

UC Berkeley
IURD Working Paper Series

Title

Evaluation of the Career Academies of Oakland Unified School District: Interim Report

Permalink

<https://escholarship.org/uc/item/93c35399>

Author

Oakland Forum

Publication Date

1993-11-01



Working Paper 93-05

**Evaluation of the Career
Academies of the Oakland
Unified School District:
Interim Report**

Oakland Forum

November 1993

University of California at Berkeley

\$6.00

Working Paper 93-05

(formerly SC 013)

Evaluation of the Careet Academies of the Oakland Unified School District: Interim Report

Oakland Forum



The University-Oakland Metropolitan Forum is a partnership of the University of California at Berkeley; California State University, Hayward; Mills College; Holy Names College; the Peralta Community College District; and the Oakland community.

University of California at Berkeley
Institute of Urban and Regional Development

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

In 1990 the Oakland Redevelopment Agency began providing financial support to the Academies program of the Oakland Unified School District, under the terms of a performance-based contract. The ORA funding has supported student internships, additional planning and curriculum development time for teachers, classroom and laboratory equipment, field trips, industry liaisons, parent liaisons, tutoring, and a number of other components of the Academy program. Each year since 1990-91 the progress of the academies has been reviewed and the ORA support, in the amount of approximately \$1.2 million, has been re-authorized by the City Council. 1993-94 will be the fourth year of this funding.

The ORA has commissioned the University-Oakland Metropolitan Forum to conduct an evaluation of the Academies, including measurement of student achievement, post-graduation outcomes, program implementation and management, and long-range planning. The Forum helps prepare the data base by which the performance of the Academies is measured against the contract's standards, but also goes beyond that task to document the key management and policy issues facing the City and District. The Forum has presented reports and data on many aspects of the program, with the most recent report having been completed on March 18, 1993.

The Forum is at this time in the midst of analyzing results from the 1992-93 school year and preparing the evaluation for 1993-94. The latest study will include a number of significant new features.

This is an interim report with two purposes:

- 1) To describe the evaluation plan for the coming year. The analysis to be conducted during the upcoming year will cover new issues and utilize new methods in addition to the approaches which have been used in the past.
- 2) To present new data about the graduating class of 1992 and the 1992-93 school year. Information recently received from the school district provides our first statistical profile of the third year of ORA support, a year in which the program expanded from five to eight sites.

It is important to remember that this document is not the Forum's Final Report for the 1992-93 year. That Final Report is due at the end of 1993, and will be a much more extensive document.

1) SCOPE OF WORK FOR THE EVALUATION DURING 1993-94

The evaluation of the Academies has employed numerous surveys and interviews of students, program staff and volunteer participants, school site visits, observations of team meetings and classes, reviews of curriculum and planning documents, and the compilation and analysis of a data base on the grades, test scores, attendance, course enrollments, and other characteristics of more than 1,200 students. We have collected data from the students and their internship supervisors and mentors. The Forum will continue to employ the above methods in the next year. However, there are several reasons for expanding the methodology and the scope of questions to be addressed.

First, the recent computerization of school district student data will allow us to spend less time on basic data entry and cleaning, allowing increased time on higher-level research tasks without increasing the evaluation budget. Second, the City Council and City staff have requested more detailed comparisons of the various academies, and assessment of how the academies progress toward their site-specific objectives. Third, enough time has now passed that extensive study of the post-graduation outcomes of graduates can be undertaken. Finally, enough time has also passed, and enough information available, to conduct cost and cost-effectiveness analyses of the programs, to learn about, as one Councilmember has put it, "the bang for the buck" of the City's investment.

The following sections briefly describe the new components of this year's evaluation plan.

Budget-Related Analyses

Cost Per Student Analysis: In 1993 and 1994 the Forum will analyze the expenditures of the program in detail. The actual costs per student of the ORA funding will be computed for each site in each of the first three program years.

Cost-Effectiveness Analysis: The data on student achievement and program outcomes will be analyzed in conjunction with the expenditure information to develop rough but useful indicators of cost-effectiveness for the sites.

Analysis of Leveraging of Other Funding: Current and Future. The Academies program has grown during the time in which it has received ORA funding: the ORA support has been followed by more than one million dollars in grants to the academies from other sources. The evaluation will document and analyze these corporate, government and foundation grants to see how the program has expanded, and what role ORA support has played in that expansion. We will also assess, through interviews with program participants and specialists in these programs, the program's prospects for future outside funding. We will also update the School District's estimates of the support it can continue to provide from its general funds. The result of these estimates should provide a picture of the prospects for institutionalization of the academies and their key components.

