



# Berkeley Unified School District Communications Study

*Discovery & Strategic Recommendations*

Produced by Madera Group in collaboration with  
the Berkeley Unified Communications Working Group

# Mission, Vision, and Values and Beliefs of the Berkeley Unified School District

## Mission

The Mission of the Berkeley Unified School District is to enable and inspire our diverse student body to achieve academic excellence and make positive contributions to our world.

## Vision

**Our Students** are curious and creative learners who succeed through personal initiative and sustained effort to reach high academic goals. They are critical thinkers who seek knowledge and possess technological competence and collaborative skills. Our students embrace diversity, act responsibly, and contribute to our community.

**Our Educators** believe that all students can meet or exceed rigorous academic standards. Teachers, staff, and administrators together form a rich professional learning community where all are supported to hone our professional craft and improve our effectiveness. Through the examination of our instructional practices and data, we adjust our teaching and operational systems in order to continuously improve. We are responsible in the stewardship of our fiscal resources and fair and equitable in their distribution.

**Our Families and Community** is integral to the success of our students and schools. Families are active, engaged partners in their child's education who give valued input and participate in making important decisions about our academic and enrichment programs. Our diverse community is passionate about equitable educational outcomes for all students. Our civic and community organizations partner with us to promote family engagement for the well-being and success of our students.

**Our Schools** are vital centers of community life enriched by the diversity of our city and welcoming to all families. Each classroom offers engaging and culturally relevant curriculum that builds on students' interests and abilities. Student needs, as identified by regular assessment, inform our teaching and guide appropriate and effective intervention services. We offer an enriched learning environment and a comprehensive system of supports to address the needs of the whole child.

## Values and Beliefs

- Students are our priority.
- We take pride in our diversity.
- We hold high expectations for our students and ourselves.
- We treat each other with respect and act with integrity.

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# I. Communications Campaign Summary

## Executive Summary

The Mission of the Berkeley Unified School District (Berkeley Unified) is to *enable and inspire our diverse student body to achieve academic excellence and make positive contributions to our world*. When the Berkeley School Board of Directors adopted this mission in August 2010, it also made a commitment to develop authentic partnerships and provide clearer and more strategic communications with the District’s families and the wider Berkeley community.

To facilitate improvements in the District’s communications systems and procedures, Superintendent Bill Huyett formalized a Communications Working Group in partnership with the Berkeley-based consulting firm Madera Group. The charge of the collaboration between the Communications Working Group and Madera Group was to design and implement a Communications Campaign from February 2011 – May 2011.

In surveying over 1000 Berkeley Unified stakeholders about the district’s communications process, **“Too much information, not enough communication”** was the most frequent message received during the communications campaign.

The ultimate goal of the Communications Campaign was to create a Communications **Study** that would survey and assess the current communications operations, systems, content, and procedures. In phase one, the outcome of the campaign was to produce the attached ***Berkeley Unified School District Communications Study: Discovery & Strategic Recommendations***. The Communications Study lays out a series of discoveries and strategic recommendations for improving external communications between the school district, parents, and the broader Berkeley community. Phase two, a comprehensive action plan, will be developed and implemented over the next twenty-four months by the Communications Working Group and other staff.

Over a three-month period, Madera Group and the Communications Working Group created and distributed three communications-focused surveys to District employees, parents/guardians with students in Berkeley Unified, and Berkeley community members, the later two of which were available in Spanish. Over 1000 respondents completed online and paper surveys, including 300 teachers and staff and over 700 parents and families.

During this time, Madera Group presented and engaged with at least 150 members of the Berkeley Unified community, including student leaders, and addressed several community Open Forums. Members of the Madera team attended several community meetings focusing on important school issues. Madera had meetings with the Superintendent, Cabinet, and BSEP P&O (Planning and Oversight) Committee members, and conducted one-on-one phone interviews with five School Board members. The Communications Campaign was introduced at several meetings with staff, teachers, administrators, and parents where feedback was collected and compiled.

What the Communications Campaign research revealed is that creating full engagement on District and school issues within Berkeley's diverse communities will require a paradigm shift and, over time, a true transformation of the District's communications operation. To achieve this, Berkeley Unified and its leaders will need to improve the quality and frequency of its information, adopt new proactive protocols for translation and use social media to engage its constituencies more effectively.

Creating an effective communications strategy will need to become a key part of Berkeley Unified's agenda for the next twenty-four months because significant changes are necessary. Berkeley Unified will also have to be dedicated to the issue of equity in access, in order to ensure that information relevant to all parents, students, faculty, staff and Berkeley citizens is widely disseminated and shared amongst our diverse communities, and that such information is received and understood by all relevant stakeholders, through whatever communications channels are necessary. Families of all backgrounds and languages should find Berkeley Unified's communications relevant, accessible and informative.

This document is intended to serve as a framework for setting the core requirements needed to shift from Berkeley Unified's current communications culture to one that is more proactive, more effective, and more responsive to staff, students, parents, and communities' needs. To do so, the Berkeley Unified Communications Working Group will be recommending new systems and protocols that embrace technology, promote two-way engagement and communication, rethink staff responsibilities, encourage family and community outreach and engagement, provide translation, and ensure that all stakeholders are informed and supported by the district.

## Overarching Strategic Recommendations

"Too much information, not enough communication" was the most frequent message received during the Communications Campaign. While there is no lack of content, the lack of coherence of Berkeley Unified's communications has forced many parents to adopt systems of "information triage" to review what they describe as an overwhelming and often redundant flow of emails, newsletters, mailings, automated phone calls, and more. The communications audit revealed at least 4 key problems, including: information coming through an overwhelming multiplicity of channels; lack of editorial and policy oversight; limited technical support; and volunteer ownership of several key web assets being used at several school sites.

At this point, it is critically imperative to reshape the Berkeley Unified communications structure, including staff roles and responsibilities, so that opportunities for alignment and collaboration available within the system are taken advantage of, and the heavy toll of calls and emails to individuals inside the school system from outsiders seeking information is significantly reduced.

While there are numerous strategic recommendations within the document as a whole, the top five recommendations are prioritized as follows:

## Top 5 Strategic Recommendations

This section provides a summarized list of the Madera Group's key recommendations.

## **1. Content**

### **A. Content Production**

*Goal: Streamline and prioritize informational content produced by the District*

- Develop a list of the 20 Top Content items (“TopCo”) required annually by stakeholders. These should be embedded with compelling narratives, rich factual information, and images reflective of student and BUSD community diversity.
- Set up protocols, timelines, and templates for TopCo assignment, editing, Spanish translation, and approval within each relevant department.
- Develop a set of FAQs (Frequently Asked Questions) to support the TopCo for the District, school sites, and departments.
- We recommend that the Superintendent work with Cabinet and staff over Summer 2011 to task individual Cabinet and staff members with the responsibility for identifying, writing, and producing each of the 20 Top Content items for Berkeley Unified’s 2011-2012 Communications Plan.
- Example: Communications Working Group and Cabinet should develop a comprehensive back-to-school communication over the summer, disseminated by August 1, 2011 across all communications channels.

### **B. Content Management**

*Goal: Establish ownership of the top communications (TopCo) by the District and school sites*

- District and sites work together to create a two-way flow of timely, accurate, useful information.
- District and sites determine strategies for working with volunteer organizations like PTAs to create more efficient and effective partnerships for sharing information resources.
- Bring all websites, informational content and materials in line with the overall Berkeley Unified “brand.”

## **2. Responsiveness**

### **A. Response Protocols**

*Goal: Promote transparency and establish clear routes to resolution for parents and community members*

- Establish district-wide protocols for responsiveness, complaint resolution, and responsibilities.
- Create operational and departmental “call sheets” with up-to-date, accurate contact information for common queries and complaints.
- Provide training and implementation instructions to ensure that protocols are clearly understood and implemented by all school sites, families, and the wider community.
- Develop FAQs for the top 10 issues (for example, transportation, admissions, safety, et al) and post on all applicable websites.
- Consider creating a staffed help line (akin to the BHS Tip Line) to help parents be heard and to get their needs addressed promptly.

## **B. Response Strategies**

*Goal: Address “hot-button” issues pro-actively*

- Strategize media and community relations in advance of situations.
- Shape the dialogue using well-defined talking points and timely, accurate information.
- Maintain an active presence where news and opinions are being communicated.
- Maintain relationships with local, state, and national press, and keep an active database of all press contacts, including bloggers.
- Disseminate TopCo information to all relevant press contacts.

*Goal: Develop an updated Crisis Communications Plan*

- Superintendent should work with the Communications Working Group to review best practices that have emerged from recent safety issues at BHS, in order to establish a baseline for updating Berkeley Unified’s crisis communications plan.

## **3. Translation**

### **A. Spanish Language Translator**

*Goal: Create a staff translator position*

- Reduce overtime expenditure and dependence on other staff members for Spanish-language translation.
- Establish a half- to full-time position for a dedicated Spanish-language translator for written District materials.
- Explore additional outside funding resources.

### **B. Resources and Protocols**

*Goal: Establish culturally appropriate protocols and procedures for translation and interpretation*

- Prioritize Spanish-language needs for document translation and distribution.
- Explore possibilities and priorities for language translation and interpretation in additional languages.
- Translated resources for as many families as possible whose primary language is not English, should be available on the Berkeley Unified website (this would include all school site websites).
- Partner with Parent Liaisons at school sites and across the District to establish common response protocols and effective outreach strategies that engage all parents.

## **4. Staffing**

### **A. Reorganization**

*Goal: Move paradigm from Public Information model to Strategic Communications Team*

- Make a long-term plan for a Communications Manager position.
- Create team to implement a synchronized, integrated communications strategy.

- In the short term, break down Communications Manager responsibilities among current staff and Cabinet members; analyze time and skill resources available, and divide responsibilities appropriately.
- Create position for a designated webmaster and social media coordinator; alternatively in the short-term create team of Cal interns to build and respond to the social media channels.
- Establish regular meetings for determining and implementing communications strategy .
- Develop intern program with UC Berkeley or other local colleges/universities to create positions for 2-3 interns, each working 10 hours a week, to manage blog and social media content updates.
- Integrate District communication strategies and mechanisms with school-based outreach networks ideally staffed with parent liaisons.

