

## 8. Parent/Community Involvement & Communication

### 8.1. School Visitation

It is the policy of the Board of Education and the practice of District staff to encourage parents and guardians to visit school sites and classrooms to observe the work of the schools. The Board of Education and District staff believe there is no better way for the public to learn what the schools are actually doing.

All visitors to school sites must report to the school office when entering, and receive authorization to visit elsewhere in the school site.

Unauthorized persons will not be permitted in school buildings or on school grounds. School principals are authorized to take appropriate action to prevent such persons from entering buildings and from loitering on grounds. Such persons will be prosecuted to the full extent of the law per Education Code section 32211 and Penal Code 653 (g) and 647 (b).

Information about a student will only be given to parents/guardians and designated adults in accordance with State and Federal laws and Board policy.

### 8.2. Parent Teacher Conferences

Formal Parent Teacher Conferences for Kindergarten through 8<sup>th</sup> grade students' parents/ guardians will be held in November. The purpose of this conference is to meet individually with the teacher to discuss progress to date and the first report card of the year. Parents/guardians are encouraged to request additional conference appointments with their child's teacher as the need arises. Please follow school site procedures for setting up appointments with your child's teacher. If you are a non-native speaker of English, services are available using the Language Line phone service.

### 8.3. Back to School Night

Back-to-School Night, scheduled in September at each school in Berkeley, is an opportunity for parents/guardians to meet their child's teacher(s), to get an overview of the grade level curriculum, and to learn more about the school from the principal.

### 8.4. Family Engagement and Equity

Many schools have Family Engagement Specialists whose focus is to equip parents with necessary information, skills, and resources to effectively navigate the school system, support their children's success in school and engage them in school leadership opportunities. The Family Engagement team also provides support to parents and caregivers in need of advocacy support and information to address concerns about their children. For further information, contact Family Engagement and Equity Supervisor, Ann-Marie Callegari, Supervisor of OFEE, at 644-8991 or [anncallegari@berkeley.net](mailto:anncallegari@berkeley.net).

### 8.5. Homeless Education Assistance

The McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Assistance Act requires school districts to remove all barriers to enrollment, attendance and school success for homeless students. Assistance to homeless students and families is provided by the Office of Student Services. Students and families identified as homeless are provided with enrollment assistance, transportation to/from school, school supplies, supplementary academic supports, case management and referrals to outside agencies. Contact BUSD's McKinney-Vento Counselor, Sophina Jones, at 644-6529 for information regarding assistance for homeless students.

### 8.6. Parent Teacher Association (PTA)

Most schools have a parent organization that comes under the umbrella of the state PTA. The PTA usually sponsors several events annually,

including fundraising activities and parent education nights. The PTA also coordinates afterschool classes, room parents and volunteers, publishes school newsletters and directories, organizes teacher lunches, and serves as a forum for parental concerns. At Berkeley High School, the PTSA includes students as members.

### 8.7. School Site Committees

#### School Governance Council (SGC)

This committee is a combination of the former School Site Council (SSC) and BSEP Site Committees. The School Governance Council is charged with developing, reviewing, and evaluating annually a *Single Plan for Student Achievement*, which addresses:

- Student achievement
- Opportunities for enrichment
- Special needs of identified students
- Staff development
- Program evaluation
- Program expenditures

The SGC monitors and evaluates the Single Plan for Student Achievement (SPSA) to ensure that BSEP funds, Title I, and other resources are being spent appropriately. Members of the SGC include the principal, teachers, classified staff, parents, other community members, and at the secondary schools, students. Members of each group are selected by their peers. Elections for membership are held annually at each school; the meetings are open to the public. Decisions made by the School Governance Council affect the school experience of every student.

#### English Learner Advisory Committee (ELAC)

State compliance regulations require that all schools with 21 or more English Learner (EL) students have a functioning English Learner Advisory Committee. This committee is comprised of parents of EL students, as well as the site principal and staff. This advisory committee meets monthly to accomplish the following mandates:

- review the school plan for services to EL students
- conduct a needs assessment
- review the language census
- give input on the EIA/EL budget; and
- increase parent awareness of the importance of school involvement.

A member of this committee represents the school on the District English Learner Advisory Committee (DELAC). Translation services for these meetings are available upon request to the site principal.

### 8.8. District Level Committees

#### District English Learner Advisory Committee (DELAC)

This committee is comprised of representatives from each site's ELAC, along with District and site staff, and community members. The committee may advise the District on services for English Learners, including ensuring parental involvement. The DELAC also serves as the English Learner Parent Advisory Committee (ELPAC) for consultation, review and comment on the district's Local Control and Accountability Plan (LCAP) for supplemental state funds under the Local Control Funding Formula. Translation at these meetings is available. For additional information, contact the Office of Family Engagement and Equity at 644-8991.

