



CALIFORNIA STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

JULY 2004 AGENDA

Federal Waiver

<p>SUBJECT</p> <p>Request by Escondido Union High School District to waive No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB); Title IV, Part A, Section 4115 (a)(1)(c) to use Safe and Drug Free Schools and Communities funds to support the cost of Connect With Kids – A multi-media approach to teaching life skills and prevention of drug and alcohol abuse and violence.</p> <p>Waiver Number: Fed-07-2004</p>	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Action</p>
	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Consent</p>

RECOMMENDATION

Approval Approval with conditions Denial

The district must submit a report to the Safe and Healthy Kids Program Office (SHKPO) no later than July 31, 2005, that describes its progress in evaluating the use of the *Connecting! With Kids* program within the district. The district must submit a report to the SHKPO no later than July 31, 2006, that describes the progress made by Compass Consulting in submitting the results of the evaluation to (1) the National Registry of Effective Programs, (2) the University of Colorado's Center for the Study and Prevention of Violence, or (3) the California Healthy Kids Resource Center, for possible designation as a Model, Blueprint, or Validated Program. The district must be willing to take part in a formal evaluation, if requested and evaluate its own comprehensive prevention program in accordance with the district's approved Local Educational Agency Plan.

SUMMARY OF PREVIOUS STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION DISCUSSION AND ACTION

State Board Policy 03-01 contains guidelines for approval of applications for waiver of the NCLB requirements that Title IV funds be used for "science-based" prevention programs. The board has previously approved a waiver of this program for use by Sacramento City Unified School District (Fed-12-2003).

SUMMARY OF KEY ISSUES

The waiver application from the Escondido Union High School District regarding the *Connecting! With Kids* program has been reviewed to ensure compliance with the three major criteria described in State Board Policy 03-01 that must be met in order for the waiver to be approved by the Board. The waiver application's success in meeting each of the three criteria is described as follows:

1. Is the program innovative?

The *Connecting! With Kids* (CWK) news was first broadcast via television in September 1998. The related curriculum first became available for use by schools in Spring 2001. The CWK program does meet the test for being a new program. The program design is based on prevention theory drawn from published research related to peer influences, factors relating to bullies, victims, and aggression. The program promotes a school violence prevention model with five major components. The most innovative is the use of televised media as an intervention. The program's coordinated use of televised and video-taped programming with curriculum is based on research cited in half a dozen published studies described in detail as part of the supplement to the application submitted by the district (Research Supporting the CONNECT Program, Anderson and McHenry, June 2003).

The hallmark of this program's innovative nature is its use of a televised reality-based education series consisting of half-hour programs and corresponding character education and life skills curriculum. The primary objective of the CWK program is to build a televised network that is the most trusted resource for reality-based programming on children's issues available to local communities, educators, school districts and families. This multimedia integrated intervention and prevention program for grades 3-12 includes videos and lesson plans with Web-based resources for teachers, parents and students. Each video documentary features real stories about real students, while focusing on key social issues or behavioral topics. The curriculum is designed to support peer-led discussion and a high level of teacher and student participation.

2. Does the program demonstrate substantial likelihood of success?

Preliminary program evaluation from an unpublished report (July 2003, Institute for Social Development) has shown the program demonstrates the likelihood of success for improving general classroom behavior related to politeness, obeying teachers, anger, threats, and bullying. Overall, the majority of areas assessed remained stable across the school year according to both students and teachers. A mix of positive and negative trends was found for a sub-set of items. Students tended to see the school climate as safer and more conducive for learning at post data collection. However, students saw their own behavior and those of other students more negatively. Clearly, more research on the efficacy of the CWK program is warranted and needed. Initial research is quite limited because without a control group, natural changes in the measured dimensions over time could not be assessed or controlled in this evaluation. Therefore, it is not possible to determine whether the observed changes are due to the presence of CWK in the schools. To directly assess the impact of CWK on school climate and student behavior, the district should use a control group in future research. The next proposed evaluation and research investigating CWK includes randomized selection of treatment and control groups as stipulated by the Department's recommendation for approval with conditions.

The opportunity to subject CWK to evaluation employing scientifically-based research methodology to determine if peer-led, televised supported, character education curriculum will change student behavior related to alcohol, other drug, and tobacco use and violence represents a valuable addition to the field of prevention research consistent with the Board's criteria.

3. Is there a plan and timeline for submitting the program for review and recognition?

The applicant has stated that when the 2003-2004 evaluation of CWK is completed, the program will be submitted to What Works Clearing House set up by the U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Educational Science. Compass Consulting will submit the evaluation results to the National Registry of Effective Programs and the California Healthy Kids Resource Center. The timeline for submission is Spring/Summer 2004. This fully meets the Board's criteria in this regard.

The Department recommends that this waiver request be approved as it meets each of the three criteria identified in the State Board waiver policy regarding the federal statute.

Authority for Waiver: NCLB, Title IV, Part A, Section 4115(a)(3)

Local board approval date(s): May 18, 2004

Period of request: July 8, 2004 – July 6, 2006

FISCAL ANALYSIS (AS APPROPRIATE)

Waiver approval will allow the district to use Title IV, Safe and Drug Free Schools and Communities funds for this program.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Consent Item: Backup materials, waiver request forms and supporting documents are not available for web viewing but are available for inspection in the Waiver Office.