



OAKLAND UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

Together, We Are Building

Community Schools, Thriving Students

a full-service community school district that serves the whole child, eliminates inequity and provides each child with an excellent teacher, every day.

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Project Narrative

Addressing Competitive Preference Priority 7: Innovations that Support College Access and Success

To be college ready, students need varying levels of expertise in key cognitive strategies, key content skills, academic behaviors, and contextual skills (“college knowledge) and awareness.ⁱ Ensuring that *all* students in a district have these college skills and the conviction that they are college-bound cannot be accomplished by the isolated efforts of individual college counselors, master teachers, or discrete extended-day programs. District-wide college readiness requires the coordinated, concerted effort of *all educators* (teachers, site and district leaders, and counselors), and the embedding of college readiness expectations and supports through every moment of the school experience. To this end, *Oakland Accelerates* will implement the College Board’s EXCEerator™ process, in order to strengthen the district’s college readiness infrastructure to better serve all students by changing educators’ behaviors across the system. College readiness coaching and professional development will make the vision of college and career readiness the common language of every adult in the district. It will equip all adults to support every student to graduate from high school with the knowledge, skills, and behaviors to complete a college course of study without needing remediation; address students’ expectations related to college; help students understand issues of college affordability and the financial aid and college application processes; provide college preparation support to students; and, most importantly, to thread all of these activities into the daily fabric of OUSD schools. *Oakland Accelerates*’ target outcomes are explicitly tied to college access and success (see pp. 13-14).

Addressing Competitive Preference Priority 9: Improving Productivity

The *Oakland Accelerates* project will develop, implement, and evaluate short-term, high-impact activities designed to build long-term staff and district capacity, with the ultimate goal of sustainably improving student outcomes per unit of resource beyond the end of the I3 project

period. Implementation of the EXCEerator process will increase district-wide infrastructural capacity by systematically integrating all college-readiness efforts together with a singular focus, enabling Oakland Unified School District to fully leverage and align ongoing initiatives aimed at improving student achievement, high school graduation, and college access and readiness to produce improved student outcomes. These district-wide alignment efforts will improve the overall efficiency and coordination of time, staff, money, and other resources by helping identify and streamline duplicative efforts. In addition, the project's college-readiness specialists and improved data collection and evaluation will build adult capacity at all levels of the district and expand the long-term effectiveness and productivity of current staff resources while improving student college readiness and success outcomes. Collectively, these changes will boost overall long-term district productivity by expanding the capacity of existing human resources, streamlining communications, and strengthening ongoing data-driven improvements.

A. Need for the Project

Exceptional approach to Absolute Priority 3: Innovations that Complement the Implementation of High Standards and High Quality Assessments. Oakland Unified School District (OUSD) has been the most improved large school district in California for the past six years, making large gains in student achievement (see Appendix C). However, these gains have occurred mostly at the primary school level, and we continue to struggle at the secondary level, with an extremely high dropout rate and a low proportion of students enrolling and succeeding in college. Our 2011-16 Strategic Plan, written after a year-long collaborative community based process, calls for graduating every OUSD student ready for post-secondary success, without remediation. To help us achieve this goal and to complement and reinforce the establishment of high standards and high-quality assessments for all our students (Absolute Priority 3), OUSD, together with partner the College Board, propose to implement *Oakland Accelerates*, a program to bring the College Board's EXCEerator process for college readiness to OUSD.

OUSD has already implemented or is about to launch a several key initiatives to improve secondary education and student outcomes. Several of them – including our ongoing middle school mathematics, secondary literacy initiative, and Linked Learning initiatives – have a strong focus on professional development and collaboration among educators to: align curricula and multiple assessments district-wide with the emerging Common Core State standards; equip educators to employ assessment data from to inform instruction and to meet the differentiated needs of under-served and under-performing students; and support these students to engage with and succeed in rigorous course work and graduate prepared for success in college. We discuss particular programs and policies in detail in Section B. Here we highlight one important reform we are implementing to illustrate why OUSD feels EXCEerator will prove so valuable.

In an effort to increase educational equity and provide a challenging academic program to all students, the OUSD Board of Education voted in June 2009 to align OUSD’s high school graduation requirements with the entrance requirements for the University of California (UC) and California State University (CSU) systems, called the "a-g" standards. This policy measure will go into effect in fall 2011. Beginning this year, all 9th graders - the graduating class of 2015 - will automatically be enrolled in courses and a rigorous program of study that meet the “a-g” requirements. Unfortunately, in our current state, OUSD does not offer enough support to either teachers or students to help make this make this ambitious change a success.

We are confident that the College Board’s EXCEerator process is an exceptionally promising complement to and support for the implementation of high standards and assessments, as well as a means to support all students, including traditionally under-represented and under-served students, to meet standards and graduate college-ready, for several reasons:

- It is a district-wide approach that embeds college readiness expectations and supports for success in a rigorous coursework throughout all students’ experience in school.
- It focuses on equipping all educators within schools and the district level to help all

students develop the knowledge, skills, expectations, and behaviors to complete a rigorous, college prep course of study – doing so by incorporating the innovative idea of intensive college-readiness coaching to enable deep adult learning and change.

- The EXCEerator model has demonstrated its effectiveness and has undergone improvements that we are confident will lead to stronger student outcomes in OUSD.

The EXCEerator process was launched in 2006 as a collaborative project between the College Board, the Gates Foundation, and three participating school districts. It was designed to help all students enter the pipeline to post-secondary education, with a focus on students who have been underserved, and has great potential to help schools become providers of high-quality, high-standards education. The EXCEerator 1.0 School Model – the precursor to the current EXCEerator district-wide process at the core of *Oakland Accelerates* – was expanded by 2008-09 to include 49 high schools and 45 middle schools across the country. Please see the “Positive Impact” discussion below for evaluation findings on the effectiveness of this model – and for lessons learned that have informed the EXCEerator process to be used in *Oakland Accelerates*.

EXCEerator begins with a District Diagnostic process, designed to analyze gaps in a district’s college readiness infrastructure by reviewing five critical components of college readiness: 1. *District Infrastructure*, 2. *Curriculum Coherence*, 3. *Assessments That Inform*, 4. *Student Academic Support*, and 5. *Student Family Support* (see “Project Design” for more detail). This District Diagnostic guides the development of a college-readiness strategic plan and Road Map for implementation. College Readiness Specialists and change management specialists then engage adults in intensive professional development and coaching, strategically developing the capacity of teachers, counselors, school and district leaders to strengthen the academic rigor of all classrooms and communicate high expectations for all students, needs which OUSD acknowledges. Rather than focusing on changing one school or a cluster of schools, EXCEerator focuses on improving the district’s overall college readiness vision and

capacity. EXCEerator’s exceptional promise to substantially shift school and district cultures in OUSD lies in the comprehensiveness of its District Diagnostic and Road Maps, and its ability to make meaningful changes that will result in genuine improvements in our district’s ability to deliver the “a-g” standards effectively so that students are engaged and successful learners.

Oakland Accelerates is closely aligned to address OUSD’s needs for a district-wide post-secondary-readiness strategic plan and a process to guide implementation of system-wide changes in educator practices that will result in dramatically improved student outcomes.

Existing gaps and weaknesses. Oakland (population 409,189), across the bay from San Francisco, has among California’s highest poverty and high school dropout rates, as well as acute socioeconomic challenges (Table 1). Oakland is also battling a longstanding severe crime problem, wrestling with the fourth highest violent crime rate in the U.S. and the highest crime rates of any of California’s 10

largest cities.ⁱⁱⁱ Much of the crime is gang- and drug-related and being perpetrated by and on Oakland youth. A full 12% of OUSD students in grades 7-

Table 1. Oakland Socioeconomic Profileⁱⁱ	Oakland	Alameda County	CA
Median family income	\$57,325	\$84,857	\$68,909
Children in poverty	25.3%	13.7%	18.3%
Unemployment	15.6%	10.3%	11.7%

12 say they are current gang members,^{iv} a dire reality linked to poor engagement in school and our district’s high drop-out rates. These barriers to success in school and life take a particular toll on our African American and Latino communities.

