



**OAKLAND UNIFIED
SCHOOL DISTRICT**

Community Schools, Thriving Students

Quality School Development Policy Progress Report

BP 6005

October 1, 2014

v2.0

QUALITY SCHOOL DEVELOPMENT POLICY: PROGRESS REPORT OCTOBER 1, 2014

POLICY HISTORY

The Quality School Development Policy was established in March 2013 by the Oakland Unified School District in an effort to memorialize a set of key levers necessary to support the continuous improvement of all Oakland Public Schools. These levers, outlined in the policy, were intended to provide the infrastructure necessary to develop high quality community schools.

Original Policy: March 2013

SECTION 1: Standards and Goals

SECTION 2: Assessing Schools Based on Standards and Goals

SECTION 3: Collaborative Site Planning Process

SECTION 4: 3-Year Strategic Site Plan

SECTION 5: Establishment of an Oakland Innovation Fund for Intensive Catalyze Implementation of Improvement Plans

SECTION 6: Use of Facilities by Charter Schools

The policy, as revised in August 2014, combines the goals of the previous Sections 2 and 3. The *revised* policy introduces a new Section 3 focused on calling for the establishment of a process to provide intensive support of high needs schools. The policy, as revised, also re-directs the goals of Section 5 (now Section 4) the establishment of an Oakland Innovation Fund, to support the intensive supports for High Need Schools. The policy, as revised removes the section regarding facility use, as this is already contemplated in the District's Asset Management Policy.

Revised Policy: August 2014

SECTION 1: Standards and Goals

SECTION 2: Assessing Schools, Strategically Planning, Developing a School Improvement Plan

SECTION 3: Collaborative Process for Intensive Support of High Needs Schools

SECTION 4: Establishment of an Oakland Innovation Fund for Intensive Supports of High Needs Schools

The progress report of October 1, 2014 contemplates the Quality School Development Policy as previously written which articulates four aspects of the continuous improvement process. The subsequent progress report, scheduled for February 2015 will provide an update on the implementation of the policy based on its revised language. Naturally, the original policy language and the *revised* policy language maintain many identical or similar goals.

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SECTION 1

Standards and Goals

OVERVIEW

The policy seeks to ensure that the District establish and maintain standards of quality for all schools. Additionally, the policy seeks to ensure that the District establish goals and targets to measure the performance of schools towards meeting these standards.

As part of the 2011 Board Adopted Strategic Plan, the Board of Education adopted a set of School Quality Standards. These quality standards can be accessed by clicking [here](#). These standards have been incorporated into many aspects of the District's practices, policies and procedures. This includes the Leadership Dimensions rubric used to help guide the development of principals and other key leaders; the Social & Emotional Learning Framework; the Family Engagement Standards; the structure of the School Site Plan; and the District's annual "Honoring Our Own" awards ceremony, among others.

Beginning in 2011-12 school year, the District began to refer to a set of goals and targets as the Balanced Scorecard for schools. These indicators were selected based on the District's Strategic Plan and based on research into the indicators most likely to correlate to student achievement and progress towards College, Career & Community Readiness. Over the subsequent two years, a process was engaged to develop and ratify a District Balanced Scorecard, and to refine the School Balanced Scorecard. As part of the development of the Local Control Accountability Plan (LCAP) in spring 2014, the Board of Education adopted a revised District Balanced Scorecard aligned to the LCAP. The District Balanced Scorecard can be accessed by clicking [here](#). Additionally, each school received a School Balanced Scorecard report in August 2013 and again in August 2014, based on these indicators.

PROGRESS REPORT UPDATE

Two developments are presented here in this report.

UPDATE #1: Balanced Scorecard towards a School Performance Framework

Tiered Intervention is a common approach to differentiating the supports provided to students or schools in order to assist in their improvement efforts. It considers what supports will all students or schools receive and what supports will select schools receive based on where they are in their Tier. In order to provide much needed intensive supports to the highest need

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schools, as well as differentiated supports to all schools, the District must develop a system for Tiering its schools. This system would result in grouping schools such that they can receive appropriate levels of support. This is much like the process of grouping students within the classroom to provide appropriate levels of instructional support. **A policy of equity would emphasize that in order for all students or schools to meet the same goals and standards, different levels of support must be provided, based on each student's or school's different needs.**

In 2007, Oakland Unified School District engaged a "Tiering Process." However, at that time the administration contemplated only a limited set of indicators, initially focusing almost exclusively on State test scores. That process, while driven by similar goals to differentiate support, lacked the balance of a broad range of indicators necessary to more effectively understand the needs of schools. Additionally a systematic Continuous School Improvement Process was lacking to hold the differentiated supports schools were supposed to receive. Today, the District has established a balanced set of key indicators, through a series of engagement efforts, including the 2014 LCAP process. Additionally, as outlined in this progress report, the District is well on its way in the establishment of a systematic Continuous School Improvement Process.

