

Williams v. California:
A Progress Update

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FOR MORE INFORMATION

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This report is a supplement to the two previous reports on implementation of the *Williams v. California* Settlement Legislation, The *Williams v. California* Settlement: The First Year of Implementation and *Williams v. California: The Statewide Impact of Two Years of Implementation*. Both reports are available at www.decentschools.org.

INTRODUCTION

The *Williams v. California* settlement had one simple truth at its heart: that at a minimum, all students need and may legally expect instructional materials to use in class and at home; clean, safe, and functional classrooms; and qualified teachers. This report presents results from the first four years of implementation that demonstrate the essential value of maintaining the educational floor protected by the *Williams* standards and related accountability systems governing provision of instructional materials, facilities, and qualified teachers. The good news reflected in this report is that the progress made in the first years of *Williams* implementation continues across the state. As a San Diego County Office of Education staff person reports: “I heard more positive feedback this past year from our school administrators and teachers than ever before, in addition to seeing more improvements in facilities/cleanliness and in use of textbooks. The comments I heard and

[T]hese thresholds for teacher quality, instructional materials, and school facilities are intended by the Legislature and by the Governor to be a floor, rather than a ceiling, and a beginning, not an end, to the State of California's commitment and effort to ensure that all California school pupils have access to the basic elements of a quality public education.

- *Williams* Settlement Legislation (Section 25, Chapter 900, Statutes of 2004 (SB 550))

what I saw made me really proud of our work.”

Now, with unprecedented budget deficits in California, legislators and school leaders have been forced to consider cuts that at any other time would be unfathomable. In these times as in all others, California’s students deserve vigilance in ensuring that they receive the educational opportunity to which they are entitled. The truth that animated the *Williams* settlement is no less urgent today, while the current state budget crisis necessarily tests the State of California’s commitment to ensuring that all California school pupils have access to the basic elements of a quality education.

SCOPE OF THE SETTLEMENT AND THIS REPORT

As detailed in the two previous implementation reports, the *Williams* Settlement Legislation established new standards and accountability mechanisms to ensure that **all California public school students** have textbooks and instructional materials and that their schools are clean, safe, and functional. It also took steps toward assuring all students have qualified teachers. The Settlement holds the state accountable for delivering these fundamental elements and provides approximately \$1 billion to accomplish these goals. The Settlement also phases out the use of the Concept 6 multi-track, year-round school calendar by 2012.¹

¹ The Concept 6 calendar has 163 instructional days per year versus 180 days on a traditional calendar.

The new standards and many of the accountability systems established by the *Williams* Settlement — including the annual instructional materials sufficiency hearings, the district facility inspection systems, the teacher assignment monitoring procedures, the Uniform Complaint Process, and the School Accountability Report Card requirements — apply to all public schools.² Every student has a right to “sufficient textbooks,” a school in “good repair,” and a qualified teacher.

This report primarily focuses on the impact the *Williams* Settlement Legislation has had on California’s lowest performing schools (those ranked in deciles one through three on the Base Academic Performance Index (API)), which receive additional oversight and financial assistance under the Settlement Legislation.³ The majority of data and information presented on the following pages are drawn from County Superintendent reports and survey responses. County Superintendents in 45 of California’s 58 counties visit and review decile 1-3 schools annually to determine

compliance with the *Williams* instructional materials and facilities standards and to determine whether each school’s School Accountability Report Card accurately reports these data. They also annually monitor, review, and report on teacher assignments and teacher vacancies in decile 1-3 schools.

² Charter schools are exempt unless they choose to “opt-in” to *Williams*. Decile 1-3 charter schools that opt in receive the benefits and must adhere to the new standards and accountability systems established by the *Williams* Settlement Legislation.

³ The California Department of Education has compiled a list of these schools pursuant to Education Code Section 1240. The list is posted at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/eo/ce/wc/wmsschools.asp>. The list of “decile 1-3” schools is updated every three years. The current list is based on the 2006 Base API. From 2004-05 through 2006-07, the schools receiving additional funds and oversight were the schools ranked in deciles one to three, inclusive, on the 2003 Base API. The list will be updated again for the 2010-11 school year based on the 2009 Base API.

TEXTBOOKS AND INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS

The *Williams* instructional materials sufficiency standards and accountability systems continue to ensure students’ access to standards-aligned textbooks and instructional materials. The *Williams* Settlement Legislation requires that all schools must provide “each pupil, including English learners” with “a standards-aligned textbook or instructional materials, or both, to use in class and to take home.”⁴ This is the legal definition of “sufficient textbooks or instructional materials,” and an insufficiency arises when any student does not have sufficient textbooks and/or instructional materials to use in class and to take home.

	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08
Percentage of decile 1-3 schools with insufficient textbooks/ instructional materials	19%	15%	14%	15%
Number of instructional materials provided to students to remedy insufficiencies	24,932	63,163	55,963	55,066

In addition, the recent categorical flexibility provisions for state funding enacted in February 2009 have not altered the *Williams* standard regarding provision of instructional materials. Schools that receive funds for instructional materials from any state source must continue to provide all students with “sufficient textbooks or instructional materials” and hold annual sufficiency hearings during the first eight weeks of the

school year to ensure this standard is met.⁵ These requirements are not contingent on increases in base revenue limits and apply even if a district elects to use state instructional materials funds for another “educational purpose” in 2008-09 through 2012-13.⁶

Thanks in significant part to the efforts of county superintendents across the state as well as to increased district and school-level

vigilance, every student attending a decile 1-3 school in the last three years of *Williams* implementation had sufficient textbooks and instructional materials in the four core subjects before the eighth week of school

at the very latest.⁷ As illustrated in the table above, county superintendents helped make this possible by identifying, in the first four weeks of each school year, a total of more

⁵ Senate Bill X3 4 (Chapter 12 of the Statutes of 2009), § 18; Education Code Section 60119.

⁶ Senate Bill X3 4 (Chapter 12 of the Statutes of 2009), § 15; Education Code Section 42605.

⁷ In 2004-05, the first year of implementation, county offices of education reported that 93% of insufficiencies were remedied, a considerable accomplishment considering visits were conducted at the end of the school year.

⁴ California Education Code Section 60119(c).

“Williams has ensured that instructional materials are available for the students early in the school year.” – Alameda County Office of Education

than 199,124 missing textbooks and instructional materials (such as lab science equipment) and ensuring they were ordered and/or distributed to students.

