



# Oakland Schools

Learning today.  
Transforming tomorrow.



# Oakland Schools Corporate Style Guide

A guide to the corporate identity of Oakland Schools

January 2016

# Introduction

Corporate identity or branding is about more than just using the logo correctly or selecting the proper colors. It's about a consistent representation of the organization that helps to preserve and strengthen the reputation of Oakland Schools by visually supporting the guidelines in this Style Guide. Carefully followed, the guidelines provide a professional, consistent and unified impression of Oakland Schools.



***Branding is about relationships, experiences, expectations and perceptions. A brand is owned, promoted and leveraged by every employee in the organization.***

## A little history

In 1997, Oakland Schools adopted a new logo and corporate identity. Up to that point, the organization had had several logos, but there were also plenty of examples where the logo and a consistent look were not being used. It was around this time that Oakland

Schools adopted the four Oakland Schools Technical Campuses - formerly known as the Oakland Technical Centers, which had been run by the local districts in which they were housed. Creating a corporate identity that would bring all facets of the organization together and represent them in a unified way was the goal at the time.

There were brainstorming sessions, staff design submissions, and ultimately, a new logo was created by Ford & Earl Design, and unveiled to staff. Guidelines were created and shared, and staff began to generate things that looked consistent – that were easily identified as Oakland Schools products and services. Our brand began to grow and become more recognizable to our customers. Local school districts from around the county, the state, and even the nation began to recognize Oakland Schools publications and products – because of consistent design elements, corporate colors, and proper use of our logo.

Fast forward a few years to 2008 when the Oakland Schools Technical Campuses experienced some major state-of-the-art renovations and a countywide grand reopening. Signage was updated to reflect the same consistent visual identity used at the main campus, helping to strengthen the corporate brand even more.



**OaklandSchools**

*The Oakland Schools logo created in 1997*

## Creating our mission

We created a more streamlined mission statement – Learning today. Transforming tomorrow. We created a credo, six strategic goals, and a Continuous Improvement Plan that guides our work. And we continued to be known throughout the county and the state, perhaps even the nation, as an organization that provides superior products and services.

## Yippee! We earned it.

Oakland Schools also pursued accreditation – a lofty goal since there were only three ISDs in the State of Michigan that had received this accreditation through AdvancED. We passed our site visit with flying colors in 2012 and will experience another in 2017.

## Why is all of this history important?

*Because it all ties back to consistent processes, procedures, goals, metrics, etc. That's what corporate identity and visual communication boils down to, again and again – **so we're speaking with one voice**, so things look related.*

Is there room for variation in the midst of all of this unity? You bet! In fact, that's why we're creating this update. We've had several updates over the years, to respond to new needs, and it's time again. Why? Because of social media, a need for new icons, new initiatives, but most importantly, because you asked!

## Does that mean that we throw the whole corporate identity out the window?

Certainly not. It's not cost-effective to do so, and it undermines the recognized brand we've worked hard to establish. Think of all of the places you see the logo – signs, printed pieces, everywhere. It doesn't make sense to throw it out, but it does make sense to reimagine it in ways that work more effectively for our internal customers – our staff.

## We held focus groups and discussed your wants and needs.

Here are some of things we heard you say:

*"The long rectangular shape of the logo doesn't always work for me. Sometimes I need a square configuration."*

*"I need a logo that fits in a circle."*

*"I need an icon that I can use for things like Facebook, Twitter, and other forms of social media."*

*"I need the logo in a variety of file types – jpeg, eps, pdf, tiff."*

*"I need a customized, project or department-specific Oakland Schools logo."*

*"Our corporate colors are so dark – they almost appear black at times. Is there any way to make it more lively?"*



*Some of these questions and comments really challenge the idea of consistency and branding, but we want to **deliver consistency for you and our public**, and if we can modify some of our requirements and maintain some unity, it's a win-win for all!*

Communication Services is going to spell out the requirements, but we've created some modifications to meet your requested needs. Any new questions that arise concerning the corporate identity system should be directed to Julie Ferguson, Communication Services. Updates to this Style Guide will be posted on the Intranet. Finally, your continued support and commitment to the principles of this Style Guide are essential to the success of our branding efforts.

## Basic Standards

### THE MAIN SYSTEM LOGO

The Oakland Schools logo is comprised of three components that comprise a single graphic. It should be viewed as a single unit and not divided, edited or recreated.

