

When GO endorses candidates and ballot measures, we do so because they support and align with our policy agenda. These short- and long-term goals to improve Oakland's public schools need diverse champions from across our city, including families, educators, and elected officials.

This policy agenda is based on a simple idea: **Every student deserves a fair opportunity to be successful in life.** For many, the backbone of that opportunity is education. We owe it to them. To deliver on that promise, we need to focus policy change in four critical areas:



1

Excellent Schools: We believe that all students deserve excellent schools which provide the foundation upon which all students can build happy and successful lives.

2

Great Teachers: We believe in the power of teachers to change the lives of students.

3

Family Leadership: We believe that families have the passion and expertise to demand and sustain the change that we need to create excellent schools for all students.

4

Excellent and Equitable System: We believe in the power of a public school system - including district and charter schools- to ensure excellence for all students.

Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world.
-Nelson Mandela



1. Excellent Schools

- *We believe that all students deserve excellent schools which provide the foundation upon which all students can build happy and successful lives.* Students deserve schools in every neighborhood that are committed to serving all students and preparing them for life, college, and career. Excellent schools have a strong leader and a community who are united around a powerful vision and have the flexibility, resources, and support necessary to make that vision true for their students.
- We believe the Oakland education system should:
 - Use the expertise of both district-run and charter public schools while addressing equity concerns (e.g., serving high-needs students, access to facilities, etc.).
 - Maximize resources spent directly at the school site.
 - Provide sustained support for school community-led transformation efforts.
 - Recruit, develop, and retain excellent school leaders for every Oakland school, beginning with those most in need.

2. Great Teachers

- *We believe in the power of teachers to change the lives of students.* All Oakland students deserve highly effective teachers who spark curiosity and passion, and believe deeply in the potential of all students. Oakland needs to be known as the best place in the Bay Area to live and work as an educator.
- We believe the Oakland education system should:
 - Improve the quality of supports for beginning teachers.
 - Increase number of teachers who represent the racial and ethnic diversity of the Oakland community.
 - Allow school communities a strong voice in hiring their staff.
 - Support a teacher evaluation system that emphasizes teachers' professional growth.

3. Family Leadership

- *We believe that families have the passion and expertise to demand and sustain the change that we need to create excellent schools.* Families should be treated as valuable partners who share decision-making at the school and broader level.
- We believe the Oakland education system should:
 - Ensure that families are represented on decision-making bodies to determine school site budget, staff, curriculum, and schedule.
 - Ensure that families are represented on system-level advisory and decision-making bodies.
 - Continue to establish full-service community schools that serve the whole family.

4. Excellent and Equitable Systems

- *We believe in the power of a public school system - including district-run and charter schools - to ensure excellence for all students.* School Board members and other education leaders--both district and charter--are responsible for the success of all students. The system should model its expectations for schools by focusing on students, quality for all, and equity for those who need it most.
- We believe the Oakland education system should:
 - Give targeted support to students with the greatest needs beyond what is required by California law.
 - Maximize resources available to school sites.
 - Increase transparency in budget priorities and decision-making.

1. Excellent Schools

We believe that all students deserve excellent schools which provide the foundation upon which all students can build happy and successful lives. Oakland students deserve schools that are committed to serving all students and prepare them for life, college, and career. Excellent school communities are united around a powerful vision and have flexibility, resources, and support necessary to make that vision true for their students.

School communities--families and educators--need the flexibility and authority over time, people, calendar, and budget to create a thoughtful and aligned school community.

The school district should have a comprehensive plan for ensuring all students have a quality neighborhood school and the ability to attend a school that meets their specific needs. We believe the Oakland education system should:

- Evaluate schools, set clear timely goals, and provide the resources and support to meet those goals.
- Provide sustained support for school community-led transformation efforts.
- Maximize resources spent directly at the school site.
- Use the expertise of both district-run and charter public schools.
- Address equity concerns across the city such as special education, student mobility, serving high-needs students, equitable access to parcel tax funds, and facilities.
- Establish a common enrollment system for enrolling in any public school.
- Work with the community to establish innovative new programs and expand high-demand successful programs.
- Provide greater supports to schools that need them.
- Recruit, support, develop, and retain excellent school leaders for every Oakland school, beginning with those most in need.

