



## NORTH OAKLAND COMMUNITY CHARTER SCHOOL

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[www.noccs.org](http://www.noccs.org)

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### **7/8<sup>th</sup> Grade Language Arts/Social Studies Core Teacher**

#### About the Position

North Oakland Community Charter School (NOCCS) seeks an experienced, dynamic, progressive, and equity-minded 7<sup>th</sup>/8<sup>th</sup> grade core subject matter teacher (language arts/social studies) to join our powerful school community.

In 2010-2011 we will complete our expansion with a complete K-8 program and a total enrollment of approximately 210 students.

Next year, our 7<sup>th</sup>/8<sup>th</sup> grade program will consist of two cores with 20 - 26 students in each class. Each core teacher will also be responsible for leading an advisory class as well as participating with the 6 – 8<sup>th</sup> grade team in continuing to develop and implement an innovative service-learning program that takes place each Wednesday at NOCCS.

We are looking for an excellent teacher and leader, who has a deep appreciation for students and the particular needs of 11-14 year olds. We are especially interested in educators who are invigorated by a growing school environment and are comfortable with innovation. The new member of our team must be a skilled organizer and collaborator. S/he must be able to work with other professionals in a team environment. In addition, we are seeking an educator who is enthusiastic about interacting with engaged families, and who wants to take an active role in shaping the school's growth, policies and educational practices.

The ideal candidate will have knowledge of and experience with a diverse range of pre-adolescent and adolescent learners. They will be highly skilled in the use of workshop and/or inquiry-based methods and teaching strategies, the California content standards, a diversity of assessments to inform differentiated instruction, culturally relevant strategies for working with a highly diverse student body, the Teaching for Understanding Framework and/or other rich project-based learning modalities including art integration. S/he will possess a strong ability to design and implement rich, engaging, and relevant teaching units. The candidate must share our school's beliefs in and passion for the power of progressive education, high expectations for all learners, and the importance of equity-based educational practices.

#### About NOCCS

The North Oakland Community Charter School (NOCCS) is a public school dedicated to helping children to become thoughtful, informed, and inquisitive citizens. NOCCS is a vibrant, diverse learning community driven by respect for each child's unique intelligence and history. Our school's dynamic and challenging educational approach deepens the intellectual and social capacities of each child that we serve.

NOCCS is driven by ten core principles that anchor and guide our community and its work, and provide a vision to which we aspire as a learning community. These principles include: (1) respect for children and their learning; (2) high expectations; (3) a caring community of learners; (4) valuing diversity; (5) connections to the world; (6) a commitment to equity; (7) families' contributions; (8) respect for teachers and teaching; (9) creativity; and (10) teaching for understanding.

Since opening its doors in September of 2000, NOCCS has grown from a tiny one classroom school serving 20 students to a vibrant community of learners that, at full capacity in 2010 – 2011 will have a full enrollment of approximately 210 students. The NOCCS student body is a diverse group of learners that includes 16% African American, 48% White, 30% Multi-Ethnic/Decline to State, 2% Hispanic, and 4% Asian. Over 25% of our student qualify for free or reduced priced lunch. Over the next several years, we anticipate continued diversification of our student body due to a combination of our expansion to a K-8 educational institution, increased outreach efforts, equity-based policy efforts, and our new geographic location within a highly diverse neighborhood area.

NOCCS stands out as one of Oakland and the Bay Area's most successful progressive education urban charter school models. Since its inception in 2000, NOCCS has ranked as one of the area's top schools. For each of the past four years of our chartering period, the school has achieved an Academic Performance Index (API) ranking of over 800, with a recent significant jump of 30 points to our current level of 880. Our most recent API ranking places NOCCS as the 11<sup>th</sup> highest achieving school out of Oakland's 70 public elementary schools, and 4<sup>th</sup> highest out of Oakland's 23 public middle schools. Our charter was unanimously approved for a third five year term in February of 2010.

### About our Educational Philosophy and Program

From the very beginning, NOCCS has embraced and been built upon a progressive and equitable educational philosophy and program. Directed by and aligned to our powerful guiding principles, a NOCCS education seeks to develop in students the ability to think critically, express creatively, and to act thoughtfully in an increasingly complex and interconnected world.

Students at NOCCS are consistently challenged – from a very young age – to critically consider, analyze, and synthesize multiple viewpoints and sources of data; consciously understand and implement a variety of strategies when attempting to solve problems; effectively work both autonomously as well as collaboratively, to develop, revise, expand and express their understanding of concepts and their demonstration of skills; and to authentically empathize and to work in a kind, caring manner to understand and resolve conflicts in a way that strengthens and builds our community of learners.