OUSD serves 46,099 students in grades K-12. Students of color make up 93% of the student population, with Latinos (39%) and African Americans (33%) the largest groups. Seventy-one percent of OUSD students participate in the National School Lunch Program, and nearly 25% of students live in public housing. One third of our students are English Language Learners, 76% of whom are native Spanish speakers. The next largest groups of the 44 languages

represented are Cantonese (9%) and Vietnamese (4%) native speakers. Many OUSD students are from families with low educational attainment and no college-going history: 32% of OUSD parents are not high school graduates; another 28% have not been educated beyond high school.^v

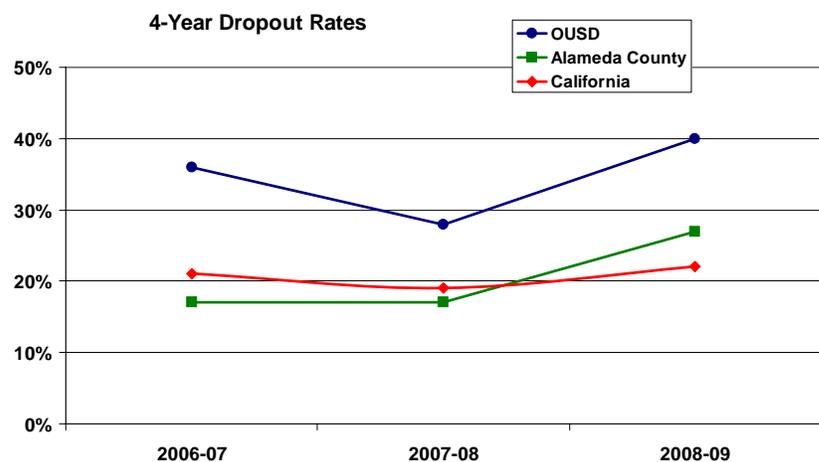
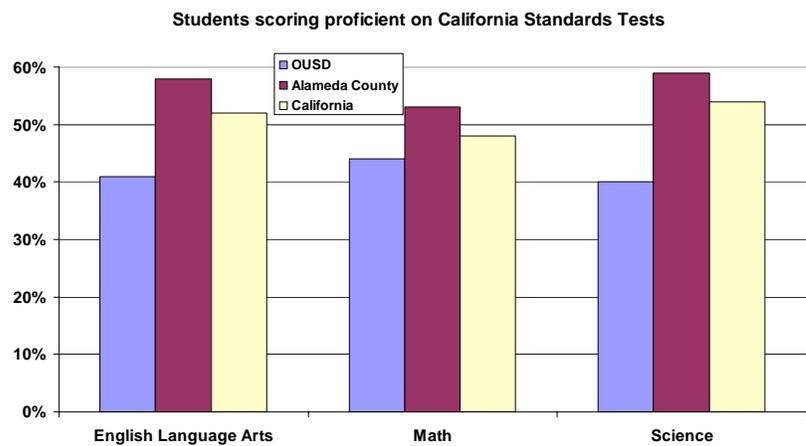
Most of our students do *not* meet academic standards, and our performance lags well behind county- and state-wide results (see figure below). Student achievement declines over time; while 54% of OUSD students in 5th grade are proficient in math, this figure drops to 36% in 6th grade and 25% by 11th grade. Moreover, OUSD has large achievement gaps. Most saliently, only 31% and 30% of all African American students are meeting English Language Arts (ELA) and Math standards respectively.^{vi} OUSD students are also faring poorly in mastering Algebra during middle school or even high school. Algebra is a “gateway” class not only to a college-preparatory program of study, but also to high school graduation. Only 68% of students taking Algebra in 8th grade, and

69% taking it in 9th grade, pass, and only 19% of students meet state standards in Algebra.

Too many of our students are not being engaged, or are losing interest in school entirely.

Eleven percent of middle school students and 14% of high school students attend less than 90% of school days, and 43% of students are truant – 50% higher than the county- and state-wide rates.

Truancy is a slippery slope to



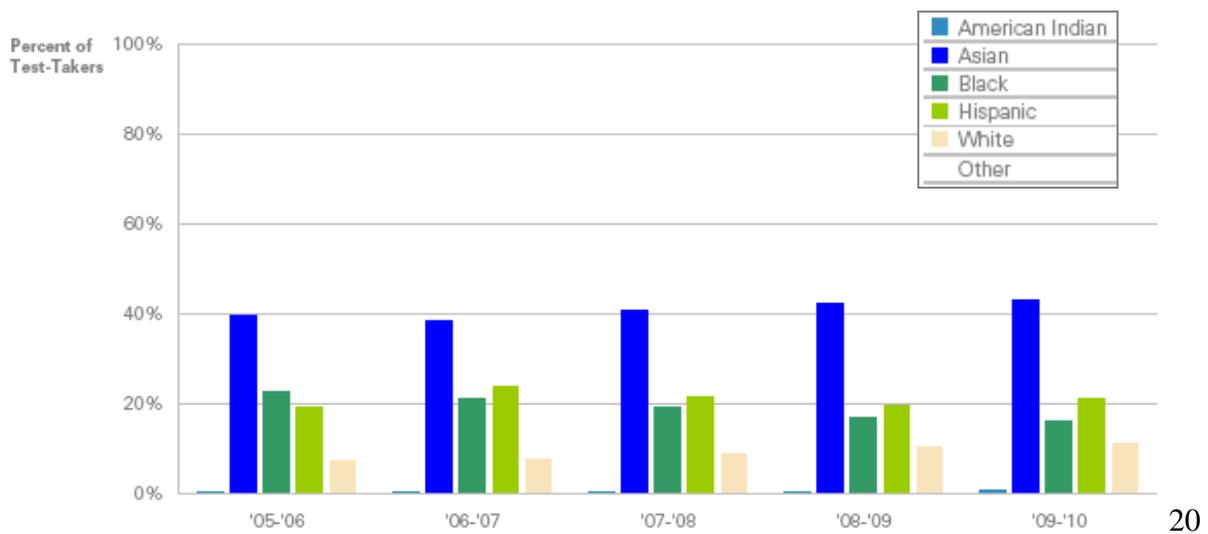
dropping out, and in fact our truancy rate is roughly equivalent to our alarmingly high drop-out rates. Over 40% of all OUSD students, and 49% of African American students, drop out of school. The graph presents comparative four-year drop-out rates for the last years for which these data are available.^{vii}

Many students get off track for graduation early in high school, as exemplified in results from spring 2011, when only 56% of 9th graders were on track to graduate in four years, as were only 53% of 10th graders and 51% of 11th graders. Students who fall behind must take credit recovery or summer school classes to catch up. To graduate, students must also pass the California High School Exit Exam. In 2011, 25% of students had not done so by 12th grade, reflecting these students' sub-proficient academic skills.

While four of every 10 OUSD students are not graduating from high school, most of those who do graduate are unprepared for college. In spring 2010, only 34% of graduating students had completed the "a-g" eligibility requirements for admission to the UC and CSU systems. In addition, a mere 11% of 11th grade students tested "college ready" on the Early Assessment Program^{viii} in ELA and only 12% tested "college ready" in Math. Therefore, most of our students lack even the basic (not to mention advanced) skills necessary to succeed in college, and high numbers of OUSD graduates who do reach college are dropping out.

