

BERKELEY UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

TO: BSEP Planning and Oversight Committee
FROM: Brent Stephens, Superintendent, and
Natasha Beery, Director of BSEP and Community Relations
DATE: April 21, 2020
SUBJECT: Recommendation for BSEP and BERRA Funds in 2020-21:
BSEP Measure Oversight, Communications and Community
Engagement; BERRA Measure Oversight

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The Berkeley Schools Excellence Program (BSEP), funded by Measure E1 of 2016, allocates two percent (2%) of revenues to “support of the Planning and Oversight Committee and School Site Councils, and community engagement, communications and public information services.” [BSEP Measure E1 of 2016, Section 9A]

The Berkeley Educator’s Recruitment and Retention (BERRA) funded by Measure E of 2020, sets aside one percent (1%) of revenues to “costs related to planning, monitoring, evaluating and reporting the use of these funds” [BERRA Measure E of 2020, Section 2A]

BSEP and BERRA Funded Purposes

Planning and Oversight Committee

Ever since the first BSEP special tax measure was approved by Berkeley voters in 1986, multiple accountability protections have been required for the expenditure of the local tax revenues. For both the current BSEP Measure E1 of 2016 and the recently approved BERRA Measure E of 2020, tax proceeds are accounted for in a separate fund, with annual review by independent auditors, and review of plans and reports by an elected oversight committee.

The district-wide BSEP Planning and Oversight (P&O) Committee is composed of 27 members elected from each school site and program to be actively involved in reviewing, discussing and recommending plans and reports for BSEP funds. For 2020-21, the P&O Committee’s bylaws have been revised and approved by the Board of Education to expand its scope beyond the BSEP funds to include oversight of the recently approved BERRA measure.

Support of the P&O Committee for BSEP and BERRA Funds

District staff ensure that the P&O Committee has the necessary information to carry out their oversight role by providing program and budget plans, revenue projections, reports and analysis for each of the distinct purposes of the Measures. The Director consults with all BSEP-funded program Directors, Coordinators and Supervisors, and works with the Superintendent, Associate Superintendent for Educational Services, and Assistant Superintendent for

Business Services to ensure that District and BSEP plans are aligned. For the BERRA fund, the Director works with the Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources to develop plans and reports for 5% of the net revenue from the BERRA budget for discretionary expenditures, and provides reports on the 95% of the net revenue applied to increased compensation.

A Senior Budget Analyst works with the Director and each Budget Manager to ensure that plans, reports and audits are provided in accordance with the Measure and with auditing and budgeting best practices, and ensures proper documentation of expenditures of BSEP funds, including Site funds. The Program Specialist provides the essential communications, record-keeping and meeting support for P&O Committee.

School Site Council Support

The BSEP measure provides 10.25% of annual revenues to fund school site Programs at each K-12 school. The Director, Budget Analyst and Program Specialist provide training and on-going support to the School Site Councils, working with principals, teachers, support staff, students, community members and parent/guardians to develop each school's annual *School Plan for Student Achievement (SPSA)*, including the development and monitoring of the annual plan for expenditure of BSEP School Site Program Funds. The Director and Program Specialist also provide materials, advice and support for school principals in conducting elections of site council representatives in order to ensure broad and diverse participation in elections and governance, and provide support and engagement with all 18 sites and programs throughout the year to ensure that each Principal and site committee has the information and support they need to plan, deliberate and document their decisions.

BSEP Funds for Community Engagement, Communications, and Translation

Multiple communication channels are needed to reach diverse audiences, including parents/guardians, students, employees, and community stakeholders, each with distinct interests and concerns. The Director oversees and convenes the work of a Communications Team on a wide range of projects in service of the communications needs of the District. Members of the team update the district website, social media platforms, bi-weekly A+ News, weekly staff Bulletin, an annual Community Report, flyers, brochures, press releases, school e-trees and newsletters, as well as school messenger emails and phone blasts for more urgent communications. When special situations arise that require community engagement on a community-wide level, such as the wildfire air quality emergencies or the current COVID-19 crisis, or on a site-specific level such as the Sylvia Mendez school name change, the Director advises the Superintendent and senior leadership and organizes targeted communications and processes to inform and engage staff, family, students and wider community. Funds from BSEP also provide for interpretation and translation to support our multilingual community, funding a specialist for

Spanish translation/interpretation, hourly Arabic translation, and a contract with a multilingual Language Line telephone service.

