



**OAKLAND UNIFIED
SCHOOL DISTRICT**

Community Schools, Thriving Students



Frequently Asked Questions

- District-Run Schools

FAQ-District-Run: Fall Call for Quality Schools 2015-2016

Q: What is the purpose of the Fall Call?

A: Oakland Unified School District is continuing its efforts to inspire and support local site-based teams to pursue opportunities to re-think and re-imagine their schools in collaboration with their community. The Fall Call is an invitational call for letters of interest to enter a district-supported school design cohort. The Fall call seeks to interrupt patterns of divestment that have occurred in parts of the city as well as individual schools settings. By making substantial targeted investments in innovations and improvements geared at creating equitable outcomes particularly for the most underserved student populations in Oakland, the District seeks to fulfill its mission and vision that “Every Student Thrives!”

Q: What would we be signing up for?

A: The 2015-16 Fall Call is invitational. We are inviting any existing school communities, who are considering a large-scale school design change efforts to submit a letter of interest to participate in one of two possible design cohorts.

Cohort 1: Schools who submit a letter of interest for option A are requesting school redesign support for the 2015-2016 school year. Schools in this cohort will have already began an independent effort at their school and would be ready to submit a completed proposal for redesign in early October of 2015 with a plan to launch the redesigned program in Fall of 2016.

Cohort 2: Schools who submit a letter of interest for option B are schools that are interested in launching an exploratory process to re-imagine or re-think their schools by engaging in a significant school re-designs. This cohort would work throughout the year to engage their community and explore their options and would submit a completed proposal for redesign in April 2016. The cohort would then participate in a design cohort during the 2016-2017 school year with a plan to launch the redesigned program in Fall of 2017.

Q: Who is eligible to participate?

A: Each call for proposals will have unique criteria based on OUSD’s Strategic Regional Analysis and Community need. Proposals must meet incorporate all five Quality School Development Pillars.

The Fall Call for 2015-2016 is seeking schools that meet the following current district needs:

A) Middle Schools Models

- Middle schools seeking to significantly redesign their programs focused on proven middle school models; such as expeditionary learning, International Baccalaureate, Blended Learning or other models.

- Models must include existing schools successfully implementing program design
- Success is defined by the school outperforming other surrounding based on specific indicators
- Models must be implemented in similar schools, as defined by having at least 60% Free/Reduced Lunch population

B) Dual Language / Dual Immersion Program Design

- To accelerate academic achievement and provide significant culture and civic skills for all students.

C) Newcomer Program Design

- To comprehensively meet the specialized needs of our growing population of Newcomer students.
 - Focus will be on models within over-all school program
 - Schools with evidence of existing a projected newcomer populations will be a priority

Cohort 1: Launching 2016 eligibility is for **Dual Language Programs**.

Cohort 2: Launching 2017 eligibility is for **Middle School Models, Newcomer programs, Dual Language Programs** and **West Oakland Innovation and Feeder Renewal**.

Regional Innovation and Feeder Renewal

D) West Oakland Innovation and Feeder Renewal

- All existing PK-12 schools located in West Oakland (District 3, west of the 980 freeway) are expected to participate in site-based visioning activities and regional study sessions facilitated by central office collaborators and district design partners to explore a community-based vision and theory of action for schools in West Oakland. The objective will be to increase the effectiveness and efficiency of the school experience for families living in and/or attending schools in West Oakland. Options that create new and or expanded feeder patterns in the region will be emphasized with a focus on renewing feeder patterns to McClymonds High School. Consideration of enrollment patterns, facility utilization, and staffing will be included throughout the process.

A recommendation of priorities factors will be sought not later than January 2016 for the housing of any new charter school programs in West Oakland. This will be incorporated into the broader West Oakland regional dialogues. Following regional visioning and theory of action development, individual schools may receive a planning grant for West Oakland quality schools proposal(s). Those completed during the spring (phase 1) will be due April 22, 2016. Those completed in the summer (phase 2) will be due September 22, 2016. Approved proposals, aligned to the regional vision and theory of action, will be eligible for multi-year investment in further design planning and implementation.

