



## **RESOURCE SUMMARY**

The expenditures in this BSEP resource were essentially as expected. However, the support for this program continues to draw upon a dwindling fund balance in the carryover from the prior BSEP Measure A to sustain the current staffing level. This drawdown is only sufficient for about one more year.

## **STATUS REPORT**

The mission of the Office of Family Engagement and Equity is rooted in the belief that family engagement is any way that an adult caregiver contributes to or supports a child's learning. We build partnerships between families, school staff, and community providers to promote successful outcomes for our students. OFEE offers district-wide support for families and school staff. The work of the Family Engagement and Equity staff is to support and educate parents and families in three main focal areas:

- 1) Establishing links between home and school for academic success,
- 2) Improving behavioral supports for students by helping families build trusting relationships with school staff and students, and
- 3) Promoting attendance and access to health and other needed services.

### Creating a culture of empowered parents and staff

The model of family engagement used by the Office of Family Engagement and Equity is researched-based and proven effective to improve student outcomes. Increasing the capacity of staff and families to partner, creating opportunities for them to partner, and supporting the relationships is the Dual Capacity Building Framework that OFEE has adopted and follows. The OFEE staff also works with schools and families to increase opportunities for parent/guardian involvement. In doing so, OFEE shares Dr. Joyce Epstein's Six Types of Involvement framework, offering a more inclusive approach to involvement, to change mindsets regarding parent involvement, and therefore positively impact and improve school climate.

### Supporting school staff and families of students who are chronically absent

Our OFEE team partners with schools and families to address obstacles to attendance. In addition to our ongoing outreach to families when students are absent, our team leads and participate in site based attendance teams, lead attendance assemblies, form lunch groups with students, offer incentives to students, and provide workshops and one-on-one support to parents.

### Parent Leadership Development

A primary focus in the 2017-18 school year involved leadership development support for up and coming parent leaders from our underserved communities. Parents at school sites partnered with the school and the district to impact change and policy. One parent successfully advocated for change in how student behavior is identified in Illuminate, and assumed other leadership roles. Others are leading site based parent groups, and positioning themselves to take on district leadership roles. Other parents are co-facilitating workshops at their schools, and supporting their peers with navigating school and district resources.

### Opportunities for Involvement

The OFEE team provided parent education, outreach, and coordinated, collaborated, facilitated, initiated and implemented groups, workshops and programs at school sites and at the District level. OFEE collaboration with Emerson's PTA resulted in an Equity Circle for parents, staff, leaders, etc. This school's PTA supports ongoing equity work at this site. Now school volunteers are trained on equity before starting their volunteer work in the classroom.

### Community Collaborations and Stakeholder Support

Family Engagement programming in the school year would not be possible without community partners. To highlight a few, SupplyBank.org supports our families with the annual school supply give-away. Community based Covenant Church provided a welcome back picnic for more than one thousand families that attended the school supply giveaway. Berkeley Youth Alternatives and UC Berkeley partner with OFEE to offer at least two College and Career Readiness and Financial Aid for College Fairs. Alameda County Food Bank, and Berkeley Food Network partnered with OFEE to serve families district-wide. During the 2017-18 school year, families were supported with food during the holidays, with monthly distributions, and more frequently as needed. This partnership supported 800 families during the holiday food distribution, many more on an ongoing basis.

### Resources and Supports

The need for resources and support escalated during the 2017-18 school year. There are many reasons for this escalation, and many of our stable families became homeless and needing support. One indicator, homelessness, was also a prelude to absenteeism, academic and behavior challenges, transportation for many students who now live a great distance from their schools, as well as needing socio-emotional support. OFEE collaborations with BUSD's McKinney Vento Coordinator, mental health services, food banks, City of Berkeley School Linked Health Services, homeless shelters, immigration rights advocates and attorneys, housing programs, and school based services helps to make these difficult transitions for families more bearable.

