

POLICY for CAHSEE Exemption For Special Education and 504 Students

Beginning in the 2009-10 school year, Education Code 60852.3 provides an exemption from meeting the CAHSEE requirement as a condition of receiving a diploma of graduation for eligible students with disabilities who have an individualized education program (IEP) or a Section 504 plan. The IEP or 504 plan must state that the student is scheduled to receive a high school diploma, and has satisfied or will satisfy all state and local requirement for high school graduation on or after July 1, 2009. This exemption may only be in place until the State Board of Education determines that an alternative to the CAHSEE is feasible for students with disabilities or that alternative means are implemented (decision projected for 10/01/2010).

The Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA) entitles special education services to eligible students until age 22 (or until they receive a diploma). Special education students, who left high school without a diploma, therefore are eligible to return until age 22. (Some Court/Community School enrollment restrictions may apply). If appropriate, the IEP team may revise the IEP of eligible students, which may or may not include additional instruction to help the student pass the CAHSEE. If the revised IEP calls for receipt of a diploma after the July 1, 2009 date stipulated in the exemption language and the student has satisfied all other local requirements for graduation, then the student may be exempted from the CAHSEE requirement. Even though 504 students do not have the same federal protections as special education students, federal regulations indicated that one way to guarantee Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) under Section 504 is to provide the same procedural safeguards as required under IDEA.

Please use the attached protocol in applying this exemption.

- 1) Obtain the names of all special education and 504 senior students who left without a diploma after January 1, 2008.
- 2) Review each record to determine if the student completed all or most of the requirements with the exception of the CAHSEE.
- 3) If the student did complete all the requirements with the exception of the CAHSEE and was on a diploma track, attempt to contact the student for possible re-enrollment in Alternative Education or district of residence.
- 4) If the student is interested in re-enrollment with Alternative Education, schedule an IEP to discuss possible revision of graduation date.
- 5) Prior to or on IEP date, enroll the student (check with the Director regarding Court/Community School enrollment restrictions),
- 6) At IEP, the team will make a determination of the need for the following options:
 - a) further remediation and attempts at CAHSEE prior to issuing diploma,
 - b) no need for further remediation or CAHSEE attempts and only a revision of the graduation date is needed,
 - c) further implementation of the transition plan prior to revision of graduation date.
- 7) Once the conditions of the IEP have been met, a Final Graduation Check should be submitted by the Principal at the site of the IEP.