

August 26, 2020

Jody London, Board of Education President, District 1, jody.london@ousd.org

Aimee Eng, Director, District 2, aimee.eng@ousd.org

Jumoke Hinton-Hodge, Director, District 3, jumoke.hintonhodge@ousd.org

Gary Yee, Director, District 4, gary.yee@ousd.org

Roseann Torres, Director, District 5, roseann.torres@ousd.org

Shanthi Gonzales, Vice President, District 6, shanthi.gonzales@ousd.org

James Harris, Director, District 7, james.harris@ousd.org

Kyla Johnson-Trammell, Superintendent, kyla.johnson@ousd.org

Oakland Unified School District
1000 Broadway, Suite 300
Oakland, CA 94607

RE: Learning Continuity and Attendance Plan

Dear Board Directors, Superintendent Johnson-Trammell, and Other OUSD Leaders,

We write this letter as members of the Parent and Student Advisory Committee (PSAC) in support of the Local Continuity and Attendance Plan (LCP) as a follow-up from our August 24, 2020 Lead Delegates meeting and August 19, 2020 Public Meeting. Upon reviewing the LCP and the associated expenditures with Oakland Unified School District (OUSD) Staff, the PSAC has the following questions, comments, and concerns.

To begin, parents need to be included and brought in more. WE ARE HERE! We want to support and we want to continue providing feedback, yet there seem to be basic communication breakdowns and important information needs that are not being met. We need tier 1 communication: basic navigation for families to know who and where to go when they seek out support. This includes translation, registration support, updated school site, district websites, and technology support. We need to be able to talk to humans and get definitive answers in our language in a just-in-time manner.

Our questions and concerns fall into the following areas: Communication, Connection with Families, New Leadership Roles, Professional Development for Teachers and Parents, Central Office Oversight, Technology, Vulnerable Populations, Tracking Success, and Providing Feedback.

Site Connection with Families/Communication

1. What exactly will community partners do to support parent leadership in online learning (\$250,000)? Which partners will be involved? How will funding be allocated to them? Will there be a coordination of efforts/services by different partners?

2. What happened to the funding for the additional 0.5 FTE communications staff member and additional printing?
3. How do we lift the work (paid and unpaid) that families are doing at schools and at home? Also, can some of the paid roles be performed by parents?

Distance Learning Leads, Safety Leads, Family Navigators

4. There are three new leads at school sites--Distance Learning Leads, Equity Family Navigators, and Safety Leads. Families need a list of who the Distance Learning lead, Safety Lead, and Family Navigator are at each site and a description of each role. Who do we go to for what? How much additional time (allocation) will each lead member be required to work? What exactly are they adding to their plate? Is it sustainable?
5. There is \$4.6 million set aside to "Fund site-based extended contracts for Distance Learning Leads, Safety Leads, training, additional professional development, and other COVID-related work." We need more substance on how these roles are being funded and how they will address personnel needs. The money should come with a plan for each of the leads including how families are a part of these teams and are not just recipients of the service.
6. Who is the OUSD staff that is supervising Distance Learning Leads and Safety Leads? Are the Distance Learning leads, Safety Leads, and Family Navigators at each school site talking to one another? Are the supervisors talking to one another? What does success look like for these 3 leads? How are these supports being felt by families? Is there a feedback loop so we can change things if it feels like things aren't working?

Support for Teachers and Parents as Educators

7. How are people's roles at school sites changing to meet the needs of this moment? How are teachers going to become adept at doing distance learning, including small group instruction, inclusion, providing accommodations, etc.? What will be the role of the teacher instructional team that developed the Strong Start Plans in supporting teachers?
8. The plan lists a series of training modules for teachers (e.g. re-engagement with families, parent-teacher home visits, trauma-informed training, etc.) Who will provide the trainings? Are all these training modules required? If they are not, how will they benefit teachers, sites, and programs that most need them?
9. How are community partners and district leaders supporting parents as parents/guardians and families have become co-teachers in online learning?

Central Office Oversight

10. How is Central Office positioned to provide oversight for this plan?
11. Is there enough administrative capacity to effectively use the funds that are being set aside? For example, the \$5,000,000 for STIP substitute teachers. It is difficult in regular times to find and place substitutes. This issue is more difficult when we need substitutes

who can do distance learning. What exactly is the \$5,000,000 for and how will the STIP substitutes be utilized during distance learning?

