

Berkeley Public Schools

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

WINTER 2016

Community Partnership Makes Impact

2020 Vision for Berkeley's Children & Youth

In 2007, the Berkeley Unified School District, City of Berkeley, UC Berkeley, Berkeley Community College and several other community organizations formed a partnership around the shared 2020 Vision of academic success for all of Berkeley's public school children.

Since then, the "2020 Partners" have been working to make a collective impact by using agreed-upon goals to focus programs and resources towards eliminating the racial predictability of school success and advancing equitable academic and health outcomes for all children.

The 2020 Vision goals are:

- Every child will be Kindergarten ready.
- Every child will read proficiently by the end of third grade.
- Every child will attend school every day.
- All students will meet 9th grade math standards.
- Every student will be college and career ready.

These goals are monitored for progress on specific indicators that provide accountability measures and help direct program decisions and resource allocation.

More on the 2020 Vision inside



INNOVATION: THE ROAD TO EXCELLENCE

Dear Berkeley Resident,

The education of our children and youth is our greatest civic responsibility, and I am honored to lead the work of our public schools on behalf of the entire Berkeley community.

With your support we have created vibrant centers of learning in safe and modernized school facilities with educational programs which both support and challenge our students every day. To reach the goals set forth in the 2020 Vision, we must be forward thinking, innovative, and committed to expanding opportunities and support so that every student in our school district has an equal chance at academic success.

I'm pleased to tell you that our efforts are contributing to an important cultural shift in the way we teach and support students in every school. In the last few years we have made significant progress in the development of common local assessments that help us to identify the learning needs of individual students and to improve our instructional practices. As you will read in this report, we've made a big leap forward in the sharing of best teaching practices and working interdependently through the formation of Professional Learning Communities in every school. The greatest outcome of this work is that we know more about the needs of our students, and we are refining our curriculum and designing innovative programs to ensure all of our students experience school success.

One of the reasons I became an educator is because of my fascination with research on the mind, and how we can use that knowledge to create the optimal conditions for learning. We know that our students' social-emotional health is essential to their ability to engage in classroom learning and embark on a lifelong love of learning and academic success. Furthermore, students must have access to a full range of opportunities that allow them to develop their abilities and interests, whether that be through music, dance, videography, literature, science, sports, theatre, or any one of many other creative and intellectual pursuits we offer them.

The engagement and broad support of the Berkeley community, and the many community partners committed to serving our students, are what make the Berkeley Public Schools great.

Thank you so very much,
Donald Evans, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools



Superintendent Evans, Rosa Parks Principal Paco Furlan, and Berkeley City Councilmember Darryl Moore participate in a backpack give away for some of Berkeley's youngest students.

Innovation in Teaching & Learning Math

New Standards, Teaching Strategies

The arrival of Common Core curricula in math classrooms across the district has ushered in a whole new way of learning and talking about math. Learning to use math to problem solve and reason is the goal of the new grade-level standards, and requires students to make sense of math rather than to solely perform functions to arrive at a correct answer.

“Studying their mistakes, and learning from their mistakes, is really what learning is.”

— Leah Alcalá, 9th grade math teacher at Berkeley High School

Growth Mindset Changes the Way Kids Think about Math

Berkeley math teachers are using knowledge about how the brain works to create conditions in which students can best learn math, seeking to develop a positive, or “growth”, mindset in



their students. Research shows that a student who believes intelligence and skills can be improved with training and practice, rather than being fixed and inherent traits, may have brains more primed for solving math problems.

“We are dedicated to helping students establish a growth mindset in math and to make sense of mathematics. There is no such thing as a math gene; everyone can learn math.”

— Rebecca Burke, district math teacher coach

▶ Don't miss a new video on how Willard Middle School math teacher Robert McCarthy (aka “Mr. Mac”) generates excitement about math in middle school: www.berkeleyschools.net/ccmath

In Pursuit of the 2020 Vision

Improved Attendance, School Readiness; More Students Enrolling in College

The statewide transition to a new set of grade level standards and new assessments has made it more challenging to use longitudinal data to measure student learning over time. However, local assessment tools put in place to monitor progress are showing continued improvement in Berkeley children's kindergarten readiness and third grade literacy; college matriculation data from the National School Clearinghouse finds Berkeley's high school students attending college in ever greater numbers (see charts), well above the national averages for all student groups. There has also been a significant increase in the number of students attending school daily, and chronic absenteeism has dropped significantly.

