

Oakland Unified School District

Board of Education
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Minutes (Long)

Monday, November 21, 2011

6:00 PM

Special Meeting

**Board Room, Paul Robeson Building, 1025 2nd Avenue, Oakland, CA
94606-2212**

Board of Education

President Jody London

Vice President Jumoke Hinton Hodge

Directors: Gary Yee, David Kakishiba, Noel Gallo, Christopher Dobbins, Alice Spearman

Student Directors: Isabel Montoya, (Vacancy)

Staff: Edgar Rakestraw, Jr., Secretary, Board of Education

A. Call To Order

President Jody London called the meeting to order at 6:00 P.M.

B. Roll Call

Roll Call: Present: Jumoke Hodge, Noel Gallo, Christopher Dobbins and Jody London
Absent: David Kakishiba, Alice Spearman, Gary Yee and Isabel Montoya

C. New Business**Roll Call (Secretary's Observation)**

David Kakishiba present at 6:05 P.M.

Roll Call: Present: David Kakishiba, Jumoke Hodge, Noel Gallo, Christopher Dobbins and Jody London
Absent: Alice Spearman, Gary Yee and Isabel Montoya

Roll Call (Secretary's Observation)

Gary Yee present at 6:10 P.M.

Roll Call: Present: David Kakishiba, Jumoke Hodge, Noel Gallo, Christopher Dobbins, Jody London and Gary Yee
Absent: Alice Spearman and Isabel Montoya

Roll Call (Secretary's Observation)

Alice Spearman present at 6:20 P.M.

Roll Call: Present: David Kakishiba, Jumoke Hodge, Noel Gallo, Christopher Dobbins, Alice Spearman, Jody London and Gary Yee
Absent: Isabel Montoya



[11-2950](#)

Decision - Education for Change - Ascend School - Petition and Proposed Conversion Charter

Public Hearing - Education for Change - Ascend School - Petition and Proposed Conversion Charter.

Attachments: 11-2950 - Education for Change - Ascend School - Petition and Proposed Conversion Charter.pdf
11-2950 - Public Hearing - Presentation - Education for Change - Ascend School - Petition and Proposed Conversion Charter.pptx
11-2950 - Decision - Education for Change - Ascend School - Petition and Proposed Conversion Charter.pdf

President London opened the public hearing at 6:00 P.M.

Larissa Adams, Principal of Ascend K-8, and members of the Ascend School Community, used a powerpoint for their presentation. Ms. Adams stated Ascend was cofounded by parents and teachers as one of the District's new small autonomous schools. Since their inception, they have focused on closing the achievement gap in Oakland by offering an engaging and rigorous instruction and building strong partnerships between students, parents, staff and community. They are highly committed to developing leaders and mentors who work to create a more compassionate equitable and just society by being a dynamic and motivating place for students to develop the creative problem solving skills and habits of mind necessary to persevere through challenges. Their parents and families are partners in this process of developing life long learners who will succeed in college and career.

Marisa Macias, Ascend parent leader, said Ascend serves 436 children K-8, a large number of immigrant families and the demographics mirror those of the surrounding neighborhood. She said 90 percent of the students are Latino and 10 percent are a mix of Asian, African American, and other ethnicities. They educate a large percent of English Learners than the District as a whole and 92% of their kindergartners enter as English Learners and 62% of the students in the school are English Learners. Their school serves a predominantly low income population. The Fruitvale district's average household income is approximately \$36,000 per year and 85% of their students are classified as socially economically disadvantaged.

Hattie Sanders, founding teacher, said Ascend's results clearly demonstrate significant student growth over time. Their API has risen more than 160 points over the past nine years and they have achieved significant growth in the number of students scoring proficient and advanced on the CST, a 46.6 percent increase in ELA proficient and advanced students and a 32.6 percent increase in math proficient and advanced students. When Ascend opened, only 50 percent of their students were Latino. Their lack of academic success was masked by the higher scores of their Asian and African American students. Now, their Latino population is 90 percent of the student body and the number of Latino students achieving proficient and advanced on the CST has risen by 46 percentage points in ELA.

Bret Wilson, Ascend teacher, reviewed powerpoint information on "Unique Inquiry-Based Program". He stated the concept of inquiry is integral to Ascend's instructional program. Their success is due to a unique program that has six components. Mr. Wilson talked about an arts integrated project studied by third grade students.

Mary Rose Turreck, parent leader, Ascend, reviewed powerpoint information on "The Ascend Story". She stated Ascend was built ten years ago with a foundation of strong parent involvement and excellent teachers that have yielded successful academic gains for their kids. Conditions in the District have made it more difficult for them to implement

their successful programs. Their programs work best when they have the autonomy to provide the best education for their kids and autonomies that decide which teachers teach their kids, smaller class sizes, and an education program that fit their kids' needs. Last year's budget cuts, handed lay off notices to 61 percent of their teachers and it motivated them to make big decisions in order to maintain a bright future for their kids. As a community, they discuss what conditions they must have in order to maximize their kids' learning and they decided they must write a charter in order to gain or maintain the four key autonomies that they originally had in the early years as a new small autonomous school and those autonomies were staffing, budget, curriculum, and calendar. She said the autonomies are essential to their kids' success.

Jessica Evans, Chief Academic Officer, Education for Change (EFC) reviewed powerpoint information on EFCP V.2. She stated EFC is a good match for Ascend. She said the staff of the three EFC schools have been constructing a plan that builds on their past academic success to increase student achievement and to build stronger family and community partnerships. They can increase their student achievement by focusing on differentiation, increasing their standards focus, creating more opportunities for student directed inquiry, and continuing to develop critical thinking skills in their students. They are focusing on building their family leadership structures so that their parents are both informed and empowered.