The lack of OUSD college-ready supports disproportionately affects African Americans and Latinos: only 26% of graduating African American students and 28% of Latino graduates (compared to 43% of white students and 59% of Asians) completed the "a-g" requirements. African American and Latino students are not hitting college benchmarks on either their SAT or their PSAT/NMSQT exams. In 2009-10, the mean Critical Reading, Math, and Writing scores on the SATs for African Americans at OUSD were 403, 401, and 402, respectively, and for Latinos they were 397, 415, and 408. In addition, these groups are neither proportionally represented in taking AP® classes, nor are they achieving college level results on the AP exams they take. In

AP: Participation by Ethnic Groups Taking One or More Exam



09-10, African Americans took a total of 298 AP exams, but achieved a score of 3 or higher on only 40 of those exams (13%), and Latinos scored 3 or higher on only 126 of the 392 AP exams (32%) they took. As shown in the prior figure, these groups are dramatically underrepresented in terms of taking AP exams over the past five years. In a district where 72% of students are either African American or Latino, these percentages make clear that significant portions of our students have not been encouraged or supported enough to make college-readiness a priority.

OUSD Research, Assessment, and Data (RAD) Department has found, based on National Student Clearinghouse data, found that 73% of OUSD students who graduated in 2009 enrolled in college after graduating (29% in 4-year colleges, 44% in 2-year colleges). Since 40% of that same graduating class dropped out, the actual proportion of college-going students who began high school in the class of 2009 was 44%. RAD has also found that of 2007 graduates entering 2-year colleges, only 72% were still enrolled a year later, and while 71% of OUSD graduates entered post-secondary education over a 4-year period, only 41% were enrolled in college by the fourth year. Clearly we are not preparing our students to succeed in postsecondary education.

During our strategic planning process in 2010-11, OUSD undertook a comprehensive assessment of our academic programs. We convened task forces of educators to discuss what

was missing and what was needed to prepare students for college and careers. We identified several key contributors to the poor engagement in school and low educational attainment of many of our students.

Currently, OUSD lacks: 1) a literacy framework that guides instruction for all secondary students aligned to English Language Arts Common Core State Standards; 2) comprehensive, high-yield, tested strategies and resources to meet the needs of African

American males and English Language Learners; 3) tools, resources, policy collaborations, and infrastructure to accelerate improvement in core academic areas; and 4) a framework for developing college and career literacies, i.e., literacy abilities that enable students to extract, evaluate, and use information from textbooks, on-line resources and other text-rich materials.

In a 2010 survey, while 88% of OUSD middle school students agreed that “I think I can be successful in college,” 41% indicated that they had *not* learned about the requirements for getting into 4-year universities; 30% of 249 middle school teachers surveyed *disagreed* their school “does a good job of teaching students the skills and knowledge they need for college.”^x Findings from a 2011 survey of 3,824 students at 13 high schools (Table 4) suggest most students do not receive adequate counseling on high school, college, or career planning.

OUSD must create a college-ready and college-going culture where every student can meet or exceed higher standards and expectations; understands the benefits of post-secondary education, aspires to it, is aware of college entrance requirements and financing options; and gets the support needed to graduate with the skills and knowledge needed to succeed in college.

As noted, *Oakland Accelerates* will strategically focus on building an infrastructure of college readiness supports district-wide by training and changing the behavior of all educators to

Table 2. OUSD high school students counseled on: ^{ix}	
Choosing classes to meet graduation requirements	34%
Future career possibilities	33%
College admission requirements	36%
How to apply to college	34%
How to pay for college	24%

have a positive impact on students. The EXCEerator model will enable us to address the particular gaps and weaknesses of which we are already aware, as well as those that emerge during the EXCEerator District Diagnostic, that underlie OUSD's poor student outcomes.

Specifically, OUSD and the College Board will collaborate to:

- Align curriculum and instruction with college readiness expectations, including equipping teachers to meet the differentiated learning needs of struggling students.
- Support teachers and administrators to use assessment data to improve instruction and increase students' college readiness.
- Guide educators to thread a college-going culture throughout students' educational experience, communicate high expectations and instill in disadvantaged students the idea that they can be college bound.
- Leverage, expand, and maximize the impact of academic interventions and non-academic supports to remove barriers to student learning and college readiness.
- Build students' and families' understanding of college preparation and "college knowledge" such as graduation requirements, the benefits of college, college options and admission requirements, application processes, and financial aid options.

Positive impact. We are confident the *Oakland Accelerates* partnership will have a substantial positive impact on OUSD student outcomes, based on the close alignment of EXCEerator with OUSD's identified needs and priorities; promising results achieved via the EXCEerator schools model; and improvements the College Board has made to EXCEerator. In Fall 2008, American Institutes for Research (AIR) began an external evaluation of EXCEerator 1.0. AIR examined the impact of the model from its inception in 12 schools in 2006-2007 through the 2008-2009 school year, utilizing a comparative interrupted series design. It found that compared to school-level outcomes prior to implementation and outcomes for similar non-program schools, EXCEerator appeared to be having positive effects on:

Graduation Rates: EXCEerator schools in their second year of implementation had graduation rates 3.9% higher than those for non-EXCEerator schools. Dropout Rates: EXCEerator schools in their third year of implementation had dropout rates 1.3% lower than those for non-EXCEerator schools. Participation in AP exams: The percentage of students taking an AP exam was almost 7 points higher for EXCEerator schools in their first year of implementation than for non-EXCEerator schools. In the second year the EXCEerator effect grew to 9.4 percentage points, and by the third year, it was 12.4 points. (Please see Appendix D for a fuller discussion of AIR's evaluation findings.)

EXCEerator 1.0 did not have the desired effects on AP, SAT®, and PSAT/NMSQT® performance, however. The College Board engaged in a multi-year process of revising and amending its processes in light of lessons learned. Key among the changes, the current EXCEerator framework now focuses on district-wide (as opposed to school-wide) reform. The College Board has developed an array of supports ranging from planning to professional development workshops, designed specifically to address identified lacunae in existing support services, identified by the District Diagnostic, that help district leaders, principals, teachers, and counselors prepare student, regardless of background, for post-secondary success.

Based on the prior results discussed above, we would expect to see *at least* a 4% rise in graduation rates, a 12.4 % rise in AP participation, and a 1.3% reduction in drop outs during the 4-year project period. Translated to our current secondary school enrollment (approximately 12,900 students) this would mean over 500 students who otherwise would not complete high school will graduate, almost 1,600 more students would participate in AP classes, and about 247 fewer students would officially drop out of school. However, EXCEerator now also focuses on district-wide changes and adult behavior and expectations, and as a result, OUSD anticipates the enhancements in human resources and district infrastructure will lead to substantially stronger improvements in student achievement, graduation rates, college readiness, college enrollment

and persistence. Specific outcomes we expect to achieve are delineated in the following section.

B. Quality of the Project Design

Goals, Strategy, and Actions. OUSD has set the following goals for *Oakland Accelerates*:

Goal 1: *OUSD students will succeed in high school and will graduate prepared for college without needing remediation.* By the end of the grant period (or as otherwise noted):

Objective 1.1—All students will have a college and career plan by the end of 9th grade.

1.2—AP test-taking will increase by 10% and under-representation of African Americans and Latino students in AP testing will be narrowed by at least 40%.

1.3—African American and Latino students earning a 3+ on AP exams will increase by 3% annually.

1.4—60% of students will take the SAT, and gaps in SAT taking between Asian students vs. African American and Latino students will narrow by at least 30%;

1.5—African American and Latino students taking the SAT will show a 15% increase in mean SAT scores.

