

What is Quality Schools Development? Why are we doing this?

All students deserve quality schools in their neighborhoods that help them thrive academically, socially, and emotionally. Right now, several of our schools are not where we need them to be. Whether we're talking about basics such as reading at grade level by 3rd grade or graduation rates at our high schools, some Oakland public schools fall short of our own goals and perform below the best schools in the state even when controlling for other factors such as funding, demographics, crime, etc. We strongly believe that our students are capable of success and we believe we have a responsibility to create the conditions to ensure that they are.

There are quality schools in Oakland. Some schools excel due to incredibly committed, talented and effective educators, others receive additional support due to having access to greater community resources such as parents, partners, and volunteers. Some of our thriving schools are district-run schools and some of our highest performing schools are charter schools. There is no one answer to who can create a quality school, but they do share one common theme that this process seeks to build – strong community collaboration – parents are engaged, teachers are engaged, students are engaged. Ask any of them what their school is about, and they will tell you the same thing – they are unified toward achieving the common goals of creating a high quality school.

Quality School Development is the District's approach to ensuring that the conditions necessary to continuously improve are in place in every school. In order to support this process, the Board of Education passed a Quality Community School Policy. This policy outlines key components of the continuous improvement process. These include:

1. The District setting standards and indicators of quality schools
2. The District conducting ongoing evaluation and monitoring of school quality
3. The District providing school teams that include parents, staff, students, and community training and coaching to develop improvement plans as well as differentiated support to implement those plans
4. The District identifying Intensive Support Schools and collaborating with school teams to develop strategies for improvement, including replicating and expanding quality schools models.
5. The District establishing a fund to support the Intensive Support Schools strategy.

To develop a quality school, there has to be a foundation of common understanding and then a process of engagement to build the common vision. The way we are going to identify and transform schools over the coming years is through the use of extensive data to inform engagement and guide our decision-making processes. Our process is going to consider the history of inequities that have led us to the disparities in quality across the district. We are going to address those inequities, engage deeply with communities, and push everyone involved to accept nothing less than quality for all. We must push outside of our comfort zones because we must be successful! This is not a "one-shot deal" or a "one-time effort." **This is a multi-year, ongoing shift in the way we work.**

What are Intensive Support Schools?

The first iteration of Quality School Development began in 2012 with the Quality School Development initiative and continued with the "Balanced Scorecard" that the District has been using to evaluate schools. In April 2014, the Board selected five schools for "intensive support." This decision was also based on school quality reviews and the ongoing challenges of enrollment declines in several schools. Going forward, we are developing a means of rating the progress of all of our schools using the same measures of success in a tool called the School Performance Framework. Doing this will ensure predictability across the district when identifying schools that are excelling, schools that need Targeted Support to improve into the excelling category, and schools in need of Intensive Support.

What does "intensive support" mean?

Various factors, including a history of inequities, have led schools to situations of declining enrollment, declining test scores, and sub-par outcomes on average at these schools. Of course, there are great people at these schools, amazing kids in their classrooms. People are working hard to make a difference. In spite of this, our students in these schools are just not being served as well as they need and we are able to deliver. Intensive Support is part of a three-tiered approach to improving schools and defining autonomies that include Universal Support (the base level of support that all schools

receive), Targeted Support (extra support for schools needing support in limited areas), and Intensive Support (the highest level of support for schools with the greatest needs). Intensive Support is all about putting ADDITIONAL resources into these schools and transforming them in a long-term, sustainable way. It's not about a specific path – making the schools larger or smaller, turning them into academies or traditional schools, or about them being charter or district-run – **it's about the outcome – quality schools for ALL**. To determine where, how, and how much additional resource investment can and should be directed toward the site, we have to go through a process, which we have begun.

There are phases to intensive support: One is a multi-phase process to engage and encourage school community stakeholders to develop a proposal for a high quality school program tailored to the identified community. The District seeks to evaluate, together with stakeholders, the proposals to select one for investment and implementation. The next phase is incubating the proposal by investing in a design team and a yearlong process to detail the plan. The third phase is implementation to ensure success. Each phase, including implementation requires the allocation of more funding and resources to schools.

Why have an open call for proposals?

Dramatically improving schools requires the collaboration of parents, students, teachers, staff, community members and other District staff. An open call provides everyone an equal playing field to put forward a plan, which is the best way to ensure we end up with the ultimate goal – **quality schools**.



