



Providing the Essentials for Educational Excellence

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“It is a mistake to suppose that acquisition of skills in reading and figuring will automatically constitute preparation for their right and effective use under conditions very unlike those in which they were acquired.”

--- John Dewey

Some Big Ideas to Balance

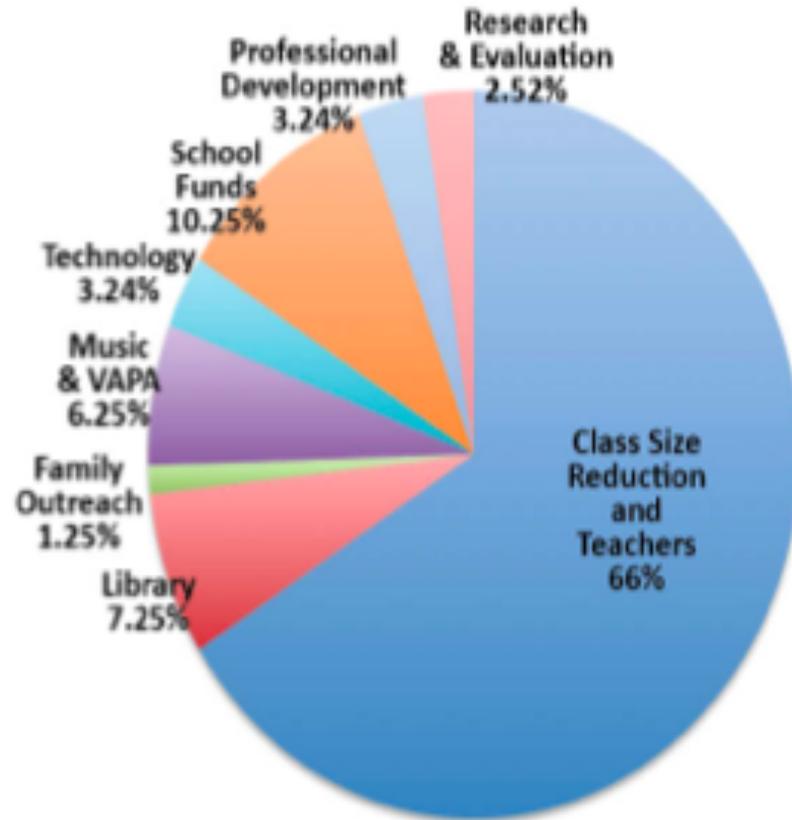
It is true that creative work in any field involves a growing mastery of skills and concepts. It is not true that they have to be mastered before the creative work can begin. Focusing on skills in isolation can kill interest in any discipline.

-Ken Robinson

When doing any serious mathematical thinking, you're going to have to multiply 6 by 8 sometimes, and if you have to reach for your calculator every time you do that, you'll never achieve the kind of mental flow that actual mathematical thinking requires; moreover, you can't write a sonnet if you have to look up the spelling of each word as you go"

-Jordan Ellenberg

Berkeley Schools Excellence Program



Berkeley Unified School District



Community Support for a Broad-Based Education

Balanced Class Sizes

Closely and consistently monitor the progress of student learning

Widen daily participation in whole-class discussions

More substantive interactions with students more often

Easier to tailor instruction to the needs of individual kids or small groups of students

Issues and Opportunities for Consideration

State funding to support K-3 class size ratio has shifted from averages of 20:1 district-wide to 24:1 school-wide

Current BUSD goal of 20:1 at K-3 and 26:1 at 4th/5th creates challenges at many schools: split-grade classes or larger classes in upper grades.

Enrollment growth and small class sizes also put pressure on facilities.

Teacher Support & Professional Learning

Issues and Opportunities for Consideration

Literacy work: coaching, scoring

High school teacher leadership

Coordination of expanded
professional learning
opportunities

Culturally responsive teaching
workshops

Teacher Initiated Professional
Development

Music and the Arts

- Intensive single-instrument instruction is universal for ALL 3rd-5th grade students
- Serve 3000-4500 students through music in a given year.
- Our students play 3,200 musical instruments each week.
- Nationally/Internationally recognized music programs grades 6-12
- Provide funding for Arts Anchor teachers in elementary and theater/drama at the middle schools



Issues and Opportunities for Consideration

Enrollment increases = need for more instruments and personnel

Cultural Competency training for teachers

Diversify teacher applicant pools

Expanded courses: chorus, guitar, ukelele, world drumming

Adding parent equity teams/liaisons

Communication through social media

Libraries

Students check out over 1,000 library books every day

Access to computers and printers

- Robust print collection: free reading choices, curriculum support
- “We Need Diverse Books” national campaign
- Digital content, audiobooks, e-books, as well as research databases at the secondary level
- Collections online and accessible from any device
- Library as “third space”, collective community space, safe space

Issues and Opportunities for Consideration

- ❖ Promote culture of critical literacies and citizenship (information, media, digital)
- ❖ Fluid responsiveness to changing formats and platforms without overcommitting to a path that might be quickly obsolete
- ❖ Credentialed staffing at elementary level
- ❖ Continue to bridge digital divide/ equity issues, and provide guided interactive, collaborative, creative space and tools
- ❖ Some elementary libraries have inadequate space

Instructional Technology

- Students and teachers have access to wifi internet service in every school
- Support for 3100 Chromebooks for interactive and online educational tools
- DigiTech & Tech Teacher Leaders provide connections between Library and Technology information skills

Issues and Opportunities for Consideration

Develop a technology blueprint to strategically address:

- ❖ Device and hardware options for students and teachers
- ❖ Professional learning and tech staffing to support and integrate and maintain expanded instructional tech
- ❖ Development of technology standards:

digital citizenship

concepts underlying hardware and software

communication, collaboration, creativity and innovation tools

Site Discretionary Funds

Provide opportunity for School Governance Councils to fund a broad array of programs tailored to each school site's priorities, including:

- Academic Support and Tutoring
- Professional Development
- Mentoring, Counseling, Behavioral, Safety
- Strengthening School-Family Connections
- Arts and Movement
- Other Enrichment Programs
- Instructional Materials and Equipment

Issues and Opportunities for Consideration

Possibilities for funding new ideas may be limited due to:

- Commitments to ongoing programs which do not have other funding sources;

- Increasing costs not keeping pace with revenue increases

- Fluctuation in allocations due to enrollment ups and downs;

- District priorities leading to requirement to fund partial positions from site funds

Innovation and the Potential for New Programs

Each BSEP Measure has been constructed with specificity as to the purpose of each funded resource, along with flexibility as to the programmatic components of each purpose.

The Planning and Oversight Committee, BSEP Managers and Board ensure that plans and reports match the overall purposes and allocations specified in the measure, and the Principals and SGCs are given latitude in determining priorities, as long as the Site Discretionary dollars to their School Plan and the intent of the measure.

Issues and Opportunities for Consideration

- ❖ Cost of including new resources/ programs in the Measure and relationship to tax rate;
- ❖ Delineating a purpose which is likely to remain a high priority and relevant for the life of the next measure;
- ❖ Ensuring public process which allows for thoughtful consideration of priorities - budget workshops, focus groups, educator input.