

Last Minute Memorandum

To: STATE BOARD MEMBERS **Date:** April 2, 2003

From: Geno Flores, Deputy Superintendent, Assessment and Accountability Branch

Re: ITEM #12

Subject: California High School Exit Examination (CAHSEE): Including, but not limited to, CAHSEE Program Update.

Assembly Bill (AB) 1609 (Ch. 716, 2001, Calderon) required the State Superintendent of Public Instruction (SSPI), with the approval of the State Board of Education (SBE), to contract for an independent study regarding the requirement of passage of the CAHSEE as a condition of receiving a diploma of graduation and a condition of graduation from high school. A final report based on the study is to be delivered to the Governor, the chairs of the education policy committees in the California Legislature, SBE, and the SSPI, on or before May 1, 2003.

The study is to include, but not be limited to, examination of whether the test development process and the implementation of standards-based instruction meet the required standards for a test of this nature.

The Human Resources Research Organization (HumRRO) is conducting this study. California Department of Education (CDE) staff and SBE testing liaisons have reviewed the study design. Based on the results of the study, "...on or before August 1, 2003, SBE may delay the date upon which each pupil completing grade 12 is required to pass the high school exit examination as a condition of receiving a diploma of graduation or a condition of graduation from high school to a date other than the 2003-04 school year if, in reviewing the report of the independent study, SBE determines that the test development process or the implementation of standards-based instruction does not meet the required standards for a test of this nature."

HumRRO Study Design and Timeline

- Review literature on findings from other states (August–December 2002);
- Analyze existing data from Standardized Testing and Reporting Program and CAHSEE (June-October 2002);
- Sample and visit schools to identify potential questions and response options (September - November 2002);
- Conduct large-scale survey of schools (January-February 2003);
- Conduct validation study using a sample of 60 schools (January-March 2003);
- Summarize findings on the test development process (February-March 2002); and
- Draft and deliver final report (March-April 2003).

In March 2002, SBE received a report on the status of the study required by AB 1609. The contract was signed in late September 2002.

During November, the draft surveys were reviewed by the contractors' outside consultant panel, CDE staff and SBE testing liaisons and staff. The input from these groups was invaluable in making improvements to the surveys.

HumRRO sent out the surveys in January to 600 high schools from the 480 school districts as well as to one feeder middle school for each high school. They visited 41 high schools, 17 feeder middle schools, and four other schools (e.g., continuation, court schools) in February and March as a follow-up to the survey to get more detailed information about standards-based instruction. HumRRO has briefed CDE staff, SBE staff, and SBE testing liaisons in March and will brief them again in April regarding the status of the report. A final report will be delivered by May 1.