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OUR NORTH STAR

What do we want to be true for Oakland students when they graduate our public schools and enter a rapidly changing world?

VISION: All OUSD students will find joy in their academic learning experience while graduating with the skills to ensure they are caring, competent, fully-informed, critical thinkers who **are prepared for college, career, and community success.**

Oakland graduates will face a rapidly changing world that their grandparents would scarcely recognize. However, Oakland graduates will be ready to thrive in this world because they will be:

- **Resilient Learners** who cultivate positive identity based on personal and cultural assets;
- **Collaborative Teammates** who communicate clearly and effectively, honor others, and build networks;
- **Community Leaders** who analyze complex issues with a race, gender, and equity lens and take action to address societal issues;
- **Critical Thinkers** who demonstrate mastery of college and career skills and present evidence based arguments using various sources, and;
- **Creative Designers and Problem Solvers** who use innovation to solve complex problems and adapt to constructive critique.

MISSION: To become a **Full Service Community District** focused on high academic achievement while serving the **whole child, eliminating inequity**, and providing each child with **excellent teachers**, every day.

In order to be a Full Service Community School District we need Quality and Sustainable Community Schools in every neighborhood. Every school in our city should have¹:

- 1) Quality Learning Experiences for All Students
- 2) Safe, Supportive & Healthy Learning Environments
- 3) Learning Communities Focused on Continuous Improvement
- 4) Meaningful Student, Family & Community Engagement/Partnerships
- 5) Effective School Leadership & Resource Management
- 6) Support from a High Quality Central Office That Is In Service of Quality Schools

¹ Oakland Unified School District has developed [Quality School Standards](#) in 2012 through a multi-stakeholder engagement process. A key strategy of this plan is to update these standards and use our California State Dashboard as a guide for a school review process for both district and charter schools.

FROM OUR SUPERINTENDENT

Dear Community,

OUSD is no stranger to challenges. Anyone who has lived in this community for some time or worked in service of our students knows this. In fact, I was looking through some old newspaper stories detailing OUSD's past troubles with finances, state control, and labor unrest. Some read as though they could be written today.

When I took on the role of Superintendent less than two years ago, after serving as teacher and principal in this district for over a decade, I knew the path forward would be difficult, but I wanted this job because I love this community and want our kids to succeed. This is my home and just like many of you, I'm raising my family in Oakland and my children attend our schools. I also took on this immense challenge because I deeply believe it's possible to serve all of our students. A quality education is essential for life success and we want to ensure that all students are prepared to become socially conscious global citizens.

Like many of you, I am tired of having the same conversations and controversies, year after year, for decades. If we are going to finally address these issues, we must lean in and fundamentally change how Oakland does business. And I am committed to doing it.

OUSD is far from perfect; mistakes have been made, but we are prepared to learn from our past, face the tough set of challenges ahead of us, and create a new path forward. Our biggest hurdle by far is consistently delivering a high quality education to every student in every school in our district, in a sustainable manner that is within our fiscal means. Today, we are severely challenged to do so. The bottom line is that OUSD has too many schools for the number of students we serve. And many of our students are not and will not be served by a quality school in their neighborhood unless we correct course. Enrollment is flat and family living patterns are changing in various communities across the city. Currently, 11,000 seats are empty across our District-run schools and the current cost of buildings, utilities, and staff is not sustainable long term. Our lack of sustainability hinders our ability to deliver the highest quality education to every student. As a result, we have significant and persistent financial issues that must be addressed.

While we address our structural deficit, we must also continue to transform our schools as more Oakland families actively seek innovative school programs. If parents don't find the school options they are looking for within OUSD, they will vote with their feet and look outside of our district.

We all want well-resourced, high quality schools with innovative programs in every neighborhood. And, to create the necessary conditions in all of our schools, the following must be true:

1. All schools must have high quality teachers and principals, which means we need to compensate employees competitively on an ongoing basis to retain our best talent.

2. All schools must be adequately staffed, so we can support teachers and leaders in creating a quality learning environment for students.
3. All schools must have sufficient academic and enrichment resources and programs.