Ms. Adams said EFC is right for Ascend. EFC provides them with the conditions that they seek in order to accelerate student learning under an autonomy for accountability model. As part of EFC, they will be able to hire and retain the staff who most effectively serve their students. They will maintain their budget and position control autonomy and small class sizes unless their staff and parent leaders can continue to align their financial resources to student needs. They will maintain the curricular flexibility required to inspire their students with multi-disciplinary arts integrated learning expeditions and they will regain calendar and schedule flexibility to align their schedules to their programmatic needs. EFC is right for Ascend because their missions are closely aligned and both are highly committed to a relentless focus on accelerating student academic achievement through high quality instruction.

Ms. Evans stated the partnership also makes sense as they have a shared focus on standards-based instruction and assessment-data driven cycles of inquiry, site based collaborative professional development, response to intervention model for both academic and behavioral interventions, and building strong family leadership structures. She stated there are many mutual benefits for both organizations. They see EFC as a constellation of schools, able to learn from one another's successes and best practices. She said EFC has a proven track record of improving student achievement and outcomes for students. They have a strong team and experienced and capacity to grow their organization.

Eliana Mendoza, parent leader, Ascend, said the future of Ascend is uncertain. She said Ascend is a great K-8 school that is an invaluable asset to their community; the community is afraid they have lost the conditions that allowed for success. Ascend has so much more to offer their children. With the right conditions Ascend can continue its mission to close the achievement gap in Oakland and continue to prepare children for high school and college. They cannot go on with this uncertainty. Will 60 percent of their teachers receive lay-off notices again this year? Ms. Mendoza stated they will not stand by as they lose the things that made their school great. They must take action because they have a

responsibility to provide the best education that they can for their children today.

Sylvia Redusco, Ascend parent, stated she has a daughter who completed her elementary and middle school years at Ascend. The educational and tools that her daughter received prepared her for high school. She has another daughter in the sixth grade who receives resources to help her improve her speech and reading. Ascend provides a safe and welcoming environment to students, parents, teachers and families. Their children are given the opportunity to receive the education of art and music. Ascend provides a voice for parents. They have monthly parent leader meetings and have great success with other events. She supports Ascend and the movement to become a charter school because they need to ensure that their community has the staffing, budget, curriculum, and calendar and autonomy they need to make the best possible decisions for their kids.

Riguel Rijos, Ascend graduate, stated he benefitted from Ascend's unique approach. He said the art program at Ascend benefitted him the most and art connected to many other subjects. Ascend prepared him well for the intense academics at his current high school.

SPEAKER CARDS:

Olivia Jaramillo, speaking through a translator, said she is a proud parent at Ascend. The school provides art, gardening, and awesome teachers. She is here tonight to ask for Board support.

Martha Juarez, speaking through a translator, said she is a proud parent at Ascend. The work at Ascend has been incredible. She asked for Board support for Ascend becoming a charter school.

Gilda Gonzales, Executive Director, the Unity Council, expressed her support for the Ascend application. She said the Unity Council has worked closely with Ascend and they celebrate the leadership of the Ascend principal.

Jim Mordecai asked that Ascend and all the charter school petitions be rejected. He said the founders of charter schools and charter schools corporate board members are not mandatory reporters of child abuse. The law does not require people who are founders or governing board members to be fingerprinted and administered background checks. He said none of the seven charter petitions tonight mention training new charter school founders and they do not mention charter school corporate board members in terms of child abuse reporting. The petitions require trust and not verification.

Benjie Achtenburg, 8th grade teacher at Melrose Leadership Academy and OEA Executive Board Member, said he does not support Oakland Public Schools converting to charter schools. He said our government should provide a quality public education for every child.

Rosa Sanchez, Ascend parent, speaking through a translator, asked for Board support of the Ascend charter petition. Ms. Sanchez stated she is very proud and concerned about the education for all the other children.

Betty Olson-Jones, President, OEA, spoke against all of the proposed charters. Ascend is a great school and she does not want to see it going outside of the District. By going charter, every other student in the District is left liable for the State debt as charter schools do not

pay for the State debt. She said she has spoken to parents at Ascend and Learning Without Limits and they are doing this in the interest of equity. She said equity is something we should do together. Ms. Olson- Jones said the vote of the permanent teachers at Ascend for going charter was 11-7. She urged the District to vote against this item.

BOARD DISCUSSION

Director Gallo asked the principal for the reason that Ascend is choosing to remove itself from the Oakland Unified School District.

Ms. Adams stated it comes down to the school needing four key conditions in order to serve their students well. One of the most key of those four conditions is staffing autonomy. They have experienced things like 60 percent of their teachers this spring getting layoff notices which is very traumatic for the students, teachers, and parents of their community. They have experienced the bumping of classified staff and they cannot serve their students well if they do not have the autonomy to retain and hire those adults who best serve their kids.

Director Gallo asked the principal to talk about the class schedule and size of classes.

Ms. Adams said that connects to the need to retain budget autonomy and to ensure that the dollars are following students. She said they use their money to keep their class sizes small at 24:1 ratios. They have a huge focus on students and families and teachers developing very close relationships. They looped together for two years and their grades from K-8, and the small class sizes allow teachers to work closely with students and families and allow for a higher degree of differentiation.

Director Spearman asked about the comments made about staffing autonomy. Did any of the school's certificated staff get laid off?

Ms. Adams said they finally got their last few staff members back in mid to end of July and they only got them back because a number of teachers who had been priority placed with them decided to pursue other jobs. Otherwise, they would have lost several of their teachers.

Director Spearman asked if there is a problem or culture in the school that is against a union?

Ms. Adams stated their teachers have had many discussions wanting to discuss with the other teachers at Learning Without Limits and the current Education for Change Schools the idea of forming a union.

Director Spearman asked if the conversation of going charter was initiated by community and parents or was it staff driven?

Ms. Adams said it developed internally last year. It started out with conversations about needed conditions in order to accelerate their kids' learning. They did surveys of teachers, other staff, and parents about the conditions needed to be successful. She said it was staff and parent driven.

Director Spearman said if the Board decides to approve this, there is a law against

discrimination and segregation. There has been no indication from the school that they are going to enroll anyone other than Latino which is going to add to the segregation of charter schools in Oakland Unified School District which are approximately 95 percent Latino.

