



Orange Unified School District
District Advisory Council (D.A.C.)
Meeting Notes
Wednesday, October 22, 2025
5:30 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.
District Office- Panther Lab



Dr. Matthew Witmer opened the first DAC meeting of the 2025–2026 school year by warmly welcoming all participants. He highlighted the purpose and goals of the DAC and outlined the agenda.

Topics Discussed:

Video Message from Superintendent, Dr. Rachel Monárrez

- Dr. Monárrez welcomed participants and expressed gratitude for DAC members' feedback, emphasizing its role in shaping programs, policies, and equitable access to education. She highlighted the importance of collaboration in strengthening communities and supporting student success.

Mental Health Matters Parent Workshops/Safe & Welcoming Schools/Attendance- Student Support & Community Engagement Office- Mr. Ernest Gonzalez, Mr. Heriberto Angel, Mr. Mark McLaughlin

- Mr. Gonzalez, Assistant Superintendent, shared this new department and its purpose. He also explained that nurses, elementary counselors, and community schools are all a part of this department that provide families with wrap around services.
- Mr. Angel, Executive Director Student Community Services, shared that a big focus for the department is mental health. They are offering a series of mental health workshops for parents offered in English and Spanish. He also shared that district has a huge commitment to safety. Staff have had professional development to support safety. DAC Representatives can speak with their principal if they want to hear more about the safety measures at their school.
- Mr. McLaughlin, Coordinator of Student Community Services, discussed the importance of attendance, noting that chronic absenteeism is considered to miss more than 10% of the school year and it can impact reading proficiency and increase dropout risk. He shared that OUSD's absenteeism rates are below the state average and improving, highlighted initiatives like Attendance Champions. He explained supports such as Short-Term Independent Study contracts, SART meetings, and SARB interventions to help families maintain consistent attendance.
- **How is Orange Unified working to increase student engagement?** Dr. Witmer provided an update on professional development, noting that all administrators have completed training and that teachers will participate in sessions in two weeks. The training focuses on Curriculum, Instruction, Assessment, and Classroom Climate, ensuring that students understand what they are learning, why it matters, and its relevance to their daily classroom experience.

Early Development Index Data – Renee Ybarra/Coordinator, Elementary Education Early Childhood Education

- Ms. Ybarra, Coordinator of Early Learning, shared 2025 data from the Early Development Index, which assesses Kindergarten readiness across five developmental areas.
- She noted that 49% of students are fully ready for kindergarten, with improvements in Language and Cognitive Development but declines in Physical Health, Social Competence, Emotional Maturity, and Communication over the past decade.
- OUSD's plan to address these areas includes professional learning, instructional coaching, new materials, parent workshops, and community school support.

LCAP Survey Overview – Christina Lin, Executive Director, Assessment & Accountability

- Dr. Lin, Executive Director of Assessment and Accountability, provided an overview of the LCAP survey, which gathers stakeholder feedback on district priorities, programs, and services.
- The survey will be open from October 27, 2025, to January 16, 2026, and will be shared via district communications, the district website, and school flyers.

Title I Overview – Dr. Sandy Schaffer, Administrator, Assessment & Accountability

- Dr. Schaffer, Director of Accountability, presented on Title I, a federal grant program that supports schools with higher percentages of socioeconomically disadvantaged students.
- The funding ensures all students have access to a high-quality education and is used for parent engagement, additional resource teachers, professional development, tutoring, and instructional materials.

Meeting adjourned at 7:00 p.m.