

Good evening, my name is Weldon Bradstreet and I am a Co-Chair of the Planning and Oversight Committee. The P&O is charged with oversight of BSEP and BERRA - the two supplemental tax measures passed by BUSD voters, that total almost a quarter of the BUSD budget: This year the P&O decided to routinely come before the BOD and District Leadership to keep you apprised of our work and to highlight the various issues of public concern our members have been asking about as we review and approve budgets that total almost \$32M in Berkeley taxpayer-provided funds.

Since the District will soon have a new person directing the BSEP and BERRA programs, we want to reiterate the major themes that consistently came up in our statements to the BOD and make clear what priorities the P&O will focus on next fall:

The Major Themes we raised to the BOD and District Leadership include the following:

1. **Firm Priorities:** The current BSEP measure, Measure E1, lists priorities for how supplemental tax dollars are to be spent. The P&O needs to hear what the District's core priorities are, and how their spending priorities comport with Measure E1.
2. **Documentation of the Efficacy of BSEP spending** - A constant theme within the P&O is our request that the District show us the educational outcomes and impacts of their BSEP and BERRA spending decisions. Essentially we want the district to "Show its work." While we acknowledge that progress has been made in revising documents provided to the P&O about *how* this information will be presented, more information about actual outcomes/ impacts is required.
3. **Promoting Equity** - Related to showing impact, the P&O has asked how equity is specifically addressed across our student community, our educational programs, and our full inclusion model - not from the perspective of where dollars are spent to support equity, but rather to learn the overall equity impact of that spending.
4. **Fund stability for the full term of the Measure** - We know budget cuts are looming for the General Fund in the 22/23 school year. We also know that current BSEP spending may not be sustainable for the full term of Measure E1. Over the past few years the BSEP budget has taken on expenses that were previously part of the General Fund, but BSEP funds may not be available to help in that way to lessen the impending cuts. Therefore, BSEP spending decisions will need to be made very carefully going forward to keep the fund stable.
5. **Preparation for renewal of Measure**- Preparation for the next BSEP measure needs to start soon. While BSEP has traditionally enjoyed strong voter support, we are uncertain if Berkeley voters will support an additional increased tax in our current times. We believe that it is imperative that the major themes outlined here are addressed and publicized to maximize prospects for renewal of the BSEP measure.

After working closely and successfully with our outgoing BSEP Director, Natasha Beery, the P&O recommends the BOD and Superintendent to consider the following points in identifying her successor:

1. **Revision of Priorities:** The current responsibilities of the Director position are too broad, and under resourced. There needs to be a streamlining of responsibilities, clear priorities, adherence to those priorities, and appropriate resources allocated.

2. **Independence:** The P&O views the Director position as a Guardian of Public funds, and as such this person must have Independence to appropriately represent taxpayers and be the bridge between the P&O and the District.
3. **Be In the Room Where it Happens:** With oversight of almost 25% of the District's budget, Ms. Beery's successor must have a seat at the table as a member of the Superintendent's Executive Committee.
4. **Holistic Understanding of BUSD's Budget:** Ms. Beery's successor must be able to understand how all BUSD budgets and programs fit together, and have the ability to effectively communicate that to the P&O
5. **Ability to Prioritize BSEP/ BERRA Dollars:** Ms. Beery's successor must have the ability to guide the District and the P&O through what we know are going to be difficult budget decisions in the coming years.
6. **And lastly, this person needs to lead and deliver the next BSEP Measure**

We thank the BOD for the opportunity to come before you, and look forward to working collaboratively to meet our expectations and requests for next year.