## **5. Technology**

### **A. Website Redesign**

*Goal: Increase the frequency of relevant postings on Berkeley Unified’s website*

- Upgrade and improve the Berkeley Unified website to increase ease of navigation and encourage interaction.
- Create a frequently updated, breaking news, event- and issue-driven blog on the District homepage.
- Update all TopCo communication documents on a regular basis.

### **B. Improve Other Communication Systems**

*Goal: Utilize technology programs that are flexible and responsive*

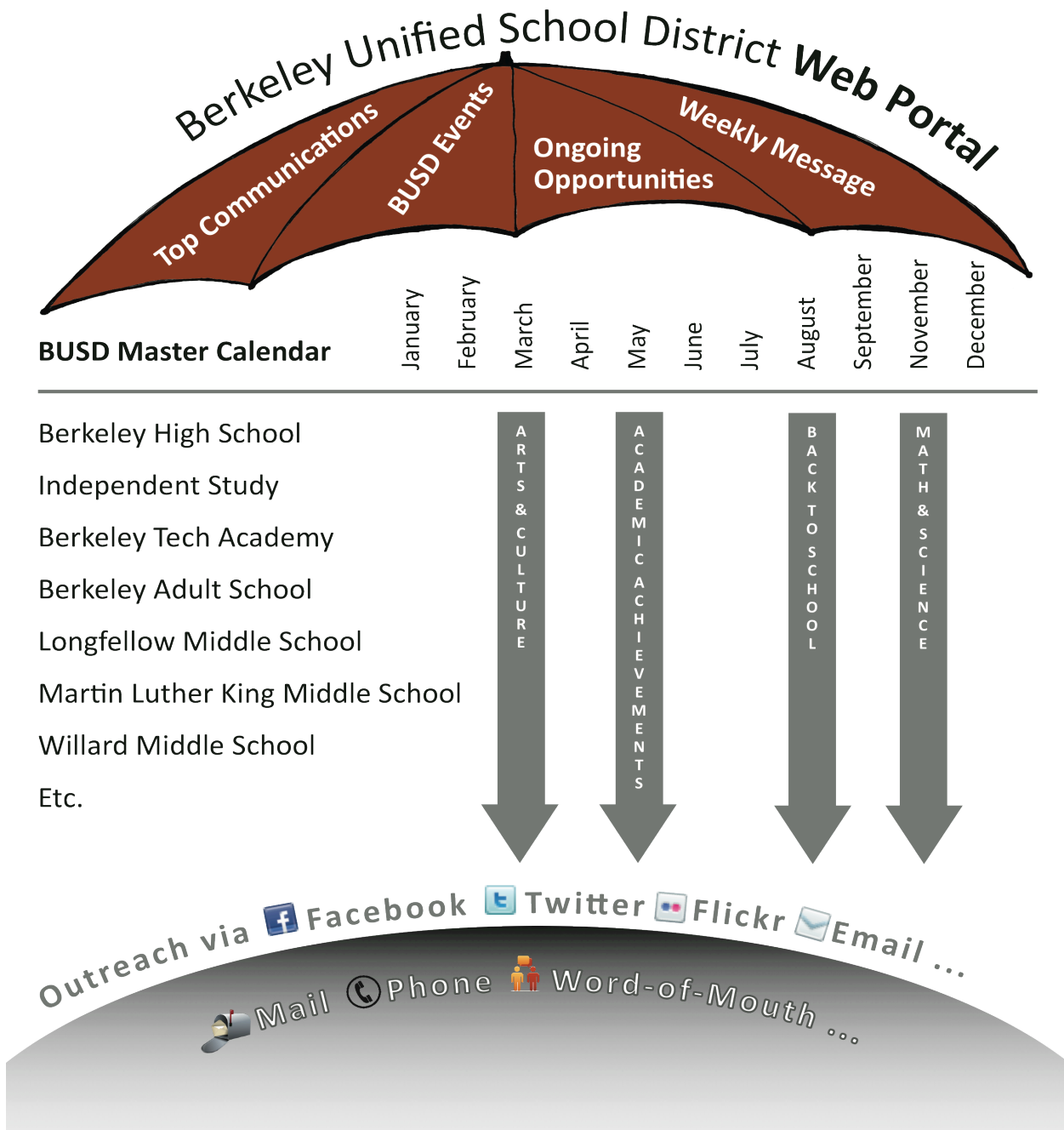
- Enable metrics programs (Google Analytics) to trace and analyze all website use, traffic patterns, and abandonment rates.
- Replace BeMail (FirstClass) with a system like Google for Education that provides for more collaboration and translation capabilities for staff as well as email for students.
- Investigate alternatives to Blackboard Connect that would provide content through user-selected method of delivery (text, email, cell or landline).

### **C. Continuity**

*Goal: Bring all Berkeley Unified site websites in line with the overall District website “brand”*

- Establish an overall identifying Berkeley Unified banner for all site websites.
- Work with parent volunteer groups to establish more information-rich and easily navigated school websites populated and updated with accurate information from the District.

**Optimal Strategic Communications Flow**



The illustration above shows how the Top 20 Communications, events, ongoing opportunities, and weekly message from the Superintendent or Cabinet members can be predetermined in conjunction with an annual communications plan, schedule, and calendar and disseminated across all communication channels.

## II. History and Achievements

### Berkeley Unified School District

To understand the challenges, expectations and resources of the District as it considers how best to implement these recommendations, one must examine the overall history of Berkeley Unified. Since the founding of the University of California, Berkeley in 1868 and the establishment of California's first accredited high school in 1880, Berkeley's community has been proud to be a leader in public education. In 1968, the Berkeley Unified School District was the nation's first school district to desegregate without a court order.

Berkeley Unified is responsible for educating more than 9,500 individual students in 11 public elementary schools, 3 middle schools, one comprehensive high school, and a continuation high school. In addition, the district has 3 preschool facilities and an Adult School which serves several thousand students each year. With a tradition of excellence rooted in a vibrant community, Berkeley Unified alumni have become national and international leaders in business, civic society, politics, academia, sports and the arts. Students and staff in Berkeley Unified come from a wide variety of ethnic and socioeconomic backgrounds, surrounded by one of the most intellectually and culturally rich regions in the United States.

Historically, the city of Berkeley and the Berkeley Unified have had a tradition of facing challenging economic and political times through a combination of innovative ideas, reforms, and structural changes. As history has demonstrated Berkeley, California occupies a unique place in our country's social geography.

### Berkeley Schools Excellence Program (BSEP) and 2020 Vision

Over the past 25 years, the Berkeley Unified School District's ability to provide well-rounded educational resources and opportunities to all students has been significantly boosted by the Berkeley Public Schools Educational Enrichment Act, a special local tax first adopted by voters in 1986 and renewed consistently since then, most recently as Measure A in 2006, followed by the passage of a new facilities bond and the renewal of a maintenance special tax in 2010.

The Berkeley Public Schools Educational Enrichment Act of 1986, known as the Berkeley Schools Excellence Program (BSEP), was intended to counter the erosion of school resources that resulted from the passage of Proposition 13 in 1978, which dramatically reduced revenue for public schools by shifting funding away from local property taxes to the State of California's General Fund. The passage of the first BSEP Measure in 1986 initiated an era of renewal for the district's schools that has continued to this day.

In 2008, Berkeley Unified joined forces with the City of Berkeley, the University of California, Berkeley and community partners to approve the *2020 Vision for Berkeley's Children and Youth*. The vision was created to address the longstanding achievement gap between different student populations in the Berkeley Unified School District and to ensure the health and well being of all of its students,

regardless of race. The 2020 Partnership has encouraged a new level of citywide collaboration and agreement around targeted priorities and use of resources geared towards the health, well being, and academic achievement of all Berkeley's children and youth.

In its current iteration under Measure A of 2006, BSEP funds make up over 20% of Berkeley Unified's overall budget. With regards to communications, a percentage of BSEP funds are specifically allocated for:

1. Public Information
2. Translation and Interpretation for Non-English Speaking Families
3. BSEP Planning and Oversight (P&O) Committee
4. Family and Community Outreach

The dedicated 2% of BSEP funds (approximately \$450,000 in 2010-11) for public information and translation resources include the funding and support of:

1. A+ News, the annual city-wide edition and Berkeley Unified monthly A+ News Update online and traditional paper newsletter
2. Content development for the Berkeley Unified website
3. Berkeley Unified Public Information Officer, BSEP Manager, and Administrative Coordinator
4. Biweekly Berkeley School News email listserv
5. A portion of district translation and interpreting services

Additional BSEP resources are directed to support family engagement and outreach and the funding of the work of the Office of Family and Community Partnerships (approximately \$275,000 in 2010-11). Furthermore, while BSEP technology funds are primarily used to provide and support technology at schools, some staff time is used to manage internet-based communications used for internal and external communications in the District.

Part of the mandate required by the BSEP Measure is the role of citizen oversight and representation on the BSEP Planning and Oversight (P&O) Committee. The P&O Committee is charged with ensuring the use of the BSEP tax dollars in line with the Measure and providing community representation in determining how best to allocate BSEP funds. Because of their detailed knowledge of BSEP funded programs and the work of the district, members of the P&O Committee serve as key communicators at school sites and the larger Berkeley community.

Translation is a significant issue due to the linguistic diversity of Berkeley students and their families. There are 2,509 Berkeley Unified students speaking 37 different languages, including 1,321 deemed "English Learners" and 1,188 "Fluent English Proficient," meaning they speak another language as well as being proficient in English. The 2009-10 student demographic data places the number of Berkeley Unified students who speak Spanish in the home at 15.35%.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> CDE data website: <http://dq.cde.ca.gov/dataquest/lc/DistrictLC.aspx?cSelect=0161143--0161143--BERKELEY+UNIFIED&cYear=2009-10>

In an era when many California public school districts are struggling, the BSEP Measure ensures the continuation of many core programs that the community of Berkeley has funded since its inception in 1986. We see BSEP-allocated funds as a major source of revenue driving the assessment, implementation, and improvement of core competencies around communication.

