

## Oakland Unified's 28 Early Childhood Education Sites all Receive 4-Star Quality Rating

**Oakland, CA** - Oakland Unified School District is pleased to announce that all 15 Childhood Development Centers (CDC) and 13 State Preschool Programs have received a 4-star rating through the District's participation in Quality Counts, Alameda County's Quality Rating Improvement System (QRIS). OUSD provides Early Childhood Education (ECE) through preschool services at 13 elementary schools and 15 CDCs throughout the City of Oakland.

The 2016-17 school year is the second year of full-participation in Quality Counts. During the 2015-16 school year, 18 sites received a rating of a four, nine sites received a three and one site received a two. Thanks to dramatic growth during the 2016-2017 school year, OUSD had the opportunity to re-rate the sites that had a 2- or 3-rating. Rated programs are eligible to receive a rating which ranges from one to five based on a tiered matrix.

Per the California Department of Education, the goal of the QRIS is to ensure California's children have access to high-quality programs, thrive in early learning settings and go on to success in kindergarten. The California QRIS (CA-QRIS) Consortium strives to improve the quality of early learning with a focus in three areas of program quality: child development and readiness for school; teachers and teaching; and program and environment quality.

California QRIS is comprised of local and regional QRIS hubs. Each QRIS in California:

- Assesses program quality using a common definition of quality and a standardized rating system for all provider types (publicly and privately funded, centers and family child care homes);
- Aligns program standards with early learning and practitioner standards;
- Supports continuous quality improvement for participating programs and their staff;
- Provides families with information about program quality to assist them in making informed choices.

"Research shows that high quality early education experiences benefit all children," says Drew Giles, Director of Quality Enhancement & Professional Development. "Our educators are committed to providing educational experiences that focus on the whole child. At least 70% of ECE staff participate in voluntary professional development opportunities outside of their contract time."

There are many reasons for the increase in QRIS ratings, including committed and hardworking educators, data-driven professional development and coaching from the New Teacher Center.

In addition to receiving the recognition that our ECE programs deserve, the preschool programs receive additional funding from the state of California by participating in Quality Counts. The funds are administered by Alameda County's Early Care and Education Planning Council and First 5 Alameda County. Funds are used to purchase classroom materials, technology, facility improvements and professional development.

OUSD Early Childhood Education is currently enrolling for the 2017-18 school year. In the upcoming school year, OUSD will be offering developmental screenings to all children to ensure that they receive individualized support based on their developmental needs. For more information on ECE programs in Oakland, visit [www.ousd.org/ece](http://www.ousd.org/ece).