



OAKLAND UNIFIED  
SCHOOL DISTRICT

*Community Schools, Thriving Students*



OAKLAND UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT  
**Pathway to Excellence ▪ 2015–2020**



Every Student Thrives!

# Every Student



# Thrives

November 19, 2014

Dear Oakland Community,

As a twenty-year educator and father to three young children, I've dedicated my adult life to supporting the growth and development of children. Having served as a teacher, a principal, a district leader, and now your Superintendent, I've had a track record of success that has expanded opportunities for young people, decreased the achievement and opportunity gap between students of diverse backgrounds, improved school performance by transforming failing schools, and prepared more students to be college, career, and community ready. My commitment is to partner with you in the effort to ensure that every student has access to a high-quality education. This is my professional calling and a personal mission, rooted in the fundamental belief that our success in this work is not only just for our students in Oakland, but also rests at the very heart of American democracy.

Many of the ills that plague our society can be traced back to our education system and its shortcomings. When we are satisfied with mediocrity and some students doing without the best, all of us lose in the long run. It puts our city and our nation at risk. The answers to these disparities lie in our ability to transform public education so that it serves students of all backgrounds and all abilities. Our vision is that all OUSD students will find joy in their academic experience while graduating with the skills to ensure they are caring, competent, fully-informed, critical thinkers who are prepared for college, career, and community success.

This work sits at the intersection of race, gender, class, religion, status, access, opportunity, and social advocacy—some of the most vexing questions of this or of any other era. If we are to realize our goals for our children and our society, we must transcend these demographic differences and political considerations in pursuit of a higher non-partisan standard—success for each and every student! It's incredibly hard work, but the solutions are not obscure, they're not mysterious, and they're certainly not out-of-reach. Of course, intellectual debates about methodology, instructional practice, public funding, and private philanthropy come into play; but, in the final analysis, the way we implement a fundamental set of standards will determine our success.

We have a moral imperative to help every child reach his or her potential. If we are to ensure that every student thrives, then we must:

- Provide every student with access to a high-quality school
- Ensure each student is prepared for college, career, and community success
- Staff every school with talented individuals committed to working in service of children
- Create a school district that holds itself and its partners accountable for superior outcomes
- Guarantee rigorous instruction in every classroom, every day

These commitments are non-negotiable; they are the bedrock upon which we'll continue to build this district. I promise to work tirelessly to provide all Oakland Public School students with a high quality education and rich, rewarding social experiences. The plan before you is our pathway to excellence and the roadmap for the next five years as we uphold our moral obligation to the students and residents of Oakland.

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No matter your place in Oakland society, man or woman, mature or young, native or transplant, heartland or hills, we all have a stake in this work. Our collective and unified voice will always be more powerful than our individual efforts. We can no longer pit one faction against another or elevate adult concerns above student needs. We can no longer settle for “good enough.” We must become a city that expects the best.

Guiding principles drive every decision I make as Superintendent, and will further our efforts towards becoming the district we must be for our students.

As the Strategic Plan makes clear, the foundational principles for the Oakland Unified School District are:



Relentlessly pursuing these guiding principles and infusing them into every aspect of our work will produce the results we seek. No longer will we allow the storyline of the “haves” and the “have-nots” to define Oakland. Instead, we will write a new narrative of strong communities and service to students. We will position OUSD as an employer of choice and the provider of a world-class educational system. As we embark on this journey, we must find common ground on providing an education that challenges students, prompts them to think, encourages them to create, inspires them to dream, motivates them to succeed, and prepares them not just for college and career, but for the world at large.

I cannot wait to partner with you in this work and our students can’t afford to wait for its results. Someday, somewhere in America, a school district and a city will fulfill its obligation to its children. Why not now? Why not Oakland?

**This is the time. This is the place. This is when we come together to ensure that EVERY STUDENT THRIVES!**

Respectfully,

Handwritten signature of Antwan Wilson.

Antwan Wilson  
Superintendent



# MISSION

Oakland Unified School District (OUSD) will build a Full Service Community District focused on high academic achievement while serving the whole child, eliminating inequity, and providing each child with excellent teachers, every day.