### III. Communications Campaign Process, Data, and Analysis

#### Campaign Process and Data Collection Summary

The above-mentioned background of Berkeley Unified and its relationship to the BSEP program has been laid out so the ***Berkeley Schools Communications Campaign*** can be presented. A staff Communications Working Group began meeting during the 2009-10 school year and identified the need to [study and improve District communications](#). The Superintendent and his team began the communications [study](#) in January of 2011, and subsequently engaged the Berkeley-based consulting firm [Madera Group](#) in late February 2011 to survey the Berkeley Community with a fresh and neutral perspective and come up with a list of recommendations to address the communications needs and current functions in Berkeley Unified.

The impetus to launch the Berkeley Schools Communication Campaign came out of the need for improvement around several key areas of concern, including:

1. Responsiveness to parents and overall community
2. Community understanding and perception of key district-wide initiatives
3. Communication with culturally and linguistically diverse families and the increasing need to provide translation and interpretation services

As Madera Group entered the Communications Campaign, the first objective was to analyze and assess how internal and external communications were functioning between the Berkeley Unified School District and its teachers, managers, classified staff, parents, and the Berkeley community at large.

While the Campaign's primary goal was to improve external communications with the District's families and the Berkeley public, we recognized that feedback from district employees would be critical to identifying strengths and weaknesses in the district's communication channels. Of equal importance would be the role that district employees played as key communicators between departments, schools, and directly with the public. For purposes of this plan development, the internal communication channels were only assessed to the extent that they supported communications with parents, families, and the community.

From the end of February 2011 through April 30<sup>th</sup> 2011, Madera Group participated in a series of weekly meetings with the Communications Working Group. The purpose was to share information on the current state of communications in Berkeley Unified, develop the communications campaign plan structure and answer specific questions, including:

1. What analysis has been done so far?
2. What content is being created?
3. How does information flow in and out of the school district?
4. What are the roles and responsibilities of individual and institutional stakeholders in creating Berkeley Unified content and maintaining the flow of information?

At the same time, a subcommittee of the Communications Working Group was formed to determine the District's current translation needs, resources, and objectives.

In February 2011 three questionnaires were created and distributed both online and in paper copy to several groups of stakeholders: District employees, parents/guardians with students in Berkeley Unified, and Berkeley community members. The parent and community questionnaires were made available in both English and Spanish.

The goal of the questionnaire was to determine how Berkeley's school communities, both internal and external, were receiving information, and what recommendations could be offered on improving the subject matter, style, pace and quality of these communications.

Over 1000 respondents completed online and paper surveys, including 300 teachers and staff and over 700 parents and families. (The results of these surveys can be reviewed in Appendix 1.)

Madera Group engaged with over 150 additional community and District staff members through the following channels:

- Presentation at Community Open Forums designed to reach various representative groups from the Berkeley school community
- Meetings with the Superintendent
- Meeting with Cabinet and BSEP P&O (Planning and Oversight) Committee members
- One-on-one interviews with five School Board members
- Attendance at numerous community meetings with staff, teachers, administrators, and parents

To address technological issues, Madera Group analyzed the websites and online presence of four California school districts with good websites: Palo Alto, Santa Monica, San Ramon and Santa Cruz.

## Survey Results

The online surveys were conducted from March 6 through April 10, 2011. Madera Group produced the survey questions in association with Berkeley Unified.

See screenshots of the surveys included in Appendix 1.

Three separate surveys were conducted:

1. Parents and Community in English
2. Parents and Community in Spanish
3. Berkeley Unified Staff

A total of 1135 people took the survey, with the responses broke down into the individual surveys as follows:

- 693 Parents and Community in English
- 43 Parents and Community in Spanish
- 399 Berkeley Unified Staff
- 1135 Total

The survey examined both how parents and community members were accessing information themselves, and how information was coming to them. According to our results, the top four areas for which parents sought information were:

Admissions or Enrollment	30.0%
Classroom Instruction	17.3%
Afterschool programs	17.0%
Transportation	15.8%

To get such information, they used the District website (52 %); direct emails (36%), referred to letters or mailings (30%) or to biweekly Berkeley School News emails (24%). When asked where they went to get non-District-created information, the largest percentage (19%) went to their local PTA-created website, followed by 18% to the Berkeley Parents Network, a subscription-based eList. When asked what was the best way for the District to communicate with them, 62% said email, 44% letters/mailings, 27% existing school channels, and 24% automated phone calls.

What these results show us is that the District website and those of individual schools are of primary importance as a source of information, and are therefore well worth the investment of District funds and resources to upgrade and make more useable, up-to-date and content-rich. The same goes for email systems and email newsletters. However, a significant number of families still rely on paper mailings, and so while these may be a lower priority, they nonetheless must be considered as a significant part in the Berkeley Unified’s communications strategy.

## Open Forums and Feedback Trends

In creating a series of public Open Forums, Madera Group sought to capture representative feedback from as many aspects of Berkeley’s school communities as possible, within the framework of the Communications Campaign’s aggressive timeline. The Open Forums were publicized around the city through the Berkeley Unified channels, including emails and e-trees, notices to parent groups, information in newsletters, and through parent and family outreach within the schools. The Open Forums were divided between “external” forums for parents and community members, and “internal” forums for teachers and staff.

Madera Group led the “external” Open Forums, which were introduced by the Superintendent and often attended by District employees, Communications Working Group and School Board members. Spanish-speaking District employees were on hand to translate on an as-needed basis. While the questions were tailored for each group, they included inquiries such as:

1. What is the ideal way(s) for the school district to communicate with you?
2. When you have a question or need information from the District, what’s the most efficient way for you to get the information you need?
3. If there were an emergency or safety issue at your child’s school, or at a school in your community, how would you want the school district to communicate with you about this?
4. How could the school district improve communications with parents, students, and the community?

As would be expected in such a diverse community, there was no single overwhelming answer to any of Madera Group’s questions. It is also important to acknowledge that stakeholder perceptions and experiences are derived from personal experience and thus are necessarily subjective.

Overall, we were able to track trends, note similar recommendations, and record both frustrations and appreciations through the responses of these varied communities. The following is a summary of recommendations based around what Madera Group heard most frequently from parents, community members, and students.

## **Feedback from Parents and Community Members**

### **1. Improve Responsiveness**

One of the questions that recurred most frequently was “Why doesn’t my child’s teacher/principal call/email me back?” Many parents, while acknowledging the many demands on teachers’ and administrative staff’s time, felt that their school lacked a protocol for responding promptly to parent concerns. Even if a quick resolution or answer was not possible, they wanted a personal acknowledgement/response made by phone or email within 24 to 48 hours. Some parents felt they could not get a response from their school unless they went to the school in person. When complaints arise, the district needs an accountability structure with a clearly outlined, well-communicated and consistent route to resolution. In general, there is unfamiliarity with the official complaint procedure process in the district. Parents may be unaware of the protocol, and/or it may not be followed at all school sites. A designated Parent Liaison at each school site could serve as the ombudsman, working with principals and school staff to increase responsiveness to parent concerns and establish a point person who can familiarize parents with the process and protocols to deal with issues.

### **2. Increase Efficiency**

Email and e-trees can be a good source of information for parents. But efficiency is key. Especially at the high school level, parents often feel lost in a swamp of digital information that is delivered indiscriminately, without clear prioritization of important information. Requests include making a concise protocol for email subject lines; reducing redundancy and overlap and keeping to a one

email=one topic template.

### **3. Be Personal and Pro-Active**

Parents admitted they were much more likely to open and read an email or school letter if it came directly from a person—the Superintendent, the school principal, one of their children’s teachers—rather than from the school district at large. This was especially true in the case around specific safety or emergency issues at their children’s schools.

Parents also noted that they wanted to hear both the bad and the good. Most importantly, they wanted to get informed, accurate information about school issues directly from the school in a pro-active manner—rather than first hearing about them in the newspapers, online, or through word-of-mouth.

What experience with several high-profile issues during the past few years has shown is that it is crucial for the Superintendent and other District leaders to take charge right from the beginning, communicating through well-defined talking points, without letting speculation or public misconceptions run the dialogue.

Berkeley’s citizen activists are well educated, experienced, and take their civic engagement with city issues very seriously. Berkeley has a national profile much larger than its size and resources might indicate. Decisions made here can resonate on a national scale, and there is a need to be prepared and have a protocol for determining the degree and potential sensitivity of issues.

One example of a current initiative that needs its own communication plan is the 2020 Vision. Our findings indicated that a majority of Berkeley parents and community members were aware of 2020 Vision. However, it is unclear to many parents and students as to whether, and how, any of the recommendations proposed in 2009 and 2010 are being implemented. Currently, the Berkeley Alliance/2020 website is not being updated, and offers very little description of how (or what) changes are being made. Parents and community members are encouraged to get involved, but there are few, if any, specific calls to action or meaningful options for direct involvement at either a grassroots or civic level. The development of communication channels to “get the word out” about 2020’s achievements must go hand-in-hand with the actual implementation of practical reforms.

### **4. Ensure Full Access**

Not every parent or guardian is fully equipped or comfortable with all technologies. Workshops on navigating Berkeley Unified’s and its schools’ websites, using PowerSchool, and using email and e-trees could be helpful. Making onsite computers and “computer 101” trainings available could be a way to bring up computer literacy for parents in the District. Targeted outreach efforts by phone and community engagement where parents congregate should be a priority to reach all members of the Berkeley Unified community, including homeless parents and parents who do not speak English at home. Establishment of Parent Resource Centers, (such as those at Malcolm X and Berkeley High School), equipped with computers and staffed by Parent Liaisons could serve as training and access centers to ensure all parents have the opportunity to learn about and have access to the available communication technologies.

## **5. Establish Clear Protocols for Contact and Resolution**

A small issue can easily become a big frustration if a parent can't figure out who to contact to get it resolved. Contact information (phone numbers, email, office addresses and hours) on the Berkeley Unified and site websites need to be easy to find and kept accurate and up-to-date. Likewise, the sites and district should make it a priority to maintain accurate, up-to-date contact information for all parents and students, including correct home and mobile telephone numbers; home addresses; and email addresses when applicable. The District needs to establish clear protocols for complaint resolution and problem solving, so that parents can get fast, accurate information and quick responses.

