



PART OF THE BAYAREA.COM NETWORK

Search

Pages

- [About The Education Report](#)

Subscribe

- [Entries \(RSS\)](#)

Recent Posts

- [Stanford professor: Oakland's small schools work](#)
- [Teachers unpin Obama buttons](#)
- [Will the wrong schools be targeted for closure?](#)
- [Fact check about charter schools](#)
- [School closure update, and rumors](#)
- [Harris takes leave of absence from D.C. job](#)
- [Two Chinatown schools have abduction scares](#)
- [Teen animators](#)
- [State law lets districts pay math and science teachers more — if the unions agree](#)
- [Oakland's part-time CFO](#)

Recent Comments

- **Nextset:** I would expect teachers at public schools to wear at least dressy casual or business attire. What have you...
- **Catherine:** Nextset: What should proper teachers at proper schools wear to school to teach? Suits? Dresses, high heels...
- **Catherine:** Our school, no students, no teachers, no workers, no volunteers are wearing any shirts or buttons. There...
- **Nextset:** Seems like this info will help the Charter movement. The school district needs to out Charter the Charters...
- **Nextset:** And I have heard that one before. People I have trained.. And I'm not training clones. I am not...

Archives

- [October 2008](#)
- [September 2008](#)
- [August 2008](#)
- [July 2008](#)
- [June 2008](#)
- [May 2008](#)
- [April 2008](#)
- [March 2008](#)
- [February 2008](#)
- [January 2008](#)
- [December 2007](#)
- [November 2007](#)
- [October 2007](#)
- [September 2007](#)
- [August 2007](#)
- [July 2007](#)
- [June 2007](#)

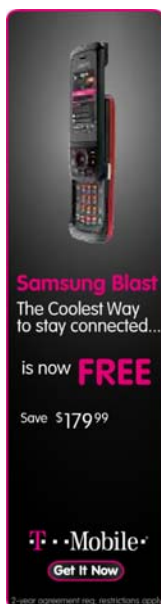
Categories

- [achievement gap](#)
- [Algebra/Math](#)
- [athletics/physical education](#)
- [Bryant Phan](#)
- [buildings](#)
- [charter schools](#)
- [Christopher Rodriguez](#)
- [cleanliness](#)
- [college](#)
- [crime](#)
- [curriculum](#)
- [Diamond Broussard](#)
- [Dobbins inquiry](#)
- [dropouts](#)
- [enrollment](#)
- [families](#)
- [finances](#)
- [firings](#)
- [freedom of speech](#)
- [health](#)
- [high schools](#)
- [initiatives](#)
- [investigations](#)
- [Isabel Rodriguez-Vega](#)
- [Jesse Dutton-Kenny](#)
- [kindergarten](#)
- [lawsuits](#)
- [leadership changes](#)

- [local control](#)
- [NCLB](#)
- [OEA](#)
- [OUSD central office](#)
- [parents](#)
- [people](#)
- [private schools](#)
- [resignations](#)
- [safety](#)
- [safety and discipline](#)
- [School board news](#)
- [school reform](#)
- [Schwarzenegger](#)
- [small schools](#)
- [special education](#)
- [students](#)
- [teachers](#)
- [technology](#)
- [teens](#)
- [test scores](#)
- [the arts](#)
- [Uncategorized](#)
- [union contract](#)
- [Uprep](#)

Other Local Blogs

- [Alameda Journal Blog](#)
- [All You Can Eat](#)
- [aPARENTly Speaking](#)
- [BearTalk](#)
- [Beer Blog](#)
- [Between the Covers](#)
- [Buzz Box](#)
- [Chalk Talk](#)
- [Chin Music](#)
- [Corkheads](#)
- [Darth Raider](#)
- [Dressed](#)
- [East Bay Outtakes](#)
- [East Bay Prep Sports](#)
- [Game Night](#)
- [Gamester](#)
- [Gary Bogue](#)
- [Get eLife](#)
- [Insert Foot](#)
- [Inside Politics](#)
- [Inside the Oakland Raiders](#)
- [Inside the Warriors](#)
- [Lamorinda Sun](#)
- [LIP Teen Blog](#)
- [Multimedia Features](#)
- [My First Year](#)
- [Night Owl](#)
- [On Assignment](#)
- [On the NFL](#)
- [Political Blotter](#)
- [Prep Corner](#)
- [Property Lines](#)
- [Read It and Rant](#)
- [Seen](#)
- [Sex and the Single Movie Critic](#)
- [The Capricious Commuter](#)
- [The Concert Blog](#)
- [The Education Report](#)
- [The Energy Blog](#)
- [The Hayword](#)
- [The Insider](#)
- [Tri-City Beat](#)
- [TV Freak](#)



