

BERKELEY UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

TO: Donald Evans, Ed. D., Superintendent
FROM: Pasquale Scuderi, Associate Supt. of Educational Services
DATE: October 24, 2018
SUBJECT: School Class Size Report

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Since 1987, Berkeley Schools Excellence Program (BSEP), a community response to state and federal education funding shortages, has financed lower class sizes at all Berkeley public schools. In 2016, BSEP Measure E1 reaffirmed the community's commitment to smaller class sizes by allocating additional funds to continue maintaining a lower student-to-teacher class size ratio. Currently, BSEP funds approximately 30% of classroom teachers in Berkeley schools.

The class size goal is a K-3 school-wide average of 23:1. The prior BSEP Measure A of 2006 goal for fourth and fifth grade remains as a district-wide class size of 26 students. The ultimate goal is a school-wide of 23:1 to be achieved by the sixth year of the measure. The goal for secondary schools remains a district-wide class size average of 28:1.

2018-19 Class Size Reports

The class size goals in elementary schools have been met. The fourth and fifth grade class size goal is a district-wide class size of 26 per teacher. A few elementary schools have a class-size average more than 26 students in fifth grade. A solution would have been to implement 4th/5th grade combination classes. However, families and teachers do not favor combination classes. As a result, a few elementary schools have smaller class averages in the fourth grade. Emerson Elementary school is an exception. Emerson was offered an additional teacher to lower the fourth grade class size. The school staff declined the additional teacher as it would have meant that Emerson would have lost its flex classroom. However, Emerson was granted funds to implement an additional release time.

Middle school class size averages met the BSEP goal, with an average class size of 27.4 in sixth grade. The district-wide class size average in 7th and 8th grade 27.2 excluding PE.

High school class size averages met the BSEP goal, with an average class size of 27.2 at Berkeley High School excluding PE. The class size average for ninth grade including LEAP is 26.21. The Berkeley Technology Academy class size average is 9.2 students per teacher, less than the 18:1 average stipulated in the Measure.

POLICY/CODE

Berkeley Schools Excellence Project, Measure E1 of 2016

FISCAL IMPACT

None

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Receive the School Class Size Report for information.