# VISION

All OUSD students will find joy in their academic experience while graduating with the skills to ensure they are caring, competent, fully-informed, critical thinkers who are prepared for college, career, and community success.



## THE OAKLAND WAY!

Ensuring that each and every child receives a quality education is an economic necessity, a moral imperative, and a matter of social justice. That's something this community understands better than perhaps any other town in America. For more than 60 years, Oakland has been a trailblazer in issues of equity and empowerment and the center of some of the country's most powerful social movements. We are standard-bearers. No place is better suited for the fight to support children.

**Our charge is to transform a public education system that reinforces race and class-based fault lines into one that breaks down barriers to achievement and prepares every student for college, career, and community.**

Oakland is a city that, for too long, has been defined by the word “potential.” It's time to transform potential into results and to ensure that “Every Student Thrives!” As a community, it's our duty to make Oakland's promise manifest. As a school district, it's our responsibility—and our privilege—to prepare every student for success in school, success in career, and success in life. The urgency is tremendous. We don't have time to waste and we don't have time to wait. It's only by undermining the tolerance for mediocrity, condemning low expectations, and establishing uncompromising standards of performance that we can provide our children with the education they deserve and create the community we desire.

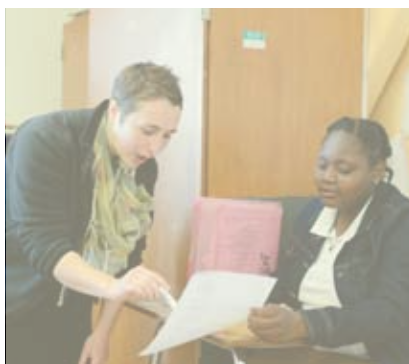
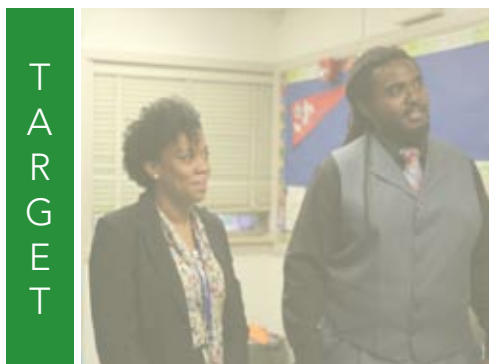
Our belief is that significant improvement in student outcomes is driven at the school level. Our every action centrally is in the service of one purpose: building quality community schools that prepare students for college, career, and community success. Empowered school communities that make decisions best suited for the needs of their particular children, align instruction to effective practices, constantly measure academic and social growth, and adapt as necessary to increase student learning, are the foundation of a world-class school district. All schools will benefit from our work to recruit, develop, and retain talented staff in every classroom and every department. All schools will receive defined autonomies, support, and recognition—as well as targeted interventions—to improve student performance. And when, over time, a school demonstrates it doesn't have the capacity for strong site governance or to produce significant academic and social growth in its students, we will intervene to accelerate student performance, enhance school quality, and ensure that Every Student Thrives!

# Priority 1

## Effective Talent Programs

**Our work starts with our people.** We need to make OUSD the premier employer for educators in the Bay Area. This means we must recruit the best talent, create a system that cultivates their growth, and develop a culture that facilitates high retention of effective employees.

- By 2020, the number of employees who are strongly engaged with OUSD as measured by our Engagement Program will increase to 85 percent.



### Employees Engaged

2020..... 85%  
 Now ..... Not currently measured

# Priority 2

## Accountable School District

**A school district that supports its people is grounded in values and effective systems.** We will ensure that we are one team dedicated to the development of quality schools in every Oakland neighborhood. We will also provide exemplary service to all Oakland schools with an emphasis on increasing achievement and engagement for our students.

- By 2020, the number of high performing and high quality schools, as measured by the district's School Performance Framework, will increase to 75 percent.
- By 2020, at least 80 percent of respondents on OUSD's Performance Management Survey will rate district departments favorably.



