- We can track students' performance and progress with different ways, including weekly tests and individualized assignments.
- We administer an 80-item diagnostic test at the start; students determine their status related to the standards. We give it again at the end to show progress.
- The program includes an assessment component with pre-post tests for each strand.

### ***Targeted Programs for Students with Disabilities***

The interviews with Special Education teachers focused on those who were responsible for the Individualized Education Plans (IEP) or who taught primary or remedial ELA or math courses offered to special education students. A total of 72 interviews were conducted with 50 high school, 20 middle-grade feeder school, and 2 "other" special education teachers.

**High Schools.** Special education teachers in the high schools mentioned several types of assistance offered to their students in preparation for the CAHSEE, examples of which are listed here:

- Practice tests
- Remedial classes
- Test taking strategies
- After school tutoring
- Tutors
- Saturday school

- Study skills classes
- Lunchtime tutoring
- Summer school
- Note-taking strategies
- Computer based instruction
- Targeted review periods

In addition to special assistance offered prior to taking the CAHSEE, many SE teachers emphasized the importance of allowing accommodations for special education students during testing, or the need for differential standards for special education students. Some examples of these responses are provided below:

- There need to be differential standards for the truly handicapped kids.
- Maybe there should be a changed cut score to begin with, or have a different score for special education students.
- We need many accommodations to help them.
- The teacher would like to see a multiple diploma situation similar to that of New York, such as the Regents Diploma for those who pass the state’s test. There are also vocational diplomas or certificates in a specific area.
- It would be important to allow students to use calculators if it is in their IEP.<sup>1</sup>
- There should be a modified version for anyone with an IEP. Test whether kids can analyze and get the main point at a lower level. This would be fairer than modifications with material that is beyond their reading level.
- The test could be broken down into sections rather than just English or math so that the students could pass fractions, for example, and not have to take that section again.
- They should give students more choices for the writing samples. Resource students need to have a choice of topics. Some topics are not within their experience.

Thirty-six of the 50 high and “other” school SE teachers indicated that their department uses the standards in developing students’ IEPs. Seventeen of the teachers indicated that they were *very familiar* with the California Academic Content Standards, while 21 characterized themselves as *familiar* with the standards. Four teachers expressed familiarity with the standards but qualified the statement by saying that the standards were “largely irrelevant” for their special education students. These teachers noted that special education students typically function at lower grade levels, and that it was the teacher’s responsibility to put the individual students’ needs first. In one school, standards were not specifically used to determine IEPs, but were used to develop curriculum. Two noted that their department had just begun within the past year to use the standards to develop IEPs, and one of the teachers stated that the school was not yet using the standards completely. Some references were made to the use of the standards in writing goals and objectives for each student. Others noted that the standards were used but were modified to meet students’ specific needs. This often translated into the use of lower grade level standards. The following comments provide examples of the use of standards in developing IEPs:

- The California standards are used to develop IEPs. Goals are established for each standard in order for students to best meet the standard.

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<sup>1</sup> Accommodations and modifications consistent with a student’s IEP or 504 Plan are allowed for the CAHSEE.

- The school is not specifically using the standards to determine IEPs. Teachers look first to the special needs of the individual to determine the IEP, then use the standards to develop curriculum.
- IEPs are written from the California Academic Content Standards and teachers adjust the level of the standards to meet student needs.
- All goals and objectives were written to be aligned with the California Academic Content Standards. They are aligned to the student's grade level content standards rather than at grade level standards.
- The goals and objectives of the IEPs are supposed to be based on the standards. I have to go back to the IEP and find where the student is. I find a standard that fits the student's level of achievement. I may have to go down to the 5<sup>th</sup> grade level to find a standard that is at the student's level.

High schools seemed to be making a concerted effort to expose their special education students to the California Academic Content Standards. This usually involved "mainstreaming" special education students into general education courses, where they could be exposed to the same standards as the rest of their grade-level cohort. Often, as suggested in the previous section on IEPs, special education students were exposed to lower grade-level standards, in accordance with their individual needs.

In several schools, all Resource Specialist Program (RSP) students were mainstreamed in at least one subject area. In most situations, Special Day Class (SDC) students were at least mainstreamed in electives, such as physical education (PE). For schools that did not mainstream all their RSP students, more complete data are provided in the Appendix D along with data for those schools that did mainstream their SDC students in ELA or math. Overall, larger proportions of RSP than SDC students were mainstreamed in ELA and math.

The consensus was that all RSP students and some SDC students would be exposed to at least some of the content standards covered on the CAHSEE. Sixteen of 50 teachers stated that RSP students would be exposed to all the standards; 10 of those 16 teachers also stated that all special education students, including SDC, would be exposed to all content. Seventeen of 50 indicated that RSP students would be exposed to some of the standards. What was not always so clear was the grade level at which the standards were being covered. Typically, respondents noted that upper level math content would not be met. One teacher maintained that most special education students would not be exposed to any of the content standards. Within these general responses, there were a few clarifications, some of which are listed below:

- The SE students are exposed to all the standards; the opportunity is there.
- For SE students, getting to Geometry and some Algebra will be difficult.
- The SE students will be exposed, but perhaps not all at the level of the CAHSEE expectations.
- A lot of SE students won't have the opportunity of being exposed to a lot of the standards when they take the CAHSEE the first time.
- SDC students will never be exposed to Algebra content or higher level thinking because they can't read at a high enough level, and they can't retain information consistently or long enough for testing.

Though many high school teachers agreed that most special education students would be exposed to at least some of the required content, mastery of the content was viewed quite differently. Teachers generally agreed that special education students would not master the content necessary for passing the CAHSEE. Several indicated that math standards were the biggest obstacle to be overcome. One comment indicated that mastery is possible, with the appropriate accommodations. The following provide examples from the range of responses about student mastery of the content standards:

- I imagine that some of the SE students won't have mastered math by the time they take the CAHSEE for the first time—Geometry especially.
- Generally speaking, only 50 to 60 percent of the standards can be mastered when the SE students take the CAHSEE for the first time.
- As far as mastering the content SE students have been exposed to—the areas of math will be a problem.
- We can still cover all the CAHSEE standards at a reduced speed with special day students. They would be able to show mastery if they were allowed alternative modes of assessment.
- The mastery of content by SDC students relates to long- and short-term memory—a student may have mastery one day but not the next—it's a moving target.

Thirteen of the high school SE teachers indicated that none of their students had passed both portions of the CAHSEE. Of students that had passed at least one section of the exam, more students had more success in ELA than in math. A few relevant responses are provided here:

- No special education students have passed the math portion of the CAHSEE.
- 70 percent of SE students have taken the CAHSEE at least once and none of those students has passed yet.
- Probably 5 percent or less of SE students have passed both parts.
- I've had roughly nine SE students take the exit exam, and one passed both sections. Five of the others passed ELA, and one passed math.

Some respondents were able to make predictions in terms of how many of their students they expected would eventually pass the CAHSEE. These predictions varied, with some anticipating nearly complete success, others complete failure, and still others somewhere in the middle. Two teachers noted that if special education students were allowed accommodations, more would pass the CAHSEE. Representative comments are provided below:

- There may not even be 1 percent of special education students who will pass the CAHSEE.
- Eventually, over 90 percent of special day and over 90 percent of resource kids will pass.
- About 75 percent of SE students should be able to pass the test with accommodations, and about 50 percent will be able to pass both sections of the exam.
- Without modifications, none of this year's kids will pass. By just allowing the use of a calculator, which is what everyone does in real life, perhaps nine or 10 would pass.

**Middle-Grade Feeder Schools.** Nine of 20 middle-grade feeder school SE teachers stated that they used the California standards in developing their students' IEPs. Seven other teachers stated that they use the standards, but noted that the standards they use are usually below the students' grade levels. Two teachers made no mention of the IEPs specifically, but stated that they use the standards. Finally, two teachers stated that they focused on students' individual needs rather than the standards when developing IEPs. A few related comments are provided here:

- Goals and benchmarks have to be written to the content standards.
- The standards are written into the IEPs, but they are the standards for where the student is performing, not necessarily grade level.
- The content standards really don't come into play on IEPs; the focus is on the students' needs.

Nine of the 20 middle-grade feeder school SE teachers stated that some proportion of their students (RSP and/or SDC) was mainstreamed. Generally, more RSP students than SDC were mainstreamed, and RSP students were more likely to be mainstreamed in English and math. SDC students were often mainstreamed only in elective courses. Seven teachers stated that all of their RSP students were mainstreamed. Finally, one teacher stated that all special education students were mainstreamed, another stated that no SDC students were mainstreamed, and two teachers failed to provide information about mainstreaming at their school.

Nine of the 20 feeder school teachers stated that their students would be exposed to some portion of the California Academic Content Standards. Similarly to high school teachers, some middle-grade feeder school SE teachers raised concerns over higher-level math standards.

All middle-grade feeder school SE teachers agreed that most of the special education students would not master all of the content necessary to pass the CAHSEE. Eight of 20 stated that their students would have trouble mastering all of the math standards, especially Algebra and word problems. Others mentioned subjects such as writing, spelling and vocabulary that would prove to be a roadblock.

Middle-grade feeder school SE teachers who spoke about the CAHSEE and its impact on both the Class of 2004 and their own students offered a variety of responses. In general, middle-grade feeder school teachers were not familiar with the details of the CAHSEE and its administration. Eight teachers focused on the need for accommodations or alternative diplomas for special education students. Three stated that the Class of 2004 was not ready to be held accountable. Three made predictions about their own students, two stating that most of their students would be able to pass the CAHSEE, and the third stating that most students would go on to fail the exit exam. Some representative comments are provided below:

- From a special education point of view, I am very concerned about a mandated exit exam, particularly with not allowing accommodations.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Accommodations and modifications consistent with a student's IEP or 504 Plan are allowed for on the CAHSEE, so this is likely a misunderstanding on the teacher's part.

- The state probably should not hold the Class of 2004 accountable on the CAHSEE. But in upcoming years, the students will be better prepared for the CAHSEE.
- The school's RSP and SDC students will not be able to pass the CAHSEE when they get to high school. Students will have a better chance if the CAHSEE allows accommodations and they get a valid score.