1. a symbolic portion that looks like an "O" with an "S" cut out of it. We are going to refer to this element of the logo as the OS Wordmark from now on. There will be certain situations where use of only this part of the logo will be acceptable.
2. A text portion created from two weights of our corporate font (Frutiger) that merge the words Oakland and Schools together.
3. A text portion that spells out our mission statement – Learning today. Transforming tomorrow.

When using the main system logo, please do not alter, redesign, redraw, animate, modify, distort, or alter the proportions of the logo.

#### *The **NEW** main system logo*



*For purposes of clarity, when using the main system logo, it should be not less than 2" wide. Otherwise it becomes difficult to see. The other versions of the logo should not be less than 1.75" wide.*

*The main system logo (in our updated colors) should still be used when it makes sense to do so.*



## SOCIAL MEDIA ICON

Up to this point, our social media icons or avatars have been text only solutions that employ our corporate colors. Because we realize that we have a well-established corporate identity after 18 years, use of the “OS” portion of the logo (the OS Wordmark) will be permitted from this point forward as social media icons for Facebook, Twitter, etc.

*For specific questions on this, please contact a member of the Communication Services team.*

## Mobile solutions

In response to the need for our logo to have a better fit on some mobile platforms as well as the web, we’ve created some additional acceptable logo configurations. They contain all of the basic system logo elements, but are designed to fit in layouts that were previously more challenging to accommodate.

## Here are the logo variations and their file names:

- Oakland Schools logo with mission statement (Learning today. Transforming tomorrow.) on one line – **OS-LTTT\_1**  
*(Available in jpg, eps, pdf, png)*
- Oakland Schools logo with mission statement on two lines – **OS-LTTT\_2**  
*(Available in jpg, eps, pdf, png).*
- Oakland Schools logo centered without the mission – **OS\_center**  
*(Available in jpg, eps, pdf, png)*
- Oakland Schools logo with mission centered with mission – **OS-LTTT\_center**  
*This version has the Wordmark centered above the text portion and includes the mission statement.*  
*(Available in jpg, eps, pdf, png).*
- Oakland Schools logo with mission statement left justified – **OS-LTTT\_left**  
*This version has the Wordmark left justified and the mission statement left justified.*  
*(Available in jpg, eps, pdf, png).*
- Oakland Schools logo with mission statement right justified – **OS-LTTT\_right**  
*This version has the Wordmark and mission statement right justified.*  
*(Available in jpg, eps, pdf, png).*
- Oakland Schools logo without the mission statement – **OSlogo\_without**  
*(Available in jpg, eps, pdf, png)*

*\*Samples of each are on the next page*

### The OSwordmark



All logos are available on the **Intranet** under Organization > Communication Services > Documents > Shared Documents > [Oakland Schools Logos.](#)



To ensure proportional integrity, please hold down control/shift (PC) or command/shift (Mac) keys while resizing the logo.

For purposes of clarity, when using the main system logo, it should be not less than 2" wide. Otherwise it becomes difficult to see. The other versions of the logo should not be less than 1.75" wide.



Learning today. Transforming tomorrow.

OS-LTTT\_1



Learning today.  
Transforming tomorrow.

OS-LTTT\_2



Oakland  
Schools

OS\_center



Oakland  
Schools

Learning today.  
Transforming tomorrow.

OS-LTTT\_center



Oakland  
Schools

Learning today.  
Transforming tomorrow.

OS-LTTT\_left



Oakland  
Schools

Learning today.  
Transforming tomorrow.

OS-LTTT\_right

***These are all approved graphics, and the same guidelines that apply to the basic system logo apply here. When using any of the above approved logos, please do not alter, redesign, redraw, animate, modify, distort, or alter the proportions of the logo.***

**Questions?**

*Please don't hesitate to contact Communication Services.*

## Project or department-specific logos

Before the organization went to the basic system logo, there were variations of the logo that were either project-specific, or department-specific. In an effort to simplify things, through development of the Continuous Improvement Plan (CIP) and our Accreditation process, it was agreed that we would eliminate all project or department specific logos in favor of a single basic system-wide logo (the one with our mission statement).

*What we have found is that staff still wants and sometimes needs those specific logos in lieu of the basic system logo. In response to your requests, we have created those specific logos, and will create others as needed. As with the other approved logos, please do not alter, redesign, redraw, modify, distort, alter or create your own. If what you need does not exist, please contact Communication Services, and we can discuss your needs and come up with a suitable solution.*

## Oakland Schools Technical Campuses

Since the Oakland Schools Technical Campuses also shared our main system logo, we've updated their logo system as well. There is a new OSTC logo, as well as new individual campus logos.



