

Board Office Use: <b>Legislative File Info.</b>	
File ID Number	21-1051
Introduction Date	4/28/2021
Enactment Number	
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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** April 28, 2021

**Subject** Resolution No. 2021-0155 - Supporting Yemeni Students and Families in OUSD

**Ask of the Board** Adoption of Resolution No. 2021-0155 - Supporting Yemeni Students and Families in OUSD

**Background** Yemeni students constitute the third largest group of newcomers in OUSD and significant portion of Arabic speakers in OUSD are from Yemen. At the same time, Arabic-speaking students are graduating significantly below the District average and report high rates of bullying. Education in Yemen has been disrupted since the 2011 Arab Spring and as a result of the subsequent civil war, with students often receiving only a few hours of schooling instead of a full day. For similar, normal activities (e.g., transcript transfers of credits) are significantly more challenging for Yemeni students.

**Discussion** The Resolution urges the Superintendent to recruit and retain teachers that represent Yemeni students, hire Arabic-speaking staff in the Enrollment Office, hire more Arabic-speaking tutors and counselors, and add two annual one-hour staff trainings/workshops regarding Yemeni and Arabic culture. The Resolution also directs the Superintendent to recognize and include two Muslim holidays on the OUSD calendar beginning 2021-2022.

**Fiscal Impact** Not known at this time

**Attachment(s)**

- Resolution No. 2021-0155 - Supporting Yemeni Students and Families in OUSD

**RESOLUTION OF THE  
BOARD OF EDUCATION OF THE  
OAKLAND UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT**

**Resolution No. 2021-0155**

**Supporting Yemeni Students and Families in OUSD**

**WHEREAS**, 87% (422 out of 482) of non-US born Arabic speakers in the Oakland Unified School District (“OUSD” or “District”) are from Yemen;

**WHEREAS**, 47% of Arabic speaking students in OUSD born in the US are of Yemeni Ancestry;

**WHEREAS**, Yemeni students constitute the third largest group of newcomers in OUSD;

**WHEREAS**, there are 907 students in OUSD from Arabic speaking families;

**WHEREAS**, 84% of Newcomers who speak Arabic are from Yemen;

**WHEREAS**, only 34% of Arabic-speaking 12<sup>th</sup> graders were on-track to graduate in 2016-17;

**WHEREAS**, based on the California Healthy Kids Elementary School Survey, Arabic speaking students reported the highest rates of bullying at 68%;

**WHEREAS**, as Yemeni families are not categorized as refugees by the United Nations High Commission on Refugees, they do not qualify for federal programs that help refugees transition into the United States;

**WHEREAS**, education in Yemen has been disrupted since the 2011 Arab Spring and the subsequent civil war, with students often receiving only a few hours of schooling instead of a full day; and

**WHEREAS**, normal activities, such as transcript transfers of credits, are significantly more challenging for students coming from war-torn countries such as Yemen.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, the Board of Education (“Board”) hereby urges the Superintendent to recruit and retain teachers that represent Yemeni students, through activities such as OUSD job fairs;

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, the Board hereby urges the Superintendent to hire Arabic-speaking staff in the Enrollment Office to support Arabic-speaking families with enrollment, standardized translations for school communications, and family outreach and recruitment events;

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, the Board hereby urges the Superintendent to hire more Arabic-speaking tutors and counselors;

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, the Board hereby urges the Superintendent to add two annual one-hour staff trainings/workshops regarding Yemeni and Arabic culture; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, the Board hereby directs the Superintendent to recognize and include Eid Al-Fitr and Eid Al-Adha on the OUSD calendar beginning 2021-2022.

**PASSED AND ADOPTED** by the Board of Education of the Oakland Unified School District this \_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2021, 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.

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**OAKLAND UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT**

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Shanthi Gonzales  
President, Board of Education

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Kyla Johnson-Trammell  
Superintendent and Secretary, Board of Education