

BSEP/MEASURE A PLANNING & OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE MINUTES
February 7, 2012
Malcolm X School Library
1731 Prince St., Berkeley

P&O Committee Members Present:

Keira Armstrong, <i>Washington (Alt)</i>	Lea Baechler-Brabo, <i>Oxford (Alt)</i>	Nicole Bowen, <i>Arts Magnet</i>
Brett Cook, <i>Malcolm X</i>	Mariane Ferme, <i>Berkeley High</i>	Aaron Glimme, <i>Berkeley High</i>
Larry Gordon, <i>Berkeley High</i>	Patrick Hamill, <i>Thousand Oaks</i>	Elisabeth Hensley, <i>King (co-Chair)</i>
Diana Kuderna, <i>Berkeley High (Alt)</i>	Catherine Lazio, <i>Willard</i>	Chris Martin, <i>LeConte (co-Chair)</i>
Brittini Milam, <i>Washington</i>	Jay Nitschke, <i>King (Alt)</i>	Dialy Paulino, <i>Cragmont</i>
Dawn Paxson, <i>Emerson</i>	Shauna Rabinowitz, <i>Jefferson</i>	Margot Reed, <i>Longfellow</i>
Abigail Surasky, <i>Longfellow (Alt)</i>	Greg Wiberg, <i>Oxford</i>	

P&O Committee Members Absent:

Marjorie Alvord, <i>Berkeley High (Alt)</i>	Juliet Bashore, <i>Rosa Parks</i>	Esther Hirsh, <i>Berkeley High</i>
Ruby Holder, <i>B-Tech</i>	John Lavine, <i>King</i>	Christine Mattson, <i>Willard</i>
Ardel Thomas, <i>Pre-K</i>	Sara Tool, <i>John Muir</i>	Evon Williams, <i>Longfellow</i>
Representative, <i>Independent Study</i>		

Visitors, School Board Directors, District Advisory Committee Liaisons, Staff and Guests:

Josh Daniels, <i>School Board Liaison</i>	Nancy Hoefler, <i>Former BSEP Manager</i>	Julie Holcomb, <i>BHS Parent</i>
William Huyett, <i>Superintendent</i>	Paula Philips, <i>BCCE</i>	Rosemary Richie, <i>BAESC</i>

BSEP Staff:

Monica Thyberg, <i>Acting BSEP Mgr.</i>	Elizabeth Karam, <i>Sr. Budget Analyst</i>	Mark Coplan, <i>Public Info. Officer</i>
Liz O'Connell-Gates, <i>Staff Support</i>		

1. Call to Order & Introductions

Co-chair Chris Martin called the meeting to order at 7:20 p.m. and invited representatives to introduce themselves and to give an update on their School Governance Councils.

2. Establish the Quorum/Approve Agenda

The quorum was established with 14 voting representatives present. The agenda was also approved.

3. Chair's Comments

Chris Martin, co-Chair

Referencing Nancy Hoefler's February 6th e-mail saying that she was stepping down as the BSEP manager, Chris Martin said it had been a difficult week for the District, which would soon take steps to transition to another BSEP manager. Acknowledging Hoefler's presence at the meeting, Martin commended the outgoing BSEP manager for her service to the District and to the P&O Committee. He noted that under her almost one-year tenure, the P&O had implemented positive changes.

4. Change in BSEP Manager

William Huyett, Superintendent

Huyett confirmed that BUSD had decided to take a new direction with the management of the BSEP funds. Huyett thanked Hoeffler for her service to the district and added that he had enjoyed working with her and had had a very positive working relationship with her. Huyett noted that BSEP funds had been under good stewardship and oversight during her tenure. He wished Hoeffler the very best of luck in her future endeavors and said he had appointed former BSEP Manager Monica Thyberg as Acting Manager to lead BUSD through the full budget development process. Huyett noted that the process of hiring a new BSEP manager would begin this spring.

Moving on, Huyett said that despite BUSD's fiscal challenges, and based on his having run through various budget scenarios with staff, he was confident that BUSD could maintain the integrity of the BSEP programs and could avoid having to declare a Fiscal Emergency in 2012-2013. He underscored that although accomplishing this would involve hard work, dialogue, and cooperation, he wanted to assure the P&O Committee that BUSD had a wealth of talent for tackling problems, for finding solutions, and for maintaining the public trust.

Huyett said that both BUSD staff and the Superintendent's Budget Advisory Committee would be presenting their 2012-2013 budget recommendations to the Board within a few weeks. He advised P&O members to pay close attention to these recommendations, which would be a starting point for developing the District's final FY 12-13 budget.

Next, the Superintendent said the District is facing funding challenges for 2012-2013 on three fronts:

- A loss of \$1.7 million in one-time federal funds.
- A loss of average daily attendance (ADA) funds due to declining student attendance. [Likely due to the new charter school and a saturation of newcomers to the district.]
- The Governor's proposed budget, which will likely deal a \$4.6 million cut to BUSD, with the possibility of an additional \$3.3 million cut if the Governor's proposed ballot initiative, aimed at raising revenues for schools, fails to win in November.

Despite the challenging financial scenario the superintendent said he was sure solutions would be found.

5. Public Comment

Rosemary Richie, Liaison for the Berkeley Arts in Education Steering Committee (BAESC)

Richie said that the BAESC Committee wanted to make a recommendation concerning the announcement that the comedy group, *Lonely Island*, comprised of three BHS alumni, had donated \$250,000 to Berkeley High School. Richie distributed a letter suggesting that the funds be used as seed money for a high-profile project such as the renovation of the Berkeley Community Theater.

