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Board Cover Memorandum

To Facilities Committee

From Denise Saddler, Ed. D., Interim Superintendent
Preston Thomas, Chief Systems & Services Officer
Pranita Ranbhise, Executive Director, Facilities Planning & Management

Meeting Date March 19, 2026

Subject Water Quality Program Update – Facilities Master Plan Integration, Public Dashboard Launch, and Cal Fire Infrastructure Improvements

Ask of the Committee This item provides an informational update and discussion on the District’s ongoing water quality efforts. No action is requested at this time.

Background Ensuring safe, clean drinking water in schools remains a priority for the Oakland Unified School District (OUSD). In response to concerns about lead in drinking water systems, the District has implemented ongoing testing, filtration, fixture replacement, and infrastructure improvements across school campuses. As this work continues, staff are advancing several initiatives to strengthen water quality management and transparency. This update provides the Facilities Committee with an overview of how water quality considerations are being incorporated into the District’s Facilities Master Plan, how recently awarded Cal Fire grant funding will support improvements to drinking water infrastructure, the launch of a new public water quality testing dashboard, and the next steps in the District’s continued efforts to maintain safe drinking water across OUSD schools.

Discussion Staff will present an update on several ongoing initiatives supporting the District’s water quality program. The presentation will highlight how water quality considerations are being incorporated into the Facilities Master Plan, outline how Cal Fire grant funding will support improvements to drinking water infrastructure at selected school sites, introduce the newly developed public water quality testing dashboard designed to improve transparency and accessibility of testing data, and provide an overview of upcoming program activities, including infrastructure improvements and future testing efforts across OUSD campuses.

Key discussion points include:

- **Facilities Master Plan – Water Quality:** Integration of water quality needs into long-term facilities planning and infrastructure improvements.
- **Water Quality Dashboard:** Launch of a public dashboard providing transparent access to districtwide water testing results.
- **Cal Fire Grant:** Use of grant funding to install additional filtered water stations and improve drinking water infrastructure at selected campuses.
- **Next Steps:** Upcoming installations, procurement for summer testing, and continued monitoring of water quality across OUSD sites.

Fiscal Impact Bond Measures J and Y; Kitchen Infrastructure, and Training Funds.

Attachment(s) Presentation: Progress Updates - Water Quality Update

Water Quality Update

Facilities Committee Update

March 11, 2026

Presentation By:
Preston Thomas, OUSD Chief of Systems & Services
Nilufar Abdul, Assistant Manager of Systems & Services



**OAKLAND UNIFIED
SCHOOL DISTRICT**

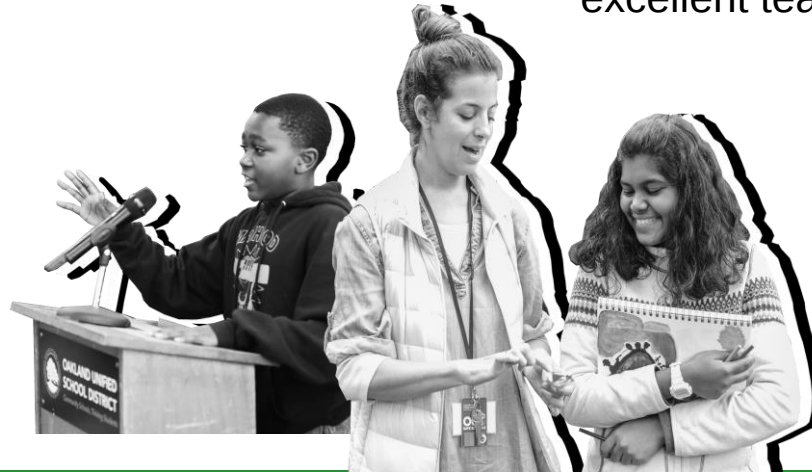
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Agenda



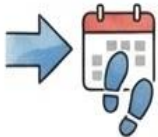
Facilities Master Plan
Water Quality Section



Testing Dashboard Live



Cal Fire Filtered Water
Stations Installation Plan



Next Steps



Providing Safe, Clean Drinking Water across OUSD

Strategy 1

Installation of Filtered
Water Stations

Strategy 2:

