

**BSEP PLANNING & OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE MINUTES**  
**January 26, 2021**

**P&O Committee Members Present**

Jerry Liang, *Pre-K Program*  
Nicole Chabot, *Berkeley Arts Magnet*  
Leda Dederich, *Cragmont (co-Rep)*  
Jonathan Weissglass, *Emerson*  
Shereen Katrak, *Ruth Acty (co-Rep)*  
Heather Ball, *Malcolm X*  
Carla Bryant, *Oxford*

Weldon Bradstreet, *Rosa Parks*  
Justin Randall, *Sylvia Mendez*  
Heather Flett, *Washington*  
Olivia Lim, *Longfellow Middle School*  
Aaron Glimme, *Berkeley High*  
Terry Pastika, *Berkeley High (Alt)*

**P&O Committee Members Absent\*:**

Vanessa Garza, *John Muir*  
Prashant Jawalikar, *King Middle School*  
Chetan Kamdar, *King Middle School*  
Kate Jordan, *Willard Middle School*  
Martin de Mucha Flores, *Independent Study*

Sarah Cline, *Berkeley High*  
Josh Irwin, *Berkeley High*  
Shauna Rabinowitz, *Berkeley High*  
Esfandiar Imani, *Berkeley High (Alt)*

*\*Alternates and co-reps are not marked absent if another rep is present. Currently there is no representation from BTA or Thousand Oaks Elementary, and only one representative each from Longfellow and Willard Middle Schools.*

**Visitors, School Board Directors, Union Reps, and Guests:**

Laura Babitt, *School Board Director*

**BUSD Staff:**

Brent Stephens, *Superintendent of Schools*  
Jay Nitschke, *Director of Technology*  
Max Eissler, *Director of Technology*  
Natasha Beery, *Director of BSEP and Communications*  
Adelita Martinez, *Professional Development Coordinator*  
Thomas Reinhardt, *Evaluation and Assessment Coordinator*  
Trish McDermott, *Public Information Officer*  
Danielle Perez, *BSEP Program Specialist*

**1. Call to Order and Roll Call**

The meeting was held online via Zoom. At 6:32 p.m. co-Chair Bradstreet called the meeting to order and conducted a roll call for members.

**2. Establish the Quorum/Approve the Agenda**

The quorum was established with 12 voting members present at the start of the meeting, increasing to 13 later in the meeting.

Chair Bradstreet asked for a motion to approve the agenda, amending the item order to be 8, 10, 9, then 11. Rep. Chabot moved to approve the revised agenda, Rep. Glimme seconded; the agenda was approved by acclamation without objection.

### **3. Chairperson's Comments**

*Nicole Chabot and Weldon Bradstreet*

Co-Chair Chabot welcomed Max Eissler, the district's new Technology Director, with sadness that Jay Nitschke will be leaving the position as he retires.

### **4. BSEP Director's Comments**

*Natasha Beery, Director BSEP & Community Relations*

Director Beery thanked all for attending, and explained changes to the meeting structure that will hopefully allow more time for discussion in these meetings per member requests. Additionally, in trying to address challenges with the progress of the year's work, she explained that the group must start with prior year reporting before jumping into next year's plans. This used to happen through very short budget compliance reports, but the lack of context was difficult for new members, so the reports were extended to include background and program updates, which has resulted in the current frustration with the amount of time and information being presented with the Annual Reports. In the most recent BSEP Managers meeting, Library Services Coordinator Jessica Lee suggested that the managers could create pre-recorded videos to provide program overviews, which could alleviate some of the pressure in the current annual work cycle of the committee. The BSEP Program Specialist will also follow up with a survey for members gauging interest in special meetings to work with BSEP managers on more specific topics that the full committee may not have time to cover.