County office of education staffs consistently report that the progress they oversee in ensuring delivery of instructional materials to students underscores, for them, the vital importance of *Williams*. For example, a Stanislaus County Office of Education staff member has reported that, in contrast to the pre-*Williams* conditions in that county, “classrooms are no longer using class sets only” and “texts are available for students to study at home.” Likewise, the Madera County Office of Education reports that “we are now seeing a one to one ratio of textbooks to students, whereas before it was common at the middle school and high school level to just have a class set of books in many classrooms.” And according to the Lake County Office of Education, because of *Williams*, “students are getting [textbooks] at the beginning of the year, all students have texts, and no more copying of materials” is required in schools in that county. The Kern County Office of Education concretized these points still further, noting that “in 2005 all middle schools in this county under *Williams* review did not allow students to take textbooks home. One school district that has a high poverty level did not allow books to go home — now all schools do.”

Year-to-year progress in preventing insufficiencies is more difficult to assess. At first glance, the figures in the table on page 5 may suggest that while ultimately all

students are receiving sufficient textbooks and instructional materials, a small minority of schools may be struggling year after year to make certain all students have their materials before county superintendents visit their campuses. This explanation, however, would be inconsistent with the widespread accounts of districts improving their textbook ordering, inventory, and distribution systems. Accordingly, the most likely explanation for the strongly consistent percentages of schools with at least one insufficiency and numbers of missing instructional materials over the past three years appears to be that more county offices of education have started collecting data on insufficiencies that are remedied quickly. In the early years of implementation, many county offices of education did not maintain records of insufficiencies that were addressed immediately (for example, by providing a new book to a student while the county office of education team was still on site) and therefore were not formally reported to the school district and State Superintendent of Public Instruction. As the number and scope of such insufficiencies decreased, more county offices of education began to track all insufficiencies, in part to better assess the true impact of the sufficiency reviews. For example, in 2007-08, the Los Angeles County Office of Education documented 31,547 insufficiencies that were immediately remedied during their reviews, whereas in 2006-07 they did not collect this data, so the insufficiency totals for the two years are not fully comparable. Likewise, the Alameda County Office of Education documented 967 insufficiencies in 2007-08 that would

not have been reported in 2006-07 because they were corrected before a formal five-day notice of insufficiency had to be sent to the school district.

In addition, the list of schools county superintendents needed to visit changed in 2007-08 when the state department of education issued a new list of decile 1-3 schools based on the 2006 Base Academic Performance Index.⁸ The total number of decile 1-3 schools increased from 2,053 to 2,099 and while many schools remained on the list, approximately one-quarter of the schools on the statewide list changed.

County superintendents continue to report that districts with decile 1-3 schools are improving their textbook ordering, inventory, and distribution systems in order to provide all students with sufficient textbooks and instructional materials at the beginning of the year. In the third and fourth years of *Williams* implementation, consistent with accounts shared in previous implementation reports, districts such as Los Angeles Unified, San Francisco Unified, Long Beach Unified, Compton Unified, as well as districts in Monterey, San Joaquin, Santa Clara, and Solano counties have started using electronic tracking systems to go beyond purchasing and shipment tracking to ensure that textbooks reach students. Also, schools, regardless of API ranking, are increasingly surveying teachers to determine if every student has sufficient instructional materials because the survey results provide the necessary evidentiary basis for each district's annual instructional materials sufficiency hearing and resolution.

The San Bernardino County Office of Education sums up the type of comprehensive reforms that are taking place across the state: "Districts created an inventory process, completed textbook spot checks at the site on the second week of the school year, completed a thorough examination of the number of textbooks, completed projections for the upcoming school year, and identified schools that have an excess of books and connected them with schools that have a shortage of books." With such integrated approaches to sufficiency, students and teachers will benefit by having the instructional materials they need early in the school year.

⁸ See note 3.

SCHOOL FACILITIES

County office of education reports from 2006-07 and 2007-08 continue to demonstrate that inspections of decile 1-3 school facilities are improving classroom conditions and helping address critical health and safety threats. As the Orange County Office of Education reports, “feedback from teachers and principals is that facility issues are addressed promptly due to *Williams*.” Similarly, the Madera County Office of Education reports “seeing a huge difference in the condition of the site facilities” because of its *Williams* inspections.

Indeed, repairs are sometimes completed before county office of education inspectors even leave campus. As described in previous implementation reports, in some districts, maintenance personnel shadow facilities inspectors and fix deficiencies as they are identified. Where this does not occur, or when the deficiencies are more severe and pose health and safety threats, staff in most county offices of education follow up to confirm repairs. The county offices of education in Alameda, Fresno, Kings, Los Angeles, Mendocino, Monterey, Riverside, Sacramento, San Diego, San Joaquin, San Mateo, and Tulare all follow up with some combination of return visits and required documentation confirming repairs; this model is particularly effective for ensuring students’ access to decent school facilities.

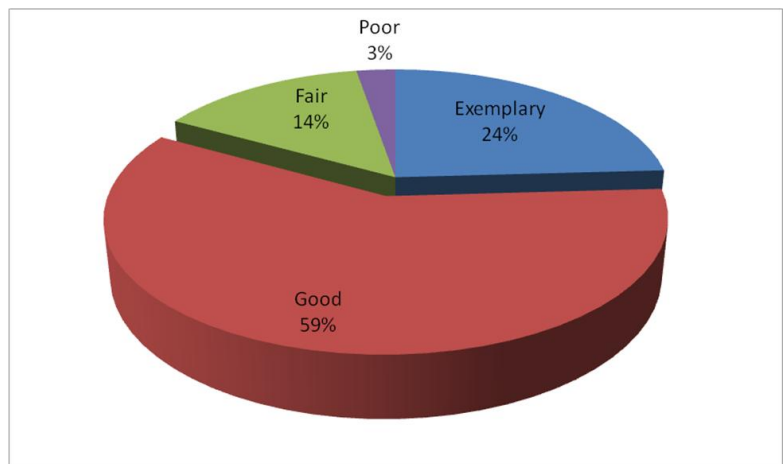
The table on this page illustrates that increasingly well-trained facility inspectors are conducting thorough reviews because it is rare for a school site not to have at least one “good repair” deficiency (i.e., a condition that makes the school less than completely clean, safe and functional).

In the early years of implementation, some inspectors expressed reticence about formally reporting deficiencies that they believed were relatively minor because the Interim Evaluation Instrument used to determine “good repair” placed schools in only two categories — “good repair” or “not in good repair.” The permanent evaluation instrument, the Facility Inspection Tool (FIT), includes a ratings system intended in part to address this problem, and it appears to be working. The table and chart below suggest inspectors are increasingly willing to document all deficiencies knowing that the overall “good repair” ratings provide a fair system with gradations that can place the individual deficiencies in context.

