

## Appendix A: Data Vision

### DRAFT: OUSD Data Vision

August 2013

OUSD is committed to improving the way school and central leaders access, analyze and utilize data to support their decision making in promoting the performance of OUSD schools.

This Data Vision contains six pillars to guide the strategies and priorities of OUSD's new data infrastructure which will be created under this initiative. These pillars were identified based on consultation with over 50 stakeholders from a range of schools and central office departments on their data needs and priorities. This engagement took place during the spring and summer of 2013.

### Pillar 1: Data Access is an Issue of Equity

#### What do we want for students?

School leaders' ability to use data in their decision making on issues crucial to school performance cannot vary because leaders have access to different sets tools and information. Similarly, the content and quality of data on school performance communicated from schools to families should not vary because of differences in school leaders' data access.

#### What must change?

Differences in data use across schools and central offices today are exacerbated by a fragmented central data infrastructure, leaders' differing personal connections within the district and the extensive use of site and department-specific data workarounds. Central must communicate to school leaders and central leaders where different data sources live, as well as how to access and utilize these sources. Central office needs to have much deeper and ongoing communication with school leaders on what information they use and need to support their real-time and long-term decision making to ensure there is more of a level playing field across the district for accessing and using data.

#### What do we need to build?

Central needs to strengthen existing communication channels and potentially build new channels both across departments and between central and schools to ensure that 1) central understands how schools use different data sources, whether developed by the district or the school site and 2) school leaders understand and can use the array of data sources supported centrally.

## **Pillar 2: Users Need to Be in Control of Their Data Exploration**

### **What do we want for students?**

OUSD wants services, programming and interventions run at the school and district level to be appropriately distributed among students. Appropriately and fairly assigning services, programming and interventions to students requires school and central leaders have access to and can use up-to-date student, school and district data to support their decision making on resource allocation and resource effectiveness.

### **What must change?**

For school and central leaders to use data in real-time decision making, they require data systems and tools that are dynamic and accessible enough to allow users themselves to explore up-to-date information related to their work. The periodic release of siloed, retrospective data from central does not provide the continuous feedback loop of data exploration, programmatic action/change and then ongoing data exploration that leaders at schools and central are seeking.

### **What do we need to build?**

The data infrastructure needs to have the accessibility and capability to allow users across schools and central to explore data in a way that is both systematic (e.g. by having premade reports and materials at predetermined intervals) and allows for ad-hoc analyses, enabling users to manipulate premade tools and generate their own analysis related to their programming focus and/or school so they do not have to wait on data from specific central departments.

## **Pillar 3: Central Needs to Do More with Less in Its Data Reporting**

### **What do we want for students?**

In the spirit of a full service community school district, OUSD wants school and central leaders to have access to integrated information on students as a whole and to be able to more easily connect information to action. Having a fuller picture of students' multidimensional profiles in combination with more systematic links between data and action will allow schools and central to more effectively serve and support students.

### **What must change?**

While central is generating an extensive array of data reports, a sizable portion of these do not fully meet the needs of school or central leaders. There was a call across the district for reporting systems and tools that combine different types of data (e.g. integrating achievement, attendance, intervention and teacher data) as well as incorporating support for how to best

interpret information and identify next steps for action from data. Central needs to reorient its reporting work to produce fewer reports that are more multifaceted in presenting integrated data and helping users decide on next steps (e.g. if data shows the school is about to overspend its budget, the information should link to central supports for course-correcting).

### **What do we need to build?**

The new data infrastructure should prioritize data reports and tools that have data integrated from multiple sources and embedded links to support over generating a large quantity one dimensional reports. OUSD also needs to build a greater capacity for data support to help users make sense of reports and strengthen the links between central teams focused on different areas of school programming and school sites (e.g. special education, English language learners, etc.)

## **Pillar 4: Data Sharing Across & Within Schools and Central Is the Default**

### **What do we want for students?**

Students will be better served if school and central leaders have the relevant district-wide information for their work to understand what schools/programs are having excellent outcomes that should be lifted as best practices as well as what schools/programs are struggling and need additional support.

### **What must change?**

The current OUSD data infrastructure does not easily or systematically allow for sharing student or school data. Data sharing across the district should be an “opt out” not “opt in” policy. Schools need to be given access to other schools’ information (not limited to regions or school types) so they can appreciate how other sites facing similar challenges are faring and know which leaders to approach for learning and support. The same is true for central which currently encounters challenges with information being isolated among district initiatives in different departments (even when they work with the same schools). Moreover, both schools and central departments need more clarity on how they are allowed to and should approach sharing data internally.

### **What do we need to build?**

First, OUSD needs to create data sharing protocols so schools and central leaders understand how data can be shared for identifying best practices while maintaining and respecting student privacy. Second, OUSD needs to build institutional learning spaces (potentially using ad-hoc or formal working groups that currently exist) to provide the time and setting for school and central leaders to use data in sharing best practices across the district.

## **Pillar 5: Channels for Data Access are Systematic**

### **What do we want for students?**

The degree to which students are in school environments using data-driven decision making should not vary based on the ad hoc use of different, site-specific tools and the varied ability of principals' to access needed data through their personal connections within the district.

### **What must change?**

OUSD needs to move away from a data infrastructure where the most common method for accessing needed information is to call/email a colleague to one with systematic channels of data access that are universally communicated and understood. This is not to say that the "human touch" is not an important component of exploring and analyzing data: it is vital for school and central leaders to be able to discuss and debrief their data with others. Rather having access be systematic ensures that variations in data access and use are not exacerbated because certain school or central leaders do not have the relationships within the district to know who to call or email for data support.

### **What do we need to build?**

Having a data infrastructure that is more user-driven will help mitigate this problem. However, OUSD must build and strengthen communication channels with schools and across central so that this shift in approach to data access is understood and users feel sufficiently supported to fully utilize a system that can be more user-driven than the current model.

## **Pillar 6: Central Cannot Provide All Data, but Should Provide Major Data**

### **What do we want for students?**

Students across the district should be learning in environments where all school leaders and central staff supporting the school have access to similar a "baseline" of data crucial to school performance, including the areas of achievement, attendance, teacher information, and budget data.

### **What must change?**

Central should not require that all schools use identical sources, systems and tools, but rather it should ensure a "floor" of access to accurate and timely data district-wide. Central needs to systematically evaluate which core data it should provide (in line with Pillar 3): it cannot realistically be "all things to all people" in terms of providing all needed data elements in exactly the right format for every stakeholder. But central can provide key data to schools (especially student data) and central leaders in a format that can be easily manipulated to fit

unique needs through an ongoing understanding how and why school and central leaders are use different data sources.

**What do we need to build?**

First, central needs to build a communication feedback loop around data to have an ongoing understanding of how and why school and central leaders are using which data sources. Second, in the short-run as OUSD transitions to a new data infrastructure central needs to create and maintain a “data landscape matrix” that captures the data sources and systems used across the district for central to best appreciate what major data it should provide to schools and central departments.

