

Oakland Unified School District

Oakland Accelerates

WHAT IS THE IMPACT OF THE OAKLAND ACCELERATES PROCESS ON OUSD STUDENTS' COLLEGE PREPARATION?

Project Overview

THE INTERVENTION

THE PROBLEM: What Challenge Did the Program Try to Address?

Oakland Unified School District¹ (OUSD) has poverty and high school dropout rates among the highest in California. Four of every 10 OUSD students do not graduate from high school, and in the year before the grant was awarded, just 34% of graduating students had completed the "A-G" eligibility requirements² for admission to the University of California (UC) and California State University (CSU) systems.³ Additionally, 40% of OUSD's class of 2009 dropped out of high school, and just 73% of those who did graduate enrolled in college upon graduation. To strengthen the district's college readiness infrastructure through coaching and professional development, OUSD partnered with the College Board to implement the EXCEerator™ process.

THE PROJECT: What Strategies Did the Program Employ?

Oakland Unified School District, acting as a representative of the Oakland Accelerates partnership with the College Board, received an i3 development grant⁴ (2011-2016) to design a program that builds the capacity of district staff to support every student to graduate high school ready for college coursework, to help students understand issues of affordability and financial aid, and to provide college preparation and application support to students. The project was implemented across OUSD, including all students in 11th and 12th grade in the district's eight high schools.⁵ The partners conducted two impact evaluations⁶: a nonequivalent comparative

¹ Oakland Unified School District received an i3 development grant supported by the U.S. Department of Education's Investing in Innovation program through Grant Number U411C110360.

² The University of California and California State University systems require entering freshmen to complete certain courses in high school. These are called the "A-G" requirements because each subject area is assigned a letter: "A" for History/Social Science, "B" for English, "C" for Math, "D" for Laboratory Science, "E" for Language Other than English, "F" for Visual and Performing Arts, and "G" for College Preparatory Elective. See the *University of California A-G Policy Resource Guide* for more information (<https://hs-articulation.ucop.edu/guide>).

³ Oakland Unified School District i3 Application Narrative, p.7

<https://www2.ed.gov/programs/innovation/2011/u411c110360narrative.pdf>

⁴ Development grants provide funding to support the development or testing of novel or substantially more effective practices that address widely shared education challenges. All i3 grantees are required to conduct rigorous evaluations of their projects. The quality of evidence required to demonstrate a project's effectiveness depends on a project's level of scale or grant type.

⁵ Between the baseline year (2011-12) and the first year of implementation (2012-13), OUSD consolidated its high schools from 12 to eight schools. This district restructuring had no significant impact on overall student population or demographics.

⁶ Both evaluations are available in the Oakland Accelerates Final Report. <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED594052.pdf>

group design examining the effects of Oakland Accelerates on OUSD students compared to similar students in a control district, and a one-group pretest-posttest design assessing the impact of Oakland Accelerates on college preparation, including high school graduation, college readiness, college enrollment without need for remediation, and college enrollment.