Director Beery will meet again with the managers to talk about reformatting the Annual Plans to make more clear how we're addressing key areas of interest to the committee, particularly equity and inclusion, data or metrics to report on outcomes, and clarifying budget projections. She added that this committee's purview hones in on BSEP and BERRA specifics, but reiterated the commitment of the Superintendent and district leaders to articulate here and in other places the high-priority initiatives and goals of the district, to provide this committee a theory of action for the district, and context for how local tax revenues fit into the bigger picture. BSEP is substantial, 20% of the BUSD budget, but there are elements committee members may wish to see addressed that fall elsewhere. She thanked the committee for bringing up multiple suggestions, and for continuing to communicate with district leaders and managers how to make these meetings meaningful and honor the members' commitment.

### **5. Superintendent's Report**

*Brent Stephens, Superintendent of Schools*

Dr. Stephens updated the committee on major lines of work in the district including a more formal launch to the educator workforce housing initiative, which will see a Board decision around a final location on February 17. There is a \$10 million renovation project upcoming for Longfellow Middle School. This week he sent a letter outlining the plan to engage the community about the middle school assignment process. The 2021-22 budget is just beginning to be built, with a 3.8% COLA resulting in a better outlook than the previous year's anticipated budget reduction. The School Resource Officer program discussions at Berkeley High continues, as does work on the district's English Learner Master Plan.

He also shared that in the coming weeks BUSD will begin learning from the City of Berkeley Health Officer about how teacher vaccinations will be implemented, vaccinations being another precaution and safety measure on top of what we're already doing to mitigate risk once schools can reopen.

## **6. Approval of Minutes**

*December 15, 2020*

Rep. Pastika moved to approve the [1.12.21 Draft meeting minutes](#), Rep. Dederich seconded; the minutes were approved by acclamation without objection.

## **7. Public Comment**

There was no public comment.

## **8. SBAC Update and BSEP/BERRA Implications**

*Nicole Chabot, P&O Representative to the Superintendent's Budget Advisory Committee*

Rep. Chabot began by saying that the Superintendent's report touched on a lot of what was discussed in the first SBAC meeting. There is a present problem of enrollment decreases, with about 250 fewer students enrolled in 2020-21. There are also significant requirements for districts to be eligible for the state's reopening incentive money, and it's not sure that the district is in a position to take advantage of these.

Dr. Stephens elaborated that the district has a couple of mechanisms in place to blunt enrollment decreases for the 2021-22 school year, but those don't mitigate the losses in the LCAP supplemental budget, which is based on enrollment numbers for English Learners, students receiving free and reduced lunch, and foster youth. That particular budget is still subject to enrollment count, and the district is forecasting two moving trends in that population: a general decline in enrollment due to COVID that we see in all districts, and significant decreases in numbers of these students in our district over the past decade.

Rep. Pastika asked if our district's loss of roughly 250 students is on par with losses in other districts in the state. Dr. Stephens responded that we think roughly yes. There aren't reliable data sources on this, but districts both urban and suburban are reporting on enrollment loss, and we think that about 5% is in line across the state. District leaders believe and hope that these are common short-term choices to seek home schooling, private schooling, and out of state schooling while California schools are closed, and hope to see a return once schools reopen in person.

## **9. 2019-20 BSEP Annual Reports Part Two**

*High Quality Instruction: Lita Martinez, PD Coordinator; Thom Reinhardt, Coordinator of Research and Evaluation; Natasha Beery, Director of BSEP and Community Relations*

Director Beery explained that High Quality Instruction (HQI) is the largest portion of BSEP, pulling 66% of available revenues. Lowering class sizes has been the first purpose of the local school taxes since their inception in 1986, while subsidiary purposes have shifted over the years

and various measures. The current iteration pulls priorities that used to be in other “buckets” into High Quality Instruction under the heading of Support For Teaching; these include Professional Development (PD), Classroom Support, Evaluation, and Expanded Course Offerings (ECO). See [HQI 2019-20 Annual Report document](#) and [Overview Slides](#) for details. Director Beery reminded the committee that the group will shift to much more in-depth looks at these program plans in about a month’s time, when managers begin planning for the 2021-22 school year.

