



CALIFORNIA
DEPARTMENT OF
EDUCATION

Enclosure 1

TOM TORLAKSON

STATE SUPERINTENDENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

Sent via First Class Mail and E-mail to:

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November 1, 2017

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

Dear Dr. Ferrer and Director Gil:

Subject: Summary of English Learner Focused Site Visit Conducted for Rocketship Futuro Academy on March 8, 2017, and Requests for Plan to Address Non-Compliance Concerns and Request for Additional Documentation

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 this site visit focused on RFA's program for English learners (ELs).

The following is a summary of the areas of concern, which were also discussed at the exit meeting on March 8, 2017.

Non-Compliance Concern–Plan for English Learners

- **Criteria**

- The CDE and State Board of Education (SBE) recognize that both designated and integrated English Language Development (ELD) is an integral part of a comprehensive program for every EL pupil to meet the linguistic and academic goals at their grade level. On September 18, 2015, the SBE and CDE provided resources in a letter to all county and district superintendents and charter school administrators regarding designated and integrated ELD. The letter can be found at the CDE Web page at: <http://www.cde.ca.gov/nr/el/le/yr15ltr0918.asp>.
- On August 30, 2016, the CDE issued a letter to all county and district superintendents and charter school administrators regarding their legal obligation to ELs. The letter clearly states that charter schools have dual obligations, as do all local educational agencies, to provide a program for EL pupils designed to overcome language barriers and provide access to the

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core curriculum. The letter can be found at the CDE Web page at:
<http://www.cde.ca.gov/sp/el/er/charterschooleltr.asp>.

- **Observation**

- The CDE has determined through classroom observations and interviews with RFA leadership that ELs are not receiving access to appropriate ELD instruction, specifically designated, explicit ELD instruction. The CDE determined at the site visit that RFA is not currently implementing designated explicit ELD instruction to support EL pupils, as outlined on p. 84 and pp. 90–92 of the RFA charter petition. RFA states that explicit ELD will take place during the Humanities block and pupils will be leveled by English fluency. This practice was not observed during the site visit or explained during interviews with RFA staff. The CDE does note that RFA has identified this as an area of growth and will continue to improve on this over the next year.

- **Corrective Action–Action Plan:**

- The Rocketship Education (RSED) Board must provide documentation to demonstrate the appropriate levels of support and ELD instruction for EL pupils enrolled at RFA including, but not limited to, the master schedule with ELD block within the instructional day; copies of the RFA annual EL placement letter to parents of ELs; and EL reclassification notification letters to parents of ELs. This documentation must be submitted to the CDE.

Non-Compliance Concern–Teacher Credentialing

- **Criteria**

- Pursuant to California *Education Code (EC)* Section 47605(I), 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 petition the Affirmations and Assurances, page 5, RFA 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.

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- **Observation**

- Based on the teacher credential template submitted to the CDE and documentation reviewed at the RFA site, there are two teachers, Adiagha Mbonisi and Reasey Ngoun-Colon, who do not hold valid CTC credentials equivalent to that which teachers in other public schools are required to hold.

- **Corrective Action–Action Plan:**

- The RSED Board must provide the CDE a plan with specific dates for Adiagha Mbonisi, and Reasey Ngoun-Colon, to obtain valid California Multiple Subject Teaching Credentials. This plan must be submitted to the CDE.
- The RSED Board must provide the CDE with a plan that includes details on how these teachers' classes will be served by appropriately CTC credentialed teachers until the identified credential issue has been resolved for the aforementioned teachers. This documentation must be submitted to the CDE.

The RSED Board is required to submit the requested documentation to the CDE by e-mail to SBEOVERSIGHT@cde.ca.gov **within 30 days of the date of this letter.**

If you have any questions regarding this letter, please contact Christy Gardner, Education Programs Consultant, Charter Schools Division by phone at 916-319-0542 or by e-mail at cgardner@cde.ca.gov.

Sincerely,

Nick Schweizer, Deputy Superintendent
Systems Support Branch

NBS:cg

cc: Karen Stapf Walters, Executive Director, California State Board of Education