In the 2017-18 school year, there were a few tragedies that took place. One of the last tragedy of the year involved the death of a parent of two young boys. The relationships that OFEE already built with this family that was already experiencing many of the most critical challenges (homelessness, chronic absenteeism, etc) created a space for our BUSD OFEE team to galvanize support from parents, PTA, school staff and the community to help this family through this difficult time. The grandparent said *"I don't know how we would have made it through without family engagement support. You helped me bury my daughter, you coordinated food for me for weeks when it was difficult to do these normal things, you called to make sure we were ok, you came to the funeral, you continue to help me to make sure my grandchildren are ok. What amazed me was when you brought the school together to give my grandson a birthday party that his mother promised."* (story provided with permission)

**Activities in 2017-18 included:**

- K to College School Supply and Dental Hygiene Giveaway (over 1000 bags were provided to BUSD low-income families)
- Why 9<sup>th</sup> Grade Matters to welcome and help new 9<sup>th</sup> grade students and parents prepare for High School. This event was well attended by more than two hundred African American, Latino, English Learner and other LCAP Target students and families.
- BUSD's first annual Black History Oratorical Fest took place in March 2018. All K-8 schools participated in this district-wide event. The purpose of this event was to promote equity through knowledge and facilitate ELA goals. Students, families and staff were immersed in Black history as students prepared to compete. The climate at each school event was warm, welcoming, respectful and engaging.
- OFEE provided a six-part parent workshop series for families of students in the Ramp Up reading academic support program
- College Readiness and Financial Aid Clinics in October of 2017 and March 2018 offered to our LCAP target families, and supported by community and district office staff.
- Kinder Fair – Family Engagement Staff greeted prospective families and shared the wonderful work that BUSD does to ensure equity and a quality education for all students. Number one question from parents were around inclusion and equity.
- Parent Champion Workshop in March 2018 offered parents strategies to support children at home and in programs during the summer. Planning for the following school year, and strategies around partnering with schools for student success were also a focus.
- BUSD Cesar Chavez and Dolores Huerta Visual Arts and Essay Contest and Celebration May 2018
- Illuminate support for parents for the transition from PowerSchool to Illuminate.
- Warm Passes - Middle School and High School transition meetings for seamless transitions for our most vulnerable students and families
- Parent Teacher Conference outreach and meeting support for teachers and families. OFEE supports with reaching parents who are not responsive, providing translation as needed, and also with ensuring parents understanding and following up with next steps to support students.
- Promotional Ceremony for English Learners – Family Engagement supports with programming, outreach and day of the event.
- Educate and support families of students with IEPs (Individual Educational Plan for special education students) or 504 (Child Education Accommodation) plans.
- Immigration support for families in the form of advocacy workshops, providing resources and communicating with school staff
- Food Pantries at most elementary schools, and BHS. Plans for including Berkeley Technology Academy and middle schools for the 2018-19 school year.

- Ongoing partnership with McKinney-Vento Coordinator to support homeless families with food, clothing, housing, student enrollment, and communicating / advocating for these students and families with school staff and community organizations.
- OFEE led race and racism workshops to continue the BUSD community's understanding of our diversity and to promote inclusion.

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## **Progress on 2017-18 SMART Goals**

### 1. Family and Community Advisory Committee

The goal was to form a Family and Community Engagement advisory committee made up of stakeholders such as school secretaries, security and afterschool staff, community partners, teachers, and district and OFEE staff. The committee was to meet at least twice - in the spring and fall - to advise OFEE Supervisor and Director of Community Relations on effective approaches to family and community engagement for student support and success.

**Result:** The Office of Family Engagement and Equity held brown bag lunches with district staff/leaders and community partners (library services, after school, cooking and gardening) to discuss intersections, and plan collaborations to provide effective student and family support, as well as opportunities for family engagement. This resulted in training collaboration with library services and resources for scheduled events. Informal and one on one meetings with school secretaries, teachers, and support staff helped with understanding of school and classroom culture and practice, and provided opportunities for OFEE collaboration to improve outcomes for students. OFEE will continue to seek input from all stakeholders, and look forward to formalizing a Family Engagement Advisory Committee to guide the progress of this work.