District staff has begun an effort to analyze the Balanced Scorecard goals in support of the development of a **School Performance Framework**. This School Performance Framework would serve as a process for Tiering schools. Currently the Balanced Scorecard acts as a Report Card for schools and the District. It provides a report on the progress individual schools are making towards meeting the goals established by the District. As a static report card, the Balanced Scorecard is helpful to inform individual school communities about their school's progress. It is insufficient to provide the District as a whole with a method for guiding decision-making regarding the equitable distribution of supports and resources to all schools.

A **School Performance Framework** is a concept that would allow the District to use the indicators contained in the Balanced Scorecard, along with additional relevant indicators, such as enrollment, facilities utilization, stakeholder surveys not already contemplated, and other demographic information, in order to tier schools. The result would be the following:

1. Establishing a set of weighted indicators for measuring school quality
2. Implementing a process for applying those weighted indicators to determine whether schools have *no progress*, *some progress*, *met*, or *exceeded* each of the targets set for each indicator

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3. The results would then be aggregated into ratings for each subcategory, such as Quality Instruction, Safe and Supportive School, and/or Meaningful Family and Student engagement (*draft examples – to be determined*)
4. The aggregate performance of schools in these subcategories would then result in an over-all rating of school performance or tier for each school

This last step would be the start of a Tiering process, resulting in the ability to group schools and begin systematically providing differentiated and appropriate supports and resources.

Consideration will likely be given to aggregating District-authorized charter school performance indicators into a similar or identical School Performance Framework for purposes of ongoing monitoring and evaluation of charter school performance; to be determined.

TIMELINE

The goal is to work in collaboration with key stakeholders in a process of working groups, focus groups, and feedback in order to develop a draft version of Oakland's School Performance Framework not later than May 2015.

UPDATE #2: Uniform Standards and Metrics for District and Charter Schools

In 2007, as part of the District's redesign of its charter authorizing practices, it established a set of Quality Charter School Standards. These standards were immediately applied to a rigorous process of evaluating charter school quality for purposes of re-authorization decision-making. Schools underwent a School Quality Review beginning in 2007 that included both District-staff and a 3rd Party Review organization conducting a multi-day site visit and generating an evaluation of the school based on the Quality Charter School Standards. The review was incorporated into the over-all staff evaluation of the school and subsequent recommendation for charter renewal or non-renewal to the Board of Education.

As part of charter law in California, each charter petition authorized must include a set of Measurable Pupil Outcomes (MPO's). These metrics are included in the approved charter. Charter applicants propose the metrics they will be accountable for achieving, which must include performance on State assessments required of all public schools. The District, as their authorizer, determines if they need to be revised in order to effectively evaluate the school's performance, as well as ensure that the school is adequately *improving pupil learning* as set forth in the legislative intent of CA charter law. The final approved metrics are then

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established when the charter is approved and used as part of the process of evaluating charter schools for purposes of re-authorization.

The District, over the past seven years has borrowed many of the lessons learned through its charter authorizing practices, which has informed the Continuous School Improvement process for District-run schools. This includes:

- 1) Establishing School Quality Standards for District-run schools, as referenced earlier in this report, in 2011.
- 2) Establishing a School Quality Review process in 2011 for District-run schools, whereby a third party team of District staff conduct a multi-day site visit and generate an evaluation report based on the School Quality Standards.
- 3) Establishing specific measurable outcomes used to determine the extent to which schools are improving pupil learning. These are embedded in the District's Balanced Scorecard goals.

These developments, however, have produced some variances in the standards and metrics used for evaluating the quality of District-run schools and charter schools.

At this time, in order to more effectively measure and ensure the quality of all public schools serving students in Oakland, staff is working to develop uniform standards and metrics for both District-run schools and charter schools. Doing so will assist in more relevant side-by-side comparisons of performance. It is understood that charter schools operate under differing statutory and policy conditions, as well as operate within a context of school choice such that all attending students have selected to enroll in the charter schools. Nonetheless, having more uniform standards and metrics will only improve the analysis of the implications of these differences on student and school performance.