To invest more in our schools so they are properly resourced and staffed and to reimagine our school programming options requires us to engage in the tough and painful work of both right-sizing our school district--getting to fewer schools, of a sustainable size, with more resources--WHILE reimagining the type of school programs we offer.

If our students are going to ultimately win, we must come together and make the difficult decisions so that we create the right conditions for a high quality public school district that will better serve our families now and attract more families in the future.

While the decisions we propose will impact everyone in our district, I want to acknowledge that this will be a more painful experience for the students, families and staff who will need to move from their current schools. I understand what it means to disrupt an element of life that usually provides stability and safety, both physically and emotionally. In some cases, generations of families have attended the same school. Relationships may have to change and oftentimes, it's these disruptions that have the hardest impact. That is why we are not just "doing this by the numbers." We are making our decisions guided by our mission and vision and more importantly, we are committed to finding ways that invite those who will experience change to collaborate and have agency on some design elements of these transitions.

My true hope is that those old OUSD headlines focused on turmoil and dysfunction become a thing of the past and that we take this opportunity to write a new narrative for OUSD, one of optimism and progress.

Respectfully,



Dr. Kyla Johnson-Trammell
Superintendent

BACKGROUND

Oakland is a city with a lot of pride and soul. It is a city which launches movements. Immigrants from around the world live next door to families who have lived here for generations. A booming technology sector is bringing new growth and innovation to the city.

Our school district is no different. We have some of the smartest, most innovative, dedicated and diverse students and staff in the county. Many of our programs are national models.

OUSD serves just over 36,000 students in grades TK-12 at 87 District-run schools and our student population reflects Oakland, one of the most ethnically and linguistically diverse cities in the United States. 89% of our students are students of color, the largest groups being Latino (42%) and African American (24%). We are also a multilingual and multicultural Sanctuary District where everyone is welcome; more than 50% of OUSD students speak a language other than English language at home, and 33% of our students are English Language Learners.

Nonetheless, OUSD faces the same challenges as any high-need urban district in this country. Nearly 75% of our students are low income, and most would be the first generation in their families to go to college. 12% of our students receive Special Education services and 13% of students live in public subsidized housing.

We have been diligently seeking change for our district for a long time, yet some of the quality, financial and safety issues we face today are the same issues we have been facing for decades. Now is the time to address our reality - the challenges and the opportunities - to make bold changes as an entire community to ensure we are a district where every family is confident their child is receiving the best education.

While many of our students face barriers to fully engaging and succeeding in school, OUSD has shown some of the greatest improvement in student achievement of any large urban district in California over the past decade, and including recent gains in graduation rates, reading, and English Language Learner fluency.

OUR CHALLENGES

OUSD is facing severe budget challenges, central office operational effectiveness needs, and a disproportionate facilities footprint to the size of our student population. We must simultaneously make improvements in financial stability and key central office systems and functions to support high quality teaching and learning across the district.