[« Teachers unpin Obama buttons](#)

[Stanford professor: Oakland's small schools work](#)

By Katy Murphy

Wednesday, October 1st, 2008 at 11:19 pm in [OUSD central office](#), [School board news](#), [achievement gap](#), [enrollment](#), [families](#), [finances](#), [high schools](#), [initiatives](#), [school reform](#), [small schools](#), [students](#), [test scores](#).



photo courtesy of Angie Taylor, [Oakland Community Organizations](#)

Overall, Oakland's small schools initiative has been a success, Stanford professor Linda Darling-Hammond told the superintendent and the [school board](#) — which commissioned the research — tonight. Hundreds of kids, teachers, principals and parents, many of whom wound up in the overflow room upstairs, applauded the findings before sharing their own stories.

I know, that's a pretty simplistic thing for me to say about a movement that started with some fed-up parents some 10 years ago and that grew into a high-profile, Gates Foundation-funded strategy (or was it a tactic?) to improve education in the city's poorest neighborhoods. Oakland Unified has created dozens of new schools as a result. Not all of them have succeeded. Some are no longer open.

In the seven years since the first small school opened, however, the district's enrollment has dropped from more than 50,000 to about 38,000 students, and its budget has shrunk accordingly. Interim Superintendent Roberta Mayor — who was brought in to help the district recover, financially — said as soon as she arrived that it was time to take another look at the small schools.

That, of course, made people pretty nervous.

Now, as the board considers whether to close up to 15 schools to save money, Darling-Hammond's summary findings might help some of them remain open. She recommended, for example, that the board "try not to have undefined mergers where you just put two schools together without a clear design."

In an elaborate statistical analysis, the Stanford team tried to gauge the average gains made at each school after taking into consideration other factors, such as parent education and poverty. They found that new small schools, on average, pushed students further beyond their statistical norms than old schools did. (The presentation is posted on the [board agenda](#).)

They also did case studies of BEST and EXCEL high schools, ACORN Woodland, EnCompass Academy, ASCEND, Elmhurst Community Prep, and Oakland International High. The full report should be available next month (and Darling-Hammond might come back for further discussion; so many students spoke tonight that she left before answering all of the board members' questions).

While the initiative is commonly called the small schools movement, Darling-Hammond said, "It's really the new schools movement in Oakland." She added, "Our task was to say, 'Are these newer schools succeeding?' and the answer is 'Yes, they certainly are.'"

They certainly are popular. Kids waited for hours just for a chance to step up to the mic. They talked about the extra attention they received from teachers and staff, the college opportunities they never thought they'd have, and how much cleaner and safer the campuses are.

"Our schools are clean, they're safe, there aren't any fights or violence or drugs going on," said Ashley Heedley, 16, who goes to Leadership Prep at Castlemont. "That's why you guys shouldn't combine our schools. You should leave them the way they are, because they're perfect."

What do you think would happen if the board decided to merge some of the small schools back together?

[You can [leave a response](#), or [trackback](#) from your own site.]

One Response to "Stanford professor: Oakland's small schools work"

1. *Nextset* Says:
[October 2nd, 2008 at 7:19 am](#)

Seems like this info will help the Charter movement. The school district needs to out Charter the Charters if that's what the families want.

Leave a Reply

Name (required)

Mail (will not be published) (required)

Website

[« Teachers unpin Obama buttons](#)

[Privacy Policy](#) | [Copyright](#) | [MNG Corporate Site Map](#)

MediaNews Group - Northern California Network