BUDGET RECOMMENDATIONS FOR 2020-21

Staff		\$573,200
• Director of Community Relations	.95 FTE	
• Program Specialist	.85 FTE	
• Public Information Officer/Comm Manager	.85 FTE	
• Specialist Translator/Interpreter	.67 FTE	
• Communications Specialist	.50 FTE	

Director of Community Relations .95 BSEP/.05 BERRA

This position is responsible for the oversight of the local tax measure funds representing over 20% of the BUSD operating budget, including planning and reporting to the P&O Committee and Board, and advising the Superintendent, District Leadership and School Board on the parameters of current and potential measures. The Director acts as the Superintendent’s designee, as assigned, to represent, coordinate, facilitate and/or support the functions of the Superintendent’s Office, including the district’s public planning processes, Communications Team, and relevant district, city and county agencies, working groups, and community organizations. As a member of the Superintendent’s Executive Cabinet, the Director participates in developing the District’s vision, strategic planning, budget, goals and programs, responds to district-wide crises, drafts district/board policies and procedures, oversees processes for community engagement, including district and school forums to gain relevant and timely feedback from the community on issues of concern. The Director also oversees the district’s strategic communications plans, public information strategies, translation/interpretation and Communications Team.

Program Specialist .85 FTE BSEP/.15 BERRA

The Program Specialist provides administrative support to the Director, communication with the Planning and Oversight Committee and Chairs, as well as training and support to Site Councils, including SSC recruitment, elections, meeting processes, records and reporting. The Program Specialist also attends Site Council meetings to advise and share effective practices with Principals, chairs and members. With the addition of the BERRA measure oversight, the Program Specialist position will also track the documentation of expenditures for discretionary purposes of the BERRA plan.

Public Information Officer/Communications Manager .85 FTE BSEP/.15 GF

A core member of the Communications Team, the District PIO interacts with news organizations, government agencies, community organizations, local businesses, District staff and other school districts to coordinate public information and media relations. The PIO responds to requests for information

and also produces news releases on the BUSD website, a Weekly Bulletin for all BUSD employees, and press releases sent directly to the news media. The PIO works closely with District staff to support communications needs, and assists in representing the District at School Board and community meetings. The PIO also may respond on behalf of the District to requests filed under the California Public Records Act, and coordinates the School Accountability Report Cards.

As demands have grown for rapidly responsive as well as proactive communication on multiple interactive platforms, this position has evolved toward the work of a Communications Manager, a development that was recommended in a communications workgroup and study conducted by the District several years ago. While many of the workgroup's recommendations were implemented, the paradigm shift from a reactive Public Information model to a more strategic Communications Manager position was not implemented at the time, nor was the recommendation of more consistent support for social media and online platforms. In 2020-21, a departmental reorganization is proposed to include updating this position to better meet the district's needs, along with shifting from contract work to a part-time communications specialist, as described below.

Communications Specialist .50 FTE

District families and the general public have expectations for responsive and comprehensive communications, with a need for up-to-date information and online access in addition to traditional print media. For many years, BSEP has funded various contracts for project-based writing, editing, website and graphic design. As demands have steadily increased to require that information and community engagement options be provided on multiple channels and platforms, and as the distance learning environment is drawing heavily upon online content generation, a part-time communications specialist would provide more consistent support and strengthen the Communications Team's ability to produce content on the district website, social media platforms, and other online channels, in collaboration with the Technology Department.

Specialist Translator/Interpreter .67 FTE BSEP / .33 GF

This position is responsible to translate into Spanish the key district print, web, and email communications and documents. In consultation with the Director of BSEP and Community Relations, this position prioritizes requests for translation/interpretation. The Specialist provides Spanish translation for key District materials and in-person interpretation for workshops, IEPs and other special meetings.