The NOCCS curriculum, with an emphasis on Teaching for Understanding, is designed to enable students to meet and/or exceed grade level standards through the exploration of in-depth, powerful, disciplinary-based skills, ideas, and strategies. As such, our pedagogy incorporates a number of best practices for effectively and equitably building mastery of skills and content as well as critical thinking and reasoning. These teaching strategies range from direct, explicit skills instruction to workshop and project-based formats that include and emphasize differentiated and individualized support for each learner and the use of reflection to build on-going understanding. Our well-articulated learning units include a number of inquiry, projects, and constructivist-based projects and modalities with a focus on higher level thinking skills that support the students in developing the skills of application, analysis, evaluation, and creation as well as the habits of collaboration, reflection and revision. The arts, environment, service-learning, peacemaking, and technology are integrated into our instructional units and strategies in order to enable students to both collect, learn, conceptualize, and internalize information as well as effectively, creatively, and meaningfully demonstrate their new knowledge, strategies, and skills – often ways that are connected to the “real world” and/or help others in our community to learn and grow as well.

Our educational program structure, school day, and culture are explicitly designed to support this ambitious and authentic vision of student achievement. Kindergarten through fifth grade students are placed in multi-age classrooms for the majority of their academic subjects, as teachers loop with student cohorts over a two year period, thus enabling teachers to develop deep relationships with each student and his/her family that support both developmentally attentive academic learning and social-emotional growth, as well as built-in leadership and community-building opportunities among and between students. Students in 6 – 8<sup>th</sup> grade participate in a variety of structures including team-taught cored block-scheduled classes, advisory programming, and service-learning cohorts that enable them

to develop deep and supportive relationships with both peers and their teachers over a three-year period. The school day is flexibly designed to enable teachers and students to work on both single lesson workshops, as well as multi-day/longer term projects that allow teachers many opportunities to individualize and/or differentiate support and instruction to meet the needs of a variety of learners. Electives are scheduled in order to both expand the educational opportunities available to students, as well as to support effective team planning, reflection, and collaboration among teaching staff.

### About Teaching at NOCCS

The NOCCS staff is an amazing professional learning community. Our current faculty members hold credentials from the area's leading teacher training and graduate programs and range in experience from 1 to 35 years, with an average of 9 years. Approximately 55% of our teaching staff hold master's degrees in education. Our director, Carolyn Gramstorff, is a highly respected educator now in her fifteenth year in education, ninth year of administration, and third year at NOCCS. She holds masters degrees in education from both Harvard University and the University of California – Berkeley, as well as a California Multiple Subject Teaching and Administrative Credential. In addition, the school employs an exciting and talented support staff including afterschool/enrichment, teaching assistants, and office support staff with diverse experiences and backgrounds.

NOCCS uses a highly rigorous process to identify and hire its teaching staff. All teacher candidates undergo a highly selective paper screen, followed by a several of three rounds of interviewing, including a phone interview, a demonstration lesson, an hour long interview with the hiring committee that is typically comprised of teachers from each grade level and the director, and an interview with a student panel.

Once hired, our entire staff participates in extensive professional development throughout their tenure at NOCCS. We begin each school year with a full week of professional development. Throughout the school year, staff members participate in a minimum of 160 hours of site-based professional development. In addition, many staff members participate in addition professional development over the summer and throughout the academic year. Many of our teachers have participated in Harvard University's Project Zero Classroom Institute, including several staff members who have worked as Teaching Fellows within the program.

Like our educational model, our professional development programming is focused on leveraging the individual strengths, knowledge, skills, and leadership of our staff members to enrich the collective work of the learning community. As such, we work to build the leadership capacity of each teacher so that our staff members can take on leadership and coaching roles with one another to move our educational priorities forward. Our professional development programming also utilizes a number of best practices for strong professional learning communities, such as the use of protocols to guide the development and peer-review of curriculum, examining student work, coaching models, and the use of teacher inquiry.

All staff are closely observed and evaluated each year. Our director undergoes a rigorous 360-degree evaluation process that includes input from staff, parents/families, students, the board, and a self-evaluation. Teachers are observed several times throughout the year. These observations as well as other student achievement data are used to provide staff members with a thorough annual review and serve as a basis for the annual extension of offers and consideration for leadership positions for the following academic year.

### About Our Families

One of the most noticeable aspects people see when entering our school is a wall filled with group portraits of nearly every family at NOCCS. We do this for much more than the stunning aesthetic value that it brings to the building – we do this because we firmly believe and want to demonstrate our history of and continuing commitment to involving the entire family in the education of our students and the life of our school community.

NOCCS was founded by a group of parents and educators committed to the promise of public education. This commitment is evident throughout NOCCS' history, and continues to thrive as a guiding principle and practice of our school today.

