



Oakland Unified School District

OAKLAND TECHNICAL HIGH SCHOOL

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September 4, 2019

Dear Oakland Tech Parents & Guardians:

We would like to inform you about the amazing Academy options at Oakland Tech, preview the upcoming 9th grade academy selection process, and answer some frequently asked questions!

One of the great strengths of Oakland Tech is our academy system. Academies are small learning communities within Oakland Tech, focused on integrating rigorous academics with career-based learning opportunities. Beginning in 10th grade, students in Academies are cohorted together, allowing core teacher teams to develop intensive individualized supports. Academy teacher teams meet together frequently to develop students supports, plan cross-curricular projects, and to arrange work-based learning experiences (e.g. internships, mentorship programs, field trips, etc). Through this collaboration, Academy teachers strive to create the conditions to ensure all Oakland Tech students graduate high school prepared for success in college and careers.

Each Academy is thematically focused around a particular field of interest, allowing students to specialize their educational experience at Tech. This year, the Academy offerings at Tech include: the **Computer Science Academy**; the **Engineering Academy**; the **Fashion, Art, & Design Academy (FADA)**; the **Health Academy**; and the **Race, Policy, & Law Academy (RPL)**. (*Note: Paideia is an advanced Humanities program, not an Academy. The admission process will occur concurrently but enrollment criteria differs.*) Please consult the school's website as well as the Academy fliers for more specific information about each Academy, including course offerings, signature Academy experiences, and work-based learning opportunities

Over the course of Fall semester, all 9th grade students will be given the opportunity to learn more about the academies and to apply. Most of this outreach and the application process will occur in Ethnic Studies classes, following the schedule on the back of this page.

The application process will ask students to rank their preference of each Academy, and to explain why they want to be a part of their top 3 choices. Some students might be invited to brief follow-up interviews to gauge interest and clarify information provided in their applications. Then, Pathway Directors will select students for their 10th grade cohort, focusing on matching student interest and with the explicit intention of supporting equity by having each academy represent the full diversity of Tech. Lastly, we will have final acceptance interviews to ensure the placement is a good fit and that students are happy.

We appreciate your support of this process! While we would like to see every student get their first choice, unfortunately, it isn't possible due to space limitations. However, every academy is equipped to support students with diverse interests and skills, and students will be supported no matter which Academy they join. Our primary goal is to ensure that all Tech students are supported, challenged, and have the opportunity to be successful!

Thank you for partnering with us,

Staci Ross-Morrison
Principal

Martel Price
Assistant Principal,
9th grade

Theresa Langston &
Natalie Cunningham
Counselors,
9th Grade

Nick Rey
Pathway Coordinator,
9th Grade

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Academies are open to 10th - 12th grade students. Most students join in 10th, but if there are open spots, students can join in 11th.

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There are 3 main benefits:

- I]" A YUb]b[Z `7 UFYYf#K cf`!VUgYX`@Ufb]b[`9I dYf]YbWYg:** eligible academy students have the opportunity to participate in career-related courses, internships, mentorship programs, field trips and other meaningful experiences in the local business community!
- II]" 7 fcgg!W ff]W `Uf`7 c`UVcfU]cb.** Academy teachers work together to plan thoughtful overlaps across classes, creating cross-curricular projects and units
- III]" HYUW Yf`8 f]j Yb`Gh XYbhGi ddcfhg.** Academy teachers share students, so they are able to meet and discuss how to best support students who might need interventions or additional challenges in class

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Academy programs prepare students to go directly into industry jobs, to attend trade school, and/or to thrive in college.

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In 10th grade, some Academies do not allow students to also take Paideia course, but some do.

Academies that **U`ck`cj Yf`Ud`**include: Computer Science, Engineering, & FADA.

Academies that **Xc`bchU`ck`cj Yf`Ud`**with Paideia include: Health & Race, Policy, & Law

These Academies do not allow overlap with Paideia because they have spent a great deal of time thoughtfully crafting an English curriculum that supports and deepens the work that students engage in across the Academy.

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Yes! With careful planning between the student, their family, and the school counselor, students can enroll in AP/HP classes in addition to their Academy. The academy director/counselor may also be consulted to assist the student and the family to plan an appropriate schedule.

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Please see the Academy Fliers for specific information on each Academy!

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- i. 1. All students participate in Academy Outreach events during November/December.
- ii. Applications will be available at the end of Academy Week and will be due no later than Thursday, January 24th. Students will have the opportunity to rank their preferred academies.
- iii. A list of interested students will be given to academy directors and invitations for academy interviews will be given to students.
- iv. After the interviews, a committee composed of academy directors and teachers will meet

to review the student information. Factors considered { æ Æ include grades, life experiences, recommendations, extracurricular activities, and responses to personal statements/questionnaires (as part of the application).

- v. By February 13th, students will then be notified about their placement in an academy and will be given the forms needed to complete the process

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All students are required to apply and are encouraged to go through the process. We are under a mandate from OUSD and the Measure N commission to place 100% of our students in Academies by 2020. That being the case, students will no longer be allowed to drop their academy placement even if they do not want it. Students may ONLY switch academies with the approval of BOTH Academy Directors, their counselor, parents, and their pathway administrator. This can only be done and only at the end of each school year.

At Oakland Tech, we believe that being part of a small learning community with a focused, engaging curriculum helps ensure that student learning is successful. We highly recommend taking advantage of the opportunities that academies have to offer. Field trips, internships, mentorship programs are just a few of the exciting possibilities!

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Please reach out to the Pathway Coordination Team at pathway-coordination-group@ousd.org