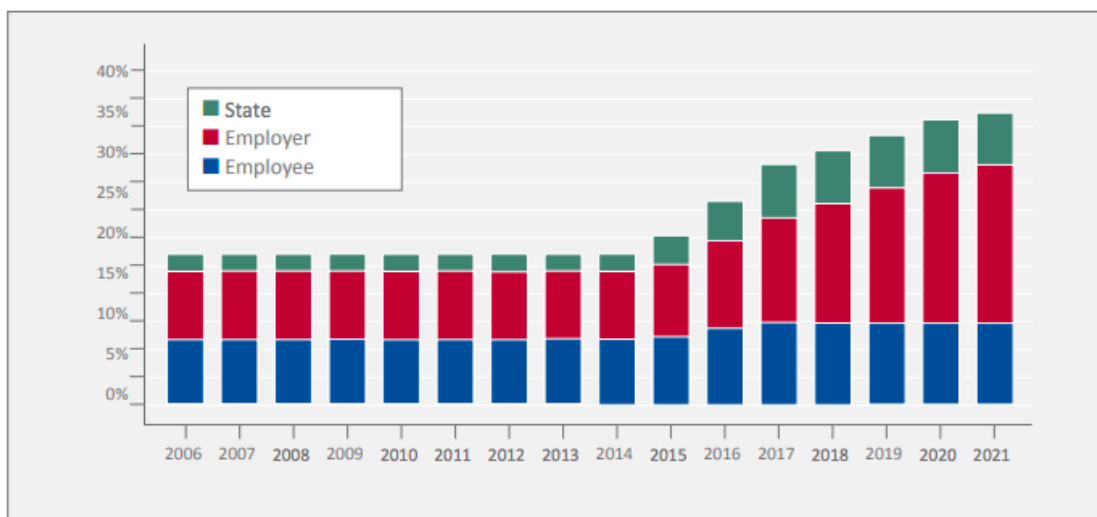
Budget Pressures

Nationally, California ranks in the bottom quartile per pupil funding, despite having the 5th largest economy in the world.² Additionally, there are state and local issues which bring increased costs, such as pension, salary and benefits costs.

² California School Board Association, "California Education Funding, Students Deserve Better", Manuel Buenrostro, August 2017.

State-level Issues:

Rising Pension Costs: OUSD’s growth in pension contributions to CalSTRS, California’s teacher retirement system, continue to rise. In 2013-14 California school districts contributed 8.25% of teacher salaries to the CalSTRS pension fund. In 2021, the rate school districts will pay will be 19.1% of teacher salaries into the system³. For example, in 2013-14 if OUSD paid \$10,000 in salary directly to a teacher, OUSD contributed an additional \$825 to the pension fund. In 2020-21, OUSD’s projected contribution on the same salary will be \$1910. CalPERS, California’s other retirement for other public employees system shows similar rates of growth.



Data: CalSTRS’ actuarial valuation reports and Assembly Bill 1469.

Notes: Projections are as legislated by Assembly Bill 1469. The projected average employee contributions depend on the proportion of CalSTRS members in each tier of the plan (who are scheduled to pay different rates under AB 1469). Estimates here are based on rough projections of member demographics from CalSTRS’ actuarial valuation reports. Although employee contribution rates remain the same for each tier from 2017 onward (unless normal costs rise substantially, which we do not allow for in the graph), the estimated average member contribution rate decreases slightly over time as more second-tier members enter.

Fig. Realized and Projected CALSTRS Statutory Contributions 2006-2021

Rising Special Education Costs: Rising special education costs are not limited to OUSD: “[s]ince 2005-06, school districts’ portion of paying for special education in California has risen 100 percent, from \$4.1 billion to \$8.1 billion. Overall costs of special education have increased 55 percent, from \$8.5 to \$13.17 billion.”⁴ OUSD follows this state wide trend.

Fig. OUSD Special Education Costs Over time

	2013-14	2018-19	% Increase
# Students in Special Education	5,085	6470 (+896 pending)	+21.4%

³ https://gettingdowntofacts.com/sites/default/files/2018-09/GDTFII_Brief_Pensions.pdf

⁴ <https://edsources.org/2017/parents-strongly-object-to-report-calling-for-local-funding-of-special-education/579265>

General Fund Contribution to Special Education	\$34.2 million	\$50.8 (projected)	+32.7%
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Local-level Issues:

Budget Development and Management: We now know that the current OUSD budget crisis was precipitated by a combination of past administration overspending, long-standing issues in OUSD’s financial systems related to internal controls, position control, and budget monitoring, as well as supporting too many schools for our number of students. In her first year, Superintendent Kyla Johnson-Trammell immediately moved to address the crisis and brought in third party expertise to identify the issues and create a plan to stabilize the District. The result can be found in the public FCMAT reports and OUSD Fiscal Vitality Plan (see appendix).