Rep. Chabot noted that in previous years, the district provided schools with multi-year testing data, which was disrupted with the shift to the STAR assessments. She asked Dr. Reinhardt when it would be possible to review student test results over a multi-year period. Dr. Reinhardt answered that the STAR has been in the district for several years, at at least some schools. Also, because BUSD had to name its learning loss indicators in the LCP, the STAR has been used to track student progress from fall to winter to spring. So, most schools should be able to track scores for 3rd, 4th, and 5th grade students with STAR data. Certainly by next year he expects that we should have another round of state SBA testing results, which we missed last year due to COVID, though we have yet to hear a definitive answer from the state about implementation this school year. BREA will release data books to principals several times a year, and some have shared those with their School Site Councils (SSCs). BREA is trying to provide data that exists in shelter in place to school sites.

Rep. Glimme noted that at the most recent PD day earlier in the week, staff felt the lack of the 0.4 FTE teacher on special assignment (TSA) working specifically to support data needs at BHS. He asked if there was an idea of when that role would be filled again. Mr. Reinhardt responded that there is a .1 FTE or more position supporting BHS administration directly, which isn’t supervised by the BREA department. He added that BREA provides similar data work for BHS as it does for the other schools, creating data books for principal and fulfilling specific requests from VPs, and would encourage staff to make sure these administrators are bringing requests to his attention. Rep. Glimme added that the previous .4 FTE position was more responsive for drilling down into data to enable PD work, and when that can be done programmatically it is helpful. BHS staff haven’t gotten that same type of data this year.

Rep. Pastika asked if BREA intends to track how many students are being served by support roles like RTI for intervention specifically because of challenges with distance learning (DL). Mr. Reinhardt answered that he would love to look at that, but acknowledged that it will be very hard to track. School staff are trying to track interventions using different systems, and all are having a difficult time tracking what the effects of DL are, because it varies so much for each student. Staff are starting to see signs of great need in a variety of ways. He suggested asking Ms. Martinez if the intervention specialists (Literacy Coaches, RtI staff, etc.) are seeing an increase in caseloads, and whether they see more students or fewer in DL. Ms. Martinez answered that she has seen that some Interventionists have been pushing into virtual classrooms during DL with teachers, which is new and has been effective. Other feedback is that attendance has been the biggest issue in providing intervention to students, especially at the elementary level.

Rep. Bryant appreciated the other Reps.’ questions, because they show a desire from committee members to really understand data and how it’s being used, particularly as this committee has been asking about the impacts of various funding decisions for the past few years. She also expressed that she loves hearing about the trainings being implemented, but really wants to know

what the impacts are. As tax monies are tied into PD, it will be important when the committee comes back with new plans that data will drive work as schools reopen. She also specifically asked for a deeper understanding of the data collected and how it's being used, in focal groups, as well as to see the impacts of trainings, especially as we talk about deeper training around equity and social justice. Director Beery responded that this conversation also goes beyond the "walls" of the P&O, there is a district-wide interest in understanding what we know and what we don't know about what we're doing. She will work with Dr. Stephens to figure out a forum in which to look at that kind of data, noting that it has been many years since BREa led data-based workshops and conferences. Dr. Stephens added that we will likely not be able to produce program evaluation data for all investments, but we should be able to trace for foci like interventions. Data sets are decentralized, maintained mostly by schools, and don't permit the kind of comparisons that we'd like. There are steps to take so that we have outcomes in mind when we plan PD, and trainings we offer should be targeted to outcomes; there is lots of enthusiasm from staff for this. He will come back to the P&O to offer thinking on equity measures in 2020-21 BSEP plans that incorporates goal statements, measures, and indicators of meeting goals.

*Instructional Technology: Jay Nitschke, Director of Technology and Max Eissler, Director of Technology*

See [Instructional Technology 2019-20 Annual Plan](#) document for details.

