High School Graduation Requirements:
A Nationwide Scan & A Closer Look at CAHSEE & SBAC

Michal Kurlaender & Paco Martorell
May 2016
Outline of Presentation

- Framing the conversation

- Analysis of assessment scores in California
  - CAHSEE
  - SBAC performance conditional on CAHSEE passing status
  - Comparison of student characteristics for those who fail CAHSEE and “fail” SBAC

- High school graduation requirements
  - Nationwide trends
  - Sample states
High School Exit Exams

- High school exit exams (HSEE) refer to the use of formal assessment as a requirement for earning a high school diploma

- HSEE are present in at least 2 formats
  - Comprehensive or “standards-based”
    - Assess multiple subjects
    - Taken by all students in specific grade-level
  - End of Course (EOC)
    - Assess mastery of course content
    - Taken by students at completion of course

Center on Education Policy, 2012
Framing the Issues

- **Proponents argue HSEE create**
  - Incentives for schools to provide better instruction
  - Incentives for struggling students to work harder and learn needed skills before graduation
  - A common standard for high school graduation, making the diploma a clearer signal to employers about the academic skills of potential employees

- **Opponents argue HSEE**
  - Discourage some students (academically or socially disadvantaged students) from staying in school
  - Lead to higher dropout rates

- Implications for educational inequality
Analysis of California Assessment Data
Analysis of California Assessment Data

- Data provided by CDE
  - Graduating class of 2016
  - SBAC scores in 11th grade in 2014-2015
  - CAHSEE scores in 10th grade in 2013-2014

- Examined pass/fail rates by subgroups
- Examined the characteristics of those who fail CAHSEE in 10th grade
- Examined the characteristics of those who fall below Not Met/Nearly Met levels on SBAC
Distribution of CAHSEE Scores
MATH

Graduating Class of 2016
Distribution of SBAC Scores
MATH

Graduating Class of 2016
Distribution of CAHSEE and SBAC Scores

**MATH**

Graduating Class of 2016

![Graph showing the distribution of CAHSEE and SBAC Math scores for the Graduating Class of 2016. The graph displays the percentage of students within different z-score ranges for both exams.](image-url)
Distribution of CAHSEE and SBAC Scores ELA

Graduating Class of 2016
SBAC Performance by CAHSEE Passing Status

- Overall
- Subgroups
  - Gender
  - Race/Ethnicity
  - Economically Disadvantaged Students
  - English Language Learners
  - Students with Disabilities
Pass/Fail Rates on CAHSEE and SBAC

Graduating Class of 2016
Student Performance on SBAC by Pass/Fail on CAHSEE

MATH
- 88% Passed CAHSEE
- 21% Failed CAHSEE

ELA
- 86% Passed CAHSEE
- 14% Failed CAHSEE

Graduating Class of 2016
Student Performance on SBAC by Gender

Graduating Class of 2016

**MATH**
- Passed CAHSEE: Male 87%, Female 88%
- Failed CAHSEE: Male 13%, Female 12%

**ELA**
- Passed CAHSEE: Male 83%, Female 89%
- Failed CAHSEE: Male 17%, Female 11%

Not Met | Nearly Met | Met | Exceeded
Student Performance on SBAC by Race/Ethnicity

MATH

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Passed CAHSEE</th>
<th>Failed CAHSEE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic</td>
<td>84%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>93%</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>96%</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black</td>
<td>78%</td>
<td>34%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Graduating Class of 2016
Student Performance on SBAC by Race/Ethnicity

Graduating Class of 2016

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Race/Ethnicity</th>
<th>Passed CAHSEE</th>
<th>Failed CAHSEE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic</td>
<td>81%</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>93%</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>92%</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black</td>
<td>79%</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Key:
- Not Met
- Nearly Met
- Met
- Exceeded
Performance on SBAC for Economically Disadvantaged Students

