

# Questions and Answers for Parents and Guardians

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## **What is the CAHSEE?**

State law, enacted in 1999, authorized the development of the California High School Exit Examination (CAHSEE), which students would have to pass in order to earn a high school diploma.

All California public school students must satisfy the CAHSEE requirement, as well as all other state and local requirements, in order to receive a high school diploma. The CAHSEE requirement can be satisfied by passing the exam or, for students with disabilities, receiving a local waiver pursuant to *Education Code* Section 60851(c), or receiving an exemption pursuant to *Education Code* Section 60852.4.

The purpose of the CAHSEE is to improve student achievement in high school and help ensure that students who graduate from high school can demonstrate grade-level competency in reading, writing, and mathematics.

## **What subjects does the CAHSEE cover?**

The CAHSEE consists of two parts: English-language arts and mathematics. One part of the CAHSEE addresses state English-language arts content standards through grade ten, including reading and writing.

The reading section covers:

- Vocabulary
- Informational reading
- Literary reading

The writing section covers:

- Writing strategies
- Writing applications
- Writing conventions

The other part of the CAHSEE addresses state mathematics content standards in grades six and seven and Algebra I, including the following:

- Statistics, data analysis, and probability
- Number sense
- Measurement and geometry
- Algebra and functions
- Mathematical reasoning
- Algebra I

Students must demonstrate computational skills and a foundation in arithmetic, including working with decimals, fractions, and percentages.

## **What kinds of questions are on the CAHSEE?**

The English-language arts part of the CAHSEE consists of multiple-choice questions and a writing task. The mathematics part consists of all multiple-choice questions. Exam questions are given only in English.

## **When is the CAHSEE administered?**

The CAHSEE is administered at the school site during regular school hours on the dates chosen by your school district. The English-language arts part is administered on the first day of testing and the mathematics part on the

second day of testing. All students must take the CAHSEE for the first time in grade ten.

A scale score of 350 or higher is required on each part of the CAHSEE to pass. Students do not need to pass both parts of the CAHSEE during the same administration in order to satisfy the CAHSEE requirement. Students who do not pass one or both parts of the CAHSEE in grade ten will have additional opportunities in grade eleven and yet again in grade twelve, if needed.

## **When do parents and guardians receive their student's results?**

About seven weeks after each CAHSEE administration, school districts will receive two copies of the CAHSEE Student and Parent Report for each student who took the exam. The school district will distribute one copy to the student's parents or guardians and place the other copy in the student's permanent record.

## **Does passing the CAHSEE guarantee that a student will receive a high school diploma?**

No. Passing the CAHSEE is just one requirement for graduating from high school. Students also must meet all other state and local requirements to receive a diploma.

### **How can parents and guardians help their students prepare for the CAHSEE?**

The best academic preparation for the CAHSEE is good instruction. Parents and guardians should talk with their student's teachers or principal to learn more about the state academic content standards in English-language arts and mathematics being taught at their student's school. Parents and guardians whose student needs extra instruction to pass the CAHSEE should make sure he or she takes advantage of in additional learning opportunities provided by the school.

The California Department of Education has posted released CAHSEE test questions and CAHSEE study guides on its Web site at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/tg/hs/resources.asp>.

### **What is done to assist students with disabilities when taking the CAHSEE?**

The CAHSEE regulations specify accommodations and modifications that students with disabilities must be permitted to use if specified in the student's individualized education program (IEP) or Section 504 Plan for use on the CAHSEE, standardized testing, or for use during classroom instruction and assessments. An accommodation is a change in the testing environment or process that does not alter what the CAHSEE measures or affect the comparability of scores, whereas a modification is a change that fundamentally alters what the CAHSEE measures or affects the comparability of scores.

Students who use an accommodation and earn a score of 350 or higher have passed that part of the CAHSEE. Students who use a modification and earn the equivalent of a passing score on one or both parts of the CAHSEE have not passed but may be eligible for a waiver of the CAHSEE requirement (see *Education Code* Section 60851[c]).

### **What is done to assist English learners when taking the CAHSEE?**

English learners must be permitted to take the CAHSEE with certain test variations if used regularly in the classroom. For example, if regularly used in the classroom, students must be permitted to hear the test directions in their primary language or use a translation glossary.

Students who are English learners are required to take the CAHSEE in grade ten with all other grade ten students. During their first 24 months in a California school, English learners are to receive six months of instruction in reading, writing, and comprehension in English (*Education Code* Section 60852). During this time, they are still required to take the CAHSEE.

### **For More Information**

**Visit the CDE Web site at**

<http://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/tg/hs/>

**or**

Contact your student's teachers, principal, or counselor.

# **California High School Exit Examination**

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California Department of Education  
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