Praising *Lonely Island's* generosity, Huyett said although he liked BAESC's recommendation, he wanted to consult with the trio to make sure their wishes were taken into consideration. The Superintendent said he agreed that the monies should be used for a long-range project with permanent effect.

Acting BSEP Manager Monica Thyberg said she also liked the idea of renovating the Berkeley Community Theater. She said interest in tackling that project went back to 1977-78 when the District conducted a two-year feasibility study on such a renovation. She said the study showed that a fund developer would need to be brought in to conduct a capital campaign, but that had not been pursued. Thyberg recommended that BAESC make a statement to the School Board the following evening and Ritchie said BAESC planned to do so. On a separate matter, Ritchie said that BAESC also wanted to recognize the eight years of hard work of Public Information Officer Mark Coplan. Ritchie said that videos made by the PIO had served BUSD's students well, giving them an opportunity to view their performances online.

Julie Holcomb, BHS Parent, former P&O co-Chairperson

Julie Holcomb urged P&O members to participate in upcoming community meetings to be held by the search firm that is conducting the search for a new superintendent. Holcomb said it was critical to communicate to the search firm that the public wanted a superintendent who would not only respect the special BSEP tax, but also the community's feeling of involvement with and ownership of the Measure. She said it was important to avoid a situation where BSEP/Measure A funds might be viewed as a slush fund for the District.

Holcomb added that any new superintendent would notice the loop hole in Measure A of 2006, which does not stipulate a minimum contribution to class size reduction by the General Fund. She warned that this loop hole could allow the District to raise the General Fund's contribution to class size to 60:1, necessitating that even more BSEP dollars would be required to meet the BSEP class size goals of 20:1 for grades K-3 (with state funds), 26:1 for grades 4-5, and 28:1 for grades 6-12.

6. BSEP Revenue Projection & COLA for FY 2012-2013

Monica Thyberg, Acting BSEP Manager

Thyberg began by distributing a draft of *FY 2012-2013 BSEP Revenue Projections*. Directing her comments at new P&O members, Thyberg explained the process and basis upon which the projections were made. She explained that the special property tax is based on the square footage of the "improvements" (buildings) on residential and commercial real estate in Berkeley. She said the City of Berkeley kept a data-base of the "improvements," collected the money from the County Tax Assessor, kept a handling fee, and then transferred the remaining tax dollars to BUSD.

Thyberg noted that the state Department of Education Cost of Living Increase (COLA) for 2012-2013 was 3.17%, which, if approved by the School Board, could be applied to that year's BSEP property tax bills.

Going step by step, Thyberg led the P&O Committee through the projected numbers for revenue, expenses, public information costs, and resource allocation. She said that net projected revenues minus the 2% for public information, mandatory expenses, and fees left a projected net total of \$21,966,176 available for 2012-2013. Thyberg explained that the funds would be distributed according to Measure A's stipulations.

7. P&O Statement to Board of Education re: BSEP Budget Considerations

Chris Martin, co-chair

Martin distributed a draft statement to the School Board on the 2012-2013 BSEP budget, written by him and co-Chair Elisabeth Hensley. Martin invited feedback so it could be amended and presented to the Board the following evening. He said the goal of the statement was to remind the Board that in these tough financial times we still had a local tax Measure to

implement and that we needed to be mindful of its intent, since we would be going back to voters for its renewal.

Discussion followed and P&O members offered a variety of factual and editorial changes. It was agreed that as long as there was general consensus regarding the statement's sentiment, changes could be e-mailed to Chris Martin, and, who would incorporate those changes into the final document before it was read to the Board.

Discussion went back and forth as to whether it made sense to address in the statement the hypothetical repercussions of the Board's declaration of a Fiscal Emergency. Concern was expressed that language focusing on such matters might prematurely raise anxiety levels in the community.

When asked to explain the implications of a Fiscal Emergency, Superintendent Huyett explained that it would allow the Board to say that the District would no longer be obliged to adhere to the 20:1, 26:1, 28:1 class size ratios as stipulated in Measure A of 2006. Huyett said that if a Fiscal Emergency were declared, the Board could potentially raise the class sizes to allow higher student: teacher class size ratios.

8. School Board Liaison's Comments

Josh Daniels, School Board Liaison to the P&O Committee

Daniels thanked the P&O Committee for its work on the statement. He said that even though the Board sometimes disagreed with the P&O, it needed the Committee's input, and always found the dialogue helpful. In the interest of grabbing the Board's attention when making statements Daniels advised the P&O to use precise language that was not open to misinterpretation, and to state whatever they wanted the Board to hear in the first or second sentence of its statements.

He urged the P&O to use caution when crafting public statements to the Board because language used in such statements could potentially be used against BSEP by Measure A opponents. Daniels said that the P&O would be most effective if, in discussing the Measure, if it could delineate three types of arguments:

- The legal argument—i.e., what does Measure A say.
- The policy argument —i.e., what should Measure A say [i.e., are counselors more important than maintaining class size.]
- The political argument— i.e., what does the P&O think is best for the politics of BSEP/Measure A of 2006.

9. Motion (Greg Wiberg/Dialy Paulino): to approve the statement as amended, with the understanding that further changes could be e-mailed to Chris Martin by tomorrow afternoon. The motion passed with 15 voting members present.

10. Motion to Approve the minutes of 1/24/12 with one correction by Catherine Lazio
The minutes were unanimously approved with one edit.

11. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned by acclamation at 9:30p.m.

Minutes submitted by: Liz O'Connell-Gates