Condition of School Facilities in Decile 1-3 Schools

	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08
Percentage of decile 1-3 schools with “good repair” facility deficiencies	64%	60%	83%	86%
Percentage of decile 1-3 schools with emergency facility conditions	13%	13%	11%	13%

“Good Repair” Ratings of 1,684* Decile 1-3 Schools (2007-08)



* Seven of the county offices of education did not calculate ratings.

The county offices of education (COEs) that tracked repairs of emergency facility conditions in 2006-07, which included all but four COEs, found that only one health and safety hazard was not successfully remedied. In most instances, districts took all necessary steps to address serious problems. For just one example, a school in Yuba County was shut down due to critical structural problems identified through the *Williams* inspection process.

Unfortunately, in 2007-08, fewer COEs tracked whether the extreme deficiencies they identified were subsequently remedied. Where tracked, almost all extreme deficiencies were remedied, but given the nature of the problems, it is troubling that districts did not always act swiftly. For example, districts in Los Angeles County failed to repair 36 of the 96 extreme deficiencies within 30 days. The Los

Angeles County Office of Education (LACOE) issued follow-up notices to the respective schools and districts and identified them as having failed to resolve their extreme deficiencies within 30 days in LACOE's Annual *Williams* Report. The results of the 2008-09 LACOE facilities inspections should demonstrate if

these measures have been effective in motivating districts to address all health and safety threats immediately.

The *Williams* Settlement Legislation created the \$800 million Emergency Repair Program (ERP) to ensure school districts could immediately address all facility conditions that pose emergency or urgent threats to the health and safety of pupils or staff in decile 1-3 schools. The ERP allows districts to address emergency facility conditions without having to draw down funds set aside for major maintenance projects and thereby placing themselves in jeopardy of experiencing more facilities problems caused by a lack of regular maintenance. In 2004-05 and 2005-06, the ERP was structured as a reimbursement program; a district had to pay for and complete the emergency repairs before it applied to the state for funds. The state

Snapshot of ERP Projects (2005-2007)

Eligible System/Component	Number of Projects	Total Per System/Component	Description of most common repairs associated with the system or component
Electrical	146	\$1,414,251	Non-functioning or unsafe electrical system or wiring
Fire/Life Safety	149	\$3,446,452	Non-functioning or faulty fire/smoke alarms
Gas	27	\$215,788	Gas leaks
HVAC	754	\$14,382,769	Faulty or non-functioning HVAC systems
Other	3067	\$43,043,702	Non-functioning refrigeration units which lead to unstable food temperatures; Removal of asbestos; Damaged plaster and cement; Roof leaks; Removal of gang-related graffiti
Sewer	68	\$877,644	Clogged sewer lines
Water	180	\$629,583	Vandalized, broken and leaking sprinkler systems
Various	105	\$25,788,917	A combination of multiple system components and system types as listed above.
Total	4496	\$89,799,107	

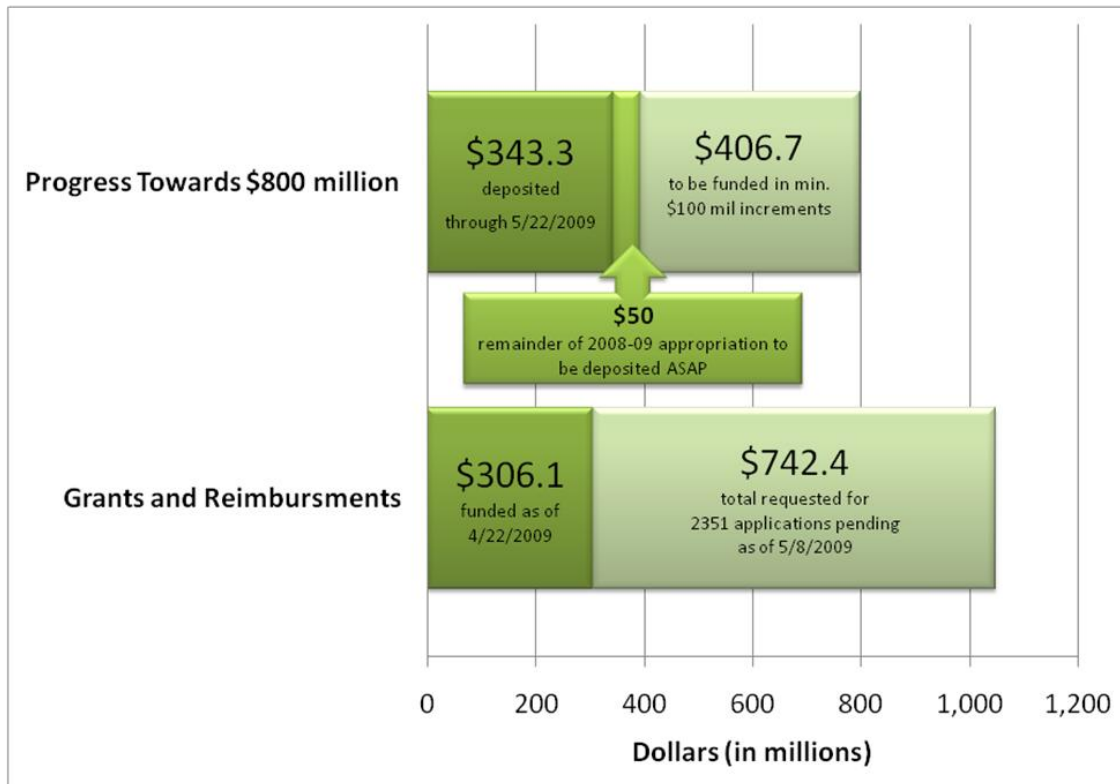
Source: Report on the Expenditures and Projections of Future Expenditures for the Emergency Repair Program (March 2008): http://www.documents.dgs.ca.gov/opsc/SAB_Agenda_Items/2008-03/ERP_Rpt.pdf

Emergency Repair Program Account

would reimburse the district for 100% of the costs of the repairs if the district's application was approved.

