

CHSPE

CALIFORNIA HIGH SCHOOL PROFICIENCY EXAMINATION

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The California High School Proficiency Examination (CHSPE) is a testing program established by California law (*Education Code Section 48412*). If eligible to take the test, you can earn the legal equivalent of a high school diploma by passing the CHSPE. The CHSPE consists of two sections: an English-language Arts section and a Mathematics section. If you pass both sections of the CHSPE, the California State Board of Education will award you a Certificate of Proficiency, which by state law is equivalent to a high school diploma (although not equivalent to completing all coursework required for regular graduation from high school). Although federal agencies are not bound by state laws, the U.S. Office of Personnel Management has ruled that the Certificate of Proficiency shall be accepted in applications for federal civilian employment. The U.S. Department of Education, including the Federal Student Aid Office, recognizes the CHSPE as the equivalent of a high school diploma in applications for federal financial aid. All persons and institutions subject to California law that require a high school diploma for any purpose must accept the certificate as satisfying the requirement.

Passing the CHSPE does not, by itself, exempt minors from attending school. Minors who have a Certificate of Proficiency must also have verified parent/guardian permission to stop attending school. Many students who pass the CHSPE continue to attend school. State law provides that, if you leave school after passing the CHSPE and are no more than 18 years old, you may reenroll in the district in which you were registered with no adverse consequences. If you do reenroll you may be required to meet new or additional requirements established since you were previously enrolled. If you reenroll and then leave school again, you may be denied re-admittance until the beginning of the following semester. Contact your guidance counselor or school administrator for further information and details about leaving school after passing the CHSPE.

Dropping out of school after registering for the CHSPE or while awaiting results is unlawful for those under 18 years old. It may also result in failing grades for courses in which you are enrolled.

Description of the CHSPE

Important Notice – Please be aware of the following information:

- For those who have not yet earned a Certificate of Proficiency, all portions of the CHSPE passed from the April 2004 test administration remain valid for the purpose of earning a Certificate of Proficiency. Sections and subtests previously passed do not need to be taken again and continue to apply to earning the Certificate of Proficiency.

The CHSPE consists of two test sections: English-language Arts and Mathematics. You must pass both sections to receive a Certificate of Proficiency. For specific skills tested, visit the [Test Specifications & Samples](#) page. Sample test questions, including a sample writing task and the essay scoring scale, are available through links from this page. On this PDF of the sample questions, the format of the multiple-choice questions is the same as in the test booklet.

English-language Arts Section

The English-language Arts section consists of two subtests: Language and Reading. To pass the English-language Arts section, you must pass both subtests. (The two subtests do not have to be passed at the same test administration and can be taken separately.) The Language subtest has 48 multiple-choice questions and one writing task, both of which must be completed at the same administration. The multiple-choice questions measure language mechanics and language expression. The writing task requires you to write an expository essay, which will be scored on the basis of writing proficiency and on your ability to address the subject in your essay. Note that the writing task on the Language subtest must be taken in conjunction with the multiple-choice questions on that subtest. If you only take the writing task, or you only take the multiple-choice questions, you will not pass the Language subtest. The Reading subtest has 54 reading comprehension questions and 30 vocabulary questions, all of which are multiple-choice. The reading comprehension questions test initial understanding, interpretation, critical analysis, and strategies using three types of text: literary, informational, and functional. The vocabulary questions assess synonyms, multiple-meaning words, and context clues. The chart below shows the number of test questions in each content cluster assessed on the Language and Reading subtests.

Number of Test Questions by Content Cluster in English-language Arts

Area	Reading Subtest	
	Content Cluster	Number of Questions
Comprehension		40
Vocabulary		30

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Comprehension	Initial Understanding	10
	Area	Content Cluster
	Interpretation	20
	Critical Analysis	14
	Strategies	10
Vocabulary	Synonyms	12
	Multiple Meaning Words	6
	Context Clues	12
Total Questions		84

Language Subtest

Area	Content Cluster	Number of Questions
Mechanics	Capitalization	8
	Usage	8
	Punctuation	8
Expressions	Sentence Structure	10
	Prewriting	5
	Content and Organization	9
Total Questions		48
Writing	Writing Task	1

Mathematics Section

The Mathematics section has 50 multiple-choice questions that assess content in the following areas: number sense and operations; patterns, relationships, and algebra; data, statistics, and probability; and geometry and measurement. The questions also assess the mathematical processes of communication and representation, estimation, mathematical connections, and reasoning and problem solving. A reference sheet containing necessary formulas is provided. The chart below shows the number of questions in each content cluster assessed on the Mathematics section.

Number of Test Questions by Content Cluster in Mathematics

Content Cluster	Number of Questions
Number Sense and Operations	9
Patterns, Relationships, and Algebra	15
Data, Statistics, and Probability	12
Geometry and Measurement	14
Total Questions	50

Testing Time

A total of 3½ hours of testing time will be provided to take the CHSPE. No part of the exam is timed within the 3½ hours, and you may spend as much time as you like on any portion until the testing session ends. You are responsible for managing your own use of the testing time.

Taking and Passing the CHSPE

On a test administration date, you can take the Mathematics section, the English-Language Arts Language

subtest, or the English-language Arts Reading subtest, or any combination of the three. You can make that decision on the day of the test. The test fee, however, is the same regardless of which parts of the test you take. To pass the CHSPE and receive a Certificate of Proficiency, you must pass both the Mathematics section and the English-language Arts section (which requires passing the Language subtest and the Reading subtest). You do not have to pass both sections on the same day, nor do you have to pass the two English-language Arts subtests on the same day. (Note that, on the Language subtest, both the multiple-choice questions and the writing task must be completed at the same test administration.) You do not have to retake a section or subtest, that you previously passed. There is no limit to the number of times you may take the CHSPE, but you must register and pay the current test fee each time.

To pass the Mathematics section, you must earn a scale score of at least 350. To pass the English-language Arts section, you must pass the Language subtest and the Reading subtest. To pass the Reading subtest, you must earn a scale score of at least 350. The passing standard for the Language subtest is based on the combination of your multiple-choice and writing task scores as shown below.

Score Combination to Pass the Language Subtest

If your writing task score is:	Your multiple-choice score must be at least:
2 or lower	You cannot pass.
2.5	365
3	350
3.5	342

Results on the CHSPE taken prior to January 2004 cannot be combined with results on the CHSPE taken after January 2004.

The CHSPE Test Dates for the current school year are:

- October 21, 2017
- March 17, 2018
- June 16, 2018

To begin your registration process you may [create a Registration Form](#) or visit the [Registration Summary](#) page for more information.

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