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## Memo

**To** Board of Education

**From** Kyla Johnson-Trammell, Superintendent  
Yvette Renteria, Deputy Chief of Innovation  
Jennifer Corn, Coordinator of Innovative Programs

**Board Meeting Date** March 25, 2020

**Subject** Blueprint Cohort 1 & 2 Update

**Action** Staff will provide an update to the Board of Education on the status of the Blueprint Cohort 1 & 2 Schools. The Board will be able to discuss key learnings, ask for further information, and provide direction for going forward.

**Background** On June 27, 2018, the Board of Education passed Blueprint for Quality Schools Cohort 1, directing the merger of Elmhurst Community Prep and Alliance Academy, now known as "Elmhurst United;" The merger of Futures and CUES on the Lockwood campus; and the expansion of MetWest. On January 28, 2019, the Board of Education also passed [Resolution 1819-0143](#), approving the closure of ROOTS Academy and the expansion of Coliseum College Prep Academy.

On March 20, 2019 the Board of Education passed [Resolution No. 1819-0178](#) - Resolution on Improving Engagement on Proposed School Changes, directing the formation of an Ad Hoc Committee to review the process for determining Blueprint School changes.

On September 11, 2019 the Board of Education passed three resolutions comprising Cohort Two of the Blueprint for Quality Schools:

- [Resolution No. 1920-0156C](#) - Proposal To Merge The Kaiser Elementary School And Sankofa Elementary School Programs At The Sankofa Campus
- [Resolution No. 1920-0156A](#) - Proposal to Implement a Quality Program Design Year for Fruitvale Elementary School
- [Resolution No. 1920-0156B](#) - Proposal To Merge Frick Impact Academy And School Of Language (SOL) On Frick Campus And To Expand Melrose Leadership Academy (MLA) On The Sherman And Maxwell Park Campuses

A key component of the Blueprint for Quality Schools process is supporting the current cohort of schools through a design process focused on preparing the schools to implement significant changes that will result in improved school quality and outcomes for students. The purpose of this report is to

provide the board and other stakeholders an update on the design process, supports, and outcomes to date, as directed by the Cohort Two resolutions.

**Discussion**

OUSD’s Blueprint for Quality Schools is a multi-year initiative that is designed to address three critical and interlocking challenges that we face as a system: Sustainability, Quality, and Equity.

As a system we must take action to address these issues which have gone unattended for multiple years and through multiple prior administrations. We believe, even though it is challenging, that the Blueprint can play an important role in providing the conditions needed to improve school and systemic sustainability, quality, and equity.

	<b>Challenges we face</b>	<b>Our Actions in Response to the Challenges</b>
<b>Sustainability</b>	OUSD has too many unsustainable, under-resourced schools that, at the current number and size, are unable to provide our students and staff what they need to succeed and thrive.	Strategically identifying the best options for school mergers, redesigns, expansions of existing schools, and closures that will result in fewer, but better resourced schools in each region.
<b>Quality</b>	As a result of having too many unsustainable, under-resourced schools, we are not able to provide our schools with the conditions and resources that produce and sustain high quality schools.	Supporting and resourcing school communities to engage in a rigorous design process that includes clear goals and strategies to meet the needs of our student populations, accelerate student growth/ achievement, and increase enrollment and demand.
<b>Equity</b>	Our most vulnerable students are disproportionately underserved by our current system and do not have access to the high quality programs that best meet their needs.	Prioritizing our most vulnerable students <sup>1</sup> , who will enroll in and demonstrate growth at higher quality schools.

**Blueprint Design Process**

A rigorous and well-supported design process is integral to the Blueprint’s theory of action, and the key lever for ensuring that this initiative yields not

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<sup>1</sup> African American, Latinx, Pacific Islander, Socio-Economically Disadvantaged, Special Education, Foster Youth, Newcomers, and English Language Learners.

just fewer, but higher quality schools that are well prepared to provide our most vulnerable students with an educational experience that results in student growth and achievement across multiple measures.

The Blueprint’s design process is designed to support school leaders and their communities to engage in a year-long planning and engagement process that prepares them to implement critical changes to their new or expanded school. The design process includes the following programmatic modules:

- Establishing, Recruiting and Launching a Design Team
- Foundational Documents (Mission, Vision, Core Values, Profile of a Learner)
- Instructional Program
- School Culture
- Systems for Adult Learning and Leadership

In addition, Blueprint schools receive operational support during the design year from departments across BUSD, including:

- Enrollment
- Facilities
- Tech Services
- Community Schools and Student Services
- Talent
- Buildings & Grounds

### **Cohort 2 Design Year Update**

In this section we will provide a brief profile of each of the Design Teams actively participating in Cohort 2.

