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## **OUSD Board Passes Community of Schools Policy Calling for District-Charter Collaboration for Oakland Kids**

**Oakland, CA** -- In response to a broad and diverse coalition of district and charter school parents, students, and educators coming together, last night the Oakland Unified School District (OUSD) Board of Education approved a policy to develop a citywide plan bringing district and charter public schools to the table to focus on improving quality and equity for all Oakland kids while also working toward financial sustainability. The Board voted 5-2 in favor of the [Community of Schools Policy \(BP 6006\)](#) that charges Superintendent Trammell-Johnson with developing and presenting this plan by November 15.

"This decision will propel Oakland as a pioneer in the work of addressing the quality and equity challenges in an environment where finances are tight," said Mirella Rangel, Director of Community Organizing at GO Public Schools Oakland. "They are moving out of the charter-district wars to one of collaboration in service of students. Oakland is charting a new course that I'm sure other cities will follow."

Nearly 30 percent of Oakland students attend a charter school. It is the 5th largest charter school enrollment of cities in California, and 20th in the nation.

Overall, the policy calls for quality and equity in service of children while maintaining fiscal vitality. It requires the Superintendent to consider quality, equity, utility, sustainability, and community benefit as guiding principles in development of the plan. It also requires specific elements be addressed including, but not limited to: underutilized and vacant school facilities that are draining resources from children, enrollment and supporting continued innovation within OUSD schools to ensure better access to quality for families, the sharing of best practices between district and charters. The plan will be ultimately voted on by the Board after "sufficient community engagement and input," per the policy.

"Our Board's adoption of the Community of Schools policy provides me and my team important guidance to develop a strategy, together with community, to ensure equity, access, quality and sustainability across our school district. The policy is consistent with our value of putting Students First," said Superintendent Johnson-Trammell. "We know that we must forge a new path forward to make sure our schools work for all students, in every neighborhood. I look forward to all of us working together, including respecting diverse perspectives, as we continue to engage in this essential work on behalf of Oakland's children and families."

The policy was first introduced in February 2018 by Director Harris (District 7) and since has been heard at two Board meetings, receiving four rounds of public comments; discussed at two additional in-depth Board study sessions; and incorporated extensive written input from community, OUSD staff, and the

Board. District, community, and charter leaders spoke in support of the policy and, more importantly, the equity-oriented work it calls for going forward.

GO Public Schools organized support for the policy beginning in February, as a part of [1Oakland](#), a campaign to help unify Oakland schools and better serve all students in Oakland. The campaign has gathered nearly 900 signatures supporting the vision of 1Oakland, mobilized attendees and speakers at every Board convening since February, catalyzed more than 120 letters to the Board in support of the Community of Schools policy, and held hundreds of community meetings across Oakland to capture and lift up the voices of families, educators and students to champion a thriving, and more equitable school system.

The decision comes on the heels of the [2017-18 Alameda County Grand Jury Final Report](#), released on Tuesday, June 26, which details grave challenges for the district around financial management, governance, and academic results. The report's section *The Charter School – Public School Wars* concludes, “charter schools and traditional public schools need to learn to coexist and must take advantage of opportunities to improve relations and better serve students.”

In a recent Board meeting on June 6, Board Vice President Hinton-Hodge, who voted in favor of the policy last night said, “my hope is that we govern in a way that brings hope to the community.”

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#### **About GO Public Schools Oakland**

GO Public Schools Oakland unites and supports a community of students, families, educators, and allies committed to working together to generate solutions that ensure every Oakland student thrives.

**Learn more at [gopublicschoolsoakland.org](http://gopublicschoolsoakland.org)**