### **Targeted Programs for English Learners**

The interviews with EL Teachers focused on those who taught courses offered to EL students as their primary or remedial ELA or math instruction covering standards tested on the CAHSEE. A total of 55 interviews were conducted with 40 high school, 13 middle-grade feeder school, and 2 "other" EL teachers.

#### **High Schools**

High school EL teachers mentioned several types of preparatory activities that were used in readying students for the CAHSEE, ranging from special programs to specific test-preparation activities. Some responses are listed below:

- An after school program is in place for students with limited English abilities.
- The school uses the Jean Schaeffer method.
- The teacher uses "Test Best," which is CAT9 aligned.
- The school has a summer program for reading and writing.
- Tutors explicitly help students prepare to pass the CAHSEE. For example, one item was looking at a telephone page and answering questions. The students wonder why they need to do this because they'd just go on the Internet or call 411 for help. The tutor is helping them to understand why it is important to know how to do things "the test way."

Some teachers mentioned using prepackaged test preparation materials, others used released test items, and still others drew from a variety of sources to prepare students in specific areas, such as vocabulary. Activities were created/assembled by a single teacher, created/assembled at the school or department level, or distributed by the district. The following responses illustrate the variety of ways that test preparation activities were developed:

- The teacher knows the topics on the exam and covers them in class prior to the exam.
- The teacher uses word lists provided by the English department, sample CAHSEE items, and skeletons for essay writing.
- The district provides the Kaplan test preparation series for use in the classes.
- Departments are working with the blueprint. Every school in the district is using "Word of the Day" to carry across the curriculum.
- Aside from working on comprehension and increasing vocabulary and grammar skills in general, the teacher does not specifically prepare students for the CAHSEE.

High school and "other" school EL teachers indicated a variety of ways in which the California standards were integrated into EL curricula. Several mentioned the use of textbooks and other materials as a guide in using the standards. As these texts usually listed

the standards associated with each chapter, teachers were able to remain focused on the standards simply through the use of a standards-aligned text. The majority of responses indicated in non-specific terms that the standards were used, stating that the curriculum was standards-aligned, or that the standards were incorporated into instruction. A few of the more interesting responses are included below:

- The teacher uses quarterly writing rubrics based on the CAHSEE rubrics.
- The teacher was involved in groups that looked at regular standards and adapted them to levels that were doable for EL students. The groups worked from the California Academic Content Standards and adapted them to create the ELD standards so they are very close.
- The district consults with teacher and committees to map ELD standards to California standards, and they are uniformly implemented across the district. Teachers are recording within courses what standards have been covered, and they are running end-of-unit tests to monitor progress.

Seven of the 26 EL teachers who were able to give an estimate of their ability to cover the California Academic Content Standards with their EL students stated that their EL courses covered the same standards as their general education counterparts. Five of the 26 stated that EL standards were the focus at the lower EL levels, with a movement to the regular standards in higher-level EL courses. Two of these teachers noted that they make every effort to move their students into the higher EL levels as quickly as possible to assure they are exposed to the California standards. Other teachers mentioned various proportions of the standards that they thought they would be able to cover with their students.

Thirty-five high school EL teachers indicated that at least some portion of the Class of 2004 had already passed or would be able to pass the CAHSEE. The following are a few comments made by teachers who were able to estimate the number of students that had passed or would pass the CAHSEE:

- I think the EL juniors are fine and have already passed it.
- Of 60 EL students, the teacher hopes all will take the math portion of the CAHSEE in March and thinks 30 to 40 percent will pass.
- The teacher thinks the Class of 2004 students will all pass except EL and special education students.
- The 2004 requirement will not present a roadblock for this teacher's EL students.

### **Middle-Grade Feeder Schools**

Though three middle-grade feeder school teachers stated that they were not very familiar with the CAHSEE, several others were aware of its importance and had begun preparing their students for the exam. Most of the preparatory activities mentioned were focused on test-taking strategies and familiarizing students with the testing scenario, as these comments illustrate:

- The teacher uses a book called *Scoring High* for reading and language. Many EL students have never had a standardized test and this really helps them understand the style of testing.

- The EL kids do STAR testing and the district conducts tests three times a year in core subjects.
- The teacher starts the EL students with the writing prompt (persuasion, literature) so they get used to seeing that every trimester.

Eleven of 13 middle-grade feeder school EL teachers stated that they used the California standards in their instruction. The standards were integrated into the curriculum in a variety of ways, a few of which are listed below:

- We integrate the standards in all kinds of ways: decoding strategies, phonics programs, reading strategies, writing strategies, WRITE program workshops. EL kids have to keep a portfolio. They prepare a research report that requires that they discuss how they met each of the standards.
- The textbooks are standards aligned.
- The entire school is behind the effort by encouraging things like listing the standards on the boards in the classrooms and pointing them out to the students when they are being covered.

Four of the 13 middle-grade feeder school EL teachers were able to make an estimate of their ability to cover all of the necessary standards in their course. The responses varied from less than half to all of the content standards being covered.

Middle-grade feeder school EL teachers were fairly evenly split in terms of their predictions about the 2004 CAHSEE requirement. Four stated that their current students would probably not be able to pass the CAHSEE, three stated that their students should have no problems passing, and three stated that student success would depend on their current EL level and their ability to advance through the EL program before taking the CAHSEE. The comments below are representative of the range of responses:

- The majority of EL students will not pass the CAHSEE when they get to 10<sup>th</sup> grade based on where they are right now.
- I am confident that the majority of EL students will pass the CAHSEE.
- If an EL student is a strong level 2 in the ELD program in 8<sup>th</sup> grade he or she should be able to pass the CAHSEE by the end of high school. If a student is low level 2 or 1 in the ELD program, it is less likely he or she will pass, but it depends on the educational background and support at the high school.

### **Other Programs**

The interviews with Special Program Teachers focused on those who taught courses or programs designed to help students considered at-risk of succeeding on the CAHSEE prior to their taking the exit exam. We conducted 42 interviews with 34 high school, 5 middle-grade feeder school, and 3 “other” special program teachers.

### **High Schools**

Depending on whether the program was structured as a single course, a before- or after-school program, or multiple courses, program length tended to vary. At 21 high schools, programs were structured as a single course that met during the school day; one course met

during a seventh, after-school period. Eight other programs were conducted before or after regular school hours. Four programs were organized as a school-within-a-school, with multiple courses and/or multiple years. Some examples of program descriptions appear below:

- Advanced Linguistics is a scheduled full-year class for low performing readers.
- The class meets as a regular class on a block schedule for two hours.
- The tutoring program is a four-week program and students can enroll for before or after school.
- Students may be in the program during one, two or three class periods.

Programs that were organized as a single course tended to last one semester or one school year. Before- and after-school programs varied between a few weeks and an entire school year. Multiple course programs might last a year or more. Some responses are provided here:

- This is an entire semester course.
- There are several sections of Language Skills. The program lasts the entire year.
- Students attend four days a week for 1 hour and 15 minutes. They are supposed to remain for the entire year.
- The *Language! [Exclamation]* program takes 2 to 3 years to complete.

Program sizes range from 10 to 300 student participants. Schools serving a larger population of students might have several sections of an intervention course, each serving 20 or more students. Programs that were organized as a course were typically taken for elective credit.

Two of the three “other” programs were organized as single courses; the third was a school-within-a-school program.

Teachers from 20 of 34 high school and 1 of 3 “other” special programs stated that they used the California standards within their program. The following comments provide good representation of teacher input:

- This program attempts to integrate the students’ learning styles with the content standards.
- Initially this course was based more on national standards, but we have modified it for the CAHSEE standards.
- This course is about a 3 in implementing standards-based instruction on content, but it’s a 5 on students feeling successful.
- One problem is that this program is not aligned with the California Content Standards.

Ten high school teachers made general comments about the difficulty that they expected students to have with the exam. Of the 13 who were able to give proportions, five stated that less than one-quarter would pass, four others estimated about one-half, and four estimated 75 to 90 percent. Two stated that students would pass depending on their level of participation or ability level. Two of the three “other” teachers commented that students who arrived at their school at an earlier age had a better chance of passing, simply by being in the system

longer. The other stated that only one or two students might be able to pass the CAHSEE. The following comments provide a good representation of teachers' comments:

- It will be very difficult for the students in this program to pass the CAHSEE.
- Students in this class have little chance of reaching the CAHSEE level competence.
- 25 percent of the students in this program have the potential to pass due to maturing.
- Probably 50 percent of my students can pass the CAHSEE.
- If current students remain in the program for the whole year-and-a-half, the coordinator hopes that approximately 80 percent will pass.
- In total, 90 percent will pass the exam.

### **Middle-Grade Feeder Schools**

Three of the five middle-grade feeder school special program teachers described their program as a course, meeting for one period per day or as a two-period block. The two other special programs were organized more as a school-within-a-school program, with students meeting several periods each day.

Middle-grade feeder school programs served between 16 and 100 students. Three of the five programs served around 40 students.

Three of five middle-grade feeder school special program teachers stated that they used the California standards within their program. The remaining two teachers however, did not mention the standards. Comments about the use of standards are provided below:

- We use the California Content Standards for reading and writing and social studies. The program is driven by the California Content Standards.
- The California Content Standards were used in developing the standards for the program.
- The California standards are used for all English classes. Although this class is more skills based, we do use the standards.

Middle-grade feeder school respondents largely cited student-level factors, most of which were mirrored in the high school responses listed above, that presented challenges for their programs. However, parental education and participation also were mentioned by the middle-grade feeder schools as challenges to program success.

## **Summary and Conclusions**

Both survey and site visit results on the impact of the CAHSEE can be summarized in two key conclusions:

1. Coverage of the California Content Standards at both middle-grade feeder and high school levels has increased dramatically in the past three years. At the high school level, coverage of the particular standards assessed by the CAHSEE has also increased.
2. The number of remedial programs designed to help students who do not initially master relevant content standards has increased dramatically. These include a number

of courses targeting special populations, in particular English learners and students with disabilities. A significant number of students are taking advantage of these courses.

While it is not possible to say that these changes were due entirely to the CAHSEE requirement, it is very unlikely that changes of this magnitude would have occurred without such a requirement. Many teachers and principals suggest that the requirement should be continued so that the momentum behind remedial instruction for students who have not yet mastered essential skills can be maintained.



