



BISHOP O'DOWD HIGH SCHOOL
Oakland, California

PRINCIPAL
Start Date: July 2022
bishopodowd.org



**Carney
Sandoe**
& ASSOCIATES



**Bishop O'Dowd
High School**

Mission

Bishop O'Dowd High School, owned and operated by the Diocese of Oakland, strives to develop young men and women of competence, conscience, and compassion through an integrated academic, spiritual, and extracurricular program. Guided by the teachings of Jesus Christ, the school educates its diverse student body to build a more just, joyful, and sustainable world. It seeks to develop leaders of influence who are loving, open to growth, religious, intellectually competent, and skilled leaders committed to justice and peace. The core values as outlined in the school's Charism reinforce its continual desire to deepen its Catholic identity.

OVERVIEW

Bishop O'Dowd High School (O'Dowd) is a well-known and highly regarded Catholic secondary school in Oakland, California serving 1,250 students, grades 9-12. Established in 1951, O'Dowd is firmly rooted in the Catholic educational philosophy of *formation*. The school believes that every student comes to the community endowed with their unique gifts, talents, and story. O'Dowd's talented faculty and staff partner with families to draw from within what the student already has inside. It is the school's mission to create a holistic educational experience that nurtures students to discover and unlock their potential, and to engage their learning to serve their community and the world.

O'Dowd is guided by its Charism (spiritual gifts of the Holy Spirit) — which are:

- community in diversity
- strength of character
- academic excellence
- social justice
- kinship with creation
- joy

This Charism animates O'Dowd's academic and co-curricular programs and is central to the school's identity. For example, O'Dowd's commitment to academic excellence challenges students to not only excel in their courses but to bring what they learn into service for the common good. O'Dowd's commitment to kinship with creation has led the community to cultivate a sustainability program which earned O'Dowd the national distinction of being a "Green Ribbon School" by the Department of Education and the Department of Energy.

At a Glance

Founded: 1951

Total Students: 1,248

Non-Catholic Students: 61%

Students of Color: 59%

Total Faculty: 92

Faculty with Advanced Degrees: 75%

Student/Teacher Ratio: 14:1

Average class size: 26

Students Receiving Financial Aid: 30%

Financial Aid Budget: \$4M

Value of Endowment: \$11.8M



Bishop O’Dowd High School seeks a dynamic operational leader as its next Principal, starting July 2022. The successful candidate will be an experienced educational leader devoted to the school’s mission and programs. The Principal is the lead teacher for the school. Their primary role is to ensure that the school’s Charism is embodied throughout every aspect of the community, from the curriculum, instructional content, and student activities, to relationships with faculty and staff. The Principal guides O’Dowd’s educators to teach through engaging instructional practices, communicate educational vision, respond and adjust to the learning needs of students — and to actively engage students in the life of the school.

This is an exceptional opportunity to lead an impressive secondary school with deep ties to its community and an unwavering commitment to its Catholic mission.

SCHOOL HISTORY

Bishop O’Dowd High School was established in 1951 by the Archdiocese of San Francisco. The school opened in temporary facilities with a staff of two diocesan priests, four Adrian Dominican Sisters, and 200 students. In 1952, the school moved to its current location in Oakland, and in 1962 became part of the newly formed Diocese of Oakland.

Over the years, the school has grown, adding to the curricular and student life offerings and expanding the facilities. In 1993, the school added a two-story, ten-classroom addition. That year also marked the departure of the last of the Dominican nuns from the faculty. In the past two decades, the school has completed a number of projects, including a \$10 million renovation of all classrooms and the addition of a state-of-the-art Advanced Placement chemistry laboratory, a new performing arts center, a four-acre Living Lab, and the impressive certified LEED platinum Center for Environmental Studies.



THE SCHOOL

Bishop O’Dowd High School is a fully accredited, Catholic college preparatory school with a challenging academic program and a community that represents the multicultural and socioeconomically diverse population of the San Francisco Bay Area. O’Dowd’s culturally rich environment gives students the academic, spiritual, and social opportunities to develop as healthy young people, prepared to advocate for themselves and their communities.

