

**Oakland Education
Association/CTA/NEA (OEA)**

Initial Proposal To

Oakland Unified School District

(OUSD) For

Successor Agreement

July 1, 2013--June 30, 2016



This proposal was generated using the input from hundreds of OEA members at dozens of sites over the past two months. We asked our members three questions.

- 1.What are the most important things needed to improve students' academic and social/emotional outcomes?
- 2.What are the most important things you need to develop as a professional educator?
- 3.What are the factors that might prevent you from remaining as a career educator in Oakland?

We strongly believe their answers to these central questions form the basis for this proposal.

We heard over and over again that Oakland educators are deeply committed to the success of every student they work with. **They need their voices to be heard and their judgment to be respected. Recognition of and support for their efforts must be at the core of the way OUSD functions.**

OEA members embrace meaningful reforms in education such as the Quality Education Improvement Act (QEIA) and the Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF), and are working hard to implement the new Common Core Standards. But doing so effectively requires that they be engaged in discussing and designing the changes and adapting them to the communities, students and parents they serve. Central to this is working with parents and other staff in school site councils to produce site plans. All stakeholders should be engaged and supported to be accountable for the success of our children.

OEA members desire to improve as professional educators—but feel that the best training for such improvement may differ significantly from site to site, department to department and for educators at different stages of their careers. Centrally directed, top down, one-size-fits all professional development may be necessary in a minority of cases, however, **local school communities know what their specific strengths and weaknesses are and should have a substantial say in identifying and selecting training topics and providers.**

We crave opportunities for collaboration and support. Our members benefit from the time to prepare, discuss and get meaningful feedback on their teaching. **Quality instruction requires regular time within the work day to process new ideas, prepare lessons and reflect on how to integrate them.**

All students benefit from a well-rounded education that includes the arts, music and physical education. It's not sufficient for these programs to be offered primarily as after school activities by instructors without state certification. They should be an integral part of the school day and provided by trained professional educators. **Providing more of that time by enhancing the offerings within the student day is a goal for us.**

Most California public schools are under resourced, but OUSD's unique circumstances have made a bad situation worse. The spending decisions imposed by a State Trustee a decade ago have still not been properly addressed since control was returned to the elected board.

Oakland central office administration consistently violates state spending statutes regarding the ratio of administrators to teachers for which it has been repeatedly fined by the State Controller's Office. The same is true of the statutory mandate to spend at least 55% on classroom expenses. **A greater investment is needed at the school sites to keep class sizes low and provide support and services for struggling students.**

Oakland students need the reality of full service community schools, not just its rhetoric. They need on site counseling and psychological services provided by professionals with the appropriate state credentials at every site. They need up to date technology and certificated staff who know how to integrate it into meaningful learning experiences.

Budgets are statements of priorities. Oakland students need education professionals at all levels for whom the decision to make a career helping Oakland's children is not also a decision to sacrifice their financial well-being. OUSD can provide the employees of Oakland with salaries that are competitive with other Bay Area districts. We need to attract and retain educators who will make Oakland students their life's work instead of a training ground for other, higher paying Districts.

By redirecting its budget in accordance with established public policy, state law, and community priorities OUSD can afford to implement these badly needed changes while maintaining fiscal solvency. We look forward to working together to achieve a better education for all of Oakland's children.