



Ojai Federation of Teachers, #2119
Resolution of No Confidence in Superintendent
January 17, 2023

Dear Ojai Unified School District Board of Trustees,

We the members of the Ojai Federation of Teachers respectfully present to you this official letter of a majority Vote of No Confidence in Superintendent Dr. Tiffany Morse.

While we came to the decision to write this letter after much discussion and deliberation, the writing of this letter has been particularly difficult because we have always considered ourselves a unified school district. However, over the course of the last three years we have watched as this unification has slowly deteriorated. More specifically, over the last year, we have watched as the fiscal solvency of our district has been eroded due to a number of reasons, the greatest of which is mismanagement on behalf of our superintendent.

We call into question the leadership qualities of Dr. Morse. During her tenure, she has demonstrated her inability to provide accurate data with regards to the district's fiscal solvency, despite giving narrative presentations that depict the financial health of the district otherwise. Furthermore, according to the recent FCMAT report Dr. Morse does not provide, "clearly written and articulated budget assumptions that support budget revisions communicated to the board at each interim report, at a minimum." Lastly, Dr. Morse has continuously not, "addressed any deficiencies the county office of education has identified in its oversight letters in the most recent and two prior fiscal years."

Ultimately, over the course of the last several years the Federation has had, and continues to have, growing concerns about our trust in, the integrity of, and the decision making by Dr. Morse

WHEREAS Superintendent Tiffany Morse's contract, board approved on August 10, 2022, stipulates that "the Superintendent will be held responsible for establishing programs and services for managing the District to meet the Board's expected outcomes" and for "providing data from which the Board can evaluate the District's achievements";

WHEREAS the Ojai Unified School District Governing Board may terminate Dr. Morse's contract with cause "upon a finding that the Superintendent has willfully and materially breached the terms of this Contract, or has engaged in malfeasance causing damage to the reputation of the District, or for failure by the Superintendent to substantially perform any of the duties and responsibilities as set forth in the job description of the Superintendent";

WHEREAS the state's Fiscal Crisis and Management Assistance Team's January 13, 2023 report on the financial health of Ojai Unified School District lists a broad range of lapses that have been occurring under the leadership of Dr. Morse, including, but not limited to:

- repeated instances of missing or inaccurate Standardized Account Code Structure (SACS) documents in budget materials given to the Board
- incomplete budget information across several categories
- failing to budget properly for declining enrollment, as seen in flat enrollment projections versus the reality of a persistent pattern of annual enrollment decline
- creation of new administrative positions, some without a record of board approval
- failure to meet a deadline to release information on the bond to the community
- gross nonconformities in accounting, despite an industry standard to have a supervisory administrator monitor accounts payable;

WHEREAS the superintendent neglected to implement the task list to support resolving the District's fiscal distress, as outlined in the October 27, 2022 email to Dr. Morse, from Dr. Cesar Morales, Ventura County Superintendent of Schools, including self certifying the 2022/2023 first interim budget as negative status to engage the level of support needed to correct the current fiscal distress.

WHEREAS the superintendent, as the District's negotiator with labor unions, allowed OFT's Agreement to expire on June 30, 2021 and in later negotiations demanded unacceptable conditions designed to stall negotiations, including granting herself unilateral power to decide which budgetary issues are worthy of discussion;

WHEREAS the superintendent has dismissed OFT's pending grievance that OUSD has failed to adhere to Article 8 of its Agreement, which is legally still in effect; and,

WHEREAS in fall 2022 the superintendent requested the OUSD Board to grant the district's top executives large pay increases while asking OFT to agree to impasse in negotiations amid the largest state COLAs in memory; now, therefore, let it be

RESOLVED that OFT request the Governing Board of OUSD to terminate the superintendent's contract due to breaching her contractual duty to "meet Board's expected outcomes" and "provide data from which the Board can evaluate the District's achievements" as well as due to other instances of malfeasance;

RESOLVED that OFT demand OUSD to prioritize its funding on restoring lapsed COLA's and immediately balance its facilities (and administrative positions) commensurate with enrollment;

RESOLVED that OFT pursue its current grievance over OUSD's dismissal of Article 8 to conclusion;

RESOLVED that OFT by majority vote of its membership declare no confidence in Superintendent Morse's ability to lead the district finances and educational mission competently or ethically.

Respectfully,
Ojai Federation of Teachers