Vice President Hinton Hodge asked about the history of Ascend. When it first started out, Ascend was about 50 percent Latino and African American and Asian students took up the balance. Since that time, the percentage of Latino students has increased to 90 percent. She asked the school staff to comment on that.

Ms. Adams said in the early years of Ascend, they did not have a boundary and they served students from the entire city. Once the school options process was instituted, their boundary became the Fruitvale district, and therefore, they reflect the demographics of their district. They are a neighborhood school.

Vice President Hinton Hodge stated she wished to talk more about the four conditions and what happens when we do not have the right conditions and when we talk about reform, it is not backed up in any real way? She asked the Ascend community to comment on their conversations with OEA or provide examples of the staffing issue beyond the layoff notices.

Ms. Adams stated the priority placement system had a number of teachers placed at Ascend in the last few years who have not been hired in the way that they normally hire which is by teachers, parent, and principal hiring committee. Instead, over the last couple of years, they have had a large number of teachers placed through the priority placement process where they have chosen the school and the school had no opportunity to interview them and the match does not always work very well.

Director Kakishiba said the work of the Ascend school community is a model for many schools in the District. The autonomies in the four areas are critical and are the real drivers of the school's success as a school.

Ms. Adams said what has slowed them down was the lack of maintaining all the autonomies. They have been successful in growing, but only 56 percent of their kids are proficient and advanced which needs to be much higher. She is trying to figure out a way to provide the autonomies within the District.

Director Kakishiba asked if there is within that continuum a set of conditions that would enable their school to accelerate quicker on academic achievement?

Ms. Adams stated for each of the autonomies there are nonnegotiables that are absolutely needed for their kids and there are other areas that would be open for negotiation.

President London said the school's mission sounds a lot like the District's Strategic Plan around Community Schools, Thriving Students. She said she wants a charter school to do something that is very different and unusual in bringing something new to the District. Given our strategic plan, what would Ascend as a charter, bring to the District, that we do not have currently?

Ms. Adams said the model of instruction of the inquiry-based units that are multidisciplinary arts integrated learning expeditions are unique.

President London said there is a section in the application that refers to the impact of granting the charter on the charter authorizer. One of the things that weighs on her is the impact of the school's departure on the other students. She asked if the applicant has any thoughts what their not being a part of the District and impact it would have on students who do remain as part of the District.

Ms. Adams said that is one of the reasons they are fighting and working with OCO and other leaders, principals, teachers, and parents to get the autonomies for everybody. Regarding the debt payment, that is something they would pay a monthly fee that includes both the rent on their building as well as money for the debt. Their intent would be to establish a partnership. They would like to be an OUSD charter and to work in partnership with the OUSD to create more innovative programs.

President London asked, should the District find a way to be able to meet the school's concerns around autonomies, would Ascend withdraw the charter and remain as an OUSD school?

Ms. Adams stated if they were able to get all of the conditions that they seek, their school community would consider that. The same way that they voted as parent leaders and as teachers to go charter, they would engage in a similar vote as to whether the community would want to continue down the charter path or stay with Oakland Unified School District.

President London closed the public hearing at 6:50 P.M.

Hearing Held and Closed



11-2951

Decision - Education for Change - Learning Without Limits Elementary School - Petition and Proposed Conversion Charter

Public Hearing - Education for Change - Learning Without Limits Elementary School - Petition and Proposed Conversion Charter.

Attachments: [11-2951 - Education for Change - Learning Without Limits Elementary School - Petition and Proposed Conversion Charter.pdf](#)
[11-2951 - Public Hearing - Presentation - Education for Change - Learning Without Limits Elementary School - Petition and Proposed Conversion Charter.pptx](#)
[11-2951 - Decision - Education for Change - Learning Without Limits School - Petition and Proposed Conversion Charter.pdf](#)

President London opened the public hearing at 6:50 P.M.

Members of the Learning Without Limits school community used a powerpoint for their presentation.

Christina Fuentes, founding parent, Learning Without Limits (LWL) said LWL is in the Fruitvale community. She reviewed the "vision statement" in the powerpoint. Ms. Fuentes stated she was an original member of the design team. Learning Without Limits is in the Fruitvale area of Oakland. She said they have much pride in their school and she is proud of what their children are accomplishing. The student population is 55 percent Latino, 22 percent African American, 8 percent Asian, and the balance representing various

ethnicities. She said 97 percent of their population is economically disadvantaged and 57 percent of their students are English Language Learners.

Mannie Herrera, Grade 2-3 teacher, Learning Without Limits, reviewed the "Program" section of the powerpoint. Mr. Herrera stated their program was built in the past five years, has an emphasis on relationships with parents about their children in his classroom; balanced approach to literacy, components of Open Court, Guided Reading, Academic Intervention during and after school, Learning Targets and Authentic Assessments, Equity Centered Professional Learning Communities.

Morgan Alcontra, 5th grade teacher, Learning Without Limits, commented on the results of the progress of their school to get their kids on the path to college. The school uses the relationships they build to target the differing needs of the students. In 2007 when their campus was Jefferson in its last year, there were 14 percent of students proficient in ELA. In math there were 25 percent of the students on campus proficient. Now, as Learning Without Limits, they have 39 percent of their students on campus proficient in ELA and 60 percent proficient in math. Ms. Alcontra stated they are excited about the progress and success. He said they are excited about the progress and success.

Jessica Evans, Chief Academic Officer, Education For Change (EFC) reviewed the "EFC v.2" section of the powerpoint. She stated current EFC schools have been undergoing a revisioning process. Staff has been constructing a plan that builds on past academic success to increase student achievement and to build stronger community partnerships. They can increase their student achievement by focusing on differentiation, increasing their standards focus, creating more opportunities for student directed inquiry, and continuing to develop critical thinking skills. Ms. Evans said that EFC has a proven track record of improving student achievement with similar populations. They have a strong team with the experience and the capacity to grow.