Comprehensive
Diagnostic Testing

Strategy 3

Replace Identified
Fixtures

Strategy 4

Signage and Visible
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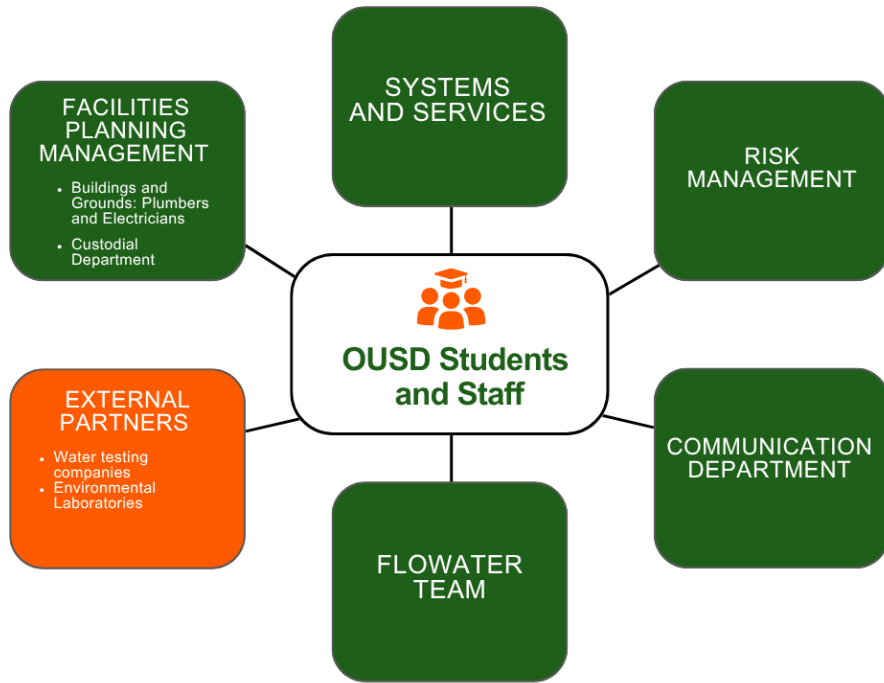
Replace Kitchen Plumbing
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Strategy 6

Improve
Communication Systems



Effective Systems = Effective Teams



- ❖ The OUSD Board has dedicated **\$20.5 Million of Measure J and Y**, and one time funding to address this problem.
- ❖ This work brings together teams across OUSD to build healthier, more supportive learning environments at every school.



OUSDs Commitment to High Standards

Goal: Provide safe, lead-free drinking water across all facilities.

OUSD Standard: < 5 ppb at consumable outlets (more protective than federal 15 ppb).

Regulatory backdrop: California **AB 746** required school lead sampling by **July 1, 2019**; EPA 3Ts remains the federal recommended framework for Training, Testing, Taking Action. [Cal Water Board](#)

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Summer 2025 comprehensive testing (completed):

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Staff Guidance

Scan QR code for updates!



MAXIMIZING WATER QUALITY AT OUSD



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Access to clean drinking water is vital for the health and well-being of every student and staff member.

OUSD has implemented a tiered approach to ensure all water on our campuses meets the District's high water quality standards. In addition, we are actively replacing water fixtures that test with elevated levels of lead. Any fixture that does not meet OUSD's strict standards is shut down immediately and remains out of service until the issue is fully addressed.

OUR APPROACH

- Installation of Filtered Hydration Stations
- Comprehensive Diagnostic Testing
- Replace Identified Fixtures
- Signage and Visible Cues
- Replace Kitchen Plumbing Systems
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BEST PRACTICES FOR ACCESSING SAFE DRINKING WATER AT YOUR SCHOOL

Encourage Use of Designated Filtered Hydration Stations

- Guide students to use FloWater, Elkay, and similar water dispensers that meet OUSD water quality standards.
- Please see OUSD Water Filtration Systems Dashboard to track your schools testing progress. [See here.](#)

Promote Use of Personal Water Bottles

- OUSD has delivered 60,000 reusable, aluminum water bottles to elementary schools for students to use.
- Encourage students to bring and refill personal bottles from designated safe water sources.
- Develop a routine for students to be able to access water bottle filling stations and drinking fountains that meet our water quality standards.

Encourage Proper Use of Designated Drinking Fountains

- Please guide students to ONLY use drinking fountains that are designated as safe with the placement of our OUSD water quality sticker.





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Facilities Master Plan: Sustaining Safe Drinking Water Across OUSD

Analysis conducted in partnership with Perkins Eastman and SALUT as part of the Facilities Master Plan process.



Current Achievements

- Protective 5 ppb lead standard (stricter than federal and state)
- Comprehensive district wide testing and remediation program
- Safe drinking water maintained across 81 campuses
- Only 4 fixtures remain offline pending remediation



What It Takes to Maintain Safe Water

- **Maintenance** - Filter replacement, fixture repair, equipment upkeep
- **Testing** - Verification testing after repairs and routine monitoring
- **Program management** - Data tracking, reporting, and coordination across school sites