From GO's Founding Vision Statement: Oakland should become a student-outcomes oriented center for innovation and achievement in education.

2. Great Teachers

We believe in the power of teachers to change the lives of students. All Oakland students deserve highly effective teachers who spark curiosity and passion, and believe deeply in the potential of all students. Oakland needs to be known as the best place in the Bay Area to live and work as an educator.

To focus on effective teaching is to acknowledge the truth that the person who stands in front of children in a classroom every day can make a tremendous difference in students' lives. To ensure that all students have the teachers they need, Oakland educators need to feel supported to stay in Oakland and thrive. With high expectations, educators should feel valued, trusted, and supported. This will help stabilize school communities and allow students to build relationships with the adults on campus.

Oakland needs a comprehensive approach to recruiting, supporting, and retaining teachers. We believe the Oakland education system should:

- Increase teacher compensation to attract and retain the best educators.
- Increase number of teachers who represent the racial and ethnic diversity of the Oakland community.
- Support and develop teachers throughout their careers by providing intensive supports for beginning teachers, ongoing differentiated professional learning, and career pathways that honor the expertise of great, experienced educators.
- Work effectively with all labor partners to build trust for long-lasting improvement.
- Ensure that teacher assignment policies increase student access to effective teaching, treat teachers fairly, and allow school communities a strong voice in hiring teachers.
- Support a teacher evaluation system that includes multiple measures of good teaching, and emphasizes professional growth and support for teachers.
- Ensure that principals are given the training, time, and support necessary to provide strong instructional leadership.
- Establishing career pathways that ensure that our best teachers deeply influence policy and decision-making.

From GO's Founding Vision Statement: We must focus on ensuring effective teaching in every Oakland classroom. Current studies confirm that among in-school factors, effective teaching is the single most important factor in student learning.

3. Family Leadership

We believe that families have the passion and expertise to demand and sustain the change that we need to create excellent schools. Families should be welcomed into schools and treated as valuable partners who share decision-making at the school and broader level.

Some of Oakland's greatest progress in education has been fueled by a deep partnership with families. Families have the passion, clarity, and expertise to demand and sustain the change that we need. Therefore, families need to feel supported and be deeply engaged as valued partners in their children's education. Students will thrive when families are building community together and our hallways, classrooms, and cafeterias are filled with families.

In support of families, we believe the Oakland education system should:

- Ensure that families share decision-making authority to determine school site budget, staff, curriculum, and schedule.
- Fully support the implementation of OUSD's family and community engagement standards which detail the ways the district and community can support each other.
- Ensure that families are represented on system-level advisory and decision-making bodies.
- Establish partnerships with the city and other agencies to help ensure that all families have the ability to participate in their child's education.
- Continue to establish full-service community schools in service of the whole family.

From GO's Founding Vision Statement: Those who are closest to children – principals, teachers, and families, should make decisions. Resources should be distributed equitably and follow students to schools.

4. Excellent and Equitable Systems

We believe in the power of a public school system - including district-run and charter schools - to ensure excellence for all students. School Board members and other education leaders are responsible for the success of all students regardless of whether they attend charter or district-run schools. The system should model its expectations for schools by focusing on students, quality for all, and equity for those who need it most.

School funding has been completely inadequate for decades. We must both increase overall funding and use what we have in the best possible way. It is critical that we build faith and trust in public education. We believe the Oakland education system should:

- Equitably distribute funding and other resources by ensuring that students with the greatest needs receive the most support, beyond what is required by California law.
- Maximize the resources available directly to school sites.
- Use resources effectively, establishing clear priorities, aligning resources to those priorities, and having clear goals for success that are centered on student achievement from cradle to career.
- Actively seek to:
 - Increase state revenue
 - Work with the community to develop local revenue sources such as parcel taxes and bond measures
 - Engage the private funding community.
- Set high expectations that district initiatives are streamlined and have:
 - Measurable goals and deadlines
 - Adequate resources and clear ownership for work
 - Regular updates of progress.
- Promote innovations, such as data-sharing agreements, that help OUSD and partners better serve students from cradle to career.
- Increase transparency in budget priorities and decision-making.