An unidentified speaker from Learning Without Limits reviewed "Key Conditions" on the powerpoint. She spoke about the partnership between Education and Change and Learning Without Limits. There are four specific autonomies that all schools need to meet the needs of their students, specifically around budget, staffing, curriculum and instruction, and scheduling calendar. She said budget is important in that sites know what is important for students. Their school makes these decisions as a community and all stakeholders are part of that conversation. Staffing is important to the work at LWL and they have built a team, comprised of people that are committed and share a common goal. She stated Education for Change and Learning Without Limits have aligned missions and the long-term goals are similar. They have a number one priority of keeping their kids on the path to college, are committed to teaching high poverty schools and to teach the community and students the families that live there now. Collaboration is crucial to both organizations and they look forward to entering into a partnership to grow their professional learning communities and share best practices for what works best for kids.

Ms. Evans stated the partnership makes sense for EFC. They want all of their schools to have a coherent instructional model. They will have a shared focus on the CMO level. They can learn from each other's best practices.

Cathy Cash, parent, Learning Without Limits, said that becoming a charter school will give them the power to keep a great team together and to continue making great decisions that

will empower their kids.

Fallah Bandabaila, parent, Learning Without Limits, said he and his family chose Learning Without Limits because it was a small school and had an excellent staff.

Ms. Amsterdam, founding teacher, Learning Without Limits, said the decision to submit the charter petition was a heartwrenching decision to reach. She said they do not believe their students have five years to wait for the Strategic Plan to come into fruition and that the dismal status quo in Oakland is unbelievable and we have to work to have this community safe for our students.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

Benjie Achtenberg, 8th grade teacher, Melrose Leadership Academy and OEA Executive Board Member, said we have two of our top performing schools deciding to convert to charter schools and leave the District and leave the union should be a wake-up call for the school board and for members of the OEA. Mr. Achtenberg said both the District and the OEA need to have a conversation.

Katia Dunkel, founding teacher, Learning Without Limits, said every adult at the school is committed to doing what is best for all the 360 students. She hopes whatever decision is made by the Board focuses on what the school has done right for the past five years and will continue to do what is right for all of their students.

Betty Olsen-Jones, OEA President, asked the Board to reject the charter petition. She said OEA is engaged in the conversation with the District and for a long time has been engaged in the conversation around curriculum and autonomies. She said OEA fought against scripted curriculum long before No Child Left Behind came into play. Ms. Olsen-Jones stated the real issue is around autonomies and staffing which gets into seniority issues. . . As part of a community of interest, Ms. Olsen-Jones stated that if the two charter petitions are approved, they will be two out of five in Education for Change. She said unions are not approved unless there is 50+ one percent of all of the schools.

Andre Spearman, OCO Leader, Manzanita Community School, said he was concerned about the lack of leadership. He said when schools leave the school district, his children suffer. The choices are now limited. He said we should have no charter schools at all.

Nova Katz, founding teacher at Learning Without Limits teacher, said the autonomy around staffing has created a place that has the most dedicated teachers she has seen at any school. The autonomy has created a place where she would prefer to stay teaching and not with the fear of layoff this year.

Jessica Sigler, first year Kindergarten teacher, Learning Without Limits, said the strength, passion and power of the school community have pushed her to work harder for her 24 students. With the staffing autonomy, she said they need to succeed, she will continue to serve her students in the coming years and without the autonomy, she will be pink-slipped this year.

Christine Estrada, first grade teacher at Learning Without Limits, echoed the sentiments of Ms. Sigler and Ms. Katz. She said she would not be at LWL if it were not for the autonomy

that they have previously had around staffing. She is in support of the charter petition.

Ben Visnick, OUSD 30-year veteran teacher, said we have two District schools asking to be charter schools. He said the issue is the lack of money and people are grabbing to go charter because they see there is extra money for going charter. The problem in this district is teacher retention, not layoffs. He asked the Board to not approve the charter schools.

Jim Mordecai said the structure of the charter schools is pedaphelia friendly because there is no oversight. He said there are more than 30 charter schools and the Oakland schools puts all of its contracts on its web site and we do not know when any of these schools meet. There is very little oversight which is a problem for financial reasons and for criminality reasons. Mr. Mordecai said we do not know if the lised people in the petition are teachers or parents. He said the teachers are privatizing and voting for their self-interest.

Kate Nichol, California Charter Schools Association, said she sent a letter to the District today about conversions. She said conversion charters require 50 percent of the signatures of permanent teachers. Conversion charters have to serve the students in their attendance boundary and the schools will have to be neighborhood schools as they have been. Ms. Nichol said other students that have left the District in the past and are now attending other schools do not pay the debt. The debt does not follow the student, but stays with the District.

BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

Director Gallo commended the Learning Without Limits school community. He said the reality is this is a discussion and a debate throughout the country and the reality is where can one's children be successful and who is going to make them successful? As a Latino community, we need to take responsibility for our children and it is extremely challenging for anybody to compete and we have no time to waste.

Vice President Hinton Hodge said she has heard the complaint about the guided curriculum for many years. She said it was her understanding that there is some flexibility around curriculum. The autonomy question could happen at other schools within our District. She asked the speakers about the specific thing that is being withheld around curriculum and instruction.

One of the speakers responded that they understand autonomy is happening all around this school and they have heard that there is talk about going back to Open Court. They strongly believe that their kids learn at different times and different paces. Even though Open Court is research based and proven, it is also proven to teach to the middle and not to our high kids and low kids. It is still a condition that we require so that we can continue to differentiate our students' learning and to continue to have our students succeed.

Vice President Hinton Hodge thanked the parents for their courage. She asked what is different on the question around diversity and innovation? She stated she would like to see us push more toward having more African American and Latino men on our teaching staffs.

Director Kakishiba asked if there was middle ground or do the petitioners want out completely?

One of the teachers responded they are very much in the partnership with Education for Change and with Ascend and working toward what the model is going to look like and for them, there are negotiables and non-negotiables. She said their schools were designed on the four autonomies and it is the foundation of what they do. They need all of them in order to continue their work. She said they would be willing to have the discussion if there was a possibility to have them all.

