

File ID Number	12-0590
Introduction Date	6/13/12
Enactment Number	12-1567
Enactment Date	6-13-12
By	



**OAKLAND UNIFIED  
SCHOOL DISTRICT**

*Community Schools, Thriving Students*

**OAKLAND UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT  
Office of the Board of Education**

To: Board of Education  
From: Tony Smith, Superintendent

Subject: **District Submitting Grant Proposal**

**ACTION REQUESTED:**

Approval and support by the Board of Education of District applicant submitting grant proposal for OUSD schools for fiscal years 2011-2012 to accept same, if granted, in whole or in part, pursuant to the terms and conditions thereof and to submit amendments thereto, for the grant year, if any.

**BACKGROUND:**

Grant proposal for OUSD schools for the 2011-2012 fiscal year were submitted for funding as indicated in the chart below. The Grant Face Sheet and grant application packets are attached.

File ID #	Backup Document Included	Type	Recipient	Grant's Purpose	Time Period	Funding Source	Grant Amount
12-0590	Notification letter, Proposal, Statement of work		Oakland Theatre Arts Initiative	Continue to build a sustainable, secondary Theatre Arts infrastructure	April 2012 - April 2013	Haas Foundation	\$30,000.00

**DISCUSSION:**

The district created a Grant Face sheet process to:

- Review proposed grant projects at OUSD sites and assess their contribution to sustained student
- Identify OUSD resources required for program success

OUSD received a Grant Face Sheet and a completed grant application for the program listed in the chart by the school.

**FISCAL IMPACT:**

The total amount of grants will be provided to OUSD schools from the funders.

- Grants valued at: \$30,000.00

**RECOMMENDATION:**

Approval and support by the Board of Education of District applicant submitting a grant proposal for OUSD schools for fiscal year to accept same, if granted, in whole or in part, pursuant to the terms and conditions thereof and to submit amendments thereto, for the grant year, if any.

**ATTACHMENTS:**

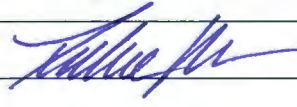
OUSD Grants Management Face Sheet, Notification letter, Grant Proposal

# OUSD Grants Management Face Sheet

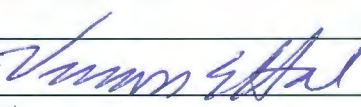
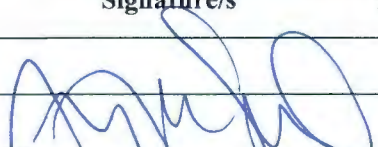
<b>Title of Grant:</b> Oakland Theatre Arts Initiative	<b>Funding Cycle Dates:</b> April 2012-April 2013
<b>Grant's Fiscal Agent:</b> (contact's name, address, phone number, email address)	<b>Grant Amount for Full Funding Cycle:</b> \$30,000.00
<b>Funding Agency:</b> Haas Foundation	<b>Grant Focus:</b> Arts Professional Development
<b>List all School(s) or Department(s) to be Served:</b> Middle and High School English Language Arts/Drama	

Information Needed	School or Department Response
How will this grant contribute to sustained student achievement or academic standards?	Provides experiential theatre professional development for a cohort of OUSD secondary English Language Arts (ELA) teachers to provide standards based theatre instruction and to integrate theatre arts instruction.
How will this grant be evaluated for impact upon student achievement?  (Customized data design and technical support are provided at 1% of the grant award or at a negotiated fee for a community-based fiscal agent who is not including OUSD's indirect rate of 5.17% in the budget. The 1% or negotiated data fee will be charged according to an Agreement for Grant Administration Related Services payment schedule. This fee should be included in the grant's budget for evaluation.)	Teachers will participate in creating a rubric for use with students in their classroom to measure growth in the various affective skills we expect from learning in theatre. Teachers will be asked to fill out a survey and participate in a focus reflecting on the program and their confidence in teaching Theatre.
Does the grant require any resources from the school(s) or district? If so, describe.	No required match however the project will use currently allocated arts professional development funds to provide participation stipends and/or sub release time. No increased allocations increases or programmatic changes are necessary.
Are services being supported by an OUSD funded grant or by a contractor paid through an OUSD contract or MOU?  (If yes, include the district's indirect rate of 5.17% for all OUSD site services in the grant's budget for administrative support, evaluation data, or indirect services.)	No
Will the proposed program take students out of the classroom for any portion of the school day? (OUSD reserves the right to limit service access to students during the school day to ensure academic attendance continuity.)	No
Who is the contact managing and assuring grant compliance? (Include contact's name, address, phone number, email address.)	Jessa Berkner, OUSD Drama Teacher Phil Rydeen, OUSD Visual & Performing Arts Manager