Declining Enrollment and Underutilized Schools: Our enrollment has been hovering around 36,000 for the last five years. However, in 1999-2000, there were 54,068 students in 87 District-run schools. From 2000-2007, 47 new schools were created, and 29 schools were closed, merged, replaced, or in the case of six of these schools, converted to charters. At the high point in 2009-10, OUSD had 106 District-run schools serving 38,360 students -- a net increase of 19 schools since 1999-2000. Today, we have the same number of District-run schools as we did in 1999-2000, with 17,000 fewer students.⁵

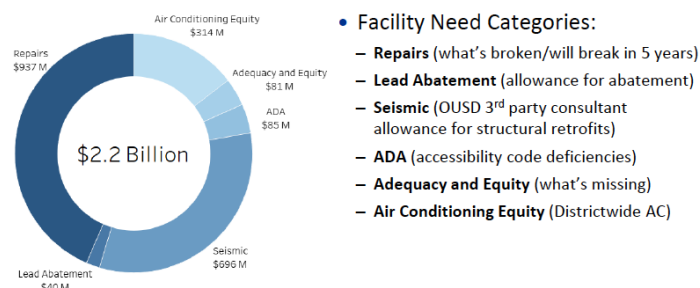
This means that many of our schools are under enrolled and unsustainably small. According to the most recent analysis, there are nearly 11,000 empty seats across our District-run schools. Having too many schools with low enrollment prevents us from reaching our North Star. Simply put, we are spreading our resources too thin. Maintaining the status quo will not improve outcomes for our students. The cost of buildings, utilities, and staff is not sustainable.

Aging Facilities:

Along with a large number of schools is the related short and long-term maintenance of those facilities. In looking at capital needs, a recent analysis identified \$2 billion in necessary repairs.