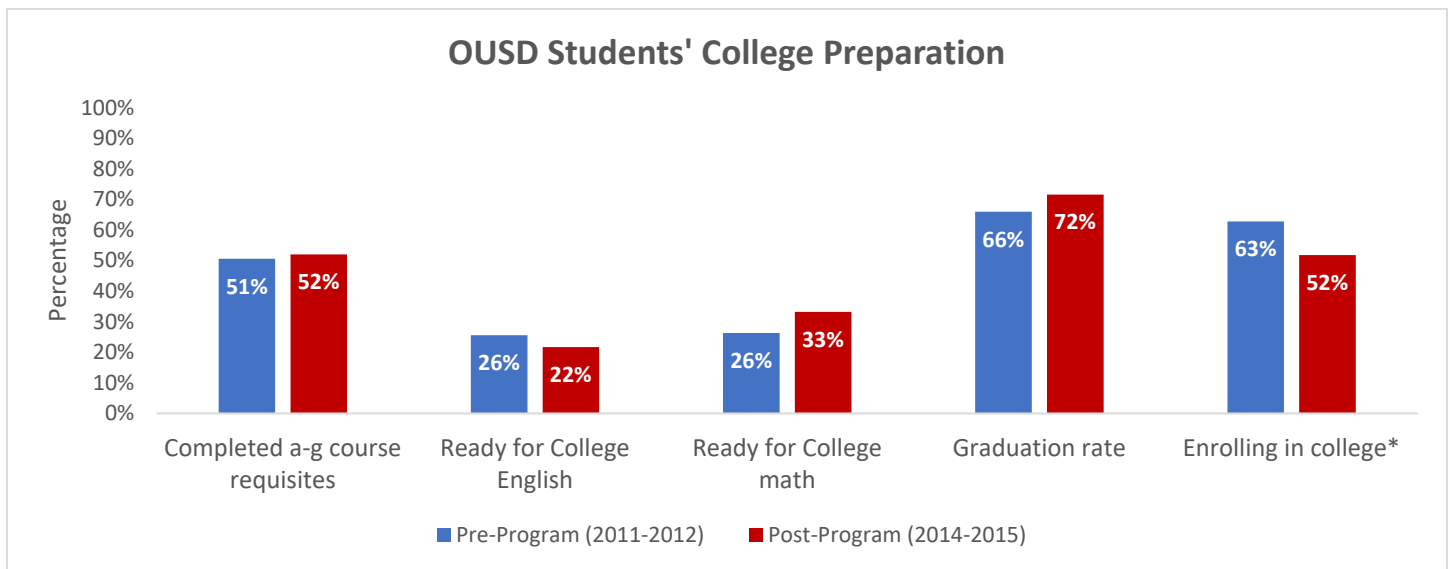
THE OAKLAND ACCELERATES MODEL

- **Professional Development (PD).** PD for teachers, leadership, and counselors to support instruction and development of a college-going culture.
- **Coaching for College Readiness Specialists.** Coaching supported College Readiness Specialists to equip all adults in OUSD to provide a rigorous education, increase student interest in and access to college, and better support students' and parents' needs.
- **Technical Assistance.** OUSD sought out technical assistance to develop policy and infrastructure to support a college-going culture.
- **Supports for Teachers, Students, and Families.** The project provided resources to support teachers, students, and families to build an understanding of college preparation.

Summary of Results

ARE OUSD STUDENTS AT PROGRAM END BETTER PREPARED FOR COLLEGE THAN THEY WERE AT BASELINE?

In terms of college preparation, there were no statistically significant differences between OUSD students at baseline and in the final program year.



- **A-G COURSE COMPLETION.** Evaluators identified no statistically significant difference in A-G course completion among OUSD students at baseline versus in the final program year.
- **COLLEGE ENGLISH AND MATH READINESS.** Oakland Accelerates had no statistically significant impact on readiness for college-level mathematics and English coursework, as measured by a composite score reflecting students' waived need for remediation in these areas, among OUSD students at baseline versus in the final program year.
- **GRADUATION RATES.** While evaluators noted a small improvement in graduation rates in OUSD schools between 2011-2012 and 2014-2015, this difference was not statistically significant.
- **ENROLLMENT IN COLLEGE IN THE SEMESTER AFTER GRADUATION.** In a comparison of OUSD students at baseline to OUSD students in the final program year, Oakland Accelerates had a statistically significant negative impact on the percentage of 12th graders enrolling in college in the semester following graduation.

- **PARTICIPATION IN COLLEGE ENTRANCE AND PLACEMENT EXAMS.** OUSD schools had a significantly greater percentage of students who participated in the SAT in 2014-2015 in contrast to the comparison school. However, there was no statistically significant difference between OUSD schools and comparison district schools in AP test participation in 2014-2015.
- **PERFORMANCE ON COLLEGE ENTRANCE AND PLACEMENT EXAMS.** There was no statistically significant difference between combined SAT mean score in OUSD versus the comparison district in 2014-2015. The evaluators note that this may be related to the greater SAT participation rates among OUSD students. Additionally, there was no statistically significant difference between OUSD schools and comparison district schools in the percentage of AP test-takers earning a passing score of 3 or higher.