The current process involves a working group, facilitated by the leadership of the District's Office of Charter Schools, attempting to establish a set of common indicators, aligned to the District's Balanced Scorecard. The goal is that these metrics would ideally be applied to all charter schools. This process continues to expect that charter schools may additionally have unique goals aligned to any unique program elements or philosophies. This is not unlike District schools that also strive to achieve goals unique to their program design such as arts integration, or the use of technology. Existing charter school petitions would need to undergo a mutually agreed-upon material revision, and future charter petitions approvals would incorporate the common Measurable Pupil Outcomes into the final document.

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TIMELINE

The goal is to work in collaboration with key stakeholders in a process of working groups, focus groups, and feedback in order to develop a draft version of Common Measurable Pupil Outcomes for use not later than May 2015.

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SECTION 2

Assessing Schools Based On Standards and Goals

OVERVIEW

The District has been assessing District-run schools based on its established School Quality Standards for three years, beginning in 2011-12. This process has involved anywhere from 15-22 schools being assessed annually. A total of 50 School Quality Reviews have been conducted to date.

In addition, other forms of quality review have been taking place throughout the district. Examples of these include; for three years, all District-run schools have participated in a process called Instructional Rounds, which occurs two to three times annually for every school. This is a half-day process where small groups of District staff from sites and central office visit a selected school and follow a common protocol for conducting classroom observations as a group, gathering, discussing and analyzing the observation data. This is then incorporated into each school's ongoing continuous improvement planning.

PROGRESS REPORT UPDATE

Three developments are presented here in this report.

UPDATE #1: Effective Practices Database

As part of the original promise of the School Quality Review process, the District would create a **Mirror** for school staff and communities to see themselves in light of our school quality standards. The District would create a **Window** to allow for those operating outside the school such as the central office, or support organizations to see into our schools and better understand what is working and not working. Finally, the District would establish a **Database** of effective practices that would support the sharing of effective practices in and among schools. As early as the first year of implementation, a **Mirror** and **Window** emerged out of the process.

In the summer 2014, staff culled through 50 School Quality Review Reports conducted over the past three years and developed an Oakland Effective Practices Database. This database is now online at www.effectivepractices.weebly.com and available to support schools in their continuous school improvement efforts. The site is linked to the Continuous School

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Improvement department's website [here](#) and thus accessible through the OUSD Departments page under Continuous School Improvement.

This website is a work in progress and will continue to be added to and revised based on feedback. The site is organized around each Quality Standard and provides actual examples from Oakland schools found to be effective in specific practices based on the School Quality Review evaluations. The contents include contact information so that schools can outreach to one another in the interest of sharing practices and strategies that work. This is a uniquely Oakland database and now provides a wealth of information for schools.

TIMELINE

The website of effective practices is available for use now. It will continuously be added to and will evolve to be responsive to the ongoing refinement of the District's priorities and goals.

UPDATE #2: School Quality Review Transition

The District has conducted School Quality Reviews for District-run schools for three years and for charter schools for seven years. Every year the processes have evolved to address lessons learned, evolving priorities, and shifting resources. The over-all strategy has remained in tact: a multi-day visit by a team of trained individuals that conduct classroom observations, interviews; focus groups with students, parents, teachers, staff and leadership; review of data and documents; and observations of other activities within the school. Each site visit culminates into an evaluation report of the findings.

To date, for District-run schools, the reviews have informed school improvement goal development, helped set priorities for improvement, and have assisted external partners, either within the District or outside the district to better target their supports. To date, for charter schools, these reviews have informed charter re-authorizing decision-making and been used by numerous charter school operators as catalysts for continuous improvement. In some cases, charter school governing boards have adopted the identical standards and required their leadership to conduct ongoing assessments and report annually on the school's progress towards meeting the standards.

In the spirit of Continuous Improvement, the School Quality Review is undergoing a transition this year to become increasingly more useful and impactful.

This transition includes:

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- 1) Streamlining the site visit and the subsequent report of findings to be easier to conduct and easier to follow.
- 2) Developing more actionable reports of findings to further assist schools in their continuous improvement planning process.
- 3) Expanding the facilitation of the SQR process to be led by School Improvement Partners embedded within each network. This will greatly increase the likelihood of the results being taken up and incorporated into the school improvement process.
- 4) Targeting the selection of schools to consider factors such as upcoming WASC¹ accreditation for high schools, and schools that have already undergone a School Quality Review and received particularly low ratings.

