

BSEP PLANNING & OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE MINUTES
April 14, 2020

P&O Committee Members Present

Nicole Chabot, *Berkeley Arts Magnet*
Jonathan Weissglass, *Emerson*
Pamela Hyde, *Emerson (Alt)*
Carla Bryant, *Oxford*
Weldon Bradstreet, *Rosa Parks*
Kate Jordan, *Sylvia Mendez*
Heather Flett, *Washington*

Terry Pastika, *King Middle School*
Aaron Glimme, *Berkeley High*
Esfandiar Imani, *Berkeley High School*
Josh Irwin, *Berkeley High*
Shauna Rabinowitz, *Berkeley High*
Felicia Bellows, *Independent Study*

P&O Committee Members Absent*:

Tamara Perkins, *Early Childhood Education*
Ana Vasudeo, *Cragmont*
Chris Wallace, *Jefferson*
Vanessa Garza, *John Muir*
Jane Logan, *Malcolm X*

Jose Rodriguez, *Longfellow Middle School*
Martin de Much Flores, *Longfellow M.S.*
Rita Gaber, *Willard Middle School*
Jennifer Sitkin-Morgan, *Willard Middle School*
Evon Williams, *Berkeley Technology Academy*

**Alternates and co-reps are not marked absent if another rep is present. Currently there is no representation from Thousand Oaks elementary, and only one representative each from King Middle School and Longfellow Middle School.*

Visitors, School Board Directors, Union Reps, and Guests:

Cathy Campbell, *BUSD Teacher*

BUSD Staff:

Bajé Thiara, *Associate Superintendent of Educational Services*
Samantha Tobias-Espinosa, *Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources*
Natasha Beery, *Director of BSEP and Communications*
Jay Nitschke, *Director of Technology*
Jessica Lee, *Library Coordinator*
Pete Gidlund, *Music/VAPA Supervisor*
Danielle Perez, *BSEP Program Specialist*

1. Call to Order and Introductions

The meeting was held online via Zoom. At 4:03 p.m. Chairperson Bradstreet called the meeting to order. Members introduced themselves.

2. Establish the Quorum/Approve the Agenda

The quorum was established with 12 voting members present.

Chair Bradstreet asked for a motion to approve the agenda. Rep. Bradstreet moved to approve the agenda, Rep. Glimme seconded the motion; the agenda was approved unanimously.

3. Chairperson's Comments

The co-Chairs thanked committee members for attending in such challenging times.

4. Public Comment

There was no public comment.

5. Approval of Minutes

March 24, 2020 and April 7, 2020

Rep. Chabot moved to approve the 3.24.20 meeting minutes, Rep. Imani seconded; the minutes were approved unanimously.

Rep. Bellows moved to approve the 4.7.20 meeting minutes, Rep. Jordan seconded; the minutes were approved unanimously.

6. District Update

Natasha Beery, Director BSEP & Community Relations

Director Beery gave a district update on behalf of Dr. Stephens. Many people tuned in to the online Town Hall on April 9, attendance for which capped out at 500 attendees. The event saw about 240 questions submitted in writing, in addition to those voiced in the meeting. These questions were subsequently summarized by BUSD staff into 16 categories, and responses have been posted on the BUSD website and sent out via email as well..

She and Dr. Stephens will be presenting a number of items at the next Board meeting, including the recently P&O-approved BSEP budgets. Since those plans were created, a lot has happened, including the likelihood that California will be heading towards a significant recession. Concerns initially discussed by the P&O were centered around expending accumulated fund balances. Now it appears the multi-year projection with worst-case scenario with no COLA could actually come to pass, and the Board may push back on recent additions to BSEP budgets in light of this. It may be necessary to cut back to be a bit more conservative about possibilities for the future. Associate Superintendent Thiara is presenting a potential addition to one budget later this meeting, knowing that several things may be pruned back in BREA by the Board.

7. Report from the April 7 Steering Committee Meeting: Bylaws Update and BERRA

Chairpersons Terry Pastika and Weldon Bradstreet, and BSEP Director Natasha Beery

Chair Bradstreet explained that the Steering Committee approved the revised bylaws on 4/7/20, so this committee now has some oversight of BERRA. Director Beery noted that the 4/7 meeting was the second reading, and the Steering Committee voted on behalf of the full committee. Some suggestions were made and added to the bylaws. In taking on oversight of BERRA, the committee will review plans for a small portion of its budget (5% for programs/staffing supporting staff recruitment and retention, and the 1% oversight budget); 95% of the BERRA budget is devoted directly to increasing compensation. Because that usage is directed by the measure language, and no latitude exists for staff or a committee to correct or amend, the P&O does not have the same kind of oversight of that portion. The P&O committee will look at salary schedules and how the BERRA funds will be applied to it, then hear reports of how it was implemented, but there would not be an approval from the P&O committee as such. This point

was clarified in the revised bylaws. The Board has final approval of the revised P&O Committee Bylaws at tomorrow night's meeting.

