

**Want to learn more? Join us for an
information and Q&A on
Tuesday, May 31, 4-5pm at Tilden.**



OAKLAND UNIFIED
SCHOOL DISTRICT

Community Schools, Thriving Students

QUALITY COMMUNITY SCHOOLS DEVELOPMENT

**Maximizing Assets in Service of
Thriving Students and Healthy Communities:**

**Inquiry into an
OUSD GRADE CONFIGURATION CHANGE
*Letter of Interest Process***

As part of its Strategic Plan to ensure high quality educational opportunities for all students, the Oakland Unified School District will undergo a series of Regional Restructuring changes to ensure that, as a school system, we operate academically and fiscally thriving environments. **These restructuring changes will include an inquiry into the advantages of school expansion.**

Beginning in spring 2011, we are beginning a process of exploring school expansion and are inviting school communities who are already engaged in this exploration to share their interest.

Please be clear: the district is not at this time seeking to engage in any wholesale changes in school grade configurations. At this moment, we are simply exploring a process for community decision-making.

The attached Letter of Interest packet includes the following:

- *Background of Grade Configuration Change (Expansion) Inquiry*
- *Frequently Asked Questions*
- *Letter of Interest Guiding Questions*

DEADLINE: Monday, June 13, 2011

Please contact Rebecca Adams (Rebecca.Adams@ousd.k12.ca.us) with questions.

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QUALITY COMMUNITY SCHOOLS DEVELOPMENT

Maximizing Assets in Service of Thriving Students and Healthy Communities: OUSD Grade Configuration Change Process (DRAFT)

BACKGROUND

As we face unprecedented challenges at the federal, state and local level to ensuring high quality educational opportunities for all students, we are clearer with each passing day that in order to improve the learning experiences for all children in Oakland, a priority must be placed on maximizing our existing assets . As the district moves into the coming years using the beneficial tool of a Strategic Plan, we will be seeking opportunities to place children in settings that bring them closer to great teaching, great leadership and great curriculum. As part of that process, the district will undergo a series of Regional Restructuring changes to ensure that, as a school system, we operate academically and fiscally thriving environments. As part of those restructuring changes, including school transformations, school consolidations and school closures, **we will also be looking at the advantages of school expansion.**

Numerous school leaders and school communities in past years have indicated a strong interest in exploring grade configuration changes that would enhance their ability to hold onto and serve more students over a longer period of time. These changes may involve a K-5 becoming a K-8, a 6-8 becoming a 6-12. Other grade configuration changes may also be considered. There is mounting research, as well as local and national models, that demonstrate that grade configurations may play an important factor in student success.

We are beginning a process of exploring school expansion and inviting school communities who are already engaged in this exploration to share their interest.

Please be clear: the district is not at this time seeking to engage in any wholesale changes in school grade configurations. The factors that would lead to a decision to implement expansions are many, and as such they must be weighed thoughtfully and collectively, site by site. At this moment, we are simply initiating a conversation with our school communities.

DEADLINE: Monday, June 10, 2011

**Want to learn more? Join us for an
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QUALITY COMMUNITY SCHOOLS DEVELOPMENT

Maximizing Assets in Service of Thriving Students and Healthy Communities: OUSD Grade Configuration Change Process (DRAFT)

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What characterizes a “grade configuration change”?

- A change to the number and type of grades served
- A K-5 → K-8, 6-8 → K-8 or 6-12, and 9-12 → 6-12 expansion of grades served
- An expansion of grades served that occurs over time, typically one grade at a time
- A school that serves a contiguous group of students (the same) throughout the new grades served

Are schools encouraged to apply?

- If your school has already begun to explore this opportunity, you are encouraged to submit a Letter of Interest.
- If your school has not already begun to explore this opportunity, you may wish to consider how this may enhance your school's and the district's overall ability to hold onto and graduate more students.
- In addition to schools that have already begun exploring this opportunity, some schools, based on a variety of factors, may be encouraged to consider this opportunity to the extent that it may enhance the ability of the district to hold onto and graduate more students.

What makes a strong proposal?

- Whole staff/community commitment to expansion of grades served
- Clear alignment to District mission and vision
- Demonstrated leadership capacity and current high performance of school based on multiple measures

What is the application process and timeline?

- The district is not at this time seeking to engage in any wholesale changes in school grade configurations. We are beginning a process of exploring this opportunity and inviting school communities who are already engaged in this exploration to share their interest. The factors that would lead to a decision to implement such expansions are many and must be weighed thoughtfully and collectively, site by site.
- School leadership will be contacted prior to the end of the 2010-11 school year for a brief meeting to discuss. Proposed grade configuration changes may be included in regional restructuring plans proposed in October 2011.

OUSD Grade Configuration Changes Letter of Interest (DRAFT)

(Letter of Interest should not be more than three pages)

GUIDING QUESTIONS

School/Region:	
Type of Grade Configuration	Current: _____ Proposed: _____
<p>Rationale:</p> <p>What is the rationale for the change in grade configuration?</p> <p>What are the lessons learned from researching other schools serving similar grades?</p> <p>How will the change enhance the school's and the district's ability to fulfill its mission and vision for Full Service Community Schools?</p> <p>How will you know if you have been successful in your grade configuration change?</p>	
<p>Support:</p> <p>To what extent do the staff and leadership of the school support the change?</p> <p>To what extent do parents and families support the change?</p> <p>What evidence demonstrates this support or lack thereof?</p>	
<p>Fiscal:</p> <p>Were there various scenarios considered and if so, why was the recommended scenario chosen?</p> <p>What fiscal implications for other school and/or district expenses or initiatives is the proposed use of these funds likely to have?</p> <p>What are likely trade-offs? How might these be mitigated?</p>	



QUALITY COMMUNITY SCHOOLS DEVELOPMENT

Impact and Supporting Conditions:

What are the implications for the surrounding community? How can these be mitigated when negative and enhanced when positive?

What is the estimated short term (within the next 6-12 months) and long term (1-3 years) resource needs of the proposed change?

How can these resources best be provided?

Principal Signature: _____

Date: _____

RExO/NExO signature: _____

Date: _____