



**OAKLAND UNIFIED
SCHOOL DISTRICT**

Community Schools, Thriving Students

Equitable Enrollment Working Group

Recommendations - Presentation to Board and Public



October 14, 2020

tinyurl.com/OUSDenrollmentequity

Agenda

1. Progress of Working Group
2. Recommendations from 3 Working Group Subcommittees
3. Recommendations on Approaching a Future Broader Policy Update
4. Next Steps

Working group membership

Albert Olson Hong	Parent
Andy Singer	Parent
Cynthia Bagby	Principal - Redwood Heights
David Byrd	Teacher - Oakland High; Parent
Jerome Gourdine	Office of Equity staff
Jason Joseph	Teacher - Futures Elementary
Jonathan Perry	KIPP Bay Area staff
Keta Brown	Oakland REACH; Parent
Luis Rodriguez	Oakland Enrolls staff
Michelle Gonzalez	Assistant Principal - Frick United
Nidya Baez	Assistant Principal - Fremont High
Rachel Latta	Equity Allies; Parent

Note: 6 original members were unable to remain participants for personal reasons.

Progress thus far

- 15 meetings
- Designed and distributed community survey -> results were presented at June Board update
- Created website to track our progress:
<https://tinyurl.com/OUSSDenrollmentequity>
- Reviewed case studies from 3 other cities: Denver, Berkeley, Boston
- Based on community survey results and Board feedback, split into 3 subcommittees focused on pain points that were deemed to have both higher impact and higher feasibility

Key Deliverables for today

- Recommendations from 3 subcommittees:
 - Enrollment marketing
 - Increased access to high-demand schools
 - Supports for non-native English speakers

- Recommendations on how to approach a broader enrollment policy change in the spring

Recommendations from Small Groups

Enrollment marketing

Problem: Parents choose or do not choose schools based on their perception of whether the school is considered quality. This problem arises because we are not telling the story that shows something different than traditional biases that have existed for so long.

Goal: Start with researching effective enrollment strategies and developing a toolkit for marketing strategies to be employed centrally and through individual school sites in the 2020-21 school year and beyond.

Background Research:

- Equitable Enrollment Survey
- Talked to Chris Campos, researcher at UC Berkeley, about preliminary school marketing research in Los Angeles.
- Met with Christie Herrera about strategies used to increase enrollment at the Childhood Development Centers.
- Met with Geoff Vu about student-focused marketing strategies used for the Middle School Initiative
- Talked to Fremont HS staff for strategies used to increase their enrollment.

Key Findings:

- Communication about schools programs and success needs to be intentional.
- The more information you share, the more it will influence parent decisions. If it is not highlighted, parents and families are less likely to know about the great things happening at schools.
- Parents will share information with each other (“spill over”)
- The type of information shared should be more than performance data; it is helpful to include information about academic growth, academic programs, alumni information, community building/culture building, student and

Enrollment marketing

Recommendation #1: Centrally supported videos for middle and high schools. The videos would be created over a three year cycle with about 10 each year. Start with a pilot for Fremont High School to be a model of what we do for all schools.

Rationale:

- Provide a baseline marketing available accessed on central and school site web pages and to share with families.
- Not all school sites have the capacity to make their own videos.
- Creating a model by starting with Fremont would allow sites to see what is possible for their own video.

Considerations: We would need to create a budget and staffing analysis to be able to support this recommendation. This would need to be prioritized in the budget development process for departments supporting the work (i.e. Communications, KDOL).

Enrollment marketing

Recommendation #2: Central office should work with school sites to create a school spotlight section on a regularly distributed newsletter to families and staff that would include a photo and a highlight of the programs and achievements for each school throughout the year.

Rationale

- Central Office would support school sites increasing the communication about the positive programming happening in all of our schools.

Considerations

- School sites would need to commit to providing central office communications with a photo and highlight from their school once a year.
- Communication office would need to prioritize time and capacity for this effort.

Enrollment marketing

Recommendation #3: Create a social media toolkit for each school site to support sites to increase their social media presence to attract students and families to each school.

Rationale

- Many families and students use social media as their main channel of communication.
- We have seen success in using this strategy with our middle schools and at Fremont who created a social media plan for their site.

Considerations

- Would require commitment from each school site to prioritize implementing the tools provided in the toolkit, by dedicating a point person or lead team to coordinate the efforts.

Increased access for low-income families

Problem: Low-income families are unable to easily access high-demand schools, if they so choose, because of the current system of enrollment priorities.

Goal: Propose a few smaller-scale initiatives around the enrollment priorities that could increase access for low-income families to high-demand schools and that could provide information to learn from when approaching a broader enrollment policy update.

Background Research:

- Equitable Enrollment Survey
- Learnings from Denver's school pilots around FRL priority vs FRL minimum percentage
- Learnings from Berkeley around using Census information as a proxy for FRL
- Conversations with high-demand schools, and their conversations with their school communities
- Modeling different enrollment priority scenarios at a few high-demand schools

Increased access for low-income families

Recommendation #1: Add equitable enrollment priority pilots at 3-4 schools to create more access to high-demand schools.