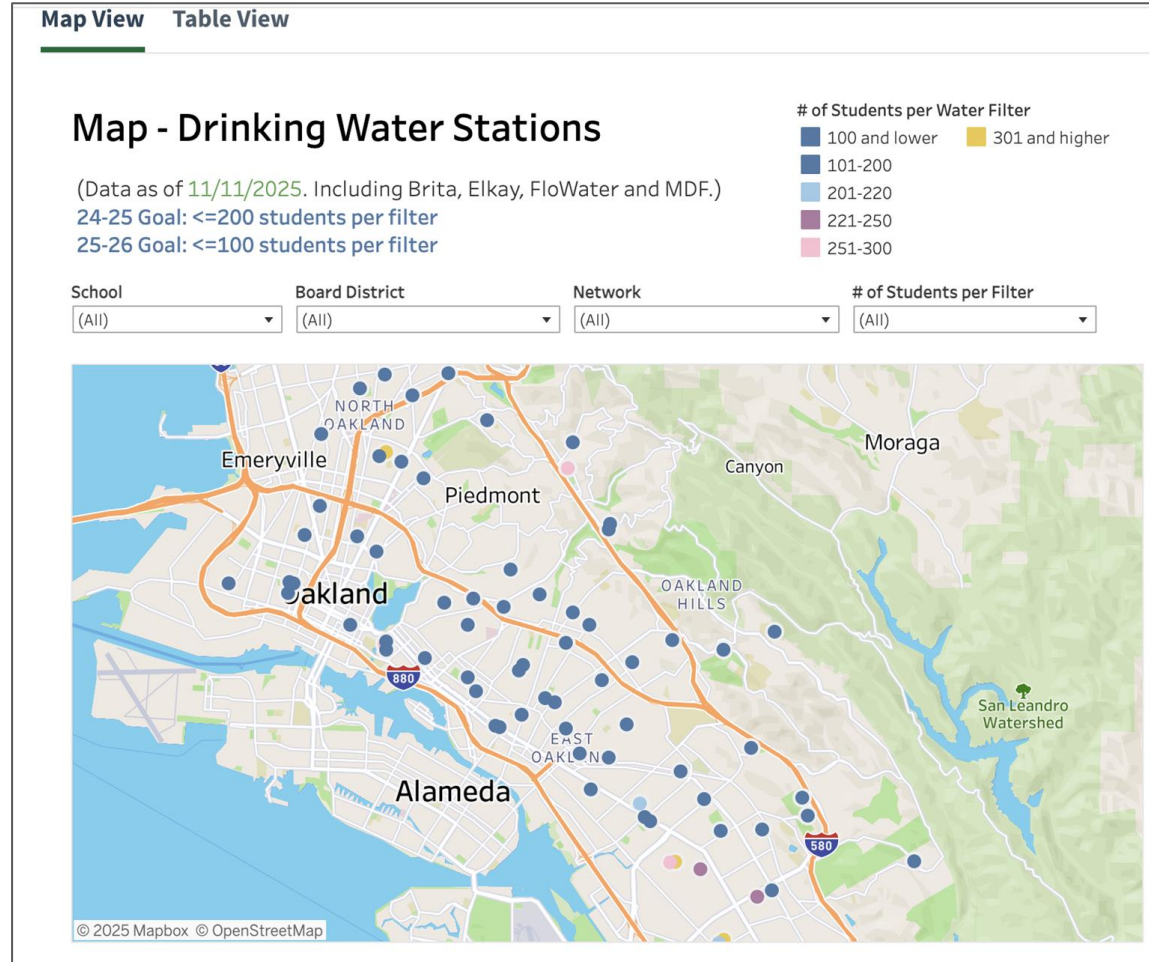
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- Address aging plumbing infrastructure over time through capital improvements



Dashboard Development

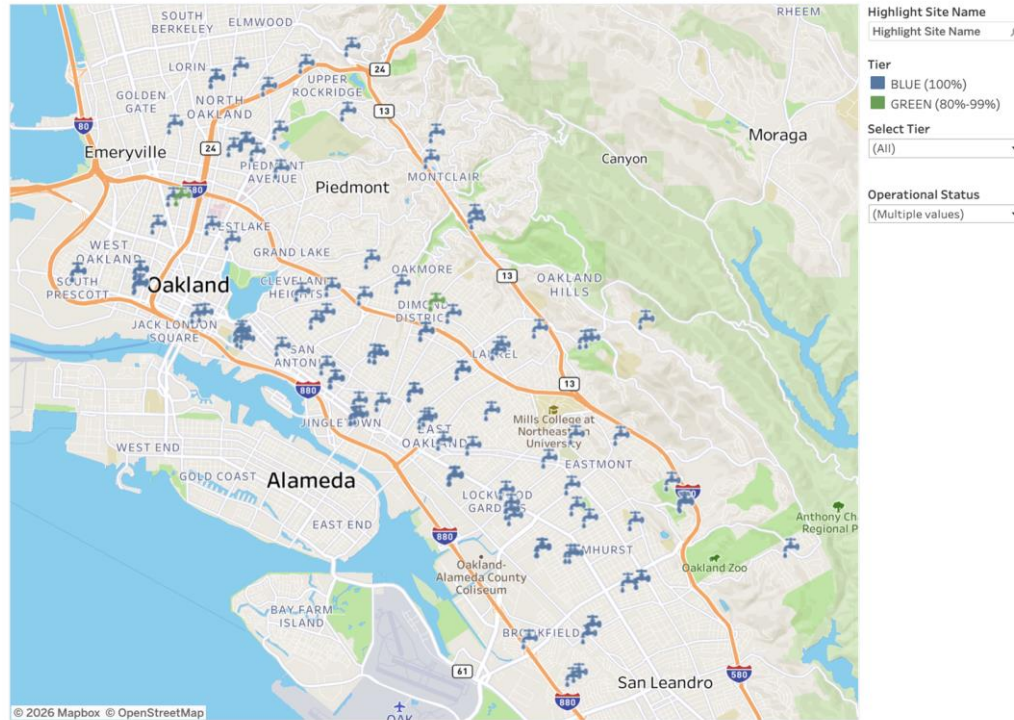
Water Filtration Systems Dashboard (Active)



Improving Transparency Through Water Quality Data

Map View List View Detailed by School

Map (click <https://tinyurl.com/mshudpth> to learn more about source of lead in drinking water.)