However, if the state Office of Public School Construction denied the application, the district had to cover all the costs already incurred. Some site and district administrators expressed reluctance to start emergency repair projects

because they were uncertain about whether they would be reimbursed and did not have the funds to pay for them otherwise. Some officials also expressed confusion about what types of projects would qualify for the program. These factors contributed to the relatively low number of applications submitted in the first two years of the program despite documentation of approximately \$803 million worth of "necessary repairs" at eligible schools in 2005 through the School Facilities Needs Assessment Grant Program.⁹



On July 2, 2007, however, the ERP became a grant program, allowing eligible schools to receive funds before they conduct repairs. Eligible schools also may still receive reimbursements if they conduct repairs before applying for funds. This new grant option led to a massive surge in applications and the program is now oversubscribed, as illustrated above. Consequently, the Office of Public School Construction has posted the following notice on the Emergency Repair Program website:¹⁰

"Funds will be made available annually through the Budget Act and the program will operate until \$800 million has been allocated. ... OPSC continues to accept applications but will not add them to the workload list at this time. Once \$800 million

⁹ The results of the School Facilities Needs Assessments are publicly available at www.applications.opsc.dgs.ca.gov/fnaReporting/fnaReporting.asp.

¹⁰ <http://www.opsc.dgs.ca.gov/Programs/SABPrograms/ERP.htm> (last visited May 26, 2009).

has been allocated, any remaining applications will be returned to the LEAs.”

The success of the Emergency Repair Program is captured by the numbers reflecting its uses and district and county staff comments about its impact on students. For example, a district official from the Coalinga-Huron Unified School District has written that the Emergency Repair Program “has provided a breath of fresh air into the school maintenance teams. There are monies available through the ERP that are NOT available elsewhere, and in sums that are quite a bit higher than the allocations available to the schools.”

<h3 style="text-align: center;">Top Recipients of ERP Funding</h3> <p style="text-align: center;">(accounting for approximately half of all funds allocated through April 22, 2009)</p>	
School District	Total ERP Grants and Reimbursements
Los Angeles Unified (Southern California)	\$41,577,752
Lodi Unified (Central Valley)	\$17,381,648
Compton Unified (Southern California)	\$14,268,319
Bassett Unified (Southern California)	\$13,474,532
Dinuba Unified (Central Valley)	\$10,876,100
Centinela Valley Union High (Southern California)	\$10,329,432
Santa Ana Unified (Southern California)	\$9,677,926
Alisal Union Elementary (Central Coast)	\$7,897,150
Orange Unified (Southern California)	\$7,399,717
Cutler-Orosi Joint Unified (Central Valley)	\$6,384,365
West Contra Costa Unified (SF Bay Area)	\$6,374,993
John Swett Unified (SF Bay Area)	\$6,162,535

Looking Ahead: Projects Waiting for Funding

Sixty-seven school districts have applications pending for the \$101 million provided by the 2008-09 Budget Act and the next \$100 million appropriation for the ERP. This \$201 million will pay for 2860 critical repair projects at 436 schools across the state.

System/Component in Need of Repair or Replacement	Total Per System/Component
HVAC	\$43,089,888
Roofing	\$38,374,764
Paving	\$25,525,053
Portables	\$15,121,592
Electrical	\$12,416,267
Windows/Doors/Gates	\$11,048,310
Fire Detection/Alarm and/or Sprinkler System	\$8,834,322
Structural Damage	\$6,403,822

ELIMINATING THE CONCEPT 6 MULTI-TRACK, YEAR-ROUND SCHOOL CALENDAR

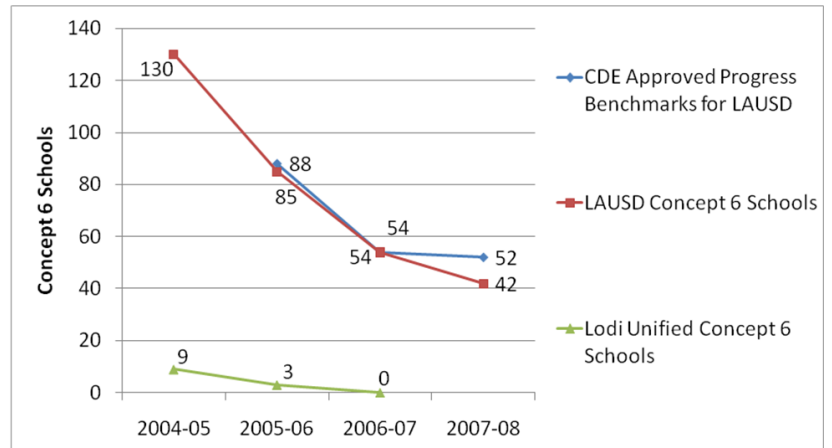
The *Williams* Settlement Legislation established standards and procedures for phasing out school districts' use of the Concept 6 multi-track, year-round school calendar, which provides only 163 days of classroom instruction instead of the common 180 days.

Lodi Unified School District (LUSD) and Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) were the only two school districts still operating schools on the Concept 6 calendar in 2004-2005, when *Williams* settled, so the Settlement Legislation required them to submit comprehensive action plans to the California Department of Education (CDE) by January 1, 2005, detailing strategies and steps to be taken annually to eliminate the use of the Concept 6 program as soon as practicable and no later than July 1, 2012.

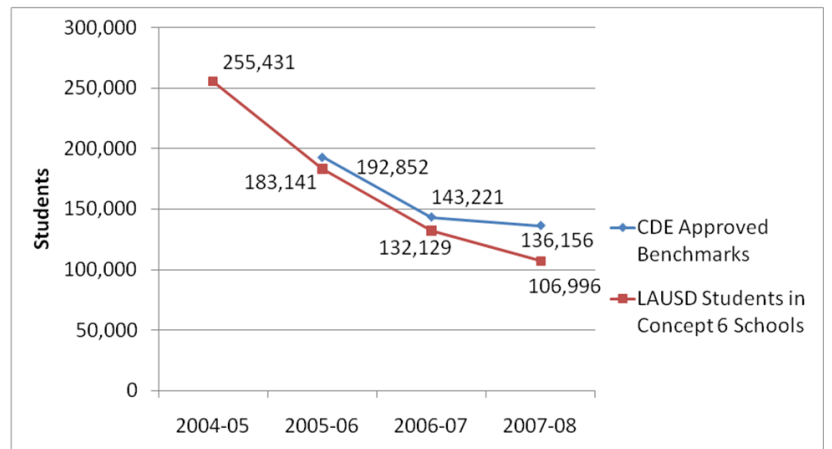
As illustrated in the graph above, Lodi Unified successfully phased out their use of the Concept 6 calendar in 2006-07, leaving LAUSD as the only district still operating schools on the Concept 6 calendar. The district is working to meet the phase-out deadline of July 1, 2012, and is making satisfactory progress as measured against the approved progress benchmarks according to the most recent reports from CDE. After three years, the number of schools operating on the Concept 6 calendar in LAUSD is down from 130 to 42 and the total enrollment in Concept 6 schools has decreased from 255,431 to 106,996.