## CHAPTER 6: EVIDENCE OF THE EFFECTIVENESS OF INSTRUCTION FOR THE CLASS OF 2004

### Introduction

The primary evidence used to evaluate the effectiveness of instruction in the CAHSEE standards was whether most students were able to pass the exam. Passing rates were computed by comparing the number of students who have passed each portion of the exam in each of the administrations from March 2001 through January 2003 with the number of 10<sup>th</sup> graders enrolled in fall of 2001, the year that the Class of 2004 entered that grade. Passing rates were computed for all students and for disadvantaged or “at-risk” students, including economically disadvantaged, English learners (EL), and special education (SE) students<sup>3</sup>. Overall and subgroup passing rates were also computed separately for 1,843 high schools, using counts of 10<sup>th</sup> graders from the 2002 STAR administration as the base for each school and demographic subgroup. Again, results from the survey of instruction and the interviews are presented to extend the information on passing rates.

### Passing Rates

Notwithstanding the extensive impact that the CAHSEE requirement has had on both initial and remedial instruction, passing rates remained low for many schools. Table 6.1 shows overall passing rates for each portion of the CAHSEE through January 2003, the most recent data available at the time the effectiveness of instruction was evaluated. Previously, CDE had published cumulative passing rates through July of 2002. Table 6.1 also shows changes in the passing rates resulting from the four administrations provided in July, September, and November of 2002, and January of 2003.

For English-language arts (ELA), the overall passing rate was above 80 percent. If the cumulative rate continued to increase at about 10 percent per year, it would have reached roughly 95 percent by June 2004. Note, however, that the remaining students would have had greater difficulty in reaching the passing standard and also that continued progress assumed that significant resources would continue to be available to help students to reach this standard. In addition, not all of the students who were in the 10<sup>th</sup> grade in 2002 would still have been in school and attempting to pass the CAHSEE by the end of their senior year. While the overall passing rate for ELA was relatively high, English learners and students with disabilities continued to have problems. Unless the rate of improvement had increased dramatically, at least a quarter of the EL students and over a third of SE students would not have reached passing levels by June 2004.

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<sup>3</sup> Note that fall enrollment counts are not available for economically disadvantaged students, defined in terms of eligibility for free or reduced-price lunch. Disaggregated counts by school and grade are not available for this variable. For this category, counts of Spring 2002 STAR examinees flagged as eligible for the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) were used. This approach undercounts NSLP students to a small extent because students excluded from testing are not in the counts. Thus passing rates for this category apply to students who are eligible for testing.

For mathematics, evidence for the effectiveness of current initial and remedial instruction was less positive. Just over 60 percent of the Class of 2004 had passed the mathematics portion of the CAHSEE. Unless the rate of improvement increased dramatically, about 20 percent of all students would have failed to pass the mathematics requirement, with the result that they would have been denied a diploma. Here too, the problem was much worse for EL and SE students. At the then current rate of improvement, about half of the EL students and 75 percent of the SE students would have failed to meet the mathematics requirement.

Table 6.1 Approximate Passing Rates for the Class of 2004 (Through Jan. 2003)

Group	2001-2002 10 <sup>th</sup> Graders*	Number Passing CAHSEE Through Jan. 2003		Ratio** (# Passing / Enrollment)		Change from July 2002	
		ELA	Math	ELA	Math	ELA	Math
All Students	459,588	373,284	287,129	81%	62%	+8%	+9%
Economically Disadvantaged English Learners (EL)	125,139	99,009	67,380	79%	54%	+10%	+11%
Special Education (SE)	77,446	42,013	28,969	54%	37%	+11%	+10%
	47,169	18,804	10,210	40%	22%	+9%	+6%

\* Based on fall 2001 enrollment data, except counts of economically disadvantaged students are based on spring 2002 STAR data. (Counts of economically disadvantaged students by grade were not otherwise available.)

\*\* The ratio is not exactly the percent of students who have passed. Some of the students who have passed have transferred out of the state or dropped out and were not included in the counts of 2001-2002 10<sup>th</sup> graders. Further, some EL or SE students passing the CAHSEE in 9<sup>th</sup> grade may have been classified differently in the 10<sup>th</sup> grade and not counted in the base for these groups

As clearly indicated in our survey and interviews and from other sources, instruction varies considerably from district to district and from school to school. The next step in our analysis of instruction for the Class of 2004 was to compute passing rates for each school. The question addressed in these analyses is “How many school systems (high schools plus middle-grade feeder schools) have had instruction that is effective in helping students to master the CAHSEE standards?”

Table 6.2 shows the number of schools with high, moderate, low, and very low passing rates for each portion of the CAHSEE. Results are also shown separately for groups of at-risk students and for schools with varying proportions of each type of student. For these analyses, passing rates less than 50 percent were considered very low, passing rates from 50 percent to 75 percent were considered low, passing rates from 75 percent to 90 percent were considered moderate, and passing rates above 90 percent were considered high. In subsequent analyses, we used a 75 percent passing rate as the dividing line between schools with moderate or high passing rates (more than 75% passing) where evidence for the effectiveness of instruction was generally positive and schools with low or very low passing rates (fewer than 75% passing) where the evidence of effectiveness was less positive. Note that the results shown in Table 6.2 were based on 1,843 high schools (essentially all) and not limited to the sample responding to the survey or participating in the interviews.

Table 6.2 Percent of Schools with High, Moderate, Low, and Very Low Passing Rates

Size (# of 2002 10 <sup>th</sup> Graders)	Number of Schools	Percent in School Passing ELA*				Percent in School Passing Math*			
		Very Low < 50%	Low 50– 74%	Mod. 75– 94%	High > 95%	Very Low < 50%	Low 50– 74%	Mod. 75– 94%	High > 95%
All Students									
1–99	930	40%	25%	16%	19%	75%	13%	6%	6%
100–499	533	15%	12%	34%	39%	28%	30%	32%	10%
500+	380	5%	16%	49%	30%	19%	43%	33%	6%
All	1,843	26%	19%	28%	27%	50%	24%	19%	7%
English Learners									
1–9	1,071	78%	7%	2%	13%	86%	5%	1%	8%
10–49	386	45%	23%	16%	17%	60%	22%	10%	9%
50+	386	34%	41%	21%	4%	70%	22%	5%	3%
All	1,843	62%	17%	9%	12%	77%	12%	4%	7%
Special Education Students									
1–9	1,056	70%	7%	2%	22%	84%	5%	1%	10%
10–49	629	39%	22%	16%	24%	70%	17%	6%	7%
50+	158	59%	25%	9%	6%	90%	8%	1%	1%
All	1,843	58%	13%	7%	21%	79%	10%	3%	8%

\* Note: Percents in each row group may not add to 100 due to rounding.

Overall, half of California’s high schools had passing rates lower than 50 percent for the mathematics portion of the CAHSEE. Passing rates were above 75 percent in only about a quarter of all high schools. Passing rates were lower for smaller schools, which were likely to have fewer resources. Seventy-five percent of the schools with fewer than 100 students had very low passing rates for the CAHSEE mathematics test and only 12 percent had moderate or high passing rates.

Very few schools had high passing rates for English learners and special education students. For mathematics, 77 percent of the schools had very low passing rates for EL and 79 percent had very low passing rates for SE students. Passing rates were even lower for schools that had higher numbers (50 or more) students in each of these categories. Only 8 percent of schools with 50 or more EL students had moderate or high passing rates compared to 19 percent of schools with 10 to 49 EL students. Similarly, only 2 percent of the schools with 50 or more SE students had moderate to high passing rates for these students, compared to 13 percent of the schools with 10 to 49 SE students.

Given low initial passing rates for the CAHSEE, a key question is the effectiveness of high school courses designed to help students who still need to master content standards that were or should have been covered at earlier grades. Principals were asked whether they offered summer courses designed to help students who were having difficulty in passing the CAHSEE. Roughly 8 percent of them said that they did. However, the majority reported that fewer than 25 percent of the students who had not passed the CAHSEE took these courses and that fewer than 25 percent of the students who did take the course were able to pass the CAHSEE on their next attempt. During our site visits, we were able to obtain class lists from

a number of these courses. Indeed, roughly 20 percent of the students we were able to match to records from CAHSEE administrations subsequently passed.

### Relationship of Passing Rates to Alignment

Passing rates were significantly higher for schools reporting early alignment to the California Academic Content Standards covered by the CAHSEE. Table 6.3 shows the relationship between coverage of the CAHSEE Academic Content Standards reported by the high school principals in our survey and passing rates for the Class of 2004 computed from the test data.

Table 6.3 Percent of Schools (N=279) with High Passing Rates (> 75%) by Time of Implementation of Standards-Based Instruction (SBI)

First Year in Which SBI Covered at Least 75% of Content Standards	ELA		Mathematics	
	Schools Reaching 75% Coverage	% with > 75% Passing	Schools Reaching 75% Coverage	% with > 75% Passing
Before 1999	10%	100%	14%	100%
1999–2000	69%	94%	72%	64%
2000–2001	42%	88%	40%	45%
2001–2002	66%	79%	62%	39%
2002–2003	42%	74%	36%	28%
Not Yet	33%	61%	36%	19%

The survey question asked principals to estimate coverage of the content standards in each academic year beginning with “Before 1999” through the current 2002–2003 school year. In virtually all cases, coverage increased each year. We sorted schools by the first year for which coverage was estimated to exceed 75 percent of the standards and looked at the passing rates for each category. As shown in Table 6.3, passing-rate results are quite closely related to the coverage data. All schools reporting high coverage before 1999 had high passing rates. For ELA, the proportion of schools with high passing rates ranged from 100 percent for schools with the earliest coverage down to 61 percent for schools that did not report at least 75 percent coverage at any time. For mathematics, the proportion of schools with moderate or high passing rates ranged from 100 percent for the “early adopters” down to only 19 percent for schools that were not yet reporting 75 percent coverage of the standards.

### Factors that Limit the Effectiveness of Current Instruction

#### Student Preparation

Teachers responding to the surveys were asked about a number of factors that limited the effectiveness of their courses. In both the survey results and the interviews, a critical limitation was the number of students who did not have key skills needed to succeed in the course they were taking. Table 6.4 summarizes teachers’ responses to the question asking what proportion of their students had the necessary prerequisite skills. For the majority of

courses targeting special education students and English learners, the teachers reported that “Most students do not yet have prerequisite skills.” Thus, schools may well be offering effective instruction in the targeted content standards, but teachers reported that many special education students and English learners are not yet ready to benefit from these courses.