## **6. Engage Parents/Community through Active Parent Networks**

Parent-run networks can be a great resource, even if originally inspired by dissatisfaction with what the Berkeley Unified is doing for certain groups. When parents organize themselves around a particular issue affecting their own children (for example, Special Ed or Bilingual Two-Way Immersion Programs), they can do a great job at outreach, event organizing, publicity, and information/resource sharing.

However, because employees do usually not staff these networks, parents may make assumptions and form strong opinions about what they “hear through the grapevine” about site or District decisions, before getting accurate information from the District itself. It's important for the District to have connections within these networks so misunderstandings can be clarified before they become city-wide issues, and so that families understand how they can participate in the District's and city's decision-making processes. In the past, problems have arisen when parents believed certain decisions were made final without their input, despite such issues still being under consideration.

## **Feedback from Students**

We addressed communications issues with fourteen students from the Berkeley High School Leadership Group. Their recommendations and feedback are as follows:

### **1. Make Communications Shorter**

BHS students want to receive short emails, shorter A+ newsletters, and capsule-size news headline updates. Long articles on the District website are largely ignored. In response to questions about school e-Trees, District emails, and A+ letters alike, a common response was “More bullet points, please!” What students want are quickly digestible, bite-sized pieces of information.

### **2. Use Social Media**

All students used Facebook for personal communication, and a large majority also used Twitter frequently; there was even a small contingent using Tumblr, a fully customizable micro-blogging site. Instead of perusing long emails or publications—which themselves might be outdated—students see using Facebook and or Twitter to get their information through quick status updates and video clips. The networking capabilities of students are also an untapped resource for information dissemination. Resources such as Facebook or Twitter could more easily facilitate sharing news or event content.

### **3. Connect to Advocates**

There was a common concern among BHS students that the larger high school community did not have adequate access to individual nodes of information within the district. Forum participants noted that if BHS students knew more about the role of the Student Director of the Board of Education, as a student advocate, they could use this person more effectively as a resource. Providing access to the Student Director through a regular *Jacket* column or Facebook page would help students get their questions addressed. Students also recommend expanded access to the Superintendent as a means of easing the communication divide between the District and school sites. A more dynamic communications system, perhaps through the Berkeley Unified website, could facilitate such connection.

## **Internal Forums and Feedback Trends**

The following feedback was derived from “internal” forums, including meetings with teachers (through the BFT), classified managers, and classified employees, that generated feedback and issues related to District-to-staff, District-to-school, and department-to-department communications. Further feedback was gathered through direct discussions with the Cabinet and one-on-one phone interviews with five School Board Members. For additional details on the internal forums, please see Appendix 3. Feedback from internal stakeholders fell into 7 areas.

Assessing the strengths and challenges of internal district communications was not within the scope of this plan. However, based on some of the feedback received, Madera recommends that a concerted effort to address the issues beyond the scope of this report be slated for the coming school year

### **1. Internal Stakeholders are Key Communicators, Be Proactive, Provide Support Systems**

As much as teachers and staff admitted to relying on “running into someone in the hallway” as a means of getting and sharing information, they felt this was a hit-or-miss way of communication. Inevitably, teachers and staff who heard about District policy changes or other developments like this felt they were being “left out of the loop.” They would have preferred to get such information in writing directly from their supervisors or the District.

Cabinet members agreed that establishing a concise protocol for subject lines for all Cabinet emails could help greatly in preventing important communications from being lost, overlooked, or misfiled. Other recommendations include bolding deadlines and keeping messages brief and to the point.

Cabinet should consider how in-depth and lengthy Board presentations and proposals can be distilled into important key messages for the community. Currently, it is a cumbersome task for a community member, parent, or interested party to access information embedded in lengthy PDF board packets that, while posted on the Board webpage, cannot be easily searched for content.

Several Board members felt that the District needed to give incoming Board members better orientation and training, rather than just letting them “make it up as they go along.” Veteran Board members said they would like to see more training on sensitive issues, such as litigation, the Brown

Act, and protocols for speaking with members of the press. Most Board members agreed that, if approached by a reporter, they would refer him or her to the Board President for comment. While there is a press protocol laid out in the bylaws of governance, there is limited awareness or familiarity with its contents.

Overall, Board members felt that their most valuable asset lay in being a visible, vocal, and hands-on participant in their community. Some parents got in touch with them via phone or email, while others attended casual monthly “office hours” or talked to them at community open forums, school-related events, meetings, at the farmers’ market, or simply on the street. As the District plans to move into a new building in December 2011, some Board members would like to see a dedicated meeting room made available for Board members to share and use for public meetings and office hours.

## **2. Establish Response Protocols**

Within a framework of reasonable expectation, given the District’s resources, it would be helpful to establish a clear protocol and route for news communication, response and resolution for teachers and staff seeking District information. By strengthening internal communication response time, all district employees’ will be able to do their jobs more effectively, and will be able to relay needed information to parents or community members.

Efforts may be complicated by the fact that many classified employees (such as food service staff, bus drivers, and maintenance workers) do not have computer access during the workday. However, there are possibilities afforded by new and often free technology that might include robocalls and robotexts and other channels for immediately delivering information.

Crisis/emergency protocols and training is crucial for teachers, classified managers, and staff. As several managers pointed out, the District needs a clear protocol for keeping managers informed when incidents occur. Staff who supervise bus drivers, vendors, and suppliers need to know when a school is on lockdown or needs to be evacuated, for example, and need to be aware of a clear “chain of command” that they can access to get fast, accurate information during a crisis.

## **3. Differentiate Communications: Elementary vs. Secondary**

In looking at school-level communications, it is very apparent that elementary and secondary schools must communicate with families in ways appropriate to the age of the students they serve. What is considered a best practice in elementary school may be ineffective at the middle or high school level. The reliance moves from weekly folders coming home in backpacks at the elementary level to more remote, electronic-based communications in the middle and high school levels. It is therefore understandable that the best practices used by schools across the District must be nuanced to reflect this change. Communication with families in the transition years, from 5<sup>th</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup> grades and from 8<sup>th</sup> to 9<sup>th</sup> grades, will require special attention.

## **4. Embrace New Technologies: Email, Website, Telephone/Text**

In order to embrace new technologies, the District should streamline the databases of parent/guardian/student information to make access and updates to all modalities easy and effective. There are many contact points with parents and families to collect and update

parent/guardian contact information.

### Email

Internal stakeholders described the District's current technology, particular the BeMail email system, as cumbersome, not user-friendly, and frequently overridden by old-fashioned word-of-mouth. The surveyed teachers are using email and want a system that can support their work in and out of the classroom with students, staff, administration, and parents. As this document neared completion, the Technology Department was planning to initiate several new tools, including a change in the email system.

All secondary, and some elementary, principals asked that the District support the development and maintenance of effective school-based email lists and systems for sending school-generated emails to parents and guardians. Schools should move away from reliance on volunteer networks for critical school communications with families. These eTrees can also promote misinformation between parents about site or district issues.

Secondary-school principals generally disagree that we "leave a whole group out by focusing on email," believing that if email communications were more effective, more people would use them and rely less on paper. They recommend putting more resources into efficient electronic communications with a campaign to encourage reliance on electronic channels, and less effort into paper mailed home, especially at BHS.

To promote the creation of effective email lists, sites could consider making Internet-enabled laptops or computers accessible to parents at school events and registration. This would be the easiest way to get parents to sign up with current email addresses, which could be used by Blackboard Connect for school-generated communications.

### Website

Many stakeholders, including teachers and school board members, expressed dissatisfaction with the Berkeley Unified website. In their experience, it was hard to navigate; difficult to find the information frequently requested by parents or staff; contained out-of-date or inaccurate information, and was rarely updated. It can be difficult to request and implement changes to the website since there is no dedicated Webmaster.

Of critical importance is establishing an up-to-date district-level events calendar on the district website, while exploring the possibility of making it accessible for synching via Google Calendar, Outlook, and iCal. Additionally, employees desire an easily searched and accessible online repository of documents.

As one Board member pointed out, new parents entering the District at this time will expect social media to be part of the District's communications plan; without it, "we will miss out on communicating with them."

While PowerSchool is generally seen as a useful tool, it has several "stumbling blocks" that need to be addressed, including allowing connections to other tech tools, including attachments, websites,

newsletters etc. Teachers find it frustrating that they can't attach assignments or post newsletters, both of which were promised when schools adopted PowerSchool. Also, address reported complaints about inaccurate attendance reporting – is this an operational error at point of data entry or a PowerSchool error? Address parent complaints about difficulties in PowerSchool coding when they have multiple children at different schools.

### **Telephone/Texting**

It's crucial that sites have up-to-date, accurate database of family contact phone numbers. Phone calls (and text messages) are the fastest way to communicate in an emergency, yet many parents cannot be reached because of incorrect phone info.

Use of texting can allow parents the option of getting student absence alerts via text message rather than automated phone message.

Every school has a different protocol for automated phone blasts. It's wise to be strategic and avoid overusing them; too many calls lessens their impact and can lead to them being ignored by parents. However, principals noted that the feedback they'd received from parents indicated that parents found the calls valuable; not only for information and events updates but also for providing a sense of connection to the school, particularly when calls came from the principal.

### **5. Look into New Options for Translation**

Teachers and staff at the school and district levels indicated dissatisfaction with the current ad hoc form of translation services and the lack of ability to consistently serve families with language access issues. Currently, schools and departments have patched together small amounts of funds to provide written translations to families and often rely on bilingual staff and teachers to step in at short notice or asked to work overtime to translate or interpret. It seems there is no protocol or agreement on language style; some refer to the California District Educational Translation Dictionary, others think translations should be in conversational Spanish, and others are unfamiliar or reluctant to embrace Google Translate or other free, automated online translation services to meet the need.

There was general agreement that increasing the amount of translated documents should be a priority for the District. To do so would require establishing Administrative Regulations (AR) outlining priorities for district translation. At the completion of this study, a Board Subcommittee on Board Policy was beginning to develop a Language Access Policy that will help guide the AR.

