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Board Cover Memorandum

To Facilities Committee

From Preston Thomas, Chief Systems & Services Officer
Kenya Chatman, Executive Director of Facilities
Pranita Ranbhise, Director, Facilities Planning & Management

Board Meeting Date January 16, 2025

Subject Introduction of New Legislative Matter Resolution: Naming the McClymonds High School (HS) Gym in Honor of Bill Russell, Civil Rights Activist and NBA Legend.

Action Requested Discussion and adoption of Resolution No. 2425-0204 - Naming the McClymonds High School Gymnasium as the “Bill Russell Gymnasium.”

Background OUSD has a longstanding tradition of honoring alumni and community members whose lives reflect the district’s core values of excellence, equity, and leadership. Bill Russell, a 1952 graduate of McClymonds High School, exemplified these values throughout his extraordinary career as a student-athlete, an eleven-time NBA Champion, and a pioneering African American head coach. Equally notable is Mr. Russell’s legacy as a tireless champion of civil rights, exemplified by his active support for the 1963 March on Washington and his enduring commitment to social justice.

Per Board Policy 7310, the Board may consider naming or dedicating facilities in memory of deceased community members who made significant contributions to society and to the Oakland community. By naming the McClymonds High School gym in Bill Russell’s honor, we pay tribute to his unparalleled achievements on the basketball court and his lifelong advocacy for equality, justice, and the uplift of underserved communities. This naming will be an ongoing source of inspiration and pride for current and future students, highlighting the transformative power of determination, integrity, and community engagement.

Recommendation Board of Education adopt the attached resolution to formally name the McClymonds High School Gymnasium the “Bill Russell Gymnasium” and direct staff to install appropriate signage and educational materials commemorating Mr. Russell’s legacy.

Fiscal Impact Any costs associated with new signage, plaques, or displays will be addressed through philanthropy/community support or non-bond funds as appropriate and will not come from Measure Y Funds dedicated to the McClymonds Site Modernization.

Attachments

Draft Resolution No. 2425-0204 - Naming the McClymonds High School Gym in Honor of Bill Russell, Civil Rights Activist and NBA Legend.

**BOARD OF EDUCATION
OF THE
OAKLAND UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT
Resolution No. 2425-0204**

Naming the McClymonds High School (HS) Gym in Honor of Bill Russell, Civil Rights Activist and NBA Legend.

WHEREAS, McClymonds High School in Oakland, California, stands as a beacon of educational excellence, community pride, and athletic achievement for generations of students; and

WHEREAS, Bill Russell attended and graduated from McClymonds High School in 1952, where he began to develop the leadership qualities, competitive spirit, and social conscience that would characterize his remarkable life; and

WHEREAS, Bill Russell's time at McClymonds High School included exceptional achievement as a student-athlete, evidenced by his contributions to the school's basketball program and his cultivation of a team-first ethos that would guide him throughout his legendary athletic career; and

WHEREAS, Bill Russell, after attending the University of San Francisco and leading its basketball team to consecutive NCAA championships, went on to an unparalleled professional career in the National Basketball Association (NBA), winning eleven championships with the Boston Celtics, becoming the league's first African American head coach, and setting a standard of excellence, teamwork, and resilience that few have matched; and

WHEREAS, beyond his athletic achievements, Bill Russell championed civil rights and social justice, standing alongside Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and Muhammad Ali, participating in the 1963 March on Washington, and actively using his platform to challenge racial discrimination and injustice both within and outside of the sports arena; and

WHEREAS, Bill Russell's moral courage, intellectual rigor, and deep commitment to equality continue to inspire generations of students, athletes, and community leaders, reflecting the values of the Oakland community and serving as a lasting example of the transformative power of education, perseverance, and moral leadership; and

WHEREAS, Bill Russell's commitment to justice, equality, and human dignity, along with his unmatched achievements in basketball and his pioneering role as a Black head coach, were nationally recognized when he received the Presidential Medal of Freedom in 2011, the country's highest civilian honor, awarded by President Barack Obama as a tribute to his extraordinary legacy and profound contributions to civil rights and American society; and

WHEREAS, per Board Policy 7310, the Board shall consider planting commemorative trees, erecting monuments, or dedicating buildings, parts of buildings, athletic fields, gardens, or other district facilities, in memory of deceased students, staff members, and community members, and benefactors of the district (memorials).

WHEREAS, naming the McClymonds High School gym after Bill Russell will celebrate not only his extraordinary accomplishments on the basketball court but also his steadfast dedication to civil rights and community uplift, thereby reminding current and future students that a commitment to justice, integrity, and the common good best complements excellence in athletics;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Oakland Unified School District Board of Education, on behalf of the McClymonds High School community, students, alumni, staff, and future generations, hereby dedicates and officially names the McClymonds High School gymnasium the **Bill Russell Gymnasium**; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that appropriate signage, plaques, and educational materials be installed to highlight Bill Russell’s enduring legacy, ensuring that all who enter the gym will learn not only of his athletic triumphs but also of his profound impact as a civil rights activist, social justice advocate, and proud son of Oakland; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this resolution be presented to Bill Russell’s family, to McClymonds High School, and the broader Oakland community as a permanent testament to the values, ideals, and accomplishments embodied by Bill Russell, both as a legendary athlete and as a compassionate, principled champion of equality and human dignity.

Passed by the following vote:

PREFERENTIAL AYE:

PREFERENTIAL NOE:

PREFERENTIAL ABSTENTION:

PREFERENTIAL RECUSE:

AYES:

NOES:

ABSTAINED:

RECUSE:

ABSENT:

CERTIFICATION

We hereby certify that the foregoing is a full, true and correct copy of a Resolution passed at a Regular Meeting of the Board of Education of the Oakland Unified School District held on _____ 2024.

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OAKLAND UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

Jennifer Brouhard
President, Board of Education

Kyla Johnson-Trammell
Superintendent and Secretary, Board of Education