

P&O Statement from 2/9/21 Meeting
For 2/17/21 BUSD BOD Meeting
Terry Pastika, Alt BHS

Good evening, my name is Terry Pastika and I am from the Planning and Oversight Committee (P&O). The P&O is an oversight advisory body that makes recommendations to the School Board on two special tax measures passed by Berkeley voters:

The first is BSEP, which voters have approved since 1986, and recently renewed in 2016, to supplement the baseline property tax that funds the District, which was significantly impacted by Prop 13. BSEP's primary focus is funding class size reduction. We are in year 4 of an 8 year measure that generates an additional ~\$32M/ year, or about 20% of BUSD's budget.

The second is BERRA, which voters approved to supplement educator salaries and to promote recruitment, retention and hard to staff areas. We are in year 1 of this 12 year measure.

Every school in the District is represented on the P&O and I serve as an alternate from BHS. This is an overview of our **February 9th** meeting.

At last week's meeting we received a general overview of the BUSD budget, revenue projections for BSEP and BERRA, a review of the teacher template for next year, and some preliminary thoughts on how to revise P&O documents to be responsive to questions that have been raised about oversight.

So, with respect to the BUSD budget overview, the P&O had questions about:

- Where one time, \$9M revenue funds, and other one time funds are spent;
- The trend of declining student enrollment in BUSD and how that impacts teacher staffing;
- The State's financial support to public schools and how they are dealing with the decline in student enrollment in public schools across the state; and
- The District's projection of a 7% "Attendance Cliff" over several years which has a direct impact on state funding received – and why BUSD is projecting that so many students are not going to show up to public schools.

We next reviewed projections for BSEP and BERRA for next year and how those revenue projections align with how many teachers are going to be needed and paid for out of BSEP to hit the reduce class sizes goals. The questions in this area circled back to the projected student attendance numbers. So, the P&O asked about:

- What happens if enrollment declines *more* than the projections after the teacher template has been approved - meaning less teachers are needed but funds have been allocated and teacher contracts let;
- Conversely, what happens if enrollment *exceeds* projections – meaning people move back into BUSD and more teachers are needed after allocation made;
- We talked about if State funding is based on Average Daily Attendance, and BSEP is based on the baseline tax rate set by the measure PLUS the Cost of Living Increase each year –that means if there are fewer students in BUSD *schools that means there is a higher fund balance in BSEP* – and what and where is the accountability for where those extra funds will be spent; and
- Along that line, if there is a higher fund balance in BSEP is there leeway to hire more teachers and reduce class sizes further for next year, given drop off in student performance due to distance learning.

P&O Statement from 2/9/21 Meeting
For 2/17/21 BUSD BOD Meeting
Terry Pastika, Alt BHS

Lastly, we looked at a draft for how to revise P&O documents in response to questions about increasing information flowing to the P&O with respect to oversight, quantitative outcomes in program areas funded by BSEP, and equity outcomes. Questions in this area included:

- Clarity in reporting along the lines of simply: what was supposed to happen last year, did it happen, and what is going to happen next year
- Clarity in summarizing how things changed from the previous year
- Request that reports include general and equity goals.
- Delineation of other fiscal resources that support program, like other district funds pools or nonprofit grants; and
- The desire for more focus on data vs. a narrative format.

In the “Good of the Order,” there were comments asking what is the capacity of the P&O to affect decisions for how BSEP funds are spent vs. a routine review of where were the funds spent.

Thanks for the opportunity to provide this brief recap. The next P&O meeting is **February 23rd at 6:30** online. We invite any of you, as well as members of the public to attend.

Thanks.