Director Kakishiba said the wake-up call is whether or not the Board is going to do something fundamentally different to be able to provide school and school leaders to be able to help to be fundamentally determined, whose on that team to be able to move the dial on student academic achievement or not. He said what is critical is having flexibility about how we staff our schools.

President London closed the public hearing at 7:30 P.M.

Hearing Held and Closed



11-2952

Math, Science & Technology Bilingual Academy - Petition and Proposed [Conversion] Charter

Public Hearing - Math, Science & Technology Bilingual Academy - Petition and Proposed [Conversion] Charter.

Attachments: [11-2952 - Math, Science & Technology Bilingual Academy - Petition and Proposed \[Conversion\] Charter.pdf](#)
[11-2952 - Letter of Withdrawal - Math, Science & Technology Bilingual Academy - Petition and Proposed \[Conversion\] Charter.pdf](#)

Withdrawn

Roll Call (Secretary's Observation)

Christopher Dobbins absent at 7:40 P.M.

Roll Call: Present: David Kakishiba, Jumoke Hodge, Noel Gallo, Alice Spearman, Jody London and Gary Yee

Absent: Christopher Dobbins and Isabel Montoya



11-2953

Decision - 100 Black Men of the Bay Area Community School - Petition and Proposed Charter

Public Hearing - 100 Black Men of the Bay Area Community School - Petition and Proposed Charter.

Attachments: [11-2953 - 100 Black Men of the Bay Area Community School - Petition and Proposed Charter.pdf](#)
[11-2953 - Public Hearing - Presentation - 100 Black Men of the Bay Area Community School - Petition and Proposed Charter.pptx](#)
[11-2953 - Decision - 100 Black Men of the Bay Area Community School - Petition and Proposed Charter.pdf](#)

Vice President Hinton Hodge opened the Public Hearing at 7:30 P.M.

Dr. Mark Alexander, Chairperson of the Board of Directors for 100 Black Men of the Bay Area, said they plan to open in fall 2012. Dr. Alexander cited statistics in the District for African American students, including a 40-55 percent drop-out rate, the gap between African American males and their White Male counterparts in English Language Arts, and that African American males are almost six times more likely to drop out of school than their White Male counterparts.

Dr. Alexander referred to educational challenges faced by Black children. Many are fearful of going to school. The 100 Black Men of the Bay Area propose to build an excellent school to bring the parents back to Oakland. Their work is based on mentoring, educational achievement, health and welfare and economic empowerment. They have developed many successful programs that adhere to these tenets, including a youth movement program, that addresses the health, fitness, and nutritional status of children of color in the Bay Area. Dr. Alexander stated many of our children come to school with a health deficit that prevents them from learning.

Dr. Alexander said the Missing Link is the 100 Black Men of the Bay Area Community School. He said it will be a school to educate primarily African American young males K-12. He said their youth program touches 2,000 students a year in the Bay Area and they wish to craft an amazing school.

Dr. Patricia Nunley reviewed the mission statement - Educate students with the skills, tools, and multiple intelligences needed to be entrepreneurial leaders in the fields of STEM; instill confidence and a sense of responsibility for leading social change, and supporting a lifelong commitment to personal excellence, leadership, civic responsibility and service to the community, environment and global society. She reviewed the 3 R's of Relevance, Rigor and Relationships. She said the targeted population is Black males. She reviewed slide information on preparing children for success in a global community for all students regardless of their ethnicity

Lauren Taylor, Chairperson of the 100 Black Men of the Bay Area Community School Design Team, said the 100 Black Men program has numerous programs which address the community and will continue to leverage programs as they impact youth and community. He said the youth movement will address health and well being by teaching best practices and skills necessary to eradicate health disparities. Mr. Taylor said mentoring will be part of the school and that every child will be paired with a mentor.

James Harris, parent, said his family has been involved with the 100 Black Men of the Bay Area and he appreciates that the organization will be sharing its resources with the community.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Phillip Barrett spoke in support of the petition. He said 100 Black Men of the Bay Area assisted him to prepare for UC Berkeley and success as an adult.

Jim Mordecai said pedophilia is an issue. The school district has a reporting requirement and there is a law about the reporting of child abuse. He said the organization is emphasizing one gender and one ethnic group for their charter school.

Oscar Wright said he has struggled in this city for over 50 years in his educational efforts.

Leon Breckenridge said the charter petition is a necessity. He said he graduated from Oakland Technical High School and graduated from college. The charter petition is not racist, but is a need that is in every community.

Lloyd Lawrence, Chairman of the 100 Black Men of the Bay Area, said the organization gave \$54,000 last year to District students in college scholarships. He spoke about the quality of the 103 members of the 100 black men of the Bay Area.

Andre Spearman commented on African American men and graduation. He said the District has an obligation to model successful conditions, including local budget, school site autonomy, scheduling and staff. He said the charter petition is an investment and more should be done.

Betty Olson-Jones, OEA President, stated for years we seen the way African American students are treated in the District. She would urge the organization to collaborate with the District to make it happen. One of her concerns about charter schools is the effect on resources. She said Chris Chapman is listed as a member of the design team which may be a conflict of interest.

Joel Valesquez, Lakeview parent, said he heard some great ideas and asked why we cannot have amazing ideas like that come into the school district? He said the issues need to be addressed as a community.

Elaine Brown commented on the disparity and denial of public education for Black children and that schools have almost been resegregated and is borne heavily on young Black men as evidenced by statistics such as the 50 percent of prison population, under-employment and unemployment. She said the 100 Black Men of the Bay Area have love and commitment to help young Black men find themselves back to becoming full contributing members of the community.

BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

Director Spearman said she will do anything she can do to make this charter petition come to fruition. It is about educating the people who have been the forgotten people and who built this city.

Vice President Hinton Hodge said if we don't have conditions, we can't bring the model in. It is unfortunate that the charter route is not the route to go. She asked the organization if they have the team built and who are the directors? She said she had a concern about the growth process for enrollment from year to year.