## **Website Comparative Analysis with Recommendations**

### **Process**

As part of Madera Group's research into Berkeley Unified communications, we had to understand the current functionality, usage, and popularity of the District's website. The latter was surveyed extensively through Board and Cabinet discussion, parent & community outreach, and online questionnaires. Before objectively rating the efficacy of the Berkeley's District website we looked at four other District websites. What did they do well? How could we incorporate some of their best

practices in the District’s web presence? As a result of our analysis, we have created a detailed outline for a two-part website refresh and redesign, which can be found in Appendix 4, Technology and Online Presence Next Steps.

The school districts chosen were:

1. Santa Cruz City Schools <http://www.sccs.santacruz.k12.ca.us>
2. Santa Monica-Malibu Unified School District <http://www.smmusd.org>
3. Palo Alto Unified School District <http://www.pausd.org>
4. San Ramon Valley Unified School District <http://www.srvusd.k12.ca.us>

Screenshots of the district websites are in Appendix 6.

These four Districts were chosen by Madera and the Communications Working Group based on several factors, including their locality, their use of parcel tax operational funding, but most importantly because they had interesting websites.

Once the four had been approved, we looked at both how the District’s website was designed and how the District negotiated individual-school website hosting with the site-specific PTAs.

This last aspect of a District’s web presence is significant because the *control* of information dissemination is often as important as the *content* that is disseminated. In Berkeley Unified’s case, many of the school web pages are run by PTAs, which often filter school and district information through the editorial oversight of parent and community volunteers. The school or District is therefore not in direct control of its communication with stakeholder families.

Within the District websites themselves, Madera broke down the analyses into four categories:

1. Home Page
2. Website Translation
3. Technology
4. Social Media

Appendix 4 provides the detailed comparisons made between the four websites analyzed in these categories. These comparisons helped inform the BUSD website recommendations and next steps found in Appendix 5.

### **Additional School District Website Translation Comparisons**

Madera Group later looked at website translation for four other Districts: New York City ([New York Department of Education](#)), Houston ([Houston Independent School District](#)), San Jose ([San Jose Unified School District](#)), and San Francisco ([San Francisco Public Schools](#)).

Houston Independent School District: Entire website, including menus, pages, and multimedia interfaces and content translated into Spanish and Vietnamese

San Francisco Public Schools: Abbreviated but still extensive translation of site into Spanish and Mandarin; Intra-web site available after clicking the news-wall link “Free Translation & Interpretation Services” ; Over 100 documents in 16 categories available for download in 3 to 11 languages (all have English, Spanish, and Mandarin)

San Jose Unified School District: “En Español” button on a top toolbar routes users to a single page with text, contact information, and downloadable documents; All news on the default (English) pages are translated in Spanish, as well as some other District pages as well; ‘Complaint Procedures’ page is also translated into Vietnamese

New York City Department of Education: Buttons on home page offer nine languages (Arabic, Bengali, Chinese, French, Haitian Creole, Korean, Russian, Spanish, and Urdu); Translated content compressed into a single page with text, links, and contact information; Each grade level (Pre-Kindergarten, Elementary, Middle, and High School) has “Publications” tab where all documents are housed; User can select from the same nine languages for translated documents

### **Website Translation Recommendations**

We recommend translating key resources into Spanish. Access should be visible on the site near the top navigation bar. An automated translation option, possibly through Google Translator, could be offered for other languages, visible near the top navigation bar.

### **School Site Website Comparisons**

As far as our research could tell, all of the four Districts we looked at had site/school websites independent from PTA oversight. Currently, PTA has oversight over the Berkeley Unified school websites used by schools to communicate with families. They are often run by parent or community volunteers and hosted on a PTA server.

Santa Cruz Unified School District schools all had independent websites, and 12 of 15 were on the District domain (.santacruz.k12.ca.us). There was no District PTA council and only one school had a PTA website in addition to the independent one—Santa Cruz High. Unlike Berkeley Unified, SCCS did not host informational pages about the schools within the District website.

Santa Monica-Malibu also had independent school websites, and all were on the District domain (.smmusd.org) except Malibu High School. While in this case there was a District PTA council website, there were no school PTA websites. Also like Santa Cruz, there were no informational school pages within the District website.

San Ramon Valley Unified School District’s schools all had independent websites, with 27 of 35 located on the District domain (.srvusd.k12.ca.us). There was a District PTA Council website but no school PTA websites. Like Berkeley Unified, all schools had an informational page built into the District website.

Palo Alto was the most comprehensive in District-Site web presence. Every school had a District informational page, an independent website, and a school PTA website. There was a district PTA council website as well.

### **School Site Website Recommendations**

We recommend the school site pages on the district website include more content, including news of school events. Links to these school pages should be possible without tunneling through the menu

system. Better coordination between the school principal, a district communication team member, and the PTA website should be developed over time.

## Social Media Comparative Usage

School districts appear to be approaching social media channels slowly and warily. Of the four Districts we researched, only two had a presence on Facebook or Twitter—and only one each.

Santa Monica-Malibu had an active [Twitter account @smmusd](#), which has 368 followers. The link is on their homepage as well as embedded into their homepage “Press Release” link. Postings, known as “tweets,” included mention of recent construction, Board Meeting updates, dates of upcoming open houses, and school events. The account is used as a channel to push updates, not as a “social” channel where they can engage the community. Updates are very sparse, with sometimes a week between tweets, making it seem like an afterthought rather than a formal channel being leveraged.

San Ramon Valley had an active [Facebook account](#) (as “SRVUSD”), with 238 ‘likes’. Photos, links to press mentions, videos, and event invitations to school functions were posted on their wall. We observed that postings were highly controlled, with no comments allowed on the entire wall; only ‘likes’ registered. The limited number of “likes” on the San Ramon Valley makes sense due to the restrictive way in which the commenting on the wall is set up and also the “push” way in which the page is used. It publishes information about the district but does not ask questions or invite dialogue.

Palo Alto and Santa Cruz do not have official District presences on either Facebook or Twitter. None of the four schools had official YouTube, Vimeo, or YouTube channels.

## Recommendations for Social Media & Technology

Nearly two-thirds of the survey respondents indicated that email was their most preferred means of communication. Constant Contact, Berkeley Unified’s current mass email provider, supports these recommendations.

1. **Make the email archives easily accessible from the District home page.** There’s a lot of content being created for each email blast. This way, no data is lost and less reposting/resending need occur.
2. **Enable Sharing buttons in all email communications.** This would allow recipients to share the email via Facebook, Twitter, etc., themselves. Likely people reading the emails are friends with others in the district on social media sites, so this would effectively give “legs” to the District’s communications with minimal effort.
3. **Create a blog for the district.** This blog would act as an easily updated newsletter for the District, with content created and posted from the Superintendent as well as other staff. The blog could provide rich, linkable content highlighting events such as the recent visit from the Surgeon General or Justice Sotomayor. The blog could become the destination to which people are sent when they receive email blasts, making the emails more concise and allowing people to pick and choose what they care to read more about. This would require establishing

blogging standards (media use, targeted word-count, posting frequency, etc.) and creating a protocol and workflow for approving posts and comments.

4. **Use analytic metrics.** Through the use of metrics such as Google Analytics, the District can learn what people care about, and use, just by looking at click-through rates, abandonment rates, and more. In order to make decisions about which channels should Berkeley Unified use more, continue to use in a different way or stop using altogether, analytics data is critical. Google Analytics should be implemented as soon as possible.
5. **Consider creating a Facebook page.** More than two-thirds of survey respondents are on Facebook, so it makes for a channel that can be leveraged easily to disseminate information and build community with parents. Updates can be managed based on the person's language on Facebook, which would be very useful to Spanish-speaking families. A practical, thoughtful exploration of the issues around schools' use of Facebook can be found in a recent online article by David Hartstein, [How Schools Can Use Facebook to Build an Online Community](#).

## IV. Community Outreach and Translation

### Family & Community Outreach Needs

According to the California Department of Education, Berkeley Unified has four ethnic groups with sizable representation. No ethnic group holds a majority, and while the White non-Hispanic population holds the plurality within the District, it does so only by six percentage points. The breakdown of District ethnicity, at the most recent tabulation (Year 2009-2010) by the Department of Education is as follows:

- African-American - 2,209 **(24.0%)**
- American Indian/Alaskan Native - 34 **(0.4%)**
- Asian - 728 **(7.9%)**
- Filipino - 56 **(0.6%)**
- Hispanic/Latino - 1,967 **(21.4%)**
- Pacific Islander - 22 **(0.2%)**
- White non-Hispanic - 2,919 **(31.7%)**
- Two or more Races - 840 **(9.1%)**

Our analysis of data and feedback has shown that the African-American and Latin American populations find the most difficulty engaging with District activity. Parents have noted in various forums—and for the latter community also through the Spanish survey--that they find it difficult to pull personally relevant information from the District's eNews and A+ Newsletters. Keeping in mind that families are primarily interested in the specific day-to-day concerns of their students, information coming from Berkeley Unified needs to *support* and expand upon school communications.

### Parent Liaisons

Parent Liaisons should be situated at each individual school site. In the near term, it is recommended that existing staff from the Office of Community and Family Partnerships establish Family Outreach offices at target schools to engage parents where they provide on-site information, support, and training, and liaise with RTI/ULSS, district, and other staffs to meet the 2020 Vision goals for all students.

## Translation Needs

To ensure full parent participation and engagement with its school system, Berkeley Unified has a responsibility to communicate effectively with all community stakeholders. Individual school sites meeting the 15% non-English speaking population of any single primary language threshold also have a state-mandated need to ensure that communications are fully accessible.

Currently, eight schools meet the state-mandated criteria as established by the California Department of Education: Berkeley Technology Academy, Martin Luther King and Longfellow Middle School, and Rosa Parks, Cragmont, Emerson, LeConte, and Thousand Oaks Elementary School.

