ABOUT

Founded in 1951, Bishop O’Dowd High School (O’Dowd) is a fully accredited, Catholic college preparatory school with a robust academic program and dynamic co-curricular opportunities spanning visual and performing arts, advanced leadership positions, and championship athletics. Located in culturally rich Oakland, California, O’Dowd’s 1,250 students come from diverse ethnic, religious and cultural backgrounds. Our values-driven education challenges our students to lead and serve for a more just, joyful and sustainable world.

MISSION

O’Dowd’s academic curriculum and co-curricular opportunities are all informed by our Charism - spiritual gifts of the Holy Spirit. In the classroom, through service learning, with performing arts and team leadership, O’Dowd guides students to embrace diversity, strive for strength of character, achieve academic excellence, stand for social justice, protect the earth, and seek joy.

STUDENTS

O’Dowd’s 1,250 students come from over 100 regional schools in Oakland, Berkeley, San Leandro, and surrounding cities. They are required to take a High School Placement Test for admission. Over half of our student body identify as people of color, with multicultural students as our largest group (21%), followed by African-American (16%), Asian, including Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islanders (11%), and Latinx (10%). Our student body also includes people who identify as American Indian and Middle Eastern. Students of European descent make up the remaining 41%. O’Dowd awards $3.5M in financial aid annually with more than 30% of O’Dowd students receiving financial aid.

More information »
O’Dowd is unique in the breadth of student leadership opportunities offered. Beyond the leadership that stems from O’Dowd’s diverse clubs and affinity groups, spirit week and cultural heritage events, Mass and student retreats, athletics and the performing arts, the school also supports advanced leadership teams. Student leaders shepherd critical elements of the school’s programming and initiatives, including:

- Associated Student Body - works with the Director of Student Activities to plan, organize and run all student activities.
- Campus Ministry Team - nurtures spiritual development across a diverse community of faith.
- Eco Leaders - steward O’Dowd’s 4-acre Living Lab and spearhead sustainability initiatives on campus and across the East Bay. Our Living Lab and Sustainability Programs have earned O’Dowd the national distinction of being a “Green Ribbon School” by the Department of Education and the Department of Energy.
- Health and Wellness Leaders - use a peer education model to strengthen students’ physical and social-emotional health.
- Solidarity in Action - engages O’Dowd’s community in social justice campaigns.
- Student-Athlete Leadership Team - empowers student-athletes to use their leadership beyond the court or field to make positive change.

Service learning is another significant component of our curriculum. Students are required to perform 100 hours of service (though many contribute far more) in partnership with local organizations that address environmental justice and youth/community development. Juniors and seniors design unique service learning projects in connection with their required Peace and Justice religious studies course. Through service learning, O’Dowd students are equipped to respond to needs in their local communities, build direct relationships with people who have been marginalized in our society, and work towards solutions to transform themselves and our world.

**FACULTY**

O’Dowd has 94 faculty members, with over 70% holding advanced degrees. Our educators are defined by their subject expertise and dedication to effective pedagogy. Various members of our faculty have received national recognition, including the Presidential Award for Excellence in Mathematics and Science Teaching from The National Science Foundation and The Office of the President.
CURRICULUM

O’Dowd offers a broad college preparatory curriculum, delivered through interactive classroom activities, seminars, and college-style lectures. Students create their own academic path through a wide range of unique courses and electives, including offerings such as Computer Science, Engineering Physics, Robotics, Digital Arts and Animation, The Art of Film and Video, Creative Nonfiction, Race and the Law, Holocaust Studies, and more. O’Dowd offers 27 AP and Honors courses, and students are encouraged to explore their interests, nurture their passions, and bring their learning into the world. In addition to electives, all O’Dowd students graduate meeting the following requirements, totalling a minimum 240 credits:

- Religion (4 years)
- English (4 years)
- Social Studies (3 years)
- Mathematics (3 years)
- Physical Education (2 years)
- World Languages (2 years)
- Science (2 years)
- Fine Arts (1 year)

COVID-19 IMPACT

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic beginning March 2020, O’Dowd adopted a fully remote learning structure, based on Alameda County and CDC guidelines, using a combination of synchronous instruction on Zoom and asynchronous work. Our faculty and staff participated in professional development in order to maintain rigorous academic standards and class engagement through virtual instruction. Although many high schools went to a Credit/No Credit model, O’Dowd continued to assign letter grades.

O’Dowd gave over 1,100 AP exams in May and June 2021. All AP exams were taken virtually, except for World Languages exams, which were administered in person.

Virtual instruction, which continued through May 2021, limited lab opportunities for students, especially those pursuing advanced science courses. Additionally, a number of student families were impacted with loss of job, loss of housing, and significant financial situations. The school awarded financial aid to those families, however many students were still not able to access reliable internet connections, which impacted their participation and learning.

Due to regional testing site health closures, 80 percent of our graduating 2021 seniors were unable to take the SAT or ACT test. Many local test dates are still being cancelled, and the Class of 2022 continues to be negatively impacted. O’Dowd anticipates that the majority of 2022 graduates will apply to college without SAT or ACT scores.

GRADERS AND STANDARDIZED TESTING

O’Dowd has a culture of high academic achievement and our students strive to maintain excellence in their coursework. Over 40 percent of seniors in the Class of 2022 have a cumulative GPA of 4.0 or higher.

