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**OAKLAND UNIFIED  
SCHOOL DISTRICT**  
*Community Schools, Thriving Students*

# Board Cover Memorandum

**To** Board of Education

**From** Mike Hutchinson, President, Board of Education  
Kyla Johnson-Trammell, Superintendent  
Dexter Moore, Jr., Acting Chief of Staff

**Meeting Date** March 8, 2023

**Subject** ADOPTION of State Budget Letter

**Ask of the Board** The Board of Education will discuss and adopt the [2023-2024 State Budget Letter](#) of the Oakland Unified School District.

**Background** The budget letter provides the State with important considerations of key education budget priorities pertaining to the 2023-2024 Governor’s Budget on behalf of the Oakland Unified School District.

**Discussion** We recommend the Board adopt the 2023-2024 State Budget Letter.

**Fiscal Impact** There are a number of fiscal impacts that can accrue through adoption of the State Budget Letter. Some of the positions can lead to increased funds for the District. Other positions can help avoid costly new mandates.

**Attachment(s)** [2023-2024 State Budget Letter](#)

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**OAKLAND UNIFIED  
SCHOOL DISTRICT**

Community Schools, Thriving Students

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March 8, 2023

The Honorable John Laird  
Chair, Senate Budget & Fiscal Review  
Subcommittee #1 on Education  
1020 N Street, Room 502  
Sacramento, CA 95814

The Honorable Kevin McCarty  
Chair, Assembly Budget Subcommittee  
#2 on Education  
1021 O Street, Room 8230  
Sacramento, CA 95814

**SUBJECT: 2023-24 K-12 Education Budget**

Dear Senator Laird and Assembly Member McCarty:

On behalf of the Oakland Unified School District (OUSD), We urge your careful consideration of key education budget priorities for 2023-24 in light of growing economic uncertainty and volatile state revenues that will affect education funding.

**Prioritize the Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF) and Fund Full Cost-of-Living-Adjustment (COLA).**

OUSD urges the Legislature to prioritize funding for the LCFF, including funding the full cost of the statutory COLA, which is currently measuring more than the Governor's January Budget estimate of 8.13%. LCFF is the primary source of revenue that supports our students and OUSD educators. The LCFF also supports our neediest students, including our English learners, foster youth, and low-income students. So prioritizing LCFF and fully funding the statutory COLA would provide the greatest benefit to the OUSD education community in maintaining core educational programs for our students and to support our educators.

**LCFF Equity Multiplier Add-On.**

OUSD appreciates and supports the Governor's intent to provide additional resources to schools that serve our most impoverished students, who often are our lowest-performing students. The deleterious effects of chronic poverty on student learning and achievement are undeniable. OUSD has long been committed to supporting our students who face persistent struggles in their learning, and we recognize them as predominantly our Black and African American students. While there is a strong, positive correlation between poverty and student performance, OUSD encourages the Legislature and the Governor to refine the LCFF Equity Multiplier proposal to use qualifying criteria that would capture more accurately the students who are intended to benefit from the additional funds.

**Reduction to the Arts, Music & Instructional Materials Discretionary Block Grant.** OUSD opposes the Governor's proposed 30% reduction to the 2022 Budget Act investment in the Arts, Music & Instructional Materials Discretionary Block Grant, which would result in a \$5.8 million cut for the district. The proposed current-year reduction will have significant budget implications for OUSD, which would require the district to find alternative revenue sources for investments budgeted from these funds.

Instead, we would encourage the Legislature and Governor to look at previous but unallocated appropriations that the state can leverage before resorting to a mid-year cut.

**New TK Staffing Requirements.** Finally, OUSD fully supports transitional kindergarten (TK) expansion with the goal of providing universal access to all 4-year-olds in our community by the 2025-26 school year. However, implementing TK expansion has not been without its challenges, particularly in recruiting educators to meet the lower TK classroom ratios. We have significant concerns about the Governor's proposal to increase the staff qualifications for those supporting TK classrooms beginning in 2028-29. We believe that the higher standards would make TK implementation even more difficult. The deep educator staffing crisis across the full spectrum of professionals that support our students is well-documented.

We believe that this proposal can create an unintended consequence of *detracting* qualified educators from the TK classroom if they can support similarly aged students in kindergarten and other primary grades that do not require them to pursue additional education. Moreover, there are many other skills that classified staff bring into the classroom that are equally valuable, such as bilingualism, experience working with young children or children with disabilities. The Governor's proposal fails to recognize the variety of assets that educators from across the classified workforce spectrum can bring into a TK classroom. For these reasons, we oppose the Governor's TK educator qualifications proposal.

**Charter School Renewals.** OUSD understands that charter schools are requesting a continuance of the temporary COVID-19 policy that extended the terms of charter schools that were due to expire between January 1, 2022 and June 30, 2025 by two years. We understand that the basis for this request is the lack of sufficient statewide assessment results that are used to evaluate renewal requests. While we understand the issue – and to some extent share the concerns about – the lack and timing of charter school performance tiers pursuant to Education Code Section 47607 to evaluate a renewal request, OUSD notes that law requires authorizers to consider other state-approved reliable and valid student assessments when state performance tiers are unavailable. Furthermore, there are four years of Dashboard data (2018, 2019, 2020, 2022), and an additional year of SBAC data (2023), that are part of each school's current charter term that can be used as part of renewal decisions this fall. OUSD believes that it is important to ensure that all students in the Oakland community receive a high-quality education and furthering the term of an existing charter without evaluating the school's performance threatens the ability to ensure that they do. For these reasons, OUSD would strongly oppose a policy to automatically extend the terms of expiring charter schools.

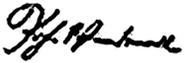
Honorable John Laird  
Honorable Kevin McCarty  
Re: **2023-24 K-12 Education Budget**  
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Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the 2023-24 education budget. Please feel free to contact me or our legislative advocates Leilani Aguinaldo ([LeilaniA@sscal.com](mailto:LeilaniA@sscal.com)) or Patti Herrera ([pattih@sscal.com](mailto:pattih@sscal.com)) with questions.

Sincerely,



Mike Hutchinson  
President



Kyla Johnson-Trammell  
Superintendent

Cc: Yong Salas, Senate Budget & Fiscal Review Committee  
Erin Gabel, Assembly Budget Committee  
Chris Ferguson, Department of Finance  
Brooks Allen, State Board of Education  
OUSD Legislative Delegation