## Applicant Obtained Approval Signatures:

Entity	Name/s	Signature/s	Date
Principal	Fillmore Rydeen		2/8/12
Department Head (e.g. for school day programs or for extended day and student support activities)			

## Grant Office Obtained Approval Signatures:

Entity	Name/s	Signature/s	Date
Fiscal Officer	Vernon Hal		
Superintendent	Tony Smith		6/4/12

## LEGISLATIVE FILE

File ID Number 12-0590  
 Introduction Date 8/20/10 OUSD Grants Management Services  
 Enactment Number 12-1567  
 Enactment Date 6/13/12



February 3, 2012

Frances Phillips  
Walter and Elise Haas Foundation  
One Lombard St. Suite 305  
San Francisco, CA 94111

It is with great anticipation that I present this new proposal to the Foundation for the Oakland Theatre Arts Initiative (OTAI). This district-led initiative seeks to increase student access to high quality, standards-based Theatre Arts Education at Oakland middle and high schools. As a result of last years program the district has added 3 full sections of drama and six teachers have received ongoing support as they develop theatre units within their classrooms.

Last year teachers had the opportunity to participate in 100 hours of professional development providing comprehensive teacher training paired with student learning opportunities. In my observations of the professional development sessions I am impressed with the depth of learning and teacher commitment to this project. Additionally, Ms. Berkner has developed highly engaging interactive sessions that not only provide adult learning experiences but also individualized coaching during the school day. Teachers involved in the experiential coursework requested further support for implementing this valuable program.

Similar initiatives in Visual Arts, Dance and Music have resulted in greater access to these performing arts in the district, and Theatre Arts is a much-needed final phase of integration. As the most interdisciplinary of the arts, Theatre Arts incorporates narrative, character, music, visual art, dance, historical and cultural contexts and communication skills into creative, community-based outcomes. As a teaching practice theatre is an invaluable tool for student engagement. It is our intention that this project marks the beginning of a long-term, sustainable, replicable model that can have lasting impact on the educational practices of Oakland Public Schools.

I sincerely thank you for your time and thoughtful review of our proposal. Please feel free to contact Jessa Berkner or me directly with any questions or for further documentation.

Best,

Jillmore Rydeen  
510-336-7609

Jessa Brie Berkner  
510-798-1952



## Oakland Theatre Arts Initiative

**2012 Proposal Summary:** Oakland Unified School District (OUSD) will continue to take steps toward building a sustainable, secondary Theatre Arts infrastructure, by supporting teachers who are teaching new stand alone sections of theatre at two schools and continuing to support a learning community of 6 teachers who are integrating theatre arts into their curriculum. This project is an outgrowth of the revitalization of the Performing Arts Department at Oakland Tech High School, through the dynamic leadership of Jessa Berkner. In 2011-12 eight secondary English Language Arts teachers from Middle and High Schools were selected and participated in 100 hours of Professional Development including: 1) workshop time, 2) intensive one on one coaching and 3) curriculum development support. Several new sections of Theatre are now being offered at two schools. In 2012 these teachers will continue to integrate theatre into their classes and mount a mini performance showcase in March with students from the 4 middle schools and four high schools. Theatre integration in English classes will be strengthened, with an opportunity for teachers to see other theatre teachers in action and an emphasis on modeling instruction of Shakespeare, a core topic at the secondary level. Partnerships and residencies with Cal Shakes, ACT, and other community arts organizations will be carefully vetted and guided by Berkner the lead theater arts educator for the district.