Table 6.4 Teachers’ Evaluation of How Well Students are Prepared for Their Course

Target Population For the Course	Percent of Teachers Indicating:		
	Few Students Are Well-Prepared	Some Students are Well-Prepared	Most Students are Well-Prepared
High School ELA Courses			
Special Education Students	62%	33%	5%
English Learners	42%	42%	15%
Not Targeted	20%	53%	28%
High School Mathematics Courses			
Special Education Students	62%	25%	3%
English Learners	53%	39%	8%
Not Targeted	31%	53%	16%
Middle School ELA Courses			
Special Education Students	56%	40%	3%
English Learners	45%	45%	10%
Not Targeted	18%	56%	26%
Middle School Mathematics Courses			
Special Education Students	59%	31%	10%
English Learners	44%	45%	11%
Not Targeted	18%	49%	33%

Teachers were also asked what proportion of the students in their course scored at or above the basic level when they took the California Standards Test the year before. The results shown in Table 6.5 are entirely consistent with the teachers’ own assessment of student skill levels as shown in Table 6.4 above. Again, the most severe problems were for courses targeting SE students. In more than 80 percent of these courses, fewer than a quarter of the students had demonstrated even basic achievement in the previous year.

Table 6.5 Percent of Students in the Class of 2004 Scoring at Least Basic on the California Standards Test in the Previous Year

Target Population For the Course	Percent of Teachers Indicating Percent of Their Students at Least Basic was:		
	Fewer than 25%	50-75%	More than 75%
High School ELA Courses			
Special Education Students	82%	12%	6%
English Learners	67%	29%	5%
Not Targeted	23%	46%	31%
High School Mathematics Courses			
Special Education Students	85%	8%	7%
English Learners	60%	31%	9%
Not Targeted	32%	50%	18%
Middle School ELA Courses			
Special Education Students	85%	13%	1%
English Learners	54%	38%	8%
Not Targeted	14%	50%	36%
Middle School Mathematics Courses			
Special Education Students	80%	10%	10%
English Learners	42%	44%	14%
Not Targeted	13%	41%	46%

**Interviews**

*Are incoming students better prepared?*

Most of the high school principals (27) reported that they either saw little change with the incoming students or they have not had enough time to tell if there has been a change. Ten principals reported that incoming students were better prepared than in the past. Additionally, 12 principals made comments regarding articulation between the high school and middle-grade feeder schools;—seven reported articulation was poor or needed improvement and six reported articulation was good and improving. Although it should not be considered conclusive, it was interesting to note that generally the same schools that reported student improvement also reported good articulation. The same was true for principals reporting the need to improve articulation; they also noted finding little change with incoming students.

The middle-grade feeder school principals reported findings contrary to the high schools. Eight of the 12 middle-grade feeder schools responding to this question stated that their incoming students appeared to be better prepared while four principals reported no changes. The same correlation found with the high schools holds true for the middle-grade feeder schools; that the same schools reporting improved incoming students reported good articulation with their feeder elementary schools.

During the site visits we asked high school ELA and mathematics teachers about any changes they have seen in the *preparation of students entering their classes* since the implementation of standards-based instruction. Thus, depending on the particular course, a teacher might be describing preparation that took place in middle-grade feeder schools or within the high school.

We placed responses into three main categories: better preparation now, little or no change now, worse preparation now. We also found several other categories, such as variance among middle-grade feeder schools, comments about student preparation in general, and relationship between preparation and student cohort. This question took the form of an open-ended response, with teachers discussing their initial response and often expanding on it. For example, a teacher might state that he or she has seen little change in the quality of student preparation and may also state that student preparation varies among middle-grade feeder schools. Results in Table 6.6 show that teachers of both subjects believe students are still not where they should be in terms of readiness for the course, but that they are starting to see improvements in student preparation, followed closely by those who see little or no change in student preparation levels. Only a few teachers stated that the level of student preparation is worse.

Table 6.6 Interview Responses About the Quality of Student Preparation by High School Subject

	Seeing better prep	Seeing little or no change	Seeing worse prep	Seeing poor prep generally	Feeder school variance	Cohort dependent	New teacher
HS ELA	19	11	3	18	3	2	5
HS math	16	14	8	18	2	1	6

We also asked middle-grade feeder school teachers who were interviewed about the *preparation of their incoming students*; 22 middle-grade feeder school math and 26 middle-grade feeder school ELA teachers responded. We used the same coding scheme as we did with high school teacher responses, and Table 6.7 presents the results. In both subjects, the most frequent response was that students were better prepared, followed by little/no change. We note that in two instances ELA teachers gave both a “better preparation” and “little/no change” comment in the same response.

Table 6.7 Interview Responses about the Quality of Student Preparation by Middle-Grade Feeder School Subject

	Seeing better prep	Seeing little or no change	Seeing worse prep	Seeing poor prep generally	Feeder school variance	Cohort dependent	New teacher
MS ELA	13	6	1	4	2	4	3
MS math	10	6	0	6	0	0	1

*Changes in performance of student subpopulations?*

Over half of the high school principals (18) said they have not seen improvement in student performance, but 13 of those stated that there has not been enough time yet to see greater results. Four principals discussed concerns that EL students are having difficulty

keeping up and one specifically mentioned that SE students are not passing—that they are the ones suffering the most. Only two principals stated that there has been a negative change in performance with one comment stating that the problem was likely due to a change in the schedule. There were, however, six high schools (22%) indicating that the CAHSEE and standards-based instruction have made a positive difference. They indicated that they were on the right path and should continue to see improvement in the future because of the standards.

The middle-grade feeder schools seemed to report a more positive outlook regarding student subpopulation performance than the high schools. About half of the middle-grade feeder schools felt there had been little change, but 40 percent of the principals felt there were positive changes in student performance. One school noted that all the subpopulations had seen improvement this year, but one school noted that EL students were having trouble.

**Teacher Qualification and Experience**

The principal survey included a question on the extent of professional development targeting teaching the standards. Table 6.8 shows the levels of professional development activity reported in response to this question. The data presented in Table 6.8 also show that the current level of professional development is not related to cumulative CAHSEE passing rates for the Class of 2004. It is likely too soon to see any impact from the high level of professional development activity reported here. It may also be the case that there is more current professional development activity in schools with lower CAHSEE passing rates, as these schools are most in need of improvement.

Table 6.8 Percent of Teachers Receiving Professional Development in Teaching the Standards (Last 12 Months)

Percent of Teachers Receiving Professional Development.	Percent of Schools	Percent with High (> 75%) Passing Rates	
		ELA	Mathematics
> 90 %	44	78%	42%
75–90 %	18	89%	40%
25–74 %	21	87%	52%
< 25 %	15	76%	49%
Not Applicable	2	50%	50%

The teacher questionnaires included a number of questions about the qualifications and experiences of the teachers of each course. Table 6.9 provides information on the extent to which courses are being taught by teachers who possess appropriate credentials. Overall, nearly all of the teachers for most of the courses have appropriate credentials. The most significant concern is with high school mathematics courses targeting special education student where more than 20 percent of the courses reported in our survey do not have teachers with appropriate credentials.

**Interviews**

In the interviews, most principals did not cite problems with teacher qualifications or credentials. The following are comments middle-grade feeder and high school principals made related to the qualifications of their teaching staffs.

- Of 14 teachers for Algebra 1, all but one has a math credential.
- Most teachers at our school are teaching within their certificates; two teachers are on emergency certificates.
- My district pays very well, but I’m hearing that getting good, qualified teachers is becoming a problem. The only time we hire someone without proper credentials is when we have a special need (e.g., physics teacher, special education teacher). From what I hear outside it’s hard to get really well trained teachers.
- This school could easily have many more sections of Math Concepts, but we don’t have credentialed staff to teach them. The principal believes teachers should be credentialed, but there is a situation now where there needs to be some reconsideration. There are science teachers who have lots of math knowledge and understanding but they can’t teach math. However, then someone who has a sufficient number of units can teach even when they don’t have the mathematical understanding.
- One of the challenges we face is that our district now has a freeze on hiring teachers with emergency credentials. Many teachers we interview really do not qualify to be teachers. Many graduates, who did not obtain teacher certificates while still in college, and who probably have good content knowledge, would like to teach, but they cannot be hired because of the freeze.

For each course listed as a primary or supplemental English-language arts or mathematics course, a teacher was asked “How many sections of this course or program are taught by a teacher with an appropriate subject area credential?” Table 6.9 summarizes the responses.

