

Students take a variety of examinations during their high school years. Some are required by the state to demonstrate competency in academic areas, while others are used for college admission or class placement purposes. In addition, there are surveys of vocational interests and aptitudes. This publication will give you an overview of testing information.

## CALIFORNIA HIGH SCHOOL EXIT EXAM

Beginning in the tenth grade, all high school students in California take the CHSEE. In order to qualify for graduation, students must pass both the Language Arts (LA) and Mathematics sub-tests. The Language Arts test consists of multiple choice questions and essay writing. The Mathematics test covers seventh through ninth grade math and includes some algebra problems. The tests are given at least twice a year.

## STAR TESTS

The STAR tests include the **California Standards Tests** in English/Language Arts, History, Mathematics through Algebra II, and Physical and Life Sciences. These tests are given to ninth, tenth, and eleventh graders during a two week period in the Spring, and the results are used for student and school accountability purposes.

## CALIFORNIA ENGLISH LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT TEST

English language learners are tested each year until the student tests at the Advanced Level in listening, speaking, reading, and writing. The CELDT is usually given to all English language learners in the fall.

## TESTS IN PLACE OF A DIPLOMA

The **California High School Proficiency Examination** (CHSPE) may be taken by any student who is at least 16 years of age or a second semester Sophomore. If the student passes this test, he or she will be awarded a Certificate of Proficiency by the state, which is equivalent in California to a high school diploma. The CHSPE covers English/language arts, including an essay and multiple choice questions, and mathematics through geometry. This test is offered three times a year: in October, March, and late June. Registration forms and sample test questions are available at: [www.chspe.net](http://www.chspe.net). If a student passes this test, he or she may legally leave high school with parental permission, or the student may choose to continue to attend high school.

**General Education Development:** the GED assesses high school-level skills in writing, math, science, social studies and literature. The GED credential is widely accepted in place of a high school diploma by employers. The results of the GED can also be used to obtain a California High School Equivalency Certificate. Students must be out of high school and 18 or older to take this test, although there are some exceptions for 17-year-olds. Preparation courses and GED testing are available at the Loma Vista Adult Center in Concord. The GED is offered several times a year.

Passing the CHSPE or the GED allows a student to enroll as a full-time student at a community college prior to age 18. Contact the Admissions Offices of four-year colleges, or military recruitment offices, to determine if either of these tests will qualify a student for enrollment or enlistment.

## COLLEGE ENTRANCE EXAMINATIONS

Several tests are used to gauge readiness for college, and qualify students for college admission. To verify a particular college's testing requirements, consult admission information at the college's web site, or the current college course catalog or bulletin.

**I. PSAT/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test.** This test gives students an opportunity to familiarize themselves with the types of questions they will encounter on the SAT Reasoning Test. Critical Reading, Mathematics, and Writing skills are assessed. Scores on this examination, when taken during the junior year, qualify students for several national scholarship and recognition programs.

Sophomores may take the PSAT for practice purposes, on a space available basis. The PSAT is given once a year, on the third Saturday in October. The fee is paid directly to the high school.

II. **PLAN**, a practice version of the ACT, is administered at some district high schools. The PLAN test is especially appropriate for sophomores who have not yet completed geometry. PLAN includes English, Reading, Math, and Science Reasoning sub-tests, plus an occupational interest inventory. The fee is paid directly to the high school.

III. **SAT Reasoning Test**. The SAT is accepted by most colleges in the United States, including the University of California and the California State University system, to meet admission requirements. This four-hour test measures Critical Reading, Writing, and Mathematics skills required for success in college. Scores range from 200-800 on each section of the test. Register at [www.collegeboard.com](http://www.collegeboard.com) or obtain a mail-in registration form from the College & Career Center. Register six to eight weeks before the test. Several district high schools are SAT Test Centers.

IV. **SAT Subject Tests** are one-hour tests in specific high school subjects including literature, foreign languages, science, mathematics, and history. The University of California requires a total of two Subject Tests selected from two different academic areas. Highly competitive colleges may require two or three SAT Subject Tests in addition to the SAT Reasoning Test. The University of California does not accept the Math Level I Subject Test. Register at [www.collegeboard.com](http://www.collegeboard.com) six to eight weeks before the test.

V. **American College Test (ACT)**. Colleges in the United States accept results of the ACT in place of, or in addition to, the SAT Reasoning Test. The ACT provides sub-scores in English, Math, Reading, and Science Reasoning, plus a Composite score. An optional half-hour writing test is available to test takers. The University of California requires the writing test; California State University campuses do not. Register at [www.actstudent.org](http://www.actstudent.org), or obtain a mail-in registration form from the College & Career Center.

## OTHER COLLEGE-RELATED TESTS

I. **Advanced Placement (AP)**. These college-level achievement tests are given in a variety of subjects in May. College units and/or advanced course placement can be earned for acceptable scores, at the discretion of the college or university. Registration for these tests takes place in early February through the high school Treasurer's Office.

II. **California State University placement tests** in Mathematics and English (ELM and EPT) must be taken by matriculating seniors who have not already met the placement test requirements. These tests may be taken at any local Cal State campus in the spring of the Senior year. Contact your College/Career Advisor for details, or consult the CSU East Bay web site.

III. The **University of California** requires that an admitted student demonstrate an acceptable level of accomplishment in English composition. The requirement may be met by: (1) Achieving a score of 3, 4 or 5 on an AP English Exam OR (2) Achieving a score of 680 or higher on the SAT Writing test OR (3) Passing the **Analytical Writing Placement Exam**, which is administered on the second Saturday in May. A UC-bound student who does not meet the requirement will be scheduled into a remedial writing class in the fall.

## COMMUNITY COLLEGE PLACEMENT TESTS

California community colleges require that incoming freshmen take placement tests in English, mathematics, and writing prior to registration for fall classes. All district high schools schedule Diablo Valley College placement tests in March or April, although seniors who are unable to test at their own high schools may test at the Assessment Center on the DVC campus. Contact the Admission Offices of other community college for placement testing information.

## VOCATIONAL INTEREST INVENTORIES AND APTITUDE TESTS

I. Each College & Career Center in the district offers paper and pencil or on-line occupational interest inventories. On some campuses, all student take an interest inventory during ninth or tenth grade. Contact your College/Career Advisor to arrange for testing at your high school. Inventories designed to be taken by eleventh or twelfth graders may require a scoring fee.

II. **Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery (ASVAB)**. This 2.5 hour battery of tests can be very useful as an indicator of an individual's aptitudes and how they relate to a variety of occupations, both in the military and in civilian life. The tests are administered free of charge at the local recruiting office. Students do NOT commit themselves to military service because they have taken this test.

I/2009