

# Strategies to Increase Graduation and A-G Rates: Equitable Grading & Board Policy Revisions





**Presented to the Teaching and Learning Committee** 

**Presented by the High School Network** 

March 18, 2025

### **Outcomes**

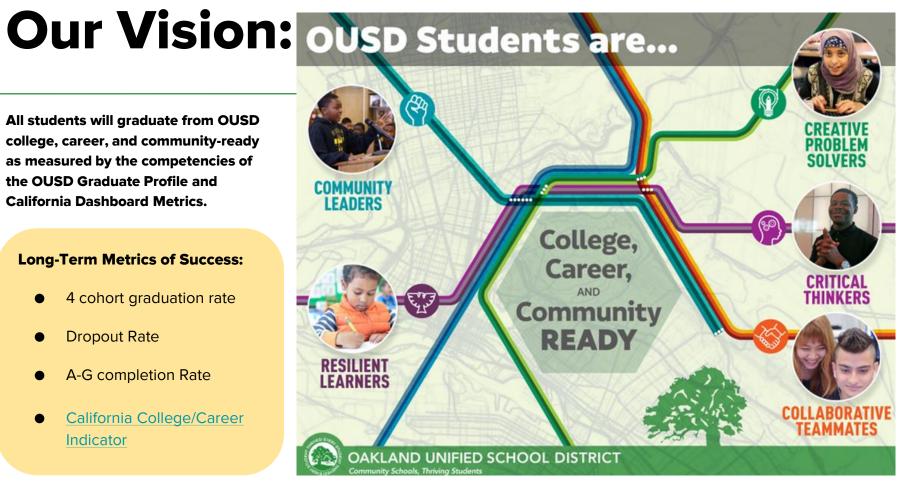
 Share updated information regarding two key strategies currently informing improvement efforts across OUSD high schools

 Gather insights from members of the Teaching and Learning Committee to inform current strategies and the ongoing improvement of long-term student outcomes

All students will graduate from OUSD college, career, and community-ready as measured by the competencies of the OUSD Graduate Profile and California Dashboard Metrics.

### **Long-Term Metrics of Success:**

- 4 cohort graduation rate
- **Dropout Rate**
- A-G completion Rate
- California College/Career Indicator











## A Decade of Progress



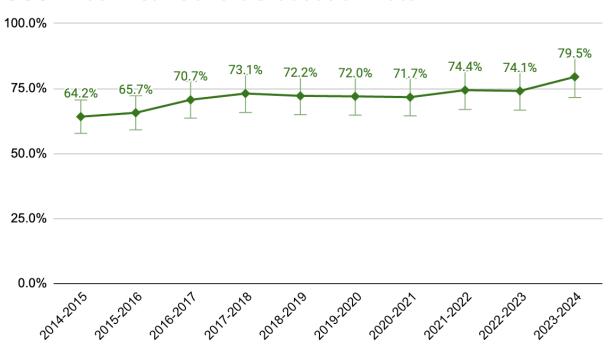






### **Headline #1: We have improved our Four-Year Cohort Graduation Rate overall**

### OUSD Four-Year Cohort Graduation Rate



**California State** Average 2024 (Cohort Grad): 86.2%







## Headline #2: We have improved the four-year cohort graduation rate for *some* LCAP focal groups

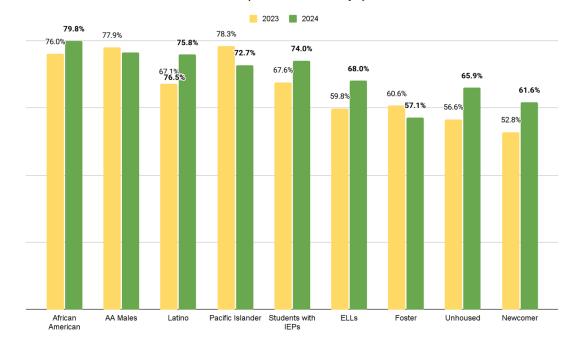
Graduation rates among several LCAP focal groups demonstrated notable gains between 2023 and 2024:

- African American
- Latino
- Students with IEPs
- ELLs
- Unhoused
- Newcomer

Graduation rates declined for the following student groups:

- African American males
- Pacific Islander
- Foster Youth

#### **OUSD Four-Year Cohort Graduation Rate (LCAP Focal Groups)**







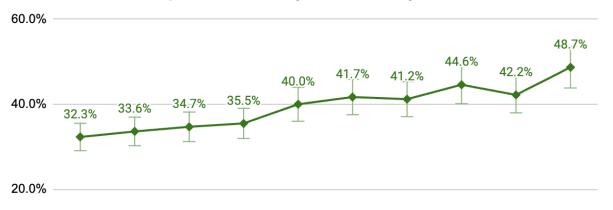






## Headline #3: We have improved our A-G Completion Rate *overall*

### **OUSD A-G Completion Rate (12th Grade)**



California State
Average 2024
(A-G):
45%







## Headline #4: We have improved our A-G Completion Rate for *all* of our LCAP focal groups

A-G completion rates have improved for the following student groups:

- African American
- African American Males
- Latino
- Pacific Islander
- Students with IEPs
- ELLs
- Foster
- Unhoused
- Newcomer













### **Graduation & A-G Completion Trends: 2023-2024**

#### **Positive Trends:**

- Graduation rates improving overall & for many LCAP Focal Student Groups.
- A-G completion rates increased across all LCAP Focal Student Groups.

#### **Notable Gains:**

- Graduation rates increased for African American, Latino, English Learners, Unhoused, Newcomers, & Students with IEPs.
- Largest A-G completion gains: Latino, Pacific Islander, Students with IEPs, & Unhoused students.

#### Areas of Concern:

Graduation rates declined for African American Males, Pacific Islander, & Foster Youth, signaling a need for targeted support.

### **Next Steps:**

Address disparities to ensure equitable outcomes for all students.











### **Ensuring Student Success: 2024-2025 Priorities**

### Goal:

 Increase 4-year graduation rates & A-G completion to expand postsecondary opportunities.

### Key Strategies:

- Equitable Grading Practices Piloting fair, accurate assessment methods.
- Policy Revisions Updating graduation & post-secondary readiness policies for student success.

### • Impact:

More students prepared for college, careers, and community upon

# Strategy #1: **Equitable Grading**



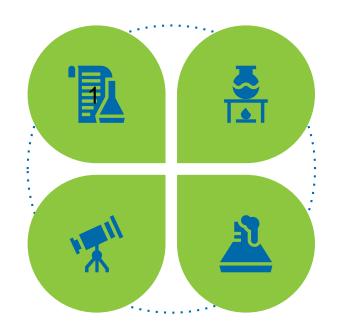






# **Equitable Grading Practices in OUSD**

- How do we reduce adult grading practices that lead to high D/F rates, biased grading, and a lack of clarity for students about what they have mastered?
- How do we ensure the majority of students' grades reflect current mastery in skills being taught?











## **Definitions**



### **Equitable Grading**

- General practices that decrease the chances a student starts off the year failing and cannot recover
  - 50% floor, no zeros policy, separating participation, retake days

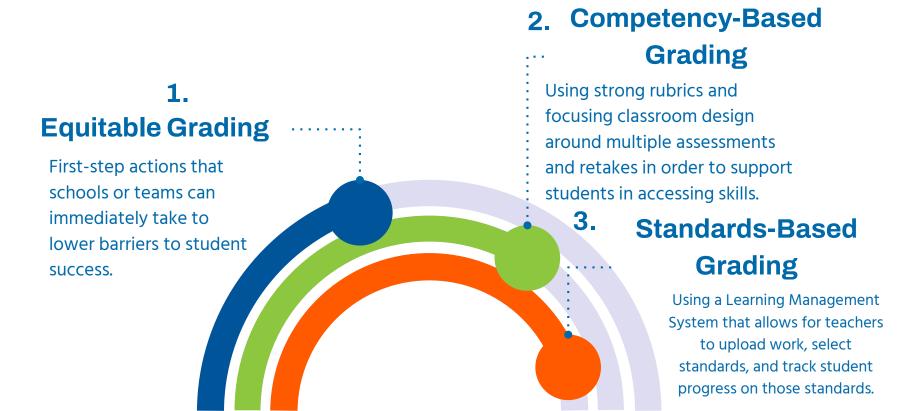
### **Competency-Based Grading (also known as Mastery-Based Grading)**

- General practices that support assessment of discrete skills in a classroom to be the majority of a student's grade.
  - 0-4 scale in Aeries, strong rubrics, backwards planning, retakes, rubric checklists

### **Standards-Based Grading**

- Similar to competency-based grading, but the assessment of discrete skills in a classroom is directly connected to the language of content standards.
  - Use of a Learning Management System/Grading Platform that allows teachers to select standards language to assess

# Each type of grading gets us closer to student success.



## **Basic Equitable Grading**



General practices that decrease the chances a student starts off the year failing and cannot recover.