TIMELINE

The goal is to have completed the initial transition process in time for the first scheduled School Quality Reviews to occur in November / December 2014.

UPDATE #3: District Priorities Focus

As part of the development of various supports for schools in their continuous improvement process, the District is working to ensure that key priorities are addressed. These include ensuring that specific populations of students are being supported to improve their performance and experiences in school. A focus will include students identified through the Local Control Accountability Plan, such as English Learners, Foster Youth, and Students with Disabilities. This also includes addressing key aspects of the school's performance such as attendance, teacher evaluation completions, and parent satisfaction, for example. Also included are the requirements set forth in the District's ESEA² Waiver to track and monitor designated schools' performance and specific strategies within their school improvement plans.

The goal is more effectively track, monitor and report out on the progress the District is making within its priorities.

¹ WASC: Western Association of Schools and Colleges

² ESEA: Federal Elementary and Secondary Education Act (No Child Left Behind)

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TIMELINE

The goal is to immediately incorporate the District priorities into the ongoing development of practices, structures, procedures, and tools designed to support the Continuous School Improvement process.

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SECTION 3

Site Planning Process

OVERVIEW

The District has, over the past several years, been working to create greater alignment across networks and schools with respect to the Continuous Improvement Process. This has included creating a protocol for schools to identify their priorities for improvement. These are often referred to as their “Big Rocks”. The District has been working to build school leaders’ capacity to collaboratively develop a Theory of Action that guides how the school goes about implementing its improvement strategies. Additionally, the District has been working to ensure that every school has a functioning Instructional Leadership Team and School Site Council to lead and manage the Continuous School Improvement Process.

The effort to align the Continuous School Improvement process has been improving over the past two years, with common practices being taken up more and more across schools and networks. Nonetheless, inconsistent practices and expectations have persisted across schools and networks.

PROGRESS REPORT UPDATE

Three developments are presented here in this report.

UPDATE #1: Continuous School Improvement Process

This year, the district is implementing very critical changes to the support structures for schools to ensure that there is a clear Continuous School Improvement Process for all schools.

NETWORKS

These changes include the establishment of **five networks**. They represent one High School, one Middle School, and three Elementary Networks. Schools of similar type have been grouped in the same network such as new K-8 schools together, and dual language schools together in the same networks. Previously middle schools and elementary schools were in the same network, and schools of similar type like those named above were spread out across several different networks.

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SUPERVISION

These changes include the establishment of not only a Network Superintendent (previously a Regional Network Officer) to supervise the network of schools, but the network structure now includes a **Deputy Network Superintendent**, so that the supervision of schools can be divided within the network and thus provide more attention and focus to each individual school. The high school network includes a Director of Alternative Education, newly supervising a number of Alt Education high schools. Previously a single Regional Executive Officer may have supervised as many as 26 schools alone.

PARTNERS

These changes include the introduction of **School Improvement Partners and Data Assessment Partners** within each network. More is discussed about this strategy in the Update #3 below. Previously these roles of support for schools did not exist.

CYCLES OF INQUIRY

These changes include the expectation across all schools in every network, that schools will incorporate a **Cycle of Inquiry** process to implement Continuous School Improvement. That process includes:

- looking at data and information to assess what is working and not working;
- identifying areas to focus; planning strategies for improvement;
- implementing and monitoring the implementation of those improvement strategies; and
- reflecting on the results to make adjustments to the improvement plans

Previously only a handful of schools engaged such processes effectively and consistently. Not all schools were expected nor supported to engage in cycles of inquiry.

GUIDE

These changes include the introduction of a **Continuous School Improvement Guide**. This guide was developed by almost 20 principals and an additional team of central office leaders during the summer 2014 and introduced at the August Leadership Institute. The guide asks a Big Question each month that is intended to be grappled with by all schools. No matter where they are in the Cycle of Inquiry that month, the question should act as a guide to consider what the school's ongoing needs are and/or what progress the school is making towards its goals. Previously a guide like this, used uniformly across the district, did not exist.