8. Recommendation for BERRA Funds 2020-21: 5% Budget for Recruitment, Retention and Development

Samantha Tobias-Espinosa, Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources

Assistant Superintendent Tobias-Espinosa addressed and discussed the following document:

- Recommendation for expenditure of BERRA Funds for Recruitment, Retention, and Development Strategies

Assistant Superintendent Tobias-Espinosa explained that this document includes additions since the first draft was presented to the Steering Committee. She added goals and objectives per the Steering Committee members' requests.

Chair Pastika asked, generally speaking about BERRA, is there any provision about how much funds may move between purposes, similar to what is outlined in the BSEP Measure. Director Beery answered no, the Measure description of the 5% BERRA purpose has suggestions and examples of how funds could be spent, but no set subdivisions. Chair Pastika then asked when, internally, it is hoped to see the fruits of this labor to fill these hard-to-fill positions. Assistant Superintendent Tobias-Espinosa answered that, for classified staff, we hire throughout the school year. Hopefully we will partner with Adult Ed to support candidates before hiring, to build the skills to pass tests to qualify for hiring and for promotions. We will be looking at results throughout the year, with the biggest anticipated impacts coming about a year from now. We hope to see differences like more job satisfaction and higher skill levels in about a year.

In response to a request made in the SC meeting, Assistant Superintendent Tobias-Espinosa presented demographic information for the pathway to teaching program: currently the program has 11 participants; 82% are educators of color, 45.5% are pursuing SpEd credentials, 36.4% are pursuing multiple subject credentials, and 18.2% are pursuing single subject credentials (PE and Art). The participants are in very different places in the process; three are at community colleges working on AA degrees, three are working on bachelor's degrees at 4-year schools, and three more are working on credentials. Two have completed classes and are working on passing the CSET to be ready to work, though tests aren't being offered right now, which is a hardship. BUSD currently employs two program alumni: one fully credentialed at Oxford and one who is an intern at Cragmont. Three alumni have left BUSD: one is fully credentialed and working in West Contra Costa, and two more are interning in Oakland. Rep. Jordan asked if any of the program participants are bilingual or planning for BCLAD certification. Assistant Superintendent Tobias-Espinosa was not aware of any, but wukk look into that question to be certain. The district had hoped to participate in a conference in April to recruit bilingual teachers, but it has of course been cancelled, though we will continue to contact candidates through other means and methods.

Chair Pastika asked for more information about the measure language around career pathways for high school students. Assistant Superintendent Tobias-Espinosa answered that the district hasn't been able to explore that yet, but it would be similar to an academy within BHS, working on

getting some of the community college requirements and early childhood ed requirements built into high school programs so that students are closer to earning credentials after graduation.

Assistant Superintendent Tobias-Espinosa explained that in supporting both continuing and new teachers, the goal is to help teachers provide the highest quality instruction for students. The new IEP coach position will be created to help teachers write accurate and meaningful IEPs. The Plan also includes support for struggling teachers, outside of the evaluation process, from other exceptional educators within our district. The .4 FTE position is currently funded by the GF to support new teachers with preliminary credentials to get fully clear credentials. The peer assistance review item allocates .2 FTE to support veteran teachers going through rough patches, this position is currently .1 FTE from other funding, so it will be increased with this funding.

Another goal of the Plan is to increase the number of educators of color through recruitment and retention efforts. We will be collaborating with the existing Teachers of Color Network, and plan to increase participation allowing teachers to support each other, and also working on creating a recruitment plan to hire educators of color in '20-21 and beyond. Throughout the year, there will be work using technology to remove obstacles for applicants, and seeking grants to help alleviate some of the systemic issues that prevent good candidates of color from being hired. Rep. Irwin noted that this recommendation was one that the district created pre-pandemic, and has not been altered given the possibility of economic changes. He asked if the plan is to proceed, assuming that the Board will let us know if they approve or if they want brakes put on. Assistant Superintendent Tobias-Espinosa responded that of course we don't know what fallout will come from the pandemic, and the idea behind this Plan is that no matter what we need high quality educators for our students and this is what our voters have approved. We will continue looking for ways to use funds to the highest potential. Some factors in hiring this year, aside from the pandemic, are that other districts are going through layoffs and flooding the market with teachers for whom it is hard to tell their quality, and also the fact that science and STEM teachers are not being laid off, and we still need to fill those.

