

Amendments, Resolution- No. 2526-0177 Amendments, Resolution No. 2526-0177 Directing the Preparation of Budget Scenarios to Address OUSD's Structural Deficit Submitted by Jennifer Brouhard, Board President, and Valarie Bachelor, Board Vice President

WHEREAS, it is the joint responsibility of the Board and District to center students with the most needs and the staff who work directly with them so that all OUSD students can graduate college-, career-, and community-ready, and so that families can confidently send their children to OUSD schools knowing they will be prepared for life after graduation; and

WHEREAS, the Board of Education recognizes that the Oakland Unified School District (OUSD) faces a structural deficit, in which projected ongoing expenditures exceed projected ongoing revenues. In a letter dated September 15, 2025, the Alameda County Office of Education stated that ongoing minimum budget adjustments of \$78M will need to be made in 2026-27, and \$73M will need to be made in 2027-28; and

WHEREAS, the Board recognizes OUSD's fiscal instability has led to cycles of reductions, layoffs and closures; has decreased focus on student achievement and well-being, and; has contributed to declining enrollment and staff turnover; and,

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WHEREAS, the budget adjustments come directly from the general funds; and

WHEREAS, the board wishes to clearly articulate its priorities in how we make budget reductions, including but not limited to a vision for the future of our school district which

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- Focuses on student academic and emotional growth and well-being
- Prioritizes equitable decision making so that we maximize resources based on student need
- Restructures central office to ensure core functions are enabled but to focus maximum resources in schools
- Focuses programs that are working well in communities with greatest need to maximize impact in those schools
- Invests in school site staff who work directly with students instead of outsourcing positions to private entities
- Allows district to be nimble, making strategic expansion and contractions of staffing and programs based on student and community needs
- Treats school closures as a strategic way to maximize programmatic impact that must be community-led, data-driven and with an equity lens, not a foundational budget balancing tool

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WHEREAS, the Board must work with District leadership to develop a budget that reflects the vision and needs of the communities we serve, including parents and caregivers who want schools with optimal learning conditions, clean and safe spaces; and

WHEREAS, the Board must also prioritize staff retention and compensation to provide continuity in schools and ensure that students and families feel a sense of belonging; and

WHEREAS, it is the responsibility of the Board to approve a budget that keeps the District solvent and maintains local control of its finances; and

WHEREAS, the Board has a duty to monitor expenditures to ensure fiscal responsibility and maintain solvency; and

WHEREAS, to maintain a solvent District, the Board must direct staff to identify positions and financial practices that (1) do not directly have the least impact on students in schools, (2) are funded by one-time funds or grants with end dates, or (3) are no longer necessary or affordable; and

WHEREAS, students identified as focal groups in the OUSD Local Control and Accountability Plan (LCAP)—including Black students, Latinx students, newcomer students, foster students, unhoused or housing-insecure students, and students with disabilities disabled students must be prioritized in the District budget.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Education directs the Superintendent to prepare at least three budget scenarios for Board review and community input. Each scenario shall address the following and include both cost and impact on students: at least two budget scenarios for community input and Board review that total \$100 million in budget adjustments. The scenarios will include both the costs and the impact on students. The budget scenario will not include school closures or mergers.

The budget scenarios will be presented to the Board at the first study session in November 2025.

1. Central Services and Network Restructuring The Board directs staff as follows:

- ~~a) Budget reductions must include substantial restructuring of the central office, including significantly reducing our administrative overhead and positions, reducing spending on outside services and contracts, and centralizing budget decisions for academic alignment and efficiency; and a) Identify and cut positions and financial practices that (1) do not directly impact students in schools, (2) are funded by one-time funds or grants with end dates, or (3) are no longer necessary or affordable.~~
- b) Provide options for consolidating the elementary network to one or two networks, noting that larger districts with more schools and students operate with one or two elementary networks.
- ~~c) Provide options for restructuring the middle school and high school networks to ensure cost savings and efficiency.~~

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2. Improving Student Enrollment and Attendance

- a) The Superintendent will ensure we are continuing work to increase our district's enrollment
- a)b) The Superintendent will provide or delegate will pProvide a comprehensive plan for improving daily attendance at each site, including monitoring and support for schools struggling to improve attendance. An increase of 1% in attendance would yield approximately \$5.25 million.

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3. Leveraging Other Agencies and Resources Provide options for potential cost savings from leveraging other agencies and resources.

4. Strengthen Fiscal Controls

- a) The Superintendent will notify the Board when new expenditures are added
- b) The Superintendent will notify the Board when a budget area approaches 80% of its budget allocation.
- c) Include a plan sunsetting those programs funded by resources and/or grants that are expiring during the fiscal years included in any budget balancing solutions presented; and  
a) Financial Systems Improvements Provide options for improving financial systems, such as limiting outsourcing contracts.

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5. Programs & Services a) Inventory the District's programs and services, assess their usage and impact on student achievement, and identify programs and/or services that could be consolidated or eliminated for 2025-26 and 2026-27. Staff will present to the Teaching and Learning committee, and recommendations from that committee will be brought to the full board. b) Identify and cut positions and financial practices that (1) do not directly have the least impact students in schools, (2) are funded by one-time funds or grants with end dates, or (3) are no longer necessary or affordable.

6. Centralizing Contracts and Services Provide options for additional centralizing contracts and services—such as, but not limited to, afterschool providers, mental health services, furniture replacement, and equipment purchases—to increase the District's return on investment.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, budget balancing scenarios may include need to amend Board Policy, which should be clearly stated, as options may include ended or limiting open enrollment so as to strengthen neighborhood schools and ensure all schools have adequate enrollment to support base programming and centralize some decisions that are current held at sites and departments; and.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that budget balancing scenarios may suggest school closures, program changes and/or grade span adjustments at current sites in alignment with goals for student achievement and well-being, while also ensuring these efforts are community-led, data-driven and have an equity lens; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT, the Superintendent or delegate will notify the Board when new expenditures are added or when a budget area approaches 80% of its budget allocation. The Chief Business Officer will present the Board with proposed adjustments to maintain a balanced budget.