



OAKLAND EDUCATION ASSOCIATION

AN AFFILIATE OF THE CALIFORNIA TEACHERS ASSOCIATION AND THE NATIONAL EDUCATION ASSOCIATION

TO: Mr. Robert E. Doyle
General Manager
East Bay Regional Park District
2950 Peralta Oaks Court
Oakland, California 94605

FROM: Trish Gorham, President
Oakland Education Association

RE: East Bay Regional Park District Community Transformation Grant (CTG)

DATE: July 25, 2012

Dear Mr. Doyle:

I applaud the East Bay Regional Park District's emphasis on health and outdoor activity. With that in mind, I am writing in support of the East Bay Regional Park District's application for a Community Transformation Grant (CTG).

One of the key elements that make the East San Francisco Bay area a healthy and vibrant place to live is the tremendous asset of the East Bay Regional Park District. With 112,000 acres of accessible parkland, 1,200 miles of trails and thousands of education, recreation and interpretive programs – the District plays a critical role in both the physical and mental wellness of our region, as well as providing a substantial health and quality of life benefit. Indeed, the District has been a preventative health care provider in the East Bay for 78 years.

The GO! Network has several key components. It embraces the Full Service Community School model – a model which promotes schools as sites to holistically meet student, family, and community needs. This component will implement Parks Prescription strategies to train teachers and school district staff in the health related value of outdoor activity, and, importantly, where there are opportunities to take advantage of regional park-related activities.

The GO! Network also seeks to promote and institutionalize the model California Children's Outdoor Bill of Rights (COBOR) – a statewide resolution that recommends ten outdoor activities every child has the "right" to experience before the age of 14. Included in this component is the District's third grade *Kids Healthy Outdoors Challenge* curriculum – a thoughtful approach for teachers to implement the concepts of COBOR by ensuring they align with curriculum standards.

The GO! Network will also shed light on transportation and policy barriers that can literally keep kids from experiencing the outdoors. The District and its' partners will work with other stakeholders to address those challenges. Ultimately, the GO! Network will provide a concrete example of a truly transformative, replicable model to promote outdoor activity, increase communitywide awareness of opportunities to move outside, fund collaborations and reduce park access barriers.

As a teacher who would bring students to an East Bay Regional Park yearly, I am excited at the prospect of a partnership that includes the Oakland Unified School District's vision of Full Service Community Schools that aims to grow healthy minds as well as healthy bodies. I have seen students who live less than 15 minutes away by car experience the parks for the first time because access is 2 hours by public transportation, their only means of getting there. I'm happy the grant addresses this.

Supporting the GO! Network for Healthy Kids will serve as a model and catalyst for regional wellness and livability. I support this proposal and urge your favorable consideration.