An Excerpt from the 2020 Vision Data Dashboard

The 2020 Vision is Berkeley's community-wide effort to end the disparities in academic achievement that exist along racial lines among children and youth in Berkeley.

2020 VISION GOAL: Every child will read proficiently by the end of third grade.

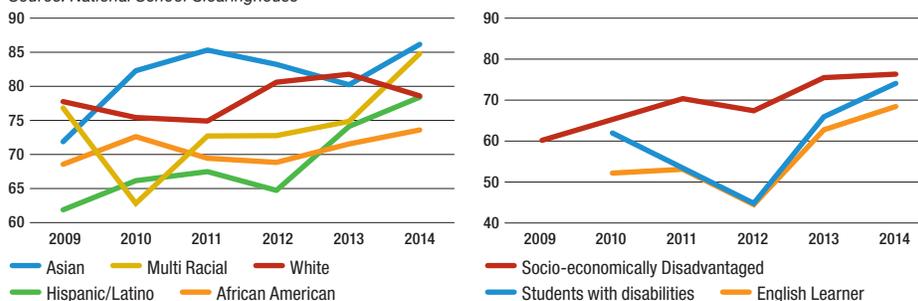
Third Grade Reading Proficiency based on Teachers' College Reading & Writing Assessment

	% Meeting Target in 2011	% Meeting Target in 2015	Percentage Change
All Students	61	70	+9
African American	40	42	+2
Hispanic/Latino	43	53	+10
White	83	89	+6

2020 VISION GOAL: Every child will be college/career ready.

Berkeley High School student college enrollment (fall immediately after high school)

Source: National School Clearinghouse



2020 VISION GOAL: Every child will attend school every day.

Chronic Absenteeism

(Percent of students absent more than 30 minutes on more than 18 days in one school year)

	% in 2013–14	% in 2014–15	Percentage Change
All Students	13	8	-5
English Learners	13	8	-5
Socio-economically Disadvantaged	15	13	-2
African American	22	17	-5
Hispanic/Latino	13	9	-4

Studies in California have found that lower rates of suspension from school and higher attendance rates correlate with better academic outcomes.

Social-Emotional Learning: Education & Support

Social-emotional learning, sexual harassment prevention education, and restorative practices focus on preparing students for success in school and in life.

Expanding the Toolbox

A large body of research demonstrates that non-cognitive factors influence the behaviors that drive academic performance, and this is particularly true for middle and high school students. Tools learned in the early years can help support motivation, conscientiousness, and the development of the intrapersonal and interpersonal competencies that are needed for long-term academic success and career readiness.

In recognition of the importance of all students and families feeling safe and welcome in our schools, the Berkeley Unified School District was the first school district in the nation to adopt the anti-bias, LGBTQ-inclusive Welcoming Schools Guide for use in all elementary schools in 2010.

Since then, the Berkeley schools have continued to work on building a positive culture in every school. In 2014, new state monies made it possible to bring the "Toolbox" curriculum to every K-6 Berkeley public school classroom. Having a common set of tools supports young students in developing the social-emotional skills of resilience, self-mastery, and empathy for others. The 12 Tools have become popular among students and staff throughout the school district.

Discipline & Attendance Reform Efforts Improve Achievement

Positive behavior supports and early interventions have helped to improve student engagement and the learning environment, while discipline reform efforts are focused on keeping kids in school. Over a five year period, the number of students suspended from Berkeley's public schools dropped from 6% to 3%; that's approximately 300 more students who benefitted from being in class. During the same timeframe, the problem of chronic absenteeism dropped from 33% to 8%.

Berkeley principals, teachers and staff are learning to use practices that promote communication and problem-solving over punitive discipline. New this school year, all three of Berkeley's middle schools are implementing Restorative Justice programs in partnership with SEEDS Community Resolution Center, and the use of restorative practices to resolve conflicts is growing at Berkeley High School and Berkeley Technology Academy.