### 2. Quarterly trainings/workshops for parents,

The goal was to to empower and support parent/guardians with attendance and academic issues, address trauma and improve school climate.

**Result:** OFEE provided parenting workshops during the 2017-18 school year to support families with helping their children at home, understanding the importance of attending school regularly and on time, as well as addressing family traumas took place.

Workshop in September addressed academic excellence, attendance and preparing early for college

November 2017 training incorporated technology and library resources to support learning, including Tales 2 Go, and other district and online resources to support learning.

January, March and May of 2018 covered Self Care, empowering parents and parent leaders, and school climate.

### 3. Latino Family Affinity Group

The goal was to engage at least two parents from each school in a Latino Family Affinity Group with meetings (at least monthly) and one retreat.

**Result:** The Latino Affinity Group model was not implemented in the 2018-19 school year, as many of the families from this vulnerable group were engaged in immigration education, and advocacy. The Office of Family Engagement and Equity contacted advocacy and legal organizations to support families, and provided a high level of support and encouragement. One focus was maintaining communication with families and school staff to create a safe space for students. The approach to supporting these families is in telling their stories in a safe space. OFEE has provided this space in the parenting workshop (*Who Colors Your Picture-Understanding Self* as a pretext to forming quality home school relationships/partnerships that support learning) that provided a space for this work with some of our target families. We are looking into being intentional about providing a safe space for this affinity group to come together, and a professional and empathetic leadership to guide families through a process of growth from the wealth of knowledge and experience they possess.

### 4. Ramp-Up parent engagement workshops

The goal was to provide workshops/activities around academic support to strengthen home school partnerships for parents of Super Science Saturday and Ramp Up program students.

**Result:** The Office of Family Engagement and Equity (OFEE) provided a six engaging workshops for parents whose students attended the Ramp Up Saturday academic support program. Topics included self-care, helping students at home, navigating school and district resources, time management / work life balance, parent leadership, and positive and negative self-talk. These workshops were developed and presented by BUSD OFEE staff, and will be presented at a conference in February 2019 to state and national school district, business and community leaders.

### Update FY 2018-19

OFEE has been well aware of funding challenges, and has therefore sought outside funding for other than staffing and basic needs funded through BSEP. OFEE produced two major activities/events in this 2018-19 school year, and both have been co-sponsored by community partners. The K to College School Supply Giveaway and Family Picnic that engaged more than one thousand families was sponsored primarily by SupplyBank.org, and Covenant Church in Berkeley, as well as Walgreens, Kaiser, City of Berkeley School Linked Services, and a number of additional community organizations.

Additionally, OFEE applied for classroom grants (three total for OFEE), and two Strategic Impact Grants from Berkeley Public School Funds to resource parenting class materials for parents of students at Title 1 Schools, a half day of Parent Workshops, as well as the Black History Oratorical Fest in March 2019. OFEE School site staff were also successful with applying for grants to support site based parent engagement strategies (Class about race, culture and cooking taught by OFEE staff) that create space for positive engagement with the school,

and for parenting classes to help parents with supporting their children at home. The plan for the rest of the 2018-19 school year is to use the small budget for staff development and contractors for parent workshops/education. The hope is to utilize funds from the grants applied for to meet the needs for the proposed workshops and events. Upcoming events initiated and supported by OFEE for the rest of the school year include the Parent workshops (some will be parent led workshops to encourage parent involvement and growth), Black History Oratorical Fest, Cesar Chavez Dolores Huerta Commemorative Contest, Promotion Ceremony for English Learners, and the High School Black and Latino Graduations. Parenting workshops for Title 1 Schools, and College and Career Readiness and financial aid Clinics. Families are invited to participate in the planning and implementation of OFEE programs and events, and these collaborations produce empowered parents, and promote an inclusive school climate and district.