Please see Appendices B and C for information about the evaluation's design and the quality of the evidence, respectively.

SECONDARY FINDINGS

As part of the second impact evaluation comparing OUSD students at baseline (2011-2012) to OUSD students in the final program year (2014-2015), the evaluators separately examined results for three subgroups: African American, Hispanic, and English Language Learner (ELL) students. The results of this evaluation showed that Oakland Accelerates had statistically significant negative impacts on African American students in multiple domains, and no statistically significant impacts on Hispanic and ELL students.

- **AFRICAN AMERICAN STUDENTS' COLLEGE ENROLLMENT.** There was a statistically significant decrease in the percentage of African American students enrolled in college in the semester following high school graduation at baseline versus in the final program year.
- **AFRICAN AMERICAN STUDENTS' COLLEGE ENGLISH READINESS.** There was a statistically significant negative impact on the percentage of African American students who were ready for college-level English at baseline versus in the final program year.
- **HISPANIC STUDENTS.** There were no statistically significant impacts on any of the domains assessed by the evaluation (high school graduation, college readiness, waived remediation for college, and college enrollment) among Hispanic students at baseline versus in the final program year.
- **ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS (ELLS).** There were no statistically significant impacts on any of the domains assessed by the evaluation (high school graduation, college readiness, waived remediation for college, and college enrollment) among ELLs at baseline versus in the final program year.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

- **STUDY DESIGN.** Study had several issues due to only one school district implementing the program.
- **LEADERSHIP TURNOVER.** Departure from key leadership in both the OUSD and College Board led to implementation challenges.

- **KEY OUTCOMES NOT INCLUDED IN IMPACT STUDY.** The implementation study identified an emphasis on PSAT participation and AP course enrollment. Stakeholders saw the district-wide institutional of the PSAT to all 10th grade students as one of the program's greatest successes. These outcomes were not included in the impact study because they had not been part of the logic model and outcomes identified early in the project.
- **IMPROVED COMMUNICATIONS.** Collaboration across district staff working towards the same goal was a key achievement. It also led to successful coordination of AP Teachers PD trainings.