<b>Sankofa United Merger of Henry J. Kaiser Elementary and Sankofa Academy</b>	
Design Team members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Dennis Guikema, Kaiser Principal</li> <li>● Denise Saddler, Sankofa Principal</li> <li>● Traci Grizzle, David Carrigan, and Erica Macklin, Sankofa staff</li> <li>● Sugeera Eckley, Tamila Jackson, and Elizabeth Tinoco, Kaiser staff</li> <li>● Dana Garrett, Valerie Manchester, and Dani Conde, Sankofa parents</li> <li>● Ken Angelo, Chione Flegal, and Howard Green, Kaiser parents</li> </ul>
Key Accomplishments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The team has agreed on the Mission, Vision, and Core Values for the merged school. The team has also developed a Profile of a Learner and a Profile of an Educator.</li> <li>● The team is planning for participation in the EL Education ELA curriculum pilot, and working with OUSD Behavioral Health staff to develop an MTSS (multi-tiered system of support) plan.</li> <li>● After engaging with both school communities, the team has chosen the name Sankofa United for the merged school.</li> <li>● Members of both school communities continue to cultivate relationships.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Design Team has held two Report Back meetings, at which they have shared work-in-progress and solicited feedback from community members at both schools. Both events were attended by about forty community members.</li> </ul>
Challenges	A group of parents and staff from Kaiser are leading Oakland Not For Sale, an advocacy group that opposes all OUSD school closures and mergers. The vocal opposition from Oakland Not for Sale has impacted both school communities.

<b>Merger of Oakland SOL and Frick Impact Academy</b>	
Design Team members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Amapola Obrera, SOL Principal</li> <li>Michael Ray, Frick Principal</li> <li>Catherine Cotter, Jaymie Lollie, Erin Rodriguez, Dewanna Slaughter, Jarod Scott, Frick Staff</li> <li>Officer Robert Smith, Frick Community Partner</li> <li>Cassandra Baker and Deirdré Mercedes, Frick Parents</li> <li>Humberto Bracho, Simone Delucchi, Yaccaira de la Torre, Zach Bell, SOL staff</li> <li>Brittany Nuno-Pelayo, SOL Parent</li> <li>Jerome Gourdine, Tom Felix, Lubia Sanchez, OUSD central office partners</li> </ul>
Key Accomplishments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Design Team has drafted Mission, Vision, and Core Values for the Merged School, as well as a Portrait of a Graduate.</li> <li>The Design Team has developed a draft master schedule that includes differentiated opportunities for all students to learn Spanish.</li> <li>During the January 31 buyback day, Frick and SOL staff attended an overnight retreat together, facilitated by Edutainment for Equity. The two staffs built relationships and learned about each school's strengths and challenges.</li> </ul>
Challenges	Both SOL and Frick have experienced challenges this year with staffing, and both schools have new principals. The instability and transitions at both sites have complicated the design process for these merging schools.

<b>Expansion of Melrose Leadership Academy</b>	
Design Team members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Bri Zika, MLA Principal</li> <li>Kirstin Hernandez, Allison Briscoe-Smith, Andrea Holloway-Lowe, Mike Viola, Ursula Aldana, Rocio Camacho, Mercedes Cordova, Elena Perez, Patricia</li> </ul>

	<p>Segura, MLA parents</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Beatriz Ferrer-Castro, Gabriela Casal, Holly Welch, Mary Ramos Peña, Evelyn Ramirez, Laura Gonzalez, Luz Salazar-Jed, Sheila Loarca, MLA staff</li> <li>• Nicole Knight, MLA Parent &amp; OUSD central office partner</li> </ul>
Key Accomplishments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Design Team made the decision that their expansion will mean locating TK-2nd grade students at the Sherman campus, and 3rd-8th grade students at the Maxwell Park campus.</li> <li>• Committees are working on the logistics of the expansion, cultivating a strong community across the two sites, and building on the existing strengths of the instructional program.</li> </ul>
Challenges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The implementation of the decision to locate 4th and 5th graders at Sherman this year was a challenge, with a short timeline that meant that technology access and classroom furniture were not fully in place on the first day of school. As a result, building trust with the MLA community and staff has been a challenge.</li> <li>• Both the Sherman and Maxwell Park facilities have significant maintenance needs.</li> </ul>

<b>Quality Program Design at Fruitvale Elementary</b>	
Design Team members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Eugene Stovall, Fruitvale Principal</li> <li>• Carinne Salnave, Angela Tyler, Christina Anderson, Genaro Castillo, Bethany Meyer, Fruitvale staff</li> <li>• Michael Gomez Sr., Fruitvale parent</li> </ul>
Key Accomplishments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Design Team revised the Mission and Vision for Fruitvale Elementary.</li> <li>• The Design Team has focused on recruitment efforts, including building a website for the school.</li> </ul>
Challenges	Because the Blueprint has been associated primarily with school closures and mergers, determining the scope of the redesign and building trust have been challenges.

