

## **Jackson gets \$30,000 a Month to Replace White's \$13,000 Jackson Not Implicated in West Contra Costa Investigation, Says OUSD**

By [Ken Epstein](#)

(<http://postnewsgroup.com/blog/author/ken-epstein/>) — Posted March 20, 2015 10:15 am  
The Oakland Unified School District has hired Lance Jackson as the interim head of the Division of Facilities and Management Department at the cost of \$30,000 a month.

Depending on how long the district takes to conduct a national search for a new administrator to oversee OUSD's school bond-financed construction programs and repairs, maintenance and custodial services, the cost would total \$360,000 a year – more than the \$280,000 a year earned by Supt. Antwan Wilson.

Tim White, who was forced out of his position in February, earned about \$13,000 a month when he left the district, roughly \$156,000 a year.

“Lance is earning \$30,000 per month, which equates to \$360,000 annually, although it's unlikely he'll remain in the position for that long and the contract was not designed with the idea that Lance will remain as interim head of facilities for a full year,” said district spokesman Troy Flint in an email to the Post.

“This high rate of pay is due to a number of considerations, but most importantly that Lance was the only person well-positioned to take over the facilities department after Tim's departure.”

“Lance is the only person who satisfies all the (necessary experience and qualifications), and for someone with that level of expertise working on a consultant basis, the price tag is significant– but if that means sound management of the \$435 million in taxpayer bond money at stake, it's an investment that will pay dividends for OUSD and our constituents. There's too much at risk to entrust projects with this level of complexity and this much money involved to someone who may not be prepared to carry the work forward.”

In addition, the Post has learned that Jackson and his company Seville Group Inc. (SGI) are responsible for planning and design management of the \$1.6 billion dollar construction program currently underway at West Contra Costa Unified School District, which has come under intense public criticism for mismanagement by the district's administration.

According to Oakland Unified, as Chief Operating Officer of Seville, Jackson is ultimately responsible for the company's work in West Contra Costa. But the company is not implicated in the investigation of mismanagement, and Jackson has not been involved for five years in day-to-day oversight of construction in that district, according to OUSD.

On Feb. 17, Supt. Wilson announced White's replacement in an email to employees: "OUSD is pleased to announce that Lance Jackson, Chief Operating Officer of the Seville Group, Inc. (SGI), has agreed to become interim leader of the Oakland Unified School District's Facilities Planning and Management Department. Jackson will serve in this role pending the search and selection of a new Deputy Chief for Facilities Planning and Management."

Jackson and his company have had consulting contracts with OUSD for a number of years.

In the 14 years that Tim White worked for the school district, he was in charge of expenditures for school bond Measure J, \$475 million; Measure B, \$35 million; Measure A, \$330 million; and before that Measure C, \$169 million. He also brought in \$300 million in state matching funds.

Seville Group, Inc., founded in 1994, provides program, project, and construction management services for public agencies in California. Its projects include facilities, such as K-12, higher education and municipal facilities; infrastructure projects, including water, wastewater, power, and highway projects; and transportation projects.

According to the company's website, Jackson has over 20 years of program and project management experience. As COO of the Seville Group, "He is responsible for facilitating the best practices for all programs and projects to strengthen the quality of services provided."

"He is responsible for planning and design management of the billion dollar construction program currently underway at West Contra Costa Unified School District and is also providing executive oversight for the East Side Union High School District's new construction and modernization programs and the Oakland Unified School Districts Measure B Bond Program and Capital project," according to the website.



In a strongly worded editorial last Sunday, the Oakland Tribune called on the West Contra Costa's Board of Education to fire Supt. Bruce Harter for mismanagement of the district's \$1.6 billion school construction bond program.

Harter should resign, and if he does not, the board should fire him, according to the Tribune.

What became clear after six school bonds, the Tribune wrote, was that "There's not enough money to finish all the construction promised. Criteria are needed for selecting the schools that will get the remaining funds."

<http://postnewsgroup.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/03/Dr->

[Harter.jpg](#)

West Contra Costa School

Superintendent Bruce

Harter.

“Harter had a professional responsibility to mind the purse, to provide the school board, the bond oversight committee and the public with meaningful analyses of the spending,” the Tribune said. “Instead, Harter and his staff stonewalled.”

Obtaining “basic information such as square footage construction costs is nearly impossible. A 2013 audit dinged the district for disproportionately spending on architectural, engineering and management costs rather than direct construction,” the editorial said.

For the full Oakland Tribune editorial, go to

[www.contracostatimes.com/news/ci\\_27697711/contracosta-times-editorial-fire-west-contracosta](http://www.contracostatimes.com/news/ci_27697711/contracosta-times-editorial-fire-west-contracosta) ([http://www.contracostatimes.com/news/ci\\_27697711/contracosta-times-editorial-fire-west-contracosta](http://www.contracostatimes.com/news/ci_27697711/contracosta-times-editorial-fire-west-contracosta))

In response to questions from the Post, OUSD spokesman Flint wrote in an email: “To my understanding, the investigation in Contra Costa is centered on district management and one trustee who took an unusually active interest in how the funds were allocated—not on SGI. As SGI’s COO, Lance has ultimate responsibility for many of SGI’s projects, but he hasn’t been involved with day-to-day project management in West Contra Costa for more than five years.”

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