Rationale:

- These school communities had previously expressed interested in exploring enrollment policy changes with a lens of increasing equitable access and diversifying their schools
- School diversity is a top value that families mentioned in the equitable enrollment community survey
- Pilots can help inform potential broader policy changes and how to resolve the tension between neighborhood schools vs integration

Considerations:

- Pilots have been driven more so by affluent communities at high-demand schools
- Modeled potential impact on surrounding schools, but reality could differ next year
- District does not yet have a stance on the importance of school integration
- Are non-neighborhood families “displaced” from high-demand schools willing to attend other OJUSD schools? How can the District support this?

Increased access for low-income families

Recommendation #2: Add enrollment priority (after neighborhood) for pre-K students to continue at the nearest elementary school, which is typically on the same campus.

Rationale:

- Majority of Pre-K families are low-income families because Pre-K admissions process prioritizes these families
- Provides continuity for these families at their school site and/or to stay together as a cohort, which we see that these families want
- Continues goal of creating seamless PK-12 system for families
- May encourage/incentivize more Pre-K families to apply on-time, and elementary schools on the same campus to support Pre-K families with applying

Considerations:

- This is a priority, not a guarantee, but that may be confusing for families

Supports for Non-Native English Speakers

Problem: Non-English native speaking families do not participate in the On Time application process as much as native English speakers.

Goal: Better understand the “why” by exploring choice tools, processes, and supports. Also, explore the need for continued engagement/ongoing support throughout the school year.

Background Research

- Equitable Enrollment Survey
- Case studies presented by other urban districts
- Focus groups with Spanish speaking families
- Focus groups with Arabic speaking families
- Various research, articles, and experiences
- *Work in progress: focus groups with Mam families and surveys to high school students from non-native English speaking families*

Key Recommendations

1. Additional Materials and Supports
2. Improve Academic Quality Information
3. Clarify Value and Meaning of Diverse Schools
4. Increase Immigrant Family Supports

Supports for Non-Native English Speakers

Recommendation #1: Additional Materials and Supports

- a. Translate all materials, hosting tours and informational events in different languages, and having adequate levels of non-English speaking staff at OUSD schools, the OUSD Enrollment Office, and other offices that support non-English speaking families.
- b. Increase collaboration and training with community partners that have strong connections with non-English speaking communities.

Rationale from Equitable Enrollment Survey

- Non-English respondents utilize tools like SchoolFinder, websites, school tours, and school presentations at much lower rates than English respondents. (34% versus 17%)
- Most-identified theme for non-English respondents is “Information sharing and supports to help the research” and “application could be improved”, citing “translations and in-person support” as a desire.

Recommendation #2: Improve Academic Quality Information

- a. Design tools using the voice of the community that allows families to more easily research and understand school quality information, beyond just test scores, as well as ensure accuracy in school-created materials.

Rationale from Equitable Enrollment Survey Data

- When asked “Which factor was most important in selecting a school?”, Quality of Academics was the top factor for English respondents (53%) as well as non-English respondents (43%)

Supports for Non-Native English Speakers

Recommendation #3: Clarify Value and Meaning of Diverse Schools

- a. Families look for school culture, teacher training, and curriculum that allow for all students to feel welcome when selecting a school, and be able to succeed at all schools.
- b. Families need more concrete student assignment priorities/scenarios to react to when discussing why “school diversity” might be an important value in the student assignment process.

Rationale from Equitable Enrollment Survey

- While 50% of English survey respondents identified “school diversity” as a value, only 25% of non-English respondents identified that value.

Recommendation #4: Increase Immigrant Family Supports

- a. Connect key OUSD services with community partners that closely support immigrant families and are often trusted organizations that can assist with the full scope of enrollment, education challenges, and related services, such as food, housing, healthcare. Make it an integral part of the process vs. separate.
- b. Simplify the application process for all families by limiting the proof of residency information required to submit an application.

Rationale from Equitable Enrollment Survey

- Frequently identified pain point for non-English speaking respondents was “the time needed to research and apply or difficulty with technology” as well as improving the registration process.

Recommendations on Larger Policy Update

Recommendations for Larger Policy Update

1. Critical need for support and buy-in from School Board
2. Greater engagement with community
 - a. More focus groups with families of color to dig deeper into issues, with concrete scenarios to react to
 - b. More student voice and teacher voice
 - c. More efforts to engage families whose children are not yet school-aged
3. Acknowledge that there is a tension between neighborhood schools and integrated schools, as is true in any residentially segregated city. Need to understand philosophically where OUSD stands.
4. Situate the working group's efforts within a larger policy frame around importance of regularly revisiting enrollment policy and impact

Next Steps

Milestone	Timeline
Discuss and vote on updates to BP 5116.1	October/November 2020
Discuss and vote on new, overarching BP 5116 from Dir. Yee	October/November 2020
Discuss and vote on specific schools' equitable enrollment pilots	October/November 2020
Convene staff working groups focused on implementation of marketing and language supports recommendations	December 2020
Update AR 5116.1 to flesh out edits to BP 5116.1	January 2021
Meet with new Board to understand their enrollment priorities	February 2021
Reconvene equitable enrollment community working group	February 2021
Continued scenario modeling and community engagement	February-May 2021
Potential proposal of broader changes to enrollment policy	June 2021

Questions

Appendix

Current Set of Enrollment Board Policies



Proposed Set of Enrollment Board Policies