**OSTCTechnicalCampuses**  
(Available in jpg, eps, pdf, png)



**OSTC-NElogo**  
(Available in jpg, eps, pdf, png)



**OSTC-NWlogo**  
(Available in jpg, eps, pdf, png)



**OSTC-SElogo**  
(Available in jpg, eps, pdf, png)



**OSTC-SWlogo**  
(Available in jpg, eps, pdf, png)



Any project or department-specific logos that are created will be housed in a folder of approved Oakland Schools logos available on the **Intranet** under Organization > Communication Services > Documents > Shared Documents > [Oakland Schools Logos](#).



All logos are available on the **Intranet** under Organization > Communication Services > Documents > Shared Documents > [Oakland Schools Logos](#).

## Accessing and placing the logo

*All approved logos are available through Communication Services.*

All logos are available on the Intranet in a folder under Communications. As new project or department-specific logos are created, they will be placed in the same folder.

## White space

All of the updated logos require a certain amount of white space free from any other visually distracting graphic elements or text. This “white space” surrounding the logo is necessary to protect its visual integrity, and keeps it clearly separate from other elements and text surrounding it. Please allow at least .125” space around the logo to keep anything from interfering with this space, and if you have questions, the Communication Services team stands ready to assist!

## Corporate colors

*“Our corporate colors are so dark – they almost appear black at times. Is there any way to make it more lively?”*

Yes, our corporate colors were a bit on the dark side. But it’s generally a bad idea to make dramatic changes in an already well-established corporate identity system. Examples of logo redesign or revamping include the Gap logo redesign (2010), the JC Penney logo revamp (2012), and even the Starbucks logo update (2011). Redesigning or updating a familiar logo is risky.

### Let’s explore this a bit

According to Time Magazine in their article *The Science of Fail: Why the New Gap Logo Made Our Brains Angry*, (October 22, 2010), the Gap logo redesign outraged consumers reacting to bad taste, but also took the Gap brand away from consumers perception of a stylish brand, to one that was too plain and unremarkable. The Helvetica font was also a “miss.” Vanity Fair’s commentary, in their article *New Gap Logo, Despised Symbol of Corporate Banality, Dead at One Week*, also mentioned that although the attempt was to transition Gap from “classic American design to modern, sexy, cool,” it was a failed attempt. One week later, the company returned to it’s iconic blue box logo.

The failed JC Penney logo redesign serves as another cautionary tale. The company changed the logo to a square shape with very simple type in 2012, and customers didn’t buy it. Responding to their customers, they returned to something much closer to their original logo design.

Even heavy-hitter Starbucks suffered some in their logo revamp in 2011. They were clever enough to give consumers a historical evolution of their logo, and their update was compared to other highly recognizable logos like Apple, Shell and Nike. They simplified their logo by zooming in on their well-recognized siren/mermaid, and eliminated the words Starbucks Coffee from the cups. They also went from a two-color logo to a single color logo. Along the way, the green used in their logo changed a shade or two.





## Why all of the tales of failed logo updates, and what does this have to do with corporate colors?

Responding to some of the changes you've requested, and in an effort to be sensitive enough to **not lose the recognition of our customers**, our changes include some reconfigurations of our logo elements, and some changes in color.

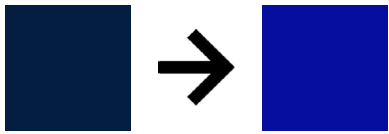
## Why else is it a good idea to take BABY STEPS in corporate identity?

Corporate identity is all about consistency – meaning signage, mobile, printed items, etc. **When you make major changes, it can be very expensive.** Think about all of the places you see our logo, and then imagine making a major change to each one of them. For a nonprofit – and even for the big for-profit companies – it's worth considering carefully before monumental overhauls are made. That's why our focus here is to make small, meaningful adjustments to what we've established.

## Let's talk about corporate colors

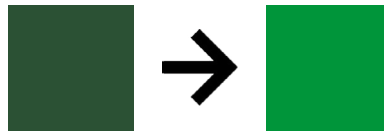
We're moving up several shades in the Pantone Color Matching System, so our corporate blue will move from the very deep Pantone 282 to a rich blueberry shade of navy (Pantone Blue 072C) which is quite a bit brighter. Our green will go from the very deep Pantone 350 to a much more vibrant Pantone 355! A few steps up the scale doesn't seem like much, but adds a little more vibrancy that has been requested from our internal customers.