Table 6.9 Proportion of Teachers with Appropriate Credentials

Target Population For the Course	Percent of Courses Where Proportion of Teachers with Credentials is:				
	None	Some	About Half	Most	Nearly All
High School ELA Courses					
Special Education	12%	4%	2%	5%	78%
English Learners	4%	2%	4%	7%	84%
Not Targeted	3%	3%	3%	7%	84%
High School Mathematics Courses					
Special Education	22%	5%	5%	7%	61%
English Learners	11%	4%	6%	13%	66%
Not Targeted	8%	4%	6%	10%	72%
Middle-Grade Feeder School ELA Courses					
Special Education	7%	3%	6%	6%	78%
English Learners	3%	2%	3%	7%	85%
Not Targeted	2%	1%	3%	8%	87%
Middle-Grade Feeder School Mathematics Courses					
Special Education	14%	3%	5%	4%	73%
English Learners	8%	4%	6%	13%	70%
Not Targeted	4%	3%	5%	8%	81%

Table 6.10 Teacher Experience with Special Populations

Specific Type of Experience	Target Population For the Course	Percent of Courses where Teacher Experience is:				
		None	Slight	Moderate	Great	Very Great
High School ELA Teachers						
Economically Disadvantaged Students	Special Education	2%	3%	19%	31%	46%
	English Learners	1%	9%	22%	34%	34%
	Not Targeted	1%	10%	34%	31%	24%
Remedial Students	Special Education	1%	2%	15%	40%	43%
	English Learners	2%	9%	27%	37%	25%
	Not Targeted	1%	10%	38%	30%	20%
EL Students	English Learners	2%	5%	18%	32%	42%
Special Needs	Special Education	0%	4%	11%	23%	62%
High School Mathematics Teachers						
Economically Disadvantaged Students	Special Education	0%	4%	25%	35%	36%
	English Learners	0%	5%	33%	36%	26%
	Not Targeted	2%	12%	38%	27%	21%
Remedial Students	Special Education	0%	3%	19%	32%	46%
	English Learners	0%	5%	34%	36%	25%
	Not Targeted	1%	9%	37%	34%	19%
EL Students	English Learners	2%	13%	29%	34%	23%
Special Needs	Special Education	0%	2%	15%	28%	55%
Middle-Grade Feeder School ELA Teachers						
Economically Disadvantaged Students	Special Education	0%	12%	31%	22%	34%
	English Learners	0%	6%	20%	37%	39%
	Not Targeted	1%	6%	33%	37%	23%
Remedial Students	Special Education	2%	2%	6%	26%	65%
	English Learners	1%	9%	21%	36%	32%
	Not Targeted	0%	6%	32%	40%	22%
EL Students	English Learners	0%	7%	22%	29%	41%
Special Needs	Special Education	1%	0%	11%	5%	83%
Middle-Grade Feeder School Mathematics Teachers						
Economically Disadvantaged Students	Special Education	0%	3%	20%	36%	41%
	English Learners	0%	7%	27%	41%	24%
	Not Targeted	2%	7%	38%	29%	24%
Remedial Students	Special Education	2%	0%	6%	38%	54%
	English Learners	1%	7%	27%	36%	30%
	Not Targeted	1%	7%	38%	32%	22%
EL Students	English Learners	1%	8%	31%	25%	34%
Special Needs	Special Education	0%	0%	9%	16%	75%

Questions of effectiveness are most pronounced for courses targeting economically disadvantaged students, students in remedial programs, special education students, or English learners. Table 6.10 summarizes responses to questions about the experiences that teachers have with these special populations. The results indicate that courses targeting special education students and English learners are nearly all being taught by teachers with moderate to very great experience with these populations.

**Other Factors**

Teachers were asked on the survey about the potential influence of a number of factors that might limit the effectiveness of the courses on which they were reporting. Table 6.11 summarizes their responses. Consistent with the findings discussed in the preceding section, lack of qualified teachers was not listed as a major concern.

The most significant limitation reported was lack of student motivation. Lack of parental support, low attendance, and other related problems were also cited as limiting factors for a number of courses. Note in Appendix B, “Summary of Questionnaire Response Frequencies,” that principals from most schools reported that fewer than a quarter of students who have not yet passed the CAHSEE take advantage of available summer school courses.

Table 6.11 Other Factors Limiting Course Effectiveness

Limitation	Percent of Teachers Indicating the Effect was:				
	None	Slight	Moderate	Great	Very Great
<b>High School Teachers</b>					
Low Attendance	14%	30%	23%	17%	16%
Low Motivation	5%	17%	26%	27%	25%
Limited English	21%	35%	25%	11%	8%
Low Parental Support	10%	29%	31%	19%	11%
Lack of Materials	53%	27%	12%	5%	3%
Lack of Teachers	70%	19%	6%	3%	2%
<b>Middle-Grade Feeder School Teachers</b>					
Low Attendance	24%	40%	16%	10%	10%
Low Motivation	10%	21%	29%	23%	17%
Limited English	23%	38%	24%	9%	6%
Low Parental Support	14%	27%	31%	18%	10%
Lack of Materials	59%	24%	10%	4%	3%
Lack of Teachers	74%	14%	6%	3%	3%

**Interviews**

*Changes in motivation?*

Of the 36 high school principals interviewed, 13 stated they had seen little or no change in student motivation and five stated they had not yet had enough time to tell. Of principals giving both those responses, several made comments to indicate that they felt they were on the right path to see improvement in the future. Eight principals stated that students appear more motivated now and two of those felt students were more motivated for the CAHSEE than for other tests. One principal of a high EL population school felt motivation had

decreased, stating the EL students are now realizing they will never pass the CAHSEE and have quit trying. Three principals stated there has been no impact on dropout rates; however, three stated that the CAHSEE would increase dropout rates in the future. One reported that the dropout rate has already increased because of the CAHSEE.

Eight of the 17 middle-grade feeder school principals reported they have seen no change in student motivation and dropout rates. We note that, because most middle-grade feeder school students are still too young to drop out, it is unlikely that middle-grade feeder school principals would see much increase in dropout rates. Although the principals stated they talk to students about the importance of the CAHSEE, it is just too far in the future for them to be very concerned. Three stated that motivation has gone down, but supporting comments indicated it was because of teacher frustration trying to implement another new program (standards) or that the students, particularly minority students, do not care about performing well in school. No principals indicated that students' motivation has increased.

#### *Challenges faced by schools?*

Four challenges were addressed multiple times by the high school principals during the interviews. They included the need to increase parental support (10 principals), gain teacher support for making changes (8), meet the needs of SE and EL students (10), and solve logistical challenges for testing (9). These four challenges alone impact most everyone involved in education—students and their families, teachers, schools, districts and state administrators. Other challenges mentioned by principals included finding and keeping good teachers, creating the time needed for teachers to work on articulation and standards, and helping to build better community support.

The middle-grade feeder school principals echoed similar challenges to those mentioned by the high school principals with regard to parental support issues and getting teachers to embrace the standards. Over half of the principals mentioned both challenges. They also discussed the ways in which they are trying to address those challenges through training and education. They are trying to provide classes to teach parents life skills as well as to offer additional professional development opportunities to teachers. Middle-Grade Feeder school principals were also concerned with the challenges EL students present to the staff. Not only is it difficult for those students to get caught up after becoming familiar with the English language, but also one principal stated that they had many students who are not educated in their own language. Primarily, the principals discussed the need for more resources to provide special programs to help these students succeed. One principal summed up the difficulties by stating that for many EL students, school is the only place they have to speak, read, or even listen to English.

High school and “other” special program teachers indicated a number of challenges faced by their programs. Responses generally fell into student-level and school-level challenges, and are listed below:

#### *Student-level challenges*

- Getting students to understand their capabilities
- Parental support
- Truancy
- Motivation
- Low self-esteem

- Transportation
- Absenteeism
- Behavior problems
- Drug use

*School-level challenges*

- Articulation between elementary, middle/junior, and high schools
- Students phased out of EL programs too quickly
- Funding
- Lack of time to prepare students
- Staffing (not enough tutors)
- Large class sizes
- Inability to reach all students in need
- Lack of student preparation upon entering high school

### **Teachers' and Principals' Conclusions about the Class of 2004**

Although there was no specific question about holding the Class of 2004 accountable to the CAHSEE on the principal interview protocol, we found that 31 of the 50 high school principals and 11 of 15 middle-grade feeder school principals volunteered their opinions about this topic.

We categorized principal responses in a simple format:

- No, don't hold them accountable
- Yes, hold them accountable
- Modify the exam in some way, and
- Unclear

For high school principals, we found 13 “No” responses, four “Yes” responses, eight “Modify” responses, and six “Unclear” responses. For middle-grade feeder school principals, we found 4 “No” responses, 2 “Yes” responses, 3 “Modify” responses, and 2 “Unclear” responses. A sample of the principals' responses appears under the following headings.

#### “No” responses

- I can live with the concept of a standardized test instrument through which students can demonstrate proficiency. We are not there for the Class of 2004—for many reasons. Within 2 to 3 years, we, at this site, will get there.
- There should be full alignment of the standards for 4 years before the exam should be implemented. That would be valid. Now, it is a confused melee of standards in California high schools—various degrees of alignment. All the things that define a curriculum need to be in place for 4 years so students go through the standards-based process as freshmen through seniors. It ought to be our freshmen or sophomores who should be accountable—that would be fairer.
- I would say no. The implementation of the standards did not start until those students were in the 9<sup>th</sup> grade. Most of the students are not ready. The class of 2006 should be ready. They were in middle school when we started to focus on the standards.

#### “Yes” responses

- They should make it count in order to maintain integrity of the test.

- The state absolutely should hold firm with the 2004 date; it would be disastrous if they move the date; people will say they'll never do what they say; it's fine to make exceptions where justifiable but be cautious with the exceptions.

"Modify" responses

- There is no need for CAHSEE; the state could select items from STAR (CAT6 and content standards) and Golden State and add a writing sample piece.
- The exit exam is a good idea, but the current one may not be the best. Schools should be able to say a student who graduated from a California school has certain basic skills, but we need some safety net for EL and SE students.

"Unclear" responses

- The exit exam is a good thing, but many students are not ready for it yet.
- The principal is very afraid of the large number of students who will not graduate if the CAHSEE requirement is enforced.

When ELA and math teachers were interviewed, the last question asked for their opinion on whether the Class of 2004 should be required to pass the CAHSEE to get a high school diploma. There were three main themes in their responses—whether standards had been covered for the Class of 2004, whether the Class of 2004 should be held accountable for passing the CAHSEE, and whether there should even be a high school exit exam. In all three categories, responses were coded as positive or negative.

Responses were tallied from 67 ELA teachers at 39 high schools, 73 math teachers at 39 high schools, 21 ELA teachers at 11 middle-grade feeder schools, and 24 math teachers at 11 middle-grade feeder schools. Responses are reported by school level and teacher subject area.

*High Schools*

**English-Language Arts.** Twenty-three ELA teachers discussed coverage of standards for the Class of 2004. Of these 23 teachers, 18 teachers said that standards were covered for the Class of 2004, and five teachers stated that standards had not been covered. At the school level, teachers at 14 schools responded that the standards had been covered, teachers at four schools stated they had not been covered, and teachers at one school were divided in their responses. As can be observed by the numbers, most schools were represented by only a single teacher's response concerning the coverage of standards. The following are some responses to give a flavor of what the teachers told us.

- The Class of 2004 was given the standards, but I do not know if they learned.
- I did not cover the standards as well with the Class of 2004 as I did this year. Next year, we will be doing even better on covering the standards.
- My firm answer is "maybe" for the Class of 2004. I am covering the standards but do not know about others. The next 2 years should be better and more consistent.
- Think the Class of 2004 has received the instruction needed to be ready to pass CAHSEE.

