

Common Enrollment in Oakland: Information for Oakland Stakeholders

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Common enrollment is a school selection and enrollment process in which families have the opportunity to choose among a variety of school types (district-operated public schools *and* public charter options) through a single, transparent, and streamlined process.

This type of enrollment system will aim to improve the overall parent/guardian experience, providing tools to help families choose and enroll in the school that best fits the needs of their child, while at the same time improving overall system efficiency.



Why are we pursuing a common enrollment system?

In accordance with the goals outlined in OUSD's [Pathway to Excellence](#), Oakland's Strategic Priorities include an upgrade to our current enrollment process. The current system was designed decades ago, before school choice was the norm. This improvement effort will allow for an efficient, technology-driven system that will give schools timely, accurate and complete information to better manage their student enrollment, class-sizes, and program offerings. For families, it will allow them to more easily navigate the school selection and enrollment process.



How will Common Enrollment work in Oakland?

The specifics of Oakland's Common Enrollment system are not yet known. Because the new system must be designed to meet the specific needs of the entire Oakland community, its creation is currently happening based on input from parents, community members, and school leaders and staff from both district-managed and public charter schools. A Steering Committee comprised of these various stakeholders is working together to shape Oakland's system. The Steering Committee's work is informed by input from a Parent Advisory Group, and all recommendations are being reviewed by an Executive Committee.



Who will common enrollment affect?

Ideally, the common enrollment system will affect all public schools, parents, staff, and students. It is not designed to disrupt current school practices, but to enhance and improve the enrollment processes for families.



What is the timeline for launching a common enrollment system in Oakland?

Although the implementation timeline has not yet been set in stone, the target roll-out for Oakland's common system is for the next enrollment cycle (beginning in December 2015, effective for the 2016/17 school year).



How does Common Enrollment fit in with OUSD's strategic plan?

Common enrollment is a high-priority strategy in OUSD's [Pathway to Excellence](#), and aims to create equity of access to quality schools in a united, accountable school district.



What exactly will Common Enrollment do for Oakland?

Here are some examples of what a unified enrollment system will do:

- Provide a collaborative approach to city-wide public school enrollment
- Provide a single application for use at all public schools
- Provide a single-best offer system
- Provide a central clearinghouse for coordination of seat allocation
- Provide a safe environment for families to reveal their true preferences
- Provide results that are easily explained and audited
- Provide a shared set of “rules” throughout the annual cycle that has many entry points (not just one lottery)
- Provide a demand-driven method for efficiently enrolling students at schools
- Provide accurate enrollment data that can inform system-wide planning



What are some things that Common Enrollment will not do?

Although a critical component to improving public school systems, Common Enrollment is by no means a “silver bullet”. Here are some examples of what a unified system will not do:

- Support or favor any one type of school governance model (district-managed or charter)
- Provide any prescription about education policy
- Control or shape admissions policies at schools
- Provide an uninformed system where computers are picking schools for kids
- Allow everyone entrance into their most-preferred school
- Directly improve schools



Who can I contact with questions?

Please do not hesitate to reach out to the following people with any questions or comments you may have:

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