Rep. Glimme moved to approve the BERRA Recruitment, Retention, and Development Plan for 2020-21, Rep. Bellows seconded the motion; the Plan was approved unanimously.

9. Recommendation for BSEP Funds 2020-21: Instructional Technology Program

Jay Nitschke, Director of Technology

Director Nitschke addressed and discussed the following document:

- Recommendation for Expenditure of BSEP Technology Funds in FY 2020-21

Director Nitschke explained that there has been a small change to this Plan around purchases, but not staffing. It's become clear that BUSD might have software service expenses in '20-21 that we haven't had in '19-20. Ed Tech companies are offering free services this year, but if they're necessary next year we need funding in place.

Chair Pastika recalled the reference made at the last meeting to a one-time expenditure for a Technology position that set the stage for a lot of the current technology implementation. Director Nitschke clarified that was the Coordinator of Instructional Technology position, which

was funded out of Common Core funding for two years. This person led the program to bring Chromebooks 1:1 in classrooms and to get teachers Google Certified (or Berkeley Certified), which included agreeing to use Chromebooks as a teaching tool for parts of their curriculum. That position also worked in concert with the Library program to adopt a model of digital literacy around the Common Sense Media framework. Chair Pastika asked if it would be helpful to have that position again. Director Nitschke responded yes, of course, but to Rep. Irwin's comment earlier, what the district budget will look like next year given economic changes likely means there won't be room to add such a big piece to the budget moving forward using district funds.

Rep. Jordan moved to approve the BSEP Technology Plan for 2020-21, Rep. Chabot seconded the motion; the Plan was approved unanimously.

10. Recommendation for BSEP Funds 2020-21: Library Program

Jessica Lee, Library Coordinator

Ms. Lee addressed and discussed the following document:

- Recommendation for Expenditure of BSEP Funds for Libraries in FY 2020-21

Ms. Lee shared that she has not made any changes to the proposed Library Plan or budget since its first review at the last P&O meeting. Her work has been all-consuming in other directions in the last few weeks with rolling out distance learning.

She reminded the committee that there was a little over \$70,000 left from the previous Measure A budget, which was meant to be for library technology purchases, but which now will be held to deal with potential losses of books or electronic resources due to the pandemic. She noted that we do have leeway given how unpredictable the current situation is.

Rep. Chabot asked, regarding all budgets and departments, in the case of changing staffing needs next Fall, if we can't be back on school grounds by then, how we make sure we're hiring for positions that are needed. Ms. Lee responded that the Library program also has staff retiring and the plan is still to replace those positions. She wasn't aware of any HR stance, as that isn't a library-specific question. Rep. Chabot asked for example about hiring the new ECE Bookbag IA position. Ms. Lee answered that this addition to the Library Plan is formalizing an existing position, not creating something completely new, which would feel more precarious right now. This is simply taking an hourly employee currently site-funded to a salaried position paid from the district Library budget. The person in the role now is hoped to continue. Rep. Chabot expressed that she would like to hear from other program managers how they will cope with changing enrollment.

Chair Pastika had a concern about an opposite scenario, in thinking about how the last recession brought an increase in enrollment from private school students. She asked what the game plan would be to address different staffing needs if we see another bubble of enrollment due to recession, as families become unable to afford private school with an economic downturn. Director Nitschke responded that the increase was gradual, and we actually saw a rise in birth rates after the last economic slump, and saw the corresponding enrollment bump five years later. Ms. Lee noted that this would impact classroom teaching more than library staffing, which is

much more stable. For example a 10% increase in students wouldn't shift library staffing very much if at all.

Rep. Weissglass asked about ways the district might circulate books for the remaining school year, given that parents want students looking at more than just screens. Ms. Lee answered that she has looked at other districts' practices, but the primary concern is for the safety of staff and families/students. The current scientific understanding of how the virus spreads is shifting, and she doesn't feel confident putting together a safety plan when we're not entirely sure what is practical or likely to put people in danger. She has been looking at ways to have library staff identify families most in need of reading materials and recommended titles, and also working with the Schools Fund buying books and sending directly to students' houses. This reduces contact and the possibility that staff would contract the virus or send it along through shipped materials. Once there is a safe way to do it, curbside pickup and dropoff may become an option, but she is waiting for the science to be more clear.