1.6—OUSD’s 4-year adjusted high school graduation rate will reach 70%.

1.7—50% of graduates will meet the “a-g” requirements;

1.8—The number of OUSD students who enroll in

Table 3. Existing (2009-10) baselines on outcome measures	
% of students taking at least one AP test	17%
% of students taking AP test who are African American	16%
% of students taking AP test who are Latino	21%
% of African Americans taking AP tests scoring 3+	16%
% of Latinos taking AP tests scoring 3+	52%
% of 12 th grade students taking the SAT	42%
Mean SAT scores ^{xi} of African American students	402
Mean SAT scores of Latino students	407
4-year high school graduation rate	60%
% of graduates who complete “a-g” requirements	34%
College enrollment	44%

college or other post-secondary institution in the year following graduation will increase by 5% annually.

1.9—50% of college-goers will begin post-secondary study without need of remediation.

Goal 2: *Oakland Accelerates will build district capacity to support and prepare all students for post-secondary success.*

Objective 2.1—All AP teachers will have the skills and capacity to enable under-represented students to succeed in AP classes.

2.2—OUSD secondary curriculum will map to a common a-g core and for grades 6-12 that integrate skills and standards to ready students for Advanced Placement.

2.3—All district leaders and principals will have experiential knowledge of college readiness and AP programs that are highly successful in advancing African American and Latino students.

2.4—OUSD will design, implement, and sustain effective intervention programs to address the learning and acceleration needs of our diverse students, in particular students who are not meeting grade level standards in core academic skill areas.

2.5—OUSD's EXCEerator District Diagnostic phase ratings will improve across all five components of the District Diagnostic tool by the end of the grant period.

Project implementation. *Oakland Accelerates* will begin with the EXCEerator comprehensive District Diagnostic, a tool designed to analyze strengths and challenges in the district's capacity to ensure college readiness by reviewing the district's foundation across five essential components. 1. *District Infrastructure* focuses on goals, policies, practices, and processes that establish college readiness as a priority. 2. *Curriculum Coherence* focuses on district guidelines that ensure a scope and sequence in core content areas are aligned to college readiness expectations. 3. *Assessments That Inform* focus on the use of assessment data to improve instruction and increase college readiness at the district, school, and classroom levels. 4. *Student Academic Support* focuses on strategies and programs that build students' capacity to

engage in learning experiences essential for college readiness. 5. *Student Family Support* focuses on strategies and programs that empower students and families to plan and prepare for college success. The EXCEerator District Diagnostic assesses a district's college readiness through an investigation of multiple documents, an analysis of disaggregated student data, including cohorts' progress toward graduation, interviews with district and school leaders, and school visits including classroom observations of core subjects and completion of a culture inventory. (See Appendix I for a more detailed diagnostic rubric).

In addition to administration of the EXCEerator District Diagnostic, six OUSD high schools will also administer the EPIC CollegeCareerReady online school diagnostic. The CollegeCareerReady school diagnostic tool, developed by Dr. David Conley and the Educational Policy Improvement Center (EPIC) and funded by grant from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, investigates individual schools' preparedness in areas critical to college readiness through self reported data from students, teachers, administrators, and counselors. The District Diagnostic assesses a district's college readiness through an investigation of multiple documents, an analysis of disaggregated student data, including cohorts' progress toward graduation, interviews with district and school leaders, and school visits including classroom observations of core subjects and completion of a culture inventory. (See Appendix D for a discussion of EPIC's approach.) Note that the EXCEerator District Diagnostic process will begin in Fall 2011, as a part of the Castlemont Corridor partnership between the College Board and OUSD, discussed below, and will be funded through that initiative, not the I3 grant. This District Diagnostic, which will include *all* high schools and middle schools across the district, will be undertaken over a 3-4-month period and is expected to be complete by the beginning of I3 funding, with only the EPIC CollegeCareerReady school diagnostics remaining to be conducted.

After the District Diagnostic process is completed and specific needs have been identified, an EXCEerator team, including a full-time *Oakland Accelerates* Project

Manager/change agent from the College Board, will work collaboratively with and within OUSD. The team will work directly with OUSD project staff and leadership in a strategic planning process that incorporates the EXCEerator Diagnostic Road Map to address the specific post-secondary needs and priorities into the overall OUSD strategic and *Oakland Accelerates* plan, then continue to work collaboratively to develop, implement, and monitor the plan, as well as sustain and expand gains into the future. *Oakland Accelerates* will incorporate the following elements of EXCEerator:

Implementation Support. One of the lessons learned by the College Board during the EXCEerator 1.0 roll-out is that to make lasting and effective change in schools there needs to be a “high-touch,” unrelenting and ongoing focus on adults in the district. To help students achieve higher standards, the adults that teach, administer, and counsel those students must all be on board and equipped to provide what’s needed. Implementation support identified as a need in the District Diagnostic may include not just teacher/administrator professional development (via training sessions, intensive workshops, and peer mentoring), but supporting teachers, counselors, and school and district administrators to set priorities and to design and implement programs (via college readiness conferences, AP clinics, and summer AP bridge programs) that will provide students the academic and other supports they need.

College Readiness (CR) Specialists. OUSD educators will be recruited and trained to serve as College Readiness Specialists, peer coaches who will support educators to apply their college readiness skills and knowledge. They will be trained intensively in the EXCEerator change framework, to increase educators’ knowledge and practice of college readiness skills in middle and high schools throughout OUSD, following Conley’s four dimensions framework of key content knowledge, key cognitive strategies, academic behaviors, and contextual skills (“college knowledge”). The CR Specialists will support teachers, counselors, and school and district administrators as they implement and monitor the instructional and student support

practices and programs that will help students graduate ready for post-secondary success. They will do so by facilitating professional development, participating in collaborative planning time with teachers, observing and modeling instruction, working with administrators to improve monitoring practices and identify needed student supports, and collecting and analyzing data about the implantation of college readiness initiatives in the district.

Change Management. The EXCEerator process is backed by a team with expertise in transitioning underperforming districts like OUSD to high standards, high-performing districts. EXCEerator and the College Board will dedicate a full-time transition expert, the Project Manager (EXCEerator PM), who will work with all OUSD stakeholders on the development and execution of the work plan. The PM, in partnership with OUSD Project Director, will have responsibilities including: defining the high-leverage college-readiness strategies and initiatives for implementation of priorities identified in the Road Map (to assess for duplicative, conflicting, and underperforming initiatives); establishing and facilitating the work of College Readiness teams, which will include Post-secondary Steering Committee members and day-to-day Program Management team members; defining a college readiness communications strategy and timeline; and providing professional development to various educator audiences.

Finally, the OUSD Project Director and the EXCEerator PM will direct the implementation of the recommendations in the work plan. Actions at this implementation stage will include (but not be limited to) delivering professional development and coaching, investigating coaching models, evaluating student outcomes, and designing tools to effectively measure changes in adult behavior and practice.

We anticipate a six-month start-up period for *Oakland Accelerates*, and in summer 2012 we plan to begin to fully implement and coaching and identified priorities in the District Diagnostic and agreed-upon implementation plan, and will do so for two full academic years, through the end of academic year (AY) 2013-14. During this “high touch” period, the program

will intensively focus on making district-wide changes, increasing the college-readiness knowledge and instructional expertise of teachers, school and district administrators and counselors, and helping to support students most in need of post-secondary readiness skills. During this implementation period, After the initial implementation period, from Summer 2014 through the end of the grant period in December 2015, *Oakland Accelerates* will transition to a monitoring phase. We will monitor not only student outcome data, but also adult changes in practice and the momentum and sustainability of the program itself. As a part of the EXCEerator framework, the Project Director and the EXCEerator PM will work to secure funding that both sustains changes made, and enables us to implement changes called for that are not addressed with I3 funding. Though we anticipate being able to greatly increase academic rigor through the initiative's unceasing focus on changing adult expertise and practice in OUSD, we anticipate finding needs in our District Diagnostic that will have to be addressed with funding other than that provided by this proposal. Given that most districts in need of increased rigor, and thus in need of a process like EXCEerator, find themselves similarly unable to fund every need identified in a District Diagnostic, monitoring the program's sustainability, and the district's ability to fund and address all of the needs identified by the District Diagnostic, are especially important to evaluating the overall effectiveness of *Oakland Accelerates*.

