

Quality Education Investment Act (QEIA) Class Size Reduction (CSR) Waiver Mt. Diablo High 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.

Mt. Diablo High School's current QEIA CSR target averages for English, ELD, mathematics, history-social science, and science grades nine through twelve are 17, 22, 20, and 20, 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 Mt. Diablo HS for 2012-13 but the school is on track to not meet the targets for 2013-2014. We are requesting an increase in core class size averages, grades 9 – 12 to 25:1.

Historically student enrollment attrition at Mt. Diablo HS enabled the school to meet these very low targets. The school now has a delightful dilemma – students do not want to leave, and enrollment is increasing slightly. While small, the attrition enabled the school to create student schedules and remain at or under the class size averages. Additionally, the Mt. Diablo Unified School District began a high school newcomer program for English Language Learners (World Academy). This program is located at Mt. Diablo High School. Enrollment in the World Academy is growing at rates we were not able to predict. While the district could add additional sections, the school is experiencing difficulty finding highly qualified teachers to teach the plethora of specialized tiny (one or two sections per course) part-time jobs that would be created by adding these sections.

An increase in the class size averages, grades 9 – 12 to 25:1 will provide the school with enough flexibility to keep students at their home school. The increase in class size for core content classes will also build in increased flexibility in scheduling that better supports the school's wall-to-wall academies. This year, for the first time, every student at Mt. Diablo HS is a member of an academy with a defined CTE pathway (with the exception of World Academy). This was gradually implemented at Mt. Diablo beginning in the 2010 – 2011 school year and is directly related to the school's increase in API from 618 to 679 in years 2009 to 2013. Increasing core class size averages will enable staff to have more flexibility in placing students in academies and assist the school with continuing this positive trend.

The central office and school administration considered overflowing students to other high schools that are not their community school. 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 high school students the connection can be a tipping point for involvement in co-curricular or extra-curricular activities. Moving students outside of their community school can impede parent involvement. Mt. Diablo's ability to keep students in their community school is important for student success and to support ongoing improvements.