Purpose

- Convert complex lab data into clear visual information
- Make testing results accessible to staff, families, and the community

What It Shows

- Districtwide testing overview
- School-level results
- Fixture-level testing and remediation status

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To improve transparency and accessibility, OUSD developed a public Water Quality Testing Dashboard that converts complex testing data into clear visuals for staff, families, and the community.



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Visual map of all OUSD sites with color-coded status showing current water testing conditions.



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Districtwide list of schools showing fixtures tested, elevated, passed, and remaining repairs.



Detailed by School

Filterable school-level data including testing dates, fixture results, and remediation status.



Cal Fire Grant: Water Quality

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The Cal Fire Grant was expanded to support water quality and improvements at 16 school sites across the district.



Participating Sites:

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 Elmhurst United Middle	 Horace Mann Elementary
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Sites were previously identified within the Cal Fire Planning Grant and can only be used for outdoor water installations,

Cal Fire Grant: Water Quality

The Board approved the Cal Fire Grant in February. As part of the grant implementation, water infrastructure improvements will be completed at participating sites.

Goal: Improve access to **safe, modern drinking water infrastructure** and support long-term water quality standards across participating campuses.

Implementation Plan:



Increase Access to Filtered Water

Install additional filtered water stations to achieve a **100:1** student-to-station ratio



Modernize Drinking Fixtures

Remove older white porcelain drinking fountains and replace them with stainless steel units. ADA compliant is preferred

Introducing Additional OUSD Standard

OUSD is introducing **Elkay and Elkay Pro Filtration vandal-resistant drinking units** as an additional district standard to support **safe, durable drinking water infrastructure** across schools.

Key Benefits

- **Vandal Resistant:** Designed for school environments to reduce damage and downtime.
- **Cost Effective:** Units can be maintained internally by OUSD staff without voiding warranty.
- **Long Lifespan:** Estimated 10+ year service life with routine filter replacement.
- **Rodent-Resistant Design:** Enclosure design helps prevent rodent entry.
- **Water Quality:** Testing shows no lead elevations above the OUSD standard.



Next Steps

Next Steps

1. January 1, 2026: Launch Dashboard to replace old system for updating the community.
2. January 2026: Receive recommendations from Facilities Master Plan in January to address water quality issues in OUSD.
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Next Steps



March 2026

Procuring services for water testing in Summer 2026.



April 2026

Recommendations for updating Board Policy 3511.3



May 2026

Continue Installations, prepare for the summer testing.



Fiscal Analysis and Cost Overview



Start Cal Fire Installations of filtered water stations.



Summer 2026

Summer Water Quality Testing.

THANK YOU

Any Questions?



Additionally, for more information, please reach out:

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preston.thomas@ousd.org

Nilufar Abdul

Assistant Manager
Systems & Services Department
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Appendix

Testing Protocol

Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Guidelines

- OUSD follows EPA guidelines for school water quality testing
- Developed district-wide protocol to ensure consistency and accuracy

Sequential Testing Protocol (Drinking Fountains and Kitchens)

- Three samples collected per fountain:
 - **125 mL – Bubbler** (tests outlet)
 - **125 mL – Angle Stop** (tests behind fixture)
 - **250 mL – In-Wall Piping** (tests upstream plumbing)
- Allows precise identification of lead source if levels are elevated

Filtered Water Stations

- Single **250 mL sample** collected per unit
- Assesses filter effectiveness and water quality at point of use

Fixture Labeling & Tracking

- Unique nomenclature system created for **every** drinking fountain and filtered station
- Labels are matched to test results for targeted repairs
- Enables clear tracking of what's elevated, where it is, and how to fix it

Module 4: Developing a Sampling Plan
Develop a Code System for Samples

Code each outlet using a system that will allow each unique outlet to be identified by location, type and other relevant characteristics. The text below provides examples for coding by fixture type and sample type. The following is an example template that can be used to designate unique samples in single buildings.

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If multiple buildings are being sampled, include the building number as well.

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Thus, if that same drinking water fountain was located in building 1 (01), it would be coded as:

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Important Note: when taking sequential samples, be sure to add a number to the sample to indicate the order the samples were taken in.