The District’s outreach strategy encompasses both English and non-English primary language speakers. Taking data from the same 2009-2010 California Department of Ed Demographic analysis, language activity near or above the 1% in the District is as follows:

Language	English Learner	F.E.P	Total E.L. + F.E.P.	Overall %
Spanish	793	620	1,413	15.35%
Other non-English	162	119	281	3.05%
Arabic	73	31	104	1.13%
Cantonese	23	51	74	0.80%
Urdu	45	22	67	0.73%
German	14	48	62	0.67%
French	16	30	46	0.50%
Vietnamese	21	23	44	0.48%

(<http://dq.cde.ca.gov/dataquest/lc/DistrictLC.aspx?cSelect=0161143--0161143>)

As the Spanish-speaking population is by far the largest — roughly 15% compared to the nearest, Arabic, at 1% — the District should incorporate Spanish as efficiently as possible into community outreach. Currently, translation is often done piecemeal, relying on bi-lingual staff to do the work on overtime. This puts additional demands on already fully scheduled staff members, while paying overtime is not the most efficient use of District and BSEP resources.

## Translation Initiative

Identifying and hiring a dedicated, part-time to full-time Spanish-language translator needs to be a priority for the District in the near future. Funding for this position may be available through BSEP, EIA, and other sources. With this in mind, please find the following recommendations for a comprehensive translation initiative:

1. Prioritize translation for community-directed content from the District, including documents and information about community events, in order to identify necessary budget resources for translator hours.
2. Create templates for Spanish document translation, including forms, newsletters, Superintendent letters and emails, and surveys.
3. Create a District-wide online repository for translated documents, accessible to all departments and employees.
4. Create an online database of downloadable documents to the external community, linked to the central District website.
5. Consider creating mechanism on the central website to allow for translation suggestions, requests, and community feedback.
6. Create a dedicated Spanish-translation protocol within the Office of Family & Community Partnerships (OFCP) to work with a dedicated translator to regulate the logistics and implementation of all document translation and event interpretation within the District.
7. Develop the Language Access Line as a way to provide access to minority language interpretation needs for school sites and in Student Services departments. Initially, Language Line can be accessed by Student Services offices and be offered as a resource for the schools to utilize. Central access point should be within Student Services office and could later be expanded to service school sites through parent liaisons.

## Communication Content and Access Recommendations

The following recommendations are for increasing engagement and accessibility regarding eNews and the A+ Newsletters:

1. Retain the A+ “brand” but consolidate the eNews and the A+ Newsletter into a single branded communication that reaches internal and external stakeholders within the community. Produce bi-weekly (twice a month), monthly, and annual versions, available in print, web, and email formats, and with full Spanish translation.
2. Research and implement a new, more streamlined, and more visually appealing template for newsletter creation that is easier to format and easier to read and navigate.
3. Prioritize information within newsletters, making sure to put the most important and most widely relevant information at the top of each communication.
4. Consider producing two versions of these communications, one focusing on elementary-school issues and the other on secondary schools, in order to better target families’ interests.

5. Create a space for community voices. Consider adding a page featuring opinion pieces or “op-ed” type letters on educational issues from District, school, community, parents, and/or student leaders.
6. Pick themes for certain issues, and focus all content around that theme, such as green activities/achievements, cultural awareness, arts, sports, health, civic activism and leadership, testing, and more. Choose themes to coincide with current TopCo communications priorities.

## **Communication Channels**

It is very clear that all Berkeley Unified stakeholders are deeply committed to full and equal access to all communications for all populations. However, achieving complete access to all communication across populations with very different levels of technological access will be no small challenge.

In one BHS student’s home, there may be an iPad on the coffee table and smart phones and laptops for every member of the family. At the same time, another student’s family may be struggling with homelessness, making it difficult even to get letters by mail. Other parents may find it difficult to navigate websites or fully engage with digital communications, either due to language barriers, a lack of technological expertise, or a lack of computer access.

While fully solving the issue of full communications access across the “digital divide” for all Berkeley Unified stakeholders is beyond the scope of this plan, here are the following recommendations:

1. Incorporate technological instruction, workshops, and tutorials, wherever possible, into community outreach initiatives. Make computers or laptops available at school events and encourage parents to sign up to receive newsletters, tutorials, and more.
2. The Office of Family & Community Partnerships could partner with the Department of Technology and school site parent liaisons or other staff to teach parents to access online content. These workshops could fit within the “Parent Institute” or similar initiative.
3. Remember that communication is a two-way street. Information sent out through the mail and online may reach the majority of stakeholders, but what about the remaining percentage? The District may need to take a fresh approach to finding parents on their “home turf.” Engaging in dialogues and listening to the concerns of community, neighborhood, and especially faith-based organizations (churches, synagogues, mosques, and temples) and their leaders can help greatly in putting a “face” on the District and helping parents’ concerns be heard.
4. Create a model of site based parent outreach, with parent liaisons at school sites, rather than the current centralized district-wide approach. Through the auspices of the Office of Family & Community Outreach (OFCO), establish a centralized system for communication with the 20 school sites. For example, if the District is holding a seminar on state academic assessment, the school Parent Liaisons should have immediate access to a downloadable agenda, flyers for

distribution, and contact information. Event information should be updated in real time, and immediately synched to school site Outreach teams.

5. Set up such an internal workspace system as a “conference” within PowerSchool or Blackboard Connect, with each school site having a logon into the District OFCP virtual office.

## V. Next Steps

Madera Group recognizes that significant change to the staffing and resources dedicated to communications and family and community outreach will be critical to implementing a robust communication strategy. Below are Madera’s staffing recommendations followed by both short and long term priorities for staff implementation.

### Staffing

Our recommendations regarding staffing are as follows:

1. Reevaluate the position of Public Information Officer, and consider reorganizing/rebuilding position as Communications Manager. The Communications Manager, in conjunction with support staff, would be responsible for generating branding elements, website style sheets, protocols, and structures, and communications performance standards and practices, and ensuring their common usage throughout the district. The Communications Manager would also develop an annual communications strategy with the Superintendent and Cabinet and suggest broad communications themes. This new staff person would manage content, the production schedule and develop communications protocols and a District style guide. A plan for emergency/crisis communications needs to be updated. This position would produce, edit, and/or ensure the timely production of general materials on admissions and enrollment, classroom instruction, afterschool programs, transportation, parent involvement, food services, safety concerns, Special Education services, and important district programs or initiatives.
2. Evaluate the current available capacities, abilities, and resources of the District’s Technology Department, in order to see how school sites and District channels could be better supported in building capacity particularly around website management and improvement and social media implementation.
3. Evaluate the current available capacities and abilities, of both BSEP and other key departmental staff positions to strengthen communication channels and improve access for parents and the community.
4. Develop a job description, source funding for, and hire a dedicated full- to half-time Spanish translator. Prioritize District translation and interpretation needs based on survey results and overall community feedback, as described in this document.
5. Evaluate the current capacities and resources of the Office of Family and Community Partnerships to examine how it could better support the school site-level communication needs brought forth in

this study. Consider moving to a site-based model of parent outreach, with coordinated, training, supervision and support out of the OCFP.

6. Develop a job description, identify funding for, and hire a dedicated position to oversee refresh/upgrade of current website and social media channels and maintain and update the website on a day-to-day basis.

7. Interview local web-design firms and take bids for short- and long-term upgrade/re-do of District website.

8. Establish an internship program with UC Berkeley or other local colleges/universities, in order to bring in 2-3 or more interns, working approximately 10 hours/week each, to handle the District's social-media capacity.

## Resources

Over the summer of 2011, as the Cabinet and BSEP reviews the Berkeley Unified's budget and staff resources for the 2011-2012 academic year, we recommend that they consider the staffing recommendations that Madera Group has outlined and prioritized in this document.

## Short Term Implementation

Under the supervision of the Superintendent, the Communications Working Group and/or Cabinet Members could implement the following recommendations during the summer of 2011, as well as throughout the academic year 2011-2012.

- Take the Communications Study, digest it, and determine how best to present the [study](#) and recommendations to the Cabinet and Board of Education for implementation.
- Distill the top 20 content (TopCo) topics, assign and plan.
- Review current biweekly emails and A+ News Updates, decide on the clear plan of action, and devote staff resources to implement on a regular schedule during the school year and as needed during the summer.
- Design an intern program for social media input and maintenance.
- Streamline databases of parent/guardian contact information to support reliable and widely available email, phone, text, and other digital forms of communication.
- Adopt a content production and distribution protocol (see opening graphic).
- Further review survey data sets.
- Hire designated Spanish-language translator.
- Situate OCFP staff at targeted school sites in dedicated Family Outreach offices.
- Determine social media criteria and most practical usage perimeters.
- Implement first-phase web refresh and first two items of Social Media (see Appendix 3) and devote resources to create and post content on the website and other communications channels.
- Establish and implement an updated crisis-communications strategy and protocol.

## Long Term Implementation

- Establish job description for Communications Manager
- Implement second phase web redesign and consider other social media suggestions (see Appendix 4)
- Address broad community outreach needs by establishing deeper coordination between Cabinet, staff, Office of Family & Community Partnerships (OFCP), and families within the community. Establish a list of top community partners (including civic and faith-based organizations), have an understanding of their monthly/annual events, and ensure a District presence there to put a face on school issues, address hot-button issues pro-actively, and communicate relevant TopCo information.
- Assign parent liaison staff at each school site; pursue funding to establish Parent Resource Office model at all schools.
- Address the issue of full and equal access for all stakeholders by establishing back-to-school media and computer training for parents to promote usage and understanding of email newsletters, eTrees, website navigation, and more. Consider supporting instructive partnerships between computer-literate parents and those needing more training by establishing a parent volunteer position as a Computer Training Liaison.
- Implement staff-wide training in new technology, social media, crisis communication, and the customer-service (We Care) communications program.