Please see the **timeline** in **Appendix J** for a more thorough representation of the many tasks and steps involved in the roll-out and implementation of the EXCEerator process.

Cost. We are requesting \$2,992,856 in I3 funding for *Oakland Accelerates*, and expect to reach every secondary student in OUSD, 12,900 students per year, at a cost of \$232 per student overall. Yearly per-student costs are very low: Year 1 (\$68), Year 2 (\$85), Year 3 (\$59), and (\$20) – especially when we consider the outcomes we expect to achieve for thousands of students, both during and after the grant period, as detailed earlier. Approximately 9% of the I3 grant (\$270,000) will cover start-up costs (the first 6-months of the grant period) and the

remainder will fund operating costs. As noted, the bulk of implementation will occur in years 2 and 3 of the grant period). If the implementation of the EXCEerator process and *Oakland Accelerates* prove as effective as we anticipate (i.e., we achieve our objectives), many thousands of students will measurably benefit from the changes put into place as a result of this partnership. As the district effectively implements district-wide changes and builds a sustainable college-going and college-ready culture, the costs for coaching/change management will drop to \$0, and OUSD will assume the task of training new personnel to support our focus on college readiness.

The College Board estimates these costs (see Table) per student for districts of larger size. These costs are extremely reasonable, as one of the advantages of a district-focused, process-oriented program like the one proposed here is that it has the potential to change how things are done in a major and effective way so as to reach all secondary students.

District Size	Total Budget	Cost/student
100,000	\$12,379,055	\$123.79
250,000	\$28,191,145	\$112.76
500,000	\$53,481,498	\$106.96

Incorporation into ongoing OUSD efforts. *Oakland Accelerates* will help to maximize the effectiveness of college-readiness strategies already underway in OUSD, by providing a system-wide Road Map and implementation that leverage and unite our existing college-ready initiatives and efforts. Having made post-secondary readiness for all OUSD students a pillar of our 2011-16 Strategic Plan, we have implemented a number of programs and initiatives in addition to, and supporting the success of, the aforementioned required “a-g” curriculum for all students beginning in fall 2011, including:

OUSD’s Learning, Curriculum & Instruction group has launched several new initiatives this year to address needs for increased academic rigor and literacy support in our high schools as well as improved teaching and learning of mathematics in our middle schools.

- Secondary Literacy: For the next several years, OUSD’s *Secondary Literacy initiative* will

consist of central- and site-based literacy specialists and principals collaborating to lead learning experiences for teachers and build an infrastructure of skills, assessments, and other tools to address the literacy skill gaps and needs of students who read below grade level. In addition, WestEd will provide intensive, ongoing professional development for secondary instructors to support ramping up rigor, through its Strategic Literacy Initiative.^{xii} As we continue to raise the bar towards “a-g,” this initiative will equip our teachers to match an increase in the intellectual challenge of instruction with effective scaffolding and strategies for increasing students' active engagement with their own learning, in order to accelerate students' reading achievement and fluency and improve their comprehension and writing skills in all core classes.

- Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics (STEM): A transitional study conducted by our internal Research Assessment and Data (RAD) department evidenced that the percentage of OUSD students who score proficient or advanced on the Math portion of the California Standards Test drops dramatically from 5th grade (63%) to 6th grade (38%) and continues to slide in 7th grade. In response, the district developed a multi-year initiative for improving teacher and school effectiveness in these crucial middle grades. Key levers of this initiative are high quality professional development supported by coaching, implementation of common core standards and curriculum, and Principal and teacher leadership training. Funded by the Bechtel Foundation, this initiative also includes the careful design and implementation of STEM corridors (a network of K-12 schools focusing on STEM) and pathways (secondary schools with courses and STEM linked learning experiences) to build student aspirations and career readiness.
- Linked Learning: In 2010, The Irvine Foundation invested substantial funding in a Linked Learning initiative in OUSD. Linked Learning connects academic learning with student interests and job preparation, leading to higher graduation rates, increased college enrollments, and higher earning potential. ConnectEd California, a nonprofit dedicated to advancing practice, policy, and research aimed at helping young people prepare for both college and career through

Linked Learning, assists OUSD high schools in developing high-quality integrated instructional units for industry themes across a wide range of possible student career-oriented interests (such as graphic design), provides professional development on these units, and supports teachers in developing their own integrated instructional units. The Linked Learning Initiative is also implementing the ConnectEd certification process to ensure that OUSD's career academies (available at all district high schools) are of high quality. Our career academies and pathways link strong academic core ("a-g") curricula with work-based learning experiences that give students unique, integrated ways of learning academic skills directly related to real world job contexts. We should note that students in our existing career academy and career pathway programs are out-achieving their peers who do not take advantage of these programs. However, only 30% of students in grades 10-12 are currently enrolled in our career academies. We are currently expanding our career academy program and stepping out recruitment outreach for them, beginning in middle school. These efforts will dovetail with *Oakland Accelerates*.

- 9th Grade SLCs: OUSD was awarded a federal Smaller Learning Communities (SLC) Program grant in 2010 for our three largest high schools: Oakland High, Oakland Tech, and Skyline, which serve about 60% of our high school students. The program aims to increase the number of students who are prepared for post-secondary education. It begins by building strong supports for our 9th graders. During our first year of implementation, SLC schools developed freshmen "Houses" to address student learning and social needs during this important transitional year, while supporting their acquisition of college readiness skills and attitudes early on. By significantly improving the achievement of our 9th graders, we will increase the probability that they will graduate from high school and go on to enroll and succeed in college.

- Castlemont Corridor: In our already established partnership with the College Board, we are working to create a 9th Grade academy on the Castlemont campus in East Oakland, which serves our most distressed neighborhoods and has long suffered from one of the highest drop-out

rates in Oakland. Using the College Board curriculum Springboard®, a proven pre-Advanced Placement program that increases participation and prepares a greater diversity of students for success in AP, college and beyond, without remediation, this project aims to create a college-ready corridor that includes all of the middle schools that feed into Castlemont.

- African American Male Achievement (AAMA) Initiative: In response to the even more pronounced needs of African American males in particular, OUSD's AAMA is piloting interventions for African American 9th grade boys who are slipping between the cracks. This year, the program included three classes at our three largest high schools, funded in part by the SLC grant. We also have plans to involve the young men in a much wider exposure to local colleges. Next year the program will expand to six high schools and three large middle schools.
- AP Access and Support: As a part of our plan to ensure that students are ready for post-secondary success, OUSD has begun to put more emphasis on offering and supporting AP classes. This year the district partnered with Equal Opportunity Schools at our three large high schools to significantly increase both the number of AP offerings and the participation of under-represented students in AP classes in an ongoing effort to eliminate AP "opportunity gaps."
- College partnerships. OUSD has active partnerships with several local institutions of higher education. We work with U.C. Berkeley's Center for Educational Partnership to provide students with college advising, pre-Collegiate Academies, tutoring, and college visits. In June 2011, we established an agreement with Holy Names College in which it will guarantee "early admission" and a scholarship to 9th grade students who meet certain conditions and graduate from high school. Mills College is working to establish a residency program for new teachers in Oakland and is partnering with OUSD on a Civics Program (funded by Bechtel). OUSD and Mills are working more closely to place Mills graduates in the district. These IHE partners will participate in our Post-Secondary Readiness Steering Committee and support *Oakland Accelerates*. (Please note Letters of Support from the IHEs included in this application.)

