


From: Jumoke Hinton Hodge jumoke.hintonhodge@ousd.org 
Subject: Re: Charter School Backers Threat to Oakland's Public Schools
Date: May 11, 2018 at 6:38 PM
To: Mirella Rangel mirella@gopublicschools.org

JH

Yes

I really think we can play at the same game.
And maybe in a way to teach.

Let's talk soon

Bless
JHH

Sent from my iPhone

On May 11, 2018, at 6:34 PM, Mirella Rangel <mirella@gopublicschools.org> wrote:

Hi Jumoke,
Thank you for sharing. Demonizing and "othering" folks who are dedicated to working for Oakland's students won't get us far and it looks like it's the only tool their toolkit.

We should distinguish ourselves from them.

It is time we strategized a collective narrative and work together to re-focus the conversation on students, especially those least served by the system now. Dirk, David, Max, Lakisha, Isaac, and Charles, are you down to join us in this effort? I really don't think we can do this without you.

Email me directly if you are up game.

Thanks,

Mirella Rangel
Director of Community Organizing
GO Public Schools Oakland
GO Public Schools Advocates Oakland
Office: (510) 868-8800 | Cell: 510-390-3404
134 Linden Street Oakland, CA 94607
www.gopublicschoolsoakland.org

Become a GO Advocate. Give Monthly.



On Fri, May 11, 2018 at 5:41 AM, Jumoke Hinton Hodge <jumoke.hintonhodge@ousd.org> wrote:
FYI

So this is on the Fake News network.
The strategy is consistent. Create your own narrative build your base stir over and over again!

I trust our individual efforts but wondering about the collective narrative we might create.

Important work and hard work ahead.

Thoughts

Best
JHH

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

Begin forwarded message.

From: jim mordecai <jim2812@hotmail.com>

Date: May 10, 2018 at 11:17:54 PM PDT

To: "mgotalk@yahoogroups.com" <mgotalk@yahoogroups.com>, Keith Brown <kb6core@yahoo.com>, Ben Visnick <benvisnick@sbcglobal.net>, Bethany Meyer <bethanynmeyer@gmail.com>, CHASITY GARCIA <mz_chaz@hotmail.com>, Janet Lau <serenemovement@yahoo.com>, Trish Gorham <oaklandeapresident@yahoo.com>, Ismael Amendariz <ismael.armendariz@gmail.com>, Shanthi Gonzales <shanthigonzales@gmail.com>, Nina Senn <nina.senn@ousd.k12.ca.us>, Aimee Eng <Aimee.Eng@ousd.k12.ca.us>, Jody London <Jody.London@ousd.k12.ca.us>, "James Harris" <james.harris@ousd.k12.ca.us>, Roseann Torres <roseann.torres@ousd.k12.ca.us>, Jumokey Hodge <jumokey.hodge@ousd.k12.ca.us>

Cc: Trish Gorham <oaklandeapresident@yahoo.com>, Becky <musicfan4005@gmail.com>, John Green <jgreen@cta.org>, Jeremy Wolff <jliebermanwolff@gmail.com>, Keith Brown <kb6core@yahoo.com>, Ben Visnick <benvisnick@sbcglobal.net>, Bethany Meyer <bethanynmeyer@gmail.com>, "CHASITY GARCIA" <mz_chaz@hotmail.com>, Janet Lau <serenemovement@yahoo.com>, "Trish Gorham" <oaklandeapresident@yahoo.com>, Ismael Amendariz <ismael.armendariz@gmail.com>

Subject: Charter School Backers Threat to Oakland's Public Schools

TULTICAN

Newest Existential Threat to Oaklands Public Schools

10 May

A “Systems of Schools” plan has been introduced by the destroy public education (DPE) forces in Oakland, California. The plan basically posits that with 30 percent of students in charter schools, the system has become inefficient. Therefore, the school board needs to review resources and close schools in areas with too many seats and overlapping programs.

However, since Oakland’s school board has no authority over charter schools it is only public schools that can be closed or downsized unless charter schools voluntarily cooperate.

Continuing the Big Lie

A memorable line from “A Nation at Risk” reads,

“If an unfriendly foreign power had attempted to impose on America the mediocre educational performance that exists today, we might well have viewed it as an act of war. As it stands, we have allowed this to happen to ourselves.”

