

**BSEP PLANNING & OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE MINUTES  
November 10, 2020**

**P&O Committee Members Present**

Nicole Chabot, *Berkeley Arts Magnet*  
Nimota Abina, *Cragmont (co-Rep)*  
Jonathan Weissglass, *Emerson*  
Nikhila Pai, *Jefferson (co-Rep)*  
Heather Ball, *Malcolm X*  
Carla Bryant, *Oxford*  
Weldon Bradstreet, *Rosa Parks*  
Justin Randall, *Sylvia Mendez*  
Olivia Lim, *Longfellow Middle School*

Kate Jordan, *Willard Middle School*  
Sarah Cline, *Berkeley High*  
Aaron Glimme, *Berkeley High*  
Esfandiar Imani, *Berkeley High (Alt)*  
Josh Irwin, *Berkeley High*  
Terry Pastika, *Berkeley High (Alt)*  
Shauna Rabinowitz, *Berkeley High*  
Martin de Mucha Flores, *Independent Study*

**P&O Committee Members Absent\*:**

Vanessa Garza, *John Muir*  
Heather Flett, *Washington*

Prashant Jawalikar, *King Middle School*  
Chetan Kamdar, *King Middle School*

*\*Alternates and co-reps are not marked absent if another rep is present. Currently there is no representation from BTA, Pre-K or Thousand Oaks Elementary, and only one representative each from Longfellow and Willard Middle Schools.*

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

Janine Waddell, *Vice President of Berkeley Federation of Teachers*

**BUSD Staff:**

Samantha Tobias-Espinosa, *Assistant Superintendent of Human Resources*  
Natasha Beery, *Director of BSEP and Communications*  
Francisco Martinez, *Admissions Manager*  
Danielle Perez, *BSEP Program Specialist*

**1. Call to Order and Introductions**

The meeting was held online via Zoom. At 5:03 p.m. Chairperson Bradstreet called the meeting to order. Members introduced themselves.

**2. Establish the Quorum/Approve the Agenda**

The quorum was established with 15 voting members present.

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

**3. Chairperson's Comments**

*Terry Pastika and Weldon Bradstreet*

Co-Chair Bradstreet welcomed members to P&O for 2020-21. Co-Chair Pastika thanked everyone for attending and reminded members of the P&O Steering Committee on 11/17/20.

This meeting will include a discussion about progress of the summer's workgroup to provide recommendations to improve flow of information between the BSEP Office and the P&O Committee. All are welcome to join. She also reminded members to consider running for (co-)Chair position.

#### **4. BSEP Director's Comments**

*Natasha Beery, Director BSEP & Community Relations*

Director Beery asked members to contact Danielle if in need of any help getting documents for meetings. She thanked Terry and the workgroup, and grateful to committee members for stepping up to contribute to decisions about how best to use our resources for students.

#### **5. Superintendent's Report**

*Brent Stephens, Superintendent of Schools*

Dr. Stephens was not able to attend this meeting, but will attend the Steering Committee meeting next week to speak about Board decisions made last Spring around some of the 2020-21 BSEP annual plans. Director Beery anticipates that he will attend remaining meetings or will have other leadership present in his stead.

#### **6. Approval of Minutes**

*June 2, 2020 and Steering Committee meeting June 16, 2020*

Rep. Glimme moved to approve the 6.2.20 meeting minutes, Rep. Jordan seconded; the minutes were approved unanimously.

Rep. Irwin moved to approve the 6.16.20 Steering Committee meeting minutes, Rep. Weisglass seconded; the minutes were approved unanimously.

#### **7. Public Comment**

There was no public comment.

#### **8. P&O Calendar and 2020-21 Preview**

*Natasha Beery, Director of BSEP*

Director Beery began by explaining that the P&O members and committee are here to provide input on two key tax measures, BSEP and BERRA. [See presentation slides for details.](#)

#### **9. Berkeley Educators Recruitment and Retention (BERRA) Update**

*Samantha Tobias-Espinosa, Assistant Superintendent of Human Resources*

Assistant Superintendent Tobias-Espinosa presented the [Proposed Changes to the BERRA 5% Plan](#) document to the committee.

Assistant Superintendent Tobias-Espinosa explained that the original BERRA 5% plan presented to P&O last year included \$20,000 to be used in combination with a grant called the Special Education Residency Program. This grant was subsequently swept in a revised state budget, and

so this plan update proposes to use the same budget as a way to bolster existing programs supporting developing teachers, including BPACT, helping classified staff to become credentialed, BPAR, and Teacher Intern programs. Assistant Superintendent Tobias-Espinosa noted that Berkeley is dealing with the same teacher shortages hitting the rest of the state, and finding it more difficult to find fully credentialed teachers, which creates an increased need to support more interns and build teaching corps from within. This plan revision is looking to increase support for those strategies. She also added that while newly-credentialed teachers qualify for the new teacher induction program, interns do not, and we want to support and provide mentors for them as well. This includes working with Trellis Education Fund supporting STEM education, getting new young teachers into STEM positions. For this, the district matches funding which would come from BERRA.

Director Beery added that this item is on the agenda as an informational item, though the changes fall in a grey area between information and action. She wanted the committee to be aware of this and to think about whether this follows guidelines for making relatively small changes. It is still supporting purposes listed in the original Plan, but is a change to this line item. The group can choose to ask for a second reading at the 11/16 Steering Committee meeting, or in the December 15 meeting of the full committee.

