



Date: December 2, 2015

To: Board of Education

From: Antwan Wilson, Superintendent
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The purpose of this Study Session is to allow the OUSD Board of Education to hear about and discuss multiple improvements currently under consideration relative to Oakland's enrollment system. The Policy and Administrative Regulations being referenced are:

- Board Policy BP 5116.1 -Intradistrict Open Enrollment
- Administrative Rules 5116 -School Attendance Boundaries

Context:

The Board of Education has been engaged on two separate occasions to gain understanding about the work OUSD has undertaken to review, engage, and revise internal enrollment policies and processes, as well as explore a common platform for enrollment with charter schools in the city, as outlined in OUSD's Pathway to Excellence:

- 1) April 14, 2015: Initial report on Enrollment in Oakland
- 2) September 9, 2015: Follow-up presentation, including introduction to common enrollment and proposal to further engage the Oakland community

Since these initial discussions, significantly more thought, work, and community engagement has taken place, all of which has informed the recommendations contained in today's presentation.

Challenges with the Current System

In December 2014 and January 2015, the Institute for Innovation for Public School Choice (IIPSC) conducted a "listening tour" in the city of Oakland at the request of OUSD and charter leaders. As part of the process, IIPSC staff interviewed parents, community leaders, school leaders and staff, enrollment staff, local funders, OUSD Board members, and other Oakland community members. IIPSC identified four distinct problems with the current system:

- 1) The school selection and enrollment process is challenging to navigate, particularly for families lacking time, resources, and/or specific language or literacy skills
- 2) The current system lacks transparency, in that no one is able to definitively explain and/or defend how each student was assigned to his/her school (i.e., "grey market")
- 3) The fact that each student can hold multiple enrollment offers is problematic for schools' ability to staff and plan appropriately (i.e., "roster instability")
- 4) From a citywide perspective, there is virtually no system-wide data available about demand for specific schools or programs, making strategic planning a challenge

In addition to IIPSC's assessment, OUSD staff has collected feedback over the past few years to highlight other problem areas specific to OUSD, including:

- 1) The location, hours, and services provided at the Student Assignment Center are not parent-friendly
- 2) Many believe the way OUSD prioritizes its applicants for enrollment is not fair:



- a) Students who attend feeder pattern schools should be given enrollment priority over those who do not
- b) Students who reside in the city of Oakland should be given enrollment priority over those who do not

Oakland's current enrollment system is the product of individuals, departments, schools, and networks attempting to support families in the best way possible over the course of many years, perhaps only lacking coordination and long term strategy. Oakland is not alone, in that most large urban school districts with a recent resurgence of various school models (i.e., magnet schools, charters, etc.) experience similar pain points.

Drafting the Potential Solutions

In an attempt to begin to think about how to solve the issues identified by IIPSC, a Steering Committee was created in February 2015, comprised of OUSD enrollment staff, OUSD school leaders, charter school leaders, an OEA leader, and community based organization leaders. The Steering Committee worked for six months to create a comprehensive set of recommendations meant to address the systemic problems. This set of recommendations is commonly referred to as Oakland's "Blueprint".

As the Blueprint was being developed by the Steering Committee, a group of parents from across the city were asked to weigh-in on the recommendations, providing feedback and ideas to help inform the Steering Committee's work in real time. This group is referred to as the Parent Advisory Group.

Lastly, an Executive Committee was assembled to review the recommendations along the way, provide input, and ultimately provide approval to move forward with relevant next steps. The Executive Committee was comprised of the superintendent, an OUSD Board member, an Oakland-area charter network leader, and a representative from the California Charter School Association (CCSA).

Vetting the Potential Solutions

Upon the completion of Oakland's Blueprint (fall 2015), Steering Committee members partnered with the OUSD Community Engagement team to conduct multiple engagement events with parents, teachers, and school leaders. These engagements allowed participants to provide feedback relevant to the Blueprint and OUSD policies and practices, ask clarifying questions, and share concerns. Approximately 180 individuals participated in these engagement sessions.

In addition to the in-person events, OUSD administered an online survey to the Oakland community in September 2015 which allowed families to weigh-in and provide qualitative and quantitative commentary about many of the potential solutions. Over 450 responses were received.

All feedback received relative to the Blueprint was shared with the Steering Committee, whose members discussed them at length and made revisions to the Blueprint accordingly.

Solutions Being Recommended

In an attempt to address problems with the current system, the following solutions are being recommended:

- 1) Implementation of a citywide enrollment system with the following attributes:
 - a) Participation of all public schools



- b) Thorough, objective, and easy-to-access information available to all families (i.e., online school finder tool, multiple enrollment centers throughout Oakland, annual school expos, etc.)
 - c) Extensive outreach to all transitioning students, particularly those considered high risk
 - d) One timeline, application, and lottery to which all schools adhere
 - e) One set of enrollment protocols to which all schools adhere
 - f) Processes & practices that improve equity of access for highest risk students (e.g., students who enroll after the beginning of the school year)
 - g) Processes & practices that are transparent
- 2) Revisit current OUSD enrollment priorities, including implementation of a priority for Oakland residents and a potential priority for students who attend a feeder pattern school
 - 3) Eliminate waitlists at OUSD schools (regardless of status of recommendation #1)
 - 4) Implement enrollment caps at OUSD schools
 - 5) Establishment of multiple Enrollment Centers around Oakland (regardless of status of recommendation #1)
 - 6) Re-introduction of citywide and regional school expos (regardless of status of recommendations #1)

Next Steps and Timeline

With regards to recommendation #1 above, the Board will be presented with resolution language in January 2016 to consider and vote upon. It is the Steering Committee's hope that the OUSD Board passes said resolution, which would allow enough time for the new system to be implemented by December 2016, in preparation for enrollments for the 2017/18 school year.

With regards to recommendations #2-#6 above, the Board is being asked to provide input on these ideas so that the OUSD enrollment team can move forward with operational improvements and all necessary preparation for potential policy changes (drafting new policy language in anticipation of a Board vote, etc.).