Three Years of Follow-up with Graduates

The evaluation has consistently shown that the academies have graduated a large proportion of seniors who have entered two and four year colleges, and a much smaller proportion who have entered the work force. During 1994 we will survey all graduates of ORA-supported academies since 1991 to learn where they are now, how they are doing in work or school, how they view the academies' preparation, and whether they see themselves working in that field and in Oakland, particularly its central district, now or in the future.

Site-Specific Documentation and Assessment

In the early years of this evaluation we minimized direct comparisons among the academy programs, thinking such comparisons to be at best premature. The programs had started at different times, worked with somewhat different student bodies, and had varying levels of outside support. In accordance with their mutual recognition that the programs were in early stages of development, the District and City did not drop any academy from future ORA support due to lower performance (though of course the District earned less for situations where student performance fell below contract standards.) Nor did any program receive a larger amount in the following year due to exceptionally strong performance.

In the coming year, at the request of the City Council and with the awareness that there are still some programs which are newer, and some which take on more "at-risk students" than others, we will present more information by which the programs can be directly compared with each other. Judgments about the relative effectiveness of the programs should not be limited to simple comparisons of a few statistics, such as grade point average, but should encompass the overall performance of each program and the conditions in which they work.

Recognizing the diversity within the program and the importance of site-based leadership, the City is asking the academies to develop more individualized program goals and objectives for 1993-94. The intent as we understand it is not to lower any of the basic District-wide academy performance standards, but to have on record a direct statement of the specific benchmarks of accomplishment which each site team is working to reach this year. We will document each site's progress toward its goals and objectives.

Policy Recommendations for City and School District

In each report the Forum has presented recommendations based on our research which we believe will enhance the management, performance, and institutionalization of the program. Our March 1993 report included 11 recommendations, many of which have been taken up directly or in modified form by the District or the ORA. For our final 1992-93 report we will track the progress of our previous recommendations, and make additional proposals in each subsequent report.

2) NEW DATA ON ACADEMY STUDENT PERFORMANCE

Post-Graduation Outcomes for the Class of 1992

In 1992, as in the previous year (see Forum Evaluation Report, April 1992), the vast majority of academy graduates have enrolled in two or four year colleges. Our data are incomplete, but based on a School District survey to which a representative fifty percent of the graduates responded, nine out of ten academy graduates were enrolled in higher education the following Spring.

Table 1 summarizes the survey data. It shows that 66 out of 73 respondents were in college, with 23 of them also having part-time jobs, and three having full-time jobs. Five students were employed and not in college, and two were in the military.

The survey respondents were also asked how helpful the academies had been to them: 74.7% (53 out of 71) said it had been very helpful, another 13 said somewhat helpful. Only five gave negative responses.

Grades and Attendance in Eight Academies During the 1992--93 School Year

Tables 2 through 8 provide the first look at the complete 1992-93 performance of 875 academy students against the performance standards in the ORA contract. Table 2 summarizes grades and attendance for all the academy students during 1992-93, showing that three-quarters (74.7%) of all students had a GPA of at least 2.00 in the Fall, falling off somewhat to 67.8% in the Spring. For the entire high school population of the School District, the mean GPA in 1992-93 was exactly 2.00, which means that roughly half the students were above this 2.00 mark. (Since this is a mean, not a median, this comparison is an approximation.) Thus, academy students as a group were substantially more likely to have higher grades than were other high school students. For our final report we will do more detailed comparisons of academy students with their high school peers.

Table 2 does not comprise measurement against a performance standard in the ORA contract, because it combines all three grade levels and all eight programs, but it does have useful summary statistics which we will track in a similar manner in all our subsequent reports.

The format of the tables has been changed from previous reports to allow viewing of all eight programs on one page. Shaded boxes indicate grade levels where performance was below the ORA contract standard. The tables showing grades and attendance for each semester are followed by two tables showing the rank order of the academies on these same measures, for the Fall 1992 only.

Noteworthy characteristics of these tables include the following:

- o Pre-Engineering again shows the highest performance levels of any academy. During 1992-93, the Pre-Engineering Academy exceeded ORA contract performance standards on all six grade point average

measurements and all six attendance measurements. Similarly, in the prior two years of the ORA contract, Pre-Engineering also surpassed twelve out of twelve performance standards for grades and eleven out of twelve standards for attendance.