- College and Career Readiness Council: To help prepare all OUSD graduates for success after high school, in 2009-10 OUSD formed the College and Career Readiness Planning Council that includes representation from students, families, community residents, local government, business and civic organizations, and community based organizations. The purpose of this Council is to leverage the resources of Oakland and the Bay Area to support an increase in the numbers and percentage of students graduating from OUSD prepared for college and career. This Council will be instrumental in helping to ensure that strategic actions called for by the *Oakland Accelerates* road map receive the funding necessary for effective implementation.

Oakland Accelerates promises to bring a district-wide perspective to these and other initiatives, uniting them toward one common purpose: the improvement of student outcomes. Every initiative noted will benefit from the EXCEerator focus on changing the behavior and practices of the adults in OUSD to help them significantly increase academic rigor in all classrooms. By streamlining and improving the support given to students, we will help them achieve under these new and more rigorous conditions, so that every Oakland student can graduate ready for success in college without the need for remediation

C. Quality of Project Evaluation

We propose to conduct a rigorous, mixed-method, multi-year evaluation that takes into consideration the development of *Oakland Accelerates* from the beginning to the end of the grant period. The evaluation strategy will focus on three research goals: 1) describe the program's implementation in order to facilitate replication and examine feasibility and sustainability; 2) evaluate the impact of the agreed-upon components of the EXCEerator model as used in *Oakland Accelerates*; and 3) define the effective strategies and barriers to establishing a partnership (particularly the effect of change management and college readiness coaching) to support and prepare all students for post-secondary enrollment and success. Below we present the research questions (RQs), measures/ indicators, and data sources to be utilized for each

evaluation goal in turn, followed by a description of data collection and analysis activities.

OUSD plans to contract with an independent professional evaluator, Hatchuel Tabernik & Associates (HTA), to objectively conduct the program evaluation and assist us with preparing reports to the grantor as well as local evaluation reports. Based in Berkeley, California, HTA has a highly experienced team of PhD-level evaluators with extensive experience conducting evaluations and research studies of large-scale initiatives funded by the Department of Education and other federal and state agencies. We have budgeted substantial and sufficient resources (10% of the I3 grant) for project evaluation activities (evaluation planning, instrument development, data collection, analysis, report development, and recommendations for improvement). We agree to participate in any cross-site or federally recommended evaluation activities ED may mandate.

Evaluation Goal 1: Describe program implementation: **RQ1:** What are the key components defining the EXCEerator model as implemented in *Oakland Accelerates* (e.g. District Infrastructure, Curriculum Coherence, Assessments that Inform, Student Academic Support, and Student Family Support)? **RQ2:** How replicable and sustainable is the EXCEerator model? What factors affect replicability and sustainability? **RQ3:** What strategies are educators using specifically to support students experiencing the most challenges in educational attainment, such as African-American males, low-income students, students of color, and English Learners?

To address RQ1-RQ3, we will develop an evaluation framework based on the EXCEerator logic model. We will review the following data to describe the program implementation and cultural competence: 1) *Document review* (e.g., Steering Committee meeting minutes, Project Management Teams meeting minutes, CR coaches' meeting minutes, syllabus/agenda of professional development, curricula); 2) *Degree of participation/dosage data* (e.g., quarterly program management support visit logs, school counselor support visit logs, CR coaches' on-site support logs, student family support records, student academic support records); 3) *Assessment of College Readiness Specialists* (data needs to be collaboratively determined in

quarters 2 and 3 of the grant by the Project Director, EXCELErator PM, and Evaluation Team (See Timeline, Appendix J).; 4) *Teacher and student surveys* to detect understanding of the EXCELErator model and *Oakland Accelerates* process and practices satisfaction with the implementation, particularly CR coaching; and 5) *Case studies* on a random sample of participating schools that include classroom observation and student and teacher interviews.

In addition, we will conduct program partner interviews at the end of each semester. These partners include: district leaders, school leaders, and project implementation staff, including coaches and the EXCELErator PM. Bi-yearly review topics will include: general impressions of the program, barriers/challenges in implementation, perceived educator and student progress/engagement, areas for improvement, and culturally-sensitive best practices utilized.

Quantitative data, such as dosage data and close-ended questions from surveys, will be imported into SPSS and analyzed descriptively. Qualitative data collected from open-ended questions and focus groups will be transcribed and imported into ATLAS.ti, a qualitative data management and analysis software package. Grounded theory, or constant comparative analysis, as described by Strauss and Corbin^{xiii} will be utilized. In an initial data reduction approach, respondents' comments will be reviewed and assigned categories of meaning (open coding). Then, these categories along with quantitative data results will be reviewed for causal linkages and non-causal relationships related to the central phenomenon (axial coding), which will allow the researcher to develop a "story" that connects the categories (selective coding) and finally posit hypotheses or theoretical propositions. These qualitative and quantitative analyses will inform us on whether the program provided all proposed services to participants and the degree to which the program is being implemented with fidelity.

Evaluation Goal 2: Evaluate the impact of the *Oakland Accelerates* process, particularly change management and college readiness coaching. **RQ4:** What is the impact of the *Oakland Accelerates* process on student outcomes throughout the project? **RQ5:** What is the impact of the

process on traditionally under-represented students, such as African-American males, low-income students, students of color, and English Learners? **RQ6:** What is the impact of the process, particularly change management and college readiness coaching, on adults?

To address RQ4 and RQ5, we will first assess whether the implementation of *Oakland Accelerates* increases the number students, particularly African-Americans and Latinos, who:

- a) have a college and career plan by the end of the 9th grade (Outcome Indicator: school/counseling records)
- b) take AP courses (Indicator: OUSD records of student enrollment of AP courses)
- c) earn a 3 score or higher on AP exams (Indicator: AP scores from the College Board)
- d) hit college benchmarks on the SAT exam (Indicator: SAT test results, College Board)
- e) graduate from high school (Indicator: school records of student enrollment and graduation, plus CALPADS 4-year dropout data on students from each graduating class)
- f) begin post-secondary study without need of remediation (Indicators: Early Assessment Test results; California Post-Secondary Education Commission and National Student Clearinghouse records of acceptance/enrollment/course work in an IHE)
- g) persist in college past the second year (Indicators: student tracking records provided by California Post-Secondary Education Commission and National Student Clearinghouse)

We will apply descriptive analyses and consider variables such as socioeconomic status, race/ethnicity, English language status, and Special Education status to address whether the program achieves these student outcomes and to disaggregate outcomes by the aforementioned groups.

The implementation of the model will provide us with the ability to engage in a quasi-experimental design to further address RQ4 and RQ5. The evaluation will focus on the following outcomes with the consideration of school-level factors: a) Individual student achievement: CST scores, SAT scores; b) graduation status (graduated vs. not graduated, and graduated with “a-g” requirements vs. graduated without “a-g” requirements), and c) college matriculation rates.

Since the project targets all secondary schools in OUSD, we hypothesize that if the *Oakland Accelerates* partnership is effective, there should be an increase in the achievement trend lines after OUSD implements these processes. In other words, the transition point of the achievement trend lines in OUSD students will be the time points OUSD begins to implement the EXCEerator process included in the *Oakland Accelerates* model. We will compare the progress of students in OUSD (treatment district) to students in a control district along the outcomes outlined above and will use a regression discontinuity design estimating the impact of treatment.^{xiv} The selection of a similar school district based on the follow criteria: district size, graduation rates, student demographic profile, and similar student achievement metrics. In the analyses, we will conduct multilevel regressions to compare outcomes between treatment students and control students, controlling for significant baseline group differences, such as demographics, and academic background data.