O’Dowd does not report class rank. AP and some Honors courses receive an additional grade point for grades A-C.
COLLEGES OFFERING ADMISSION TO THE CLASS OF 2018 - 2021

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA: Berkeley, Davis, Irvine, Los Angeles, Merced, Riverside, San Diego, Santa Barbara, Santa Cruz
CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY: Bakersfield, Channel Islands, Chico, Dominguez Hills, East Bay, Fresno, Fullerton, Humboldt, Long Beach, Los Angeles, Maritime, Monterey Bay, Northridge, Pomona, Sacramento, San Bernardino, San Diego, San Francisco, San Jose, San Luis Obispo, San Marcos, Sonoma, Stanislaus

Alabama A & M University
American University
Arizona State University-Tempe
ArtCenter College of Design
Azusa Pacific University
Bard College
Barnard College
Baylor University
Belmont University
Bentley University
Boise State University
Boston College
Boston University
Brandeis University
Brown University
Bucknell University
Butler University
California College of the Arts
California Institute of the Arts
California Lutheran University
California Lutheran University
California State University, Bakersfield
California State University, Channel Islands
California State University, Chico
California State University, Dominguez Hills
California State University, East Bay
California State University, Fresno
California State University, Fullerton
California State University, Humboldt
California State University, Long Beach
California State University, Los Angeles
California State University, Maritime
California State University, Monterey Bay
California State University, Bishop O’Dowd High School
California State University, Northridge
California State University, Pomona
California State University, Sacramento
California State University, San Bernardino
California State University, San Diego
California State University, San Francisco
California State University, San Jose
California State University, San Luis Obispo
California State University, San Marcos
California State University, Sonoma
California State University, Stanislaus
California State University, Sacramento
California State University, San Luis Obispo
California State University, San Marcos
California State University, Sonoma
California State University, Stanislaus

Emory University
Evergreen State College
Fairfield University
Florida State University
Fordham University
Franklin and Marshall College
Franciscan University of Steubenville
Furman University
George Fox University
George Mason University
George Washington University
Georgetown University
Georgia Institute of Technology
Georgia State University
Georgia State University-Perimeter College
Gonzaga University
Goucher College
Grand Canyon University
Guilford College
Hamphire College
Hamilton University
Harvard College
Harvey Mudd College
Hawaii Pacific University
Hobart and William Smith Colleges
Hofstra University
Holy Names University
Howard University
Indiana University-Bloomington
Ithaca College
Johns Hopkins University
Johnson & Wales University, Providence
Kean University
La Sierra University
Lehigh University
Lewis & Clark College
Louisiana State University
Loyola Marymount University
Loyola University Chicago
Loyola University Maryland
Loyola University New Orleans
Marist College
Marquette University
Maryland Institute College of Art
Maryville University of Saint Louis
McDaniel College
McGill College
Menlo College
Miami University-Oxford
Michigan State University
Mills College
Montana State University
Morehouse College
Morgan State University
Mount Holyoke College
New York School of Interior Design
New York University
Northeastern University
Northern Arizona University
Northwestern University
Norwich University
Oakwood University
Occidental College
Ohio State University
Ohio Wesleyan University
Oregon State University
Pace University-New York
Pacific Union College
Pacific University
Pennsylvania State University
Pepperdine University
Pitzer College
Pomona College
Portland State University
Pratt Institute
Princeton University
Purdue University
Reed College
Regis University
Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute
Rhode Island School of Design
Rhodes College
Rose-Hulman Institute of Technology
Rutgers University-New Brunswick
Saint Joseph’s University
Saint Mary’s College of California
Saint Michael’s College
Santa Clara University
Sarah Lawrence College
Savannah College of Art and Design
School of Visual Arts
Scripps College
Seattle University
Seton Hall University
Skidmore College
Southern Oregon University
Spelman College
Stanford University
SUNY-Buffalo
SUNY-Stony Brook
Syracuse University
Temple University
Texas Christian University
Texas Southern University
The American University of Paris
The Citadel, The Military College of South Carolina
The New School
Trinity University
Tulane University
Tuskegee University
United States Military Academy
University of Alabama
University of Alaska Anchorage
University of Arizona
University of British Columbia
University of Chicago
University of Colorado-Boulder
University of Colorado-Colorado Springs
University of Colorado-Denver
University of Connecticut
University of Denver
University of Florida
University of Hawaii at Manoa
University of Illinois at Chicago
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign
University of Iowa
University of Kansas
University of Maryland-College Park
University of Massachusetts-Amherst
University of Miami
University of Michigan-Ann Arbor
University of Minnesota-Twin Cities
University of Mississippi
University of Montana
University of Nevada-Las Vegas
University of New Hampshire
University of New Mexico
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
University of Notre Dame
University of Oregon
University of Pennsylvania
University of Portland
University of Puget Sound
University of Redlands
University of Rochester
University of San Diego
University of San Francisco
University of Southern California
University of the Pacific
University of Tennessee-Knoxville
University of Texas at Austin
University of Toronto
University of Utah
University of Vermont
University of Washington, Seattle
University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire
University of Wisconsin-Madison
University of Wyoming
Ursinus College
Villanova University
Virginia Military Institute
Wake Forest University
Walla Walla University
Washington State University
Washington University in St Louis
Wesleyan College
West Chester University of Pennsylvania
Western Oregon University
Western Washington University
Wheaton College – Massachusetts
Whitman College
Whittier College
Willamette University
College of William and Mary
Williams College
Woodbury University
Worcester Polytechnic Institute
Xavier University
Xavier University of Louisiana
Yale University

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