- o Law and Government's performance has improved greatly since its first year. For example, the 1991-92 tenth grade had 57% of students with a GPA of at least 2.00 in the Fall, while the following year 90.7% of tenth graders met that standard.
- o The two new (or new to ORA) academies at Castlemont High School were below the contract standards for all grades, during both semesters, in grade point average. This follows a pattern of several years whereby the more recently formed programs have had lower scores than the others. It should be noted, however, that seniors at Castlemont's Computer Academy came very close to meeting their standard (79.2%, with the standard being 80%, for both semesters).
- o The Business and International Finance Academy at McClymonds was below the standards on most (11 out of 12) measurements, continuing a pattern seen in the previous years. In the previous two years, the Business Academy failed to meet the contract performance standards for grades on nine out twelve measurements and for attendance on all measurements.
- o There appears to have been a District-wide problem with greater absenteeism in the Spring, since 11 out of 20 grades did not meet the minimum standard, compared with just 5 out of 20 in the Fall. This pattern has occurred every year. Table 2 shows that the proportion of students with adequate attendance was higher in the Fall than in the Spring: 83.5% compared to 67.8%.
- o Even in programs where 12th grade GPA's were below the standard, they were very close to it (76, 76, and 79 percent above 2.00 GPA, for example), continuing the trend seen each year of higher grades among seniors than among younger students.
- o Two-thirds of the GPA scores which were below the standard were within the margin of error allowed for in the contract to permit payment to the District.

We issue the familiar and important caveat that there can be many reasons for changes in these indicators from one semester to the next, such as a single new teacher who graded extremely harshly compared to her peers, or a class where a string of substitutes taught all semester, or a situation where student recruitment was done more effectively than in the previous year. For the 1992-93 Final Report we will gather as thorough a set of background factors as possible with the help of the Academy directors, District officials, and other participants, to help explain both successes and shortcomings. The purpose of this interim report is to provide an overview of performance during the year and stimulate that review and discussion of specific circumstances.

TABLE 1

**1992 ACADEMY GRADUATES
Post-Graduation Survey, by OUSD (N=73)**

Higher Education and Work Status as of April 1993

	Number	Percentage
Attending College Full Time, Not Employed	40	54.8%
Attending College and Employed (all but three are employed part-time)	26	35.6%
Employed, Not in College	5	6.9%
Serving in Military	2	2.7%
TOTAL	73	100.0%

Responses were received for 49.6% of graduates (73 of 147) from the 1992 senior class. Respondents' mean GPA was 2.93 compared to 2.63 mean GPA of the non-respondents, suggesting they were not significantly disparate groups.

How beneficial was the education you received while enrolled in the academy?

	Number	Percentage
Very helpful	53	74.7%
Somewhat helpful	13	18.3%
A little helpful	4	5.6%
Not helpful	1	1.4%
TOTAL	71	100.0%

Did you participate in an academy internship?

	Number	Percentage
Yes	41	59.4%
No	28	40.6%
TOTAL	69	100.0%

TABLE 2

**OVERALL PERFORMANCE SUMMARY
(ACROSS EIGHT ACADEMIES, ALL GRADES)**

<u>Students with GPA 2.00 or higher:</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>#</u>	<u>N*</u>
Fall 92	74.7%	646	865
Spring 93	67.8%	593	874
<u>Students absent less than 20% of time:</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>#</u>	<u>N*</u>
Fall 92	83.5%	724	867
Spring 93	67.8%	593	875

* N = total enrollment, which varies slightly for different time periods and data sources. The minimum enrollment required was 600.

ORA contract standards for grade point average: for 10th grades, 70% of students shall achieve a 2.00 G.P.A. or better; for 11th grades, 75%; for 12th grades, 80%.

ORA contract standards for attendance: 70% of 10th graders are to be absent less than 20% of the time; 75% of 11th graders; 80% of 12th graders.

TABLE 3

**GRADE POINT AVERAGE, FALL 1992
ACADEMY STUDENTS WITH GPA OF 2.00 OR HIGHER**

	Percent of Students w/ GPA 2.00 or Higher	Number of Students (# ≥ 2.00 / Total #)
CASTLEMONT HIGH		
Computer		
10th Grade	52.5%	21/40
11th Grade	63.6%	35/55
12th Grade	79.2%	38/48
Trade & Transportation		
10th Grade	67.3%	37/55
FREMONT HIGH		
Media		
10th Grade	57.1%	28/49
11th Grade	77.1%	37/48
12th Grade	76.1%	35/46
McCLYMONDS HIGH		
Business		
10th Grade	73.5%	25/34
11th Grade	58.8%	20/34
12th Grade	76.4%	42/55
Law & Government		
10th Grade	90.7%	39/43
11th Grade	84.2%	16/19
OAKLAND HIGH		
Visual Arts		
10th Grade	77.3%	17/22
11th Grade	62.1%	18/29
OAKLAND TECHNICAL		
Health & Bioscience		
10th Grade	72.2%	39/54
11th Grade	76.6%	36/47
12th Grade	83.3%	45/54
Pre-Engineering		
10th Grade	75.7%	28/37
11th Grade	89.1%	49/55
12th Grade	97.6%	40/41

Shading denotes performance below the ORA contract standards: for 10th grades, 70% of students shall achieve a 2.00 G.P.A. or better; for 11th grades, 75%; for 12th grades, 80%.