- **155**= First sequential sample
- **255**= Second sequential sample

For example, the first 125-mL sequential sample taken at that same drinking water fountain, would be coded as:

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The coding should be identified on a site map, accompanied by a narrative that describes the observable conditions of each sampling location. It is also important to document any special conditions for the sampling, such as whether it was conducted after a remedy was implemented (e.g., after fixture/plumbing replacement, after POU filter installation), during a flushing evaluation (e.g., XX hours after morning flushings), or after aerator or inlet strainer cleaning so that results can be interpreted in the future.

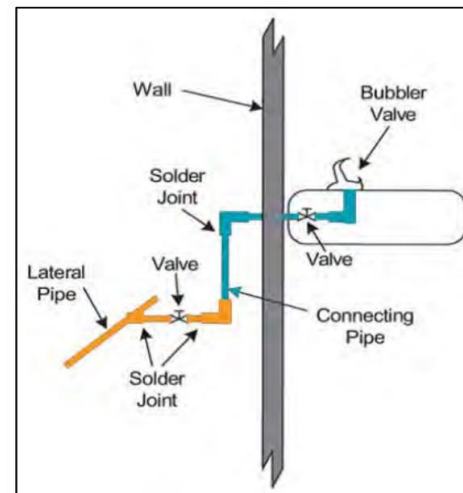
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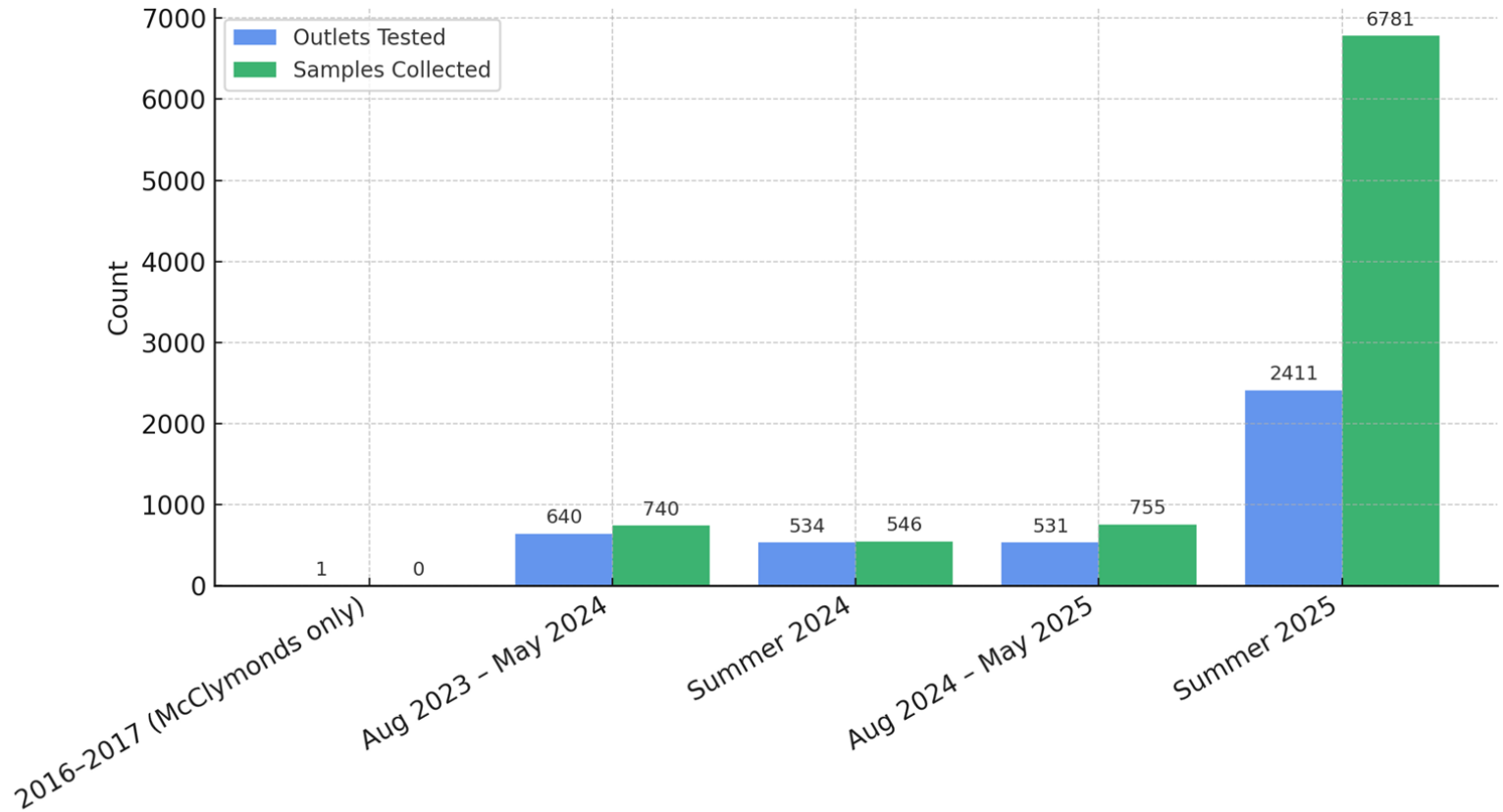
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- F= follow-up flush sample
- SS= sequential sample