As of January 1, 2008, LAUSD projected enrollment in Concept 6 schools would

Phasing-out Concept 6



Declining Number of Students on
Concept 6 Calendar in LAUSD



actually rise a bit in 2008-09 to 110,791 students, but then will steadily fall to 99,417 in 2009-10, 98,604 in 2010-11, 55,356 in 2011-12, and finally 0 in 2012-2013. These projections, even with the projected rise in 2008-09, are consistent with the benchmark ceilings for year-to-year progress of the Concept 6 calendar phase-out plan that CDE approved, in part because LAUSD made such significant progress in 2007-08 in reducing its number of students subjected to the Concept 6 calendar.

QUALIFIED TEACHERS: CORRECTING TEACHER MISASSIGNMENTS

Students’ access to appropriately certificated and assigned teachers has improved dramatically over the course of the first four years of implementation, with particularly notable improvements in English Learner students’ access to such teachers. The California Commission on Teacher Credentialing (CTC) recently released a report describing how across all schools, the “*Williams* settlement created a new focus in the review of English learner assignments resulting in better identification of teachers that lacked the authorization to provide instructional services to English learners.”¹¹ The CTC explained that the high numbers of teacher misassignments identified in the immediate wake of the Settlement

Legislation were “a result of the more rigorous monitoring conducted by the county offices,” and not “an increase in actual misassignments,” concluding that this is “a positive outcome of the *Williams* settlement.”¹²

County offices of education found disturbingly high numbers of misassignments in decile 1-3 schools and successfully worked with their local districts to correct them. Progress was especially dramatic between the 2005-06 and 2006-07 school years, though the trend appears to have reversed slightly in 2007-08 with an uptick in subject matter and English Learner (EL) teaching misassignments; these

**Certificated Staff Misassignments in Decile 1-3 Schools
2005-2008**

	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08
Total Certificated Staff Monitored	100,868	101,315	99,369
Total Certificated Misassignments	58,283	11,867	18,027
Percentage of Certificated Staff Misassigned	58%	12%	18%

Source: CTC

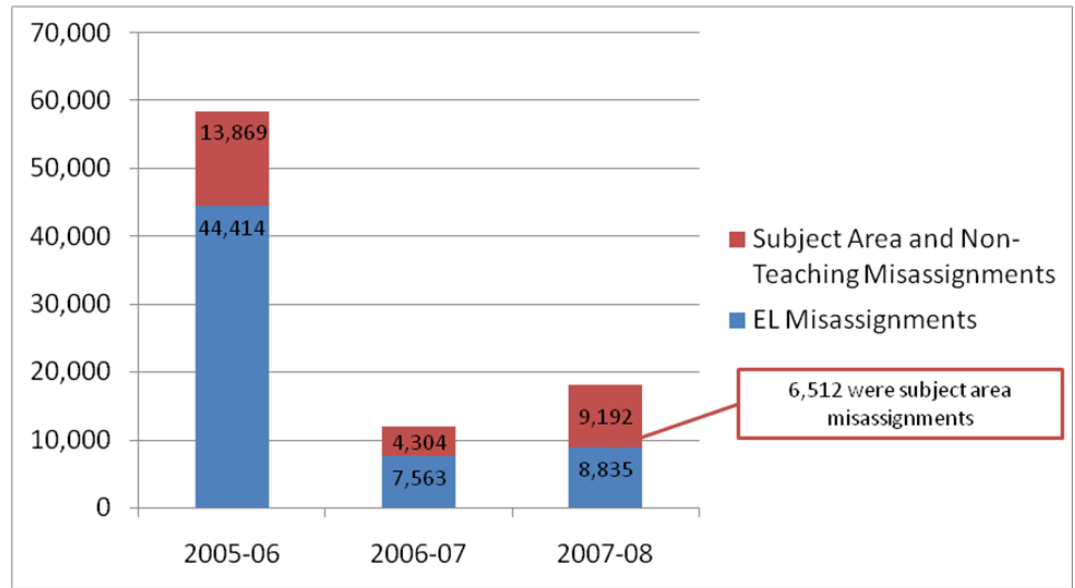
¹¹ Purdue, Roxann. [Assignment Monitoring of Certificated Employees in California by County Offices of Education 2003-2007. A Report to the Legislature](http://www.ctc.ca.gov/reports/AMR-090108.pdf), California Commission on Teacher Credentialing, August 2008:

¹² Id.

increases may be attributable to the schools receiving their first annual review after the three-year *Williams* list was updated, adding new schools to be reviewed. Notably, although the total number of EL teacher misassignments increased from 7,563 in 2006-07 to 8,835 in 2007-08, the number of classes with a significant number of English Learners (20% or more) and an EL teacher misassignment fell by over half for the third year in a row.¹³

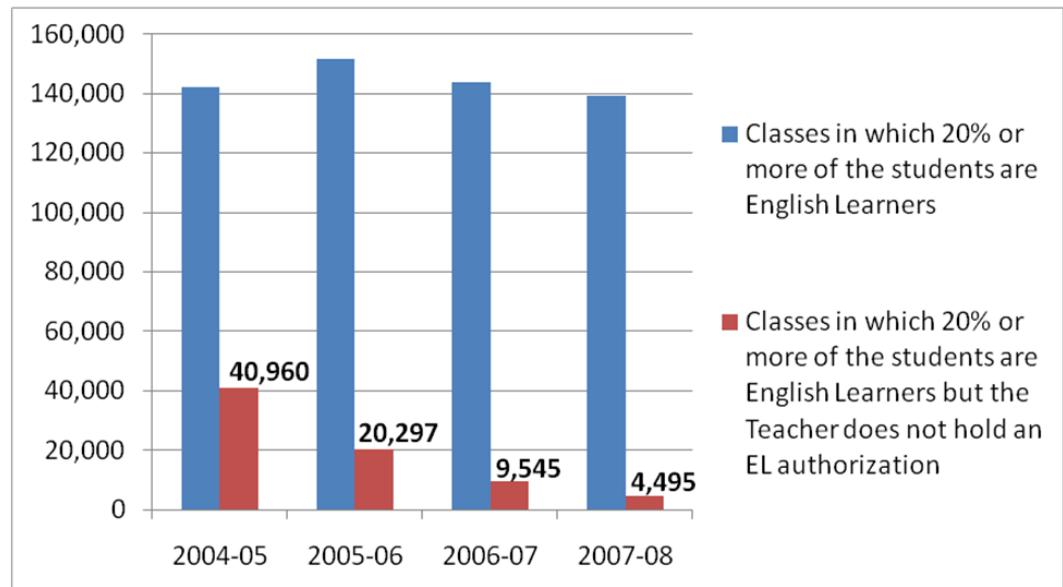
The CTC has reported a corresponding sharp increase in the number of applications requesting an English learner authorization, and the number of veteran teachers completing a Certificate of Completion of English Learner Staff Development (CCSD) has risen from 4,314 in 2005-06 to 6,726 in 2006-07 to 9,455 in 2007-08.¹⁴ County offices of education confirm this data.