To address RQ6, we will rely on site visits guided by observation/evaluation tools as well as surveys, interviews, and focus groups with teachers regarding their on-the-ground application of particular components of the *Oakland Accelerates* professional development program. We will conduct site visits on a randomly selected school sample. The site visits will include interviews, focus groups, and classroom observation with the focus on classroom instruction and delivery of rigorous content. Our partnership will work with the evaluator to design an evaluation tool that measures changes in the behavior of teachers, site and district leaders, and counselors. We will also rely on district leader interviews regarding the usefulness of *Oakland Accelerates* professional development, coaching, and other measures in strengthening the OUSD's capacity to support and prepare all students for post-secondary success. Quantitative data, such as close-ended questions from surveys, will be analyzed descriptively. Atlas.ti and Grounded theory will be utilized to analyze qualitative data to comprehensively explain the impact of *Oakland Accelerates* on educators' practice.

Evaluation Goal 3: define the effective strategies and barriers to establish a full partnership. **RQ7:** To what extent has a long-term, intensive partnership between OUSD and EXCEerator been established and implemented? To address RQ 7, we will rely on interviews with OUSD and EXCEerator leadership. Aside from the themes on program implementation, the interviews will cover: general impressions of the collaboration, value-added for the partners, barriers/challenges in collaboration, and areas for improvement. Qualitative analyses will be conducted utilizing Atlas.ti and grounded theory methodology, as described earlier.

Ensuring program progress towards goals and achieving intended outcomes. The evaluation will employ a *continuous improvement-based approach* whereby the evaluator provides regular feedback and analysis of the program's progress towards implementation fidelity and intended outcomes, allowing for adaptations and/or adjustments as necessary. Both qualitative and quantitative analyses will be conducted on a quarterly basis and presented to the *Oakland Accelerates* Project Director, who will present to the Post-Secondary Readiness Steering Committee, Program Management Team, and Data Team, to inform and guide continual program improvement. The evaluator will prepare mid-year and annual performance reports that include multiple quantitative and qualitative indicators that capture progress toward our goals and objectives, detail our preliminary outcomes, and present recommendations for program improvement. The Project Director will distribute these reports to our project staff and teams and solicit from all stakeholders to inform program operations and refinements. At the close of the initiative's fourth year, the evaluator will prepare a final summative report summarize the implementation and overall findings for the entire grant period.

D. Quality of the Management Plan

Adequacy of Management Plan. The *Oakland Accelerates* management plan carefully balances the need to intensively implement college-readiness strategies with the importance of seeing the effects pertaining to our objectives. We have chosen to pursue a four-year funding period in

order to allow us the time to better capture data relevant to our post-secondary objectives. However, the bulk of the implementation of our program will occur in the first half of the funding period. In overview, we allow six months start-up time, with a plan to have coaching and other services up and running by summer 2012, a plan we believe is feasible given the fact that the majority of the District Diagnostic will have already been performed at the time of notification of funding (as noted earlier, it is scheduled to begin in Fall 2011 as a part of the Castlemont Corridor partnership between OUSD and the College Board). In addition, we have already identified a Project Director, and do not anticipate difficulty in hiring other key personnel, such as the EXCEerator PM, enabling us to quickly set priorities and implement the Road Map and our overall implementation strategies. As noted in the Project Design section, the final year-and-a-half of the I3 funding period will be largely devoted to project monitoring, evaluation, and sustainability activities. Milestones for achieving the project objectives delineated in Section B, and specific actions associated with each one of these phases—start-up, full implementation, and monitoring—are included in a detailed timeline in Appendix J.

Our budget is built to reflect the fact that the I3-funded intensive strategic implementation and change will occur in the first two years of the total project time span, and so the bulk of funding will be spent in years 1-3. In effect, I3 funding will not be used to continue implementing strategies outlined in the road map after the end of AY 2013-14. However, as just noted, we will continue to evaluate the program for the remaining 1½ years of the 4-year time line. As such, our budget maintains full funding for the evaluation team throughout the grant period. We also will continue to fund a Project Director half-time in that final year, to continue overseeing the collection of data needed for the evaluation team, as well as transition college-readiness efforts from *Oakland Accelerates* to OUSD.

Qualifications of Key Personnel. *Eve Gordon* will be the full-time *Oakland Accelerates Project Director*. Ms. Gordon will be lead the project's day-to-day implementation under the

guidance of the Post-Secondary Readiness Steering Committee (see below); work with the EXCEerator Program Director to develop a Road Map for college readiness and to develop and implement initiatives/programs called for in the Road Map; supervise the initiative's Career Readiness Specialists; provide leadership for the Project Management and Data Teams (see below); communicate with the Steering Committee and other district leadership concerning *Oakland Accelerates* implementation and progress; manage the I3 grant, and liaise with the grantor and our evaluator. Ms. Gordon has been at OUSD since 2004, and has been Principal of our MetWest High School since August 2006. MetWest is a member of the Big Picture Schools (BPS) Network based in Providence, Rhode Island. One of Oakland's most unique small schools, 100% of its seniors graduated this year and 85% were African American or Latino. During a recent speech on the drop-out crisis in our nation, President Obama praised the BPS model of internship-based, personalized high schools for providing students highly relevant and engaging paths to graduation, during a recent speech on the drop-out crisis in our country. At MetWest, Ms. Gordon made it a priority to sharply focus the school on college readiness. Serving as instructional leader, she set the course for academically rigorous instructional practice and professional development. She led the overhaul of MetWest's 4-year curriculum scope and sequence, focusing on spiraling high leverage "Learning Targets," as well as efforts to deepen the academic rigor of our students' real-world, work-based-learning projects. Due to these efforts, Met West increased its "a-g" college-ready rate and had the highest rate in the district each of the last four years. As a school leader, Ms. Gordon has experience managing a large budget successfully and raising a substantial amount of funding. In her role as Project Manager she will report directly to Jeannie Johnson, OUSD Director of College and Career Readiness.

OUSD Superintendent Tony Smith and Mario Santos, Deputy Superintendent, Instruction, Leadership & Equity, will be actively involved in *Oakland Accelerates* through their participation on the Post-Secondary Readiness Steering Committee. ***Jeannie Johnson***,

OUSD's *Director of College and Career Readiness*, will devote 10% of her time to the initiative. Ms. Johnson directs our Linked Learning Initiative and the 18 OUSD California Partnership Academies across our district. She supervises counselors and organizes and conducts their training. Ms. Johnson has a M.Ed. credential in Administrative Services and English, and 17 years as a teacher and counselor of at-risk high school students; a principal, and a director of Alternative Education programs in urban school districts. *Alison McDonald* and *Matthew Duffy* will be in charge of convening the *Oakland Accelerates Post-Secondary Steering Committee*. Ms. McDonald is the Executive Officer for OUSD's High Schools. She has 35 years in education, including five as an Executive Officer and three years as Principal of OUSD's highest performing small high school. Mr. Duffy is the Executive Officer of the district's new Office of School Transformation which leads and supports innovative restructuring of the district's lowest performing middle and high schools. Mr. Duffy has been in the field for 16 years and was the founding principal of a new small OUSD middle school which during his tenure posted substantial gains in student achievement. This past year, McDonald and Mr. Duffy were co-leaders of the district's Secondary Achievement and Experience Task Force. This task force developed the High Schools section of the district's "Community Schools, Thriving Students" five-year strategic plan completed in June 2011. *Cleo Protopapas*, Project Director of OUSD's Smaller Learning Communities program, will help convene and facilitate Post-Secondary Steering Committee sessions and assist in developing budgets to support the strategic plan resulting from *Oakland Accelerates*. Ms. Protopapas has worked in education for nearly 20 years as a teacher and administrator and has extensive experience in strategic planning, budget development and program management, and organizational development. Both Ms. Johnson and Ms. Protopapas will assist and support the Project Director in managing the I3 grant.