Office of Water (4606M)
EPA 815-F-18-021
October 2018



U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. (2021). *3Ts for Reducing Lead in Drinking Water in Schools and Child Care Facilities: Revised Technical Guidance*. Retrieved from [EPA Guidelines](#). pp. 62

Testing Data for Recent Testing Windows



Water Quality Outlet Testing and Sample
Collection

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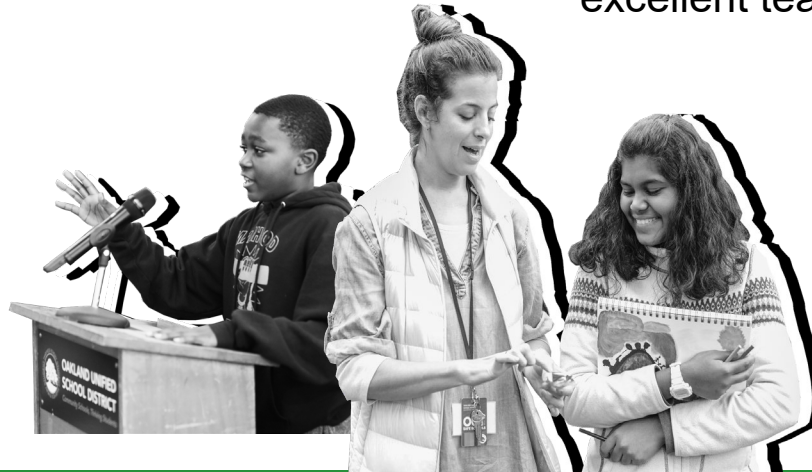