### BSEP Schools Excellence Program and the BSEP Planning & Oversight Committee (BSEP P&O)

The *Berkeley Public Schools' Educational Excellence Act of 2016* (Measure E1 of 2016) is a local special tax which provides over \$28 million each year for the enhancement of our school programs. Two-thirds of BSEP funds are used to provide more classroom teachers and other supports for classroom teaching, enabling the district to maintain smaller class sizes than could be afforded through the General Fund.

The BSEP Measure provides much more, including: counseling services for middle school students; 4<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> grade music and visual and performing arts programs; up-to-date libraries in all K-12 schools; technology equipment and support; professional development for teachers; a program evaluation department and a public information office. The BSEP Measure also provides School Discretionary funds to each site, which each school's School Governance Council (SGC) allocates to programs which support student achievement.

The BSEP program is overseen by the BSEP Planning and Oversight Committee (P&O), a citizens' committee with representatives from every school, selected by each school's School Governance Council. The role of the P&O Committee is [to assist the District in developing plans and budgets for each of the BSEP programs, and to monitor the expenditures of BSEP funds. The P&O Committee representatives also provide communication and coordination among schools, sharing ideas to ensure the effective use of BSEP. Serving on the BSEP Planning and Oversight Committee is an excellent way to obtain an overview of how the district functions, and to help ensure that BSEP funds are used properly and to good purpose. Information is available on the BUSD website and through the BSEP Office at [bsep@berkeley.net](mailto:bsep@berkeley.net), or by calling Natasha Beery, Director of BSEP, at 644-8717.

### The Local Control and Accountability Plan (LCAP) and Parent Advisory Committee (PAC)

In January, 2014 a new Parent Advisory Committee (PAC) was formed under the guidelines of the new California State Local Control Funding Formula, which requires a forum for consulting parent representatives on the three-year plan now required of all school districts in California. Together with the DELAC, the role of the PAC is to consult, review, and comment on the district's Local Control Accountability Plan. For additional information, contact Pat Saddler, Director of Special Projects at 644-8931.

Meaningful engagement of parents, students, and other stakeholders, including those representing students qualifying for free and reduced price meals, English learners, and foster youth, is a state priority and key component of the Local Control Accountability Plan (LCAP) development process. Representatives are appointed from each school, with one from each elementary site, two from each middle school, four from Berkeley High School, two from Berkeley Technology Academy, and one from the preschools, as well as four at large for the district.

### Bond Oversight Committee

The charge of the Bond Oversight Committee is to provide enhanced accountability to the Berkeley community by ensuring that monies from the Berkeley Schools Construction Bonds of 2010, 2000 and 1992 (Measures I, AA and A respectively) are spent in accordance with the Measures and the Board approved modifications. The Committee meets monthly to review whether projects are contained within the Measure I language, review audits, scrutinize project expenditures, review construction program modifications, and produce an annual report. They advise the Board of any concerns with regard to the expenditures or

progress of construction projects and present an annual report. Information about the Committee is available at 644-6066 and on the BUSD website.

### Facilities Maintenance & Security Oversight Committee

The charge of the Facilities Maintenance & Security Oversight Committee is to provide enhanced accountability to the Berkeley community by ensuring that monies from the Berkeley Schools Facilities Safety and Measures Act of 2010 (Measures H) are spent in accordance with the Measure. The Committee reviews the District's administration of and compliance with the terms of the Measure and provides input into annual and long-term goals for maintenance and security of the District's facilities. The Committee reports to the Board of Education and advises them of concerns and matters related to BUSD maintenance. Information about the Committee is available at 644-6250 and on the BUSD website.

### Berkeley Arts in Education Steering Committee

The Berkeley Arts in Education Steering Committee (BAESC) welcomes parents, teachers, arts organizations and community members. Meeting bi-monthly during the school year, BAESC believes that regular, sequential standards-based instruction in all four arts — dance, drama, music and visual arts — is essential for all students in BUSD schools. To achieve this goal, the committee seeks resources and partnerships to make quality arts instruction equitable and accessible. BAESC works to provide a stable infrastructure for the district's art programs by assessing existing programs and facilities and supporting the BUSD Arts Education Plan. Committee members make reports to the Board of Education and lend support for the annual Performing Arts Showcase. For further information, call Peter Gidlund, VAPA Program Supervisor at (510) 644-8772.

### Audit Committee

The Audit Committee functions as a budget oversight committee and is comprised of five members: two Board members appointed by the Board President, and three members of the community whose skills are deemed sufficient by the Board to enable them to carry out their duties effectively.

