

# Quality Education Investment Act (QEIA) Class Size Reduction (CSR) Waiver Oak Grove Middle School Summary

**Ed Code waivers are now submitted online to the State Board of Education (SBE). If approved by the Mt. Diablo USD Board of Education, below is a narrative presentation of the information that will be submitted.**

Mt. Diablo Unified School District is requesting a Quality Investment Education Act waiver for the period July 1, 2013 through June 29, 2014, Ed Code Class Size Reduction Requirements Section 52055.740 (C i, ii, iii, ), under Ed Code authority: 33050. (see strikethroughs)

(C)For classes in English language arts, reading, mathematics, science, or history and social science courses in grades 4 to 12, inclusive, an average classroom size that is the lesser of clause (i) or (ii), as follows:

~~(i)At least five pupils fewer per classroom than was the average in 2006-07.~~

~~(ii)An average of 25 pupils per classroom.~~

(iii)For purposes of this subparagraph, average classroom size shall be calculated at the grade level based on the number of subject-specific classrooms in that grade at the schoolsite. ~~If the subject specific classrooms at the school averaged fewer than 25 pupils per classroom during the 2005-06 school year that lower average shall be used as the "average in 2006-07" for purposes of this subparagraph.~~ A school that receives funding under this article shall not have a class in English language arts, reading, mathematics, science, or history and social science in grades 4 to 12, inclusive, with more than 27 pupils regardless of its average classroom size.

Oak Grove Middle School's current QEIA CSR target averages for English, ELD, mathematics, history-social science, and science grades six through eight are 19.1, 23.7, and 20.1, respectively. Monitoring performed by the Contra Costa County Office of Education indicates that the Class Size Reduction (CSR) requirements of the Quality Education Investment Act (QEIA) were fully met by Oak Grove MS for 2012-13 and, at the time of the writing of this waiver request, the school is on track to meet the targets for 2013-2014. However, if mid-year enrollment continues to follow recent trends, the school may find itself unable to continue to meet these excessively low targets. While the district could add additional sections, mid-year hiring creates difficulty with finding highly qualified teachers willing to come on board to teach the specialized tiny (one or two sections per course) part-time jobs that would be created by adding these sections. Additionally, the excessively small classes that are necessary to maintain these grade level averages are creating unique scheduling and enrollment issues. We are requesting an increase in core class size averages, grades 6 – 8 to 25:1.

Oak Grove Middle School staff recognizes the benefit of small class sizes, however in the quest to ensure equity for all students, the current class size restrictions impede the school's ability to appropriately place a student in an intervention or advanced core class appropriate to their needs. Very small core class size averages have inadvertently become a barrier to equal access for students. If a student enrolls after September, staff often has the challenge of developing an appropriate schedule for students. Due to the small class sizes needed to achieve the low target averages, these more specialized classes fill quickly. Additionally, the Mt. Diablo Unified School District began a middle school newcomer program for English Language Learners (World Academy). This program is located at Oak Grove Middle School. Enrollment in the World Academy is growing at rates we were not able to predict.

The central office and school administration are considering overflowing students to other middle schools that are not their community school if class sizes continue to rise. Except for those cases where parents chose a transfer under School Choice transfer (NCLB), parents, students, and staff would prefer students to remain at their home school. We recognize the importance of the community connection to the school for parents and students. For middle school students the connection is an important one in their emerging adolescent identity and forming positive peer groups. Moving students outside of their community school can impede the parent involvement and access that is so critical at a Title I school with a predominately English learner population. Oak Grove's ability to keep students in their community school is important for student success and to support ongoing improvements.