California Department of Education

Executive Office

SBE-004 (REV. 11/2017)

addendum01-mar19item21

# **ITEM ADDENDUM**

**DATE:** MARCH 14, 2019

**TO:** MEMBERS, State Board of Education

**FROM:** TONY THURMOND, State Superintendent of Public Instruction

**SUBJECT:** Item 21: Paradise Unified Waiver Request Addendum

## Summary of Key Issues

This addendum provides additional analysis of the ongoing impact of the wildfires to the Paradise Unified School District (PUSD), which informed the CDE’s recommendation to approve the submission of the waiver request to the U.S. Department of Education (CDE) on behalf of the PUSD. Each request to waive the federal statutory and regulatory requirements is unique. In the case of the PUSD, the immediate devastation and ongoing impact of the wildfires were determining factors in the CDE’s recommendation.

## Attachment(s)

* **Attachment 1**: Additional Analysis regarding the Ongoing Impact (2 pages)

# **Attachment 1: Additional Analysis of Ongoing Impact**

The Camp Fire, which began on November 18, 2018, in Butte County was the deadliest and most destructive wildfire in California history to date. It is also the deadliest wildfire in the United States since 1918. The Camp Fire burned 153,336 acres of land (almost 240 square miles) and destroyed the town of Paradise, which had a population of 27,000 before the fires, within the first six hours of the fire. The fire claimed nearly three times as many lives and structures as any other wildfire in California’s history. According to a November 21, 2018, report by the *Redding Record*, when the fire was 95 percent contained it had destroyed 13,631 residences, 275 multifamily residences, 514 commercial buildings. Additional reports stated that 4,404 barn sheds were also destroyed. At least eighty-five deaths have been confirmed, and some are still missing. The total monetary damage was $16.5 billion. The fire reached 100-percent containment after seventeen days on November 25, 2018.

The burned region was considered uninhabitable and a public health risk due to exposure to hazardous materials remaining from the Camp Fire. The Camp Fire cleanup is currently the largest hazardous material cleanup in California’s history. Due to the evacuations, one hundred-percent of the student population meets the requirements for McKinney Vento and are considered homeless for the duration of the school year. In addition to the impact to students, 260 of 400 staff members lost their homes and another 60 were displaced by the fires. Students and teachers alike have suffered trauma from the fires and their ongoing impact. The PUSD is offering mental health services (counseling) to students and staff as a result of the trauma.

## Summary of School Enrollment and Operating Locations

According to DataQuest, in the 2017–18 school year, the PUSD served 4,211 students and operated nine campuses. Based on information provided by the PUSD in February 2019, their enrollment decreased by over 50 percent to 1,759 students. There are no operating campuses with the PUSD geographic boundaries at this time. PUSD enrolled students attend schools outside of the Paradise city boundaries in non-traditional school settings. Table 1 provides additional information regarding the temporary operating locations of the schools or their status (e.g., school is closed and not reopening). Please note that this table includes all schools in the PUSD including charter and private schools.

Table 1: Displacement of students and temporary location or status

| School Name(s) | Temporary operating location or status |
| --- | --- |
| Achieve Charter High School | Life Church, Chico, CA |
| Achieve K–8 | Life Church Chico, CA |
| Children’s Community Charter School | Chico, CA |
| Core Butte TK–12 Middle School | Two locations in Chico, CA |
| Creekside Six, Evergreen Six, and Paradise Intermediate School | OSH Hardware Building Chico, California |
| HomeTech Charter School | Living Hope Fellowship, Chico, CA |
| Honey Run Academy | Boys and Girls Club, Chico, CA |
| Paradise Charter Middle School | Core Butte Charter School Gymnasium, Chico, CA |
| Paradise eLearning Academy | Independent Study with Chico Mall drop in hours |
| Paradise Elementary | Bird Street Elementary School, Oroville, CA |
| Paradise High School | Chico, CA |
| Pearson Center | Silver Dollar Fairgrounds Chico, CA |
| Pine Ridge | Two locations: Cedar Wood Elementary Magalia, CA and Bird Street Elementary School, Oroville, CA |
| Ponderosa | Durham Elementary School Durham, CA |
| Ridgeview High School | Boys and Girls Club Chico, CA |

## Implications for Accountability

Upon request, the CDE provided guidance to the PUSD on federal accountability and assessment waiver options and requirements. The PUSD submitted a waiver request of the assessment requirements only. However, in the event that ED approves the testing waiver, the CDE will apply a business rule to indicate that PUSD does not have testing data and therefore will not receive a performance color for Academic Achievement in the English Language Arts and Mathematics indicators for the 2019 Dashboard. The PUSD committed to continue administration of the English Language Proficiency Assessments for California (ELPAC).

## CDE Review of Waiver Request

CDE is reviewing the waiver request according to the requirements outlined in ESSA Section 8401, and is evaluating the unique circumstances related to the ongoing impact of the wildfire for the PUSD. The CDE would like permission to work with PUSD to make technical changes to the request as needed to meet federal requirements, if applicable. The CDE recommends the approval of the submission of the waiver request to ED on behalf of the PUSD once it meets all federal requirements.