

May 27, 2017

Dear NOCCS Board of Directors,

I am here tonight to express my support for our Head of School, Stephen Ajani.

NOCCS has a treasure in Stephen Ajani. Over the past two years I have seen Stephen put forth so much of himself for the students and families of this school. We are honored to work in a community school and Stephen is critical in helping make it feel like a community. He leads the charge in developing relationships that truly make this school feel that every person who steps into this building is cared for. We humbly follow that lead.

One of the greatest qualities in his leadership is his trust. He gives us the gift of trust. This is in regards to our talents, our knowledge, our experience, and our skill; to act as collaborators in instilling the best possible education for NOCCS students. We are empowered to believe in ourselves and in NOCCS. We have a voice and we are heard. This is truly a remarkable gift that I have experienced from very few leaders in my career.

Three years ago when NOCCS created it's 5 year Strategic plan I was excited and inspired. I still am to this day. I am excited by NOCCS' dedication to equity as our student population changes to match the greater diversity of our beautiful Oakland neighborhood. I am inspired to have finally had the opportunity to write curriculum surrounding the Next Generation Science standards. I came to NOCCS to write curriculum and teach project based learning. Stephen has allowed my creativity to flow and grow. Currently, K/1 has 4 out of 6 of its Teaching For Understanding Units fully updated to Next Generation Science Standards. I would not have been able to do this without the trust and empowerment given by Stephen.

Stephen and I have also been in talks surrounding the adjustment of K/1 schedule to create an hour ELA block instead of the half hour of literacy instruction allotted to Kindergarteners. This speaks directly to our strategic plan's dedication to equity by providing adequate time necessary for differentiation of a diverse group of learners. This development also speaks to our strategic plan goal of having students proficient in ELA and Math after three continuous years of enrollment at NOCCS. We are lucky to have a leader like Stephen who has a vision to support a more equitable school.

I am honored to work by Stephen's side and I feel that I am growing as a teacher because of his leadership.

Sincerely,

Lorin King
K/1 Lead Teacher
NOCCS