

# Meet Aubrey Layne

Principal, Edna Brewer Middle School  
Oakland Unified School District

## **Briefly describe your journey from teacher to Principal and why you want to become a school leader?**

Prior to joining OUSD, I taught for eight years in the Ravenswood City School District (RCSD) in East Palo Alto. In the 8 ½ years since I joined OUSD, I've had the privilege of serving as administrator at Cole, Edna Brewer and Roosevelt middle schools, and my commitment to its diverse community of students has only amplified. Over the years, many inquired about my intent to pursue a principal position, yet I intentionally postponed that pursuit until I felt I had gained sufficient experience, achievement and perspective to perform the role at the highest level. The many challenges of supporting education in an urban community have positively molded and shaped my leadership, and it has undoubtedly prepared me to successfully step into a principal position. I relate to the students I serve, and in many ways I see myself in them. It's that personal connection that keeps me committed to the work, especially when it gets tough.

## **What made you decide to become a Principal in OUSD?**

I've committed to stay in OUSD. I've chosen to re-invest the leadership I've mastered across nine years of administration into a principal position to equip Oakland students with the critical skills to discern their opportunities, assess the consequences of their choices, thrive and compete in an increasingly global marketplace. More specifically, I've committed to the principal role at Edna Brewer Middle School, which served as the training ground for my leadership and continues to serve as an inspiration through the staff relationships I maintain at that school to this day.

## **How would you best describe your role as Principal of your school?**

Mom, dad, brother, (sometimes sister), counselor, visionary, follower, advocate, accountant, colleague, mentor, coach, culture keeper, disciplinarian, listener, motivator. I could go on...but most importantly, I see myself as a servant leader.

## **What gets you most excited each day to be Principal at your school?**

Plain and simple, it's the kids. To be working at a school that is a microcosm of Oakland is awesome. The diversity at Brewer is plentiful, and the kids are amazing academically and in citizenship. The staff are hardworking individuals who care deeply about the academic, social and emotional success of kids. I sincerely enjoy working with colleagues committed to the beautiful work of shaping young minds and hearts.

## **What is your biggest accomplishment as a Principal in OUSD?**

My greatest accomplishment as Principal has been my ability to uniquely engage students and families, quickly forging trusting relationships and creating a culture of collaboration, open communication and inclusion for parents.

## **What advice do you give students and parents when they first arrive at your school?**

I give three pieces of advice to students: 1) Take advantage of all the opportunities presented to you. 2) Don't be afraid to ask questions, especially when you don't know an answer. 3) Work hard and help each other to succeed. We have an open door policy at Brewer, so I encourage parents to visit the school, stay involved, ask questions and hold us accountable to doing our best for their child.

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