

# ***STANDARDIZED ASSESSMENT***

## ***CALIFORNIA STANDARDS TEST, CAHSEE***

All students, including those who have Individualized Education Plans (IEPs) or 504 Plans, are expected to participate in the assessment program developed by the State Department of Education. When students are newly identified for receiving special education services and annually, as new IEPs and 504 Plans are developed, it is the responsibility of the team to discuss how the student will participate in standardized assessment. Some students with disabilities may require accommodations based on their particular disability. Test publishers ultimately determine what types of accommodations are "Standard" vs. "Non-Standard." When an IEP or 504 team recommends "Non-Standard" accommodations, they may be jeopardizing that student's ability to receive a high school diploma. While this decision may be appropriate, it is the responsibility of the team to discuss the implications of this decision with the parent. Every opportunity should be given to students with disabilities to allow them to participate as fully as possible so that they will remain eligible for receiving a high school diploma.

Students with severe disabilities are generally not working toward a high school diploma. To that end, the State Department of Education has developed an Alternative Assessment (based on progress toward goals and objectives). When the decision is made to use this Alternative Assessment, the student is no longer working toward a high school diploma. Parents need to be fully informed about the implications of this decision each time a new plan is developed.

IEP and 504 teams need to thoroughly inform themselves of the needs of their students and the limits (Standard versus Non-Standard accommodations) established by test publishers. A recent court decision has directed schools to provide students with accommodations listed on IEP documents for students taking the California High School Exit Exam (CAHSEE). At this time, whether students passing the CAHSEE with Non-Standard accommodations will be awarded a diploma, has not yet been decided. School districts will need to apply for waivers for these students.

A system needs to be in place at each school to gather information about how students with IEPs and 504 Plans are participating in standardized assessment. Each site should compile a list of students with notes about the types of accommodations needed. The list should be compiled early in the year (for test ordering) and reviewed a month prior to assessment dates to update information that may have changed (new students added, modifications changed, etc.) Schools need to coordinate with their on-site special education staff that has access to the most recent information.