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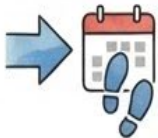
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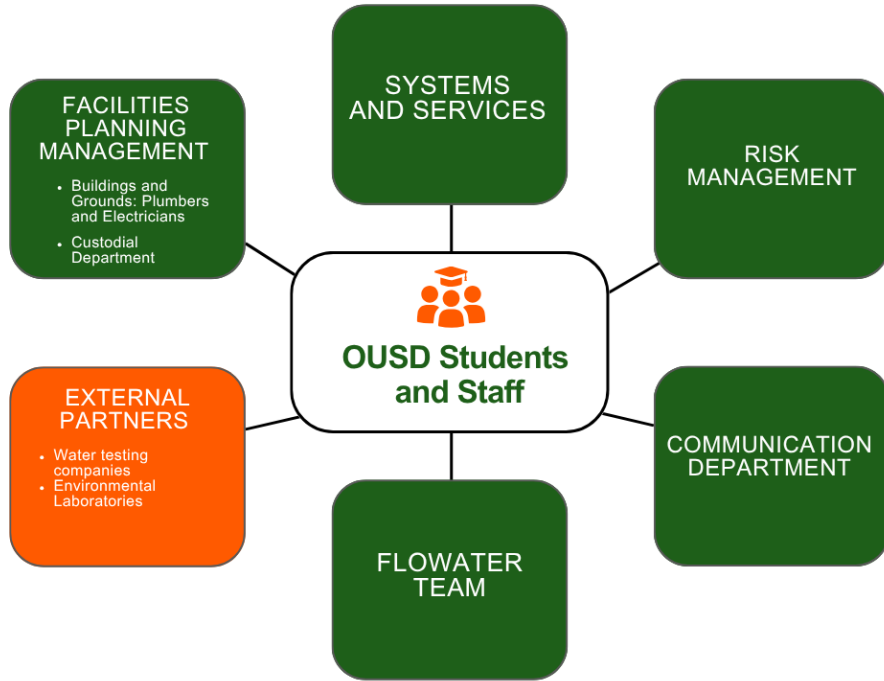
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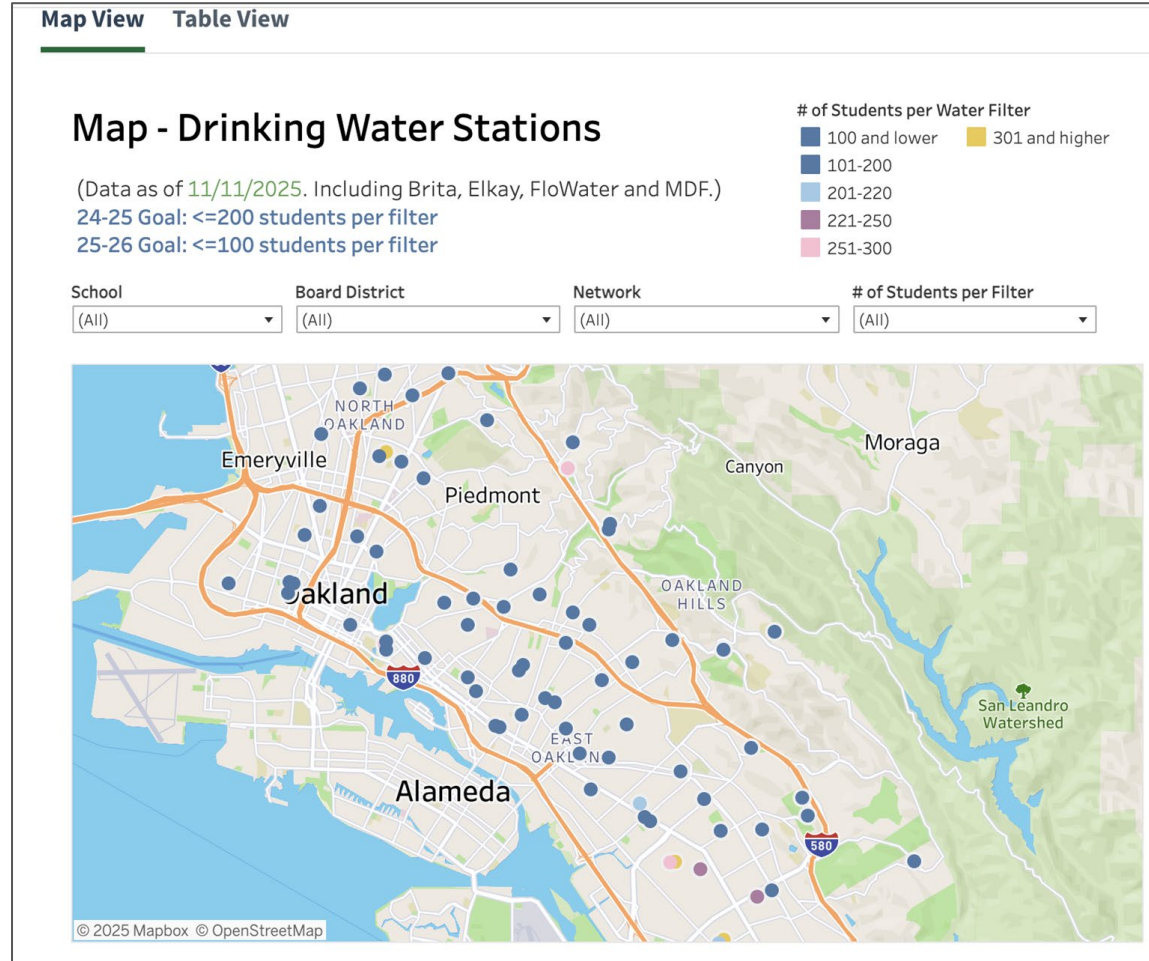
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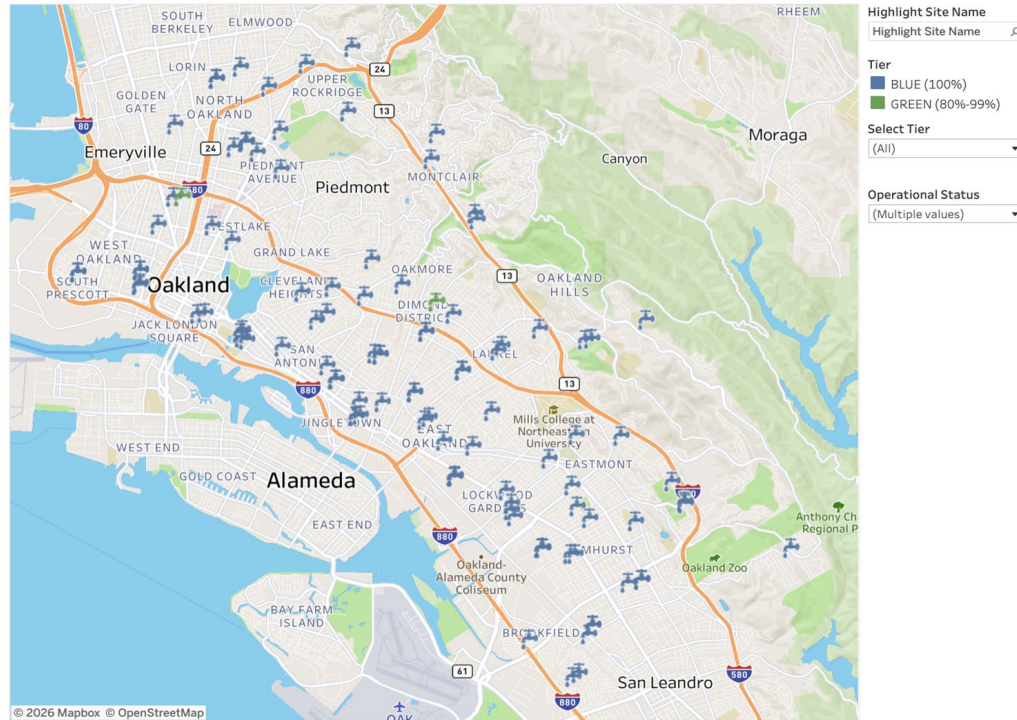