INQUIRY & PLANNING

These changes include an **Inquiry and Planning Tool**. This is a web-based Google Doc tool designed to support schools in documenting their analysis of data and information about

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student performance; record likely root causes; and action plan any changes they intend to make to their improvement plans as a result of their analysis. The tool is designed to be used at least on a monthly basis to record their engagement of the monthly Big Question, but may also be used under any circumstance. It may be that the principal, teacher collaboration teams, ILT, SSC, or other small or large groups are looking at data and information to determine what is needed or how things are going. Previously a consistent tool accessible broadly and used across the district to capture and record this part of the improvement process did not exist.

DATA ACCESS

These changes include dramatic improvements in the **accessibility of data**. Currently the district has launched a data website at www.ousddata.org. Located there are internally and publicly accessible data reports for all schools and the district. These reports link back to the Balanced Scorecard and provide a wealth of information about student and school performance. Previously most of this information was not publicly accessible and often very difficult for school leaders and school communities to access. The increased access to data on student performance and school quality reported here is still not where the District needs to be and the procurement and development of more real-time dashboards and data tools will remain a priority.

TIMELINE

The Continuous School Improvement process is underway. The Continuous School Improvement Guide and Inquiry and Planning Tool are currently in use. The data reports and other information on school performance are readily and publicly available. A subsequent tool, to be referred to as the Site Plan Tracker, will be rolled out by December 2014. Its purpose will be to have an easy to use and follow tool for monitoring schools' progress in implementing the site plan. The other tools and web-based resources referenced above are available and in use now.

UPDATE #2: Communities of Practice and Pairing Strategies

Communities of Practice are small groups of 3-4 schools that have a common focus area of improvement. They work together over the course of the year to collaborate around the school improvement process. A focus area may be the improvement of reclassification rates of English Language Learners; or an increase in the active engagement of African American

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families in the school's activities; or it may be developing common practices for the use of evidence in student writing.

Communities of Practice meet in teams comprised of teachers, leaders, site support staff, and possibly parents. These Communities of Practice will have opportunities to meet as teams in at events sponsored by the District, such as the Site Governance Summits, which are scheduled to occur at least three times this school year. Additionally, principals of schools working together in a Community of Practice will meet with one another independent of their teams to get additional support and guidance. Beginning 2014-15, all networks are sponsoring time and supports within their Monthly professional learning structures so that every school is a member of a Community of Practice focused on at least one of their Priority improvement areas.

Additionally, resources permitting, school teams will schedule additional opportunities to come together as Communities of Practice in order to work collaboratively on a common focus of improvement. This can include a shared reading; a presentation by an expert; and protocol to look at common data or student work; or conduct structured site visits at one another schools or a model school. Communities of Practice are one of the strategies outlined in the ESEA Waiver to be used with Focus Schools and AMO³ Schools. Their participation will feel more seamless this year, given that all schools will engage in Communities of Practice.

Pairing is the program in which schools that are identified under the ESEA Waiver as Priority Schools are paired with Partner schools from other ESEA Waiver Districts. A Facilitator is identified; in the case for Oakland the facilitator is the Network supervisor for that school, who assists the school in their participation in the program. The program includes a sponsored Institute in the fall to learn strategies for effective Pairing practices. Schools are supported to have monthly interactions, typically virtually or tele-conferencing, as well as at least two site visitations at one another's schools over the course of the year.

The District has learned many lessons as a result of its first year of implementing Communities of Practice and Pairing in 2013-14. This year, the Continuous School Improvement department is managing the process. More consistent communication and training are being provided. A website with key information has been created and can be access [here](#).

³ AMO: Annual Measurable Outcomes – Federally required progress. Schools not meeting AMO's for two years are designated under ESEA Waiver to receive differentiated supports.

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TIMELINE

The Communities of Practice structure is being progressively rolled out now within the school networks and ideally will become fully in-place by December 2014. The Pairing Program has begun and involves specifically those schools identified as Priority Schools under the ESEA Waiver. These strategies will be implemented for the duration of the year.

UPDATE #3: School Improvement and Data Assessment Partners

The District is launching a new and exciting role to support schools in their continuous school improvement efforts. These new roles include School Improvement Partners and Data Assessment Partners. These positions were recently approved by the Board and are immediately being implemented. Recruitment has included existing high quality staff interested and committed to supporting schools in the improvement process.

These positions will report to their assigned Network Superintendent and work as part of the core Network Leadership Team of each network. Two Partners will be assigned to each network. Their roles and responsibilities will be equitably distributed to support school based on a collaborative analysis of needs to ensure all schools are developing on pace towards becoming high quality community schools.