- 50% floor ("F" starts at 50%)
- Eliminate the use of zeros to grade "Mastery" assignments
- Categorize grades into weighted categories of at least "Participation" (30%) and "Mastery" (70%)
- Institute retake days specifically geared towards students raising their "Mastery" grades

## **School-Based Equitable Grading Pilots**

### Madison Park Academy and Castlemont High School

- Gradebook analysis
- Student work analysis
- Standards Based Grading exploration
- 0-4 scale
- Aeries gradebook configuration
- Weekly gradebook updates
- Transparent gradebook content (due dates, commentary, categories and weighting)
- Retakes
- Make up days
- Rubric development









## School-Based Equitable Grading Pilots

### **Pre-Existing**

### Life Academy

- Student work analysis
- Common rubrics
- No D
- Grades weighted according to "habits of mind" and "habits of work"
- Sliding scale by grade level for mastery (9th is 70%, whereas 12th is 100%)

### Coming up:

### **Skyline, Fremont, McClymonds**

- Engaging with 9th grade team-BTSC
- Common grading practices

### MetWest

Engaging with principal











## Strategy #2: Board **Policy Revisions**









## **Ensuring Equity in Expectations**

#### Goal:

 Create fair conditions for all students to meet OUSD graduation, attendance, and college/career preparation requirements under California Education Code.

### **Constraint:**

- Current Board Policy allows inconsistent application of requirements, leading to inequitable outcomes.
- High-performing students may be excused from required courses.
- Marginalized students, including LCAP focal groups, must meet all requirements without exceptions.

### **Need for Change:**

 Align policies to ensure fair expectations and opportunities for all students.

### **Policy Alignment with Neighboring Districts:**

- Written Request Required for external course approval.
- Credit Limitations on how many external credits count toward HS graduation.
- Accreditation Requirement for all external courses.











## **Reducing Subjectivity in Course Decisions**

### **Current Issue:**

- Students and parents sometimes make course decisions without school guidance.
- Some students enroll in courses that don't count for OUSD credit, delaying graduation.
- Lack of clear policies leads to inconsistent decision-making by different stakeholders.

### **Proposed Solution:**

- Pre-approval process ensures courses align with graduation and post-secondary goals.
- Prevents last-minute denials, improves scheduling, and fosters collaboration.
- Clearer guidelines replace subjective decisions with consistent, equitable processes.









### **Enhancing Early College & Dual Enrollment Opportunities**

- Expanding Access: Revisions support early college, dual enrollment, and concurrent enrollment options.
- Minimizing Barriers: Ensures students can access advanced courses without unnecessary restrictions.
- Streamlined Process: Promotes informed, collaborative decision-making without delays or surprises.
- Flexible Learning: Students can take community college courses to accelerate learning and, in some cases, earn OUSD credit.
- Equity & Consistency: Clearer policies increase awareness of options and ensure fair access.









## **Proposed Revisions**

- BP 6146.11: Alternative Credits Toward Graduation
  - Updated Ed Codes
  - Added provision for approval/oversight of courses taken outside of OUSD
- BP 6146.1: High School Graduation Requirements
  - Updated terms to align with Linked Learning Pathway requirements (ex: program of study)
  - Differentiated between minimum credits for Comprehensive vs Continuation high schools
- BP 6172: Instruction
  - Updated Ed Codes
- BP 5121: Grades/Evaluation Of Student Achievement
  - Updated Ed Codes
  - Clarified language to specify the reasons for students to repeat courses.









## **Investments to Support Strategies**

- 1.0 FTE Equitable Grading Teacher on Special Assignment
- Extended contracts for teachers participating in Equitable Grading Professional Learning Community
- Meeting refreshments for students participating in Listening Sessions
- Dedicated time during HS Principal Professional Learning for Grading Community of Practice
- High School Network and Linked Learning Office staff time









## **Questions for Board Directors**

- What opportunities do Board Directors see to advance our work within the two strategy areas identified?
- What suggestions or additional strategies can Board Directors share in support of district-wide initiatives to improve graduation and A-G completion rates?