Yesterday (May 7, 2018) Steve Hinnefeld writing about this report for the blog School Matters noted,

“As Anya Kamenetz of NPR reported recently, its authors were sure the education system needed change and set out to create a report that justified what they thought. Remarkably, they cited falling SAT scores as

evidence of decline – at a time when many more college-bound students were taking the test, leading to lower average scores.

“The authors ‘were hell-bent on proving that schools were bad,’ Lynn University professor James Guthrie told Kamenetz. ‘They cooked the books to get what they wanted.’

“A 1990 report produced by the Energy Department’s Sandia National Laboratories broke down the flaws in the “A Nation at Risk” analysis but got little attention.

“‘It was great stuff,’ Golarz [former Indiana school administrator] said. ‘I remember, when it came out, thinking, ‘Finally, somebody’s unraveled this damn thing and showed all the flaws.’ But nobody read it.’”

“Nation at Risk” set the model for the DPE movement. Public education was so popular that to privatize it required denigrating it. Over the last 35 years, the DPE movement has developed an approach using local money in concert with national money to promote charter schools, denigrate public schools and campaign for privatization friendly policies like unified enrollment. The local money in Oakland is provided by the Rogers Family Foundation.

The article “[Oakland is California’s Destroy Public Education Petri Dish](#)” describes the [Rogers Family Foundation](#) and its relationship to [GO Public Schools Oakland](#), [Educate78](#) (previously New Schools Venture Fund) and the [Oakland Public Education Fund](#). The late T. Gary Rogers foundation is like the queen bee of DPE Oakland with the other organizations carrying out various political and financial activities including spawning AstroTurf organizations.

The well-financed and robustly staffed DPE-oriented GO is leading the ground assault. 1Oakland, a GO led AstroTurf organization, bashes public schools and promotes the “Systems of Schools” legislation. The [1Oakland](#) web-page states, “In September of 2017, GO Public Schools Oakland brought together community, family, and student leaders to launch 1Oakland, a campaign that is working for an exceptional, equitable, and sustainable education system that reflects our commitment to all Oakland students.”

On the GO web site a [statement](#) from Boris Aguilar, a 1Oakland Leader

On the GO web-site a [Statement](#) from Boris Aguirre, a Oakland Leader, is accompanied by typically misleading statements denigrating Oakland Unified School District (OUSD). It claims,

“In the 1990s and early 2000s, families organized and established charter schools and [small schools](#) as alternatives to OUSD’s overcrowded, low-performing schools. These schools often times provided creative and culturally responsive curricula in contrast to OUSD’s one-size-fits-all, “teacher-proof” scripted curriculum.”

The organizing for charter schools in Oakland did not come from local families. It came from billionaires and politicians including Bill Gates, Reed Hastings, Eli Broad, Carrie Walton-Penner, Jerry Brown and several other elites. The small-schools initiative was Bill Gates’s first big failed education reform idea. Small-schools generated many headlines like this one [from the Washington Post](#), “How Much Bill Gates’s Disappointing Small-Schools Effort Really Cost.” The one-size-fits-all philosophy and scripted curriculum promoted by “education reformers” from the Bush and Obama administrations are far more prevalent in charter schools than public schools. When properly adjusted for poverty, OUSD testing outcomes reflect a high-quality steadily improving public school system.

[Oakland Reach](#) is another AstroTurf organization with GO fingerprints on it. The Oakland citizens involved with this organization appear sincere and to have well-founded grievances. Unfortunately, they are being used to steal high-quality public schools from their own neighborhoods.

This new initiative’s [executive director, Lakisha Young](#), also paid staff at GO. Sources say that some Oakland Reach leaders traveled to Memphis, Tennessee to be trained by Memphis Lift. Memphis Lift is an AstroTurf parent organization that has enough [money to pay \\$15](#) an hour for parent “volunteers” to knock on doors. Teach for America [promotes Memphis list](#) on their web site.

The new message by these organizations is “we only want quality education and don’t care whether it comes from charter schools or public schools. People in our neighborhoods deserve to choose what is right for their children and grandchildren. ‘System of Schools’ will enable managing our portfolio of schools more efficiently.” A public school advocate, Jane Nylund commented, “Essentially, the campaign is designed to embrace what I would call a Kumbaya moment: a way to deal

designed to embrace what I would call a rainy-day moment, a way to deal with what CRPE calls ‘toxic local politics.’”