**Applicant Organization:** The Visual and Performing Arts Department in OUSD is uniquely poised to continue this project, having successfully introduced English Language Arts teachers to artistic practices in theatre through ongoing workshops and individualized coaching from an experienced Theatre specialist teacher during 2011-12. As a result of the last 8 years of 4-5 day Summer Arts Institute workshops in theatre, many teachers have stayed in contact with the presenters and have, taken advantage of continued and more sophisticated learning opportunities including those offered through a previous grant from the Hass Foundation. OUSD is also positioned to utilize a portion of its Arts Learning Anchor School program funding in establishing a full-time Theatre position at another of its comprehensive high schools. Meanwhile a Middle School is opening 2 theatre classes. As these teachers build performing arts programs, they will be mentored by the district's lead Theater teacher.

### THREE-YEAR VISION FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF THEATRE ARTS

<u>YEAR 1</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Beginning experience in techniques of acting in 6 months of workshops</li><li>• Individual coaching and curriculum development</li><li>• 2 new Theatre classes offered to secondary students at two sites</li><li>• Mini theatre festival with all teachers and their students March 2012</li><li>• 4-day Intensive Summer Institute- June 2011</li></ul>
<u>YEAR 2</u>

- Implementation of more new classes and curriculum
- Focus on Brewer Middle School and Oakland High becoming Arts Learning Anchor sites with focus on Theatre.
- Support production of student performances at two sites
- Mini student performance festival
- Summer Institute for teachers is in Lab format with participating teachers as presenters, and professional actors as presenters as well. June 2012
- August 2-day curriculum writing session
- .2 FTE funded by district in theatre Sept 2012

### YEAR 3

- Building sustainability
- Experienced Teachers model for and teach others...developing new theatre teacher leaders
- Theater Camp for students (participating teachers as presenters)
- Theater productions mounted at four secondary sites
- OUSD fully funds Teacher on Special Assignment position in theatre

**Statement of Need:** At the outset of this initiative, only two of the nine high schools in OUSD offered theatre classes. For the most part at Middle School, stand-alone theatre classes are non-existent although a growing number of English Language Arts teachers are beginning to integrate theatre arts methods into their study of literature. For new programs at the high school level to be competitive and rigorous, students must begin to build their skills at the Middle School level.

Because so many middle school students must take double sections of English or Math, theater electives are not readily offered. Theatre will be best delivered within the English Language Arts Curriculum when not available as a stand alone elective. For most students, a theatre approach to understanding literature will engage them in a powerful way with many forms of literature.

Students are currently not aware of the rich theatre environment in which they live. Through this initiative they will see avenues for professional engagement as they mature into self- confident participants and audiences of theatrical performance.

### **Program Goals and Objectives:**

**Goal One:** To build a sustainable, high quality theatre arts infrastructure within Oakland Unified School District with active teacher leaders.

- Convene teachers in intensive and ongoing professional development in theatre, building from their own curricula and teaching practice.
- Create a theatre learning community, a common language and curriculum.
- Utilize professional skills of local theatre artists and organizations.

**Goal Two:** To engage students in the literature and stories of their community, empowering their own voices and developing their communication skills.

- Students will experience one carefully developed unit of instruction in theatre each year as well as experiencing theatre skill building throughout a year of English instruction.
- Students will perform 10-minute pieces they have written, sharing with students, parents and community members from the 10 schools involved in the Spring of 2012 and 2013

**Goal Three:**

- Solidify a new Theatre Arts programs at one High School and one Middle School.
- Support teachers who are teaching stand-alone theatre classes for the first time.
- Mentor faculty at the two sites as they build their programs and produce performances at their sites.

**Workshop Content:**

- Theatrical Technique
- Scenes and Monologues
- Shakespeare
- Archetype and Myth
- Playwriting, Stagecraft, Directing
- Project-Based Curriculum Development
- Student Assessment Practices
- Building Sustainability of a Performing Arts Program at the School Site

Time	Activity	Persons Involved
March	Rehearsals and Final Performance: a sharing of 10 minute pieces from each teacher/school: March 16 <sup>th</sup> , Oakland Tech Auditorium 7pm	Teachers, students & community members
April	Professional Development Workshop Saturday/Individual and Group Coaching	Jessa Berkner, OTAI Teacher Cohort
May	Professional Development Workshop Sat/ Individual and Group Coaching	J. Berkner, OTAI Cohort
June	Summer Institute 4-day intensive	J. Berkner, OTAI Cohort, OUSD Teachers
July	Resource Development	Jessa Berkner

