



**CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT  
OF EDUCATION**

**TOM TORLAKSON**  
STATE SUPERINTENDENT OF  
PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

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June 5, 2018

Dr. Frederick Ferrer, President of the Rocketship Education Board  
Marie Gil, Bay Area Regional Director  
Jason Colón, Founding Principal  
Rocketship Futuro Academy  
350 Twin Dolphin Drive, Suite 109  
Redwood City, CA 94065

Dear Dr. Ferrer, Director Gil, and Principal Colón:

Subject: Site Visit Conducted for Rocketship Futuro Academy, on April 25–26, 2018,  
and Noncompliance with the Terms and Conditions of the Charter Petition and  
the Memorandum of Understanding between the State Board of Education and  
Rocketship Futuro Academy

Thank you for the opportunity to visit Rocketship Futuro Academy (RFA). The California Department of Education (CDE) appreciates the tremendous amount of work you orchestrated before and during the CDE's annual site visit.

The following is a summary of the areas of non-compliance, which were discussed at the exit meeting on April 26, 2018.

**Summary of Non-Compliance:**

- **Criteria**
  - Pursuant to *California Education Code (EC)* Section 47605(l), teachers in charter schools are required to hold a Commission on Teacher Credentialing (CTC) certificate, permit, or other document equivalent to that which a teacher in other public schools would be required to hold.
  - Pursuant to the RFA charter petition, the Affirmations and Assurances section, p. 5, states that RFA will ensure that teachers hold a CTC

certificate, permit, or other document equivalent to that which a teacher in other public schools are required to hold.

- Pursuant to the RFA petition, Element E, p. 136, state core teachers at all levels shall meet or exceed all highly qualified requirements (HQT) under the No Child Left Behind Act. Accordingly, teachers of core academic subjects must meet the following qualifications: a bachelor's degree, California teaching credential, Cross-cultural Language and Academic Development certificate, possess core academic subject matter competence, and demonstrate core academic subject competence for elementary grades. This is done through CTC's approved subject matter examination or by completing the California High Objective Uniform State Standard of Education.
- Pursuant to the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the California State Board of Education and RFA, RFA will certify compliance with the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) highly qualified teacher requirements. The school will have on file evidence that teachers of any ESEA No Child Left Behind core subject meet the HQT requirements as they apply to charter schools.

- **Findings**

- The CDE determined through file transfer protocol documentation, classroom observations, and interviews with the RFA leadership that Nicole Arroyo provides pupil instruction in kindergarten and Bindya Bhakta provides pupil instruction in second grade. These aforementioned teachers do not hold an approved CTC credential.
- Teacher credentialing was noted as a CDE concern on August 26, 2017, November 1, 2017, and February 13, 2018. On March 15, 2018, RFA submitted a written corrective action plan response regarding teacher credentialing to CDE. CDE found this corrective action plan to be insufficient pursuant to *EC* Section 47605(l).
- The CDE notes on April 26, 2018, during the CDE annual site visit, RFA leadership verbally communicated a commitment to address the above referenced kindergarten and second grade classrooms.

- **Action Plan to be submitted to the California Department of Education for Review:**

- The RFA Board must provide a written action plan to appropriately address the aforementioned teacher credential concerns. This plan must

Fred Ferrer, Board President  
Marie Gil, Regional Director  
Jason Colón, Founding Principal  
June 5, 2018  
Page 3

be provided to [SBEOVERSIGHT@cde.ca.gov](mailto:SBEOVERSIGHT@cde.ca.gov) **within 30 calendar days from the date of this letter.**

If you have any questions regarding this letter, please contact Chaddrick Owes, Education Programs Consultant, Charter Schools Division, by phone at 916-445-6761 or by e-mail at [cowes@cde.ca.gov](mailto:cowes@cde.ca.gov).

Sincerely,

/s/

Lisa F. Constancio, Director  
Charter Schools Division

LFC:co

cc: Karen Stapf Walters, Executive Director, California State Board of Education  
Nick Schweizer, Deputy Superintendent, Systems Support Branch, California Department of Education