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Memo

To Board of Education

From Kyla Johnson-Trammell, Superintendent
Sonali Murarka, Executive Director - Enrollment

Board Meeting Date October 27, 2021

Subject Designate an Attendance Boundary for Life Academy

Action Adoption by the Board of Education of Resolution No. 2122-0111 – Designation of an Attendance Boundary for Life Academy

Background Life Academy of Health and Bioscience (“Life Academy”), located in District 5, serves approximately 450 students in grades 6-12. Life Academy is one of three OUSD schools that does not have an attendance boundary. (The other two schools without an attendance boundary are Melrose Leadership Academy and MetWest High School.)

Discussion Typically, schools without attendance boundaries in a school district are intended to draw students from across the district to their unique programming. In the case of Life Academy, that does not appear to be the intention; rather, there is an interest in further embedding Life Academy within its community so that it can serve as a high quality neighborhood school, which is in line with OUSD’s goal to have high quality options available to students in all neighborhoods.

The specific proposal is to give Life Academy a middle school attendance boundary that encompasses two existing boundaries: (1) Urban Promise Academy/United for Success Academy, and (2) Coliseum College Preparatory Academy/Greenleaf. Families who live in these attendance areas would have one additional neighborhood school, Life Academy, where they are given an enrollment priority.

About 60% of the middle school students in Life Academy in 2020-21 lived in one of these two boundaries.

Under the current application/enrollment system, families must list all their neighborhood schools on their application when they apply. By adding a middle school boundary to Life Academy, this means that approximately 450 additional on-time applicants (from across the two above-named attendance areas) for 6th grade would have listed Life Academy on their application and may have received an offer. In exchange, students from the Bret Harte, Frick, Elmhurst, and Roosevelt neighborhoods are less likely to receive an offer to Life Academy.

The rationale for this proposal is as follows:

- Life Academy currently serves many students from these two boundaries (~60% of the middle school population), but families must go out of their way to find out about the school in order to apply. This slight difference in their admissions process draws a slightly different type of family (because these families must seek out the school to apply to it), which likely contributes to the higher incoming proficiency at Life Academy.
- By adding a neighborhood boundary, we expect there to be a slightly more even distribution of students by prior academic background.
- Furthermore, for families who live close to Life Academy, it can be confusing to learn that they don't have any special enrollment priority into the school.
- In general, as mentioned above, schools without neighborhood boundaries in most districts are intended to draw students from across the district. Life Academy doesn't seem to fit this description.

Engagement with the leadership of several middle schools in this area, including the co-principals at Life Academy, indicates strong support for this proposal.

Fiscal Impact

The fiscal impact of this boundary change is anticipated to be minimal. The middle schools in these boundaries have stable or growing enrollment; therefore, the addition of an attendance area for Life Academy should lead to some shifts in the population at each middle school in the area but not the overall number of students enrolled.

Attachment

Resolution No. 2122-0111

RESOLUTION OF THE
BOARD OF EDUCATION OF THE
OAKLAND UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

NO. 2122-0111

WHEREAS, on March 20, 2019, the Governing Board passed Resolution No. 1819-0150 relating to the Citywide Plan;

WHEREAS, the Citywide Plan articulates that a key strategy is to revisit the enrollment policy to ensure more equity in access to quality schools;

WHEREAS, Life Academy of Health and Bioscience (“Life Academy”) is one of three OUSD schools without a neighborhood boundary;

WHEREAS, the Office of Student Enrollment has been in conversation with OUSD principals regarding their ideas for modifying OUSD’s enrollment policies with an equity lens; and

WHEREAS, multiple OUSD principals have raised the inconsistency and subsequent equity implications of Life Academy not having a neighborhood/attendance boundary.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED the Board of Education hereby adopts the proposal to designate an attendance boundary for Life Academy to provide a neighborhood preference to Life Academy for students in grades 6-8 living in the Urban Promise Academy/United for Success attendance area and for students in grades 6-8 living in the Coliseum College Preparatory Academy/Greenleaf attendance area.

PASSED AND ADOPTED this 27th day of October, 2021, at a Regular Meeting of the Governing Board by the following vote:

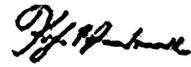
AYES: Aimee Eng, VanCedric Williams, Gary Yee, Clifford Thompson, Vice President Benjamin "Sam" Davis, President Gonzales

NOES: None

ABSTAIN: None

ABSENT: Student Director Samantha Pal, Student Director Natalie Gallegos Chavez, Mike Hutchinson

Date: 10/28/2021



Kyla Johnson-Trammell
Secretary, Governing Board
Oakland Unified School District