Rep. Lim asked, from an equity lens, what the internal flow of information is when figuring out which students need better technology for DL. Director Nitschke answered that this has a multi-pronged answer. The district has been working on technology distribution since last March, and there is optimism that most families needing help have already been connected. Most recently the district just partnered with a local internet provider, and the public will be hearing more about that in the next few weeks. Families can still come to the Ed Hub for equipment, they are in the process of refreshing hotspots and looking to provide alternative, fiber connections. Rep. Lim observed that the Ed Hub is self-resourced, requiring families to reach out to receive assistance, though she is aware of students who seem to have habitual internet connectivity issues which aren't being resolved. Director Nitschke noted that OFEE staff also reach out to families, and the Ed Hub delivers for anyone who can't get to the physical location, and there is a process by which teachers can reach out to the Ed Hub and request new equipment be delivered to students at home. There is also the internal HelpDesk system through which teachers request help for parents by connecting the Tech staff directly to the families. Rep. Lim expressed concern that this process would still rely on teachers being proactive with choosing to take these steps, and spoke in favor of a top-down logistical flow chart, teacher surveys with student attendance, or perhaps a requirement that teachers send monthly reports. Director Nitschke responded that though the district did a lot of work to communicate with teachers and families about the available resources for Tech at the beginning of this school year, it sounds like we need to reinforce that work again.

Rep. Dederich thanked the Technology staff for all their efforts over the past 10 months. She asked if the issue of parental controls, which are not implementable to a full extent with district computers, has been addressed with older students prior to this shift to sending district equipment home with younger students in middle and elementary schools. Director Nitschke answered that BUSD has never been a take-home district at any level before this, even at the high school level.

The content filtering on district chromebooks does interfere with parent control that might have been available otherwise. This situation is of necessity a public/private partnership with families, as neither can control the devices completely, but we try and do our best to the extent that each can. Rep. Dederich asked, if this moment is extended, perhaps parent education can be implemented.

Rep. Pastika thanked Director Nitschke for all his service to the district, stating that he will be missed. She asked what role the Berkeley Public Schools Fund plays, whether they are a contractor with the district. Director Nitschke answered that BPSF is a fundraising organization formerly called the Berkeley Public Education Fund. They raise over a million dollars a year to support Berkeley schools, similar to a PTA, but focusing on fundraising from sources outside of BUSD parents. They have an established district-wide focus and were in the best position to organize their existing volunteer group, many of whom don't have a connection to any one school.

*School Site Programs: Danielle Perez BSEP Program Specialist*

Ms. Perez explained that these funds will likely be most familiar to P&O members, as many currently serve or have served on their School Site Council, or SSC. One of the biggest jobs of the SSCs at BUSD schools is to review and approve the use of BSEP Site Program Funds. See [School Site Programs 2019-20 Annual Report](#) document and [summary slides](#) for details.

Chair Bradstreet explained that it was now before the committee to vote to accept the 2019-20 Annual Reports, confirming that the funds were spent as planned to the extent possible and that the spending was in accordance with the respective BSEP Measures.

Chair Bradstreet asked for a motion to approve the combined [2019-20 BSEP Annual Reports](#). Rep. Glimme moved to approve the Annual Plans, Rep. Ball moved to second; the Annual Plans were approved unanimously.

**10. 2020-21 First Interim Report for BSEP and BERRA**

*Natasha Beery, Director of BSEP and Community Relations*

Director Beery explained that in the interest of time, she proposed that the Teacher Template preview be put into the next P&O meeting when the committee will review the 2021-22 Teacher Template draft for the first time.

Director Beery explained the First Interim Report, see [BSEP 2020-21 First Interim Report](#) and [BERRA 2020-21 First Interim Report](#) documents for details. These will be presented to the Board at the same time as the BSEP and BERRA 2019-20 Annual Reports. These reports show the revenue for the current year, give a snapshot of the current year budget, and show the available fund balances.