### Compare the old and the new colors



*Old blue*  
Pantone 282 C

*New Blue*  
Pantone Blue 072 C



*Old green*  
Pantone 350 C

*New green*  
Pantone 355 C

## Let's talk type!

Another way to strengthen and reinforce the visual identity of Oakland Schools is to use a consistent selection of typefaces.

Not everyone in the organization has an identical selection of fonts. To that end, there are some selections that are relatively similar and therefore appropriate substitutions.

The fonts used in the logo are Frutiger Bold (Oakland) and Frutiger Light (Schools), and Bodoni Book (Learning today. Transforming tomorrow.)



BABY STEPS...



= Serif font style



= Sans serif font style

## Serif vs. Sans Serif

**Serif fonts** like the Bodoni are the ones with little “feet” on the letters. These are considered more classic fonts, and are designed for easier readability, as they guide the eye through them.

**Sans serif** fonts are the smoother fonts (sans means without). These are more effective when used for titles, subtitles, captions, pull quotes, and more limited quantities of type.

### Sans Serif font examples

Great for headlines and subheadings. Appropriate sans serif fonts that would correspond and complement the corporate fonts would include:

Frutiger

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ / abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz

**Frutiger Bold**

**ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ / abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz**

Frutiger Light

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ / abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz

Helvetica

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ / abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz

Arial

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ / abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz

Avante Garde

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ / abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz

Avenir

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ / abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz

Myriad (Pro)

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ / abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz

*... or a reasonable substitute. For assistance, please contact Communication Services.*

## Serif font examples

Great for body text in publications. Appropriate substitutes for corresponding or complementary text for serif fonts would include:

Baskerville

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ / abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz

Bodoni

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ / abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz

Elephant

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ / abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz

Garamond

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ / abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz

Palatino

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ / abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz

Times New Roman

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ / abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz

... and many more! For assistance, please contact Communication Services.

## More about type...

Type can be set up as left justified, right justified, centered, or force justified. **Left justified** type is the arrangement we see in most books. The set up is called left justified, ragged right – meaning the type lines up along the left margin, but has a more ragged appearance in the right margin. This is a standard arrangement for most text in publications.

**Right justified** means that the type lines up on the right margin, and has a ragged left margin. This should be used sparingly and is not designed for large quantities of text.

**Centered type** is just that – lines of type are aligned centrally, with ragged right and left margins.

**Force-justified type** forces the type on a line to fully fill the space so that text aligns on both the right and left margins. This configuration should be avoided because it compresses or expands the words in the lines of type and can punch holes in the text.

*Example of left justified type with a ragged right margin.*

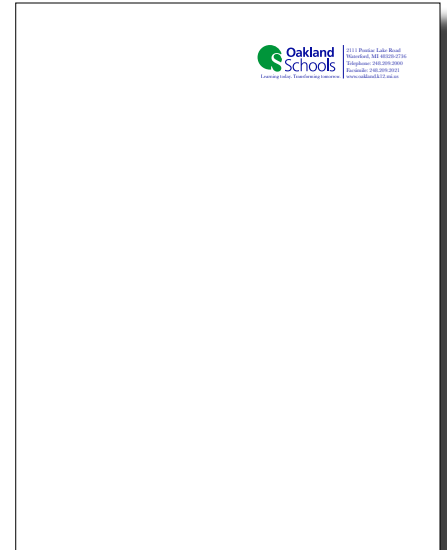
*Example of right justified type with a ragged left margin.*

*Example of centered type with a ragged right and left margins.*

*Example of force justified type. (Creates awkward spacing).*

## Stationery System

Letterhead, envelopes and business cards often create the first impressions customers will have of Oakland Schools. **Consistency in color, design and type here is critical.** Two color or black letterhead and envelopes are available through Production Printing and Graphics (PP&G) – [OSPrintshop.com](http://OSPrintshop.com), and can be customized for your department – with appropriate phone and fax information. The letterhead features the Oakland Schools logo with the mission statement on one line (**OS-LTTT\_1**).



## Envelopes

The envelope plays an important role in reinforcing the established corporate identity system, creates the first impression, and helps establish a consistent look. Envelopes are available through Production Printing and Graphics, in either our corporate colors, or black, in a variety of sizes. These can also be customized by department and location if desired.