The Call process will invite ALL members of the community to come forward with their ideas, input, and commitment to creating quality schools – and it will help provide resources to ensure there is a broad base of response. This must include the full diversity of views about how to meet the needs of the community in a quality school proposal. Educators who bring forth proposals must engage with the community of the schools involved in order to have a chance at their proposal being recommended to the Board for approval. Additionally, proposals must meet the criteria identified by each community as being important to them, e.g. extended time, personalized learning, tutoring supports; additionally, the proposals will need to meet the expectations the District has for improving Intensive Support Schools, called Transformation Pillars.

1. **Educator Development and Pipelines** – Successful schools will be led by effective leaders who work collaboratively to develop and nurture a cross-functional leadership team. The school will help educators develop through effective professional learning and recognize effective educators for their success.
2. **Strong School Culture** – The school will have a mission, vision, and values that are focused on high academic achievement for students while preparing them for college, career, and community success. The school will stress the importance of education as well as the social and emotional well-being of students. This emphasis must permeate all other components of the school and include restorative practices as a part of the approach to strengthening culture.
3. **Increased Time on Task** – Successful schools will intentionally use time to maximize student learning. Extended school days, weeks, and years are integral components. Additionally, the school must prioritize providing teachers' time for planning, collaboration, and professional learning.
4. **Rigorous Academics** – Effective schools ensure teachers have access to foundational documents and instructional materials needed to help students achieve high growth. This includes regularly assessing student progress, analyzing student progress, and re-teaching skills with the expectation that students master standards.
5. **Linked/Personalized Learning** – Students will be exposed to different educational options that go beyond the “four walls” of the school in effective schools. This will include allowing students to innovate and create, having them concurrently enrolled in college classes, engaging them in internships, using online learning, and providing students access to career pathways in our secondary schools.

Q. Will the District provide support to school teams proposing District-run schools to create quality proposals?

A. YES

- The District will provide proposal teams with resources such as contracted proposal writers/facilitators, translation services, childcare, refreshments, and support for staff participation outside work hours, upon request.
- The District will host multiple workshops on specific areas such as technology, the arts, science and literacy.

- The District will host engagements with stakeholders to ensure proposal-writing teams understand their needs.

Q. Will the District assist multiple proposal teams for one school to join forces to create a single plan?

A. YES.

The District will create opportunities for collaboration and host events to bring proposal teams together to share their vision and planning and consider the option of joining forces.

Why include charter schools in the call process?

Q. Is this a plan to “charterize” Intensive Support Schools?

A. NO

Q. Is this a plan to preference charter school proposals?

A. NO

FACT: Having successful, high quality proposals for District-run schools, supported by the community, would be ideal for the District.

**365
days**

#1 Charter Law currently allows charters to be delivered anytime, 365 days a year. The law allows submission without meaningful input from affected communities and without proposing to meet a specifically identified need. That law is NOT going to change. And there are many reasons why it will not change, including the fact that there are many good charter schools, serving our children – about 25% of children attending public schools in Oakland are in charter schools (which are public schools). Charters are NOT going away. We are a portfolio district – one with district-run and charter schools – and we must work within that framework.



#2 Oakland has too many schools, district-run and charter operated, for the number of students served, causing limited community resources to be spread too thin. Continued submission of new charter schools that do not consider urgent needs does not solve this challenge. This process can help change that.



GOAL – MANAGED GROWTH One of the goals of this process is to move from haphazard school growth to managed growth. Even if the District were to deny new charters, such as San Francisco has done for nearly a decade, they can be approved by the County or State and proceed to open regardless. Doing so would perpetuate the division that exists between some district-run and charter school practices. This process we are planning will help focus the need and level the playing field for in-district and community teams with charter management organizations.

Any charter petition submitted in Oakland **must have** meaningful community input **AND** support **AND** should propose to meet an identified need. Including charter schools in the “Call” **DOES NOT** preference charter schools, but **INSTEAD** seeks to better manage their submission and growth on behalf of Oakland’s students and families. **Absent this process, Oakland continues to be subject to charter proposals submitted at any time, for any reason.**

Is this a process to hand over these schools to charter schools?

A. NO

Existing laws already provide the process by which charter schools may request facilities from the District. Proposition 39, as well as the District’s Asset Management Policy outlines the intent and process for allocating facilities for use by charter schools.