OUSD Capital Needs top \$2 Billion

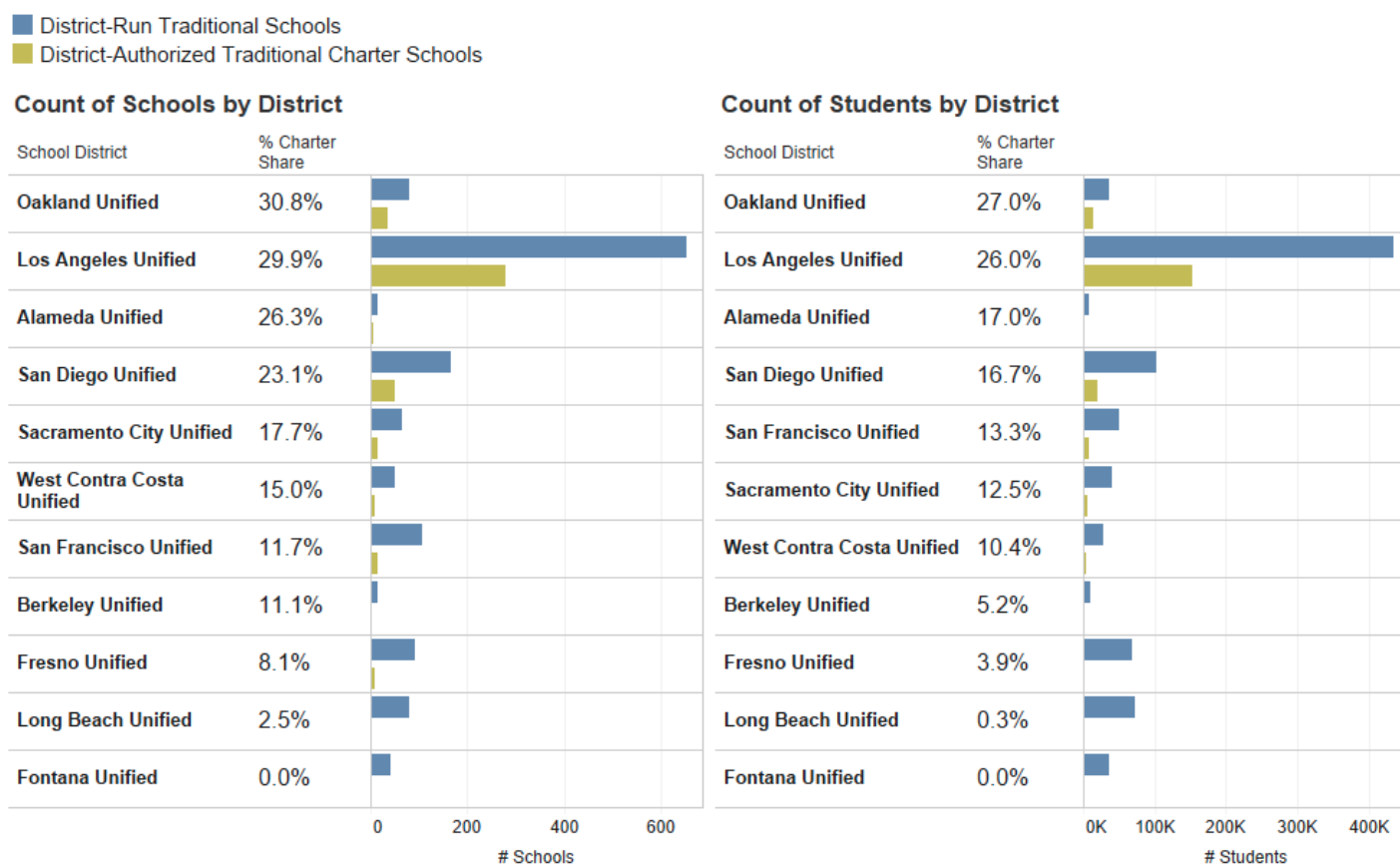
Fig. OUSD Projected Capital Projects



⁵ In 2000, the Board passed a New Small Autonomous Schools District Policy (in partnership with Oakland Community Organizations and the Bay Area Coalition for Equitable Schools) to create up to ten new small schools during a time of severe overcrowding and underperforming schools in the heartlands. At that time, we had some multi-track, year round elementary schools with 1,000 to 1,500 students in facilities built for 500, and high schools like Fremont bursting at the seams. In total, between 2000-2007, 47 new District-run schools were created, and 29 schools were closed, merged, replaced by new schools, or converted to charters. At the high point in 2009-10, OUSD had 106 district-run schools serving 38,360 students -- a net increase of 19 schools since 1999-2000. As enrollment continued to decline, OUSD closed or merged 17 of schools between 2010 and 2013, in an effort to concentrate district resources in a smaller number of schools, and 3 schools converted to charters during this same period.

Charter Expansions: The proportion of students in charter schools in Oakland is much higher than the state average. In Oakland, in terms of enrollment, about 2/3 of students attend District-run schools and 1/3 of students attend charters schools. The Oakland charter sector has grown from approximately 1,000 students in 7 District-authorized charter schools in 1999 to its current level of 13,711 students in 34 District-authorized charter schools, plus another 2,948 students in 9 Alameda County-authorized charter schools (and 52 students in 1 state-authorized charter school).

Fig. Student and School counts by District. Official CDE enrollment data for 2017-18



The current mix of charter schools and District-run schools, combined with the requirements of Proposition 39, impedes OUSD's ability to make coherent long-term plans for its facilities footprint.

The intent of Proposition 39⁶ is that public school facilities should be shared fairly among all public school pupils, including those in charter schools. This law requires that the District provide facilities to Oakland charter schools who request space annually. The facilities that have available space for charter schools changes year to year, which creates instability for both District-run schools and charter schools.

The District must work together with charter schools to make every public school option a quality option.

GETTING TO OUR NORTH STAR

In order to reach our vision of all Oakland students being prepared for college, community, and career success and our mission of having a quality and sustainable school in every neighborhood, we need to make some important shifts in how we operate. At a high level, our three district priorities are: (1) organizational resilience; (2) fiscal vitality; and (3) quality community schools.

The Community of Schools **Citywide Plan** is focused on ensuring that there is a high quality, sustainable school offering the types of programs our families want in every neighborhood. To achieve that we must:

- Determine the right number and location of high quality schools and programs;
- Increase access and equity by establishing strong feeder patterns and partnering with charters to ensure that our highest needs students are being well served;
- Strengthen OUSD's role as a charter authorizer in terms of oversight and accountability for quality;
- Establish a clear definition of school quality to which all schools are held and share best practices across all public schools; and
- Redesign central office in support of school innovation to accelerate program diversity and the number of high quality school options

This work will be grounded in the following Board policies:

