



SEPTEMBER 2003 AGENDA

<b>SUBJECT</b> Immediate Interventional/Underperforming Schools Program (II/USP)- Consider definition of “significant growth” for certain schools failing to meet annual Academic Performance Index (API) growth targets (Education Code Section 52055.5).	<b>X</b>	<b>ACTION</b>
	<b>X</b>	<b>INFORMATION</b>
		<b>PUBLIC HEARING</b>

**Recommendation:** CDE staff recommends that the Board maintain the current definition of significant growth for Cohort I and Cohort II schools, with the recommended technical correction, and change the definition of significant growth for Cohort III schools. Staff recommends that the Board adopt the second proposed definition of significant growth under option two for Cohort III schools.

---

**Summary of Previous State Board of Education Discussion and Action**

At the February 2002 State Board meeting, the Board approved a definition of significant growth for II/USP schools.

---

**Summary of Key Issue(s)**

Current law (Education Code Section 52055.5) requires the State Board of Education to adopt a definition for “significant growth.” This definition is applied in a situation when an II/USP school fails to meet or exceed its API growth targets to determine if a school receives a third year of implementation funding or will be subject to state intervention/sanctions.

Following the discussion by the PSAA Advisory Committee, the State Board of Education (SBE) adopted a definition of significant growth in February 2002. Significant growth was defined as making positive growth on the schoolwide Academic Performance Index (API) in either of the two funded years of II/USP implementation.

Following release of the 2002 API growth data, 308 Cohort I schools made significant growth and received a third year of funding, 71 schools met their API growth targets for a second year in a row and exited the program and 24 schools failed to make significant growth for a second year in a row and entered the state-monitored schools sanctioning process. (Of the remaining 26 schools, 17 did not exit because they are also in the High Priority Schools Program and 9 schools had insufficient data and remain on “watch.”) The same definition of significant growth was used for Cohort II schools to notify them of the need to hold a public hearing as required by Education Code 52055. In 2002, 125 Cohort II schools made significant growth, 201 met their growth targets, 96 made no growth or negative growth, and 8 schools had insufficient data.

In November of 2003, some number of **Cohort I** schools will again be subject to significant growth requirements. A similar pattern of exit, “watch” and “enter sanctioning” will again occur, although only the sanctioned schools will receive any future funding under the II/USP

initiative.

Also in November 2003, some number of II/USP **Cohort II** schools will exit the program, be eligible for a third year of funding or become subject to state sanctions, based upon their academic performance.

In addition, by November 2003, **Cohort III** schools will have completed their first year of II/USP implementation and must be noticed that if they have not made significant growth, they will be required to hold a local public hearing.

In sum, the Board must affirm the current definition of significant growth or decide to change the definition for one or more cohorts. Two policy options are as follows:

**Option one: Maintain the current definition of significant growth for Cohort II and III schools (making positive growth on the schoolwide API in either of the two years of funded implementation).**

Adopting the same definition would:

- Ensure that all II/USP cohorts are treated equitably; and
- Avoid changing the rules in the middle of the program for Cohort II schools.

**Option two: Maintain the same definition of significant growth for Cohort II schools, but change the Cohort III definition to move toward alignment with *No Child Left Behind* (NCLB) requirements.**

The SBE could maintain the current definition of significant growth for II/USP Cohort II schools and adopt a more rigorous definition for II/USP Cohort III schools. Doing so would better align II/USP with NCLB and would demonstrate a good faith effort to align state and federal accountability requirements for underperforming schools. Currently, 86% of Cohort III schools are in Title I; hence, they are required to meet the NCLB requirements. In addition, 33% of Cohort III schools have been identified as in Program Improvement, with the probability of that number increasing substantially in 2003. Maintaining such a vast difference in the criteria for sanctioning under federal and state law is becoming more difficult to rationalize.

If option two is selected, there are two new definitions of significant growth that the Board could consider for Cohort III schools:

1. **“Making at least five points growth on the schoolwide Academic Performance Index (API) in either of the two funded implementation years and each year thereafter until the school exits the program.”**

This definition would align the significant growth criteria with the Governor’s Performance Awards Program criteria. Currently, the awards program requires schools to meet or exceed their 5% growth target, or have an API increase of 5 points, whichever is greater to be eligible for rewards. Requiring underperforming schools to make at least 5 points growth on the schoolwide API would be consistent with the Governor’s Performance Awards Program. (See Table I, attached, for a comparison of outcomes using the current and alternative definition of significant growth.)

