

The Williams Settlement – How Does it Affect You?

Williams v. State of California was filed in May of 2000 on behalf of a class of plaintiffs defined to include K-12 students in the state's most deficient schools. The basis of the lawsuit was that the State and state agencies had failed to ensure that all public school students had adequate instructional materials, clean and decent school facilities and qualified teachers. In September of 2004, the California Legislature and Governor, implementing the settlement of the case, approved legislation designed to address the concerns brought forward by *Williams*.

While many of these legislative changes affect all schools and school districts, most of the *Williams* changes directly target those schools ranking in Deciles 1, 2 and 3 of the 2012 Academic Performance Index (API).

County Offices of Education have been assigned the task of implementing the *Williams* Settlement, including but not limited to:

- Annual monitoring and review of teacher assignments in Decile 1, 2, and 3 schools,
- Inspection of each Decile 1, 2 and 3 school to determine the condition of the facility, and
- Verification that Decile 1, 2 and 3 schools have sufficient instructional materials for all students, including transitional kindergarten students.

What does this mean to you? During the months of August and September, teams from the Ventura County Office of Education will be visiting all Decile 1, 2, and 3 schools in Ventura County. The purpose of these visits will be to meet the requirements of the *Williams* Settlement with regard to the facilities and instructional materials issues. In order to complete the requirements of the Settlement, the teams will have to visit classrooms while classes are in session. While every effort will be made to minimize the disruption of classes while in session, some level of disruption will be unavoidable. We anticipate that each classroom visit will take no more than 5 or 10 minutes and not all classrooms will be visited during this process. Some classrooms will be visited for either the facility inspection or the instructional materials inspection. Some classrooms will be visited for both types of inspections.

The Ventura County Office of Education and your School District Office thank you for your cooperation in making these visits a positive experience for everyone involved.

If you have any questions about the *Williams* Settlement inspection process, please contact your site administrator.