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**OAKLAND UNIFIED
SCHOOL DISTRICT***Community Schools, Thriving Students*

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MESSAGE FROM PRESIDENT JENNIFER BROUHARD

August 12, 2026

Good Evening, Everyone, and Welcome Back To the 2026–27 School Year.

It has been a very busy summer in Oakland Unified.

We began the summer celebrating groundbreaking ceremonies for new facilities at McClymonds, CCPA, and Melrose Leadership Academy. At the same time, our Buildings and Grounds teams were hard at work preparing our schools for students, including important heat-mitigation work across the district. And, as we heard tonight, our finance team has spent the summer working on the 45-day budget revision and continuing the difficult work of stabilizing our district's finances.

I also had the opportunity to spend time with some of the newest members of our OUSD family.

I attended the New Teachers' Institute at Oakland Tech and the end-of-week dinner at Nido's. I spoke with teachers who are brand new to the profession and others who are new to OUSD but bring years of experience from other districts. What struck me most was their excitement. They are ready to meet their students. They are ready to teach. And they are excited to become part of our Oakland community.

I also attended the first day of the Leadership Institute. Our student speakers, Director Bloch and Director Tongun, set an important tone for the day. They reminded us that site leadership has a direct impact on the student experience—and that students have expectations for the adults who lead their schools.

And now, after all of the preparation, we are ready.

All week, I have seen Buildings and Grounds trucks at our school sites, making sure our campuses are clean, safe, and ready for students. I have watched our football teams practicing on their fields, preparing for opening-day games. I witnessed registration events at several high schools welcoming students back. The first station at several sites was the New Cellphone Policy station. Just a reminder that OUSD now has a bell-to-bell no cellphone policy. This is a state policy passed by Legislature, and all schools in California must adhere to it. Across this district, people have been getting ready to welcome our students back.

And there is a great deal of work ahead of us.

This year, we will make difficult decisions about budget stabilization and labor negotiations. We will continue the search for our next superintendent and our work to improve student achievement. We will receive feasibility studies for three vacant properties and have important conversations about how those properties can best serve our students, families, and staff.

We will also make decisions about charter schools whose charters are up for renewal.

We will continue our work to make sure that Oakland schools are safe places for students, staff, and families. And we will continue our work on ICE protocols. We know there will be increased ICE presence in our communities, and we must be prepared. Oakland Unified is a sanctuary district, and we will continue working to protect our students, our families, and our staff and to ensure that our schools remain places where every student can learn without fear.

The recent shooting at the Roots Community Center was a terrible tragedy and a painful reminder that the safety of our students and families extends beyond the walls of our schools. We must continue to work with the City and County to invest in and strengthen violence prevention efforts.

Keeping our communities safe is not the responsibility of any one institution. It is a shared responsibility. The City, the County, the school district, community organizations, and our residents all have a role to play. We must work together, coordinate our resources, and invest in prevention so that our schools and community spaces are places where young people and families can feel safe, supported, and welcome.

There will be disagreements this year. There will be difficult conversations. Some decisions will be harder than others. But I believe deeply in this district and in the people who make up OUSD. Our responsibility is to keep students at the center of every decision we make. We may not always agree about the path, but we share a commitment to ensuring that every Oakland student has the opportunity to thrive.

So, to our students: welcome back.

To our families: thank you for trusting us with your children.

To our educators and staff: thank you for the extraordinary work you do every day.

And to everyone who makes up the Oakland Unified School District community: welcome to the 2026–27 school year.

We have a lot of work ahead of us. Let's get to work.