Rep. Chabot recalled that when this plan was originally presented to the committee, there was a particular need to fill SpEd positions, and this proposal aimed to address that need. She asked if, by this change, the district would lose this outreach. She also asked where SpEd recruitment is in the plan with this change. Assistant Superintendent Tobias-Espinosa responded that the Plan originally aimed to create an IEP Coach to support all SpEd teachers in managing the paperwork, and this money would now help support the intern SpEd teachers that we do have. She explained that the district doesn't currently have hard time filling classroom or caseload-restricted teaching positions, but we did have unfilled positions created to support at a district level, to relieve pressure from teachers for case management and assessment. In response, we have hired more interns and others to help build that support system. The district is definitely wanting to still use whatever we can of this program to help support SpEd.

Rep. Cline asked how specifically the funds will be used. Assistant Superintendent Tobias-Espinosa answered that this \$20,000 would pay for stipends to BUSD teachers to act as coaches to teaching interns; teachers of color that we want to keep in the district; and struggling teachers who may not fall into these specific categories but who would still benefit from extra support.

There was a discussion about the most appropriate time to bring this revised plan back to the committee as an action item. Director Beery confirmed that she will bring the plan to the Steering Committee for a second reading on 11/16 and again for a vote in the 12/15 meeting.

## **10. Class Size Report**

*Francisco Martinez, Admissions Manager*

Mr. Martinez presented the [Class Size Report](#) document to the committee.

Mr. Martinez explained that BSEP pays for about 30% of teacher salaries in BUSD, and that he and his office monitors class sizes as they assign students to schools throughout the year. That is

why he is bringing this information to the P&O. The previous BSEP measure had a class size goal of 20:1 K-3, and 26:1 in grades 4-5. The new measure of 2016 balanced that goal out to 23:1 for all elementary grades. We are still in the last years of having that jump from 3rd to 4th grade, but it will level out soon.

This year there are fewer students enrolled, because of the pandemic. Close to 96% are enrolled, which is higher than other districts, but lower than what was planned. This does allow all schools to have lower class sizes than normal in this unusual year.

[See presentation slides for details.](#)

Rep. Irwin asked why students from schools with larger classes aren't sent to schools with lower class sizes. Mr. Martinez answered that moving students into a different attendance zone creates an obligation for the district to provide them transportation to that new school, which is often not feasible. Also, once kids are settled in one school, it would be extremely problematic for the families to be asked to change to a new school. He explained that if a family requests a move to a school with smaller classes, we're happy to accommodate them, but wouldn't force a family to move their children.

Rep. De Mucha Flores stated that it would be helpful to include the high, low and average with this data, and that it also would be helpful to have demographic information for each school alongside the class size data to provide a lens about how we see our schools and shifting demographics, especially for SpEd. He also asked if BIS enrollment is included in the BTA enrollment numbers. Mr. Martinez answered that some BIS enrollments are included in the BHS numbers, and that in December he will present a Race and Ethnicity report to the School Board. Rep. De Mucha Flores responded that if we the district is committed to, and using equity in statements, we need to look at demographic information like SpEd, gender, gender identity, race/ethnicity, etc. We cannot say we're advancing equity and not talk about populations in specificity as they move across our district.

Rep. Imani asked if anyone tracks the reasons behind fluctuations in attendance from year to year. Mr. Martinez responded that his office doesn't have resources to determine the reasoning behind fluctuations, though his office does track projections about enrollment to be able to staff all schools each year. He explained that in elementary schools, the populations are really very stable. Even at the high school, the number of new kids coming into the district at 9th grade from private schools is only around 100 each year. With changes this small, it's hard to draw conclusions, and almost would need to go child by child or family by family.

Rep. Jordan recalled Director Beery saying that this measure E1 was structured differently to set the average class size by school site, rather than across the district. Director Beery confirmed that this is correct. However, the district can't retroactively implement that change, rather it's rolled out one grade at a time starting with the Kinder class in 2017. Higher class sizes in grades 4-5 are grandfathered in as that rolling out is happening each year gradually. We are under 23:1 at every school in elementary this year, which is actually early.

Mr. Martinez added that Emerson is a good example, as a site that would have alternating enrollment of either 2 or 3 kinder classes each year, and in every other bubble year with 3

kinders, 60 students would end up having to be divided based on a 26:1 ratio from the old measure. As a result, the District and that school would have to decide whether they wanted two fourth grade classes with higher class sizes, or implement a combination class of 4th and 5th graders to maintain the lower class size goals. Schools notoriously rejected combo classes because teachers didn't favor that structure. But, by the 2022-23 school year, class sizes will be 23:1 as a school-wide average at the elementary level.

#### **11. For the Good of the Order**

Director Beery recognized that we need to be more realistic about the timing of agendas, and moving forward we will plan for meetings to be longer to allow enough time for all discussions and items.

Rep. Imani noted that the BUSD P&O website still lists the meeting time as 7pm.

Director Beery also reminded members that when shelter-in-place took effect, the P&O meetings were shortened and set to begin earlier in the day, but now the needs of the group may have changed. Ms. Perez will survey the committee members to determine what the meeting start times should be moving forward through the 2020-21 school year.

#### **12. Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned by acclamation at 6:39 p.m.