## Business cards

Business cards are a way to represent individuals, departments and the organization while reinforcing the established corporate identity system. The business cards feature the Oakland Schools right justified logo with the mission statement on two lines (**OS-LTTT\_right**).



The approved layout for the business cards at Oakland Schools corresponds with our letterhead. Business cards are ordered through Production Printing and Graphics. They will prepare a proof of your business card for you to review before printing. Please supply them with the following information:

- Your name, followed by any credentials/degree abbreviations you require
- Your position title, followed by department name
- Your telephone number(s) – you may include both desk and cell phones if desired
- Facsimile number – this is optional. Include it if you use your fax
- Email address (business)
- If you have a lot of social media information, it may fit on the front of the business card, and/or may have to be placed on the back side of the card.
- The Oakland Schools web address will be included on all business cards.

*Please note: Oakland Schools does not provide business cards for contractors.*

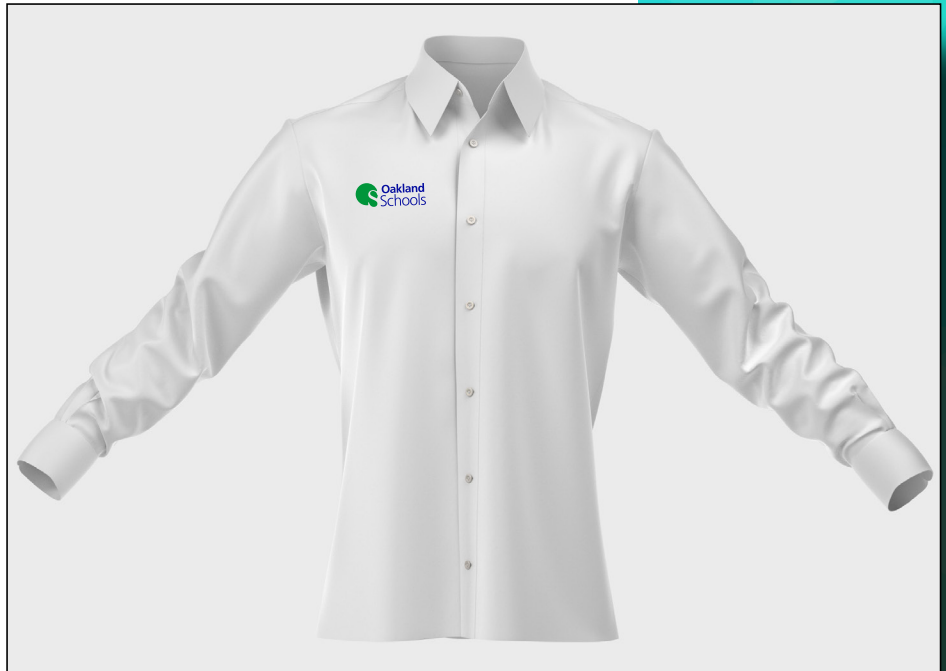


To order letterhead, envelopes or business cards, please to go Production Printing and Graphics at [OSprintshop.com](http://OSprintshop.com)

## Promotional items & Logo merchandise

Please consult Communication Services regarding production of promotional items or logo merchandise wearables, such as tote bags, coffee mugs, office-appropriate apparel, thumb drives, etc. We will be happy to assist in creating artwork that is appropriate for the item being purchased. The imprint area determines what logo or identifying text or marks can be used. In some cases, the area is far too small to use our logo effectively. In those instances, we will create a customized text solution for your team.

*Logo merchandise is available through several vendors. Please refer to the Communication Services link on the Intranet for the most up-to-date information.*



## Using the editorial office – help us, help YOU!

Internal and external publications (including electronic) are key elements in promoting the corporate identity system. Therefore, they must employ the established guidelines to maintain the integrity of the look of Oakland Schools. Communication Services provides strategic internal and external communications that support the mission, goals and objectives of Oakland Schools, through consistent standards.

Communication Services provides editing services for all departments at Oakland Schools. This service is designed to ensure that Oakland Schools publications have a consistent look, are free of typographical and content errors, contain all necessary information, and use our corporate identity appropriately. In other words, we want you to look good!

Because promoting a unified, accurate look to our customers is so important, all publications (electronic and otherwise) should be submitted for editing to Communication Services. We will edit for accurate content and appropriate logo use, while offering suggestions to give your publication the first-rate look Oakland Schools publications should demonstrate.