Aug	Curriculum development intensive	J. Berkner, OTAI Cohort
Sept	PD Workshop and Coaching	J. Berkner and OTAI Cohort
Oct	PD and Coaching	J. Berkner, OTAI Cohort
Nov	PD and Coaching	J. Berkner, OTAI Cohort
Dec	PD, Coaching, Residencies and Field Study	J. Berkner, OTAI Cohort, Partner Organizations CalShakes, ACT, Berkeley Rep
Jan 2013	PD, Coaching, Sustainable Infrastructure	J. Berkner, OTAI Cohort, Fillmore Rydeen, Principals
Feb	Rehearsals for Showcase, PD Continued	J. Berkenr, OTAI Cohort, Students
March	Student Showcases from all OTAI Cohort Schools, Oakland Theatre Arts Festival	OTAI Cohort, Students, Community

### **Project Evaluation:**

Teachers will participate in creating a rubric for use with students in their classroom to measure growth in the various affective skills we expect from learning in theatre. Students will use a performance-based rubric to self-evaluate and evaluate each others' performance, in a final showcase as a final outcome of this grant.

Teachers will reflect on the program in a focus group format twice a year, midway and at the end of the school year. This will provide information for the coming year. Written teacher reflections will help to measure change in teaching practice, confidence, and goal setting for continual growth.

### **Key Personnel**

#### **Jessa Berkner/ Oakland Tech High School Drama Teacher/ Project Lead**

Jessa Brie Berkner is an award-winning professional actor and educator who has performed and taught theatre for the past fifteen years in theatres, conservatories, schools, and training programs in the U.S. and Canada. In the Bay Area she has performed with ACT, MTC, SF Shakes, Center Rep, TheatreWorks and San Jose Stage Co.. Professional Awards include an Emmy, Bay Area Theatre Critics Circle, Dean Goodman, and Shellie Best Actress Awards. For the past four years she has been a leader in the development of Theatre Arts in Alameda County and City of Oakland Public Education.

As Performing Arts and Theatre Director at Oakland Technical High School, she revitalized the Performing Arts Dept., adapted Zora Neale Hurston's *Their Eyes are*

*Watching God* for the stage, directed two documentary shorts, and produced one full-length film of the play "Oakland: Inside Out," a verbatim theatre piece developed with her student company Oak Tech Rep (presented in Stanford University's Docu-Drama curriculum). Berkner was recently recognized nationally with the American High School Theatre Award and selected to perform at the Edinburgh Fringe Festival in Scotland, 2010. Her student company's version of Naomi Iizuka's "Hamlet: Blood In the Brain" has been performed at CalShakes, Stanford University, and high schools across the Bay Area. Berkner has served as Professional Development leader at several OUSD Workshops, Arts Anchor School Visits, and Alameda County Arts Events/Symposiums... including the recent salon on Culturally Relevant Teaching Strategies. Berkner's students have performed with Berkeley Rep, SF Playhouse, the National Storytelling Festival in Washington D.C., and two of the three finalists for the 2010 Bay Area Beach Blanket Babylon Acting Scholarships were students of Berkner's... and one was the grand prize winner.

Berkner was trained at Carnegie-Mellon, USC, and the International School of Comic Acting/Teatro del Vicolo. She holds a BA from CIIS, a teaching credential in English/Drama and an MFA from the California Institute of Integral Studies' Interdisciplinary Arts Program,.

## **Expected Outcomes**

### For Teachers

- Teacher understands Theater discipline on an experiential level and is able to connect that with their teaching practice and curriculum
- 3 teachers develop Theatre Arts Elective courses.
- 6 Teachers develop at least one unit in Theatre Arts
- All teachers incorporate at least one theater arts activity in each unit of study.
- Teachers gain differentiated learning strategies for ELA classes
- Video of final performances.

### For Students

- Student motivation and engagement in literature and character
- Development of student communication and critical thinking skills
- Student voice is activated
- Student ability to embody character and perspective
- Ensemble work and teamwork
- Tolerance and empathy

### For the Community

- Two new Theatre programs one at Oakland High School and the other at Brewer Middle School
- Sustainable Theatre arts program within the school district that is connected with the larger artistic community
- Video of final performances



- Strong Theatre Arts Programs at more schools

#### **Finances:**

Teacher Stipends, a major portion of the budget, will come from funds currently budgeted for the arts. OUSD has added 3 new theatre sections as a result of the program.

