

**Statement from 2/23/21 & 3/9/21 P&O Meetings
BUSD BOD 3/10/21 Meeting
Terry Pastika, Alt BHS**

Good evening, my name is Terry Pastika and I am here on behalf of the Planning and Oversight Committee. The P&O is an oversight advisory body comprised of representatives of every school in the District that makes recommendations to the School Board on two special tax measures passed by Berkeley voters that supplement funding: BSEP and BERRA.

BSEP is a special tax measure that generates an additional \$32 million per year over the baseline property tax for the District, with majority of funds going towards supporting smaller class sizes and teaching.

BERRA is a special tax measure that supports teacher and staff recruitment and retention.

I'm here to provide an overview of the kinds of questions and comments P&O members asked of BSEP and BUSD staff at the Feb. 23rd and March 9th meetings.

At both meetings the Superintendent provided a district update and we reviewed the teacher template to lower class sizes – which encompasses about \$15M/ of \$32M.

Questions asked by committee members included:

- Whether the working assumption is that school in the fall will be in person, full time?
- What if more teachers are needed to address learning loss than is approved in the teacher template calculation
- What is the educational plan for providing teachers to serve students who remain in distance learning in the fall
- Could district surveys consider asking parents if they would remain in distance learning to allow for more kids to be on campus who need the attention
- And, in reviewing the “High Level Priorities” presentation for next year, concern about how much emphasis is being placed on core academic priorities

In response to P&O requests, we were provided a long-range draft budget of what BSEP funding looks over the full term of the measure if current budget expenditures remain constant. Questions included what happens if funds are approved but not spent; how sensitive are the budget projections to changing variables; and also could more BSEP support be provided to replacing lost library books, adding Spanish titles, and could BERRA address hiring bilingual teachers.

We did an initial review of the \$700K draft Program Evaluation Budget. Questions focused on what is being done differently to be more responsive to the on-going concerns about the need for better analysis of student outcomes, how the addition of a statistical analysis position achieves that goal, and the difficulty in doing evaluation analysis and reaching causal conclusions.

We looked at changes to the music budget to fund a summer full scholarship program that for the first time to address music loss from distance learning. Questions focused on who was being served, who was eligible, and accolades given for thinking outside the box to address learning loss.

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We heard an update on the technology budget which increased the hourly work of tech teacher leaders due to the demands of distance learning, which was offset by a decrease in BSEP expenditures for software.

We did a review of the draft \$2M professional development budget and questions focused on how teachers are giving feedback, how the PD budget fits into the overall deficit spending of BSEP, and what kind of support does classified staff get in PD because they work one on one with students

There was a general question about when will there be an agreement with the teachers union for the fall as we are being asked to approve budgets without certainty of what learning will look like in the fall.

We looked at the draft \$2M classroom support budget and new proposed expenditures in this area. A question raised here was about the district-wide middle school writing coach program that used to be facilitated that was tremendously valuable and the possibility of bringing it back.

Thanks for the opportunity to provide this brief recap. P&O meetings are open to the public and we invite any of you, as well as members of the public, to attend.

Thanks.