Forty ELA teachers provided responses concerning holding the Class of 2004 accountable for passing the CAHSEE to receive a diploma. Of those 40 teachers, 23 responded that the Class of 2004 should be held accountable and 17 responded that the

requirement should be delayed and the Class of 2004 should not be held accountable for passing the CAHSEE. At the school level, the responses were fairly equally split. Teachers at 11 schools responded that the Class of 2004 should be held accountable. Teachers at 11 schools responded that the Class of 2004 should not be held accountable and that the requirement should be delayed. Teachers at four schools were split on their responses.

- More time should be given until the requirement is implemented to allow for teachers to adjust to teaching to standards.
- If the Class of 2004 is not held accountable, it will damage the credibility of the exit exam in the eyes of the students. The exit exam has caused remarkable changes in the students' willingness to work. The classes seem to be getting better every year.
- I believe the state should stand on its requirement. If delayed, it would be a serious mistake—one that reinforces that this is not a serious requirement. Students need to know there is a requirement and that they have a responsibility for their education.
- There will not be a class that is seriously prepared for the CAHSEE for another 6 or 7 years.

Thirty-three ELA teachers provided responses about whether there should be a high school exit exam. Of the 33 teachers, 27 were in favor of having some form of high school exit exam and six were opposed to any kind of high school exit exam.

- I believe the exit exam is an awesome thing.
- I think CAHSEE is good because it gives meaning to graduation.
- We really need the accountability that the CAHSEE requirement will bring. Believe an exit exam is absolutely necessary because it equalizes across the board and keeps schools from passing students on. Believe in accountability. Have seen too many students who have graduated without basic skills.
- Opposed to CAHSEE in general.
- If the diploma is to mean something, the CAHSEE is a fairly decent minimal standard.
- Without the test there will not be a lot of change. Most teachers are like the students. Unless there are consequences and they are held accountable, they will not change.

**Mathematics.** Thirty math teachers expressed an opinion about the coverage of standards for the Class of 2004. Of the 30 teachers, 18 stated that the standards were covered for the Class of 2004 and 12 teachers stated that the standards were not covered. Aggregated by school, there were teachers at 13 schools who indicated that the standards were covered, teachers at eight schools who indicated that the standards were not covered, and teachers at two schools who offered mixed opinions.

- For the Class of 2004, similar standards were covered, but not all students understood them.
- They have been given the opportunity to learn here. They are given chances to do it. If juniors have not passed, they are in courses targeted to help them pass the test. Those who attend regularly and work hard will pass the exam. Still have some good students who are struggling.
- Class of 2004, students have not covered all of the content; they are always behind.

Thirty-eight math teachers at 27 high schools offered opinions about holding the Class of 2004 accountable for passing the CAHSEE. Of those 38 teachers, 26 responded that the Class of 2004 should have to pass the CAHSEE to receive a diploma, while 12 thought the requirement should be at least delayed. Aggregating at the school level, math teachers at 17 high schools felt the requirement should stay, teachers at seven high schools thought the requirement should be delayed, and teachers at three high schools provided mixed opinions.

- There will be a lot of students who will fail, but they have got to be accountable. Go and let it be a reality check. Not implementing may be detrimental.
- We should not delay. Students who are working hard to pass need to have that goal in front of them. Students who worked and already passed need to see that what they did has value and does not get blown off. Ditch the whole...program but do not delay it. I understand the legislature does not want to be bombarded with complaints, but do not delay. Lower the cut score if you have to, but maintain the requirement. Recognize that the Class of 2004 did not have standards-based instruction for their whole schooling and phase in the passing score until you reach the desired cut point in several years, but do not pull the rug out from the whole program. CAHSEE has been motivational to students to pass this requirement. Ratchet up the cut score for awhile rather than drop the requirement.
- Class of 2004 should be held accountable for CAHSEE because the junior class has spent the last two years focusing on this test and thought it was going to count. Students have been taking the test repeatedly, taking summer classes to pass, and finally passing. Teachers have spent extra time and resources to prepare them for the test. Delaying would send a message to other classes that the requirement will be removed at the last minute. Start with the first class that has been putting the time in, the Class of 2004.
- Withholding of diplomas should not take place until the students have had a chance to get standards-based instruction from the beginning.
- The Class of 2004 is not prepared. Need to wait 5 to 10 years.

Eighteen math teachers provided responses about whether or not there should be a high school exit exam. Of those 18 teachers, 16 were in favor of having some form of high school exit exam, while two were opposed to any kind of high school exit exam.

- We need a test, but not the test we have. The test should have two components—one that does not use calculators and one that does. For the section that measures higher-order math, the students should be allowed to use calculators.
- An exit exam is fine because students need to know something before they leave.
- Think students should be held accountable for their education and the exit exam is a good way to do that.
- Think the diploma should stand for something. Would like to see more than a single test score used though.
- I do not think anyone ever should have to pass the test to get a diploma.

#### *Middle-Grade Feeder Schools*

**English-Language Arts.** We received responses from this question from 21 ELA teachers at 11 middle-grade feeder schools. There were no teachers who had a response concerning the coverage of standards for the Class of 2004.

Nine ELA teachers at five middle-grade feeder schools provided a response concerning holding the Class of 2004 accountable for passing the CAHSEE to receive a diploma. Of those nine ELA teachers, four said that the Class of 2004 should have to pass the CAHSEE to receive a diploma. Five teachers thought the requirement of passing the CAHSEE to get a diploma should be at least delayed.

- Class of 2004 should be held responsible for CAHSEE. The students should be responsible. Teachers are taking CAHSEE seriously, but some students have no intention of graduating from high school.
- More time should be given until the requirement is implemented to allow for teachers to adjust to teaching to standards. Class of 2004 is not ready, would be better for 2006 or 2008.
- For the 65 kids I had, yes. But, I had the top kids from my track. For the others, I do not think they should. Because, until they left here, they were not held accountable. We had a no-fail policy here. If these students got 12 fails in 6<sup>th</sup> grade, they still moved on to 7<sup>th</sup> grade. The only thing they do not get to do is go through graduation. Our students do not believe us when we tell them. I personally think it should be the first class that they hold accountable in kindergarten.
- Think the 2004 requirement should be waived at this point. It should be delayed until standards-based instruction has been offered from beginning—so, maybe 10 to 12 years.

Seven ELA teachers responded about whether there should be a high school exit exam. Of those seven teachers, five were in favor of having some form of high school exit exam, and two were opposed to any kind of high school exit exam.

- It is grossly unfair to require the exit exam for lower SES. It is punishing to EL groups. Homework should be eliminated, and it would improve students' morale—they have so many things to do at home.
- I like the idea of an exit exam because I like students being held accountable for their learning. There is little motivation when students get to high school. They recognize that they must pass CAHSEE to get a diploma.

**Mathematics.** We received responses to this question from 24 math teachers at 11 middle-grade feeder schools. There were seven teachers who had a response concerning the coverage of standards for the Class of 2004. Of the seven teachers, four responded that the standards were covered for the Class of 2004. There were three teachers who responded that the standards were not covered.

- The Class of 2004 was being exposed to similar standards.
- The Class of 2004, in his class, they were using the standards at that time. In other classes, they were not.
- Teachers have not had time to cover the standards adequately.

Eight math teachers at four middle-grade feeder schools provided responses concerning holding the Class of 2004 accountable for the CAHSEE. Of those teachers, two stated that students in the Class of 2004 should have to pass the CAHSEE before receiving a diploma. Six, on the other hand, thought the requirement of passing the CAHSEE to get a diploma should be at least delayed.

- Students should be held accountable and have an exit exam. Some will fail. But, the state needs to stick to the requirement. If students are coming to learn, then let us show it.
- The Class of 2009 should be the first class accountable. Teachers have not had time to cover the standards adequately.
- Still need more time. You should wait until all of the issues are resolved. When asked how long that would be, the teacher replied, “A long time.”

There were 18 math teachers who provided responses about whether or not there should be a high school exit exam. Of those 18 teachers, 16 favored having some form of high school exit exam, and two were opposed to any kind of high school exit exam.

- An exit exam is a good thing. But students should not be penalized for not passing.
- I am 100 percent for teachers and students being held accountable.
- CAHSEE is an incentive to work harder. I like CAHSEE.
- CAHSEE is not a positive thing for the students. Getting the students to buy into the test is difficult, because many teachers do not even buy into it. It is a waste of time. CAHSEE will be a problem for 50 percent of the students to get a diploma.

The CAHSEE remediation teachers seemed fairly evenly split on the accountability issues. Of the eight teachers who expressed an opinion about the CAHSEE, three were in favor of holding the Class of 2004 accountable, three were opposed, and two expressed opinions somewhere in between. The following are representative of teachers’ comments:

- By junior year, the students here should be able to pass the exam. The standards were taught at this school for the Class of 2004.
- The date should remain firm, because if it changes, then the message is that we aren’t serious.
- Should the Class of 2004 be held accountable on the CAHSEE? I would say no; I do not think we are ready.
- The Class of 2004 is not yet prepared for the exam. The Class of 2004 probably needs more time because this requirement was not expected of them when they began school.
- On the one hand we should hold kids accountable so they won’t lose faith, but there will be more success on the CAHSEE the longer you put it off.

Sixteen of the 50 high school special education teachers stated explicitly that the Class of 2004 was not ready to be held accountable to the CAHSEE requirement. Most recommended that the exam be postponed for at least another year. Some of their responses and reasons are provided below:

- The Class of 2004 should not be held accountable; the Class of 2004 just isn’t ready.
- The Class of 2004 wasn’t prepared from the start of their education.
- The Class of 2004 had not been held to the standards in earlier years; they were socially promoted and now in mid-stream the rules were changed.
- The teachers or students have not had enough years to regroup their strategies and concentrate on what is expected.
- There should be a delay in the CAHSEE requirement for all students; put it off until 2008.

- The lead time wasn't sufficient to prepare the Class of 2004 for the standards on the exam.
- At least 2 more years would help in preparing the students; the state should delay maybe 2 more years because it has just been sprung on us.
- The Class of 2006 has had more time and should be the first class to be responsible for the CAHSEE requirement.
- The students that were in first grade when the standards were implemented are the ones who should be held accountable.