#### **Project Budget**

\$30,000	Teacher on Special Assignment, Project Coordinator	Walter and Elise Haas Request
<b>OUSD Anticipated funds (budgeted)</b>		
\$18,000	Teacher Stipends for Summer Institute and Saturday workshops	OUSD VAPA Program
\$5,000	Teaching Artists	In kind Cal Shakes and ACT
\$3,000	Instructional Supplies	OUSD VAPA
\$4,000	Administrative Support	OUSD VAPA
<b>\$36,000</b>	<b>3 of new Theatre Sections @\$12,000 each (Brewer Middle and Oakland High)</b>	Site-based funding OUSD
<b>\$96,000</b>	<b>Total Project</b>	

#### **Comments from Oakland Unified Teachers and Students**

##### **Student Reflections:**

##### **Engagement with Learning**

"[I have learned] that with just a little imagination you can bring a play to life and that Shakespeare can be pretty cool."

~Tomorrow

"At the beginning of the year, I could not read a book. And then one day, you came to me and said 'read' and then I thought to myself if I don't like it then I won't read. Then I liked to read and I've been reading ever since that day, thank you."

~Joshua

"You taught me that with passion I could do anything. I am growing and can bravely ask questions about anything."

~Joanna

"I can't wait to learn new things in the future. Performing in this class would have to be my favorite thing that we did."

~Nicole

### **Learning about being part of a group**

"Being in this drama class has taught me how to work with a group. I grew up an only child and although it may seem like that wouldn't affect you socially, it really made me spoiled and hard to work with people because I'm so used to getting everything I want. Drama is helping me become a better person in that sense because working with others is a fundamental part of life. Drama is helping me open up to an audience and not be so nervous about being put on the spot."

~Nia

"I learned about being a leader and encouraging others to participate. I also learned that I really like acting."

~Milan

"I never actually talked to some students, nor could I tolerate their random moments. But in the end, they actually memorized their lines and pulled it together. It [the showcase performance] taught me not to judge a book by its cover. I also shouldn't underestimate a person's worth or capability."

~Jennifer

"I have learned how to get along with others in the class, and to have less attitude and to have more fun."

~Annise

"If you are weak then you have to step up, but if you have a lot of strength, then you have to give it to the weak people or step back a little bit."

~Raeshonna

### **Persistence/Hard work**

"My favorite was the showcase because that's really the first time I've actually worked hard to make something perfect. I was really proud of myself."

~Heaven

"I felt really proud of myself that day we did the drama performance. I felt very good about myself and also my group because I felt like we really did very good. We did a lot of hard work on that drama performance."

~Jacinta

### **Confidence**

"This class has taught me to speak up when I feel I need to talk, no matter who the audience is."

~Malaika

"I have also learned that I am capable of a lot of stuff, such as performing in front of many people although I was very nervous. I've also learned how to include my group members in things because before I was pretty much a 'do it myself' girl... Also, how to be a good audience member to others."

~Lavonni

"Since I've been in your drama class, my shyness is kind of going away and I am becoming okay with the idea of performing."

~Joanna

"When Ms. Howeth first told us we were performing a play, I didn't think our class could handle it. But they proved me wrong."

~Memrie

### **OTAI Teacher Outcomes and Reflections, Year One:**

"Over the past year I have had incredible experiences with the Oakland Theater Arts Initiative and have been able to bring some great pieces to my classroom. In my core English class my students studied character motivation by examining themselves. They created and performed monologues- both practicing and rehearsing their performances and creatively examining themselves via questioning and writing. In my strategic reading class I have incorporated vocal/theatre exercises and done readers' theatre to strengthen their confidence and fluency in speaking and reading."

- Elizabeth Tacke, Brewer Middle School ELA Teacher/OTAI Cohort Member

"I have used the theatre techniques in my AP Literature class. I taught my students these techniques while we were reading The Glass Menagerie. The students loved it! They begged for more theatre in my English class which is why I am bringing in a longer theater unit this year with Berkeley Rep workshops." – Jenny Clark, Oakland H.S. ELA Teacher/OTAI Cohort Member

### **For more Testimonials, Workshop Agendas, Lesson Plans, Research and Data,**

please see our Google Group Site for Oakland Drama (in progress) at :

<https://sites.google.com/site/oaklanddrama/home>