Dr. Alexander said they have a preschool and Kindergarten. They have a lower school director and upper school director and they have a firm team in place. Dr. Alexander recruitment fairs were held back East and at historical Black universities and they are convinced that they will have some of the best people available to work with Black boys.

Vice President Hinton Hodge asked about housing.

Mr. Taylor said they have not yet finalized a location, but they plan to take advantage of the community around it. He said the growth model was challenging; based on community engagement, they feel competent they will be able to deliver on the growth plan.

Director Yee asked about the new initiative that will be the focus of the 100 Black Men of the Bay Area and will it continue to redirect to this project? Dr. Alexander stated they will continue to support McClymonds although most of their resources will go into the charter school.

Director Yee asked about at-risk students and will students be prioritized who are most at risk? Will students be accepted who are low or high performing or based on where they live? Dr. Alexander said there will be no cherry picking. They are looking for groups that can make a significant impact. He anticipates they will also be serving children from foster homes. He said the recruitment strategy focused on a target population with underlying conditions of life, but they are primarily advocates for Black boys in this city.

Director Yee asked about staff hiring and if the organization is looking to hire exemplary teachers in current schools in the area? Dr. Alexander said they are going to work with whomever to make it a success.

Director Yee mentioned linked learning and the importance of statewide high school strategies. Vice President Hodge said the West Oakland corridor is looking at linked learning at the elementary levels.

Director Gallo said he looks forward to working with 100 Black Men of the Bay Area and it is an opportunity that has long been lacking. He recognized the leadership of the organization.

President London asked what would it take for them to be part of Oakland Unified School District and not a charter school?

Dr. Alexander said they are proud of things done by the Superintendent and the African American Male Achievement staff. They would do anything to work in partnership. They require full autonomy in hiring teachers. He said the school year and school day will be longer. They are willing to sit down and negotiate.

President London stated she sees interest in this as a District school. If we are going to approve it, she wants it to be an Oakland Unified School District school.

President London closed the public hearing at 8:15 P.M.

Hearing Held and Closed



[11-2954](#)

Decision - Aspire Public Schools - Lionel Wilson College Preparatory Academy - Petition and Proposed Charter (Renewal)

Approval by Board of Education of Aspire Public Schools - Lionel Wilson College Preparatory Academy - Petition and Proposed Charter (Renewal).

Attachments: [11-2954 - Aspire Public Schools - Lionel Wilson College Preparatory Academy - Petition and Proposed Charter \(Renewal\).pdf](#)
[Public Hearing - Presentation - Aspire Public Schools - Lionel Wilson College Preparatory Academy - Petition and Proposed Charter \(Renewal\).pptx](#)
[11-2954 - Decision - Aspire Public Schools - Lionel Wilson College Preparatory Academy - Petition and Proposed Charter \(Renewal\).pdf](#)

President London opened the public hearing at 8:20 P.M.

Tatiana Epanchin, Area Superintendent, Bay Area Region, Aspire Public Schools, used a powerpoint to share results to date on Wilson Prep's five year goals - academic excellence, interpersonal and cultural acumen, and self efficacy. She reviewed demographics for their students and student achievement results to date, Results to Date on Student Satisfaction, Faculty Satisfaction, Family Satisfaction, Cycle of Inquiry. She said they work daily to take steps to drive their instructional plan and instructional practices.

Ms. Epanchin said Wilson Prep's Class 2011 were all accepted to at least one four-year college or university. On average, their seniors are each applying to an average of 7.5 colleges. Slide information was reviewed on Next Steps for Lionel Wilson College Preparatory Academy to continue their work to support all of their students so that they are ready to be successful throughout high school and college; to analyze our work and results as we work to continuously improve and to support their educators as they grow professionally and improve their practice.

Kevin Schultz, Dean of Student Services, stated for the second year in a row they have had 100 percent college acceptance. The goal is to keep students in colleges and universities, once accepted.

Ascencio Casanova, student body president, was introduced. Mr. Casanova said Lionel Wilson creates the best possible environment in which students can thrive.

Mary Lawrence, parent, said she appreciates the vigor to keep her daughter entertained and educated. All of her daughter's teachers have stayed in contact with her. The school has a very large and thriving parent advisory group. She stated the staff love and treat the children as if they were their own.

Ken Shepherd, parent, said he chose Lionel Wilson because it exemplifies what a school should be. His daughters love the school and he loves the teachers because they ensure the kids get what they need.

PUBLIC COMMENTS ON THIS ITEM

John Zueski, founding parent, said he loves the school. Many alumni credit Wilson Prep for helping them graduate and continue to college.

James Robertson, Physics teacher, Wilson Prep, stated Wilson Prep is an accomplished institution as evidenced by the standardized test scores and graduation rate. All students are required to take physics and they outperform other schools.

Sammie Savaadra, parent, spoke in support of the charter school renewal.

Joel Valesquez, Lakeview parent, said we have not figured out how to get both and bring them to the middle which is the Oakland Unified School District. There is a need to put pressure on the Board and there is a need to support the Board. We need to learn how to work together as a community and not against each other. We need to pause and stop before we renew or create anymore charters.

Jim Mordecai said the issue is child abuse. This District has to report child abuse. Teachers have to report child abuse. The law states that every teacher in a charter schools has to report child abuse. He said the issue is training.

BOARD DISCUSSION

Director Spearman said Lional Wilson is in her district and has been a high performing charter school since its inception. She said many students from Wilson have been expelled for things Oakland Unified would not suspend for. She asked them to start looking at some of the cases of expulsion and talk to the parents about lgoing to a public school versus expulsion.

Vice President Hinton Hodge stated some some of the cases involved kids in special education. She said it is a capacity issue. There is some responsibility at the District level to provide Special Education services.

