



Additional Proposed Amendments to the CORE Waiver – August/September 2014

In August 2013, the U. S. Department of Education (hereafter, USED) approved the CORE Waiver, which is based upon the School Quality Improvement System. On May 1, 2014, seven CORE districts – Fresno, Long Beach, Los Angeles, Oakland, San Francisco, Sanger and Santa Ana – submitted a joint request to USED to extend our efforts to develop and implement the School Quality Improvement System into SY 2014-15 and beyond. The School Quality Improvement System is a holistic approach to school improvement rooted in the moral imperative that the school community has a collective responsibility to prepare all students for college and careers. The School Quality Improvement System calls for a reorientation of school districts’ work, with districts assuming unprecedented accountability to eliminate disparity and disproportionality in all subjects and across the academic, social-emotional, and culture-climate domains.

To learn more about CORE and to watch an information video about the CORE Waiver, [click here](#).

As the original CORE Waiver and the subsequent amendments represent a working/living concept for improving and supporting our schools, we invite public comment on two additional proposed amendments to the CORE NCLB Waiver described below – Amendment 38 and 39 (see below).

Public comments can be submitted by [clicking here](#), emailing core@caedpartners.org, faxing (916) 244-0250 or via regular mail to 1107 9th Street, Suite 500, Sacramento, CA 95814. The public comment window will be between August 18, 2014 and September 12, 2014. The CORE Board – comprised of the superintendents from each of the CORE districts – will review public comments before making final decisions in September 2014. Finalized amendment requests will be submitted to USED for review and approval.

Proposed Amendments

Amendment 38 – Use only English Language Arts Proficiency, Math Proficiency and high school graduation (and not API Growth) in the Summer 2014 School Quality Improvement Index

As we build toward the full whole child/whole school School Quality Improvement Index that is made up of measures in the Academic and Social-Emotional/Culture-Climate domains, the Summer 2014 School Quality Improvement Index only includes Academic measures (as originally planned in the approved CORE Waiver). The Summer 2014 Index will utilize data from 2013. Assuming USED approves the original set of amendments submitted on May 1, 2014, the Summer 2014 Index will not have stakes attached and will generally serve the purpose of being illustrative of how the Index works. In the approved CORE Waiver, the Summer 2014 Index was slated to include English Language Arts proficiency, math proficiency, API growth points and high school graduation. We seek to remove API growth points from the included set of measures such that the breakdown of the weighting of measures on the Summer 2014 Index would be as follows:

Metric	Student Groupings	Elementary and Middle School	High School
ELA	All Students	25.00%	12.50%
	Racial/Ethnic Subgroups	6.25%	3.125%
	Students with Disabilities	6.25%	3.125%
	English Learners	6.25%	3.125%
	Socioeconomically Disadvantaged	6.25%	3.125%
Math	All Students	25.00%	12.50%
	Racial/Ethnic Subgroups	6.25%	3.125%
	Students with Disabilities	6.25%	3.125%
	English Learners	6.25%	3.125%
	Socioeconomically Disadvantaged	6.25%	3.125%
Four Year Cohort Graduation Rate	All Students		25.00%
	Racial/Ethnic Subgroups		6.25%
	Students with Disabilities		6.25%
	English Learners		6.25%
	Socioeconomically Disadvantaged		6.25%
	TOTAL	100.00%	100.00%

The rationale for this amendment is that API growth is markedly different from the kind of growth measure the CORE districts have committed to developing for 2016+. API growth points examine the change in performance on API from one year to the next for two different cohorts or groups of students – those in the school one year versus those in the school the next year. The CORE growth model will examine the performance improvement of each individual student from one year to the next year. In other words, the CORE Growth model will more precisely assess individual student growth over time and the impact of schools on student growth. Due the differences in growth measurement approaches, CORE district staff and leadership have proposed not using API growth points in the Summer 2014 Index and instead only using measures that are the same as or similar to measures that will be part of the Index going forward. Indeed, four year cohort graduation will be part of the Index going forward. (In future years, we will also include the five and six year cohort graduation rates in addition to the four year cohort graduation rate). Proficiency in ELA and math will also be part of the Index (with the caveat that we are shifting from the California Standards Tests to the Smarter Balanced Assessments).

To summarize, API growth will not be part of any future Index and so we are requesting to remove API growth from the Summer 2014 Index.



Amendment 39 – Methodology for examining subgroup performance on the School Quality Improvement Index

The School Quality Improvement Index contains a number of metrics that combine together for an overall Index score from zero to 100. In the approved CORE waiver, the methodology for translating performance on specific metrics into Index points was not finalized. In our requested amendments submitted on May 1, we articulated our proposed method for doing this. Each metric will be examined against ten thresholds of performance to determine an Index level for that metric (e.g. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9 or 10). The Index level is then multiplied by the weight and then by 10 to get the total Index points earned.

In order to eliminate disparity and disproportionality, the CORE districts made a commitment to examine the performance of subgroups on even footing with the “all students” group. Most metrics involve an “all students” result and a subgroups result. The two results are meant to be equally weighted. For instance, if a metric has an overall weight of 20%, the result for the “all students” group is to be weighted 10% and the results for the subgroups result are to be weighted 10%.

Our amendments to date do not define how we will examine subgroup performance. In the approved CORE Waiver, a potential approach was described whereby subgroup performance would be averaged within each metric. That approach, though, raised several concerns, including the idea that the performance of particular subgroups would be less visible when made part of an average. The CORE districts worked together on an approach that will allow stakeholders to examine the performance of each key subgroup separately, making more students visible in our accountability system as we work toward eliminating disparities. Further, the proposed approach below aligns with how subgroup data are organized and reported by school districts and the state, which will help stakeholders understand and act upon the data provided.

We propose to examine subgroup performance in the following ways:

Step 1 – Analyze and report metric performance for each subgroup against the performance thresholds: Each subgroup is analyzed against the same thresholds as the “all students” group for each metric, such that for each metric, each subgroup with 20 or more students will have an index level of 1 to 10.

Step 2 – Translate into Index performance: Schools will receive up to four subgroup results for each applicable metric.

Subgroup	Method
Racial/Ethnic Subgroups	Lowest performing racial/ethnic subgroup based upon index levels
Students with Disabilities	Index level for this subgroup
Socioeconomically Disadvantaged Students	Index level for this subgroup



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English Learners

Index level for this subgroup

Step 3 – Apply even weighting: In terms of determining Index points earned, each subgroup result is evenly weighted. (For example, if a metric is weighted 20% overall, 10% will go to the “all students group” performance. The remaining 10% will be divided evenly between the four subgroup group results – 2.5% for racial/ethnic subgroup performance, 2.5% for the performance of students with disabilities, 2.5% for socioeconomically disadvantaged students and 2.5% for English Learners).

To summarize, this amendment continues to place equal emphasis for the all-student group and subgroups, but seeks to assure that each subgroup is reported individually, rather than as an average. This way, schools and communities will be able to see how each subgroup is performing.