### High Performing & High Quality Schools

2020..... 75%  
 Now ..... Not currently measured

### District Departments Performing Favorably

2020..... 80%  
 Now ..... Not currently measured

# Priority 3

## Quality Community Schools

**Every student deserves the right to attend a quality community school in their neighborhood.** The Community Schools work in Oakland is some of the most compelling work in the country. By targeting our focus, we will build schools that all Bay Area students are proud to attend.

- By 2020, the percentage of high school students in Linked Learning Pathways will increase to 80 percent, 100 percent for rising sophomores.
- By 2020, the cohort graduation rate will increase to 85 percent.
- By 2020, the percentage of African-American, Latino, Special Education, English Language Learner (ELL), and Foster Youth students who meet the California College admission requirements for a 4-Year university or college will increase to 60 percent.
- By 2020, the percentage of Long-Term English Language Learners (six or more years in US schools) reclassified to fluent will increase to 50 percent.
- By 2020, the percentage of African-American males without an out-of-school suspension during the year will increase to 97 percent.
- By 2020, the percentage of 3rd grade students who are reading on grade level will increase to 85 percent.



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High School Students in Linked Learning Pathways

2020..... 80%  
Now ..... 37%

High School Sophomores in Linked Learning Pathways

2020..... 100%  
Now ..... 47%

African-American, Latino, Special Education, ELLs & Foster Youth Students Meeting Four-Year University or College Requirements

2020..... 60%  
Now ..... 23%



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Cohort Graduation Rate

2020..... 85%  
Now ..... 67%

Long-Term ELLs Reclassified as Fluent

2020..... 50%  
Now ..... 7%

African-American Males Without Out-of-School Suspension

2020..... 97%  
Now ..... 87%

Third Graders Reading on Grade Level

2020..... 85%  
Now ..... 38%





EFFECTIVE TALENT PROGRAMS

**RECRUITING & ORIENTATION**

We will focus on recruiting the best talent and develop efficient systems for supporting their successful transition into their roles in the district.

**SUPPORTING & EVALUATING**

We will make OUSD the employer of choice in the Bay Area by creating conditions for success through effective teams, a culture of professional learning, and the use of observation and constructive feedback.

**LEADING & RETAINING**

We will create professional growth opportunities that facilitate the development of all employees as educators and leaders within our system in a way that supports the placement and retention of our effective employees.



ACCOUNTABLE SCHOOL DISTRICT

**IMPLEMENTING DISTRICT CORE VALUES**

We will collaboratively develop a set of district core values that will be used to guide how we support our employees, engage with our families and communities, and provide services to our students. These core values are intended to permeate our culture and will be used to drive us towards a north star of excellence as a school district.

**QUALITY SCHOOL DEVELOPMENT**

We will engage in a Strategic Regional Analysis to inform where we need more quality programs, and to inform where district facilities need to be used more effectively. Additionally, we will develop a School Performance Framework to measure quality at all individual schools. Finally, we will begin a Call for Quality Schools focused on facilitating the development of effective school models from the ground up and to ensure that every student is able to attend a quality school in their neighborhood.

**DISTRICT-CHARTER COMPACT**

We will partner with charter schools to provide access to quality schools in every neighborhood while building common systems for enrollment, transfers, discipline, performance, and serving all Oakland students.

**PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT**

We will measure the effectiveness of central services to ensure that student needs are put first and schools receive the support they need to be successful. We will engage in cycles of inquiry to elevate exemplary services and to improve our supports to our stakeholders.



QUALITY COMMUNITY SCHOOLS

**LINKED LEARNING**

We will provide learning opportunities for all of our students that meet college and career readiness standards, provide experiential learning, and embed technology-based learning to ensure students are prepared for college, career, and community success. This will begin with early-childhood education to ensure students are prepared for success by third grade. It continues by focusing extra attention to improve our secondary schools by embedding pathways that prepare students for success in careers in the science, technology, engineering, arts, mathematics, health, and entrepreneurial fields. Each Linked Learning pathway will require students to take college-level Advanced Placement, International Baccalaureate, and/or Dual Enrollment courses while providing support to students who need additional help in meeting college and career-level expectations.