Elise Darwish, Chief Academic Officer, said Wilson Prep is an LEA in El Dorado County and they are responsible for all aspects of the Special Education services. They have done a lot in the last three years using their response to intervention to make the program stronger and to serve those students. They have all their own staff for testing including an educational specialist, psychologist and they provide their own speech and language services. There are employees assigned to Oakland and to Wilson Prep specifically.

Director Yee asked about the senior graduation rate and success rate of the percentage going on to college. He asked if that is the standard senior graduation rate for students entering the senior year or is that the cohort that arrived at Wilson Prep at the ninth grade and may include students that may have dropped out or been expelled or left the area. The whole issue of graduation rates and seniors going to colleges is subject to many criteria.

Director Yee asked if the school advocates a uniform curriculum.

Ms. Epanchin said there are guidelines included with the petition as an appendice. Teachers have a fair amount of autonomy in how they use them and augmenting them. Al their schools do use A-G requirements and they have Aspire guidelines.

Director Gallo commended the school on its success.

President London closed the Public Hearing at 8:53 P.M.

Hearing Held and Closed



11-2955

Decision - ARISE High School - Petition and Proposed Charter (Renewal)

Public Hearing - ARISE High School - Petition and Proposed Charter (Renewal).

Attachments: [11-2955 - ARISE High School - Petition and Proposed Charter \(Renewal\).pdf](#)
[11-2955 - Public Hearing - Presentation - ARISE High School - Petition and Proposed Charter \(Renewal\).pptx](#)
[11-2955 - Decision - ARISE High School - Petition and Proposed Charter \(Renewal\).pdf](#)

President London opened the Public Hearing at 9:00 p.m.

Romeo Garcia, Co-founder, and Director of College Guidance and Community Partnerships, and other staff and students, of ARISE used a powerpoint to share the school's story on transformation through education and empowerment, engagement and critical thinking, academic rigor, and activism. Since 2007 they have opened their doors to all students regardless of race, academic achievement or whether they live in the Oakland community. He said 100 percent of Arise graduates were admitted to four-year colleges and universities. Mr. Garcia stated the mission of ARISE is to empower students with the skills and knowledge to pursue higher education and become leaders in the world. ARISE will provide an environment for training educations to become leaders in secondary school reform.

Mr. Garcia said ARISE has high graduation standards, has A-G courses and students must complete additional requirements in order to graduate.

PUBLIC COMMENTS ON THIS ITEM

Gilda Gonzalez, Executive Director, Unity Council, stated it has been a remarkable opportunity to see the school committed and focused and stay flourished. They have graduated their first class. She said she supports the renewal of ARISE.

Carlos Pena, student, ARISE High School, spoke in support of the renewal. Until he attended ARISE, he did not know if he was going to attend college. He receives support from teachers after school with his classes.

Diana Ocampo, student, stated ARISE has taught her to be a critical thinker and to achieve her goals for college.

Gloria Ortiz, parent, said ARISE is the best school for her son. Her son now plans to attend college.

Joshua Vargas, student, stated that ARISE is different from other schools. It is a community. ARISE is the future that all young people need in order to change their community and be a better person.

Jorge Aceves, student, stated the community welcomes ARISE students. He said ARISE is a great school and he hopes the the school will be renewed.

Javier Martinez, student, said ARISE has been open for five years and he has seen the growth.

Jim Mordecai asked the Board to reject ARISE. He said charter schools are publicly

funded and privately managed. The principal is the founder and is responsible for training people in reporting child abuse.

Tom Limon, Board Member, ARISE, said a recurring theme is that students can graduate and get out of the area. He spoke in support of the charter renewal.

Clint Wilkins, Director of Education, ARISE stated they work with students to respond courageously to challenging situations. ARISE has outstanding faculty that go above and beyond the call of duty.

BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

Director Yee asked about the graduation rate and percentage (100%) going to college is a cohort graduation rate? He asked if the graduation rate cited on the web site accurate? How does ARISE assess the high school graduation rate and what are the strategies? If students do not graduate, are they still part of ARISE? What about fifth year or sixth year students and GED students?

Mr. Garcia stated ARISE is committed to working with students for as long as it takes to get them to the next level and students are held to graduation requirements. They have some students who are fifth year seniors and some students who require extra time to complete their graduation requirements. Each graduation class has gotten larger and larger.

Director Spearman applauded the school for working with the various student populations.

Director Gallo recognized the school leadership of ARISE. They have heard the student pleas for assistance. He commended all the students at ARISE.

Vice President Hinton Hodge said she was impressed on her site visit with the Socratic seminar and students were thoroughly engaged in the class. She asked about Special Education.

Laura Flaxman, ARISE Executive Director, said they are part of the District's SELPA. and they have developed a relationship with Seneca Center. There are many students who have special needs and are not identified as special education. They have a wrap-around approach in trying to get students the support they need. Staff has weekly meetings to discuss intervention strategies for students.

President London closed the Public Hearing at 9:45 P.M.

Hearing Held and Closed



11-2956

Civicorps Corpmember Academy - Petition and Proposed Charter (Renewal)

Public Hearing - Civicorps Corpmember Academy - Petition and Proposed Charter (Renewal).

Attachments: [11-2956 - Civicorps Corpmember Academy - Petition and Proposed Charter \(Renewal\).pdf](#)
[11-2956 - Public Hearing - Presentation - Civicorps Corpmember Academy - Petition and Proposed Charter \(Renewal\).ppt](#)
[11-2956 - Public Hearing - Handout - Civicorps Academy.pdf](#)
[11-2956 - Decision - Civicorps Corpmember Academy - Petition and Proposed Charter \(Renewal\).pdf](#)

President London opened the Public Hearing at 9:50 P.M.

Yolanda Peeks, Board of Directors, Civicorps, said Civicorps gives young people in the community a second chance for a quality high school education and use what they learn to lend helping hands to others in the community. She introduced Civicorps partners, staff, students and Tessa Nicholas, Head of School.

Ms. Nicholas said the school is a year-round full service community school with a job training and academic program in West Oakland serving youth 18-21 year old, many who are disconnected youth and have been out of school for at least a year. Ms. Nicholas stated the school believes in small class size and maintains a class size of 19:1. They became part of the Alternative Schools Accountability Model with the State which allows them to set goals and measurements and are compared to similar schools.

