



April 14, 2019

TO: City Council President Rebecca Kaplan and Council Members
City of Oakland

FR: Aimee Eng, President, Board of Education
Oakland Unified School District

CC: Kyla Johnson-Trammell, Superintendent, OUSD

RE: **OAKLAND UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT REQUEST FOR SUPPORT WITH STUDENT SERVICES**

Dear Council President Kaplan and Council Members,

Thank you so much for your unwavering support of Oakland students and OUSD! We are extremely appreciative of your offer to support bridge funding for OUSD's restorative justice and foster youth programs. As you know, the City of Oakland and OUSD are nationally recognized as the model city-wide restorative justice initiative. There is wide and strong support from student leaders, families, educators, public and community based partners for restorative justice, foster youth and equity programs. **City Council approval of these funds prior to adoption of the full city budget would be very helpful allowing us to prevent or rescind staff layoffs due to these cuts and allow school sites and departments to plan accordingly for 2019-20** (the school year ends early this year in May and we would like to ensure staff do not find other employment and that our site and department plans are locked-in before summer break begins).

Please know that these program reductions did not come about as a function of their value or effectiveness for our students, but rather the unfortunate choices OUSD had to make with reductions coming from only the general and supplemental unrestricted funds. This clarity is important as we are also under consideration for Measure HH funds for which the requested investments are apart from these funding reductions and will serve only to augment and expand *restricted use* in nutrition services (central kitchen launch and meal program) and health/wellness/nutrition education and programs, including obesity prevention and intervention.

Libraries and Asian Pacific Islander Student Achievement (APISA)

School libraries in OUSD are funded through Measure G, a parcel tax which generates \$20 million annually, of which \$1.6 million has been allocated to directly support school libraries. Library funds were not reduced, they were redistributed based on an equity formula allowing more sites to have funds to support library services. In the past 2 years, the funds were allocated centrally to enable 35 schools to have a full-time or part-time library. However, with 87 schools, this left the majority of OUSD's schools without resources to support their libraries and it left schools without access to PTA funds to subsidize the libraries in a particularly challenging situation. In 2019-20, there was a **shift** in how the \$1.6 million is allocated so that more schools could receive Measure G funding. Rather than resource a smaller portion

of schools, all schools with a student population of 85% and above free and reduced lunch would receive funding to support school libraries. There are 49 schools that have a LCFF Unduplicated rate above 85% and are eligible to receive Measure G Library funds. Each school will receive \$30,373.00. Other non-Measure G eligible schools are still supporting their libraries through other funding sources, allowing at least 56 schools to provide library services, an increase of about 20 more schools than had library funds the past two years. (Note: the alternative schools are not eligible for Measure G library funding)

OUSD restored funding for the Asian Pacific Islander Student Achievement (APISA) program for 2019-20.

I. RESTORATIVE JUSTICE

Background

Restorative justice in Oakland's public schools improves learning for educators and students alike, and both bolsters and sustains a **culturally responsive and equity-based approach to address and meet the academic and social-emotional needs of Oakland's diverse students**. OUSD's restorative justice initiative is a pioneering and [internationally acclaimed model](#) for implementing alternatives to punitive and racially disproportionate discipline in schools.

- OUSD implemented restorative justice in Cole Elementary School in [2005](#) with great success, dramatically reducing racial disparities in suspensions.
- In 2009, the Board of Education passed a policy that required schools to adopt restorative measures and lessen use of punitive measures of discipline.
- OUSD began unfolding restorative justice district-wide in 2012 as part of an [agreement](#) signed with the Department of Justice, the [Voluntary Resolution Plan](#), to address the impacts and eliminate racial disproportionality in discipline. In 2012, African American boys made up 17% of the student body and 42% of all students being suspended.

Results

- In the current 2018-2019 school, year-to-date, 29,777 students have participated in 3,486 circles. This includes 1,620 community circles; 1,760 repair harm restorative circles and processes; and 116 Welcome and Support circles.
- Expanded RJ from 1 site in 2007 to 25 (30%) by 2018.
- Decrease in number of suspensions by over 50%.
- Successfully resolved the Office of Civil Rights sanctions regarding discipline disparities within 5 years.
- More than 350 students trained annually as Peer RJ leaders.

2019-21 Funding Needs for Restorative Justice

	Philanthropic funds already raised / committed to support RJ	OUSD investment in RJ	Budget cut to RJ / gap in funding to run full RJ program	*Potential City of Oakland budget	Philanthropic support needed for RJ in OUSD
2019-20	\$372k ¹	\$300k ²	\$1.2M ³	\$600k	\$600k

2020-21	\$0	\$300k+	\$1.2M	\$600k	\$300k ⁴
2-Year Funding Request					\$900,000

¹ from Oakland Opportunities grant

² OUSD is maintaining investment in 2.0 FTE central office coordinator and program manager (\$300k) and a small portion of matching funds for site based facilitators

³ \$300k cut from central RJ staff and programs, \$900k cut from school site RJ staff

⁴ We believe that when additional RJ funding is available centrally, many schools will opt back in to sharing RJ costs from their site funds, which explains the reduced ask in 2020-21.

