



Board Office Use: <b>Legislative File Info.</b>	
File ID Number	22-0586
Introduction Date	3/9/22
Enactment Number	22-0450
Enactment Date	3/9/2022 er

# Board Cover Memorandum

**To** Board of Education

**From** Sam Davis, Board Vice President  
Kyla Johnson-Trammell, Superintendent  
Curtiss Sarikey, Chief of Staff

**Meeting Date** March 9, 2022

**Subject** 2022-23 K-12 Education Budget Letter

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**Ask of the Board** Adopt annual K-12 Education Budget letter for 2022-23 and authorize the Board President and the Superintendent to sign and send on behalf of the District.

**Background** For the past several years, the Board of Education (“Board”) has adopted an annual budget letter to the State of California.

**Discussion** This year’s letter is informed by the District’s adopted 2022 Legislative Platform with input from School Services of California. While it addresses general fiscal issues, it is primarily tailored to address specific budget proposals.

**Fiscal Impact** N/A

**Attachment(s)**

- OUSD’s 2022-23 K-12 Education Budget Letter

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March 9, 2022

The Honorable John Laird  
Chair, Senate Budget Subcommittee #1  
1020 N Street, Room 502  
Sacramento, CA 95814

The Honorable Kevin McCarty  
Chair, Assembly Budget Subcommittee #2  
State Capitol, Room 6026  
Sacramento, CA 95814

**RE: 2022-23 EDUCATION BUDGET**

Dear Senator Laird and Assembly Member McCarty:

On behalf of the Oakland Unified School District (OUSD), I write to respectfully request your consideration of the following education investments for the 2022-23 budget as you work toward adoption in June. OUSD believes that these investments are critical to continuing to address the acute and dynamic needs of our students during the pandemic while enabling us to plan strategically for the coming years.

With historic education revenues in California, OUSD believes that now is the time to install critical policies that will address long-term fiscal stability for education agencies across the state. These include investment to address growing local obligations and ways to protect local revenues, which are vital to fiscal stability and the sustainability of key educational programs and services for our students and communities.

**Increased Investments in the Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF)**

First and foremost, OUSD urges greater investment in the LCFF so that we can sustain, expand, and improve educational programs and services for our students. With Proposition 98 and per-student education revenues at historic highs, the State can and *must* invest more in the LCFF than the statutory cost-of-living adjustment (COLA). Importantly, the COLA is designed only to protect the current purchasing power of the dollar amidst rising inflation. We have the capacity within Proposition 98 to increase funding under LCFF either through an augmentation to the COLA or as a statutory increase to the Base Grants as many have been advocating since the inception of the LCFF.

In addition to increased LCFF funding, OUSD appreciates the Governor's recognition of the deleterious impact of declining enrollment on district finances and his proposal to help mitigate it. Equally, we appreciate the Legislature's attention to this matter and the two main proposals that are similar to but distinct from the Governor's proposal. We support the Governor's additional option of using three prior years of ADA for determining LCFF and other local funding allocations when doing so protects local resources. We urge the Legislature to adopt a *permanent* mitigating policy rather than the temporary solutions proffered by some as we do not yet know how long the COVID-19 pandemic will continue to exacerbate declining enrollment and pose threats to the fiscal health of local districts.

Honorable John Laird  
Honorable Kevin McCarthy  
Re: RE: 2022-23 EDUCATION BUDGET  
March 9, 2022  
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### **School Employer Pension Obligations**

One of the largest budgetary risks OUSD faces like every other education agency in California is our growing pension obligations vis a vis increases in employer contribution rates to CalSTRS and CalPERS. Planned rate increases coupled with skyrocketing inflation threaten to undermine existing policies and policies that are currently being contemplated to protect local fiscal stability.

It is notable that the Governor's budget contains a proposal to address the State's pension liabilities without extending a benefit for school employers who face equally challenging obligations. We urge the Governor and the Legislature to appropriate surplus state general fund resources to help moderate growing local pension obligations so as to avoid having to make difficult programmatic adjustments that will affect the students under our stewardship.

### **Special Education Funding**

Consistent with our focus on policies that secure our long-term fiscal health and stability, OUSD supports the Governor's proposal to increase the Special Education funding base rate to \$820 per ADA. As districts have argued for many years, the cost of providing special education programs and services to our most vulnerable students has not been fully funded by state and federal resources combined. Thus, we urge the Legislature to adopt the Governor's proposed increase for Special Education programs.

### **Expanded Learning Opportunity Program (ELO-P)**

OUSD applauds policies and investments that promote enriched educational opportunities for our students that equally support working families, and we acknowledge that the ELO-P is one such policy and investment. However, the reality is that every local agency faces acute staffing challenges with severe shortages in teaching, classified, and substitute staffing pools. Indeed, this crisis is not endemic to California and has been exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic and the Great Resignation from which the education sector has not been spared. For this reason, we support the additional time for implementation included in the proposed trailer bill legislation that would allow 2022-23 ELO-P funds to be used for an additional year and would delay audit of the program until 2023-24.

Thank you for your consideration of these important fiscal matters.

Sincerely,



Gary Yee  
*Board President, Oakland USD*



Kyla Johnson-Trammell  
*Superintendent, Oakland USD*

Cc: The Honorable Gavin Newsom, California State Governor  
Chris Ferguson, Department of Finance  
Brooks Allen, State Board of Education  
Yong Salas, Senate Budget Subcommittee #1  
Erin Gabel, Assembly Budget Subcommittee #2