Ms. Nicholas stated 97% of their students live below the poverty line, 37% have children of their own, 30% are homeless, 31% are involved with the juvenile justice system and 14% have learning disabilities. She said the demographics remain fairly consistent for the 200 students enrolled. The demographics: 81% are African American, 7% Latino/Spanish, 4% Native American, 4% Asian-Pacific Islander, 2% Caucasian and 2% Biracial. She stated approximately 64% are male. The majority of students arrive with a history of struggling school attendance. Their target of maintaining 70% monthly attendance rate was met during the first year of this charter cycle and has steadily improved to a 85% attendance rate for last year.

Ms. Nicholas stated their target of retaining a 70 percent monthly attendance rate was met during the first year of this charter cycle; last year, there was an 85 percent average attendance rate. The current charter set an academic growth rate of 75 percent. They ended the first year with a 50 percent academic growth rate and they have made significant improvements in the growth rate to 61 percent for 2008-2009 and 81 percent for 2009-2010. Last year, the growth rate was 87 percent of students demonstrating academic growth in quarterly testing. Ms. Nicholas stated the school had an 87 percent graduation rate last year. She reviewed graduation requirements and services provided for students in the areas of career counseling and social services. The school has paid environmental job training for all students.

Joseph Billingsley spoke of the teamwork and support given to students. Several students were introduced by Mr. Billingsley to share information on the three stages of transformation, retention, and graduation.

Ms. Nicholas stated they are a full service year- round community school model with emphasis on transformation, retention and graduation with their Corp Members. She said in 2010-11 they exceeded their pupil outcomes with an attendance rate of 85 percent, academic growth rate of 87 percent, and graduation rate of 85 percent. They think their

evidence is compelling because they give their students a second chance in getting a high school diploma and reconnecting them with their education and career opportunities.

PUBLIC SPEAKERS ON THIS ITEM

Oscar Wright stated he was in full support of the renewal of the charter petition.

Director Gallo commended Civicorps and stated he has worked with the East Bay Conservation Corps in the past. It represents an opportunity for our youth in Oakland to re-establish their education and develop a skill at the same time. He appreciates the growth made by the school in attendance and academics and they have his support.

Director Yee asked about the 85 percent graduation rate. Ms. Nicholas stated the Alternative School Alternative Model defines graduation ready as those students who have passed both CAHSEE exams. Their graduation rate is calculated by those students who are graduation ready. They give themselves a nine-month timeline. They use the measurement of the CAHSEE exam and within nine months they hope their students have completed all the requirements and earned their diploma.

Vice President Hinton Hodge said the presentation was very powerful and it is important for the young people to learn and share from one another. She looks forward to supporting them.

President London closed the Public Hearing at 10:12 P.M.

Hearing Held and Closed



11-2957

Kipp Bridge Charter School - Petition and Proposed Charter (Renewal)

Public Hearing - Kipp Bridge Charter School - Petition and Proposed Charter (Renewal).

Attachments: [11-2957 - Kipp Bridge Charter School - Petition and Proposed Charter \(Renewal\).pdf](#)
[11-2957 - Public Hearing - Presentation - Kipp Bridge Charter School - Petition and Proposed Charter \(Renewal\).pptx](#)
[11-2957 - Decision - Kipp Bridge Charter School - Petition and Proposed Charter \(Renewal\).pdf](#)

President London opened the Public Hearing at 10:12 P.M.

Lolita Jackson, KIPP Principal, introduced the presentation, saying the KIPP is dedicating to providing a college prep education to students in West Oakland. A powerpoint was used to review KIPP's Mission and Vision, School Values, and Five Pillars. She stated KIPP BRIDGE has 267 students in Grades 5-8, of which 72 percent are African American, 24% Spanish-Latino, and 4% Pacific Islander. Ms. Jackson introduced staff members from KIPP BRIDGE who talked about the excellent curriculum and support. Ms. Jackson said they are closing the achievement gap. Their API increased from 789 to 911 in 2011. Their graduation rate in 2010 was 92%.

PUBLIC SPEAKERS ON THIS ITEM:

Jim Mordecai said he has emphasized to all charter schools the importance of providing

training to staff in order to prevent child abuse by the proper reporting of child abuse.

Betty Olson Jones, OEA President, said she was impressed by KIPP. She had some concerns about the long school day which is not sustainable. In the long run, it is the students who suffer.

Shannon Perkins, parent, said her son attends KIPP because he was not getting the rigor that he needed in Oakland Public Schools.

Kate Nichols, California Charter Schools Association, said 18 of 19 teachers returned to KIPP last year. She said we all need to find a way to move forward that is productive. The will of the community is there to do this work.

Ada Pearson, parent, said she is grateful to KIPP and staff members. She said the academics at KIPP BRIDGE is very high. Staff tells students they are college bound starting in Grade 5.

BOARD DISCUSSION

Director Spearman spoke about KIPP expectations and asked if any OUSD high school is recommended to KIPP graduates. KIPP staff member response was that they have a conference with every family who gets to choose which high school their child will attend.

Director Spearman asked about EL students. KIPP staff response was that African American students were not being serviced.

Director Yee commended the school on its track record and long history and the extent to which they track their kids. He asked for information of the class that arrived at fifth grade, how many of the students stayed until Grade 8?

Director Gallo commended KIPP for their excellent work and to the adults who are providing the leadership. They have his support.

Vice President Hinton Hodge said KIPP was a small autonomous school in our system. She commended the school. It was distressing for her that McClymonds was not an option when her daughter was in KIPP. We have to be mindful about how we speak around our children and the community needs to be helpful in rebuilding the campus.

President London closed the Public Hearing at 10:40 P.M.

Hearing Held and Closed

D. Adjournment

President Jody London adjourned the meeting at 10:49 P.M.

Prepared By: _____

Approved By: _____