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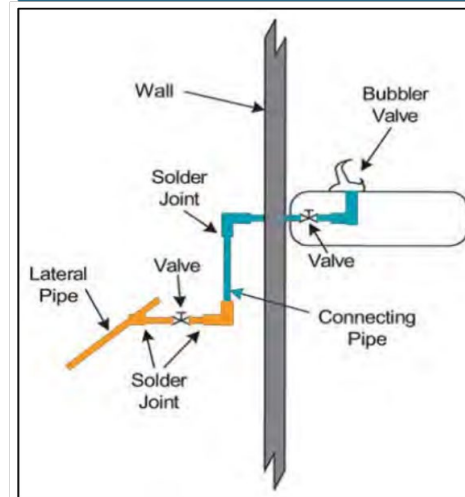
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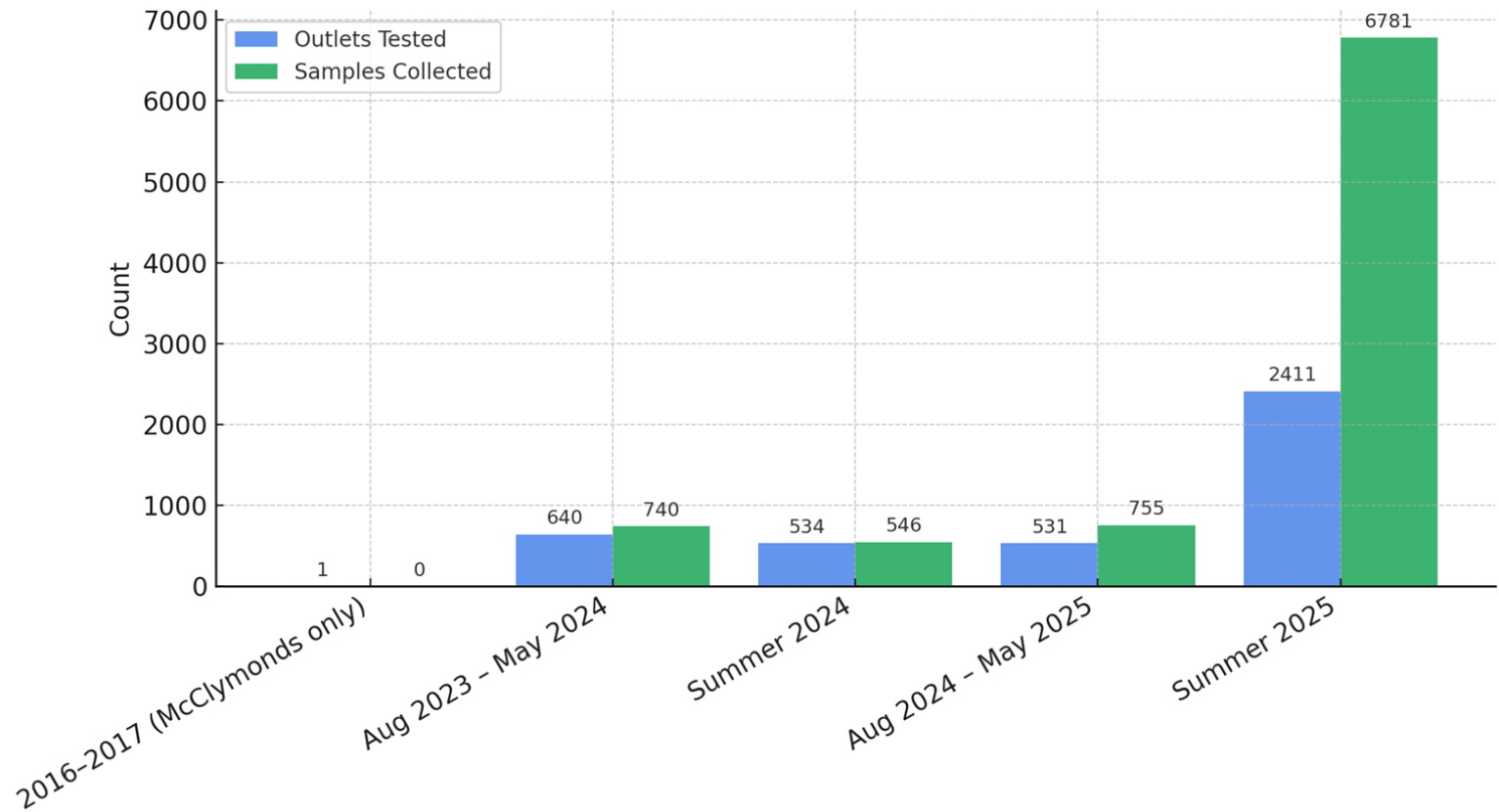
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EPA 815-F-18-021
October 2018



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Testing Data for Recent Testing Windows



Time Period
Water Quality Outlet Testing and Sample Collection