



CALIFORNIA STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

JULY 2004 AGENDA

General Waiver

SUBJECT Request by North Sacramento Unified School District to waive <i>Education Code</i> (EC) Section 37202, the equity length of time requirement, to allow a pilot full day kindergarten program at Noralto Elementary School . Waiver Number: 110-4-2004	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Action
	<input type="checkbox"/> Consent

RECOMMENDATION

Approval **Approval with conditions** **Denial**

Approval of this waiver for one year with the condition that the district provides an evaluation of the full day kindergarten pilot program before a renewal is considered.

SUMMARY OF PREVIOUS STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION DISCUSSION/ACTION

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

SUMMARY OF KEY ISSUES

North Sacramento Elementary School District is requesting a waiver of the equity length of time requirement, EC section 37202, which states a “school district shall maintain all of the elementary day schools established by it for an equal length of time during the school year.” The district wants to start a pilot extended day kindergarten program at Noralto Elementary School beginning in the 2004-2005 school year, one of eleven elementary schools in the district. The district received a waiver for EC Section 37202, last year to implement a full day kindergarten at another school in the district, Northwood Elementary. Due to space constraints, Northwood is not going to seek a renewal. That campus is being renovated and the school is actually moving to another location during the renovation work.

The district, working together with Noralto Elementary staff, wants to provide a longer day for their kindergarten pupils in order to increase student achievement. The district has found that many of their kindergarten pupils begin their academic lives with no English language skills or pre-school experiences. The district feels that by extending the academic day for these pupils that they will increase their chances for success. The school board has already adopted the Early Primary Program (for the Northwood waiver) and has an open enrollment policy in place. Students will receive age appropriate activities including academic instruction as well as enrichment activities during the extended day. The class will consist of one teacher to twenty pupils along with the assistance of a bilingual para-professional. This particular classroom has the added convenience of bathrooms inside the room.

District administration is still required the Northwood site to turn in an evaluation of their

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pilot as a source of information for the new pilot program at Noralto. The results of that evaluation will help with future planning of full day kindergartens throughout the district. Attached to this waiver is a copy of Northwood's extended day kindergarten evaluation report. Overall the evaluation of the Northwood pilot program is positive, and will not be continued because of inadequate space.

The North Sacramento Education Association (NSEA), the bargaining unit for the district has opposed this waiver and their letter is attached. The union states the reason for their opposition, as "the North Sacramento Education Association does not believe that a full day Kindergarten program is developmentally appropriate." As per EC section 33051(a)(3), the district met the requirement of the law by including the union's participation in the waiver process. It is important to note, however, that this same bargaining unit did not oppose the previous year's waiver for Northwood Elementary School for the same thing, an extended day kindergarten.

As a rebuttal to the NSEA objections to the waiver request, John Brewer, the Assistant Superintendent attached a letter from Theresa Roberts, Ph. D., on her professional recommendations for an extended day kindergarten program at Noralto Elementary to the North Sacramento School Board (see attached). Dr. Roberts is a professor of education at California State University, Sacramento and specializes in early childhood education as well as English learner education. In her letter, Dr. Roberts cites several studies of the benefits to children of providing longer day kindergartens to lower income pupils, particularly among children of limited English language skills. As the NSEA does not elaborate or cite specific research as evidence to the contrary, it is difficult to ascertain the reason for the opposition.

As the district is meeting all of the criteria for establishment of a pilot program for an extended day kindergarten, 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.

Authority for Waiver: *Education Code* (EC) Section 33050

Bargaining unit(s) consulted on date(s): March 30, 2004

Position of bargaining unit(s) (choose only one):

Neutral

Support

Oppose

(see reason above)

Name of bargaining unit/representative(s): Jim Davis, Jason Phipps, Linda Powell, Carol McKinley, Joan Whittaker (see attached letter from bargaining unit)

Public hearing identified by (choose one or more):

posting in a newspaper

posting at each school

other (specify)

Public hearing held on date(s): April 13, 2004

Local board approval date(s): April 13, 2004

Advisory committee(s) consulted: School Site Councils

Objections raised (choose one): None Objections are as follows:

Date(s) consulted: March 29, 2004

Period of request: July 1, 2004 to June 30, 2005

FISCAL ANALYSIS (AS APPROPRIATE)

School District will absorb any increases in cost.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Action Item: Some documentation is available for web viewing. Waiver forms and other hard copy documents are available for viewing at the Waiver Office or State Board Office.