Program Expenses

Printing & Mailing \$18,000

The primary expense in this category comes from a mailing of the annual *BUSD*

Community Report. Printing and citywide mailing costs for each issue are approximately \$15,000. Other print documents include Site Council training materials, the BSEP Annual Plan, district-wide mailings to families from the Superintendent, information posters for schools, and printing related to BSEP Measure Awareness or specific BSEP-funded programs.

Travel, Conferences and Memberships, Cell Phone \$6,000

This budget provides cell phone service for the PIO and Director, as well as membership fees and annual professional development (for local travel only) for the specialist interpreter-translator, the Public Information Officer, and the BSEP Director. Expenses have been reduced for 2020-21.

RESOURCE SUMMARY

The core program purposes are currently in alignment with the yearly revenue allocation, although without much leeway for special project expenditures, which must rely upon the balance from Measure A.

In summary, the recommendation for the expenditure of the BSEP Community Engagement funds in FY 2020-21 is:

Revenue	647,593
Expenses	
Staffing	573,200
Printing and Mailing	18,000
Travel, Conferences, Memberships	5,000
Cell Phone	1,000
Reserve for Personnel Variance	<u>35,000</u>
Total Expenses	<u>632,200</u>
Net Change to Fund Balance	15,393
Fund Balance	
Beginning Fund Balance	163,063
Net Increase/(Decrease)	<u>15,393</u>
Ending Fund Balance	178,456

BSEP Measure A (Resource 0854) Carryover

The fund balance from Measure A is the legacy of a period of understaffing in the BSEP Office, and is planned for use to address deferred needs that have not been within the capacity of the Communications Team and/or BSEP office to achieve without supplemental assistance.

Contracted Services \$30,000

The contracted services for 2020-21 would include:

- A email newsletter service;
- Website design and maintenance support;
- Simultaneous interpretation phone services and video interpretation services for multiple languages;

Hourly Staff \$10,000

Support on an as-needed basis is provided in the following areas:

- P&O and Public Meeting Support (set-up, minute-taking, childcare);
- Translators and interpreters to supplement the District Specialist Translator/Interpreter; these needs have increased significantly in the past year, particularly for Spanish and Arabic;
- Hourly staff to support document and website archiving.

Equipment and Supplies \$12,000

This budget provides office equipment for BSEP staff, as well as supplies for the BSEP P&O Committee, annual site council training, town halls and other public events.

In summary, the recommendation for the expenditure of the BSEP Community Engagement funds from Measure A (Resource 0854) in FY 2020-21 is:

Revenue	0
Expenses	
Hourly Staff	10,000
Equipment and Supplies	12,000
Contracted Services	30,000
Total Expenses	<u>52,000</u>
Net Change to Fund Balance	(52,000)
Fund Balance	
Beginning Fund Balance	237,690
Net Increase / (Decrease)	<u>(52,000)</u>
Ending Fund Balance	185,690

BUDGET RECOMMENDATION for BERRA Oversight

Staff **\$82,700**

- Director of Community Relations .05 FTE
- Program Specialist .15 FTE
- BERRA Coordinator [TSA] .50 FTE

Director and Program Specialist .05 Director / .15 Specialist

The Director and Program Specialist provide administrative support to the Planning and Oversight Committee in ensuring that the budgets, plans, paperwork, reports, audits and all fiscal processes are carried out in keeping with the requirements of the Measure.

BERRA Coordinator .50 FTE

This Teacher on Special Assignment will work with the relevant departments, including Human Resources, Special Education, Education Services and Professional Development, to move the nine projects forward and to provide coordination amongst the projects. This position will help to develop work plans for each project and will support implementation tracking. In addition, this position will support the work of Human Resources to staff the various programs. The Teacher on Special Assignment will assist the Director in completing the necessary reports.

In summary, the recommendation for the expenditure of the Measure E, BERRA Oversight budget in FY 2020-21 is:

Revenue	94,528
Expenses	
Staffing	84,400
Reserve for Personnel Variance	6,000
Total Expenses	90,400
Net Change to Fund Balance	4,128
Fund Balance	
Beginning Fund Balance	0
Net Increase/(Decrease)	4,128
Ending Fund Balance	4,128