- Community of Schools Policy (6006)
- Quality Schools Development Policy (6005)
- Results Based Budgeting Policy (3150)
- School Governance Policy (3625)
- Assets Management Policy (7350)

The tables on the following page divide the work of the Citywide Plan into the five areas of work outlined in the Board's policy and our theory of change:

- A. Facilities
- B. Enrollment & Transportation
- C. Charter Authorization
- D. Sharing Best Practices
- E. Defined Autonomy

For each area, we lay out clear goals and key strategies for how we will achieve the outcomes we desire for

⁶[https://govt.westlaw.com/calregs/Browse/Home/California/CaliforniaCodeofRegulations?guid=I37D74210D48011DEBC02831C6D6C108E&originalContext=documenttoc&transitionType=Default&contextData=\(sc.Default\)](https://govt.westlaw.com/calregs/Browse/Home/California/CaliforniaCodeofRegulations?guid=I37D74210D48011DEBC02831C6D6C108E&originalContext=documenttoc&transitionType=Default&contextData=(sc.Default))

our students.

GOALS AND KEY STRATEGIES

<p>A. FACILITIES</p> <p>Goal 1: Provide a quality school in every neighborhood.</p> <p>Goal 2: Identify a fiscally sound number of schools.</p> <p>Goal 3: Generate revenue from surplus property.</p>	<p>Key Strategy 1: Implement the Blueprint for Quality Schools Action Plan which identifies 4 Cohorts of School Changes focused on increasing quality and sustainability across all OUSD schools. (2018-2023)</p> <p>Key Strategy 2: Create a Citywide Map that identifies a fiscally sound number of schools given OUSD's projected student population for 2023 and shows optimal locations for schools and where high quality options are needed. (2019)</p> <p>Key Strategy 3: Finalize an updated Facilities Master Plan and initiate a 7-11 Committee that will identify how to best leverage vacant, underutilized and surplus properties and utilize facility use agreements to strategically engage all Oakland public schools - District-run or charter. (2018-2019)</p> <p>Key Strategy 4: Identify Criteria for Long-Term Leases for Quality Charter Schools to support a more stable footprint of schools in our city. (2018-2019)</p>
<p>B. ENROLLMENT & TRANSPORTATION (Access and Equity)</p> <p>Goal 1: Create high quality and predictable feeder patterns across the city</p> <p>Goal 2: Create partnerships with Charter schools to increase equity of enrollment.</p>	<p>Key Strategy 1: Create a Citywide Map that articulates high quality neighborhood feeder patterns, including District-run and charter schools, with a focus on programming for students with special needs and newcomer students; both of which need specific programming. (2018-19)</p> <p>Key Strategy 2: Update the existing Board Policy on Enrollment to (1) prioritize access to quality for students coming from school consolidations (Opportunity Ticket) and (2) revisit the priority ranking to ensure more equity in access to quality schools. (2018-19)</p> <p>Key Strategy 3: Develop Charter Partnerships to commit to how District-run and charter schools will serve the same diverse populations of students, including students with</p>

<p>Goal 3: Increase Charter Participation in the OUSD SELPA.</p>	<p>special needs, Newcomers, unsheltered, low-income, foster, and English Language Learner students, as OUSD schools so that the highest needs students are not concentrated only in District-run schools. (2019-2021)</p> <p>Key Strategy 4: Examine a SELPA Expansion Process by which charter schools may rejoin the OUSD SELPA to increase state funding and increase coordination of services to our students with special needs. (2019-2023)</p>
<p>C. CHARTER AUTHORIZATION</p> <p>Goal 1: OUSD will strengthen its role in oversight and accountability of district authorized charter schools.</p>	<p>Key Strategy 1: Adopt a Board Policy on Charter Authorization that articulates how OUSD can strengthen its role in oversight and accountability to ensure that all charter schools operating in Oakland are providing a high quality education and working to address inequities at their schools. (2019)</p> <p>Key Strategy 2: Create and adopt Quality School Standards in order to have a common understanding of quality across all public schools in the city and to support continuous improvement. (2019)</p> <p>Key Strategy 3: Expand the role of the Charter School Office beyond compliance to establishing a vision for how charter public schools can contribute to a citywide vision of educational quality and how charter public schools will increase their responsibility for serving all students. (2018-2020)</p> <p>Key Strategy 4: Adoption by the Board of Education of its Legislative Principles and 2019 State Legislative Priorities, including Charter Authorization (see full list in the appendix).</p>
<p>D. SHARING BEST PRACTICES</p> <p>Goal 1: Identify a definition of quality for all public schools;</p>	<p>Key Strategy 1: Create and adopt Quality School Standards in order to have a common understanding of quality across all public schools in the city and to support continuous improvement. (2019)</p>

