

**Statement from 4/27/21 P&O Meeting
BUSD BOD 5/5/21 Meeting
Terry Pastika, Alt BHS**

Good evening, my name is Terry Pastika and I am here on behalf of the Planning and Oversight Committee. The P&O is an advisory body comprised of representatives of every school in the District that makes recommendations to the School Board on BSEP and BERRA, two special tax measures passed by Berkeley voters that supplement school funding.

- BSEP generates an additional \$32 million for the District over the baseline property tax, with majority of funds going towards supporting smaller class sizes. The P&O just finished reviewing 9 budgets under the most recent Measure.
- BERRA supports teacher and staff recruitment and retention.

This is an overview of P&O questions and comments to BUSD staff at the last meeting.

We started with an overview of the Superintendent's Budget Advisory Committee, again reviewing the one time COVID Relief funds from the State and the uncertain funding conditions for the District over the next few years, specifically looking at the unknown factor of if BUSD will be able to recover the 7% drop in student enrollment from the last year. A question was asked as to if BUSD's plan for bringing students back to the classroom on a limited basis across all grades qualified for all the State funding available.

The next topic we turned to was looking at the BERRA tax measure. While 95% of that funding goes directly into staff compensation, 5% of the revenues is dedicated to providing programs designed to strengthen the recruitment and retention of teachers of color, and strategies for filling historically difficult to fill certificated positions – and that is the budget the P&O is authorized to review. To that end, we reviewed a draft budget of approximately \$470K, most of which went towards staffing, such as a Professional Development Coordinator position to facilitate professional development opportunities for classified staff. The P&O asked why these funds might not be routed toward increasing the pay of Classified Staff overall, for whom the next year's 7% increase in salary meant a much less amount of money when considering the stark difference in pay between teachers and the support staff. Concerns also were raised over the allocation of funds to Professional Development staff vs compensation to staff who are primarily made up of persons of color in BUSD and are struggling to make ends meet, and that the disparity is a form of racism within BUSD itself that needs to be addressed. Additionally a request was made for how much overall the District spends on Professional Development and how that compares to other districts as well as a request for quantitative information about Special Education positions over the last 4 years (outside of this COVID year), showing the number of open roles and rate of turnover among those roles.

A question was also asked as to if BERRA funds could be used for recruitment/retention stipends for Longfellow hiring, along the lines of those already budgeted for SPED and bilingual positions, which have already been recognized as historically hard to hire.

We then reviewed the left over funds from the BSEP Measure A, and a draft recommendation to allocate approximately \$22K to the Office of Family Engagement and Equity to support the program needs for non-staffing costs. Lastly, we reviewed a draft proposal regarding the restructuring of duties for the BSEP Director and Community Relations into two different positions.

Thanks for the opportunity to provide this brief recap. P&O meetings are open to the public and we invite any of you, as well as members of the public, to attend.