**EQUITY-BASED EDUCATION**

We will support our schools with implementing strategies that accelerate the academic achievement of all students while ensuring that we are closing the opportunity gap for our African-American, English Language Learner, Foster Youth, and Special Education Students. This includes building upon the progress of African-American Male Achievement; and, it also includes providing additional resources and supports to some schools to promote the success of our most impacted students that our data shows we need to do more to support in reaching higher academic outcomes.

**SCHOOL SITE GOVERNANCE**

We will focus on clear, transparent, and representative engagement that empowers stakeholders to work collaboratively with the school principal to improve educational outcomes for all students. This will include prioritizing improvement strategies targeted to the needs of the students the school serves and that are tightly aligned with district priorities.



## LOCAL CONTROL FUNDING FORMULA & LOCAL CONTROL ACCOUNTABILITY PLAN

To ensure that every Oakland public school student is prepared for success in college, career, and community, we must use all the resources at our disposal and allocate them in a manner that reflects our shared beliefs and supports a common vision for Oakland students.

- The Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF) determines how the state funds our school district. The money is allocated based on our enrollment of English Learner, Low-Income, and Foster students.
- The Local Control Accountability Plan (LCAP) is a three-year accountability plan that requires input from stakeholders, to ensure LCFF funds are spent intentionally and strategically, for our state and local target populations: Students with Economic Hardship, English Language Learners, Foster Youth, Students with Disabilities, African-American Students, and Latino Students.

During the 2013-2014 school year, OUSD engaged over 5,000 staff, parents, community members and students through a process to help develop the LCAP, which our Board of Education approved in Spring 2014. The input gained during this ongoing process was used to help inform District funding decisions and shape the objectives, themes, and strategies of this Strategic Plan Update.

As we create a world-class school system, we will continue to incorporate community values; collect key data; outline measures of success; and establish commitments to students, staff, and families to guide us as we build a school district where “Every Student Thrives!”



# FROM CRADLE TO CAREER: STEPS TO SUCCESS

During my listening engagements, I often heard parents ask questions such as, “What should my child be reading by 5th grade?” or “Why does it matter that she takes Algebra by eighth grade?” From birth through graduating from high school, what are the minimum aspirations that we want for all Oakland students to be prepared for a high standard? In the model below, we provide an easy-to-understand path that explains what each student *needs* at every step *in order to be* college, career, and community-ready and to have true choices for their future.

## Why it Matters:

- More Lifetime Earnings
- Lifelong Career Connections
- More Engagement in the Democratic Process



**My 11TH/12TH GRADER NEEDS TO** complete their college preparatory A-G courses; earn a qualifying score in at least 5 college-level courses; meet the college-ready standard on the Early Assessment Program (EAP), Scholastic Assessment Test (SAT), and/or the American College Test (ACT); participate in at least two extra-curricular, work-based, or civic engagement activities per year; complete a Personal Education Plan (PEP); and, evaluate factors that lead to goal achievement and success (e.g., managing time, adequate resources, perseverance and confidence) **IN ORDER TO** have their choice of a 4-year college, 2-year college, or career training program; graduate with college credit; have a stronger resume; be competitive for financial aid and scholarships; and, be more prepared to give back to the community.

**My 9TH/10TH GRADER NEEDS TO** be taking college preparatory A-G courses; be on grade level or above in reading; be engaged in a Linked Learning college & career pathway; continue implementing a Personal Education Plan (PEP); and, identify verbal, physical, and situational cues that indicate how others may feel **IN ORDER TO** be on-track to graduate, take multiple college-level courses in high school, and have more elective choices.

**My 8TH/9TH GRADER NEEDS TO** receive an A, B or C in Algebra and English-Language Arts; miss no more than 5 days of school; continue with the Personal Education Plan (PEP); and, evaluate emotional responses to various challenging situations, how to communicate them, and persevere through them **IN ORDER TO** be on-track to 11th/12th grade, be ready for a Linked Learning college & career pathway, have more course choices, and be ready for college preparatory A-G courses.

