



NOVEMBER 2003 AGENDA

SUBJECT Golden State Seal Merit Diploma: Eligibility Requirements	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Action
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Information
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Public Hearing

Recommendation:

It is recommended that State Board of Education (SBE) allow students to use a combination of previously earned Golden State Examination (GSE) results and California Standards Test (CST) scaled scores to qualify for the Golden State Seal Merit Diploma and that districts be provided with an electronic copy of the Golden State Seal Merit Diploma to award to qualifying graduates.

Summary of Previous State Board of Education Discussion and Action

SBE approved the "senior waiver" for the 2003 Golden State Seal Merit Diploma on April 9, 2003. This waiver was available to seniors who were prevented from meeting the Diploma requirements due to GSE Program changes and reductions. The waiver allowed seniors to use a CST scaled score of 350 or above to meet the subject area requirements.

Summary of Key Issue(s)

- GSEs are identified as the means to demonstrate mastery of the high school curriculum in *California Education Code* section 51452. Due to funding cuts to the GSE Program in March 2003 and the repeal of the program in September 2003, students no longer have the opportunity to take GSEs and earn the Golden State Seal Merit Diploma with GSE results. In order to continue the Golden State Seal Merit Diploma and allow students to qualify for the Diploma, other exams need to be identified.
- Since the GSEs were and the CSTs are designed to assess student achievement on California's Academic Content Standards for specific courses, it is appropriate to use CST scores in lieu of GSE results.
- Currently, very few students can qualify for the Diploma using only GSE results or only CST scores. GSEs are no longer being given, and CSTs have reported scaled scores for 2002 and 2003 only. Therefore, it is recommended that a combination of results be allowed as long as students have qualifying GSE results available. Eventually, Diploma eligibility would be based solely on CST scores.
- California Department of Education staff analyzed GSE and CST data to identify

Summary of Key Issue(s)

CST scaled scores comparable to GSE results of recognition, honors, and high honors and identified the following three options:

1. Students must earn the advanced performance level on each CST used to qualify for the Diploma.
2. Students must earn a scaled score of 370 or above on each CST used to qualify for the Diploma.
3. Students must earn specific scaled scores that equate to the GSE performance levels of recognition, honors, and high honors for each CST used to qualify for the Diploma.

Option 2, using a scaled score of 370 or above, is recommended. Option 1, using the advanced performance level, underscores the highly selective intent behind the Diploma, but would disqualify an unacceptable number of students. Option 3 results in different scaled scores for each CST. While coming close to duplicating the Diploma achievement rates observed in the 2002 GSE administrations, the variation in scaled scores would result in a difficult and time-consuming process for identifying eligible students and verifying scores by district/school personnel. In addition, there are no matching GSEs for 11 CSTs and; therefore, no identified scaled scores for these exams. Option 2 represents a compromise between these two extremes in that it comes reasonably close to duplicating the 2002 Diploma rates and provides district/school personnel with an easier process for identifying eligible students and verifying scores.

- Review of the eligibility information and printing of the Golden State Seal Merit Diplomas was done by the GSE contractor, but funding no longer exists. An alternate method for providing the diplomas is needed.

Fiscal Analysis (as appropriate)

Minimal cost to the State.

Attachment(s)

Attachment 1: [Eligibility Requirements for the Golden State Seal Merit Diploma \(Pages 2\)](#)

Eligibility Requirements for the Golden State Seal Merit Diploma

The following information has been prepared to help school and district staff identify graduating seniors eligible to receive the Golden State Seal Merit Diploma. Beginning in 2004, and thereafter, students may use results from previously taken Golden State Examinations (GSEs) and/or California Standards Tests (CSTs) to qualify for the diploma.

To be eligible for the Golden State Seal Merit Diploma, students must:

- Be receiving a high school diploma from their district.
- Have earned designated results on six qualifying examinations. Results from GSEs and/or CSTs may be used. When using GSE results, students must have earned a performance level of recognition, honors, or high honors. When using CST results, students must have earned a scaled score of 370 or above. The six examinations include:
 1. The Grade 11 History-Social Science CST (United States History and Geography)
 2. One of the following English-language Arts exams:

<u>CST</u>	<u>GSE</u>
Grade 10 ELA	Reading
Grade 11 ELA	Writing
 3. One of the following mathematics exams:

<u>CST</u>	<u>GSE</u>
Algebra I	First-year Algebra
Algebra II	Geometry
Geometry	High School Mathematics
High School Summative Mathematics	
Integrated Mathematics 1, 2, or 3	
 4. One of the following science exams:

<u>CST</u>	<u>GSE</u>
Biology	Biology
Chemistry	Chemistry
Physics	Physics
Earth Sciences	Second-year Coordinated
Integrated/Coordinated	Science
Science 1, 2, 3, or 4	
 5. Two exams of the student's choice. To meet this requirement, students may choose from the following:
 - an examination listed above not used to meet another requirement.
 - English-Language Arts Exception—Students may use only one English-Language Arts exam as an elective. For example:

Students may not use the Grade 11 ELA CST to fulfill the ELA requirement and the GSE in Reading and GSE in Writing to fulfill the two electives.

Math and Science Exception – Students **may not** use both the GSE and CST in the **same** subject area. For example: Students may not use the GSE in Geometry to fulfill the math requirement and the Geometry CST to fulfill the elective requirement or the GSE in Biology to fulfill the elective requirement and Biology CST to fulfill the science requirement.

- the grade 10 History-Social Science CST;
- the GSE in Economics;
- the GSE in Government/Civics; and
- the GSE in Second-year Spanish Language.

Schools/districts are responsible for identifying eligible students. Beginning in 2004, schools will identify eligible students and submit the information to the district. The district will be responsible for reviewing and maintaining all records necessary to validate awarding the Golden State Seal Merit Diploma. An electronic color-copy of the Golden State Seal Merit Diploma will be provided to districts. Districts may choose to complete the diploma, print a color-copy, and award the diploma to students at their graduation ceremony.