We are in the 4th and entering the 5th year of this 8-year BSEP measure, now being a good midpoint to take stock of the measure's accomplishments and to look at where we are in its spending trajectory. In the past, some BSEP measures had seen an inability to maintain funding, but as of right now we are not in that situation thankfully. Director of Fiscal Services Liz Karam

will use the Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA), see the [Draft 2021-22 BSEP COLA Resolution](#) and [Draft 2021-22 BERRA COLA Resolution](#) docs, to produce a revenue projection for each fund, with multi-year projections. Director Beery explained that the big takeaway in BSEP is that we are in a position to continue funding our programs right now. We're also in an artificial valley with needing fewer teachers because of smaller 5th grade classes this year, but that will even out and next year when we'll need about 3 more teachers as the larger upper grades completely phase out. She will work with Dr. Stephens and Assistant Superintendent of Business Services Pauline Follansbee to manage the needs of students and, especially in DL, driving needs for kids who are suffering the most, working to figure out how we can use our fund balance to address that.

She explained that for BERRA, this is the first year of this new resource. Most of this revenue goes directly to educator compensation, while also setting aside the small amount of funds necessary to reimburse the City and County for tax collections, to pay for required audits, to establish reserves, for the 1% for oversight costs, and the 5% allocated for recruitment programs. There is not much to say about this First Interim Report for BERRA other than we're on track.

Rep. Glimme asked how the 2% COLA increase to BERRA will get put into the district's pay structure. Director Beery answered that it likely will be split proportionally based on measure goals, so 95% of that increase would be applied to pay scales across the board. Rep. Liang observed that it looks like we're anticipating less spending, and asked if historically there are ever unexpected expenses that have come up that would result in spending going up. Director Beery answered yes, in the past have had enrollment shoot up significantly and stayed up across several years. Another unforeseen and unforeseeable factor is the economy. The previous BSEP measure A, started with big COLAS and ended with a zero cola from the economic downturn. There is an ongoing challenge of how much to hold on to against these unexpected situations, without withholding dollars we could be using to help our kids.

### **11. 2021-22 BSEP Revenue Projection**

*Natasha Beery, Director of BSEP and Community Relations*

This item will be presented at the next P&O meeting on February 9.

### **12. Teacher Template Preview**

*Natasha Beery, Director of BSEP and Community Relations*

This item will be presented at the next P&O meeting on February 9.

### **13. For the Good of the Order**

Rep. Pastika, for the coming School Board meeting, provided a brief overview of the summary she would present to the Board of the P&O's items of discussion and related questions. The next statement will use the same structure and outline that explains the BSEP and BERRA funds and the P&O committee work, and will provide an overview of what was discussed and the flavor of questions asked in the meeting. The idea being that the Board and general public will have a sense of what we do here and how it's part of the community.

Rep. Liang moved to approve the summary to the Board as described by Rep. Pastika, Rep. Chabot seconded, and the summary was approved by acclamation without objection.

Rep. Lim wanted to raise a concern about lots of resources from the district that require parents to pick things up from district campuses: food, books, meals, technology. She sees the ad hoc volunteer efforts, but still much isn't distributed directly to families' homes. She asked if there is any information about how district transportation staff are being utilized or could be utilized to address this need, and if the P&O is the correct forum for this concern. Director Beery advised Rep. Lim to raise this as public comment at School Board meetings, and to also send a letter directly to Dr. Stephens using the [superintendent@berkeley.net](mailto:superintendent@berkeley.net) email address, which he responds to regularly. It doesn't make as much sense to bring this particular item to the P&O Committee because neither BSEP nor BERRA fund or oversee the Transportation department.

Chair Bradstreet thanked School Board Director Babitt for attending the meeting, and noted that if she wants to address the committee she would be more than welcome, with a message to the Chairs or the BSEP staff agenda time can be added for this purpose.

#### **14. Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned by acclamation at 8:45 p.m.