Misassignments in Decile 1-3 Schools



Source: CTC

EL Teacher Misassignments in Decile 1-3 School Classes with 20% or more English Learners



Source: CTC

¹³ Commission on Teacher Credentialing.

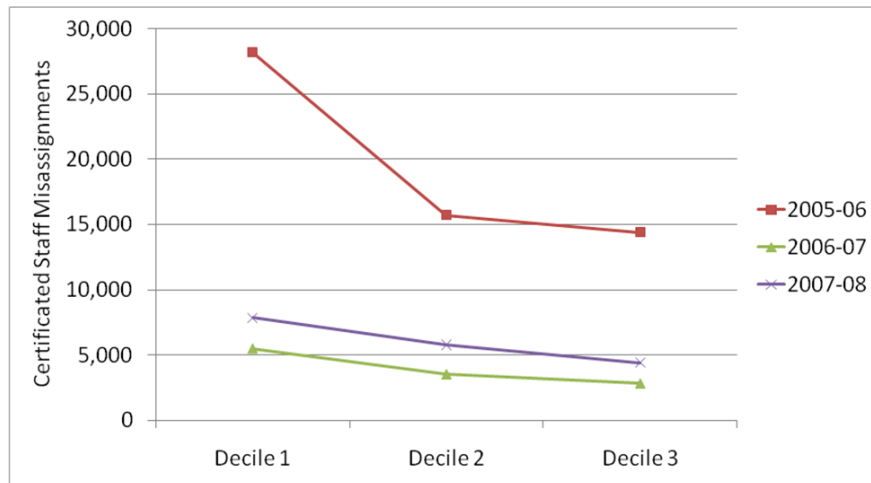
¹⁴ *Teacher Supply in California 2007-2008*. California Commission on Teacher Credentialing: http://www.ctc.ca.gov/reports/TS_2007-2008_AnnualRpt.pdf.

For example, the Sonoma County Office of Education reports that “*Williams* has caused many districts to pursue credentialing teachers who were not credentialed to teach EL students. This has made a great impact on teacher knowledge regarding how to better instruct students who are learning to speak English.”

The *Williams* Settlement Legislation required, for the first time, annual monitoring of teacher misassignments in decile 1-3 schools and schools likely to have misassignments and vacancies and,

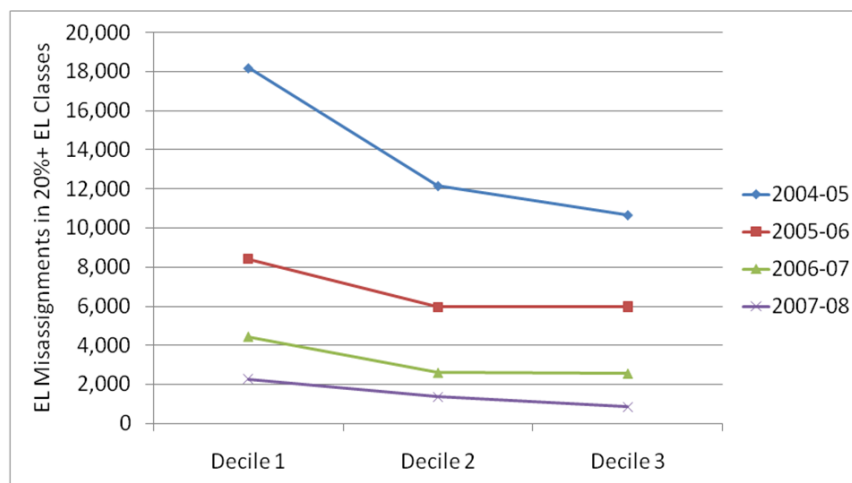
anticipating that further steps would be necessary, called for legislative hearings based on the new data collected. As illustrated below, the data reported because of *Williams* reveals that even in the lowest-performing schools there continues to be a negative correlation between a school’s ranking on the Base Academic Performance Index and the number of misassignments at the school. These data underscore the urgent need for legislative action to build on the success of *Williams* assignment monitoring to help all schools attract and retain fully qualified teachers.