The Business, Media, Health & Bioscience, and Pre-Engineering Academies are in their third year of CICA operating support; the Law and Government Academy, in its second year; and the Computer, Trade & Transportation, and Visual Arts Academies in their first year.

TABLE 4

**GRADE POINT AVERAGE, SPRING 1993
ACADEMY STUDENTS WITH GPA OF 2.00 OR HIGHER**

	Percent of Students w/ GPA 2.00 or Higher	Number of Students (# ≥ 2.00 / Total #)
CASTLEMONT HIGH		
Computer		
10th Grade	47.5%	19/40
11th Grade	40.0%	22/55
12th Grade	79.2%	38/48
Trade & Transportation		
10th Grade	67.3%	37/55
FREMONT HIGH		
Media		
10th Grade	46.0%	23/50
11th Grade	57.1%	28/49
12th Grade	51.5%	34/46
McCLYMONDS HIGH		
Business		
10th Grade	66.7%	24/36
11th Grade	65.6%	21/32
12th Grade	68.4%	39/57
Law & Government		
10th Grade	77.3%	34/44
11th Grade	69.6%	16/23
OAKLAND HIGH		
Visual Arts		
10th Grade	81.8%	18/22
11th Grade	58.6%	17/29
OAKLAND TECHNICAL		
Health & Bioscience		
10th Grade	57.1%	32/56
11th Grade	75.0%	36/48
12th Grade	81.5%	44/54
Pre-Engineering		
10th Grade	73.7%	28/38
11th Grade	87.3%	48/55
12th Grade	85.4%	35/41

Shading denotes performance below the ORA contract standards: for 10th grades, 70% of students shall achieve a 2.00 G.P.A. or better; for 11th grades, 75%; for 12th grades, 80%.

The Business, Media, Health & Bioscience, and Pre-Engineering Academies are in their third year of ORA operating support; the Law and Government Academy, in its second year; and the Computer, Trade & Transportation, and Visual Arts Academies in their first year.

TABLE 5

GRADE POINT AVERAGE, FALL 1992, IN RANK ORDER

	Percent of Students w/ GPA \geq 2.00	Number of Students (# \geq 2.00 / Total #)
10th Grade		
Law & Government (McClymonds)	90.7%	39/43
Visual Arts (Oakland High)	77.3%	17/22
Pre-Engineering (Oak Tech)	75.7%	28/37
Business (McClymonds)	73.5%	25/34
Health & Bioscience (Oak Tech)	72.2%	39/54
Trade & Transportation (Castlemont)	67.3%	37/55
Media (Fremont High)	57.1%	28/49
Computer (Castlemont)	52.5%	21/40
11th Grade		
Pre-Engineering (Oak Tech)	89.1%	49/55
Law & Government (McClymonds)	84.2%	16/19
Media (Fremont High)	77.1%	37/48
Health & Bioscience (Oak Tech)	76.6%	36/47
Computer (Castlemont)	63.6%	35/55
Visual Arts (Oakland High)	62.1%	18/29
Business (McClymonds)	58.8%	20/34
12th Grade		
Pre-Engineering (Oak Tech)	97.6%	40/41
Health & Bioscience (Oak Tech)	83.3%	45/54
Computer (Castlemont)	79.2%	38/48
Business (McClymonds)	76.4%	42/55
Media (Fremont High)	76.1%	35/46

Shading denotes performance below the ORA contract standards: for 10th grades, 70% of students shall achieve a 2.00 G.P.A. or better; for 11th grades, 75%; for 12th grades, 80%.

This is the same data as in Table 3. The data has been reformatted to enable direct comparisons.