## Appendix 1. Sample Results from Parent/Community Questionnaire

### Berkeley Schools Communications Questionnaire

In this school year, which of the following communications do you receive from the School District? (check all that apply)

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Automated phone calls (school messages)	71.9%	415
Student handbook (September)	70%	404
Letters/mailings	63.2%	365
Berkeley Unified website (berkeley.net or	50.4%	291
Biweekly Berkeley School News emails	43.5%	251
Meetings/Events	44.3%	256
Automated phone calls (attendance messages)	41.7%	241
Direct emails or phone calls from an individual	39.8%	230
Word of Mouth	36.7%	212
A+ News Monthly Update newsletter	36.2%	209
A+ News color 8-page newspaper (September)	36.0%	208
None of these	3.20%	19
	<i>answered question</i>	<b>577</b>
	<i>skipped question</i>	<b>110</b>

### Berkeley Schools Communications Questionnaire

Where do you currently look for information about the Berkeley Unified School District that is produced by others?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
School PTA website	19.5%	113
Berkeley Parents Network (e-list subscription)	18.1%	105
None of these	16.9%	98
Berkeleyside (online local news source)	9.7%	56
Berkeley Times (local newspaper)	5.7%	33
Other	4.5%	26
Berkeley Daily Planet	4.1%	24
Berkeley PTA Council	2.9%	17
Facebook	1.5%	9
Online Blogs	0.3%	2
	<i>answered question</i>	<b>577</b>
	<i>skipped question</i>	<b>110</b>

### Berkeley Schools Communications Questionnaire

In this school year, did you contact the Berkeley Unified School District seeking information about any of the following concerns: (check all that apply)

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
None of these	39.1%	226
Admissions or Enrollment	30.6%	177
Classroom Instruction	16.8%	97
Afterschool programs	16.6%	96
Transportation	15.5%	90
Parent Involvement	11.4%	66
Safety concerns	8.8%	51
Food Services	8.3%	48
Special Education services	7.6%	44
Use of the BSEP (Berkeley Schools Excellence)	4.1%	24
School construction/facilities information	2.4%	14
<i>answered question</i>		<b>577</b>
<i>skipped question</i>		<b>110</b>

### Berkeley Schools Communications Questionnaire

In this school year, what Berkeley Unified resources were the most useful? (check all that apply)

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Berkeley Unified website (berkeley.net or berkeley.k12.ca.us)	52.3%	302
Direct emails to/from District staff	36.2%	209
Letters/mailings	29.6%	171
Biweekly Berkeley School News emails	24.2%	140
Direct phone calls to staff	19.4%	112
Information from other sources	16.4%	95
A+ Newsletter (online copy on district website)	1.3%	75
None of these	10.0%	58
A+ Newsletter (print copy monthly or annual edition)	7.6%	44
Other	6.7%	39
Flickr photos or Vimeo or YouTube video of school or district	5.5%	32
Cable TV broadcasts of Berkeley School Board meetings	2.7%	16
Online video of School Board or other district meetings	2.5%	15
<i>answered question</i>		<b>577</b>
<i>skipped question</i>		<b>110</b>

### Berkeley Schools Communications Questionnaire

When the district is communicating to a large number of people, what is the best way for the District to communicate with you? (check all that apply)

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Email or Berkeley School News email	61.5%	355
Letters/mailings	44.1%	255
Communicating through existing school communication methods	27.2%	157
Automated phone calls	24%	139
Twitter	16.6%	96
Communicating through existing news media	12.3%	71
Text messages	14.2%	82
BUSD website postings	11.4%	66
Meetings/Events	11.2%	65
Traditional newsletters (paper copy)	7.6%	44
Facebook	6.9%	40
None of these	4.5%	26
<i>answered question</i>		<b>577</b>
<i>skipped question</i>		<b>110</b>

## Appendix 2. Information Hierarch Based on Survey Results

According to the results from the survey data, information sought by parents, ranked by the following topic:

Admissions or Enrollment	30.0%
Classroom Instruction	17.3%
Afterschool programs	17.0%
Transportation	15.8%
Parent Involvement	11.7%
Food Services	8.5%
Safety concerns	8.9%
Special Education services	7.8%
Use of the BSEP (Berkeley Schools Excellence Program) or Maintenance special taxes	4.1%
Structure/facilities information	2.4%

After including the results from interviews conducted with faculty, board and the Communications Working Group, Madera developed this rough **hierarchy of information** any stakeholder (including faculty and staff) might need (ranked by time-sensitivity and urgency):

1. Emergencies on campus and in the community
2. Daily changes (in classes, events, transport, availability of teachers and staff, etcetera)
3. Daily and Weekly events, appointments, deadlines
4. Schedule reminders (vacations, afterschool programs, test schedules, etcetera)
5. General information on safety and emergency procedures
6. Class and school information for current students
7. General information about admissions and enrollment
8. General information about the mission and history of the district and a breakdown of schools and programs
9. General Information about classroom curriculum and instruction
10. General Information about afterschool programs
11. General information about parent involvement
12. General information about food services
13. General information about special education services
14. General information about the BSEP and other district wide initiatives
15. General information about the Berkeley Unified budgeting and finance
16. General information on facilities and structure
17. Information about co-workers in Berkeley Unified
18. Statewide updates about public education

It is apparent that this information can be categorized further:

- Information that is developed immediately, in response to emergencies or other events or changes that are critical to the daily functioning of parents, students, administrators, faculty and staff
- Information that is developed and/or updated daily or weekly.
- Information that is developed and/or updated quarterly, semi-annually, or annually.
- Information that is developed and/or updated occasionally (as needed).

Ideally, ensuring that this information is produced and made available in an efficient manner, using “best practices” in communications techniques, and through the channels most appropriate for the particular content and audience, is the basic function of the communications office.

## Appendix 3. Process Information: School Board and Cabinet

### Berkeley Unified Board Members Feedback

Madera Group had one-on-one phone meetings with five members of the School Board. Questions asked included:

1. How do members of the community who have a question or concern communicate with you, and how do you communicate with your constituency? How can the school district assist you in your communications?
2. Do you feel well enough informed about district and school issues in your district to feel confident doing your job as a School Board member?
3. What communication tools used by the school district do you think are most effective or useful in communicating with the district's diverse stakeholders?
4. In order to best serve your constituency, what do you see as the district's top translation priorities?
5. Does the School Board have a protocol for interacting with the media?

Specific feedback from the School Board is in the Internal Forum Feedback section of the study that begins on page 18.

### Cabinet

The Berkeley Unified Cabinet is an executive committee made up of the Superintendent, Deputy Superintendent, Assistant Superintendents for Educational Services and Human Resources, as well as several directors representing Maintenance and Facilities, Curriculum and Instruction, Special Education, and Technology. This group forms a crucial brain trust for the District, and their regular meetings provide a valuable check-in for how all of the District's many moving parts are working together. Decisions made at the Cabinet level affect every level of District operations. Madera Group attended a Cabinet meeting and asked:

- How Cabinet decisions are communicated, both internally and externally;
- How communication methods could be improved;
- How the Cabinet can become pro-active with regards to the Berkeley community and parent networks; and
- How translation issues are being addressed.

According to Cabinet members, most internal communication (from Cabinet on down) is verbal. Some decisions are confidential; some are brought to business management, others to departmental meetings, while others are implemented directly. However, Cabinet members acknowledged that some decisions "fall through the cracks," and impacted parties do not receive notification.

In terms of centralized communication channels used to communicate Cabinet's priorities and decisions, the following tools and practices are in place:

- Email groups set up on BeMail (PIO News, Management Team, etc.);
- A+ News online and in limited paper copy;
- Friday Notes, a round up of weekly updates directed to the School Board Directors at the end of each week;
- An employee news that includes pertinent information about human resource and business services included with each employee's paycheck on a monthly basis;
- And a Weekly Bulletin generated every Sunday night by the Public Information Officer directed primarily at Principals, but that goes out to the entire Management Team on bemail.

Major initiatives and informational items are brought to School Board meetings usually every two weeks on Wednesday nights. In line with requirements of the Brown Act, the District follows a strict protocol for posting Board meeting agendas and the entire "Board Packet" is available online and in paper copy 72 hours prior to the School Board Meeting. Priorities and decisions of the Board are tracked with concise Board Updates posted by email and on the district website most Fridays following a Board meeting. Board meeting minutes are also archived over time and posted on the district website.

## Appendix 4. Website Comparative Analysis

### Home Page Comparisons

The most interactive home page, in terms of content, was that of [Palo Alto Unified School District \(PAUSD\)](#). Notable items included:

- Rotating photo slideshow and embedded video
- Dual shortcut drop-down menus at the top of the page, to the right of the search bar, one with direct links to school site websites, another to the top most-visited pages
- Google-enabled search bar
- Mini events calendar that appeared whenever a cursor hovered over a link on the news wall (so that users don't need to go to another page to get event info)

Notable items on the [San Ramon Valley Unified School District \(SRVUSD\)](#) home page included:

- Rotating photo slideshow
- Useful "CONTACT US/Find It Fast" link on the top left toolbar, listing current staff, critical District information, Board Member policies and information, and all current and archived District communications, with announcements tagged by date of posting
- Clicking on any staff name brings up an email client already addressed email client
- Embedded interactive calendar in right toolbar
- Direct Facebook-linked button on top right

Notable items on the [Santa Cruz City Schools \(SCCS\)](#) included:

- 'Calendar' link right at the top directs users to an interactive Google calendar
- Events can be printed or sent to the user's own online calendar

### Website and Online Technology Comparisons

#### Student Information System:

1. Santa Monica-Malibu: Illuminate Ed
2. Berkeley Unified: PowerSchool
3. San Ramon Valley, Palo Alto, Santa Cruz: Infinite Campus

#### Grade/Assessment storage system:

1. Berkeley Unified, Santa Cruz: Datawise
2. Santa Monica-Malibu: Pinnacle GlobalScholar, Data Director
3. Palo Alto: InClass, Infinite Campus

It is beyond the capacity of Madera Group to recommend one content management system over the other in terms of strict technological functionality, save to mention some Berkeley Unified community complaints about PowerSchool's interface and usability.

## **Board Meeting Communications**

1. Santa Monica-Malibu: Streaming video, MP3 audio, MPEG video, and has RSS feed (audio & video) capability for media archive.
2. Palo Alto: Board Meetings on TV and radio, live video streaming over the web.
3. Santa Cruz: Meeting schedule and archived downloadable minutes.

## **Webcams and Video**

San Ramon Valley USD: Video orientation to volunteering on the requisite page

Palo Alto USD: 2 webcams built into its website, of the Palo Alto High School athletic field and Ohlone Elementary parking lot, giving website a certain dynamism

## **Staff Usability**

San Ramon Valley USD:

- Staff login on homepage
- RSS feed functionality on homepage so users can receive news updates directly to their preferred browser

Palo Alto USD:

- Staff login on homepage
- Ed Technology page lists scheduled 'Workshops & Classes,' 'eTech News,' video tutorials, and rubrics for adequate and effective use of technology in the classroom

It is important that staff have access not just to the educational technology tools, but the training to best utilize them. This can be done at low cost by linking to existing resources.