Certificated Staff Misassignments in Schools Ranked in Deciles 1-3, 2005-2008



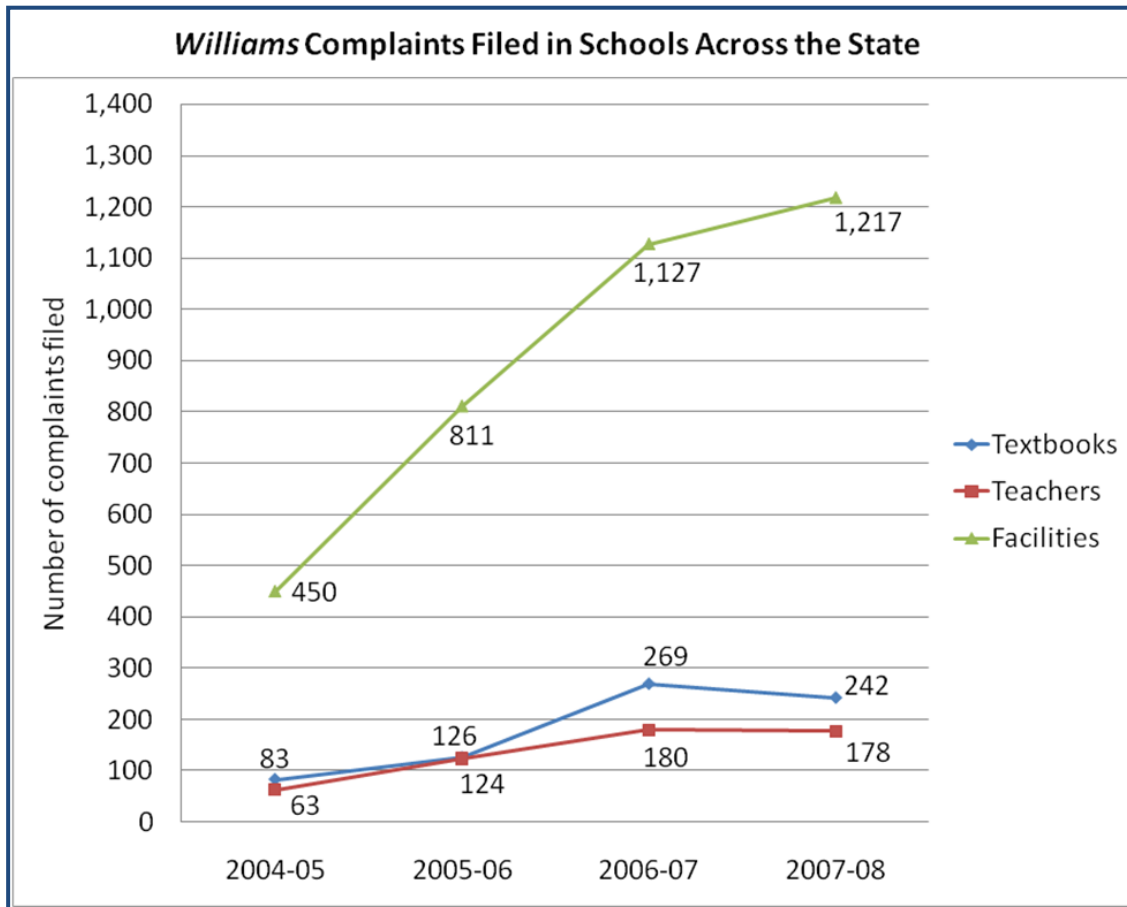
Source: CTC

EL Teacher Misassignments in Classes with 20% or More English Learners in Schools Ranked in Deciles 1-3, 2004-2008



Source: CTC

THE *WILLIAMS* UNIFORM COMPLAINT PROCESS

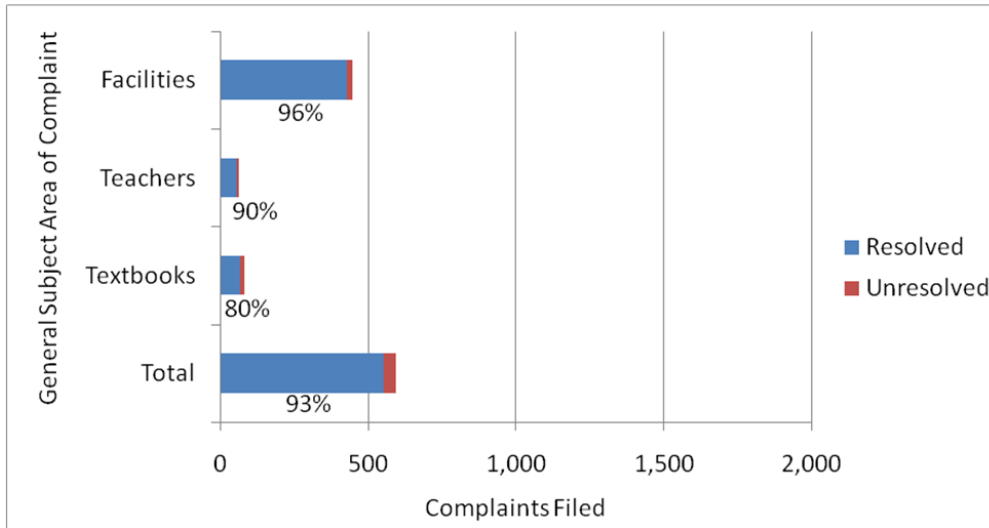


District quarterly reports on *Williams* Complaints from 2004-05 through 2007-08 suggest that awareness and utilization of the complaint process is spreading. Parents, students, and teachers are increasingly using complaints to highlight problems and ensure students receive the basic necessities guaranteed under *Williams*. The overall number of complaints filed statewide has risen every year since the Settlement, and though some of the largest districts in the state are home to many of the complaints (e.g., schools in Los Angeles Unified School District received 1406 complaints through 2007-08), there is complaint activity across the state. Twenty-nine of forty-three county offices of education received reports of complaints in 2007-08.

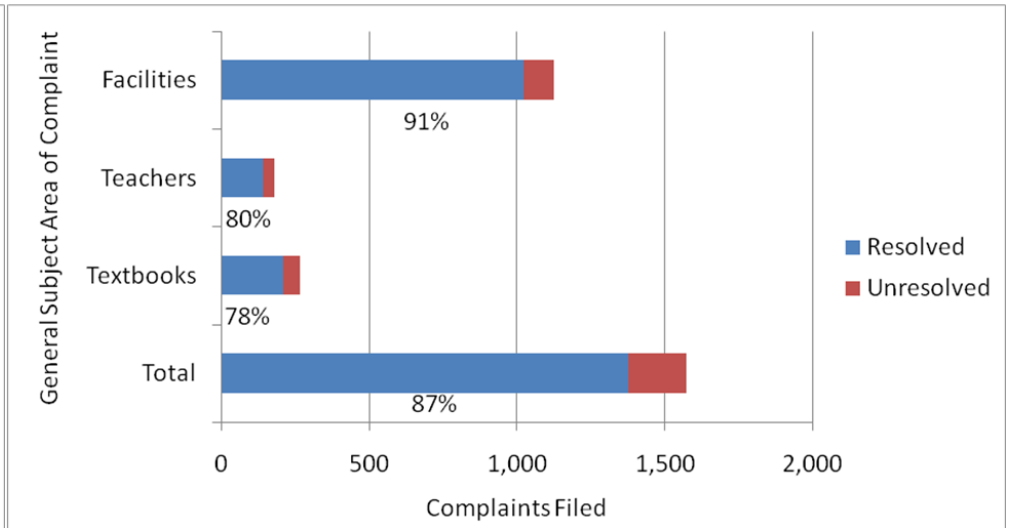
School districts' self-reported resolution rates (illustrated on the next page) are encouraging, especially considering that some "unresolved" complaints were ultimately resolved within the required 30 working days, though after the respective district's quarterly report was due. Conversely, anecdotal evidence from individual complainants indicates that the resolution rates may be artificially high in some cases where school districts do not take the complainant's assessment into account when reporting a complaint as "resolved."

The *Williams* plaintiffs' counsel remain committed to ensuring that the promise of this unprecedented accountability tool for students and parents is realized.

