

**BSEP PLANNING & OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE MINUTES
February 23, 2021**

P&O Committee Members Present

Jerry Liang, *Pre-K Program*
Nicole Chabot, *Berkeley Arts Magnet*
Nimota Abina, *Cragmont (co-Rep)*
Jonathan Weissglass, *Emerson*
Nikhila Pai, *Ruth Acty (co-Rep)*
Carla Bryant, *Oxford*
Stefan Cohen, *Oxford*
Weldon Bradstreet, *Rosa Parks*
Justin Randall, *Sylvia Mendez*

Heather Flett, *Washington*
Olivia Lim, *Longfellow Middle School*
Kate Jordan, *Willard Middle School*
Sarah Cline, *Berkeley High*
Aaron Glimme, *Berkeley High*
Josh Irwin, *Berkeley High*
Terry Pastika, *Berkeley High (Alt)*
Shauna Rabinowitz, *Berkeley High*

P&O Committee Members Absent*:

Vanessa Garza, *John Muir*
Heather Ball, *Malcolm X*
Prashant Jawalikar, *King Middle School*

Chetan Kamdar, *King Middle School*
Martin de Mucha Flores, *Independent Study*

**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:

Ana Vasudeo, *School Board Director*

BUSD Staff:

Brent Stephens, *Superintendent of Schools*
Natasha Beery, *Director of BSEP and Communications*
Adelita Martinez, *Professional Development Coordinator*
Gloria Munoz-Hughes, *English Language Development TSA*
Danielle Perez, *BSEP Program Specialist*

1. Call to Order and Roll Call

The meeting was held online via Zoom. At 6:30 p.m. Chairperson 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 16 voting members present.

Chair Bradstreet asked for a motion to approve the agenda; Rep. Irwin moved to approve the agenda, Rep. Rabinowitz seconded, the agenda was approved by acclamation without objection.

3. Chairperson's Comments

Nicole Chabot and Weldon Bradstreet

There were no comments.

4. BSEP Director's Comments

Natasha Beery, Director BSEP & Community Relations

Director Beery will present some of the agenda items because Ed Services staff were not able to attend the meeting. She reminded the committee that the district is looking for contracted help in many different areas, and urged any interested community members with skills in the desired subject areas to contact the Berkeley Public Schools Fund office for more details and to apply.

5. Superintendent's Report

Dr. Brent Stephens, Superintendent of Schools

Dr. Stephens provided updates on school reopening and staff vaccination plans. The expectation is that within 3-4 weeks all school-based staff will have received their first vaccination appointments. If all vaccines administered are the Pfizer product, the schools reopening timeline may be accelerated by a week. The district also sent a message asking for staff volunteers to work on campus before the broader reopenings, to provide smaller groups with on-campus options as soon as possible. This is a step forward on the road to reopening, generating experience working with students in person and generating enthusiasm about getting back to work in person. The last task is settling on the fine details of hybrid schedules.

Rep. Weisglass asked if bringing students back before the official reopening would happen at all schools. Dr. Stephens answered that the call for volunteers is open to all staff from all campuses, and though this brief phase will be modest in scope he hopes it will touch most campuses. Rep. Bryant asked about any plans for summer school or other intervention after the school year ends. Dr. Stephens shared that the district is engaged in planning for an expanded summer school, including opportunities for students at all levels to work with BUSD staff, in addition to expanding program offerings through opportunities to work with other providers. Some examples include various science-based programs for different grade levels, and work with specialty organizations and tutoring services to offer specialized intervention and support services and workshops for students in literacy and math skills. The district is also working with the City of Berkeley to coordinate services they will be offering, to target opportunities to BUSD families who need them the most.

6. Approval of Minutes

February 9, 2021

Rep. Chabot moved to approve the [February 9, 2021 Draft Minutes](#), Rep. Jordan seconded; the minutes were approved by acclamation without objection.

7. Public Comment

Rep. Pastika called the committee's attention to a [Distance Learning Update](#) presentation made to the School Board on 1/20/21. The presentation covered academic performance in the second semester of the 2019-20 school year compared to performance in the first semester of the 2020-21 school. She feels it's relevant to the P&O's work as the committee considers budgets, particularly in relation to understanding what the baseline assumption is about how learning will

happen in the fall. Also, data in this presentation shows that students need a lot of help to catch up from the past year in distance learning, and committee members should evaluate how BSEP and BERRA budgets will address getting students back on track whether students are fully back to in-person learning in the fall of 2021 or not.

