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OAKLAND UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT
Community Schools, Thriving Students

Board Cover Memorandum

To Board of Education

From Kyla Johnson-Trammell, Superintendent
Tara Gard, Chief Talent Officer, Talent Division

Meeting Date April 22, 2026

Subject Designation/Selection – Dawn James, Iyla Ollinger, and Megan Hatscheck – Collectively and Individually, as Oakland Unified School District’s 2026-2027 Teachers of the Year - Talent/Human Resources Department

Ask of the Board Adoption by the Board of Education of Resolution No. 2526-0093— Designation/Selection of Dawn James, Iyla Ollinger, and Megan Hatscheck, collectively and individually, as Oakland Unified School District's 2026-2027 Teachers of the Year.

Background Annually the District identifies and honors its own, including three outstanding teachers, to recognize and pay special tribute by reason of their tireless efforts, outstanding instructional skills and/or the achievements of their students. These honorees can go on to compete in the Alameda County Teacher of the Year Competition, and, if further selected, compete at the state and national levels, respectively.

Discussion The Teacher of the Year Selection Committee has recommended to me, as Superintendent, that Dawn James, Iyla Ollinger, and Megan Hatscheck, collectively and individually, be put forward to the Board of Education as District Teachers of the Year for 2026-2027. I have accepted the recommendations made by the Teacher of the Year Selection Committee and recommend and request that the Board of Education selects and designates Dawn James, Iyla Ollinger, and Megan Hatscheck, collectively and individually, as the district’s 2026-2027 "Teachers of the Year." They are now eligible to advance in the County, and, if further selected, the state and national level.

Fiscal Impact N/A

**RESOLUTION
OF THE
BOARD OF EDUCATION
OF THE
OAKLAND UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT
Resolution No. 2526-0093**

- Designation/Selection – Dawn James, Iyla Ollinger, and Megan Hatscheck – Collectively and Individually, as Oakland Unified School District’s 2026-2027 Teachers of the Year -

WHEREAS, the goal of the District’s Teacher of the Year program is to identify and honor outstanding teachers and to celebrate and pay special tribute to the tireless efforts of outstanding instructors; and

WHEREAS, each year the District selects three instructors, collectively and individually, as “Teachers of the Year,” and these teachers represent the District in the Alameda County Teacher of the Year competition; and

WHEREAS, if selected in the County competition, one or more of these teachers will go on to compete at the state and national levels; and

WHEREAS, the District’s Teacher of the Year Selection Committee has received and considered applications from nominated candidates for the District’s 2026–2027 Teacher of the Year; and

WHEREAS, the Teacher of the Year Selection Committee has recommended to Interim Superintendent Denise G. Saddler that Dawn James, Iyla Ollinger, and Megan Hatscheck, collectively and individually, be recommended to the Board of Education for selection as Oakland Unified School District's 2026–2027 “Teachers of the Year”; and

WHEREAS, Dawn James is a legendary educator and the beating heart of the Skyline dance community, whose years of dedication, consistency, and excellence have made her one of the most beloved and respected figures on campus. A veteran teacher in every sense of the word, Ms. James has spent her career shaping not just skilled dancers, but confident, disciplined, and expressive young people who take the stage each year in performances that bring joy, hope, and celebration to the entire school community. Her classroom is a masterclass in balance — rigorous and structured, yet warm and joyful, with space for student-created choreography alongside the pieces she designs herself. The deep mutual respect between Ms. James and her students is palpable the moment you walk through her door. Her impact extends far beyond Skyline, as she now leads classroom visits for dance teachers across the district, serving as a model not just for arts educators, but for all teachers who aspire to hold high standards while leading with love. She moves through campus with a smile and an open door, always dependable, always communicative, and always committed to making Skyline the best it can be.

WHEREAS, Iyla Ollinger is a passionate and tireless advocate for Newcomer and SIFE students whose extraordinary dedication to her students — both inside and outside the classroom — makes her exceptionally deserving of Teacher of the Year. From designing highly scaffolded, standards-aligned lessons and teaching phonics with the UFLI curriculum, to connecting international families with community resources and coordinating Student Study Teams to ensure every student receives the academic support they need, Ms. Ollinger consistently goes above and beyond what is asked of her. She was instrumental in establishing a community closet for Newcomer students and created a resource guide distributed to all international families, reflecting her belief that supporting students means supporting their whole lives. In the classroom, she strikes a balance her students once captured perfectly — “Kindest Strictest” — holding students to high academic standards while cultivating a warm, welcoming environment where growth is celebrated and learning a new language is met with

patience and multiple opportunities for mastery. Her approach is deeply data-informed and flexible, using formative assessments, mastery-based grading, and annual curriculum revisions that account for immigration patterns and student educational histories. Ms. Ollinger's leadership extends across the campus as an ILT member, SLC lead, OEA representative, and curriculum developer for ELLMA, where she also leads trainings for fellow teachers. She is the kind of educator who lifts everyone around her — students, families, and colleagues alike — and embodies the very best of what a teacher can be.

WHEREAS, Megan Hatschek is an exceptional educator whose commitment to students, staff, and school community makes her a standout candidate for Teacher of the Year. Over more than 10 years at TCN, she has served in multiple leadership roles, driving both instructional excellence and cultural wellness across the school. Her contributions have left a lasting mark on the district — from infusing GLAD strategies into district curriculum to leading a white anti-racist space that fosters honest, courageous conversations among staff. At the heart of her teaching is a deep commitment to student belonging and agency, and she is constantly evolving her practice to ensure students have true ownership of their learning. Most recently, she has been developing visual systems that allow students to track their own mastery and growth throughout the year. Her impact extends even further through her collaboration with the ELLMA team, where she provides real-time feedback on curriculum that is then distributed across the entire district. Ms. Hatschek approaches her own growth with genuine metacognition, and her responsiveness to feedback results in immediate, meaningful shifts in her practice. She is a teacher, a leader, and a bridge — showing up fully every day for her students, her colleagues, and her community. Student voices are to be heard and honored;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, with this brief interim introduction, and upon recommendation of Interim Superintendent Denise G. Saddler and the Teacher of the Year Selection Committee, the Board of Education of the Oakland Unified School District hereby selects and designates Dawn James, Iyla Ollinger, and Megan Hatschek, collectively and individually, for exceptional service to the students of the District, as Oakland Unified School District's 2026–2027 "Teachers of the Year," to be fully recognized at the first Regular Meeting of the Board in September 2026.

PASSED AND ADOPTED by the Governing Board of the Oakland Unified School District on this 22nd day of April 2026.

AYES:

NOES:

ABSTAINED:

ABSENT:

Passed by the following vote:

PREFERENTIAL AYE:

PREFERENTIAL NOE:

PREFERENTIAL ABSTENTION:

PREFERENTIAL RECUSE:

AYES:

NOES:

ABSTAINED:

RECUSE:

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 'April 22, 2026.

Legislative File	
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By:	

OAKLAND UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

Jennifer Brouhard
President, Board of Education

Denise G. Saddler, EdD, Interim Superintendent and Secretary,
Board of Education