As the school looks to the future, it aims to more deeply realize its Charism of community in diversity by intentionally forging a caring learning community that truly sees and serves every student. To support this goal, O’Dowd is actively strengthening the curriculum to ensure that both content and instructional methods engage the multiplicity of student experiences. The school is also investing in professional development, and has already launched professional learning communities, affinity groups, and evaluation processes to support and equip teachers, program staff, and coaches in making the curriculum even more culturally responsive and enlivening.



O'Dowd is also intentionally creating more opportunities in the daily bell schedule for open creative time, which will allow students, faculty, and staff to engage in enhanced community building and collaborative activities.

Fundamentally, O'Dowd believes that a values-based education equips students with the support they need to grow as leaders, and participate in making the world a more just, joyful, and sustainable place. The school has an experienced counseling team and an extensive set of programs designed to help students effectively handle personal and academic challenges, assess and evaluate their interests and goals, attain maximum personal and intellectual growth, and make the best individual choices related to college and career direction.

Bishop O'Dowd High School is accredited by the Western Catholic Education Association (WCEA) and the Western Association of Schools and Colleges. It is a member of the National Association of Independent Schools (NAIS) and the National Catholic Education Association (NCEA).



ACADEMICS

Academics at O’Dowd challenge the intellectual capacity of students and prepare them for success in college and life beyond. Required coursework is complemented by a wide variety of electives. 9th graders take seven courses each semester. The 10th and 11th grades follow a core curriculum enhanced by courses in visual and performing arts. By the time students reach junior and senior years, they choose from a wider range of electives including Advanced Placement and honors course options, as well as independent study.

Overall, O’Dowd offers students a wide breadth of unique courses and experiential learning opportunities to explore their interests, nurture their passions, and develop their own academic path. Courses are delivered through interactive classroom activities, seminars, college-style lectures, and online courses. Traditional forms of learning integrate with the use of state-of-the-art technology.

Core courses required for graduation include Religion, English, Social Studies, Mathematics, Science, World Languages, Fine Arts, and Physical Education. O’Dowd offers 27 AP and honors courses in Mathematics, English, World Languages, Chemistry, and History. A plethora of electives round out the program — including Spiritual Ecology and other signature environmental education courses that take place in the school’s Living Lab, a four-acre certified wildlife habitat and outdoor classroom committed to reconnecting students with the natural world.



The counseling department offers individualized, comprehensive support for each student's future. Throughout their four years at O'Dowd, students are prompted to discover who they are and who they want to become. Guided by caring counselors, students are encouraged to explore new interests and opportunities and identify their path to college and beyond. Over the past five years, 98% of students went on to college, with a small percentage electing a gap year or military service. Graduates attend colleges and universities from Ivy League schools to the University of California system. On average, 46% attend either University of California or California State University schools; 32% attend private, Catholic, or other parochial colleges and universities; 17% attend out-of-state public universities, and 1% attend international universities.

College Acceptances

In addition to those attending the UC and Cal State systems, graduates from the Class of 2020 were admitted to the following colleges and universities, among others:

- American University
- Arizona State University
- Baylor University
- Boston College
- Brown University
- Carnegie Mellon University
- Columbia University
- Colgate University
- Cornell University
- Duke University
- Elon University
- Emerson College
- Fordham University
- Georgetown University
- Harvard College
- Johns Hopkins University
- Marquette University
- Michigan State University
- Morehouse College
- New York University
- Northeastern University
- Princeton University
- Purdue University
- Reed College
- Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute
- Rhode Island School of Design
- Sacred Heart University
- Saint Joseph's University
- Stanford University
- Syracuse University
- The American School of Paris
- The University of Alabama
- Tulane University
- University of Chicago
- University of Iowa
- University of Notre Dame
- University of Oregon
- Villanova University
- Williams College
- Xavier University
- Yale University



THE ARTS

O'Dowd students experience an eclectic array of offerings in the arts. To provide breadth and relevance, the arts programs are versed in all art forms – from the traditional to the avant-garde – and are cognizant of contemporary trends. The program is designed to foster creative artistic expression and to support the exhibition of such work.