School improvement Partners will assist in the following ways:

- Strong instructional (pedagogical and curriculum) knowledge.
- Strong communication skills.
- Has the ability to build relationships and work collaboratively.
- Understands or has the ability to learn continuous school improvement.
- Understands the school site plan process.
- Has the capacity to help schools keep track of their school site plan on the tracker, as well as think through documentation.
- Ability to think critically.
- Serve as a thought-partner to principals (and ILT's) and Network and Deputy Network Superintendents.

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- Serve as critical friends to school leaders and ILT's to help them improve overall API and school/student performance.

Data Assessment Partners will assist in the following ways:

- Ability to gather needed data and present it in a clear way to stakeholders, including but not exclusive to school leaders, teachers, and community.
- Ability to inform and support schools use of formative and interim assessments to inform instruction and improvement strategies.
- Ability to analyze trends and suggest ideas to improve performance based on academic data, student engagement data, educator effectiveness data, social/emotional data, and college and career readiness data.
- Should understand the continuous improvement process and have the ability to learn more about it.
- Strong ability to work vertically and horizontally in the organization.
- Serve as thought partners and critical friends to school leaders and ILT's to help them improve overall API and school/student performance.

TIMELINE

The District held its School Partners Kick-Off Institute in September. The District is finalizing its placements and processing of School Partners and expects this to be completed by early October 2014. The partners will begin working within their networks in early October while continuing to gradually release key roles and responsibilities that may otherwise retain as part of their transition plans.

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SECTION 4

3-Year Strategic School Site Plan

OVERVIEW

The District has employed many strategies over the past five years to support schools in their site planning processes. Developments in these areas have included reconstructing the site plan document to align to the Quality Standards established under the Strategic Plan. It has included creating an online tool so that the site plans are accessible via the web for public consumption and intended for ease of use. Many tools, graphic organizers, guides, and resources have been created over the years to further assist in the planning process and implementation of those plans.

Because different groups or departments within the District may at times develop these tools, or because of changes in staff and leadership, these tools can be developed in isolation of other existing resources; the end result can be less coherence, and more confusion. Evidence of this lack of coherence and increased confusion is present currently throughout the District.

PROGRESS REPORT UPDATE

One development is presented here in this report.

UPDATE #1: Continuous School Improvement Process Architecture Re-design

In order to interrupt the patterns of incoherence and confusion as it relates to the Continuous School Improvement process, District staff is embarking this year on an effort to improve the architecture of the School Site Plan, tools and resources designed to support that plan. In some cases this may require a complete reconstruction based on the District's learning's. In other cases, the issue will boil down to improving and aligning the "look and feel."

Ultimately the goal will be to have coherent, easy to follow structures, procedures, tools and resources to support the Continuous School Improvement process. The goal will not however be to re-invent the wheel. Much has been learned and will be incorporated into the improvements. The re-design will involve first a small working group represented by site leaders, central office staff from the schools division and staff that have historically supported the development of these tools. Their process will involve outreach to various departments and stakeholders to receive feedback and input.

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TIMELINE

The goal is to have a working draft of a newly redesigned School Site Plan by January 2015. It is not yet clear whether or not the technical developments subsequently required would allow for use in the 2015-16 site planning process or the following year. This is to be determined.

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REVISED POLICY SECTIONS

Intensive Supports

In April 2014, staff presented to the Board an update on the Quality School Development Policy with a focus Tier III supports for highest needs schools. In that presentation staff included Guiding Principles, Supporting Conditions, proposals for next step planning, and specific steps that had been taken to address a select number of identified schools.

Since that time, the District hired a new Superintendent Antwan Wilson; specifically calling out his background and experience is addressing the needs of under-performing schools requiring dramatic improvement. Additionally, the District underwent a planning process to produce and approve a Local Control Accountability Plan (LCAP) that contemplated supports and interventions for high need schools. As well, the District has undergone and continues to undergo several re-organizing efforts that have had implications for structural changes and leadership changes to central office departments and changes in the appropriation of some site-based services to schools.

STATUS

As of September 2014, District staff have begun to integrate the lessons learned from its own experiences working to dramatically improve under-performing schools with the knowledge and experiences of the new leadership within the District. This includes the new Superintendent, new Chief of Schools, new Chief Academic Officer, and new Deputy Chief of College and Career Readiness.

