



## **OUSD's Acceleration High Schools and Teacher on Special Assignment (TSA) Positions**

### **Background**

On Thursday, February 23, OUSD's Office of School Transformation informed the faculties at Castlemont, Fremont and McClymonds of a plan to change the staffing process at these high-need schools, also referred to as "acceleration" high schools. The essence of this plan is that in March 2012, all teaching positions at the Acceleration Schools (roughly 60 in all) will be reclassified as 11-month Teacher on Special Assignment (TSA) positions. The TSA positions will be posted as vacancies, and teachers from within OUSD, as well as outside candidates, will be eligible to apply, with first consideration given to those teachers already working at one of the Acceleration Schools. Internal candidates not selected as Acceleration High School TSAs are guaranteed another position within the District.

The TSA roles include a 204-day work year in place of the conventional 186-day year, and 10 hours of non-instructional time a month, as opposed to the current five-hours. In exchange for this and other professional duties included in the job description, the typical TSA will receive an additional month's worth of compensation. The additional compensation is made possible by a \$300,000 investment in Castlemont, Fremont and McClymonds that is part of a larger, overall commitment to improving these three schools.

For Castlemont and Fremont, the announcement grew out of a year-long design process led by the Office of School Transformation. This process included site-based faculty, staff and administration, as well as community members and bargaining unit representatives in the work of transforming Castlemont and Fremont into high-quality, full-service community schools that are schools of choice for their local neighborhoods and competitive with other, larger schools elsewhere in the city. The decision to include McClymonds reflects OUSD's increased emphasis on West Oakland and the Board directive to prioritize this part of the city in the District's school improvement efforts.

The Acceleration High Schools staffing proposal reflects the urgent need to accelerate student learning at historically underserved sites and the critical importance of investing time and resources at these schools. Doing so will allow faculty to consistently implement high-leverage practices that are proven to boost academic achievement and create better outcomes for students.

### **Process**

- In order to dramatically improve outcomes for kids in historically underserved neighborhoods, OUSD has posted all instructional positions at its three Acceleration High Schools as 11-month Teacher on Special Assignment (TSA) positions.
- The positions are open to application, with first consideration given to current teachers.
- All internal applicants are guaranteed a position in OUSD, but not necessarily at Castlemont, Fremont or McClymonds.
- The 11-month TSA works 204 days per year, instead of the conventional 186, and participates in an additional 10 hours of professional duties a month instead of five hours per month.
- In return for the greater time commitment and professional requirements, the 11-month TSA will earn an additional one month's salary.
- The positions were created through the Budget Development Process in March 2012. OUSD is investing approximately \$700,000 for 2012-13 to fund the TSA positions.
- Staff was informed of the change on Thursday, February 23 (although at Castlemont and Fremont, redesign efforts involving staff and community began one year ago).
- A series of informational meetings was held between February 27 through March 16.

- Human Resources hosted an Advisory Matching Showcase Event on Friday, March 23, to give teachers the opportunity to learn more about positions throughout the District that might be a good fit for their skills.
- Applications were due by March 30.
- The announcement window for decisions begins April 6 and will run throughout April.

### **Why are you doing this?**

The decision to utilize different instructional roles at the Acceleration Schools is part of OUSD's commitment to addressing historically underserved neighborhoods with a comprehensive school improvement program that creates better outcomes for students. In order for the transformation effort to be successful, all staff must not only understand the vision, but know and accept what's required to realize it. The 11-month TSA position helps accomplish this goal by codifying the requirements for teachers at Acceleration Schools and providing the framework for a shared commitment to a clearly defined set of professional expectations.

A sharp focus on demanding, high quality instruction in every classroom is one of the most critical steps OUSD can take to improve outcomes for students. It's not a cure-all, but it's a crucial part of a multifaceted plan (that includes integrated curriculum, Linked Learning Pathways, strengthened AP offerings, etc.) to improve the Acceleration Schools.

Expectations for TSAs are specified in our Bargaining Agreement with OEA, and are grounded in the California Standards for the Teaching Profession and in the national Teacher Leader Model Standards as well as Oakland-based research of the Office of School Transformation. By giving teachers more time for planning, collaboration, family engagement and student conferences, OUSD is creating the foundation for a richer more, more rigorous and more inclusive educational experience for students and families. OUSD will also be providing teachers with appropriate compensation for this important work; work that, in many cases, teachers are already performing for less pay.

Teachers who do not choose to apply or are not selected for the TSA positions are guaranteed a job elsewhere in OUSD, but the expectation is that the majority of the existing staff will be retained. The TSAs will be teacher-leaders engaged in the challenging work of transforming these sites into high-quality, full-service schools that produce better outcomes for kids and will be evaluated according to a set of criteria that facilitate the realization of these goals.

**This is not an attack on teachers or an indictment of staff at Acceleration Schools; it's an acknowledgement that the status quo is failing kids and we must take action to improve outcomes for Oakland students. The goal is to create a better environment for kids and, in those cases where the goal of supporting children conflicts with adult interests, we must side with children.**

For more information, please visit [www.ousd.k12.ca.us/accelerationhighschools](http://www.ousd.k12.ca.us/accelerationhighschools)

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