While the law obligates the District to provide available facilities to requesting charter schools, and the District’s policy acknowledges the interest of the District in the success of all students attending publicly funded schools, that process is SEPARATE from the Call for Quality Schools process.

Do all intensive support school principals have a role in this process?

A. YES

Strong school leadership is an important component of successful schools. The District will focus on ensuring that each school succeeds and strong leadership is an important part of that goal. OUSD does deserve the right to ensure that those leading our schools are best positioned to drive long-term success. We will make decisions to ensure that leaders are effective and best prepared to succeed with this important work.



SITE-BASED COMMITTEES

Each Intensive Support School will form a committee of stakeholders. These site-based committees will form over the months of January and February. Their role is to meet frequently and elevate the needs of the school and vision of the school community. These site-based committees will provide feedback on the final proposal(s) that are submitted.



PROPOSAL WRITING

Teams are likely to form to create a proposal to meet the Call for Quality Schools. These teams will likely include parents, teachers, students, and community members from the Intensive Support Schools. These teams will engage with the Site-based Committees and may share membership.



INCUBATION DESIGN TEAMS

Beginning with the 2015-16 school year, the approved proposals for each Intensive Support School will undergo a yearlong Incubation Process. The process involves much more detailed planning, research and preparation. Design Teams will be formed in each school community to lead the incubation process. Members of the Proposal Writing Team may lead or participate in the Incubation Design Teams.

What's the timeline?

Intensive School Support, the Call for Quality Schools, and overall Quality School Development are on-going processes that will respect and build on previous, on-going efforts to improve our schools. While each school will have their own detailed timeline and pathway, **after gathering feedback from community, there are two timelines we've proposed for the five current Intensive Support Schools:**

Timeline #1: Minimum 28 month total process – 14 Month Incubation Process

April 2014	Board Action to Support Five Schools
May-Nov. 2014	District staff develops process for intensive support & engagement
Dec. 2014-Jan. 2015	Initial community engagement
Feb. 17-May 15, 2015	After Feb. 9 Call Roll-out, ongoing Engagement
Feb. 24, 2015	Timeline decision – continue on Timeline #1 or shift to Timeline #2
March 12, 2015	Letter of Intent Deadline (Extended by two weeks from Feb. 26 previously)
May 21, 2015	Proposal Submission Deadline (Extended by one month from April 23 previously)
May-June 2015	Review, community feedback, recommendations & proposal selection (in June)
July 2015	Incubation process begins, with ongoing community engagement
August 2016	Initiate Phased implementation of School Plan

Timeline #2: Extended Timeline 40 month total process - 20 month incubation process

April 2014	Board Action to Support Five Schools
May-Nov. 2014	District staff develops process for intensive support & engagement
Dec. 2014-June 2015	Community engagement (see Timeline #1 above)
July-Oct. 2015	“Call for Quality Schools” – Deadline TBD – Continued engagement
Nov-Dec. 2015	Review of proposals, community feedback, recommendations, and approvals
February 2016	Incubation process begins, with deep community engagement
Fall 2017	Newly Designed Quality Schools launch

PLEASE NOTE: Shifting to Timeline #2 from Timeline #1 brings with it a shift in resource allocation that will come with the Intensive Support process, as well as a delay in any facility investment required to implement the new academic program.

Who will be reviewing & recommending the options to the Board?

ACADEMIC REVIEW BOARD

As part of the proposal evaluation process, the District will convene an ongoing team of content experts to review the proposals, conduct interview of proposal teams, and facilitate protocols with Site-Based Committees to evaluate the quality of the proposals submitted. This Academic Review Board will make recommendations to the Superintendent **and include all feedback from Site-based Committees.** Membership will include the following OUSD team members:*

- Chief Academic Officer
- Chief of Schools
- Deputy Chief, College & Career Readiness
- Deputy Chief, Community Schools
- Deputy Chief, Programs for Exceptional Children
- Executive Director, English Learner-Multi-Lingual Programs
- Executive Director, African American Male Achievement
- Executive Director, Research, Assessment & Data
- Director, Linked Learning
- Director, Continuous Schools Improvement
- Director, Assessments
- Manager, Mathematics
- Manager, Visual & Performing Arts
- Network Superintendent Representative
- Principal Representative
- Teacher on Special Assignment (TSA) for English & Language Arts & Math
- Community Schools & Student Services Office Representative

* Current list subject to change.

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