## **Multi-Lingual Comparisons**

San Ramon Valley USD:

- Full-website language translation using Google Page Translation
- Footer of homepage allows user to choose between Spanish, Chinese, Japanese, Korean, Arabic, French, German, Italian, and Portuguese.
- Translation is adequate and comprehensive to all content within the entire website

Santa Cruz City Schools:

- "En Español" button at the top toolbar of the homepage, linking to a single text-heavy page with translated Spanish information
- Almost all important, relevant information is translated in Spanish speakers on one page
- An abridged information list provides: Spanish-speaking liaisons at all schools, matriculation information for all schools, volunteer and parent involvement information, and state standard information
- Comprehensive, not interactive

Santa Monica USD and Palo Alto USD:

- No webpage translation
- Parents' survey, downloadable complaint guide (Santa Monica) and school registration form (Palo Alto) in Spanish only

## Appendix 5. Technology and Online Presence Next Steps

### I. Website

#### A. Phase 1 Refresh of Website

1. Email sign-up button on homepage for eNews
2. Google analytics (or similar)
  - a. Weekly report
3. Active Calendar embedded on website
4. Content updated on a regular basis through blog on the home page
  - a. News
  - b. Events
5. 2020 Vision Statement (or District mission and vision statement) should featured on the home page
  - a. Dedicated box with Vision Statement
  - b. 2020 Vision Video
6. Dedicated subsection, however small, for translated content
  - a. Documents
  - b. Links
  - c. Contact information
7. Update contact information
  - a. Place current office/position holders and email (with link to pop-up addressed email)
  - b. Activate Google Reader
8. Multimedia
  - a. Video
  - b. Slideshows
9. Allow District to manage and observe all searchable content from websites that cover BUSD news and information.
10. Add a District information tab

## **B. Phase 2 Redesign of Website**

1. Move all school sites under District Server
  - a. All school site pages will have homepage space for district information
  - b. All sites on same domain
  - c. All school sites with same basic architecture of District or at least a BUSD header/toolbar
2. Staff portal logon on homepage for E-Mail, PowerSchool, and Intranet
  - a. Section on educational technology and access workshops/troubleshooting, instruction videos like San Ramon Valley
3. Spanish-translated button/tab for subsection with all translated content
4. Place a central toolbar on homepage with “Student,” “Parent,” “Staff,” “Community,” or similar with requisite dedicated content

## **C. Social Media**

- Change and consolidate all YouTube and Vimeo accounts to “Berkeley Unified School District”
  - Vimeo has both “Berkeley Public Schools” account and “Mark Coplan”
  - YouTube has just “Mark Coplan”
- Fix Board of Education Vimeo video link on BUSD website
- Create Facebook page
  - Post contact information, events, videos, etc.
  - Regulate commentary: Allow “Likes”
  - Determine a policy regarding management of individual comments
    - Example: San Ramon Valley Unified School District only allows positive/constructive comments, as well as “likes”
- Create Facebook button for homepage
- Create Twitter feed
  - Allows for faster-paced messaging and communication outreach to all stakeholders
  - Will also grab younger, more connected audience
  - Can be incorporated into “Press Release” page within District homepage (multimedia functionality): example Santa-Monica Malibu Unified
- Create Twitter button for homepage
- Create YouTube button/central link for District website
  - Dedicated space in visible real estate
- Have dedicated staff for review, maintenance, refreshing/updates

## Appendix 6: District Website Screenshots

Websites change, so we've created screenshots to record the current sites while also providing links in the document text.

The screenshot shows the Palo Alto Unified School District website. At the top left is the logo "Palo Alto Unified School District". To the right is a search bar and a "School Web sites:" dropdown menu. Below these are navigation buttons for "Students", "Parents", "Community", and "Staff", along with a "Shortcuts:" dropdown menu. A horizontal menu contains links for "About PAUSD", "Board Agenda", "Board of Ed.", "Bond Program", "Calendars", "Curriculum", "Directory", "Ed. Programs", "Ed. Services", and "Enrollment". Below this are sub-links for "Employment", "FAQ", "Fees", "Forms", "InClass", "Meal Plans", "Schools & Sites", "Summer School", "Superintendent", and "Webmail".

**The future starts here.**

We are a student-oriented district where children come first and where students always remain at the heart of our commitment. Thanks to the efforts of our talented and dedicated staff, strong support from our Board of Education, involved parents and a community that values education, our students benefit from a rich and varied curriculum.

As we pursue our [Strategic Plan](#) to provide a first-class educational program for all our students, our ongoing commitment is to improve student achievement and to support all areas of student development.

[News Blog](#)

**2011 PARENT SURVEY March 21 – April 4**

This year's Parent Survey school sites are: Addison, Briones, Fairmeadow, Hoover, Nixon, Ohlone, Jordan, Terman and Gunn.

**Administrative Retirements Announced**

Three District Office administrators announced plans to retire from Palo Alto Unified.

[Upcoming Events](#)

[School Play Rehearsal](#)  
Wednesday, March 30, 2011

[Ives Quartet Master Class](#)  
Wednesday, March 30, 2011

[School Play Rehearsal](#)  
Thursday, March 31, 2011

[Apply submission deadline](#)




**San Ramon Valley**  
UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

Home District Schools Students Parents Community Departments Employment Search Go

- Budget Info
- Staff Resources
- Enroll Your Child
- Calendar
- Summer Programs
- Safe School Efforts
- CONTACT US/Find it Fast

## News & Announcements

### What are YOUR kids doing this summer?

Come to the 9<sup>th</sup> Annual San Ramon Valley Community Fair and meet over 75 different groups that offer sports and martial arts programs, academic support and enrichment services, music and dance classes, day and overnight camps, volunteer opportunit... [Continue](#)

Posted by: Terry Koehne Published: 3/30/11

### Registration open for SRVUSD Summer Enrichment Program

The district is now accepting registrations for its annual Summer Enrichment classes. Courses are designed for students entering kindergarten through high school to enjoy an academic enrichment and/or a recreational experience. Although some of ou... [Continue](#)

Posted by: Terry Koehne Published: 3/30/11

### SRVUSD named to College Board's AP Achievement List

SRVUSD is one of two school districts in the East Bay to have been named to the College Board's AP Achievement List for opening advanced placement classes to a broader range of students and for maintaining or improving the

**SRVUSD now on**

facebook

### Whooping Cough Booster Shot now Required!

A new California law (AB 354) now requires students to be vaccinated against whooping cough.

**For the 2011-12 school year only, all students entering 7<sup>th</sup> through 12<sup>th</sup> grades will need proof of an adolescent whooping cough booster shot (Tdap) before starting school.**

Thereafter, in future school years, **only students entering 7<sup>th</sup> grade will need proof of an adolescent whooping cough booster shot (Tdap) before starting school.** By law, students who do not have proof of receiving a Tdap booster shot will not be able to start



**Santa Cruz City Schools**

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**News & Events**

- 3rd Annual Student to Student Conference May 21, Grades 3-12
- Welcome to Santa Cruz City Schools!
- Left Column
- Parent Survey-English & Spanish
- Open Enrollment for Elementary Schools Now Open
- Santa Cruz City Schools: The Best Choice for Middle School and High School Students
- District students perform in Honors Concert

## Welcome to Santa Cruz City Schools!

### Welcome to the 2010-11 year!

I would like to welcome students, staff, parents and community to Santa Cruz City Schools this new school year. This promises to be an outstanding year for our staff and students, a year in which we will continue to build upon our on-going progress in raising student achievement.



We continue our commitment to the achievement of our district's strategic goals. We maintain this commitment in the face of some serious financial challenges. Thanks to the support of our community, Santa Cruz City Schools continues to offer outstanding programs despite the state budget crisis.

We welcome many outstanding classified and certificated staff members to our team this year. In particular, I would like to welcome Karen Hendricks, Assistant Superintendent, Human Resources, and Kris Munro, Assistant Superintendent, Educational Services, who join our district office team, which is here to serve you.

Regards,

**Quicklinks**

- SCCS Board Policies
- Facility Assessments Report - Vol. 1, Vol. 2
- Enrolling Your Child/ Health Forms
- School Meals
- District Calendars: Online, Elementary, Secondary
- Infinite Campus Portal
- 2010-11 Adopted Budget
- Contact the School Board/Board Meetings
- Single Plans for Student Achievement - 2009-10
- School Accountability Report Cards (SARC)



# Santa Monica-Malibu Unified School District

1651 Sixteenth Street, Santa Monica, California 90404 . 310-450-8338

## Quick Links

[Site Map](#)

[District Map](#)

[City of Santa Monica](#)

[City of Malibu](#)

- ▷ [Board of Education](#)
- ▷ [Board Meetings](#)
- ▷ [Superintendent](#)
- ▷ [Personnel Commission](#)
- ▷ [Press Releases](#)
- ▷ [Calendar](#)
- ▷ [Staff Directory](#)
- ▷ [Departments](#)
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- ▷ [Employment Opportunities](#)
- ▷ [Human Resources](#)
- ▷ [Information Services/Tech](#)
- ▷ [District Advisory Committees](#)
- ▷ [Complaints/Requests for Information](#)
- ▷ [Council of PTAs](#)
- ▷ [Education Foundation](#)
- ▷ [Education Foundation Grants](#)
- ▷ [Measure BB](#)



## SANTA MONICA - MALIBU

### World Class Public Schools

## What's New at SMMUSD

***Superintendent Search Information***  
Information and dates>>

***Strategic Plan 2011***  
Click here for more information>>

***Financial Oversight Committee (FOC) seeks Malibu Representation***  
Apply by April 29, 2011

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## Santa Monica-Malibu Unified Schools

### Elementary

- Edison Language Academy
- Franklin Elementary
- Grant Elementary
- John Muir Elementary
- Juan Cabrillo Elementary

### Middle Schools

- John Adams Middle School
- Lincoln Middle School
- Malibu Middle School
- SMASH Alternative School