

# Berkeley Public Schools

BI-ANNUAL REPORT from Berkeley Unified School District | Berkeley, CA

SPRING 2015



*Berkeley High's 2015 Bridge seniors  
Ready for their future!*

## Bridge to College

### 2020 Vision for Berkeley's Children & Youth

Five years ago, *Berkeley High Bridge* was one of the first initiatives to be launched in the schools as part of the *2020 Vision For Berkeley's Children and Youth*. Since then, the program has evolved from a summer enrichment class for 25 incoming Berkeley High School (BHS) freshman to a four-year academic skill building and college preparation program now serving 150 students. The goal of Bridge is to prepare more African American, Latino, and low-income students to make an academically successful transition from middle school to BHS, and from BHS to college.

*Continued inside*

***"The heart of the Bridge program is about building relationships with students and parents, and then encouraging students to reach high expectations, while guiding them around barriers and increasing access to the skills and knowledge needed on the pathway to college."***

*—Jessie Luxford, BHS Bridge teacher*

## TOGETHER WE CAN

### Dear Berkeley Resident,

Spring is a special time of year in the schools when we marvel at the many ways our students have grown and matured, and all they have learned and experienced over the school year. Soon many of us will gather together for the annual high school graduation ceremony at UC Berkeley's Greek Theater and congratulate over 700 students of the graduating class of 2015 for their hard work and perseverance. We have much to celebrate in this spring season of culminating events and new beginnings.

This year we increased our focus on professional development for our teachers and staff, and on supporting our students' social and emotional well-being through positive behavior programs, such as our popular Toolbox curriculum. We also used new state revenue to improve services to high need students, including our students learning English, foster youth, and those qualifying for Free and Reduced Lunch as outlined in Berkeley's Local Control & Accountability Plan (LCAP).

With state coffers growing with our economy, we anticipate the restoration of state funding for K-12 public education to continue, although schools are still not back to the funding levels of 2007. Our most pressing financial challenge is how to meet the state's new pension mandate while continuing to invest in the high quality education our children deserve, and providing our dedicated teachers and staff with competitive pay and health benefits.

We are proud that greater numbers of our students are experiencing school success. Data from a recent national report shows Berkeley students far surpassing state and national college attendance rates. Eighty-seven percent of our Berkeley High School graduates enter college within the first two years after high school, which is well above the 63% of students nationwide in our comparison group. As you will read inside this report, our improvement efforts have also resulted in a greater percentage of our students graduating high school.

We have made significant progress toward the goal of improving outcomes for all students as set forth in Berkeley's *2020 Vision*, and yet we know there is much more work to do. Together we can continue to be deliberate in our allocation of resources, and work closely with our school communities to ensure all of our students have the social-emotional and academic skills for a lifetime of learning and success.

In partnership and gratitude,  
Donald Evans, Ed.D.

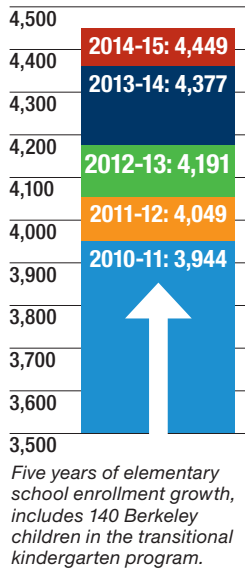


*Superintendent Evans congratulates  
English learners in the Berkeley schools  
with certificates recognizing their  
achievement in English fluency.*

# Enrollment in the Berkeley Unified School District is Growing

- More young families are moving to Berkeley and enrolling in our public schools.
- Lower attrition rates indicate that a greater number of students are remaining continuously enrolled in the Berkeley Unified School District, benefitting from the year-to-year articulated curriculum in our schools.
- Children turning five years old in September, October, and November now benefit from an additional year of public schooling through the transitional kindergarten program which improves school readiness.

**Elementary School Enrollment 2010-2015**



## In Response: Thoughtful Facility Planning and a Review of District Policies and Practices

- In the short-term, the need for more elementary school classrooms has reduced the availability of dedicated rooms for special programs, and prompted the conversion of some art, science, and other resource rooms into classrooms.
- Projections of continued growth require long-term facility capacity plans which include the possibility of relocating programs, re-purposing facilities, adding new classrooms, and/or creating a new school.
- Enrollment policies are currently being updated by the Superintendent in collaboration with the School Board Policy Committee to ensure compliance with all related state laws and Education Code, and appropriate access for all Berkeley residents.
- All families of BUSD 5th grade students are required to recertify Berkeley residency in order to secure a spot for their child entering middle school, with the same process for 8th to 9th grade students planned in 2015-16. Students with inter-district permits are required to meet academic, behavior, and attendance expectations and to renew that permit each year.