**My 5TH/6TH GRADER NEEDS TO** be on grade level or above in reading and math, miss no more than 9 days of school, persevere through difficult tasks, and demonstrate cooperative behaviors in a group (e.g., listening, encouraging, acknowledging opinions, compromising, reaching consensus) **IN ORDER TO** be prepared for middle school and high school success, have more course choice, and be prepared for a Linked Learning college & career pathway.

**My 2ND/3RD GRADER NEEDS TO** be on grade level or above in reading and math, miss no more than 9 days of school, persevere through difficult tasks, and identify the steps needed to perform routine tasks or accomplish goals (e.g., for academic success, personal success, classroom behavior) **IN ORDER TO** be prepared for success throughout school, be more likely to graduate on-track, and take more challenging middle school courses and electives.

**My 0-5 YEAR OLD NEEDS TO** know 100 commonly used words, miss no more than 9 days of school, have self-restraint, view one's characteristics and abilities positively, enjoy demonstrating them and assert one's own preferences and desires **IN ORDER TO** be prepared for Kindergarten success.





# Every Student Thrives!



## OUSD VITAL STATS | 2014-15

<b>Total Enrollment</b>	<b>48,181</b>	<b>Total Number of Schools</b>	<b>118</b>
OUSD Community Schools	37,147	OUSD Community Schools	86
OUSD Charter Schools	11,034	OUSD Charter Schools	32
Total Employees (OUSD Community Schools)	4,457		

## Demographics

OUSD Community Schools TK-12		OUSD Charter Schools K-12	
African-American	30%	African-American	21%
Asian	14%	Asian	11%
Latino	39%	Latino	57%
White	12%	White	6%
Other	5%	Other	6%
English Learners	31%	English Learners	30%
Free/Reduced Price Lunch	71%	Free/Reduced Price Lunch	76%
Foster Students	1%		
Special Education Students	10%		

## OUSD Graduation Rates, 2013\*

OUSD Community Schools, 2013		OUSD Charter Schools, 2013	
All Students	67%	All Students	72%

## OUSD Community Schools Budget

Total Budgeted Expenditures	\$607.7 million
Restricted	\$284.8 million
Unrestricted	\$322.9 million

## Unrestricted Budget Allocation (2014-15)

Direct to Schools	\$196.7 million (61 percent)
School Support	\$82.2 million (25 percent)
Infrastructure	\$38 million (12 percent)
State Loan	\$6 million (2 percent)

\* Students who graduated within four years of entering 9th grade

## RECENT ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- In the past two years, OUSD employees have been named California Teacher of the Year (I'Asha Warfield, 2013) and California Classified Employee of the Year (Marcus Board, 2014).
- Since 2010, three OUSD schools have earned National Blue Ribbon Status and 10 sites have been recognized as California Distinguished Schools.
- Between 2011 and 2013, OUSD's graduation rate improved by 8.1 percent, while the dropout rate fell by 9.0 percent
- OUSD operates 15 school-based health clinics, the most per capita of any school district in the country.
- OUSD supports its college and career preparatory goals with the most California Partnership Academies of any school district in the state.
- Oakland is one of only eight school districts in the country selected to participate in a special initiative by the Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL) to help students manage emotions, achieve positive goals, show empathy for others, maintain positive relationships, and make responsible decisions.

Our secret ingredient—and it's not too secret—is the professional skill and dedication of each member of our staff, certificated and classified.

You see, that's where we're going to win. We'll have differences, but as long as we don't let those differences separate us and tear us apart in a disruptive confrontation; if we can believe in each other and stand on the common ground that children are what we are all about; if we do nothing to rob children of the opportunity to learn; if we are willing, whatever our adult differences may be, to work them out as professionals and adults; if we will not cause children to suffer while we solve our problems, we will make education work. Then, we must be determined that after we have worked with our young people, those little tags they brought to us will never have written on them, "reduced in value, cheap," but rather because they came to the Oakland Public Schools; because they've met you and have dealt with the schools across the city; they will have on their little tags, "of surpassing worth, increased in value."

— DR. MARCUS FOSTER  
SUPERINTENDENT

OAKLAND UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT  
1970 – 1973



**OAKLAND UNIFIED  
SCHOOL DISTRICT**

*Community Schools, Thriving Students*

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