### **Blueprint Evaluation Process**

In order to ensure the Blueprint design process yields greater quality, equity, and sustainability for OUSD's schools, the Office of Innovation has begun to build an evaluation framework and continuous improvement action plan. This framework and plan:

- Is guided by a set of clear goals by which the district will measure the success of this initiative
- Uses a range of qualitative and quantitative data to demonstrate progress towards these goals

- Includes processes to use interim data to drive the continuous improvement of support systems and practices for schools and communities involved in the blueprint process

Included in our evaluation and continuous improvement plan are several mechanisms to collect data from our design teams, and school and system leaders, in order to better understand the experience, perspectives, and needs of all design team members. Specifically, we have designed two key data collection tools:

- The Design Team Survey
- School and Systems Leaders Interview Protocol

We use data from these tools to inform and improve our support and services to current and future cohorts of school teams working to lead design, merger, or expansion processes in OUSD.

To date, we have:

- Administered the mid-year Design Team Survey in January 2020 and analyzed data
- Conducted Cohort 2 School and Systems Leaders Interviews (in process)
- Completed and analyzed Cohort 1 School Leader Interviews to inform our Cohort 2 design process

### **Cohort 2 Interim Data & Findings**

In January 2020, we launched our first Design Team Surveys. The purpose of the Design Team Survey is to better understand the experience, perspectives, and needs of all design team members in order to inform and improve our support and services to current and future cohorts of school teams working to lead redesign, merger, or expansion processes in OUSD.

Twenty-seven Design Team members completed the mid-year survey.

- Design Teams: 33% of respondents were from MLA, 30% from Frick-SOL, 30% from Kaiser-Sankofa, and 7% from Fruitvale.
- Roles: 37% of the respondents were teachers, 22% staff, 22% principals, and 19% parents/guardians.
- Ethnicities: 37% of respondents were White, 30% African-American, 26% Latinx, 11% multiple ethnicities, 4% Asian, 4% Jewish, and 7% decline to state.

Mid-year survey results can be found [here](#).

Key learnings from the survey results:

- Design teams have formed positive relationships. Members feel valued and a sense of belonging.
- Design teams believe that their work will lead to improved student growth/achievement and positive school cultures.
- Design Team members appreciate the support they receive from the Office of Innovation and view the Office of Innovation staff as responsive advocates.
- The mid-year Design Teams retreat hosted by the Office of Innovation was viewed by Design Team members as well-planned and well-facilitated. Participants were able to build connections both within and across teams.
- Design Team members express concern about whether their school

communities understand the work they are doing.

- Design teams express a need for more support and resources in order to achieve their goals.
- Design Team members believe that their teams are doing good work that will benefit their students, but they do not understand how the Blueprint for Quality Schools will improve student outcomes across the district.

### **Cohort 1 Implementation Year Update**

In this section we will provide a brief profile of each of the schools that is currently in the first year of Blueprint Implementation

<b>Elmhurst United Middle School (merger)</b>	
Leader	Kilian Betlach
Key Accomplishments	<p><b>Sustainability:</b> The Elmhurst United merged school had higher overall enrollment in 2019-20 than the combined enrollment of the two schools before the merger (716 vs. 658 across all grades), meaning the school received additional resources beyond those offered as part of the redesign process.</p> <p><b>Sustainability:</b> 89% of 6th and 7th graders who were enrolled at ECP/Alliance in 2018-19 re-enrolled in OUSD schools for 2019-20. Of these, 96% opted to enroll in the newly merged Elmhurst United.</p> <p><b>Quality:</b> Expanded course offerings include Band, Spanish language classes, Dance classes, expanded Computer Science for all, and Oakland Goes Outdoors (overnight experience in nature for all students)</p>
Challenges	<p><b>Equity:</b> Elmhurst United welcomed 40 ROOTS students, the single largest group of ROOTS students to enroll in an OUSD school. Supporting these students through the transition has been a challenge, and has required additional resources (academic, social-emotional, transportation).</p>

<b>Merger of Futures and CUES</b>	
Leader	Shelley McCray
Key Accomplishments	<p>These two schools will fully merge in the Fall of 2021.</p> <p>Design work to date:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Design Team created new vision statement with STEAM focus</li> <li>● Designed new maker space classrooms with flexible seating options, aligned schedules and academic programming</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Created robust PLC teams and teacher coaching across both schools (teachers at CUES and Futures meeting together)</li> <li>Formed several task forces to engage staff and families around school beautification, dual language programming, English Language Development, parent engagement, culture and climate, and academic intervention.</li> <li>Students have demonstrated growth on SRI and IAB, staff is more unified across campus, and parent engagement is increased.</li> </ul>
Challenges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Developing cohesive instructional programming with Dual Language and Sheltered English Instruction.</li> <li>Need to move classrooms to integrate schools and align grade levels across both schools.</li> </ul>