Students are able to study specific disciplines, such as ceramics and painting, symphonic and jazz band, acting, and directing and playwriting, and participate in performance of full-scale musicals and plays. The department encourages work that is socially conscious, conceptually rich, and personally meaningful.

The art faculty supports students in the development of their artistic ability and works to provide the necessary tools to enable students to develop a creative vision.



ATHLETICS

O'Dowd's long-standing athletic tradition is defined by its commitment to excellence in the development of scholar-athletes. The school has been consistently ranked in the top ten of nearly 175 North Coast Section independent and public schools for academic and athletic excellence. Over 700 students play interscholastic athletics and some of the school's top scholars make up a large portion of its outstanding athletes. Many athletes go on to play at the college level, with a number reaching the professional ranks.

The program offers 57 teams in 16 sports. Men's sports include baseball, basketball, cross country, football, golf, lacrosse, rugby, soccer, swimming, tennis, track and field, volleyball, and water polo. Women's sports include basketball, cross country, golf, lacrosse, rugby, softball, soccer, swimming, tennis, track and field, volleyball, water polo, and cheering.



SCHOOL LIFE

Community lies at the center of O’Dowd student life, with myriad programs and initiatives to support community development. Student clubs — more than 60 in all — offer opportunities that harness talents, develop skills, build friendships, strengthen bonds between teachers and students, and foster leadership development. Clubs range widely from Activism and Media to Aerospace Engineering, from Climate Action to Ping-Pong, from the Black Student Union to Model UN, and from Film and Movies to Girls Who Code.

Bishop O’Dowd High School provides students ample opportunities to grow personally, intellectually, and spiritually. From service learning and immersion programs focused on social justice, to retreats and liturgies that grow and express a student’s relationship with God, O’Dowd’s students are continually developing their own expressions of faith and justice. All students are required to complete a minimum of 100 service learning hours, in tandem with their religion courses. A pinnacle experience is the Anawim Project, which challenges students in their junior or senior year Peace and Justice course to work directly with an underserved population, putting O’Dowd’s social justice values into real action.



CAMPUS

Bishop O'Dowd High School is set on a 20-acre campus in the foothills of East Oakland. Originally completed in 1951, O'Dowd's campus continues to evolve and grow. Recent additions include the 324-seat James T. Bill '55 Theater and the Center for Environmental Studies, which overlooks the school's four-acre Living Lab.

In 2022, the school will open the new O'Dowd Center, a state-of-the-art, LEED Certified, 38,000-square-foot facility to house performing arts, athletic and community programs. The school has also purchased the adjacent 20 acres of the former Seneca Reservoir for future campus development. O'Dowd's next Principal will have a significant opportunity to participate in imagining and influencing how O'Dowd's campus will continue to serve students and their families into the future.



OAKLAND, CALIFORNIA

With a population of 425,000 and a one of the most active deep-water ports in the nation, Oakland, California serves as the trade center for the San Francisco Bay Area and beyond. The region bloomed into a city after Oakland was selected as the terminus for the Transcontinental Railroad in the late 1860s. More recently, the city has changed and grown with the evolution of the high-tech industry and other cultural shifts.

Today, Oakland is one of the most ethnically and racially diverse cities in the nation, with a highly educated populace. One of the great attractions of the region is its temperate climate — warm in summer, mild in winter. Of course, Oakland is also connected to San Francisco and the greater Bay Area by the regional transportation BART system, making it a more affordable choice for many local families. In recent years, Oakland has been ranked among the best cities in which to start a career. Oakland has also topped the list of “America’s Most Exciting Cities” for its diverse culture, thriving arts scene, and culinary options.

