

Class Size Reduction Report: Impact of New Law SB 311: Participation remains at 93% Combination Classes Decrease

The first report showing the impact of the new Class Size Reduction law SB 311 indicates that more than 93 % of K-3 students participated in the Class Size Reduction program in California during 2004-05, about the same level as the prior year.

Class Size Reduction (CSR) is an incentive program that provides additional funding for maintaining small class size in grades K-3. Findings for 2004-05 indicate participation in the program has remained steady for the past two years, reversing a trend of slight decline.

Based on data released by the California Department of Education:

COMBINATION CLASSES:

The number of reported combination classes continues to drop—by almost 11 % since last year. The number of combination classes is now below the number reported in 1996 when the program began. Statewide, the percentage of combination classes is now approximately 7 %. In 2004-05, combination classes totaled 6,915 (out of a total of 94, 044 classes in CSR.) This is a drop of 840 classes from the prior year. In 1996, when CSR was first introduced, the number of combination classes was 7,289 out of 51,612 CSR classes, for a percentage of 14 %.

AVERAGE CLASS SIZE UNDER SB 311

The average class size in the 2004-05 school year was 19, a slight decrease from the prior year average of 19.11. In 2002-03 and 2001-02, the average size was 18.96.

PARTICIPATION UNDER SB 311

The total number of local agencies participating increased in 2004-5, jumping to 1,065 from 1013 in the prior year. The increase reflects the number of charter schools participating independently from their school districts. In 2004-05, 184 charter schools participated independently compared to 131 in the prior year. In 2004-05, 10 districts out of 891 eligible did not participate. In the prior year, 13 districts out of 895 eligible failed to participate.

SB 311 PENALTY CHANGES

Under this new law and through the 2008-09 school year, the funding penalty for exceeding the average class size of 20.4 is calculated on a sliding scale.

Classes of 20.45 to 20.94 will receive \$15,472 in 2005-06 (80% of full funding).

Classes of 20.95 to 21.44 will receive \$11,604 in 2005-06 (60% of full funding).

Classes of 21.45 to 21.84 will receive \$3,868 in 2005-06 (20% of full funding).

Classes of 21.85 and over lose 100% (\$19,340 in 2005-06).

Last year, a new law SB 311, supported by the PTA, made changes to the penalty provisions for exceeding the class size average of 20. Under prior law, schools lost **ALL** CSR funding for a classroom that exceeded the average of 20 students. Under SB 311, the funding penalty is calculated on a sliding cap, with schools keeping all of their CSR funds if they do not exceed the average of 20.4 students in a classroom.

This change in the penalty provision was introduced to help schools respond to minor fluctuations in school population during the year. It was also introduced to address a small decline in participation in the program.

The California State PTA has been the leading advocate for small class size based on extensive research of class size reduction programs throughout the country. For schools to benefit from the strong findings about small classes, the accumulated body of research indicates that the actual class size in grades K-3 must be small, fewer than 20 pupils.

More information is available on the California Department of Education web site at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/ls/cs/k3/participationdata.asp>

CLASS SIZE REDUCTION STATISTICS

School Year	K-3 Total Statewide Enrollment	CSR Participation: Per cent of total state Enrollment	CSR Combination Classes	CSR Full Day Option	CSR Half Day Option
2004-5	1,888,850	93.33%	6,915	89.21%	4.11%
2003-4	1,910,291	93.46%	7,755	89.52%	3.94%
2002-3	1,925,373	95.94%	8,671	93.66%	2.28%
2001-2	1,925,719	96.26%	11,740	94.15%	2.11%
2000-1	1,919,617	97.02%	11,093	94.73%	2.29%
1999-0	1,918,296	95.15%	11,379	92.46%	2.69%
1998-9	1,922,199	92.13%	12,213	88.85%	3.29%
1997-8	1,904,217	83.59%	11,166	77.29%	6.30%
1996-97	1,877,213	50.89%	7,289	49.30%	3.60%