<b>Coliseum Community Prep Academy (expansion)</b>	
Leader	Amy Carroza
Key Accomplishments	<p><b>Quality:</b> CCPA has positive student outcomes in terms of cohort graduation, A-G completion, and pathway participation. In 2019-20, CCPA expanded its enrollment by increasing the number of 6th grade seats by 57 students, with plans to continue growing from the bottom over the next six years, expanding access to a quality program.</p> <p><b>Equity:</b> Relative to 2018-19 enrollment, a greater percentage of students in the new 2019-20 6th grade cohort were African American and fewer were Hispanic/Latinx. The expansion allowed the school to admit 28 more Hispanic/Latinx 6th graders than in the prior year, as well as 21 more African American 6th graders than in the prior year. The percentage of African American students in the expanded 6th grade at CCPA now roughly equals the percentage for the entire Havenscourt campus (Roots &amp; CCPA) in 2018-19. As the school grows from the bottom, this proportion is expected to continue to rise.</p> <p><b>Equity:</b> The SDC students who were previously enrolled at Roots were able to remain on the Havenscourt campus at CCPA.</p>
Challenges	<p><b>Sustainability:</b> There is a need to develop and confirm a budget and staffing model that supports growth over several years. In addition to budget, there is a need to find more space when CCPA reaches full capacity. In the meantime, all OUSD open space is subject to Prop 39.</p>



<b>ROOTS Academy (closure)</b>	
Key Accomplishments	<p><b>Academic growth (Quality and Equity):</b> The average number of failing grades (Ds and Fs) of former Roots students went down significantly between the first term of 2018-19 school year and the first term of the 2019-20 school year (average of 1.281 vs. 1.018, respectively).</p> <p><b>Lowered suspension rate (Quality and Equity):</b> Of 10 prior Roots students who had been suspended by winter break in 2018 and who also re-enrolled in an OUSD school in 2019-20, 4 were suspended in the 2019-20 school year by the same time point.</p>
Challenges	<p><b>Equity:</b> There were relatively more African American students and fewer white and Asian students enrolled at Roots than across the district as a whole at those grade levels, so African-American students were disproportionately displaced by this closure.</p>

<b>MetWest (expansion)</b>	
Leader	Michelle Deiro
Key Accomplishments	<p><b>Expanding Quality:</b> In 2019-20, MetWest High School added 42 new 9th grade seats for its program on the Westlake campus.</p>
Challenges	<p><b>Equity:</b> While the majority of the additional 9th grade seats went to Hispanic/Latinx students (24), 9 additional seats went to white students (at least four of whom are Arabic or Armenian home language), 4 to African American students, 2 to Asian students, and 1 to each of Native American, Multiple Ethnicity, and Ethnicity Not Reported students. Given this distribution, the 9th grade cohort in 2019-20 had a slightly lower percentage of Hispanic/Latinx students than in the prior year, and a slightly higher percentage of white students.</p>

### **Lessons Learned**

**Welcoming Schools:** Students who need to move from their home school need support as they transition to new schools. Welcoming Schools must address students' and families' needs in the areas of transportation, social-emotional supports, and academic supports. Special attention must be paid to our most vulnerable students, including students with IEPs and Newcomer students. Teachers and staff who are welcoming displaced students, some of whom have significant needs, may need additional professional development.

**Design Process:** Effective preparation for a merger or expansion requires a significant investment in the design process. Central office staff from both

the Office of Innovation and other departments have been critical for supporting the work of Design Teams. Blueprint schools have also needed additional investments during the Design Year--staffing, consultants, etc.

**Enrollment Policy Changes to Increase Access to High-Quality Programs:** MetWest and CCPA expansions have necessitated enrollment policy changes in order to create more equitable access. At MetWest a new feeder priority will give students from Westlake and La Escuelita greater access to MetWest, and CCPA's new enrollment policy will give priority to students living in public housing.

### **Fiscal Impact**

The purpose of this discussion is to understand the status of the Cohort 1 Implementation and Cohort 2 Design Year. The projected savings from the school changes in cohorts 1 & 2 is approximately \$600,000.

### **Attachments**

[Resolution 1819-0143](#)

[Resolution No. 1819-0178](#)

[Resolution No. 1920-0156C](#)

[Resolution No. 1920-0156A](#)

[Resolution No. 1920-0156B](#)

[Design Teams mid-year survey results](#)