### **8.9. Website**

The District website, maintained by the Public Information Office, is a valuable resource with information about:

- School sites
- Enrollment procedures
- Test scores
- Board of Education agendas and meetings
- Calendars
- Demographic information
- Employment opportunities
- Facility updates, and
- State and national resources for parents and students
- Parent Student Handbook

Visit the website often: <http://www.berkeleyschools.net>

### **8.10. Distribution of Materials**

Any organization that wishes to distribute materials to students or staff or post notices in schools must obtain prior approval from the Executive Assistant to the Superintendent.

### **8.11. Berkeley Public Schools Fund**

The Berkeley Public Schools Fund is a non-profit organization that mobilizes financial and volunteer resources to directly support student

success through excellent teaching. With support from individuals, businesses, government and foundations, the Schools Fund is able to provide over \$400,000 annually in direct grant support for teachers and their classrooms; manage another \$200,000 in special projects funds for programs and teachers; administer the Berkeley School Volunteers program; and serve as a catalyst, facilitator, advocate and fundraiser for public education within and outside the District. With the Schools Fund's help, students and teachers travel throughout the Bay Area on field trips; enjoy working with visiting art, dance and theater professionals; use various technology tools or supplemental curriculum materials to support reading, math, science and social studies; have bookshelves replenished with engaging fiction and non-fiction selections—and many other educational enrichment opportunities.

The School Fund's Berkeley School Volunteers (BSV) program engages some 1,000 community volunteers to assist in the schools. BSV, fully funded by the Schools Fund, has authority from BUSD to recruit, train, and place volunteers from the community with teachers and staff who have requested volunteer assistance. Annually, BSV volunteers give the equivalent of at least \$1 million in donated time and talent. BSV's diverse programs make volunteering in our schools easy for even the busiest of community members. From writing a monthly "Lit Pal" letter to tutoring regularly in classrooms, BSV volunteers make an invaluable contribution to teachers, students, and public education in Berkeley!

For more information about the Schools Fund programs, or to make a donation, please visit their website at [berkeleypublicschoolsfund.org](http://berkeleypublicschoolsfund.org), contact the Schools Fund at (510) 644-6244 or email at [schoolsfund@berkeley.net](mailto:schoolsfund@berkeley.net). For information about volunteering, please call (510) 644-8833 or email at [bsv@berkeley.net](mailto:bsv@berkeley.net).

#### **8.12 Use of Student Images/Schoolwork**

The District often includes images of students engaged in school activities and events as part of outreach and information about our programs for parents, family, and the wider community. Community partners such as the PTA and the Berkeley Public Schools Fund value these images as compelling ways to share and urge support for the work of our teachers and students.

During the school year, your student may be photographed or filmed by District staff while participating in school programs and activities. If you have a special concern about the use of your student's image or name, please notify the school office.

We want you to know that our Board Policies and Administrative regulations provide the following guidelines:

#### Photos and Videos

- Close-up photos of individual students require parent permission before publication.
- Videos including an interview with an individual student also require parent permission.
- Photos and videos showing two or more students may be published without parent permission, such as videos showing students engaged in classroom/school activities,
- Photos and videos of public performances, or other special events open to the general public may be published and shared.

#### Student Names

- Parent permission will be required to publish the first and last names of students along the photo or video, unless the student is appearing in an award ceremony and other public event. Otherwise,

photos and videos are published without names, or with first names only.

#### Student Work:

- Student artwork, schoolwork, writing and media may be shared publicly (website, social media, print publications) as long as the student's full name is not used. Parent permission is required for the use of a student's full name in association with the student's work.

#### **8.13. Media and Special Projects**

There are times when schools may be featured in various news media. News reporters, photographers and/or film crews from TV, radio stations, newspapers, magazines, online publications, or other media may wish to interview, photograph and/or film your child in relation to a story about our schools or students, such as a school performance, a sports competition, or other newsworthy events. Your child's name might be included in the report. We want you to know:

Media representatives must register immediately upon entering any school building or grounds when school is in session and a media representative who wishes to photograph students on school grounds should first make arrangements with the PIO, principal or designee. We want you to know that in accordance with Board Policies and Administrative Regulations:

- The district will not impose restraints on students' right to speak freely with media representatives at those times which do not disrupt a student's educational program.
- Parents/guardian may, at their discretion, instruct their children not to communicate with news media representatives.

Please discuss your wishes with your children if you do not want them to be interviewed, photographed or filmed by news media, on or off campus. Please be aware that there may be circumstances beyond our control, and the media policy is a guide, but not a guarantee that your child will not be interviewed or photographed by news media.