<p>District-run and charter.</p> <p>Goal 2: Share best practices and innovation across all public schools to improve equitable educational access for all Oakland students.</p>	<p>Key Strategy 2: Create a clear, transparent and robust Accountability System for both District-run and charter public schools. And use data to drive decisions and to inform the Continuous Improvement of schools. (2019-2023)</p> <p>Key Strategy 3: Develop Collaborative Opportunities for educators across the city to share best practices that improve equitable educational access for all Oakland students (e.g., professional development, recruitment and retention). (2020-2023)</p> <p>Key Strategy 4: Develop a Formal Structure for OUSD leadership and Charter leadership to meet regularly to discuss how to share responsibility and opportunities for Oakland students. (2019)</p>
<p>E. DEFINED AUTONOMIES</p> <p>Goal 1: Support continued innovation within OUSD schools to accelerate the number of high quality school options.</p> <p>Goal 2: Increase the opportunities of those closest to the school site to make decisions about improving outcomes for students.</p>	<p>Key Strategy 1: Partner with a Multiple Stakeholder Groups in learning from other cities and district models that have empowered their school sites. (2018-2019)</p> <p>Key Strategy 2: Develop and implement a Defined Autonomy Framework that identifies how OUSD can best support continued innovation within OUSD schools and accelerate the number of high-quality school options within OUSD (i.e., by providing District-run schools similar autonomies to charter schools). (2019-2020)</p> <p>Key Strategy 3: Create a clear, transparent, and robust Accountability System for both District-run and charter public schools. And use data to drive decisions and to inform the Continuous Improvement of schools. (2019-2023)</p> <p>Key Strategy 4: Reorganize Central Office in a way that allows for more resources and decision making to be held at the school sites and is grounded in practices of Continuous Improvement of central services to sites. (2018-23)</p>

2018-2019 TIMELINE

Date	2018-19 Board Meeting/Stakeholder Engagement
June, 2018	(6/27) Approved the Community of Schools Board Policy
September, 2018	(9/8) Special Retreat on Asset Management
November, 2018	(11/14) Provided an Update on the methodology used to create a Citywide Map
December, 2018	(12/5) Initial discussion on the Long Term Leases for Charters
January, 2019	(1/23) Roots/CCPA Change (first read) (1/28) Roots/CCPA Change (approval)
February, 2019	(2/13) Citywide Plan Report (first read) (2/27) Citywide Plan Report (approval)
March, 2019	(3/6) Quality School Standards and Blueprint Cohort 1 & 2 update (engagement plan) (3/13) Long Term Charter Lease Criteria (first read) (3/27) Long Term Charter Lease Criteria (approval)
April, 2019	(4/17) Citywide Plan Study Session: -Citywide Map (first read) -Blueprint Cohort 2 Financial Impact Analysis and other updates (4/24) Facilities Master Plan (first read)
May, 2019	(5/8) Defined Autonomies Framework (Presentation) (5/22) Citywide Map (approval) (5/22) Blueprint cohort 2 (approval) (5/22) Facilities Master Plan (approval) (5/22) 7-11 Committee Update

APPENDIX

Board Policy and Guiding Documents

[BP 6006 Quality School Development: Community of Schools](#)

[OUSD Government Theory of Action](#)

[OUSD School Quality Standards](#)

[Legislative Priorities](#)

Financial Documents

[FCMAT Report](#)

[OUSD Fiscal Vitality Plan](#)

Websites

www.ousd.org/citywideplan

www.ousd.org/blueprintforquality

www.ousd.org/fiscalvitality