8. Superintendent's Budget Advisory Committee (SBAC) Update

P&O Reps. to SBAC: Chabot, Pastika, Irwin and Imani

Rep. Chabot explained that the budgeting process is looking at the 3-year horizon for the district, which is both difficult so early in this year and with so many moving pieces and unknowns. Our '20-21 budget is sufficient, but the cliff will hit in two years, in SY 2022-23, taking into account downshifts in COLAs and a potential dropoff in enrollment. The district could be in the range of needing to realign its budget to negative \$9 million. The hope is to get more accurate numbers in one month to six weeks, and the biggest variable even in this year is enrollment.

Dr. Stephens added that the budget forecasting is made more difficult because of the current drop in enrollment that we associate with pandemic, which is the same with most districts in the state. Fiscal Services is prepared with a number of forecast models and will revise estimates on the basis of enrollment data the district is actively collecting. If it's warranted to update the budgetary forecast and assumptions we will, but for now we are adopting a more conservative stance so that we're not in trouble unexpectedly in the out years. Rep. Rabinowitz asked which grades show the sharpest decline in enrollment. Dr. Stephens answered that it is highest at the transition grades, Kindergarten, 6th, and 9th. In Kindergarten the decline is roughly 15%, while 6th and 9th grades show a decline of slightly more than 7%. Director Beery noted that these numbers track with what other districts are seeing and reporting in the state.

9. Recommendation for BSEP Funds in 2021-22: High Quality Instruction (HQI) / Class Size Reduction (Teacher Template)

Natasha Beery, Director of BSEP and Community Relations

Director Beery outlined the overall BSEP measure structure to contextualize where the Teacher Template fits into the broader BSEP annual budget. She also presented the [2021-22 Teacher Template](#). She explained that this is a straight service funded through BSEP, rather than a program, and so there wasn't a need to use the new Annual Plan template for this portion of the HQI spending. Some equity approaches are included in the Teacher Template by default--staffing at BTA is an example where a minimum number of staff are provided so that appropriate number of courses exist even if actual enrollment is much lower. Other factors considered, which bring the calculation away from straight math, are considering which schools there have flex rooms and space to house full classes, as well as the need to provide additional support for the Two-Way Immersion (TWI) program at Longfellow.

Rep. Irwin noted that the projected student numbers are based on the current decrease in enrollment, and asked if the assumption is that the teachers listed in this document will all be working in person. He also asked if, given the amount of discretionary funding left over, this BSEP resource should leave a cushion in case some teachers continue to work remotely with some students. Director Beery explained that in an ideal world we'd have enough teachers and classrooms to offer everything: small groups in-person, extra teachers for remote learning, etc.,

but we don't have that many teachers. There isn't a clause in the BSEP measure allowing class sizes to go down further. We do have a subsidiary purpose in this resource for Classroom Support, however given the average cost to employ a teacher, putting just one more teacher at each elementary school would use \$1.1 million in a year. Our ability to make an impact from this resource is limited, but we will talk specifically about targeted supports from this budget tonight and at the next meeting.

Dr. Stephens added that the best information right now is that we should assume that we will use layered protocols next fall, including social distancing. We might see reduced requirements around social distancing if overall conditions improve, and then we could get closer to the old classroom structures. It is right to keep an eye on additional staffing needs in '21-22, especially at the middle and high school level; in the spring we will know if we need to hire more teachers for the fall. Rep. Weisglass asked if there is any chance that the state could step in to provide centralized remote learning for families who choose to keep their students home. Dr. Stephens answered that he didn't know if the state will recognize that need in time to make a difference, but in a similar vein BUSD does already have the SELPA for Special Education, where we already have service sharing agreements with neighboring districts. We could see our district working collaboratively to create a distance learning academy with other districts for a limited number of families still seeking that method.

Rep. Weisglass moved to approve the 2021-22 Teacher Template, Rep. Pastika seconded; the Teacher Template was approved unanimously.

10. District-Wide Budget and High-Level Priorities

Dr. Brent Stephens, Superintendent of Schools

Dr. Stephens [presented slides](#) outlining the district's high-level budget priorities. He highlighted key figures from a number of revenue sources showing some opportunities to make new ongoing investments, a relatively large opportunity to make one-time investments, and pressure from LCAP reductions given the ongoing trend of decline in enrollment of unduplicated students. The presentation included a list of priorities presented by the Board members. See slides for details.

Rep. Chabot asked what the \$9 million from one-time revenue will be spent on, generally. Dr. Stephens answered that the district is receiving portions of this total in tranches, as little as \$50,000 and as much as \$1 million at a time, and the emphasis for this funding's use has become more categorical as we progress through the pandemic. At first it was physical: signage, PPE, HEPA filters, etc. the next buckets to come in are to be used for summer services and into next year. Rep. Chabot observed that these uses will bleed directly into high level priorities.