MATH
- Passed CAHSEE (FRPL): 83%, (No FRPL): 93%
- Failed CAHSEE (FRPL): 17%, (No FRPL): 7%

ELA
- Passed CAHSEE (FRPL): 80%, (No FRPL): 93%
- Failed CAHSEE (FRPL): 20%, (No FRPL): 7%

Graduating Class of 2016
Performance on SBAC for English Language Learners

Graduating Class of 2016

**MATH**
- **ELL**
  - Passed CAHSEE: 58%
  - Failed CAHSEE: 20%
  - Not Met: 6%
  - Nearly Met: 14%
  - Met: 23%
  - Exceeded: 34%
- **Non-ELL**
  - Passed CAHSEE: 91%
  - Failed CAHSEE: 9%
  - Not Met: 14%
  - Nearly Met: 23%
  - Met: 37%
  - Exceeded: 23%

**ELA**
- **ELL**
  - Passed CAHSEE: 41%
  - Failed CAHSEE: 9%
  - Not Met: 37%
  - Nearly Met: 29%
  - Met: 40%
  - Exceeded: 25%
- **Non-ELL**
  - Passed CAHSEE: 91%
  - Failed CAHSEE: 9%
  - Not Met: 41%
  - Nearly Met: 25%
  - Met: 73%
  - Exceeded: 66%

Kurlaender & Martorell
May 2016
Performance on SBAC for Students with Disabilities

**MATH**
- Disabled: Passed CAHSEE - 46%, Failed CAHSEE - 91%
- Non-Disabled: Passed CAHSEE - 54%, Failed CAHSEE - 22%

**ELA**
- Disabled: Passed CAHSEE - 43%, Failed CAHSEE - 90%
- Non-Disabled: Passed CAHSEE - 57%, Failed CAHSEE - 10%

Graduating Class of 2016

Kurlaender & Martorell May 2016
Characteristics of CAHSEE & SBAC “Failers”

- Subgroups
  - Gender
  - Race/Ethnicity
  - Economically Disadvantaged Students
  - English Language Learners
  - Students with Disabilities

- 3 categories of “Failers”
  - Fail CAHSEE
  - Not Met on SBAC
  - SBAC performance at CAHSEE fail rate
CAHSEE Failure by Gender

Overall
Male: 51%  
Female: 49%

MATH
Failed CAHSEE: 40%  
Not Met SBAC: 60%  
"Failed" SBAC: 53%

ElA
Failed CAHSEE: 40%  
Not Met SBAC: 63%  
"Failed" SBAC: 65%

"Failed" SBAC means holding the CAHSEE failure rate constant

Male  Female
Graduating Class of 2016
CAHSEE Failure by Ethnicity/Race

Graduating Class of 2016

“Failed” SBAC means holding the CAHSEE failure rate constant

- Hispanic
- White
- Asian
- Black
CAHSEE Failure for Economically Disadvantaged Students

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>MATH</th>
<th>ELA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Overall</td>
<td>55%</td>
<td>77%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Failed CAHSEE</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>72%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not Met SBAC</td>
<td>66%</td>
<td>72%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Failed&quot; SBAC</td>
<td>71%</td>
<td>72%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

"Failed" SBAC means holding the CAHSEE failure rate constant

Graduating Class of 2016
CAHSEE Failure for English Language Learners

MATH

Overall  Failed CAHSEE  Not Met SBAC  "Failed" SBAC

11%  36%  20%  29%

ELA

"Failed CAHSEE  Not Met SBAC  "Failed" SBAC

44%  32%  35%

"Failed" SBAC means holding the CAHSEE failure rate constant

Graduating Class of 2016
CAHSEE Failure for Students with Disabilities

Overall Failed CAHSEE 36% Not Met SBAC 16% "Failed" SBAC 27% Failed CAHSEE 33% Not Met SBAC 26% "Failed" SBAC 29%