The first 2 years of Implementation investment will be determined during the fall of the Design Year based on the contents of the individual West Oakland quality school proposal(s). **Call for Quality Schools Investments are NOT ongoing. Following three years of investment including the Design Year,**

determinations will be made regarding continued investments for up to a total of five years. School design models must ultimately demonstrate capacity to achieve solvency without additional subsidies.

Q: Is grade configuration change an option for the Fall Call?

A: Grade configuration changes will only be considered in certain circumstances during this call:

- ***Dual Language***

To the extent it is relevant for the program design and is consistent with the Middle School Grade configuration matrix.

- ***Newcomer***

Grade configuration changes are not applicable.

- ***West Oakland Configuration***

Grade configuration changes are entirely applicable and should be considered in order to establish a viable, sustainable set of school options.

- ***Middle School***

See **Middle School Configuration Matrix** for options at end of FAQ.

Q: Why do we need to submit a letter of interest?

A: The letter of interest informs us of both a school's interest and their level of readiness to participate in a school design process. Based on the letter of interest a school may be recommended for Cohort 1, 2 or not at this time due to a variety of factors. Final eligibility determination made by school's Supervisor and Chief of Schools.

Q: What needs to be included in a letter of interest?

A: The following information needs to be included in a letter of interest.

- o Primary contact information
- o Proposal team members
- o Rationale for your interest
- o Major program innovations you are considering
- o Outline innovations from the Quality School Pillars
- o Evidence of Staff Interest
- o Analysis of achievement gaps in student group performance
- o A description of staff engagement to date, and further engagements planned
- o Key design questions being considered

Q: How many schools will get to participate in the School Design Cohorts 1 (2016) and 2 (2017)?

A: 3-4 schools will be selected to participate in the year-long design cohort. Newcomer Programs and Middle School Models will only be considered for the 2017 Cohort 2 timeline process.

Q: If we are not ready now, will there be other opportunities later to participate in this process?

A: Yes, it is possible that future investments will be identified for similar focus areas. In addition, schools that participate in the Exploratory or Proposal Writing Phases, but are not selected with have priority to receive other forms of assistance, including receipt of Design Support from District Design Partners; priority assignment of coaching support; priority access to school design resources, including research workshops, events, and school visits.

Q: If we have already begun a process of pursuing a model of innovation for our school should we slow down? Of, if we are not selected for this Call process, should we stop pursuing our desired innovation?

A: No! You should maintain your momentum and incorporate the support provided by this process to accelerate your efforts. It is understood that many schools have already taken the initiative to pursue innovations and significant improvement. The goals of this process are to augment and further invest in those efforts.

Q: If the model we are pursuing, such as International Baccalaureate, have their own proposal requirements, will we be required to work on and submit two different proposals?

A: No. Staff will work with your school to cross-reference the requirements for the Call for Quality Schools proposal guidelines and the requirements of the model you may be pursuing. We will identify what elements are shared that can be done once, and what elements are missing from either set of requirements that requires additional attention. It is expected that schools will notify central office staff during the “exploratory phase” if there are additional proposal requirements for a chosen model, to avoid unnecessarily doubling up on the workload.

Q: If the model we are pursuing inherently costs Districts more resources than traditional schools to implement, may we still consider this option?

A: Yes. However it will require identifying these inherent costs during the “exploratory phase” and notifying central office staff so that we may work collaboratively to determine prior to investing in the “proposal writing phase” if the over-and-above costs are a barrier to long-term sustainability of the selected model.

Q: What is the relevance of the feeder school programs our students come from and go to?

A: Schools participating in the Call for Quality Schools process are expected to invest time and energy in exploring and learning about the programs in the schools its students matriculate from and towards. Understanding these programs should help shape and inform how schools build coherence for student and families to experience alignment among and across schools PK thru 12.

Q: How is West Oakland defined for purposes of the Fall Call?

A: West Oakland is being defined as the region within the attendance boundaries of those schools located west of the 980 freeway serving grades PK-12 that are within Board District 3. These include; District-run:

PLACE @ Prescott, Martin Luther King Jr. Elementary, Lafayette Elementary, Hoover Elementary, West Oakland Middle School, and McClymonds High School. Charter-operated: Vincent Academy, KIPP Bridge Academy.