Rep. Pastika asked when the committee will see a multi-year fiscal forecast for BSEP resources. Director Beery answered that the committee will have a simple version looking at the fund balances tonight in several resources, but when we get to the point of finalizing proposals for the coming year, that's when we can project out with basic math four years forward.

Rep. Pastika, while appreciating the scope of the issues outlined, asked on a fundamental level why the priorities aren't focused in a more targeted manner on academic loss or delays as a result of the past year. Dr. Stephens responded that the first slide, outlining support for students, is

intended to be the most significant. The Board and he know that as we go along in the budget building process, there are opportunities to move forward work in some of these areas as small amounts of money are identified. They may be modest in scope, while we may be investing millions in overall support for students, but the aim is to not miss small opportunities to advance other goals.

Rep. Bryant asked if it would be likely for schools to be closed again after this initial reopening, if or when the virus situation changes. Dr. Stephens answered that the chances of small groups shutting down due to individual cases is highly likely. So far, the stance of the state is that once a school is open, it's allowed to stay open even if cases climb again. We anticipate that schools will stay open, even if some individuals and small groups have to comply with quarantine procedures.

Rep. Lim suggested, if the goal is to accelerate getting the kids who need it most back on to campus, and social distancing is still an issue, that the district survey which families are able to continue in distance learning to cede time to those higher-need students. Dr. Stephens shared that he had this suggestion from other parents as well, and that the next survey going out this week to middle and high school families should include that question. He agreed it would be good to know if any families are open to a prioritization model. Another idea under consideration is a variable attendance plan, where some students attend more days per week than others, to get high-priority students more valuable time as the school year comes to a close.

Rep. Glimme shared that he, as a high school teacher, and almost everyone he's talked to, is very excited to be back on campus with students. Particularly for the fall, he felt we would do a disservice to students in not assuming that we'll be back in person in almost normal classes. Through the summer it is likely that beyond staff vaccinations, even most high school students will also be vaccinated, and the target should be to be schooling in person again. Dr. Stephens agreed that the target absolutely is that.

11. BSEP Budget Overview for 2020-21 and Preliminary Proposals for 2021-22: HQI/Support for Teaching and Learning; Student Support

Natasha Beery, Director of BSEP and Communications

Director Beery presented the [High Quality Instruction Preliminary Budget Summary](#). She explained that the P&O committee's scope is focusing on BSEP and BERRA tax revenues, but there are assumptions that we need to understand which impact moving parts and resources brought to bear on district needs. She wants the committee to understand where this BSEP piece is situated within that larger picture, and also wants to assure members that many conversations are taking place across committees and district departments about how best to bring resources to where we think they'll be most needed.

Rep. Chabot asked if the committee will see multi-year budget projections of BSEP funds before being asked to vote on incremental approvals of spending for the coming year. Director Beery answered that we can produce those in simple ways, in which we project fund balances using simple math based on assumptions like what the COLA will be, projected enrollment, and expected teacher costs--though none of these is known with any certainty. However, these estimates could be well off if any of those factors don't materialize or develop in the way we expected them to. Rep. Chabot acknowledged that the committee does see that variability every

year, but she would still want to keep the spending proposals in the context of projected fund balances though the measure to protect the committee's goal of ensuring the funds last.

Rep. Jordan asked if the positions currently being funded piecemeal by schools, like RtI and Literacy Coaches, are being looked at when thinking about the extra resources in HQI or other larger BSEP budgets, perhaps to help make those site-funded positions less precarious. Director Beery answered that it is the nature for things to be piecemeal, though we have been working to consolidate over recent years, with Lit Coaches being a good example. She would expect lots of "horse trading" between budgets as we work with one-time funding that's coming in this year. Over the next couple of meetings the committee will see multiple proposals of some of these budgets.

12. Recommendation for BSEP Funds in 2021-22: Expanded Course Offerings; Counseling

Natasha Beery, Director of BSEP and Communications

Director Beery presented the [Draft 2021-22 Expanded Course Offerings Annual Plan](#). She explained that this isn't a program, there isn't a director of ECO; rather this is really just staffing allocations to middle and high schools to allow for before and after school courses beyond what is available in the school day. The FTE totals have remained relatively stable across the years, and ECO is funded exclusively through BSEP. Advanced Placement Augmentation and AVID classes at BHS are examples of how these BSEP resources are supporting students of color. She acknowledged that it was a little bit of a struggle to get the new Annual Plan format to work for something that isn't a program, but she hopes to bring something more polished when this plan is presented for a vote at the next P&O meeting.

