

GENERAL WAIVER COVER SHEET
CALIFORNIA STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION
JANUARY 2004 AGENDA
Item No. W-5

TITLE: Request by Bonita Unified School District to waive <i>Education Code</i> (EC) Section 37202, equity length of time requirement, to allow a full day kindergarten pilot program at Allen Avenue, Fred Ekstrand, Gladstone, Grace Miller, La Verne Heights, J. Marion Roynon, Arma Shull and Oak Mesa Elementary Schools.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ACTION <input type="checkbox"/> INFORMATION <input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC HEARING <input type="checkbox"/> CONSENT
CDSIS: 1-9-2003	

RECOMMENDATION:

The Department recommends approval of this waiver for one year with the condition that the district provide an evaluation of the full day kindergarten pilot program before a renewal is considered.

Summary of Previous State Board of Education Discussion and Action:

The State Board of Education has approved similar waivers in the past.

Summary of Key Issue(s):

Bonita Unified is requesting a waiver of the equity length of time requirement, EC Section 37202, that states a district shall maintain an equal length of time in the school year for all its elementary schools. The district wants to start a pilot program of extended day kindergartens at all eight elementary schools. Recent changes in content standards and school accountability have increased the pressure on kindergarten pupils to master skills previously acquired at the first grade level. In order to support this new emphasis, the district finds it necessary to lengthen the kindergarten day.

The district surveyed parents and found that 90% of them were in favor of a longer day for their kindergarten pupils. The school board has adopted a policy for the Early Primary Program and will follow the requirements of EC Sections 8970-8974. The teacher's union fully supports this pilot program. The district has an open enrollment policy so that parents may choose to enroll their pupils in the pilot program. Each school site has individual staff/facility issues, so not all of the schools are able to increase the minutes to the same levels, thereby requiring a waiver of EC Section 37202. Attached is a chart showing the different kindergarten instructional minutes for each school.

Therefore, the Department recommends approval of this waiver for one year with the condition that the district provide an evaluation of the full day kindergarten pilot program before a renewal is considered.

Bargaining unit(s) consulted on: July 30, 31 and August 6, 20, 21 2003

Position of bargaining unit (choose only one):

Neutral Support Oppose

Name of bargaining unit representative: Jim Himelboch (BUTA President); Debbie Tully (BUTA Rep.) and Don Roberts (CSEA President)

Public hearing identified by (choose one or more):

Posting in a newspaper posting at each school other

(specify) District Office

Public hearing held on: August 20, 2003

Local board approval date: August 20, 2003

Advisory committee(s) consulted: School Site Councils

Objections raised (choose one): None Objections are attached on separate sheet

Date consulted: September 2003

Effective dates of request: 07/01/03 to 06/30/04

Fiscal Analysis (as appropriate): N/A

Background Information:

Waiver request forms and supporting documents are attached to this summary.