2. **“Meeting either the schoolwide API growth target or making positive growth on the schoolwide API and meeting all applicable comparable improvement API growth targets in either of the two funded implementation years and each year thereafter until the school exits the program.”**

This definition uses API as the metric, not Annual Yearly Progress (AYP), and would not be as difficult to attain as AYP. However, this definition begins the process of aligning II/USP with NCLB and raises the bar substantially higher than the current significant growth definition. Unfortunately, the new definition will move Cohort III schools into state sanction more quickly than under the current definition. (See Table II, attached, for a comparison of outcomes using the current definition and this alternative definition of significant growth.)

Regardless of which option the Board chooses, a technical revision to the current definition of significant growth should be made. Currently II/USP schools that do not exit the program (those making significant growth) remain “under watch” until they make their growth targets and exit the program or until they are deemed state-monitored. Education Code Section 52055.5 (h) requires that any year between the third year of funding and the time a school exits the program the school does not make significant growth, the school is to be deemed state-monitored. Therefore, a yearly assessment on the status of schools “under watch” is required. In order for the current definition of significant growth to be in aligned with the legislation, the following technical revision to the significant growth definition is recommended: “making positive growth on the schoolwide Academic Performance Index (API) in either of the two funded implementation years *and each year thereafter until the school exits the program.*”

Staff recommends that a new significant growth definition be adopted for Cohort III schools. With the requirement in NCLB that each state maintain a single accountability system for all schools, changing the definition of significant growth would be a good interim step toward that goal. More importantly, with 86% of Cohort III schools already in Title I, reducing the gap between the state and federal sanctions requirements becomes even more critical. Therefore, staff recommend that the second proposed definition be adopted—meeting either the schoolwide API growth target or making positive growth on the schoolwide API and meeting all applicable comparable improvement API growth targets in either of the two funded implementation years and each year thereafter until the school exits the program.

Staff also recommend that the Board adopt the technical revision for the current definition of significant growth.

---

### **Fiscal Analysis (as appropriate)**

With a new definition of significant growth, more schools will potentially be identified for state sanctions, thereby increasing the costs to the state for interventions/sanctions.

---

### **Attachment(s)**

Attachment 1: [Table I - Comparison of current definition with the 5 points growth definition](#)

Attachment 2: [Table II - Comparison of current definition with meeting schoolwide API growth target definition](#)

**Table I**  
**Comparison of**  
**Current Significant Growth Definition—Positive growth in either year**  
**Vs**  
**New proposed definition of significant growth—At least 5 points growth in either year**

	# of Schs meeting all growth targets	# of Schs Meeting <b>Current Definition</b>	Total	# of Schs meeting all growth targets	# of Schs meeting <b>New Proposed Definition</b>	Total
<b>Cohort I</b> (Two years of implementation data—2001 and 2002 API)	82	296	378	82	281	363
<b>Cohort II</b> (One year of implementation data—2002 API)	201	124	325	201	93	294
<b>*Cohort II</b> (Two years of data—one planning year and one implementation, 2001 and 2002 API)	136	271	407	136	260	396
<b>Cohort III</b> (One year of planning data—2002 API)	201	116	317	201	90	291

Please note: Chart does not reflect how many schools did not have valid data or how many schools had zero or negative growth both years.

\*The planning and implementation years of API data were used in an effort to better represent how many schools would not make the new definition of significant growth. The number of schools that meet the definition of significant growth increases substantially when it is applied over a two-year period.

<p align="center"><b>Table II</b>  <b>Comparison of</b>  <b>Current Significant Growth Definition—Positive growth in either year</b>  <b>Vs</b>  <b>New proposed definition of significant growth—Meeting schoolwide API growth target or making positive growth on schoolwide and applicable comparable improvement API growth targets</b></p>						
	# of Schs meeting all growth targets	# of Schs Meeting <b>Current Definition</b>	Total	# of Schs meeting all growth targets	# of Schs meeting <b>New Proposed Definition</b>	Total
<b>Cohort I</b> (Two years of implementation data—2001 and 2002 API)	82	296	378	82	244	326
<b>Cohort II</b> (One year of implementation data—2002 API)	201	124	325	201	66	267
<b>*Cohort II</b> (Two years of data—one planning year and one implementation, 2001 and 2002 API)	136	271	417	136	228	364
<b>Cohort III</b> (One year of planning data—2002 API)	201	116	317	201	68	269

Please note: Chart does not reflect how many schools did not have valid data or how many schools had zero or negative growth both years.

\*The planning and implementation years of API data were used in an effort to better represent how many schools would not make the new definition of significant growth. The number of schools that meet the definition of significant growth increases substantially when it is applied over a two-year period.