*City of Oakland consideration of support for RJ would provide significant foundation to maintain RJ

Sustainability

- OUSD will take the 2019-20 year to redesign the restorative justice model and develop an integrated 'Whole Child' strategy including RJ, mental health, and community schools, resulting in a cohesive and affordable approach that ensures availability and deliverance of high-quality services and programs for OUSD students for the long term.
- Support from the City of Oakland would provide critical bridge funding to maintain RJ and allow the time to redesign and for the district to stabilize its budget.
- OUSD will continue to also seek philanthropic funds from a broader group of funders through possible pooled funding, engaging directly with individual donors, and enhancing a communications and engagement strategy to ensure visibility of OUSD's RJ work within local and national funding communities.

II. FOSTER YOUTH CASE MANAGERS

Background

There are over 400 foster youth in Alameda County (placed by Alameda County CFS). Of this, almost 200 attend Oakland Unified Schools. 5 case managers serve foster youth and build capacity in 25 different schools in OUSD. Foster Youth Case managers in Oakland Unified serve in the following ways:

- Provide one-on-one support for foster youth, identify goals (i.e. attendance, improved behavior/grades, etc.) and create plans/strategies to meet these goals
- Attend SSTs, IEPs, and COST meetings for foster youth on caseload and notify the child welfare worker and education rights holder when appropriate
- Communicate consistently with guardian, child welfare workers, dependency lawyers, probation officers, and CASAs to provide a network of communication to support the success of foster youth
- Work with Child Welfare Worker and dependency attorney to ensure foster youth have signed up for AB 12 by the time they're 17.5
- Assist with plans/goals for post-secondary education or employment
- Attend Manifestation Determination or DHP hearings for foster youth on caseloads as the foster youth liaison education representative (and notify appropriate parties such as Education Rights Holder and attorney)
- Attend Children & Family Team meetings (CFT)
- Partner with NextUP program at Peralta colleges to refer foster youth for post-secondary education plans and resources

- Provide training for school site staff related to trauma-informed practices when working with foster youth
- Maintain confidentiality of foster youth status while partnering with school site staff to create a network of support
- Collaborate with therapists, behavioral health staff, and special education staff to develop behavior intervention plans for foster/probation youth on caseload
- Attend court hearings for foster and probation youth
- Attend county Transition Independent Living Plan (TILP) meetings with foster youth and foster youth team to assist in their housing plan as they transition non-minor dependents
- Partner with Independent Living Program (ILP) to connect students to resources, including jobs, housing, stipends, transportation, trainings (life skills, college and career, financial aid, etc.), employment, and clothing. Case managers create an avenue for ILP staff to come on site to meet with students directly (prior to this, foster youth had to travel to ILP to obtain these services)
- Work with school site staff to develop alternatives to discipline for foster youth with the understanding that foster youth can experience trauma and frequent school/home placement changes
- Ensure all foster youth rights are being followed in order to prevent legal ramifications to the district

Results

- Since 2016 graduation rates of FY increased by almost 12%
- Dropout rate decreased from 41% to 19% in one school year--the first year 5 full time case managers were hired (2017-2018)
- Increase in 2 year and 4 year college enrollment by 21% in one school year
- Decrease in suspensions by over 30%
- Decrease in office discipline referrals by almost 20%

2019-21 Funding Needs for Foster Youth

	Cost of Foster Youth Case Managers	Funds available and/or that will be raised from additional sources	Budget gap / funding request
2019-20	5 FTE Foster Youth Case Managers \$102K x 5=\$510K	0	\$510k
2020-21	\$510,000	0*	\$510k
2-Year Funding Request:			\$1,020,000

*At this point we cannot determine this amount. Intention will be to secure some other funds to support this work.

An initial year of city funding would be instrumental in maintaining these highly valuable and beneficial programs, while at the same time provide OUSD the time to redesign more cost effective models where indicated and to build long-term sustainability plans for these services. At the potential level of \$1.2M of city funding, OUSD would likely allocate as follows:

	Restorative Justice	Foster Youth
2019-20	\$690,000	\$510,000
2020-21	TBD*	TBD**
Total:		\$1,200,000

*Ideally, RJ would be funded at \$600k/year for 2 years

**Minimally would maintain 3.0FTE Foster Youth case managers and spread funding over 2 years to provide time for program and sustainability planning.

We look forward to partnering with you on this request and planning any next steps. Thank you.