College Board will hire a full-time *EXCEerator*™ *Project Manager* for *Oakland Accelerates*. The EXCEerator PM will define the high leverage college readiness initiatives for

the road map (to include evaluating for duplicative, conflicting, and underperforming initiatives); define a college readiness communications strategy and timeline; provide leadership for implementation of curricular and student interventions, coaching opportunities, curriculum and instruction enhancements resulting from the EXCEerator District Diagnostic, in collaboration with the OUSD Project Director, EXCEerator leadership, the initiative's College Readiness Specialists, and all project teams. The EXCEerator PM will deliver professional development to various audiences; support the design, development, evaluation and production of curricular and instructional materials for the initiative's professional development activities; make school visits and conduct data analyses, and communicate findings to project staff and teams to support problem-solving and appropriate intervention leading to ongoing improvement at the school and district level. The EXCEerator PM will contribute to a national network of educators engaged in improving college readiness rates throughout the country. Required qualifications for this position include a master's degree in educational leadership; at least five years of progressively responsible secondary administrative and supervisory experience; extensive college readiness and school-based leadership experience; demonstrated ability to communicate, monitor, and support the implementation of district curriculum and instructional programs; exceptional management and leadership skill; and a strong proven commitment to educational equity and access for all. In addition, the individual hired for this position must have working knowledge of the following: change management research and strategies; all College Board College Readiness System programs; curriculum and instruction planning, development, and implementation processes particularly at the middle and secondary levels; and experience developing and delivering professional development to a variety of educator audiences.

Several key personnel at the College Board will be involved in the implementation of *Oakland Accelerates*. **C. Barden Keeler, Senior Director of EXCEerator Implementation**, will be the College Board's point person for the OUSD District Diagnostic in fall 2011, and will

supervise the EXCEerator PM. Mr. Keeler is a veteran high school AP teacher with a degree from Harvard University. He has worked for the College Board for over 10 years, conducting numerous workshops and institutes across the country, serving as an AP reader, table leader, and question leader as well as a member of the AP Development Committee in World History. He has presented at professional conferences in education, specializing in advanced curriculum and instruction, and in history. He was one of the designers of and consultants for the AP Achievement Institutes established by the College Board, which are programs that help urban school districts increase the number and diversity of students succeeding in AP courses. He also contributed to the first AP Edition of *The Earth and Its Peoples* – a college level survey of world history. *Stacy Caldwell, Vice President, District and Student Services*, and *Jane Dapkus*, who oversees EXCEerator strategy and planning, will be resources for the change management components of Oakland Accelerates. *Linda Guidry*, who oversees all EXCEerator Implementation activities, will oversee the implementation of college readiness initiatives that emerge as a result of the District Diagnostic and the resulting strategic planning phase. *Dan Cunningham* will oversee the development of EXCEerator solutions, including professional development. (Please see resumes in Appendix F.)

We will hire six *College Readiness (CR) Specialists*, growing from one high school and one middle school specialist during the start-up phase to three high school and 2.5 FTE middle school specialists at full implementation. These individuals, who will be accomplished educators hired from within OUSD and supervised by the Project Director, will be intensively trained in the EXCEerator change framework to implement college-readiness initiatives in cohorts of middle and high schools. They will facilitate professional development, participate in collaborative planning time with teachers, observe instruction, model instruction, work with administrators to improve monitoring practices and identify needed student supports, and collect data about the implantation of college readiness initiatives in the district. Key qualifications for

CR Specialists will be past success in working with peers and educators to improve practice and in supporting students to meet high achievement standards.

Key committees and teams. *Oakland Accelerates* will convene a ***Post-Secondary Readiness Steering Committee***, a collaborative and representative oversight group led by the OUSD Executive Officers of High School and School Transformation. Participants will include: OUSD Superintendent Tony Smith, Deputy Superintendent of Instruction, Leadership & Equity Maria Santos, the OUSD Project Director and EXCELerator PM, OUSD bargaining unit leaders, secondary school leaders and teachers, student representatives from OUSD, key college (U.C. Berkeley, Holy Names College, and Mills College) and community partners, and the evaluator. The Steering Committee will meet quarterly and be responsible for high-level oversight of the development, implementation, monitoring, and ongoing improvement of *Oakland Accelerates* in conjunction with all OUSD college readiness initiatives. Because the Steering Committee will be representative and collaborative, its members ensure that all stakeholders have input into and responsibility for the success of *Oakland Accelerates*.

A ***Project Management Team*** will lead day-to-day project implementation and coordinate relationships with the OUSD and the College Board leadership, the schools, and partners. The team will help to link *Oakland Accelerates* to and leverage other related district initiatives and resources. Participants will include OUSD's Associate Superintendent of Instruction, Leadership & Curriculum, high school and middle school Principals and Teacher Leaders, Curriculum Managers, the OUSD College & Career Office Director, the Project Director, and the EXCELerator PM. A ***Data Team*** will engage in cycles of inquiry around program outcomes data that guide modifications as needed to strengthen programming and achieve desired results. Its membership will include representatives from OUSD and College Board and be designated through the *Oakland Accelerates* Strategic Planning process.

Endnotes

ⁱ Conley, David T. 2010. *College and Career Ready: Helping All Students Succeed Beyond High School*. Jossey-Bass: San Francisco.

ⁱⁱ U.S. Census Bureau. 2005-2009 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates; Kids Count Data Center, Annie E. Casey Foundation; California Department of Education; California Employment Development Department. www.labormarketinfo.edd.ca.gov/?pageid=1006.

ⁱⁱⁱ FBI, Uniform Crime Reports, Offenses Known to Law Enforcement, 2009.

^{iv} California Healthy Kids Survey. Oakland Unified Secondary 2009-2010 Main Report.

^v Oakland Unified. 2010-11 Accountability Progress Report. CDE Dataquest.

^{vi} By comparison, 59% of Asian students and 83% of white students are meeting ELA standards, and 62% of Asian students and 78% of whites are meeting Math standards.

^{vii} California Dept. of Ed; California Longitudinal Pupil Achievement Data System (CALPADS).

^{viii} A collaborative effort among the California Board of Education, Department of Education, and State University system, to allow students to measure their readiness for college-level English and math and facilitate opportunities for them to improve their skills during their senior year.

^{ix} OUSD Youth Truth Survey Report, April 2011. Center for Effective Philanthropy.

^x 2010 Use Your Voice Survey. Middle School Results. Research and Assessment. OUSD.

^{xi} In each of the SAT components: Critical Reading, Mathematics, and Writing.

^{xii} This initiative has a national reputation based on its rigorously researched and demonstrated effectiveness in improving adolescent students' engagement, literacy, and achievement in ELA, math, science, and history/social studies. In 2010, West Ed was awarded one of a handful of U.S. Department of Education I3 Validation grants for a multi-state implementation of this initiative.

^{xiii} Strauss, A. and Corbin, J. (1998.) *Basics of qualitative research: Techniques and procedures for developing grounded theory*. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.

^{xiv} Shadish, W.R., Cook, T.D., and Campbell, D.T. (2002.) *Experimental and quasi-experimental designs for generalized causal inference*. New York: Houghton Mifflin Company.