## Growth in Graduation Rates

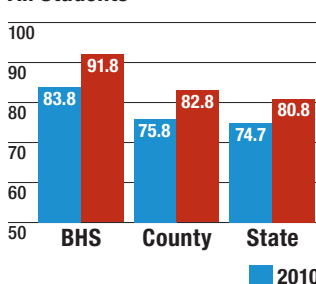
Recently released Graduation Rates for the Class of 2014\* indicate improved outcomes for all student groups, with the overall graduation rate for BHS students at 91.8%, an increase of 8% from 2010 (see chart below). The BHS African American student graduation rate increased almost 9% over the same period, reaching 87.2% in 2014. Berkeley High's Latino/Hispanic students are graduating at a rate of 89.7%.

Of particular import is the Graduation Rate for students with disabilities which grew to 75.5%. Furthermore, the rate of college attendance immediately after high school for students with disabilities was almost 66% in 2014 (compared with a national college attendance rate for students with disabilities of 47.3%).

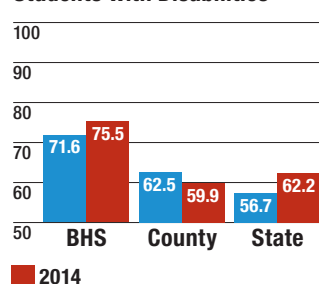
During senior year at Berkeley High, students with disabilities benefit from a focus on post-secondary education and employment readiness that includes individual goal setting, concurrent enrollment at Berkeley City College, and support from the Transition Partnership Program funded by the California Department of Rehabilitation.

\*Most recently available California Department of Education data

**Graduation Rates 2010-2014 All Students**



**Graduation Rates 2010-2014 Students with Disabilities**



## General Fund Budget Snapshot

The state's Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF) for K-12 education distributes "base grant" revenue calculated on per pupil student attendance, and "supplemental grant" funding based on our high-need student population. Some conditions currently affecting the district's General Fund budget are noted here:

- **Salary Increase:** Raises of 5-6%, and two years of 5% bonuses were paid in 2013-14 to all employees using restored state revenue and savings from district reserves. Employee contracts are currently under negotiation and new revenue will help address salary increases for our employees.
- **Classification & Compensation Study:** Updated job requirements and salary schedules were recently approved for the District's classified (non-certificated) positions with on-going costs of \$0.5 million in the General Fund, and another \$0.5 million in other funds.
- **New Pension Mandate:** All California school districts must increase pension contributions to meet the unfunded public employee pension liabilities. BUSD's new General Fund annual pension contributions are projected to be \$800,000 in 2015-16, with an addition of another \$1,000,000 in 2016-17 (see table below). Further increases are slated for subsequent years. In addition, teachers are expected to pay an additional 2.10% of their salary in employee pension contributions in 16-17 and beyond.
- **One-time and On-going Costs:** Step and column salary and health benefit cost increases, new teacher support (formerly paid by state), garden program (formerly supported with federal funds), the district nurse (formerly paid for by the city) and a Compliance Officer for Title IX and student support restrict the expenditure of new funding.

### General Fund Revenue & Projections 2013-2017

(Based on the Governor's May 2015 proposal)

(\$ in millions)	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17
Base Grant	\$68.3	\$68.3	\$72.5	\$76.6
Base Grant Increase		\$4.2	\$3.3	\$0.8
New Revenue offset by Pension Increase			\$0.8	\$1.0
LCFF Supplemental Funding for High-Need Students*	\$0.8	\$2.3	\$4.2	\$4.9

\* Berkeley's Local Control & Accountability Plan (LCAP) defines goals, actions, and expenditure plans for the use of the LCFF supplemental funds.



# New Leader of District Facilities

Timothy White has joined the Berkeley Unified School District as Executive Director of Facilities at a crucial time, with growing public school enrollment and school capacity challenges. He hit the ground running in April, and is already working to develop a master plan for the development of district facilities that will be driven by a set of educational standards.

Director White works closely with the Superintendent, Construction Bond Oversight Committee, and School Board to determine long-term planning for the expenditure of facility construction bonds approved by Berkeley voters. He is also responsible for the expenditure of the district's school maintenance tax (\$5 million annually) used to keep schools safe and well-maintained.



The Berkeley Unified School District's new Executive Director of Facilities, Timothy White, previously served the Oakland public schools for fourteen years as head of the facilities and construction division.