Among SE teachers who thought that the Class of 2004 was ready for accountability, common reasons were that the current juniors had been adequately prepared, or that postponement would result in a loss of credibility, as shown by the following comments:

- The standards were covered for the Class of 2004.
- Don't delay. When you back off, it looks bad. When students don't have to do it [meet the CAHSEE requirement], they won't take it seriously.

For the majority of high school EL teachers, the CAHSEE accountability was not so much a Class of 2004 issue as it was an EL-level issue. Twenty of 40 EL teachers noted that students who had been in the program since their 9<sup>th</sup> grade year would have a greater chance of passing the CAHSEE. These students would have had the time to advance to the higher EL levels—levels at which they would be more exposed to the California standards prior to taking the CAHSEE. Students who entered the school in higher grade levels, but at lower levels of English language proficiency, would not have as much time to prepare for the CAHSEE. Below are a few comments that address this issue:

- For EL 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> graders, they likely can pass if they start here as freshman—about 80 percent could pass. Of EL students at levels 3 and 4 of the ELD program, perhaps 50 percent could pass if they took the exam seriously.
- The intermediate and advanced English Language Development (ELD) students will probably be okay. The beginning level students will not pass.
- If an EL student comes to this school as a 9<sup>th</sup> grader, some of these students who progress through EL Level 1 and EL Level 2 and get into EL Levels 3 and 4 may be able to pass.

Not all respondents were positive about any proportion of their students in the Class of 2004 passing the CAHSEE. The following comments illustrate how some respondents felt about EL student success on the CAHSEE and when to hold students accountable:

- None of the current EL juniors would pass the CAHSEE.
- I think the expectations are unrealistic [for EL students].
- The Class of 2004 is not ready and will probably not pass, but I think it should be implemented now anyway. The 2005 and 2006 classes will be able to pass the CAHSEE.
- I don't know what will happen to EL students if the Class of 2004 is responsible for the CAHSEE. Many will not succeed.

Fourteen special program teachers expressed their opinion regarding holding the Class of 2004 accountable to the CAHSEE. Five said that accountability should be delayed, while

nine thought that the 2004 date should be maintained. A few representative comments are provided below:

- The Class of 2008 would be more appropriate for accountability.
- The state needs to allow more time for a cycle of results of class-size reduction.
- The exit exam should perhaps go ahead and keep on schedule with some conditions.
- The state should definitely follow through with the 2004 date.
- The Class of 2004 should be held responsible for the CAHSEE as a graduation requirement.

### **Summary and Conclusions**

Through January 2003, the CAHSEE passing rates continue to be low, particularly for mathematics. Students in the Class of 2004 will have at least one more chance to take the CAHSEE during their junior year and three more chances to take it during their senior year. Unless the rate of improvement increases dramatically, however, a substantial number of students will be denied a diploma at the end of their senior year. Passing rates for English learners and special education students continue to be particularly low. The CAHSEE diploma requirements will have a particularly large impact on these groups.

Passing rates vary considerably by school. Currently a significant number of schools have low or very low cumulative passing rates. This is particularly true in mathematics, for which half the high schools in the state have passing rates below 50 percent. Passing rates were closely related to reports of coverage of the content standards in our survey, adding considerable credibility to the information provided in response to the survey.

A number of reasons why current instruction was not fully effective were given in response to the survey and in the interviews. Student preparation, or lack thereof, was a clear concern for both initial (in middle-grade feeder school) and remedial (in high school) instruction in the content standards. Student motivation was a continuing concern as was student preparation in prerequisite skills. Concerns about student preparation for Algebra, particularly for special education students, were particularly high.

Teacher qualification and experience did not appear to be a significant problem at present, although with significant budget woes in many districts, concerns with hiring and retaining qualified teachers could increase. One area of possible concern is that some mathematics courses, particularly those targeting special education students, are being taught by teachers who do not have appropriate credentials. In general, however, those who teach courses targeting English learners and special education students have considerable experience with these populations.

Several other reasons for the limited effectiveness of instruction in some courses were examined. Low student motivation was commonly cited in both the surveys and the interviews, as was low attendance and lack of parental support. It is thus difficult to tell whether the limited effectiveness of standards-based instruction in some schools should be taken as an indicator of inadequate instruction when a significant part of the problem might be that students do not take full advantage of instructional opportunities offered to them. It is difficult to believe, however, that the CAHSEE requirement will not be a significant factor in increasing student motivation.

## CHAPTER 7: FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### General Findings

#### ***Test Development***

In conducting analyses for the AB 1609 requirement, we reviewed all of the relevant standards published in *Standards for Educational and Psychological Testing* (AERA, APA, NCME, 1999). These standards were developed by joint committees of the American Educational Research Association, the American Psychological Association, and the National Council for Measurement in Education. They are the most widely accepted standards for testing. A listing and discussion of each relevant standard was presented in the AB 1609 report (Wise, et al., May 2003). Results of our review of these standards led to the first general finding:

**General Finding 1: The development of the CAHSEE meets all of the test standards for use as a graduation requirement.**

#### ***Standards-Based Instruction***

##### **The Impact of the CAHSEE on Instruction**

**General Finding 2. The CAHSEE requirement has been a major factor leading to dramatically increased coverage of the California Academic Content Standards at both the high school and middle school levels and to development or improvement of courses providing help for students who have difficulty mastering these standards.**

Chapter 3 of this report describes the profound impact that the CAHSEE requirement has had on standards-based instruction. At the high school level, coverage of the California Academic Content Standards assessed by the CAHSEE has increased steadily from 1999, when only about 20 percent of the schools reported covering at least three-quarters of the standards, to the current school year, in which more than 80 percent of the schools reported at least 75 percent coverage. Changes to instruction are also indicated by the number of new courses started in the past three years, the number of existing courses that have adopted new textbooks in this time period, and the increased alignment of these courses and texts to content standards. Alignment at the middle school has shown similar improvement.

An even more important indication of the impact of the CAHSEE requirement is the number of new remedial or supplemental courses, many specifically targeting students who do not initially pass the CAHSEE. Schools have always worked to help students who did not master important standards the first time around, but the CAHSEE has expanded these efforts very considerably. New programs also include courses designed specifically for English learners and special education students. Principal and teacher interviews suggest that the CAHSEE requirement was a major factor in driving schools to increase alignment of their courses to the California Academic Content Standards and to develop programs for students who were not mastering key standards.

### Effectiveness of Instruction for the Class of 2004

**General Finding 3. Available evidence indicates that many courses of initial instruction and remedial courses have only limited effectiveness in helping students master the required standards.**

Chapter 4 of this report presents evidence for the effectiveness of standards-based instruction for the Class of 2004. The general conclusion from these analyses is that instruction throughout the state has not been effective for all students, particularly in mathematics. In half of the state's high schools, fewer than 50 percent of the Class of 2004 has passed the mathematics portion of the CAHSEE.

High school passing rates are closely related to the reported coverage of the CAHSEE standards in the high school curriculum. For ELA, 100 percent of schools in the survey where high levels of content coverage were implemented early (just subsequent to passage of the CAHSEE legislation) had passing rates of 75 percent or greater. In comparison, only 59 percent of schools that have not yet implemented high levels of coverage had ELA passing rates this high. For mathematics, the percentage of schools with high passing rates ranged from 100 percent for early implementers down to only 22 percent for schools that have not yet implemented high levels of alignment between curriculum and content standards.

### Student Preparation

**General Finding 4. Lack of prerequisite skills may prevent many students from receiving the benefits of courses that provide instruction in relevant content standards. Inadequate student motivation and lack of strong parental support may play a contributing role in limiting the effectiveness of these courses.**

Survey and interview results indicated a major reason that courses were not more effective in helping students master the required standards was inadequate student preparation. Many students participating in both initial and remedial instruction did not have essential prerequisite skills. For supplemental and remedial courses, more than half the teachers reported that most of their students did not yet have prerequisite skills; among teachers of remedial courses targeting special education students, 72 percent gave this response.

A number of other reasons for the limited effectiveness of current instruction were explored in the survey and interviews. Low student attendance and motivation were frequently cited as contributing factors. Students do not always take advantage of remedial activities that are offered, particularly summer programs. Many of the interview respondents stated that the CAHSEE requirement has had some positive influence on student motivation.

We also investigated the possible impact of teacher qualifications, defined by their credentials and years of experience, and professional development programs for the teachers on the effectiveness of standards-based instruction. There was no clear evidence that teacher qualification was an important factor. Few schools made extensive use of teachers with emergency credentials, and the majority of courses targeting English learners or special education students were taught by teachers who were experienced with these populations.

There was some indication that the qualifications of mathematics teachers could be improved. Mathematics teachers had lower rates of participation in professional development targeted to teaching the standards, and as many as 25 percent of high school mathematics courses targeting special education students are being taught by teachers without appropriate credentials. In general, however, those who teach courses targeting English learners and special education students have considerable experience with these populations.

#### ***Year-4 Findings Based on Further Analyses of 2002-03 Administration Results***

The following general findings are based on results from the analyses and activities summarized above and reported in detail in our Year-4 Annual Evaluation Report (Wise et al., September 2003).

**General Finding 5. While precise comparisons are not possible, by the end of 10<sup>th</sup> grade, passing rates for students in the Class of 2005 were slightly lower than passing rates for students in the Class of 2004.**

Overall, 67 percent of the students in the Class of 2005 passed the ELA test and 52 percent passed the mathematics test. Corresponding figures for the Class of 2004 at the end of 10<sup>th</sup> grade were 73 percent and 53 percent respectively. A key caveat is that more than a quarter of the students in the Class of 2004 had taken the CAHSEE at least twice by the end of 10<sup>th</sup> grade. This was not true for the Class of 2005, where very few students had taken the CAHSEE more than once. This finding was also consistent with results from the STAR assessment, which showed that the Class of 2005 performed at about the same level as the Class of 2004 on the 10<sup>th</sup> grade ELA assessment. Tenth graders in the Class of 2005 had slightly lower scores on the Algebra I assessment compared to the Class of 2004, although a higher proportion of students in the Class of 2005 took Algebra I in the 10<sup>th</sup> grade.