CRPE is the Bill Gates financed [Center for Reinventing Public Education](#) on the campus at the University of Washington. CRPE is leading the charge for portfolio districts which means managing a portfolio of schools like a stock portfolio; close the losers and open new schools. This theory ignores the [well-known damage](#) that instability causes students; especially those living in poverty.

The article “[Education Cities is the National Organizer for the Destroy Public Education \(DPE\) Movement](#)” relates how this national umbrella organization is providing leadership for privatizing public education across America. A recent Education Cities [update says](#),

“Educate78 has started an #OUSDBudget blog series to delve into the Oakland Unified School District budget crisis. Most recently, the series has been tackling the question of whether [Oakland has too many schools](#). Educate78 is also excited to celebrate the launch of two initiatives from one of its major grantees, GO Public Schools. The new [Oakland REACH](#), a parent-led advocacy group and [1Oakland](#) – a community-driven campaign working with educators and elected officials to advocate for policies that promote partnership and creatively re-design the school system in service of all students.”

The Citizens United Decision Effect on Oakland’s Schools

John Dunbar writing for Public Integrity [explained](#),

“The Citizens United ruling, released in January 2010, tossed out the corporate and union ban on making independent expenditures and financing electioneering communications. It gave corporations and unions the green light to spend unlimited sums on ads and other political tools, calling for the election or defeat of individual candidates.

“In a nutshell, the high court’s 5-4 decision said that it is OK for corporations and labor unions to spend as much as they want to convince people to vote for or against a candidate.”

The first year that the Citizens United ruling effected Oakland’s school board election was 2012. It is now apparent that corporations and the billionaires who control them have a lot more money than labor unions or

CHALLENGERS WHO BELIEVE THEY HAVE A LOT MORE MONEY THAN MOST ANYONE ELSE. James Harris, who proposed the “System of Schools” legislation, was the only 2012 challenger to unseat an incumbent. Reporting on that election, the [East Bay Times said](#),

“This year’s school board elections have involved vigorous campaigning and far more money than usual — and, unlike recent election years, all four races were contested.

“GO Public Schools, a group of parents, teachers and community members that formed in 2008, is more charter school-friendly than the union’s leaders, and it has promoted changes to traditional union staffing rules, which the union has opposed. The GO Public Schools PAC has received three large donations of \$49,000 or more, including — most recently — the California Charter Schools Association, bringing its fundraising total to nearly \$185,000.

“The group threw its weight behind Hinton Hodge, Torres and Harris, mostly through independent expenditures and the organizing of volunteers. By contrast, the Oakland teachers union PAC, which is backing Pecot, Fuentes and Hutchinson, expected to raise about \$20,000.”

The big money from billionaires was mostly funneled through Great Oakland Public Schools which is GO’s independent expenditure committee registered under tax code 501 C4. The following tables are based on [data from](#) the City of Oakland Public Ethics Commission.

In 2012, the support of GO helped Harris defeat incumbent board member Spearman in a close race. In addition, several well-known wealthy people gave maximum contributions to Harris, Hodge and Torres.

2012 Harris, Hodge and Torres

Received Max \$700 Contributions from

Bloomberg	Michael	New York	NY
Bradley	Katherine	Washington	DC
Penner	Greg	Atherton	CA
Rock	Arthur	San Francisco	CA

GO-PAC		Oakland	CA
Sponsored			
Tepper	David	Short Hills	NJ
Fournier	Alan	Far Hills	NJ
Fournier	Jennifer	Far Hills	NJ

Michael Bloomberg is the famous billionaire and former mayor of New York city. Katherine Bradley was the publisher of the Washington Post. Laurene Jobs Powell was Apple founder, Steve Jobs, wife. Stacy Schusterman inherited the Schusterman fortune and runs the \$2-billion Schusterman Family Foundation. Greg Penner married into Walmart money. His wife Carrie is one of the richest women in the world. Arthur Rock is Silicon Valley royalty. He had a hand in founding several famous companies including Intel. David Tepper is a billionaire hedge fund manager from New Jersey as is Alan Fournier.