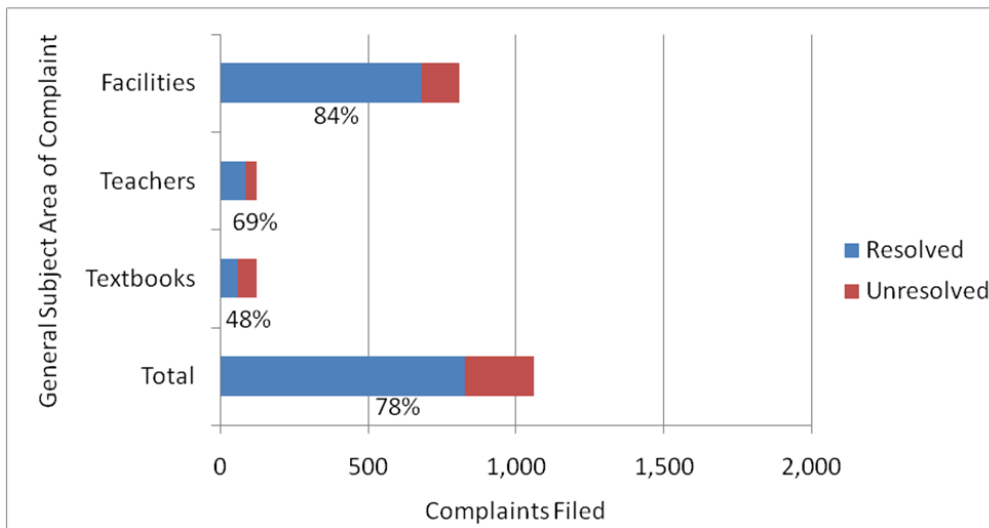
Williams Complaints
Resolution Rates in 2004-05



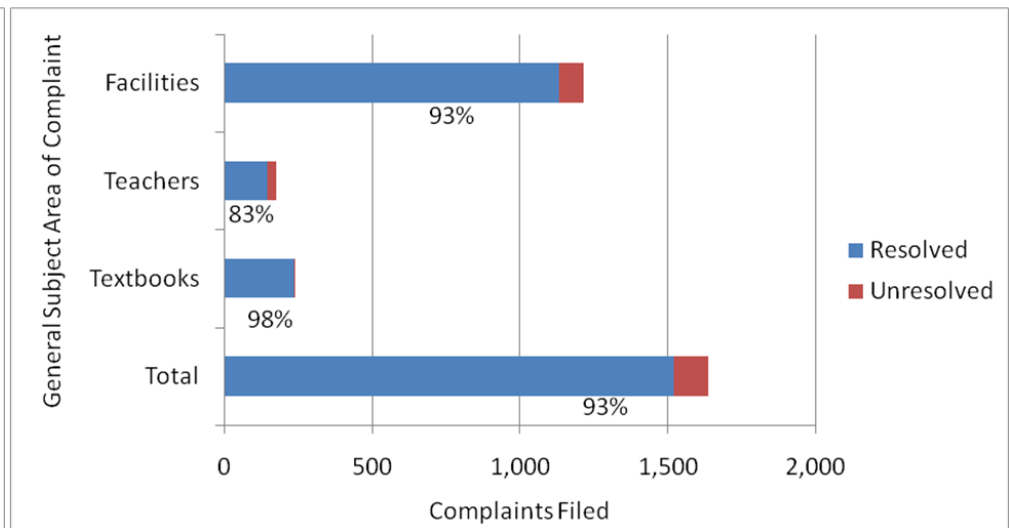
Williams Complaints
Resolution Rates in 2006-07



Williams Complaints
Resolution Rates in 2005-06



Williams Complaints
Resolution Rates in 2007-08



Conclusion

The four years of implementation have consistently demonstrated that clear standards combined with effective oversight and vigilant monitoring and advocacy from the community and counsel for plaintiffs together provide improved educational opportunity for California public school students. Even as schools, districts, and counties become more aware of and compliant with *Williams* requirements, this report shows that each year county offices of education have to work with districts to distribute tens of thousands of books to students who would otherwise not have received them, districts continue to identify facilities repair needs that threaten students' health and safety and to seek *Williams* funding to satisfy those needs, county offices of education identify teacher misassignments and work with districts to correct them, and teachers apply in increasing numbers to gain credentials to avoid such misassignments. These overlapping efforts demonstrate the efficacy and utility of the *Williams* settlement in the aggregate.

County and district practitioners often demonstrate that efficacy in even more concrete specifics. For example, a Kings County Office of Education staff person reports that by this most recent year of *Williams* implementation, "it has come to the point that districts and schools are working with us and not against us. They are now prepared, making sure that every student has all the text materials that are required and that the teaching environment is safe and clean. Some of the classes even get upset if I haven't chosen their classroom for visitation." Yolo County Office of

Education staff echo this view: "principals have come to see *Williams* monitoring as a support to their efforts to provide a quality educational experience to their students. Some report jealousy from other principals who do not get the 'benefits' of being monitored (i.e. the perception that monitored schools get the quickest response to requests for help from district administrators)."

These validations of schools' new readiness for their oversight visits, and therefore for their students' learning, and of the efficacy of a process whose absence would be missed, is consistent with reports from around the state. For another example, the Orange County Office of Education reports that "districts are correcting issues in a timely fashion which in turn, provides a better environment for students and staff."

The Los Angeles County Office of Education summed up *Williams*' overall impact, noting that because of *Williams*, "school systems made an impressive change in the district/school culture to emphasize that teaching and learning began on the first day of school. This was not the belief system at the beginning of the *Williams* program. Future reforms can learn from the *Williams* program in that change can occur if the focus is children and that all stakeholders are involved in the process and results." California's public school students look forward to that continued focus on children and on results as California continues implementation of *Williams*.

“Without a doubt the budget crisis is real and will require our public policy leaders to make difficult choices. Those choices should not serve as an excuse to abandon poor children. The Williams Settlement mandates basic equity in our schools. These mandates must be maintained. Our leaders must consider the real costs to society when we fail to educate our students. We cannot afford to fail those students who already are paying the price for the lack of qualified teachers, instructional materials and clean and safe schools.”

- May 22, 2008, *Los Angeles Wave* Guest Editorial by Pamela Short-Powell, Superintendent of Inglewood Unified School District and President of the California Association of African American Superintendents; Edna Herring, Superintendent of Rialto Unified School District; and Dwight Bonds, Acting Executive Director of the California Association of African American Superintendents.