TABLE 6
 ABSENCE, FALL 1992
 ACADEMY STUDENTS ABSENT MORE THAN 20% OF THE TIME

		Percent of Students Absent > 20%	Number of Students (# Absent > 20% / Total #)
CASTLEMONT HIGH		Computer	
10th Grade	30.0%	12/40	
11th Grade	21.8%	12/55	
12th Grade	22.9%	11/48	
		Trade & Transportation	
10th Grade	23.6%	13/55	
FREMONT HIGH		Media	
10th Grade	4.1%	2/49	
11th Grade	10.4%	5/48	
12th Grade	13.0%	6/46	
McCLYMONDS HIGH		Business	
10th Grade	41.2%	14/36	
11th Grade	47.1%	16/34	
12th Grade	38.2%	21/55	
		Law & Government	
10th Grade	20.9%	9/43	
11th Grade	42.1%	8/19	
OAKLAND HIGH		Visual Arts	
10th Grade	9.1%	2/22	
11th Grade	10.3%	3/29	
OAKLAND TECHNICAL		Health & Bioscience	
10th Grade	18.5%	10/54	
11th Grade	6.4%	3/47	
12th Grade	11.1%	6/54	
		Pre-Engineering	
10th Grade	2.7%	1/37	
11th Grade	1.8%	1/55	
12th Grade	2.4%	1/41	

Shading denotes performance below the ORA contract standards: no more than 30% of 10th graders are to be absent any more than 20% of the time; no more than 25% of 11th graders; no more than 20% of 12th graders.

The Business, Media, Health & Bioscience, and Pre-Engineering Academies are in their third year of ORA operating support; the Law and Government Academy, in its second year; and the Computer, Trade & Transportation, and Visual Arts Academies in their first year.

TABLE 7
 ABSENCE, SPRING 1993
 ACADEMY STUDENTS ABSENT MORE THAN 20% OF THE TIME

	Percent of Students Absent > 20%	Number of Students (# Absent > 20% / Total #)
CASTLEMONT HIGH Computer		
10th Grade	30.0%	12/40
11th Grade	43.6%	24/55
12th Grade	27.1%	13/48
Trade & Transportation		
10th Grade	41.1%	23/56
FREMONT HIGH Media		
10th Grade	20.0%	10/50
11th Grade	22.4%	11/49
12th Grade	21.7%	10/46
McCLYMONDS HIGH Business		
10th Grade	63.9%	23/36
11th Grade	59.4%	19/32
12th Grade	66.7%	38/57
Law & Government		
10th Grade	38.6%	17/44
11th Grade	56.5%	13/23
OAKLAND HIGH Visual Arts		
10th Grade	22.7%	5/22
11th Grade	31.0%	9/29
OAKLAND TECHNICAL Health & Bioscience		
10th Grade	42.9%	24/56
11th Grade	20.8%	10/48
12th Grade	14.8%	8/54
Pre-Engineering		
10th Grade	13.2%	5/38
11th Grade	10.9%	6/55
12th Grade	4.9%	2/41

Shading denotes performance below the ORA contract standards: no more than 30% of 10th graders are to be absent any more than 20% of the time; no more than 25% of 11th graders; no more than 20% of 12th graders.

The Business, Media, Health & Bioscience, and Pre-Engineering Academies are in their third year of ORA operating support; the Law and Government Academy, in its second year; and the Computer, Trade & Transportation, and Visual Arts Academies in their first year.

TABLE 8

ABSENCE, FALL 1992, IN RANK ORDER

	Percent of Students Absent > 20%	Number of Students (# Absent > 20% / Total #)
10th Grade		
Pre-Engineering (Oak Tech)	2.7%	1/37
Media (Fremont High)	4.1%	2/49
Visual Arts (Oakland High)	9.1%	2/22
Health & Bioscience (Oak Tech)	18.5%	10/54
Law & Government (McClymonds)	20.9%	9/43
Trade & Transportation (Castlemont)	23.6%	13/55
Computer (Castlemont)	30.0%	12/40
Business (McClymonds)	41.2%	14/34
11th Grade		
Pre-Engineering (Oak Tech)	1.8%	1/55
Health & Bioscience (Oak Tech)	6.4%	3/47
Visual Arts (Oakland)	10.3%	3/29
Media (Fremont High)	10.4%	5/48
Computer (Castlemont)	21.8%	12/55
Law & Government (McClymonds)	42.1%	8/19
Business (McClymonds)	47.1%	16/34
12th Grade		
Pre-Engineering (Oak Tech)	2.4%	1/41
Health & Bioscience (Oak Tech)	11.1%	6/54
Media (Fremont High)	13.0%	6/46
Computer (Castlemont)	22.9%	11/48
Business (McClymonds)	38.2%	21/55

Shading denotes performance below the ORA contract standards: no more than 30% of 10th graders are to be absent any more than 20% of the time; no more than 25% of 11th graders; no more than 20% of 12th graders.

This is the same data as in Table 6. The data has been reformatted to enable direct comparisons.