***"In my first six months, I intend to visit every school, get inside every classroom, and assess the strengths and challenges of each physical plant. I want to work with each school community to understand how we can support learning, and to use this information to establish a set of district-wide expectations and standards so that future construction projects are driven by the educational program we want for our students."***

—Timothy White

[www.berkeleyschools.net/departments/facilities](http://www.berkeleyschools.net/departments/facilities)



Among other group activities, Bridge students tour college campuses and participate in team building exercises. Bridge is made possible by teachers, mentors, volunteers, and state and local funding sources, including BSEP, City of Berkeley, Berkeley Public Schools Fund and the Berkeley High Development Group.

## Bridge to College Continued from front page

Bridge demands a significant investment of time, energy, and effort from students as they develop the ability to navigate the often complex pathway to a college education. Beginning with the two-week summer session prior to the 9th grade year, and continuing with daily afternoon meetings, weekend study sessions, and regular tutorials throughout their four years at Berkeley High School, Bridge students invest between 150 and 250 additional academic hours per year in their education.

With the daily support and expertise of the Berkeley High Bridge teachers, and through their own hard work and resiliency skills, students in the five Bridge cohorts are rising to meet the challenges on their pathway to college. Not surprisingly, demand for the program continues to grow. This year's graduating eighth graders are now clamoring to be part of the next Bridge cohort, and Bridge teachers are working hard to find the funds needed to serve more students.

### Bridge to College Stats in 2015

Bridge students complete 1st year of college: 24 of 29



2015 BHS Bridge seniors making final college plans: 25 of 25



## Breaking Down Barriers to College



Programs such as Bridge, AVID, and R.I.S.E.\* are making a difference by offering specialized supports to students each year of high school. The year-to-year Bridge program components, for example, improve student success on the path to college (see below).

### 9th Grade:

- Middle to High School Transition
- Study & Technology Skills
- Team Building & Parent Connections

### 10th Grade:

- High School Exit Exam & PSAT Preparation
- UC/CSU Eligible Coursework
- Advanced Placement (AP) / International Baccalaureate (IB) Preparation
- College Visits

### 11th Grade:

- Essential College Readiness & AP Skills
- SAT/ACT Preparation
- Leadership & Mentoring
- Financial Literacy

### 12th Grade:

- College Applications & Personal Statements
- Financial Aid & Scholarship Applications
- SAT/ACT Tests

\* Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID), Responsibility, Integrity, Strength, Empowerment (R.I.S.E.)



\*\*\*\*\*ECRWSSSEDDM\*\*\*\*

Residential Customer



**ATTENTION BERKELEY HIGH ALUMNI!** Come on out for the third annual all class reunion at San Pablo Park, Saturday, August 22, 2015, 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.



**College Fair:** Students work with Berkeley High's two College & Career Advisors on the path to college, and participate in the annual college fair on campus.



**Gardening:** Students learn science, math, and language development in the gardens.



**Small Group Instruction:** Students work and learn in teams with support of additional staffing.



**School Climate & Mental Health:** Counselors support students individually and in groups, and lead efforts to build a positive school community.

## Opportunities Expand with BSEP School Discretionary Funds

Thanks to the Berkeley community's long-standing commitment to the Berkeley Schools Excellence Program (BSEP), each school is able to expand and enrich programs and services beyond the limitations of state and local funding.

The School Governance/Site Council at each school conducts a yearly school-wide needs assessment that includes the study of student wellness and achievement data alongside school community input, in order to create plans tailored to fit the needs of students in each school's community. The BSEP Discretionary funds of \$230/student are provided to each preK-12 school to use in accordance with the school's annual plan. These school funds are currently being used to expand course offerings in visual and performing arts, gardening, and

technology, fund additional student support and counseling services, and provide high-quality instructional materials. Thanks to BSEP, our students have schools that are welcoming, engaging, and supportive of high achievement for all.

### BSEP Renewal: Nov. 2016

The Berkeley community has been investing in high-quality public education since the Berkeley Schools Excellence Program (BSEP) was first approved by Berkeley voters in 1986. A series of community focus groups, workshops, and surveys are being planned to engage the Berkeley community in our city's educational priorities for the next measure, which will go before the voters in November, 2016.

*Join us this coming fall in defining the future of BSEP!*

## BSEP ★ Excellence!

### BSEP – Measure A of 2006

*Berkeley's education tax dollars at work:*

- ✓ Smaller class sizes
- ✓ School libraries
- ✓ Music education
- ✓ Professional development
- ✓ Technology
- ✓ Program evaluation
- ✓ Middle school counseling
- ✓ Public information and translation
- ✓ Family engagement
- ✓ School discretionary funds

[www.berkeleyschools.net/BSEP](http://www.berkeleyschools.net/BSEP)