*To use the editing service, please submit your publication to [Communications@oakland.k12.mi.us](mailto:Communications@oakland.k12.mi.us). After review, we will return your publication to you with edits.*

## Oakland Schools conventions, mandatory statements and final thoughts

Occasionally a situation arises where there must be some latitude given within the guidelines to achieve optimal communication. When situations arise that ultimately present new solutions, your Style Guide will be updated. Any new standards will also appear on the Intranet in articles under OS News. Any new files will be located by going to *Organization – Communication Services – Shared Documents*.

Please don't hesitate to contact Communication Services for clarification or help with any corporate identity issues or questions you may have.

### When creating a new publication, please include the items listed below where applicable.

*The carpooling, nonsmoking, and all registration information should be included on items promoting professional learning opportunities.*

- **Nondiscrimination statement:** Oakland Schools does not discriminate on the basis of sex, race, color, national origin, religion, height, weight, marital status, sexual orientation (subject to the limits of applicable law), age, genetic information, or disability in its programs, services, activities or employment opportunities. Inquiries related to employment discrimination should be directed to the Assistant Superintendent of Human Resources, Personnel Management and Labor Relations at 248.209.2429, 2111 Pontiac Lake Road, Waterford, MI 48328-2736. For all other inquiries related to discrimination, contact the Director of Legal Affairs at 248.209.2062, 2111 Pontiac Lake Road, Waterford, MI 48328-2736.

- **Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) statement:** Please notify us within 10 days if you require special arrangements.  
*This could refer to issues of mobility, or dietary restrictions.*
- **Nonsmoking statement:** Oakland Schools is a nonsmoking environment.
- **Carpooling statement:** Carpooling is encouraged.
- **Event Management Cancellation Statement:** No reimbursement if cancellation is not made seven business days prior to the workshop.
- **Registration information** - Pre-registration with payment for all workshops is necessary.
- Registration forms must ALWAYS include the name of the workshop or program so that when they are detached and faxed to Event Management, it is clear for which workshop the customer is registering.
- You can simply list [osregistration.org](http://osregistration.org) to take people directly to the Professional Learning section of our homepage, where they can search by name, date, or other criteria.
- **Oakland Schools inclement weather statements** – In the event that severe weather conditions should affect Oakland Schools’ buildings operations this winter, please be aware of the following options:
  - Call the Building Closing Hotline at **248.209.2228** (It is suggested that staff store this number in their cell phone in the event of future weather anomalies.)
  - Check Oakland Schools Facebook and or Twitter sites
  - Check local TV and/or radio station newscast.

*Decisions regarding the closing of any Oakland Schools building or program are usually made by approximately 6 AM and information is immediately posted on the Building Closing Hotline and relayed to major television and radio stations.*

## Other Oakland Schools conventions

- When referring to a phone number, the Oakland Schools convention is to separate the numerals with periods rather than parenthesis or hyphens. *(Example: 248.209.2000)*
- When listing the time of an event, the Oakland Schools convention is upper case, no period – AM or PM. If the time of the event begins AND ends with either an AM or PM, you need only list it once. For example, 9:00 – 11:00 AM, or 3:00-5:00 PM.



## For more information...

*Regarding Style Guidelines, mandatory legal statements, Oakland Schools conventions, etc. please visit Communication Services on the Intranet, or contact the Communication Services team:*

## **Communications@oakland.k12.mi.us**

Julie Ferguson, Communications, Design & Editing Specialist  
248.209.2300, [julie.ferguson@oakland.k12.mi.us](mailto:julie.ferguson@oakland.k12.mi.us)

Danelle Gittus, APR, Director, Communication Services  
248.209.2181, [danelle.gittus@oakland.k12.mi.us](mailto:danelle.gittus@oakland.k12.mi.us)

Jean MacLeod, Social Media Specialist  
248.209.2186, [jean.macleod@oakland.k12.mi.us](mailto:jean.macleod@oakland.k12.mi.us)

RoNeisha Mullen, Communications Assistant  
248.209.2239, [roneisha.mullen@oakland.k12.mi.us](mailto:roneisha.mullen@oakland.k12.mi.us)

Heather Odinga, Project Department Assistant  
248.209.2145, [heather.odinga@oakland.k12.mi.us](mailto:heather.odinga@oakland.k12.mi.us)



## Questions?

*Please don't hesitate to contact Communication Services!*