Cultural attractions include the African American Museum and Library, Chabot Space and Science Center, the Oakland Zoo, Jack London Square, Oakland Symphony, the Paramount and Fox theaters, the Oracle Arena, Children’s Fairyland (the precursor to Disneyland), and more. The city is also home to the Oakland Athletics, with the Golden State Warriors and San Francisco Giants just across the bay. The region contains a number of institutions of higher education including the University of California, Berkeley, and California State University, East Bay. The Bay Areas also boasts world-renowned hospitals, such as UCSF Benioff Children’s Hospital’s in Oakland and San Francisco and Stanford Hospital. Oakland is also a regional business center and is headquarters for Clorox, Kaiser Permanente, and other corporate giants.



GOVERNANCE

O'Dowd is a diocesan school, operating under the Diocese of Oakland and the Superintendent of Catholic Schools.

The Principal is hired by Bishop Barber upon recommendation of O'Dowd's President, and reports to the President. O'Dowd has a Board of Regents that operates as a board of limited jurisdiction in collaboration with the President to ensure the school fulfills its mission and prudently allocates its resources to provide an exceptional formational experience for students.

The Principal runs and operates the school in collaboration with the President. Their role encompasses not only academics, but robust co-curricular programs. As such, the Principal directly manages a team of Associate Principals, as well as the department and program directors, faculty, and staff. The Principal, in partnership with the Associate Principals, carries out the duties and responsibilities of strengthening and maintaining the O'Dowd program: academic, athletic, co-curricular, and spiritual.

Collaboration between the Principal and President is vital. Together they will align around the vision and direction for the school. However, the Principal is the primary enactor — tasked with leading O'Dowd's faculty and staff to bring that vision to life. While the President is a partner and resource, a successful Principal at O'Dowd will take operational lead, seeking appropriate guidance and assistance wherever necessary to enact the school's mission and serve the community. Decision-making in alignment with best practices and in connection with Catholic educational networks is vitally important to innovate and guide the school community.



OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

The Principal will have the opportunity to shape the next chapter of excellence at O’Dowd by building a strong sense of community with teachers, coaches, club moderators, students, and all community members. Additional opportunities and challenges include:

- Advancing the priorities of the school’s Western Catholic Educational Association plan, which includes ensuring the school community embodies its Charism and acts in accordance with its values, as well as bringing an ethos of profound care — *Seeing and Serving Every Student* — to the curriculum.
- Providing a strong student-first perspective. This perspective includes deep care and empathy for teachers, supporting them to help students succeed.
- A deliberate and intentional commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion, which will inform decision-making. This includes working with faculty and staff to execute O’Dowd’s Equity and Belonging Action Plan, among other initiatives and action plans.



DESIRED QUALITIES AND QUALIFICATIONS

The Principal will be a practicing Catholic who will promote and integrate Catholic values into the life of the school. Additionally, the Principal will be:

- A strong, capable leader with the ability to hold the community accountable.
- An infectious and encouraging energizer for the school's goals and aspirations.
- Faithful and spirit filled.
- A thoughtful and present listener.
- Flexible yet able to be decisive when necessary.
- Deeply empathetic and compassionate.
- Committed to equity and belonging.
- Experienced with change management.
- Adept at building and fostering a nurturing culture.
- Able to balance stakeholder needs.
- Agile and persuasive in articulating an educational vision.
- Successful at forging and empowering teams to accomplish ambitious goals.
- Skilled at managing and navigating deep challenges.
- Self-directed, with the ability to take ownership of goals and guide others to execute.
- Gifted at working independently and collaboratively.



TO APPLY

Interested and qualified candidates are invited to contact the consultants in confidence. Candidates will ultimately need to submit the following materials as separate PDF documents:

- A cover letter expressing their interest in this particular position;
- A current résumé;
- A one-page statement of educational or leadership philosophy and practice;
- A list of five professional references with name, phone number, and email address of each (references will not be contacted without the candidate's permission) to:

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