

# FCMAT Requests Applications of Interest for County Trustee at Oakland Unified School District

## District Background

Located in Alameda County in the Bay Area of northern California, the Oakland Unified School District (OUSD) serves approximately 35,400 students in 83 district-operated schools and an additional approximately 14,000 students in 33 district-authorized charter schools. Approximately 50.7% of the district's students speak a language other than English at home; 33% of the district's students are classified as English language learners. Seventy-four percent of the district's students are eligible for free or reduced-price meals. The district's unduplicated pupil percentage is 76% (that is, the percentage of students who are English learners, foster youth, or eligible for free or reduced-price meals). According to its first interim 2020-21 budget, the district is projected to have combined unrestricted and restricted revenues of \$655 million and combined unrestricted and restricted expenditures of \$667 million in 2020-21. The district's unassigned, unrestricted ending fund balance is projected to be approximately \$11 million as of June 30, 2021.

The district has been under state receivership since 2003, when the governor approved Senate Bill (SB) 39 (Chapter 14/2003), which included an emergency appropriation of \$100 million to avert fiscal insolvency. The district drew all \$100 million of the authorized funds. All legal rights, duties, and powers of the district's governing board and superintendent were returned to the district on June 28, 2009. Upon return of local governance, the state-appointed administrator completed their work and a trustee was assigned to monitor and review the district's operations.

## The Position

The county trustee at OUSD will serve under the direction and supervision of the Alameda County Superintendent of Schools (ACOE). The trustee shall monitor and review the operations of the district and may stay or rescind an action of the governing board of the district that, in the judgement of the trustee, may affect the financial condition of the school district. The ideal trustee will have the ability to analyze financial and related data; recognize adequate fiscal systems, processes, and internal controls; engage with the district's governing board and leadership team through regular, authentic verbal and written communication; attend meetings of the governing board; inform the county superintendent of critical issues; and assist in related matters regarding the district's continuing recovery and solvency, all with a focus on sustainability, maintaining local governance, and full repayment of the emergency appropriation.

## Candidate Qualifications

The successful candidate will be a transformative leader who has demonstrated prior success and who cares about students and their academic and personal achievement. The ideal candidate will have a professional and personal profile that includes the following:

- Strong commitment to the district's recovery and long-term success
- Mindset that this is the final trustee appointment to serve until full recovery

- Excellent communicator who fosters transparency, develops trust, conveys a sense of urgency when needed, and exemplifies honesty and integrity
- Ability and will to engage in difficult conversations and ask the right questions
- Collaborator with and among all stakeholder groups: students, teachers, classified staff, administrators, parents, business and civic members, advisory board, associations, county office, and state agencies
- Strong commitment to the success of both the process and the ultimate goal
- Unwavering commitment to equity
- Dynamic, confident and compassionate individual with strong experiences in school district leadership and governance
- Demonstrated commitment to holding self and others accountable; willing to make tough decisions
- A style that is approachable and accessible to stakeholders
- Able to communicate in actionable terms
- Strong background in all aspects of school business
- Recent experience with labor management and the ability to identify and communicate impacts on the district's financial and operational status
- Objective thinker; not easily swayed by one party's interests

## **Compensation**

The successful candidate will be offered a competitive hourly rate, plus reimbursement of travel costs. Approximate number of hours per month is 30, including attending school board meetings and other meetings at the district and county office.

## **Tentative Selection Timeline**

- Application deadline: Friday, June 25, 2021, 5:00 p.m.
- Initial screening: Friday, July 9, 2021
- ACOE interviews of candidates: July 14, 2021
- Appointment by ACOE, State Superintendent of Public Instruction (SPI), and president of California State Board of Education (SBE): July 23, 2021

Dates above are shown for planning purposes and may be subject to change. The position is open effective July 1, 2021; start date will be immediately upon appointment.

## **Application Procedure**

Initial screening will be based on the following two required items, which must be submitted by the application deadline:

- A letter of interest

The letter of interest must concisely address the following five points:

1. The role of the trustee is defined in Education Code and is generally viewed as a facilitator to local governance and long-term stability. It is different than a county superintendent's normal oversight role under Assembly Bill 1200, et seq. What does an effective and healthy relationship between the board, district superintendent/staff, county superintendent and county trustee look like?
2. Good communication and listening skills that engender strong professional relationships and accessibility are crucial to facilitate difficult choices and decisions. As trustee you may be required to intervene with the district's leadership and board on an item they are planning to act on. How will you approach communicating your concern about the direction the district is contemplating?

3. Strong experience in school business, school facilities and labor negotiations is essential. Describe your experience in school business, school facilities and labor negotiations as it relates to serving as a county trustee for OUSD. Additionally, describe your specific view of the trustee's role in budget development and monitoring as it relates to long-term fiscal stability and equitable allocation of resources.
  4. Transparency and trustworthiness are critical attributes for decision-makers. Describe how you will build trust between yourself, district board and staff, and community stakeholders, and instill transparent approaches to decision making.
  5. Good governance is key to well operated school districts. Describe how you will help the board make sound decisions that promote improved outcomes for all students, enhances an equity mindset, and ensures accountability.
- A current resume

Candidates selected for interviews will be required to submit the following items:

- A completed ACOE application
- Three (3) current letters of recommendation

Instructions and deadlines for these additional required items will be provided to those selected for interviews. Receipt of applications will be acknowledged, and materials submitted will be treated confidentially.

### **Application**

Application instructions and additional resources are available at <https://www.fcmat.org/oakland>.

Initial applications shall be submitted via email to [oakland@fcmat.org](mailto:oakland@fcmat.org) **no later than 5:00 p.m. on June 25, 2021**.

Questions may be submitted via email to [oakland@fcmat.org](mailto:oakland@fcmat.org). Any contact with the Alameda County Superintendent of Schools, the SPI or the president of the SBE to attempt to influence the selection process will be considered a breach of professional ethics and a basis for disqualification of an applicant.