Director Beery added a shout-out to Ms. Lee for all the work she has been doing, she's been incredibly busy on many many things in response to closures and distance learning. Last weekend, when we made the switch from Zoom to Google Meet, she put together webinars to be ready for Monday morning, both for staff and information for families. Ms. Lee is doing a phenomenal job with what was only a 10% part of her job before this pandemic.

Rep. Bryant moved to approve the BSEP Library Plan for 2020-21, Rep. Rabinowitz seconded the motion; the Plan was approved unanimously.

11. Recommendation for BSEP Funds 2020-21: Music/VAPA

Pete Gidlund, Music/VAPA Supervisor

Mr. Gidlund addressed and discussed the following document:

- Recommendation for Expenditure of BSEP Funds for the Visual and Performing Arts Programs in FY 2020-21

Mr. Gidlund explained that there has been no change to the VAPA Plan since its first reading on March 24. The only change from 2019-20 to 2020-21 are three equity-focused expenditures: the BHS digital music production lab, creating a part-time VAPA Family Liaison position to support students and families of color, and adding a materials budget for the African American Studies department at BHS, including field trip buses, arts materials, and things of that nature.

As an update on the VAPA program at the current time, Mr. Gidlund shared that his office has done several instrument distributions, many at the middle schools, two at the High School, and the previous day from the central VAPA office for all grades. Students had left instruments behind that last Friday before the closure at all different school sites. Of the 4,000 instruments in circulation for the year, the majority of BUSD music students have them at home now, but he and his staff are doing this for those left behind and also for any students who need associated supplies like reeds or method books. The distributions include recorders for 3rd graders, and VAPA will do another distribution on the following Monday.

Rep. Chabot moved to approve the BSEP VAPA Plan for 2020-21, Rep. Bellows seconded the motion; the Plan was approved unanimously.

12. Update to FY 2020-21 BSEP BREA Plan

Bajé Thiara, *Associate Superintendent of Educational Services*

Chair Bradstreet explained that this is an information item, providing an update on the BREA plan for '20-21.

Associate Superintendent Thiara wanted to inform the committee that she will be asking the Board to approve funding to reinstate the Director of State and Federally funded Programs and Special Projects. Leaving this position unfilled in 2019-20 has provided only limited savings, but it is important to reinstate it to oversee and serve as lynchpin between English Learner services, the SPSA process, and our summer school and after school programs. This position being unfilled has resulted in a lack of oversight of compliance with state and federal guidelines. This year BUSD has been asked to refund over \$120,000 due to this lack of compliance. In 2019-20 the position's responsibilities have been covered by Associate Superintendent Thiara with help of content experts.

Chair Pastika asked why this item was not a P&O action item requiring a committee vote. Director Beery answered that it was brought for information to the committee, as it is time-sensitive. The addition to the BREA budget is small, representing a reduction of only .5% in the fund balance. A change of this size is not required to be voted on. This addition to the BREA budget provides .1 FTE of the overall position, the lack of which was making it difficult to post and recruit to fill. This proposal is part of big picture budgets going to the Board along with items from all kinds of district funds. Given the pandemic situation and potential for a huge economic downturn, Director Beery asked Associate Superintendent Thiara to bring this to the P&O as an update so that it could be on table (and would be of negligible impact), but may or may not go forward depending on final Board decisions.

13. For the Good of the Order

Chair Pastika asked if staff anticipate anything unusual coming to the P&O given our current situation. Director Beery responded that she has given up on attempting to predict either the future or near present, but stated that it is entirely possible that after tomorrow night's Board discussion there might be a desire to revise the BSEP budgets. We don't know when we may reopen schools; Governor Newsom spoke publicly today about schools staying closed through June, and stated that re-opening may look like a very different school year than we've seen in the past. There could be a return to the P&O in May based on Board-level conversations with impacts on BSEP funds. In that case we can expect at least the Steering Committee, and maybe the full P&O Committee in the Fall, may see substantially changed plans in a few areas. We do want to allow program managers some kind of flexibility to adapt to whatever their situations are within their own budgets. As long as they aren't making huge changes in program directions, we may ask that this be allowed. Plan revisions could come to the Committee for information purposes or for feedback. We can't predict anything specific and may need the P&O as thought partners as things evolve.

13. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned by acclamation at 5:20 p.m.