

BSEP P&O Public Statement
Draft 12-9-14

My name is (), and the BSEP P&O Committee has asked me to make the following statement on behalf of the committee, honoring the service of Chris Martin and Elisabeth Hensley, who are stepping down as co-chairs after many years of service.

As you know, we are fortunate to live in a community where, since 1986, we have supported our schools with a local tax fund, called the Berkeley Schools Excellence Program, or BSEP. Thanks to BSEP, we have smaller class sizes, along with libraries in every school, an amazing music program for 4th-8th grade, professional development for our staff, technology funds, program evaluation, parent outreach, public information and translation, site discretionary funds, and more. These funds make the difference between good schools and great schools.

The BSEP measure established a Planning and Oversight Committee composed of parent and staff representatives from every school, and we take very seriously our charge of working with district staff to review annual plans and reports for each of the nine purposes of the current tax Measure, which is also known as Measure A of 2006.

The P&O has been very fortunate to have had the guidance of very committed and conscientious committee chairs, Chris Martin and Elisabeth Hensley, whom we wish to honor tonight.

Chris Martin is a Berkeley High graduate, class of 1990, and his family roots go deep here - his mother served on the BHS BSEP committee. Fast forward, to 2009 - as a first time Kindergarten parent at LeConte, Chris co-chaired the School Governance Committee. Next he signed up as an alternate to the P&O committee, and then became co-chair, first with Dan Lindheim in 2011 and then with Elisabeth Hensley.

Elisabeth Hensley began her involvement with the Jefferson SGC in 2007 before stepping up to serve her community on the P&O Committee. Chris and Elisabeth have seen us through challenging times - two years of declining state revenue, and two superintendent transitions as well as transitions with the BSEP director position.

Thanks to Chris and Elisabeth, the P&O Committee has worked toward consensus on major issues that could have been divisive and contentious, always staying focused on what is best for the students while keeping faith with the intent of the voters who supported the BSEP measure. They ensured that the P&O looked carefully at every resource, and oversaw important discussions such as the relationship between BSEP and General Funds in class size reduction and in the music/VAPA fund. Last year, under their leadership the P&O engaged with the district to ensure that new state LCFF/LCAP funds and BSEP dollars could be leveraged towards key programs for our students. With meetings and subcommittee meetings nearly every week last year, Chris and Elisabeth made sure that all voices were heard, while our meetings stayed on time and on topic, no small feat!

We are grateful that Elisabeth will stay on the P&O Committee as a mentor to the new chairs, Danielle Perez and Bruce Simon, and doubly grateful that both Elisabeth and Chris have committed to an additional task, working on the next BSEP Measure. As

you know, Measure A expires in 2016, and we are gearing up to begin the work of planning for the next measure. The P&O is committed to working with the board, superintendent, staff and community to develop a consensus on the structure and contents of the BSEP measure for 2016, to continue to ensure that all our students have access to a truly excellent education. This important work is possible, thanks to the dedicated volunteer work of people like Chris Martin and Elisabeth Hensley, and we ask you to join the P&O Committee in thanking them for all they have given and will continue to give in service of all our students.