Prospects continue to look better for the Class of 2006. Performance of students in this class on the 2003 9<sup>th</sup> grade STAR assessment in ELA was significantly improved from performance levels attained by the classes of 2004 and 2005. Performance of the Class of 2006 as 9<sup>th</sup> graders was not significantly better than prior classes. However, more students in the Class of 2006 completed Algebra I in the 8<sup>th</sup> or 9<sup>th</sup> grade in comparison to earlier classes, and having completed Algebra I is a very strong predictor of positive performance on the mathematics portion of the CAHSEE.

**General Finding 6: Available evidence indicates that the CAHSEE has not led to any increase in dropout rates. In fact enrollment declines from 10<sup>th</sup> to 11<sup>th</sup> grade for the Class of 2004 were significantly lower than declines for prior high school classes.**

One possible negative consequence of the CAHSEE requirement that the Legislature asked the evaluation to address is that students who have difficulty passing the CAHSEE might be more likely to drop out of school early and end up with lower levels of achievement than if they had stayed in school longer. Comparison of enrollment rate trends indicates that this is not happening. In fact, the decline in enrollment from the 10<sup>th</sup> to the 11<sup>th</sup> grade was

significantly less for the Class of 2004 than for prior classes. Thus, it is safe to conclude that the CAHSEE requirement has probably not yet led to any increase in early dropouts.

**General Finding 7: More students in the Class of 2005 believed that the CAHSEE was important to them compared to Class of 2004 students when they were in the 10<sup>th</sup> grade. Slightly more said they did as well as they could on the exam. Expectations for graduation and post-high school plans were largely unchanged for the Class of 2005 in comparison to the Class of 2004.**

Responses to survey questions at the end of the CAHSEE indicated that students in the Class of 2004 who had not yet passed believed that passing the CAHSEE was important and slightly more of them tried their best in comparison to responses from students taking the CAHSEE for the second time in 2002. Students in the Class of 2005 taking the CAHSEE for the first time were also more likely to believe passing the CAHSEE was important and to have done their best in comparison to students in the Class of 2004 taking the CAHSEE for the first time in 2002 as 10<sup>th</sup> graders.

**General Finding 8: Schools are continuing efforts to cover the California Academic Content Standards in instruction and provide support for students who need additional help in mastering these standards. Many programs that were planned or only partially implemented a year ago have now been fully implemented.**

The percentage of principals reporting that their school had conducted local workshops on CAHSEE content rose from 41 percent in 2002 to 62 percent in 2003. Principals reported that the Teacher Guides distributed by CDE were useful in these workshops. New CAHSEE study guides available for the Class of 2006 will provide additional support for workshop activities.

The percentage of principals reporting that more than 95 percent of their students received instruction in the math content standards rose from 22 percent to 33 percent while the percentage estimating that fewer than 75 percent received instruction in the content standards declined from 48 percent to 33 percent for mathematics and from 34 percent to 27 percent in ELA. Similar results were noted in estimates for English learners, minority, and economically disadvantaged students. Results for special education students were not directly comparable as the 2003 survey asked for separate estimates for students with more or less severe disabilities. Estimates of content coverage for students with less severe disabilities were higher, but more than half of the principals estimated that more than half of these students did not receive instruction that covered the California Academic Content Standards included on the CAHSEE.

Efforts to help high school students who had not passed the CAHSEE continued to increase. In 2002, 24 percent of the schools planned to implement remedial courses, 33 percent had partially implemented such courses, and only 10 percent had fully implemented the courses. One-third had no plan to increase remedial courses. In 2003, the corresponding results were only 20 percent with no plans to implement, 10 percent planning to implement, 37 with partial implementation, and 33 percent with full implementation of increased remediation (Table 4.8). Increases were also reported for individual or group tutoring (up

from 29 percent to 45 percent fully implemented), adopting the California Academic Content Standards (from 45% to 82%), altering the high school curriculum (16% to 26%) and working with feeder middle schools (from 5% to 18%). Perhaps as a result of these efforts, more teachers believed that students were prepared to pass the CAHSEE in the 10<sup>th</sup> grade (70% in 2003 versus 58% in 2002).

**General Finding 9: Teacher and principal expectations for the impact of CAHSEE on students were largely unchanged from prior years.**

Estimates of the impact on student motivation and parent involvement on retention and dropout rates and on instructional practices did not show any significant trends in comparison to similar estimates from prior years.

**General Finding 10: Professional development in the teaching of the state's Academic Content Standards has not yet been extensive.**

Teachers were asked to rate the quality of professional development that they received from local and from state sources. Twenty-six percent said they received no professional development from local sources and 44 percent said they received no professional development from state sources. Ratings of the quality of professional development received by the teachers were generally the same or lower in comparison to similar ratings in the 2002 survey. Fewer than half of the teachers rated the quality as good or excellent.

**General Finding 11: There were no significant problems with local understanding of test administration procedures, but some issues remain with the provision of student data and the assignment of testing accommodations.**

More test coordinators reported using the CAHSEE administration video provided by ETS to learn more about test administration procedures than in prior years, although nearly half still preferred the test-administration training workshop because it provided them with the occasion to ask questions. No significant test administration problems were observed.

Some issues with regard to scheduling students to take the test remained, including testing 10<sup>th</sup> grade students early and signing up other students for consecutive administrations. There appear to have been some errors in entering student information and the lack of common student identifiers continues to make it difficult, if not impossible, to track results for a given student across administrations. Some students who were not coded as special education students or English learners were provided testing accommodations or even, in a few cases, modifications. Currently, there is no available documentation of the basis for school decisions about testing accommodations.

## Recommendations

A number of recommendations for steps that the Legislature and the Board might take in deferring the CAHSEE requirement were included in the AB 1609 report (Wise et al., May 2003). As described in Chapter 2, the Board has considered and approved a number of

changes to the CAHSEE. These changes are being implemented for the 2004 administrations of the CAHSEE, so there is no time for further consideration at this point. Nonetheless, we do offer four new recommendations for consideration as the CAHSEE moves forward.

**Recommendation 1: Restarting the exam with the Class of 2006 provides some opportunities for improvement; however, careful consideration should be given to any changes that are implemented.**

The AB 1609 study report (Wise et al., May 2003) included several recommendations for changes that could ensure better alignment of what is tested with what is taught, making it easier for all students to demonstrate adequate mastery of the intended content. At their July 2003 meeting, the Board approved plans to shorten the ELA testing to a single day and reducing cognitive demands for mathematics questions while still assessing the same standards. Changes to the score scale and possibly even the reexamination of test content specifications are also being considered.

Given the opportunity to restart the CAHSEE for the Class of 2006 next year, consideration of such changes is entirely appropriate. An exact equating of scores from new administrations to scores from prior administrations is not necessary, since the prior administrations no longer “count.” (All students tested to date are no longer required to pass the CAHSEE.) Nonetheless, the time to implement changes is very short. For example, forms for the 2004 administrations must be printed well ahead of time, so there is no time to develop and field test new questions. In addition, current procedures have worked very well. A careful review will be needed to ensure that proposed alternatives will work equally well.

We are particularly concerned that there be adequate technical review of plans to reduce the testing time for ELA to a single day. Members of the original HSEE Standards Panel that recommended the content to be covered by the test felt strongly about the need for students to demonstrate their ability to write coherently. To what extent will eliminating one of the two essay questions increase errors in classifying students as passing or not passing? What will be the impact of changing the relative weight assigned to writing versus reading and to the writing standards covered by the essays? There is, unfortunately, not time for the Board to seek the advice of another panel of content experts on these matters, but a careful technical review is both feasible and important.

**Recommendation 2: The California Department of Education and the State Board of Education should continue to monitor and encourage efforts by districts and schools to implement effective standards-based instruction.**

Results from the AB 1609 study (Wise et al., May 2003) indicated that standards-based instruction was widely available in both middle and high schools. High school instruction includes significant new efforts to provide second-chance opportunities for students who did not fully master required skills during initial instruction. The study also found, however, that current instruction was not fully effective in that many students taking the standards-based courses offered still could not pass the CAHSEE. There were indications that instruction was likely to improve for students in high school classes beyond 2004 and 2005. Ensuring that effective instruction is available to all students remains critical to the successful

implementation of the CAHSEE requirements. CDE must monitor further improvements to standards-based instruction and both CDE and the Board should encourage further efforts in this regard. Providing information on exemplary programs to other districts is one example of how such efforts might be encouraged.

**Recommendation 3: Professional development for teachers is a significant opportunity for improvement.**

Results from the AB 1609 study indicated that many students were taking initial and remedial courses covering the California Academic Content Standards included on the CAHSEE, but were not benefiting fully from these courses. One reason was that the students did not have important prerequisite knowledge or skills. Additional professional development for teachers could help them be more effective in the courses they are already teaching and also could help them identify students needing additional help with prerequisite skills. One particular target of opportunity identified in the AB 1609 study was that a significant number of teachers involved in remedial mathematics had considerable experience with special education students, but less training in mathematics itself.

**Recommendation 4: Further consideration of the CAHSEE requirements for special education students is needed, in light of the low passing rates for this group.**

In our evaluation activities, we have introduced consideration of special education students that distinguishes those who are able to participate in regular classes and those who cannot. Treating all special education students as a single group may mask solutions that could help those who can to master critical content standards while setting more realistic expectations for students who cannot reasonably be expected to master these standards.

The very low passing rate, particularly in mathematics, for special education students who are African American or Hispanic deserves further investigation. Are these students somehow more severely handicapped? Are there differences in rates or types of diagnoses and treatments? Are there differences in the way African Americans are treated by schools when they have diagnoses similar to other groups? Are these students concentrated in less effective schools? How can we best understand and remediate these discrepancies?

Collection of more specific information on special education and EL students may facilitate interpretation of CAHSEE results for these groups. The National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), for example, surveys schools regarding each student designated as special education or ELL—asking whether the student is receiving instruction in the regular curriculum at his designated grade level, the severity of the student’s disability, etc. Were CAHSEE to collect similar information, a clearer picture of student progress on California state standards may emerge.

Overall, the CAHSEE requirement continues to have a significant impact on instruction and student achievement. Much work remains to be done in helping all students meet the standards for high school graduation that have been established. CDE and the Board face continuing challenges in implementing the CAHSEE requirement.



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