"Failed" SBAC means holding the CAHSEE failure rate constant

Graduating Class of 2016
Discussion

- SBAC appears more difficult
- More students are in lowest level of SBAC than failed CAHSEE
  - Overall and for all subgroups
- When holding the failure rate constant, SBAC is more equitable
  - Disproportionately lower (failure rate for ELL and Students with Disabilities)
Nationwide Scan
Scan of State HSEE Practices

- Scan 50 states + D.C.
  - Diploma requirements
    - Including alternative paths for completion
  - HSEE policies
    - Specific exit exam requirement
    - Minimum scores on standardized tests
    - End of Course Exams
- K-12 assessment strategies
- College & career readiness indicators and assessments
Methods
Scan of H.S. Diploma Requirements

- Center for Education Policy report
  - Regular summary of HSEE practices
  - Latest report, 2011-2012

- Review of public websites
  - State departments of education
  - State legislation/education code
  - LEA websites
  - Popular media articles
17 States use Specific Exit Exam
2011-2012

Center on Education Policy, 2012
9 States use End of Course Exams 2011-2012

Center on Education Policy, 2012
The State of the Nation

In 2011-2012:

- 25 states administered high school exit exams
  - 17 with comprehensive assessments
  - 9 with EOCs
  - (Massachusetts required both)
The State of the Nation

In 2011-2012:

- 25 states administered high school exit exams
  - 17 with comprehensive assessments
  - 9 with EOCs
  - (Massachusetts required both)

- 69% of the nation’s students attend school in states with HSEE
The State of the Nation

In 2011-2012:

- 25 states administered high school exit exams
  - 17 with comprehensive assessments
  - 9 with EOCs
  - (Massachusetts required both)

- 69% of the nation’s students attend school in states with HSEE

- 70%-90% of students pass on first attempt, though rates vary from state to state and by subject area of exam

Center on Education Policy, 2012
Over the past 5 years…

- Transition in state assessment systems
  - Largely driven by Common Core
Over the past 5 years…

- Transition in state assessment systems
  - Largely driven by Common Core

- States have repealed or suspended comprehensive HSEE
  - Some permanently
  - Some temporarily
Over the past 5 years…

- Transition in state assessment systems
  - Largely driven by Common Core

- States have repealed or suspended HSEE
  - Some permanently
  - Some temporarily

- More states require EOCs and other performance measures
  - Senior projects
  - Portfolios
  - Learning plans
  - Community service
Resulting in...a current state of flux

New Jersey requirements
Main Dish
Course Requirements
Minimum Credit Requirements

Choose A Side Dish
High School Exit Exam
End of Course Exams
Non-test Requirements

Substitutions
Non-test Requirements (e.g., portfolios)
H.S. Graduation Requirements
Course & Credit Requirements

- Specific subjects/courses

- Vary by state
  - Generally 18-24 Carnegie Units

- Vary by diploma type
  - Florida (for example)
    - 24 credits for standard diploma
    - 18 credits for college preparatory program
    - 18 credits for career preparatory program
H.S. Graduation Requirements
High School Exit Exams

- Specific Exit Exam
  - Primary use is to meet graduation requirements
  - Cutoff scores represent a minimum skill level
  - Comprehensive or “standards-based
  - Assess multiple subjects
  - Taken by all students in specific grade-level
H.S. Graduation Requirements
High School Exit Exams

- **Specific Exit Exam**
  - *Primary use is to meet graduation requirements*
  - Cutoff scores represent a minimum skill level
  - Comprehensive or “standards-based”
  - Assess multiple subjects
  - Taken by all students in specific grade-level

- **State accountability assessment**
  - *Primary use is to meet state and federal accountability requirements*
  - Cutoff scores represent a minimum skill level
  - Comprehensive or “standards-based”
  - Assess multiple subjects
  - Taken by all students in specific grade-level
H.S. Graduation Requirements
High School Exit Exams