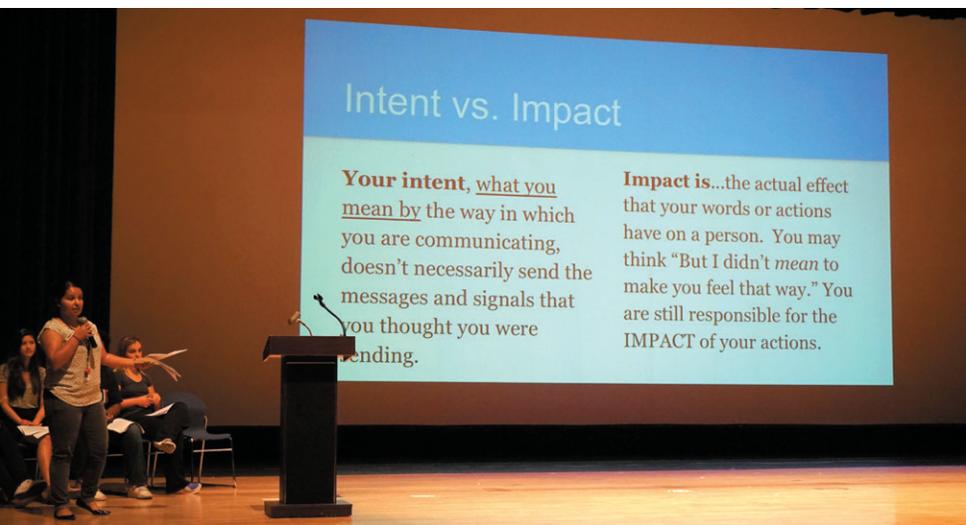
Tools for Teens: Sexual Health, Teaching Consent, and Sexual Harassment Prevention Education

Already in line with state legislation that took effect January 1, 2016, health education for Berkeley students in grades 7-12 includes providing students with "the knowledge and skills they need to develop healthy attitudes concerning adolescent growth and development, body image, gender, sexual orientation, relationships, marriage, and family."

College and high school student activism across the nation, and in our city, has helped to increase awareness about sexual harassment and sexual violence, and led to the passage of California State Senate Bill 695 in support of teaching all high school students about the importance of affirmative consent as a guide to healthy, safe, and mutually consenting sexual relationships. A special assembly was held for all of Berkeley High School's 9th grade students in the fall, and a school-wide teach-in on affirmative consent, sexual harassment prevention, and sexual violence was held at Berkeley High School in December.



What's in the toolbox? Find out on this web page: www.berkeleyschools.net/toolbox





*****ECRWSEDDM****

Residential Customer



Please help keep our children safe. Remember to drive **15 MPH** in a school zone.

BSEP 2016

Since 1986, Berkeley voters have shown their support for public education by renewing the local parcel tax known as the Berkeley Schools Excellence Program (BSEP). Thanks to BSEP, two generations of Berkeley children and youth have benefitted from vibrant school libraries, music education, smaller class sizes, and many other programs made possible through local support.

Be a part of the future of BSEP!

Come to the BSEP Community Workshop on **Thursday, February 25 at 7:00 p.m.** to discuss the BSEP Measure, which is up for renewal in November 2016. (Location: BUSD Board Room, 1231 Addison St.)

Visit the BSEP Blog:

www.berkeleyschools.net/BSEP

BSEP ★ **Excellence!**

The Schools Are Alive with Music

Our district-wide music program in grades four through eight is one of the best in the country, thanks to the dedicated music funding from the Berkeley Schools Excellence Program (BSEP) and support from community partners such as the Berkeley Public Schools Fund and the Berkeley Symphony. In fact, for the third year in a row, Berkeley Unified School District has been recognized by the NAMM Foundation as one of the best communities for music education.

In recent years, the Berkeley public schools music program has expanded instruction beyond the traditional band and orchestra instruments, and now also includes ukulele, guitar, and drums. In response to the newly diversified offerings, participation in the middle school music program has grown.

Our vibrant elementary and middle school music education program is made possible with the dedication and expertise of the 18 music teachers who travel from school to school to teach students. In addition to expanding student choice in instruments, the team of music teachers has been engaged in professional development focused on further developing teaching practices that engage all students through drawing upon the rich diversity of cultural backgrounds in Berkeley.



Longfellow Middle School's Mariachi Band is one of several music options.

In Professional Learning Communities, Students are the Focus

Promoting collaboration among teachers and creating a laser focus on student work are two of the most important outcomes of a recent push to have each school's faculty engaged in an effective Professional Learning Community (PLC). To make this possible, all principals and teacher leaders from every K-8 school are attending workshops to learn how teacher teams use four guiding questions to understand and assess student learning, and together generate the actions that will achieve better results for students. www.berkeleyschools.net/PLC



"I'm truly excited about this work. Our teachers have vigorously picked up the PLC structure to inform their work with students. The result is a deeper understanding of student learning, agreements about what is best for students, and concrete actions that are making a difference."

— Maggie Riddle, Director of K-8 Schools