Board Director Vasudeo asked if a PUENTE program at the high school could be funded from this resource, and Director Beery answered that if it's for academic credit, it can be. She recalled that the district did have this program or something like it at one point. It was clarified that ECO allocations do provide visual/performing arts at the middle and high school level through 0 and 7th period offerings such as theater, and ECO [not VAPA] provides staffing for music classes at BHS.

Director Beery presented the [Draft 2021-22 BSEP Counseling Plan](#) and the [Draft 2021-22 Counseling Budget](#). She explained that counseling at the middle school level is partially (but not entirely) supported by BSEP. Though this resource also doesn't have a Director overseeing a program throughout the district, each group of counselors works within their site and also across the district to some extent. All three middle schools use site funds to supplement their counseling staff. BUSD has other funding for mental and behavioral health, for example the LCAP and City of Berkeley funds that are applied to each elementary school, and Longfellow's OFEE liaison. Counselors identify needs for students much in the same way that OFEE staff does, connecting students and families to resources as they identify needs. The BSEP-funded counselors are all certificated, many have credentials in social work or other therapeutic areas, on top of their credentialing to work in schools. They function a little differently than the advocate-liaisons from OFEE, though they complement each other's work.

Rep. Lim asked if the counseling staff allocations are based on student enrollment numbers, with concern that the current middle school assignment process results in Longfellow receiving most

late additions and transfer students, and as a result is dealing with a greater proportion of students with headwinds. Director Beery answered that recognition of the extra need at Longfellow is exactly why the only middle school OFEE liaison is working there. BSEP counseling is mostly based on student enrollment numbers, though Longfellow does have a bit of a bump beyond its enrollment. She added that there have been other decisions about building supports for Longfellow, like housing the African American Success Project there. Rep. Lim asked if students and families were contacted by their counselors about the Sonic internet offer, and Director Beery responded that yes, the counselors absolutely are contacting students. There is also additional support for outreach around the Sonic offer through expanded funding to provide Language Line interpretation services to both Sonic and BPSF staff and volunteers.

13. 2021-22 BSEP Site Fund Allocations

Natasha Beery, Director of BSEP and Community Relations

Director Beery presented the [BSEP Site Fund Allocations for the 2021-22 school year](#). The available revenue of roughly \$3.3 million is divided out to every school on a per-pupil basis. This year, 2020-21, had \$305 allocated per student; in the coming year it will increase to \$325 per student. BSEP has seen a modest increase in revenue and fewer students are enrolled currently, allowing for the significant per-pupil amount increase. That does mean that if students re-enroll in force after the pandemic, BSEP per-pupil site allocations in the following year (2022-23) may drop. Enrollments at BTA and Independent Study are set at 150, to provide a meaningful amount of funding to support their site programs, and offer protection against enrollment that varies a lot in the course of each year.

Rep. Lim reiterated her concern that conditions at Longfellow are not equitable, stating that per-pupil funding isn't equitable in serving students with headwinds. Director Beery explained that this iteration of the BSEP measure is specifically written that site funds are allocated per-pupil, though we may want to consider a different approach or additional criteria to inform site allocations in the next BSEP measure.

Ms. Muñoz-Hughes shared that she sits on the Educators Advisory Committee (EAC), and works with the PAC, and wonders when opportunities will be created for these perspectives to come together collectively and comprehensively as a district. She has seen the same questions coming up in multiple committees. Director Beery answered that the various committees and departments have long felt siloed, and shared concerns aren't always addressed. BSEP and LCAP each have specific limitations, but collectively these groups could consider a broader picture given the opportunity. She would love to work together on this to find a time for these committees to come together.

Rep. Glimme, regarding the question of equity in BSEP funding, noted that there are many parts of this measure that are not allocated per-pupil, for example Student Support funds. More broadly, knowing that there is work being done at the district level to address problems with the middle school assignment policy, he felt that we should address the root of the issue by dealing with the inequitable allocation of students.

14. For the Good of the Order

Director Beery asked for the members' feedback about the new Annual Plan template after seeing draft plans for Expanded Course Offerings and Counseling earlier in the meeting.

Rep. Jordan expressed appreciation for the new template and that Director Beery reached out to the counselors and included specific feedback from them, which helped to contextualize the plan and budget. Rep. Chabot also expressed thanks for the work being put into the plan template revisions, and would like to see more plans before she provides more feedback.

Rep. Abina, on behalf of her co-Rep. Dederich, shared the opinion that while BUSD funds a full-time OFEE position for each elementary school, the number of full time OFEE positions for the middle schools, BHS and BTA should be appropriate to the population at each school. She feels that advocating for more robust funding for OFEE is essential, especially for the coming school year.

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. Rep. Abina moved to approve the summary, Rep. Jordan seconded; the summary overview was approved by acclamation.

15. Adjournment

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