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**Statement from CBEE Executive Director Regarding Budget
Conference Committee Action on High School Exit Exam**

Sacramento--“Using the false argument of cost savings to the state, the budget conference committee took actions yesterday that will ultimately hurt thousands of students across California as they are left underprepared for the workplace that awaits them.”

The California High School Exit Exam (CAHSEE), which was authorized by Senate Bill 2 (O’Connell) in 1999 as part of the state’s public school accountability agenda, required passing the CAHSEE as a requirement for students to graduate high school. The actions of the conference committee yesterday would eliminate this as a graduation requirement, and eliminate extraordinary efforts currently taking place across the state to ensure students have the basic math and reading skills necessary to pass. According to a recent PPIC Survey, 69% of all adults, 74% of public school parents and 80% of Latinos support passage of the exam as a requirement graduate from high school (PPIC Californian and Education, April 2009).

“The CAHSEE ensures that high school graduates have the minimum skills necessary to become productive members of California’s workforce. At a time when California needs to be preparing more students for not only access to college, but the rigor and skills necessary to be successful in college, yesterday’s action by the conference committee takes California in the absolute wrong direction.”

“What is worse, students who are currently receiving intensive remediation to ensure their passage of the CAHSEE will be left behind, as schools no longer held accountable for their students’ success turn their attention elsewhere.”

California High School Exit Exam (CAHSEE)

The CAHSEE is divided into two sections: language arts (reading and writing) and mathematics. Based on the state’s Academic Content Standards, passing CAHSEE requires 10th grade language skills and mathematics aptitude through Algebra I. Sophomores who take the test will have eight opportunities to pass both sections; if they pass one section, they do not have to take that section again. Please see attached information for the Class of 2008 CAHSEE passage rates.

*California Business for Education Excellence is a nonprofit organization whose mission is to **raise student academic achievement and close the achievement gap** in California’s public schools. For more information please visit our website at www.cbee.org.*

Provided by the California Department of Education

Class of 2008 - Grade 10, Grade 11, and Grade 12 Estimated Cumulative Percentage Meeting the CAHSEE Requirement By Subgroup¹

Demographic Subgroup	Grade 10 Class of 2008 Percentage Passed	Grade 11 Class of 2008 Percentage Passed	Grade 12 Class of 2008 Percentage Passed
All Students	65.1	78.0	90.2
Female	67.9	80.2	91.6
Male	62.4	75.7	88.8
Native American or Alaskan Native	61.0	75.3	89.1
Asian	82.5	89.0	95.5
Hispanic or Latino	52.4	69.0	85.8
African American or Black	46.3	62.7	80.1
White	80.5	89.3	95.8
Economically Disadvantaged	50.8	67.3	84.9
English Learner	27.0	49.2	72.8
Students Receiving Special Education Services	20.9	33.9	53.8

¹ Source: HumRRO; The denominator for calculating the passing rates are calculated by adding the students in each class who passed CAHSEE in grades 10, 11, and 12 and those students who are still attempting to pass the CAHSEE in grade 12; students identified as grade 12 from the classes of 2006 and 2007 were excluded from the 2008 calculation.