- Distinct and separate HSEE
  - Primary use is to meet graduation requirements
  - Cutoff scores represent a minimum skill level
  - Comprehensive or “standards-based
  - Assess multiple subjects
  - Taken by all students in specific grade-level

- State accountability assessment
  - Primary use is to meet state and federal accountability requirements
  - Cutoff scores represent a minimum skill level
  - Comprehensive or “standards-based
  - Assess multiple subjects
  - Taken by all students in specific grade-level

- Some states allow for scores on HSEE to substitute for EOC scores
H.S. Graduation Requirements
End of Course Exams

- Assess mastery of specific course content
- Taken by students at completion of course
- Some states require a minimum EOC score for graduation
- Some states factor EOC scores into course grades, but no minimum EOC score required for graduation
- Some states allow for scores on EOC to substitute for HSEE scores as an alternative
H.S. Graduation Requirements
Non-test Requirements

- State required, but locally implemented
- In some states, the non-test requirements must be met by all students
- In other states these are alternatives for “failers”

Samples of non-test requirements:
- Performance assessments (Rhode Island)
- Portfolio or work samples (New Mexico, Oregon)
- Senior project (Idaho)
- Community service (Washington, D.C.)
- Learning plans (Hawaii, Oregon, Washington)
Sample States
# SAMPLE STATES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Common Core Assessment Consortium</th>
<th>HSEE/State Assessment</th>
<th>EOC</th>
<th>Non-Test</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Massachusetts</td>
<td>PARCC</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Florida</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New York</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ohio</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oregon</td>
<td>SBAC</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Washington</td>
<td>SBAC</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Massachusetts
Class of 2016

- Course & credit requirements locally determined
  - Required by state
    - American History
    - Civics
    - Physical Education

- Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS)
  - Minimum 240 score on ELA and Math
  - Minimum 220 score on 1 Science/Technology/Engineering test
    - (Biology, Chemistry, Introductory Physics, or Technology/Engineering)
Massachusetts
Alternative Route to Graduation

Educational Proficiency Plan

- MCAS score between 220-238 in required subjects
- Review of a student's strengths and weaknesses
- Successfully complete grade 11 & 12 courses that will move the student toward proficiency on:
  - Grade 10 curriculum framework standards
  - Grade 11 &12 ELA and Algebra II standards
- School will administer assessments annually to determine student progress toward proficiency
  - MCAS tests or
  - Other tests identified by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education
Florida
Class of 2016

Diploma Options
- 4-year, 24-credit program
- 3-year, 18-credit college preparatory program
- 3-year, 18-credit career preparatory program
- International Baccalaureate
- Advanced International Certificate of Education

Requirements for All Options
- Minimum GPA
- Minimum score on FCAT®
  - Grade 10 Reading
- EOC requirements
  - Pass Algebra I
  - Take Geometry, Biology
    - Count 30% of grade
Florida
Class of 2019

Diploma Options

- 24 credit standard diploma
- 18 credit Academically Challenging Curriculum to Enhance Learning (ACCEL)
- Advanced International Certificate of Education
- International Baccalaureate

Requirements for All Options

- Minimum score Florida Standards Assessment
  - Grade 10 ELA
  - Or ACT/SAT equivalent
- EOCs
  - Pass Algebra I
    - Or Postsecondary Education Readiness Test equivalent
  - Take Biology, Geometry, US. History
    - Count 30% of grade
New York
Class of 2016

- 44 Credits + the following:
  - Pass 5 Regents Exams (1 in each category)
    - ELA
    - Math (Algebra I, Geometry, Algebra II)
    - Science (Living Environment, Earth Science, Chemistry, Physics)
    - Social Studies (US History, Global History/Geography)
    - Any additional Regents Exam or approved assessment
  - OR
    - Pass 4 Regents Exams
    - Career Development & Occupational Studies credential
Ohio
Class of 2016