NOCCS is also known throughout the area as a model of parent/family and community involvement. Our parents and families typically log over 7,000 volunteer hours per year. The volunteer services that our families provide are wide ranging, including teaching handwriting, organizing the gardening program, serving on our board of Trustees, teaching visual arts classes, directing fundraising efforts, and more. This level of involvement fosters a culture of shared responsibility and accountability for the school and the education of every child at NOCCS.

#### About Our Governance and Infrastructure

NOCCS is governed by its Board of Trustees. Five members of this board are elected by stakeholders within the school community. The board also includes two staff members – the director and a teacher as well as other appointed members, often from outside of the school community.

In the past decade, NOCCS has moved from a one classroom rental space on College Avenue, to a second rental facility located at local Catholic Church on Alcatraz Avenue to its current, permanent home in a 20,500 square foot facility located at 1000 42<sup>nd</sup> Street, adjacent to Linden Park in Oakland. Our move to a secure, permanent home ensures NOCCS' long term stability, as well as an opportunity to further develop our role as an institution and important steward in our local, Linden Park neighborhood community. This year, NOCCS has taken a number of important steps towards this aspiration. First, with the support of a generous foundation grant, NOCCS has initiated an ambitious service-learning program focused on implementing a number of classroom projects that benefit our local neighborhood community. Our complete service learning and 6 – 8<sup>th</sup> grade Community Action Learning Program is further detailed in our charter renewal. Second, as the City of Oakland has reduced maintenance of many of its public parks, NOCCS has stepped forward to provide stewardship of Linden Park through the city's adopt-a-park program. Through these and other outreach efforts, we hope to form and strengthen important bonds and partnerships throughout our local community.

See our website for more detailed information regarding our school: [www.noccs.org](http://www.noccs.org)

#### ***Position Requirements:***

- California Multiple Subject Teaching Credential OR California Single Subject Teaching Credentials in two subject areas (language arts & social studies – or any combination of these areas) and CLAD or AB1059, demonstrating compliance with the NCLB highly qualified teacher status as defined by the California Department of Education.
- A minimum of two years of lead teaching experience in 6 – 8<sup>th</sup> grade classroom.
- Demonstrated success in designing rigorous and engaging units of study for students aged 11-14 and/or upper elementary grade levels.
- Knowledge of different 6<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> grade curricula and ability to design curriculum to address multiple cultural groups.
- Demonstrated success working with youth from diverse cultural, racial and socioeconomic backgrounds and the ability to interface with their parents in productive ways.
- Ability to manage a learning-centered classroom that includes age-appropriate, culturally responsive classroom management practices.
- Knowledge of the California State Content Standards.
- Ability to design and/or use a variety of assessment tools and techniques to guide instruction.
- Demonstrated success in differentiating instruction in public school classroom settings.
- Ability to collaborate and participate in critical relationships with other teachers to develop educational strategies jointly, both within and across grade levels.

- Interest and skill in working as part of team to develop and implement a state of the art advisory, service-learning, and elective program for 6<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> grade students
- Interest in working in a school community with a high degree of parent/family participation.
- Commitment and ability to attend committee meetings, lead school-wide initiatives, utilize parents as volunteers in the classroom, and attend evening meetings approximately once each month.
- Teaching demonstrations required of all applicants.

***Desired:***

- Teaching experience in a charter or new school setting
- Ability to contribute to a growing school environment
- National Board Certification
- Knowledge and experience with alternative assessment practices
- Bilingual Education experience (Spanish).

Salaries and benefits are competitive and commensurate with experience. We are strongly committed to hiring a diverse and multicultural staff and strongly encourage candidates of color to apply.

Interested candidates, who meet the above requirements, please email the following application materials to [director@noocs.org](mailto:director@noocs.org) or mail them to:

**Hiring Committee  
North Oakland Community Charter School  
1000 42nd St.  
Oakland, CA 94608**

Absolutely no phone calls please.

- 1. Resumé**
- 2. Cover letter, including a description of your grade level preference and experience**
- 3. Photocopy of California multiple subject teaching credential(s)**
- 4. Brief response to the following questions (maximum one page for each item):**
  - Describe your philosophy or approach to classroom management. How do you develop your learning environment to meet the varied social, emotional, and academic needs of a diverse class of students?
  - Describe your philosophy or approach to teaching a language arts/social studies core class. How do you develop content knowledge while also balancing/helping students to develop important academic skills, work habits, and the ability to work in teams?
  - Describe key needs of students in the 11-14 year old age range and how students in this age range can thrive at a K-8 school. How could you use your own unique skills and talents to approach meeting these needs through an advisory class, elective, and/or service-learning project?
  - Describe yourself in relation to how you work on a team. What roles do you tend to play in a team environment? What skills and resources do you bring to a team/colleagues in a collaborative environment? What needs do you have in terms of the supports and talents of your teammates?