12. What will the support be for student engagement? We understand that the person holding this position is in transition. Until then, it will be held by the Office of Equity staff.
13. If the Office of Equity is holding the supervision of the Family Navigators (\$950,000), then can we centrally think about the role of Family Navigators? Can the Office of Equity have an updated and accessible list of staff, CSM, Family Navigator, Parent Leaders? Identify "go-to" persons for certain needs, etc. Parent leaders want to be available to support and answer questions of other parents but need to know where to send parents.

Technology

14. Many students are missing class because they cannot connect online, their parents are not receiving the information and/or the communication is not in a language they understand. What investments are being made to ensure that students, families, and the staff who support them have the assistance available to them to navigate technology challenges?
15. What is the breakdown of the overall technology investment? How do all the funding pieces fit together, including the private funding received by the district (e.g. the Jack Dorsey contribution)?
16. How are Early Childhood Education students using technology? How are concerns about the negative impacts of early childhood technology use being addressed?

Special Education, English Language Learners, Foster Youth, and Unhoused

17. The \$2.1 million set aside for special education needs to be more specific and it is concerning that more money is not being set aside. Please refer to the [Community Advisory Committee \(CAC\) letter](#) for more specific feedback around this funding.
18. It doesn't appear that there are any additional Emergency Relief & Learning Loss Mitigation Funds allocated for unhoused students, English Language Learners, unaccompanied immigrant youth, and newcomers. The investment looks to be the same or less than what it was last year, even though we know the needs are greater. The discussion of support for Foster Youth lacks investment to be able to implement given the cuts to the Foster Youth Case Manager positions this year from three to one, knowing that at one time we had five valuable Case Managers. Please refer to the letters from the [Foster Youth Advisory Committee \(FYAC\)](#) and the [District English Language Learners' Sub-Committee](#) for more specific feedback.

Tracking success and providing feedback

19. What are the markers of success for these investments? How are we understanding that these actions are working? If not, how can we correct the course? Will staff and other

stakeholders be able to observe practice as part of evaluating impact? If so, how will this take place?

20. Are we set up to track access by specific student groups to services, supports, and investments?
21. While the LCP is silent on what the process will be for implementation and evaluation, we understand from the MOU that OUSD and OEA will “convene a task force composed of principals and/or assistant principals, district-level instructional leaders, and OEA members designated by the Parties. This committee shall be tasked with problem-solving issues related to the implementation of the distance learning program and make recommendations for the improvement of the distance learning program to the President of OEA and the Superintendent of OUSD.” ***It is imperative that such a task force have a representation of students and families.***

Many of the concerns here align with those made by the [Community Advisory Committee for Special Education \(CAC\)](#), the [Foster Youth Advisory Committee](#), the [District English Language Learners’ Sub-Committee](#), and the Committee to Empower Excellence in Black Students’ Education. We urge you to look closely at those more specific requests. While we have reviewed and are in support of these committees' feedback we simply did not have enough time to incorporate their requests and feedback into our letter.

In conclusion, the PSAC and sub-committees are full of parents, students, and community members who are deeply invested in the success of the Learning Continuity and Attendance Plan. Now more than ever, parents, students, and community members are taking on the role of educators and our request is to be part of the conversation at every level. We can share with you the successes and failures of this plan when provided with transparency and authenticity.

In partnership,

Members of the Parent and Student Advisory Committee

Parent Members: Alan Pursell (D1), Caitlin Khurshid (D1), Rasheeda Johnson (D1), RocQuel Johnson (D1), Michelle Campbell-Mateo (D2), Duy Vo, (D2), Diana Casanova (D2), Ruqayyah Abdul-Rahim (D3), Jen Darmstadt-Holm (D3), Alma Piedras (D4), Monalisa Treviño (D4), Reginald Mosley (D4), Carmen Pearson (D4), Alejandra Méndez (D5), Teresa Díaz (D5), Dawn Allen (D6), Bahijat Abdul (D6), Jonathan Kael (D7), Ché Phineessee (D7), Ashea Fuller (D7)

Student Members: Natalie Gallegos (Oakland Tech)