West Oakland is defined by its residents. The Fall Call process expects to engage the emerging demographic shifts in West Oakland, prioritizing engagement of both the historical residents of West Oakland, as well as newly arrived families and community members.

Q: What support is provided to schools during the exploratory phase and the proposal writing phase?

A: Eligible schools that submit a Letter of Interest for Cohort 2: Launching 2017 (or eligible Dual Language schools submitting a Letter of Intent for Cohort 1: Launching 2016) will have access to funding that may support community engagement (translation, refreshments, childcare) as well as school visits, subs, extended contract time for staff to engage in planning meetings and proposal development. Funds will be managed centrally and schools will have access to up to \$8K each during exploratory phase and up to \$10K during the proposal writing phase. These figures may be adjusted depending on total number of participating schools.

Support is also defined by the in-kind investments of time and energy of multiple staff experts within the District, department and school-based materials and resources, research and in-house curriculum, as well as the time and energy of high quality schools in and around Oakland that will serve as models for the school planning and design process. These in-kind supports are likely to represent hundreds of thousands of dollars in additional investments over the life of the design, planning and implementation process.

Q: What is the engagement process?

A: For existing schools pursuing the In-District Innovation Fall Call focused on Middle School Models, Dual Language Programs, or Newcomer Programs; engagement will be site-based and include opportunities to participate in school visits, content workshops, and proposal writing. These engagements will be the responsibility of the school leader with support from central office collaborators that include the Middle School Network team, the Network Superintendent's associated with each participating school, as well as the Office of English Language Learners and Multilingual Achievement.

For the West Oakland Regional Innovation and Feeder Renewal process, the Network Area One team, Communications and Engagement Office team, Office of Continuous School Improvement staff, as well as partner organizations will lead the engagement process in collaboration with school leaders. A series of retreats with school leaders will build a shared perspective of West Oakland. A series of site-based trainings will build capacity of parents, staff, and community members to understand the Strategic Regional Analysis data, as well as begin to surface a local vision for students.

The regional dialogues and study sessions will broaden the engagement to support a shared educational vision for students in West Oakland, as well as provide opportunities for shared exposure to school programs and approaches that will inform a regional theory of action for schools. The regional dialogues and study sessions, following the school leader retreats and site-based trainings, will be open to the public and may be attended by any interested members of the broader Oakland community. The focus will be on developing a shared vision and theory of action for schools in West Oakland, as defined elsewhere in these guidelines. Subsequently, individual West Oakland schools will be invited to develop school program proposals aligned with the West Oakland regional vision and theory of action to pursue multi-year investments in design and implementation.

Middle School Grade Configuration Matrix

The majority of middle schools will not be eligible to change their grade configurations under the Fall Call 2015-16 due to one or more of the following factors:

- Existing high demand for grade 6-8 seats
- Limited Facility Capacity
- Availability of existing viable or redesigning 9-12 seat options

Please contact **David Montes de Oca** david.montes@ousd.org and **Ron Smith** ron.smith@ousd.org with any questions.

Grade Configuration Options

SCHOOL	GRADE OPTIONS	RATIONALE		
		High Existing 6-8 Demand	Facility Capacity Limits	Viable 9-12 Feeder
Alliance Academy	6-8	X	X	X
Bret Harte Middle School	6-8	X	X	X
Claremont Middle School	6-8		X	X
Edna Brewer Middle School	6-8	X	X	X
Elmhurst Community Prep	6-8	X	X	X
Montera Middle School	6-8	X	X	X
Roosevelt Middle School	6-8		X	X
Roots International Academy	6-8, 6-12	6-12 scenario may include consideration of redesign together with existing 6-12 in current facility (CCPA), or integration with 6-12 or 9-12 school design within alternate facility		
United for Success Academy	6-8	X	X	X
Urban Promise Academy	6-8	X	X	X
Westlake Middle School	6-8		X	X
West Oakland Middle	6-8, K-8	K-8 scenario may be considered in the context of a West Oakland Regional Reconfiguration Recommendation, and requires integration of existing TK-5 school in West Oakland		

NOTE: Program model designs that are pedagogically linked to 6-12 models may be discussed for further consideration.