This process of integrating new knowledge with existing knowledge is culminating into a work plan under development to focus on this important area of the Quality School Development Policy. Specific areas of focus are outlined below.

The district, over the past 10-12 years has experience and knowledge to draw from in each of the specific areas outlined below. In addition, the District will be engaging in research and knowledge exchanges locally and nationally to learn more about what is being done to effectively address the challenges and needs of persistently under-performing schools.

Work plan focus areas include:

- 1) **Developing Common Pillars for school improvement that have been shown to dramatically improve under-performing schools.** These may include

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programmatic factors such as extended learning time for students and collaboration time for teachers, as well as the increased frequency of the use of formative assessments to inform instruction. These Pillars are not yet established, but doing so is part of the emerging work plan.

- 2) **Determining the Supporting Conditions necessary for increased Site-based Decision-making.** These may include programmatic or operational decisions. The development of strong and effective school governance teams and/or school site councils is essential to this process, and is being additionally considered within the emerging work plan.
- 3) **Developing support structures within school networks.** In order to differentiate the supports to schools, particularly schools with the highest needs, specific support structures are needed within the networks that all District-run schools are situated. They include the School Partner role, the Continuous School Improvement Process, and they include methods for monitoring school progress towards meeting their goals.
- 4) **Building leadership capacity and a leadership pipeline.** This is consistent with work already well underway. The District has been investing in the development of Teacher-Leaders, as well as other career ladder opportunities for leadership for existing staff. Additionally, the District has facilitated a Leadership Taskforce for several years focusing on piloting a Leadership Evaluation process as part of the Educator Effectiveness initiative. Rubrics and Standards for performance have been developed and field-tested.

Ongoing professional development in the standards or dimensions of leadership is also underway. For several years the District has provided comprehensive professional learning in the area of establishing and implementing Instructional Leadership Teams. During 2013-14 and again in 2014-15, the District will be investing in building the capacity of School Governance Teams and/or School Site Councils to continue to take on leadership responsibilities on behalf of their school's continuous improvement. Ultimately the District must rely on high quality leadership to be available and working in its highest need schools.

- 5) **Establishment of a multi-pronged Funding Strategy to address the unique costs associated with the Pillars likely to dramatically improve under-performing schools.** These costs can include extended contracts for teachers,

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extended learning time for students, targeted tutoring services, instructional coaching, assessment systems, professional development, and other levers to support dramatic school improvement. This funding strategy must consider federal, state, and local funding resources, including philanthropy.

- 6) **Developing the necessary Infrastructure for the types of strategies necessary to dramatically improve the performance of under-performing schools.**

These include:

- ❑ Previously discussed *School Performance Framework*;
- ❑ A *Strategic Regional Analysis*, which is intended to look at demographic data, physical assets information, and programmatic information, in order to help guide District-wide school program changes and investments; and
- ❑ A type of *Call for Quality Schools* process, which is a method by which the District can facilitate the development of new school programs whenever necessary to address the persistent under-performance of one or more schools

Oakland Innovation Fund

In 2013-14 the Board established an Oakland Innovation Fund in order to support the implementation of the quality school development goals set forth in the original policy. Additionally, the intent of these funds, at that time, was to be a catalyst for acquiring additional resources to support the goals of the policy. Staff provided an update on the application of those funds in its April 2014 Progress Report.

The investments that occurred in 2013-14 included:

- School Site Capacity Development in identified SQR Schools (site-based allocations)
- Parker Grade Configuration Change – Expansion support
- Increased School Quality Review Leadership Capacity
- Site Planning Guides and Support Tools Development
- Balanced Scorecard Metrics Development
- Data Quality and Governance Initiative

The acquired resources linked to the establishment of the Fund included:

- Stuart Foundation \$180,000
- New Schools Venture Fund \$230,000

QUALITY SCHOOL DEVELOPMENT POLICY: PROGRESS REPORT OCTOBER 1, 2014

| | |
|---------------------|------------------|
| • Scully Foundation | \$50,000 |
| • Target | <u>\$75,000</u> |
| | \$535,000 |

These resources were applied to the same list of investments above, as well as invested in Human Capital Analytics support.

STATUS

At this time, District staff is considering what the most effective approach will need to be in order to establish a source of ongoing revenue to support the necessary dramatic improvements of persistently underperforming schools.