The table above is of money contributed by a few wealthy elites compared to the total that GO's independent expenditure committee recieved.

In 2016 Go spent a quarter of a million dollars to insure Harris and Hodge stayed on the board. In 2012 they had freely spent to elect Roseann Torres to the board, but in 2016 they spent \$121,000 failing to have her unseated. Go has verbally supported London and Eng but provided them with little actual support. Go spent \$65,000 to oppose Shanthi Gonzales.

The Board Discussed "Systems of Schools"

Board member James Harris proposed the "Systems of Schools" legislation. At the [April 25th Board meeting](#), he said that Oakland had too many district and charter school programs. Because Oakland is the first California city to reach 30% charter penetration, he claimed Oakland had a unique need for his "Systems of Schools" plan. He rebutted the idea that the plan cannot work because the state law does not give the Board any power over charter schools. He compared that to accepting segregation and not taking any action just because it goes against unjust laws.

Board Vice President Jamoke Hinton-Hodge said she likes the "Systems of Schools" concept and that she was for charter schools because

“traditional schools haven’t served black people well.” She also called for unity saying that GO, Oakland Education Association and “Diane Ravitch’s funded organization” need to find a way to work together.

I am guessing that Diane Ravitch is surprised to learn that she is funding an organization.

Director Roseann Torres said she did not see how “Systems of Schools” could work. She asked, “How do we enforce something if charters don’t come to the table?” She also noted that she was getting “100’s of emails” opposing the plan.

Board members Eng, London and Senn were non-committal but they all called for dialog and encouraged VP Hodge, Director Harris and Director Shanthi Gonzalez to sit down together and try to find some points of agreement.

I attended a presentation given by Shanthi Gonzales last fall and was favorably impressed. I wrote asking for her opinion. She was forthcoming and unambiguous. Her email response said,

“Director Harris is not wrong that there are areas in which we need to work together more, and special ed is the major one. As a result of the consistent dumping of high-needs students, we have a seriously unsustainable situation in OUSD, which is one of the drivers of our current budget crisis.

“But there is nothing stopping charter schools from ceasing their discriminating against SPED and high-needs students; they do not need a policy to do what they are legally required to do. The real goal is access to one of our parcel taxes, Measure G, and for us to kick OUSD students out of their own buildings to make more space for their students (they don’t like the split-site offers that we are legally forced to provide because we don’t have any more vacant sites).

“A recent [report from GO](#), the main supporters of this policy, found that OUSD spends \$1400 on average more per student than charter schools in Oakland do, and they see that as unfair. Given that the same report also found that we have more SPED students, with more severe learning differences, and the students with the most severe academic challenges, it seems entirely appropriate to me that we would have more funding per

student – serving higher needs students is expensive.

“Until there is evidence to demonstrate what charters are saying, that they want to serve students more equitably, I do not see a need for this policy. Charter schools can simply do what they are legally required to do until they have evidence to demonstrate that they are serving students equitably. Then we can talk about a system of schools.

“That is how I see it.”

Gordon Lafer, Ph.D., University of Oregon Labor and Education Researcher, has written a startling new paper for In the Public Interest called [Breaking Point: The Cost of Charter Schools for Public School Districts](#). One of the tables in the paper demonstrates the special education issue Director Gonzales mentioned.

This graphic shows how Oakland’s charter schools not only take fewer special education students but avoid high cost students leaving them to district schools.

Professor Lafer documents the debilitating costs for public schools caused by charter school expansion. Costs for which they cannot easily adjust. He reports,

“In a first-of-its-kind analysis, this report reveals that neighborhood public school students in three California school districts are bearing the cost of the unchecked expansion of privately managed charter schools. In 2016-17, charter schools led to a net fiscal shortfall of \$57.3 million for the Oakland Unified School District, \$65.9 million for the San Diego Unified School District, and \$19.3 million for Santa Clara County’s East Side Union High School District.”

Oakland may be close to losing their public schools but cities like San Diego and Los Angeles are not far behind. We desperately need a charter school moratorium and for all publicly financed schools to be put under elected board control.

Tags: [Bill Gates](#), [citizens united](#), [education](#), [NCLB](#), [OUSD](#), [philanthropy](#), [Politics](#), [Public education](#), [Public Schools](#), [reform](#)

