



# Cross-Case Review of College Access and Future Centers at O-High, Castlemont, & CCPA

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# Agenda

- Evaluation purpose & methods
- Summary of college access supports across cases
- Main findings across cases
  - Key similarities
  - Key differences
- Value add of on-site Future Center and OP partnership
- Potential actionable next steps for OP

# Purpose of the Evaluation

- Understand the breadth, depth, and accessibility of college and career resources and supports at high schools with a site-based Future Center
- Understand the role of Future Centers in helping students achieve desired college and career pathways
- Understand how Future Centers and Oakland Promise can better serve students and their families

## Case Study Approach

- Focused on three schools with site-based Future Centers:
  - ✓ Oakland High School
  - ✓ Castlemont High School
  - ✓ Coliseum College Preparatory Academy
- Each case study involves interviews with school administrators/staff, high school students (current and former), and parents/guardians
- Interviews with staff from OUSD and Oakland Promise provide context for cross-site case study findings
- Interview topics:
  - School priorities
  - College-going aspirations and expectations of students
  - College and career supports
    - Role of Future Center
    - Role of partnership with Oakland Promise
    - Successes and challenges
    - Areas of improvement
- Analysis process:
  - Create initial thematic codes based on interview topics
  - Apply codes to transcribed interviews across cases
  - Draw out findings per thematic code

# Interviews

	Oakland High School N=6	Castlemont High School N=9	CCPA N=9
Principal	X	X	X
Assistant Principal (s)	X (2)	X	X
College and Career Readiness Specialist (CCRS)	X	X	X
Counselor	X	X	X
Work Based Learning Liaison/Director of Internships and Early College Programs	X	X	X
Teacher (s)	-	X (4)	X (3)
Director of College Advising	n/a	n/a	X

# What college and career access supports do high schools provide their students?

	O-High	Castlemont	CCPA
Future Center (including staff dedicated to supporting college and careers)	X	X	X
OP College Scholarship	X	X	X
College Access Partners/Supports/Programs	X	X	X
Classroom presentations by FC staff and partners (A-G requirements, GPA, applications, scholarships, college overview, etc.)	X	X	X
One-on-One student supports (especially seniors)	X	X	X
College/Career Days (i.e., College crunch days)	X	X	X
College and Career Fairs	X	X	X
Summer Expo (internships, college classes, leadership programs and part-time jobs)	X	X	X
College/University Field Trips	X	X	X
Internship Opportunities	X	X	X
Senior college seminar class (Senior Seminar)	X	X	X
Student/Family Information Sessions/Nights (ex. Financial – Cash for College, college knowledge, FAFSA)	X	X	X
Junior college class (One-Goal)	-	X	X*
Advisory periods /Advisory groups where students/staff have opportunities to discuss college/careers	-	X	X
Presentations by college alumni and representatives of different college and career paths	-	X	X
Dual enrollment	-	X	X
Trade school programs/partnerships	X	-	X
Summer programming (i.e., students participate in college and career focused programming)	-	-	X
Empowerment Assemblies	X	-	-

# What college and career access supports does *Oakland Promise* provide to each high school?

	O-High	Castlemont	CCPA
OP College Scholarship	X	X	X
Support in finding other scholarships and filling out scholarship applications	X	X	X
Support & Guidance for CCRS	X	X	X
Incentives & Financial Support (e.g., food, gift certificates, bussing, fee support, technology, etc.)	X	X	X
Additional Staffing & Volunteers (e.g. for College Crunch Nights, one-on-one support for filling out FAFSA, etc.)	X	X	X
Representatives who attends regular FC staff meetings	X	X	X
Templates and Resources (e.g., college application templates, FAFSA resources, etc.)	X	X	X
Presentations to students and families	X	X	X
Regular on-site representation of OP staff	-	X	-
Extra support for newcomer students	-	X	-
Extra support for African American students	-	-	X

# Key Similarities & Differences Across Cases

# Key Similarities – Priorities, College Goals, School Expectations & Supports

- All three schools prioritize ensuring that all students are college and career ready
- All three schools said they want to support students no matter what postsecondary option they choose to pursue
- All three schools are struggling to maintain student engagement and academic growth during COVID-19 and virtual learning
- All three schools reported that they would like their students to aspire to and pursue 4-year college degrees, BUT...

# Key Similarities – Priorities, College Goals, School Expectations & Supports, Cont.

- All three schools reported seeing growing percentages of their student populations aspiring to and pursuing options other than a 4-year college degree
  - Schools are seeing post-high school student aspirations and expectations shift; trend started pre-COVID, but has been accelerated by COVID, financial considerations, and family needs
  - Also seeing a shift in perceptions of the value of a 4-year degree; notion that there is a declining return on investment of a 4-year degree
- Each school reported the need to increase the amount of information and supports they give to students about other post-high school options, particularly CTE, vocational, 2-year, military, and non-college options

# Some Key Differences – Student Aspirations & College Supports

- Aspirations of students vary across the three sites
  - Most CCPA students aspire and expect to go to a 4-year college
  - At O-High and Castlemont, staff report decreases in the percentage of students aspiring to 4-year colleges; these two schools also struggle with lower matriculation rates
- Both CCPA and Castlemont have college and career focused courses for 11<sup>th</sup> graders, but
  - Castlemont and O-High would like more help to expand programming to include 9<sup>th</sup>-11<sup>th</sup> graders
- CCPA is more adept at using data to inform their college access work (i.e., reviewing transcripts and lists of opportunities to help match students to supplemental programming, etc.) than the other two high schools
  - CCPA would like to have more data on college matriculation and persistence for their students
  - The other two high schools would like more support in using high school level data and tracking progress