For More Information

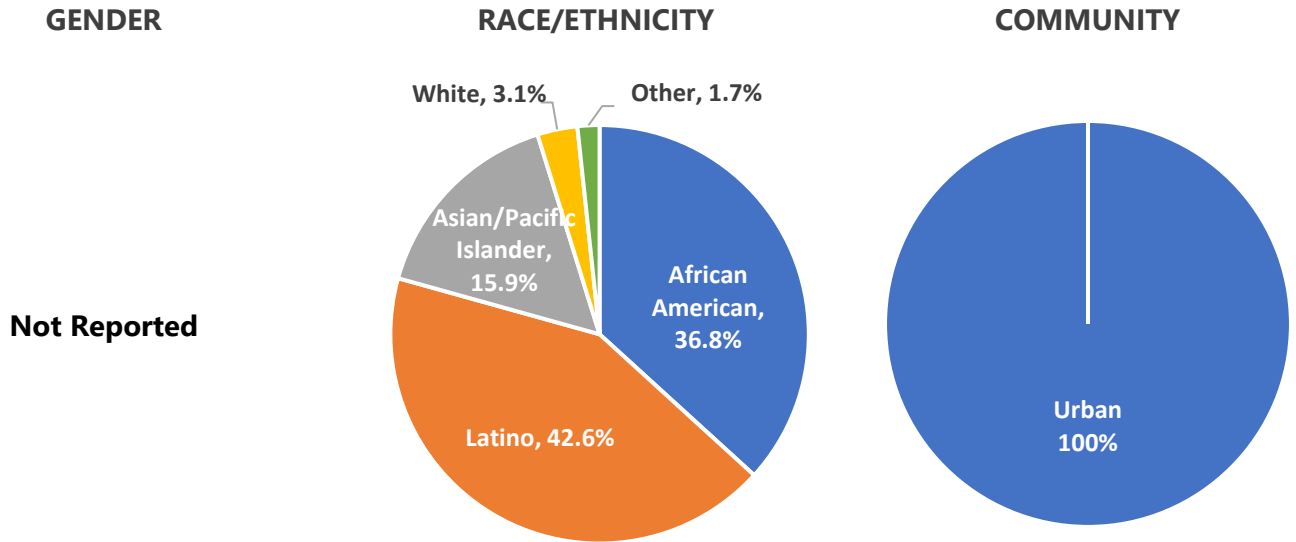
Evaluation Reports

[Final Evaluation Report \(ERIC\)](#) (HTA, September 2016)⁷

⁷ The information and data for this result summary was collected from the most recent report as of 01/22/2020: Hatchuel Tabernik & Associates. (September 2016). *The Oakland Accelerates Program: Final Results of a District-wide Strategy to Increase College-Readiness of Under-Served Students, January 2012 – May 2015*. Retrieved from <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED594052.pdf>

Appendix A: Students Served by the Project⁸

GRADE(S)													
PK	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12



HIGH-NEED STUDENTS ⁱ		
Free/Reduced-Price Lunch	English Learner	Students with Disabilities
Not Reported	15.5%	17.9%

⁸ Because all students in Oakland Unified School District were impacted by the Oakland Accelerates project, the following demographic information represent the 7,000 students in 11th and 12th grades at eight high schools in OUSD during the 2011-2012 school year.

Appendix B: Impact Evaluation Methodology

RESEARCH DESIGN:

Design:	Nonequivalent comparison group design	One group pretest-posttest
Approach:	The evaluators compared school-level outcomes in the baseline year (2011-2012) and the final program year (2014-2015) from students in treatment schools and in comparison schools that share similar demographic and academic outcome characteristics.	The evaluators compared school-level outcomes in OUSD high schools in the baseline year (2011-2012) and in the final program year (2014-2015).
Study Length:	Four years	Four years

DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS

	NONEQUIVALENT COMPARISON GROUP	ONE GROUP PRETEST-POSTTEST
Study Setting:	High schools in Oakland Unified School District and in a comparison school district that shares similar demographic and academic outcome characteristics.	All high schools in Oakland Unified School District, a mid-sized urban district with high poverty rates, low student achievement, and low college attendance rates.
Final Sample Sizes:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Intervention Group:</i> All students in the 12 traditional⁹ OUSD high schools. ▪ <i>Comparison Group:</i> All students in the 11 traditional high schools in the comparison district. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ All students in the 12 traditional OUSD high schools were served by the intervention. The pretest-posttest design compares students graduating in the baseline year (2011-2012) to those graduating in the final program year (2014-2015).
Intervention Group Characteristics:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ English language learners – 15.5% ▪ Special education students – 17.9% ▪ Ethnicity: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Black: 36.8% ▪ Latino: 42.6% ▪ Asian/Pacific Islander: 15.9% ▪ White: 3.1% ▪ Other: 1.7% 	<p>Baseline levels of OUSD students' performance on the outcome measures were established in 2011-2012, before the intervention began. OUSD's high school student population in the baseline year had the following characteristics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ English language learners: 15.5% ▪ Special education students: 17.9% ▪ Ethnicity: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Black: 36.8% ▪ Latino: 42.6% ▪ Asian/Pacific Islander: 15.9% ▪ White: 3.1% ▪ Other: 1.7%

⁹ Charter, continuation, and alternative high schools were excluded from the sample of both studies. The researchers felt that the student populations in these non-traditional high schools would not adequately generalize to other student populations.