- 20 Credits + the following:
  - Pass 5 EOCs
  - OR
    - Pass 4 of 5 EOCs tests
    - Missed passing 5th test by no more than 10 pts.
    - 97% attendance rate in all 4 years of H.S.
    - Not expelled in last 4 school years
    - GPA of 2.5 in subject area not passed EOC
    - Completed high school curriculum requirements
    - Participated in intervention programs offered by the school with 97% attendance rate
    - Letters recommending graduation from the high school principal and from each high school teacher in the subject area not passed on EOC
Ohio
Classes of 2018 & Beyond

- 20 Credits + 1 of the following:

  - Pass 7 Ohio EOCs
    - Algebra I and Geometry (or Integrated math I and II), Biology, American History and American Government, English I and English II

OR

  - Industry recognized credential
    - 12 points on State Board approved program
  - WorkKeys Assessment
    - Achieve a \textit{workforce readiness} score

OR

  - Nationally recognized college admission test
    - Student’s choice
    - Earn “remediation-free” scores in ELA and Math
Oregon
Class of 2016

- 24 Credits + the following:
  - Demonstrate mastery in reading, writing & math
    - SBAC score
    OR
    - Work samples
    OR
    - Pre-approved alternate assessment
      - ACT
      - SAT/PSAT
      - AP
      - IB

- Meet personalized learning requirements
  - Education Plan & Profile
  - Career-Related Learning Experiences
  - Extended Application
Oregon

- **Personalized Learning Requirements**
  - *Education Plan & Profile* - Develop an education plan and build an education profile to guide learning toward student’s personal, career and post-high school goals
  
  - *Career-Related Learning Experiences* - Participate in experiences that connect classroom learning with real life experiences in the workplace, community, and/or school relevant to student’s education plan
  
  - *Extended Application* - Apply and extend knowledge and skills in new and complex situations related to the student’s personal and career interests and post-high school goals
## Washington
### Classes of 2016 & 2017

- **24 Credits**
- **High School and Beyond Plan**
- **Minimum score on the following assessments**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2016</th>
<th>2017</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Math</strong>*</td>
<td>Algebra 1 EOC or Geometry EOC or SBAC</td>
<td>Algebra 1 EOC or Geometry EOC or SBAC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>ELA</strong>*</td>
<td>Reading and Writing HSPE or SBAC</td>
<td>SBAC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Science</strong></td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Biology SBAC</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*If unsuccessful on SBAC or EOC, then may substitute approved alternative assessment: ACT, SAT, AP, IB*
Guides a student’s high school experience and includes plans for postsecondary activities. Students must work with school staff and parents/guardians to develop the plan and it must be updated to reflect changes in student interests and goals.
Discussion

- States moving away from specific HSEE
- States allowing for alternative assessments
- States introducing non-test measures as alternative to assessments
Questions?
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Requirements</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>Comprehensive HSEE</td>
<td>Standardized exam given to all students at a specific grade level that tests for minimum level knowledge, skills, &amp; competencies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>Multiple Test Options</td>
<td>Allows students to choose from multiple tests to demonstrate minimum competency or mastery</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>Test + Non-test requirement</td>
<td>Standardized exam AND additional non-test requirement such as community service or senior project</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>Test or Non-test option</td>
<td>Students must receive passing score on standardize test OR demonstrate competency or mastery through alternative pathway (not limited to students with disabilities)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E</td>
<td>No Test</td>
<td>No requirements beyond credits/courses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>End of Course Exams</td>
<td>Standardized assessments given at end of courses whenever students enrolled rather than administered at set time to all students</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Typology of H.S. Diploma Requirements

- All 50 states
  - Minimum credits
  - Course sequence/Content requirements

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Requirements</th>
<th># of States</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>1 Comprehensive HSEE</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>Multiple Test Options</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>Test + Non-test additional requirement</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>Test or Alternative Non-test option</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E</td>
<td>No Test</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>End of Course Exams</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

May 2016