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OAKLAND UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT
Community Schools, Thriving Students

Board Cover Memorandum

To Board of Education

From VanCedric Williams, Board Member

Meeting Date January 13, 2021

Subject Resolution No. 2021-0033 - Acknowledging Oakland as Part of the Historic Land Belonging to the Muwekma Ohlone

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Action Introduction of Resolution No. 2021-0033 - Acknowledging Oakland as Part of the Historic Land Belonging to the Muwekma Ohlone

Background There are 574 federally recognized American Indian and Alaska Native tribes and villages in addition to all terminated and unrecognized tribes. There are also 18 treaties signed by California tribes that the federal government has never ratified or honored. While federal Indian reservations, Rancherias, and Pueblos comprise only two (2) percent of U.S. land area, seventy-one (71) percent of Native Americans reside in urban areas, with the largest urban Indian population residing in the State of California.

Native Americans experience among the highest rates of teen suicide, unemployment, diabetes, poverty, and police violence, and some of the lowest rates of high school graduation and life expectancy in the United States. There are significantly more cases of rape, sexual abuse, stalking, and domestic violence of Native American women than any other group in the U.S. WHEREAS, American Indian and Alaska Native women experience murder rates 10 times the national average.

The Oakland Unified School District exists on unceded land of the Muwekma Ohlone—first taken by Spain, then possessed by Mexico, and now possessed by the United States.

This Resolution establishing a land acknowledgment would be just the first step needed in acknowledging and honoring the land, culture, language, traditions, and contributions of local tribes, particularly the Muwekma Ohlone, throughout the Bay Area, California, and the United States.

Discussion The Resolution, as introduced, would be the first—and long overdue—formal acknowledgement that the District is situated and its buildings are built on Native land. This historic and continuing fact has contributed and continues to contribute to the erasure, displacement, dispossession, and the attempted eradication of all

original and tribal peoples on such land. The Resolution, as introduced, also acknowledges that historical traumas, cultural norms, school curriculum, and District practices and policies have further perpetuate the inequities and impede opportunities of American Indian and Alaskan Native students and staff.

The Resolution, if approved as introduced, would:

- Begin a process of developing a respectful and meaningful policy of land acknowledgment that will include recognition language to be used at the opening of every Board meeting. This process would be done in consultation with the Muwekma Ohlone.
- Direct the Superintendent to form a local area land acknowledgment task force, which includes Native students and staff in OUSD as well as Muwekma Ohlone tribal representatives, to advise on the development the land acknowledgment policy.
- Directs the Superintendent to include in the District's annual budget an allocation of at least $3,000 for either (i) two $1,500 scholarships for Native OUSD students or (ii) an annual contribution to the Muwekma Ohlone to support Native students or staff in OUSD.

Fiscal Impact $3,000 from the General Fund.

Attachment(s)

- Resolution No. 2021-0033 - Acknowledging Oakland as Part of the Historic Land Belonging to the Muwekma Ohlone

RESOLUTION OF THE
BOARD OF EDUCATION
OAKLAND UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

Resolution No. 2021-0033

Acknowledging Oakland as Part of the Historic Land Belonging to the Muwekma Ohlone

WHEREAS, the Oakland Unified School District ("District") acknowledges and honors the five hundred and seventy-four (574) federally recognized American Indian and Alaska Native tribes and villages in addition to all terminated and unrecognized tribes;

WHEREAS, the first Governor of the State of California, Peter Burnett, explicitly called for the extermination of Native peoples;

WHEREAS, there are eighteen (18) treaties signed by California tribes that the federal government has never ratified or honored;

WHEREAS, the Oakland Unified School District exists on unceded land of the Muwekma Ohlone—first taken by Spain, then possessed by Mexico, and now possessed by the United States;

WHEREAS, Native Americans experience among the highest rates of teen suicide, unemployment, diabetes, poverty, and police violence, and some of the lowest rates of high school graduation and life expectancy in the United States;

WHEREAS, there are significantly more cases of rape, sexual abuse, stalking, and domestic violence of Native American women than any other group in the U.S.;

WHEREAS, American Indian and Alaska Native women experience murder rates 10 times the national average;

WHEREAS, only seventeen (17) percent of American Indians and Alaska Natives, age twenty-five (25) and over, have at least a bachelor's degree, in comparison to thirty-three (33) percent of non-Hispanic Whites and only six (6) percent of American Indians and Alaska Natives have at least an advanced graduate degree, in comparison to twelve (12) percent of the non-Hispanic White population;

WHEREAS, while federal Indian reservations, Rancherias, and Pueblos comprise only two (2) percent of U.S. land area, seventy-one (71) percent of Native Americans reside in urban areas, with the largest urban Indian population residing in the State of California;

WHEREAS, Native lands such as that of those of the Standing Rock Sioux, the Cheyenne River Sioux, and the Oglala Lakota are selected for dirty fossil fuel pipelines instead of running these lines through suburban mostly white neighborhoods, perpetuating environmental racism; and

WHEREAS, this land acknowledgment is just the first step needed in acknowledging and honoring the land, culture, language, traditions, and contributions of local tribes, particularly the Muwekma Ohlone, throughout the Bay Area, California, and the United States.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Education ("Board") acknowledges that the District is situated and its buildings are built on Native land and, as such, contribute to the erasure, displacement, dispossession, and the attempted eradication of all original and tribal peoples on such land;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the Board hereby acknowledges that historical traumas, cultural norms, school curriculum, and District practices and policies have further perpetuate the inequities and impede opportunities of American Indian and Alaskan Native students and staff;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the Board, in consultation with the Muwekma Ohlone, shall begin the process of developing a respectful and meaningful policy of land acknowledgment that will include recognition language to be used at the opening of every Board meeting;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the Board directs the Superintendent to form a local area land acknowledgment task force which includes Native students and staff in OUSD as well as Muwekma Ohlone tribal representatives to advise on the development the land acknowledgment policy; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the Board directs the Superintendent to include in the District's 2021-22 budget, and for each budget therefore if so required by the land acknowledgement policy, an allocation of at least $3,000 for either (i) two $1,500 scholarships for Native OUSD students or (ii) an annual contribution to the Muwekma Ohlone to support Native students or staff in OUSD.

PASSED AND ADOPTED on _____, 2021, by the Governing Board of the Oakland Unified School District by the following vote:

PREFERENTIAL AYE:

PREFERENTIAL NOE:

PREFERENTIAL ABSTENTION:

PREFERENTIAL RECUSE:

AYES:

NOES:

ABSTAINED:

RECUSED:

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 _____, 2021.

Legislative File	
File ID Number:	21-0095
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OAKLAND UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

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Shanthi Gonzales
President, Board of Education

_____

Kyla Johnston-Trammell
Superintendent and Secretary, Board of Education