Investing in Innovation (i3) Grantee Results Summary

Development, 2011-2016

**Comparison
Group
Characteristics**

- English language learners: 13.6%
 - Special education students: 0.6%
- Ethnicity:
- Black: 16/6%
 - Latino: 32.0%
 - Asian/Pacific Islander: 21.5%
 - White: 26.3%
 - Other: 3.7%

OUSD students' performance on outcome measures was assessed again in the final program year, 2014-2015. OUSD's high school student population in the final program year had the following characteristics:

- English language learners: 15.5%
- Special education students: 17.9%

Ethnicity:

- Black: 36.8%
- Latino: 42.6%
- Asian/Pacific Islander: 15.9%
- White: 3.1%
- Other: 1.7%

Data Sources:

- Requested from the OUSD and comparison district Research departments: AP and SAT participation rates and performance

- Retrieved from the California Department of Education Dataquest website: Graduation rates
- Requested from the OUSD Research department: "A-G" course completion, Early Assessment Program (EAP) test score, AP and SAT exam performance, AP coursework participation, and college enrollment rate

Key Measures:

College entrance and placement exam participation:

- AP exam participation rate, operationalized as the number of students in all grades with AP exam scores reported by College Board divided by enrollment in 11th-12th grades
- SAT exam participation, operationalized as the number of students who participated in SAT divided by 12th grade enrollment at each school

College entrance and placement exam performance:

- AP exam performance, operationalized as the number of students who received at least one passing AP exam score divided by enrollment in 10th-12th grade
- Mean SAT exam performance, calculated as the school-level mean score based on the highest combined score for each student

High school graduation rates:

- Graduation rates calculated by the California Department of Education

College readiness:

- "A-G" course completion, calculated as the number of students in each school completing the requirements divided by 12th grade enrollment

Waived remediation for college English and Math, a composite score (ranging from 0 to 4) based on:

- Early Assessment Program (EAP) test score, which identifies students as ready, conditionally ready, or not yet ready for courses in the CSU system. The evaluators used a binary rating with value of 1 for students receiving a "ready" rating and 0 to those receiving "not ready" or "conditionally ready" scores
- SAT score, based on the CSU rating of a score of 550 in each section as college-ready. The evaluators used a binary rating with value of 1 for 12th grade students scoring at least 550 and 0 to those scoring below 550
- AP test score in Math and English, where 12th grade students who received a passing score on any of the tests indicated for each subject area receive a value of 1, and 12th grade students with no passing scores in a subject area receive a value of 0
- AP coursework in Math and English, where students receiving a C or better in any of the indicated courses for each subject area receive a value of 1, and those who did not receive a C or better in any of these courses receive a value of 0. A value of at least 1 on the composite score indicates "ready" for college math or English; value of zero indicates "not ready"

College enrollment rates:

- College enrollment, based on the percent of 12th grade students who subsequently enrolled in at least one semester of college in the year following their graduation from an OUSD high school

Appendix C: Quality of the Evidence

WHAT WORKS CLEARINGHOUSE REVIEW¹⁰

STUDY	RATING
Not reviewed as of 01/22/2020	N/A

EVIDENCE FOR ESSA REVIEW¹¹

STUDY	RATING
Not reviewed as of 01/22/2020	N/A

NATIONAL CENTER ON INTENSIVE INTERVENTIONS REVIEW¹²

STUDY	RATING
Not reviewed as of 01/22/2020	N/A

¹⁰ <https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/FWW>

¹¹ <https://www.evidenceforessa.org/>

¹² <https://intensiveintervention.org/>

The [*Investing in Innovation Fund \(i3\)*](#), established under section 14007 of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009, is a Federal discretionary grant program at the U.S. Department of Education within the Office of Elementary and Secondary Education (OESE). i3 grants help schools and local education agencies work in partnership with the private sector and the philanthropic community to develop and expand innovative practices that improve student achievement or student growth, close achievement gaps, decrease dropout rates, increase high school graduation rates, and/or increase college enrollment and completion rates for high-need students.

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ⁱ “High-need student” refers to a student at risk of academic failure or otherwise in need of special assistance and support, such as students who are living in poverty, attend high-minority schools, are far below grade level, who have left school before receiving a regular high school diploma, at risk of not graduating with a diploma on time, who are homeless, in foster care, have been incarcerated, have disabilities, or who are English learners. For more information see: [*Applications for New Awards; Investing in Innovation Fund-Development Grants, 81 FR 24070 \(April 25, 2016\)*](#).