# Value Add of On-Site Future Center and OP Partnership

# Value Add of On-Site Future Center

- All three schools said that the Future Center was vital to their college access work
- All three schools valued the place-based nature of the FC
  - It is a hub and hang-out spot for students
  - It helps centralize college and career support services across the school and with external partners
    - Leads to more equitable distribution of supports for students (ex. Helps identify students who are under or over-serviced)
  - It sends a message to students and families that there is a spot on campus they can go to get support and have their questions answered about postsecondary options
- Led to better distribution of responsibilities between the FC staff and school counselors for college and career access work

# Value Add of OP Partnership with Schools

- All three schools thought the partnership with Oakland Promise was positive and highly valued
- All three schools appreciated the financial support given to the school and students, including the scholarship money and other financial resources
- All three schools valued having OP on-site staff support, as well as extra volunteers and supports during college and career focused events
- All college access staff valued the formal and informal support that OP provides to them regularly (e.g., being available to answer questions, being responsive to school “asks” and needs, providing resources, information, and general support, etc.)

# Potential Actionable Next Steps for OP

# Potential Next Steps for OP Related to the OP Scholarship

- Improve communication and expectations around the OP scholarship
  - Some confusion over the college scholarship messaging/marketing as ‘guaranteed’ when it isn’t always guaranteed
  - Some confusion over the amount of money students will receive
- Provide more transparency about current limitations of the OP scholarship with regard to the original “promise” vision
  - “Our vision is that **every** qualifying **student** will have access to college **scholarships** of \$1,000 to \$16,000 over the course of his or her college career within a decade.”

# Potential Next Steps for OP Related to the OP Scholarship (Cont.)

- Revisit the maximum amount of OP scholarship funding given the rising costs of college tuition
  - Broad consensus that \$4,000 total (\$1,000 per year) for 4-year college tuition was not enough given rising costs; covers small portion of tuition at HBCUs, out-of-state, and private colleges
- Revisit the scholarship rules and requirements
  - Lack of flexibility with scholarship rules/requirements and deadlines; especially given COVID and changing student/family circumstances
  - Perception of scholarship requirements: full-time student, enroll in college immediately after high school; used for tuition only, non-flexible release dates for the funds

# Potential Next Steps for OP Related to Visibility and Presence of OP staff

- Become more directly involved (virtually and in-person when the time comes) in providing college and career access supports to students and parents, especially at O-High and CCPA
  - Have a dedicated OP staff member available to meet with students during a regularly scheduled time each week/month
  - Focus on building trust and relationships with students;
    - this may help to motivate students to apply for/complete the OP scholarship application and keep up with scholarship requirements
  - Actively facilitate a warm handoff/transition from high school to college for students who are awarded the OP Scholarship (i.e., OP Scholars)

# Potential Next Steps Related to Visibility and Presence of OP staff (Cont.)

- Provide better training and screening of OP volunteers to ensure they are prepared to work with the school's student population (specific to O-High)
  - Volunteers should have experience working with specific student populations and be able to relate to students
- Engage in more outreach activities to increase awareness about full range of OP college access supports
  - At all three schools, some staff were not aware that OP provides their school with other college and career access supports aside from the OP scholarship

# Potential Next Steps Related to Targeted College and Career Access Supports

- Continue to support schools in building a college going culture, particularly at O-High and Castlemont
  - Help with increasing student/family aspirations and expectations for continuing education beyond high school (whether CTE, 2-year, or other type of educational opportunities)
  - Provide more resources, information, and opportunities for students to better understand the value of college as it relates to career pathways, distinguishing between 2-year, 4-year, and CTE pathways
- Help schools build out a clearer college and career trajectory of access supports and programming for 9<sup>th</sup> – 11<sup>th</sup> graders, especially at O-High and Castlemont
  - Majority of supports are currently targeting seniors

# Potential Next Steps Related to Targeted College and Career Access Supports (Cont.)

- Expand on college and career services/supports for African Americans (at CCPA) and newcomers (at Castlemont)
  - FC staff at these schools requested more support serving these populations
- More supports for students who want to pursue a CTE/vocational path
  - Help connect students with opportunities that allow them to explore CTE and trade school pathways
  - Help facilitate partnerships with CTE and vocational programs as well as unions
  - Help coordinate bringing in panelists to talk about CTE and vocational programs

# Potential Next Steps Related to Targeted College and Career Access Supports (Cont.)

- Support schools with parent outreach and engagement around college access work
  - Schools need more help with getting parents involved in the college access process, particularly at O-High and Castlemont
  
- COVID SPECIFIC: Help schools navigate college access supports virtually, especially areas where they do not have as much capacity this school year

# Potential Next Steps Related to Data Sharing

- Help schools identify data and metrics to measure progress towards their college and career goals
- Regularly share data with schools on the postsecondary success of their graduating students
  - Help them use that data to drive college match conversations

Thank You!



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