

BSEP PLANNING & OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE MINUTES
April 27, 2021

P&O Committee Members Present

Nicole Chabot, *Berkeley Arts Magnet*
Nimota Abina, *Cragmont (co-Rep)*
Jonathan Weissglass, *Emerson*
Nikhila Pai, *Ruth Acty (co-Rep)*
Heather Ball, *Malcolm X*
Weldon Bradstreet, *Rosa Parks*
Justin Randall, *Sylvia Mendez*

Heather Flett, *Washington*
Olivia Lim, *Longfellow 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*:

Jerry Liang, *Pre-K Program*
Vanessa Garza, *John Muir*
Carla Bryant, *Oxford*
Prashant Jawalikar, *King Middle School*

Chetan Kamdar, *King Middle School*
Kate Jordan, *Willard Middle School*
Sarah Cline, *Berkeley High*
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:

Laura Babitt, *School Board Director*

BUSD Staff:

Brent Stephens, *Superintendent of Schools*
Samantha Tobias-Espinosa, *Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources*
Natasha Beery, *Director of BSEP and Communications*
Danielle Perez, *BSEP Program Specialist*

1. Call to Order and Roll Call

The meeting was held online via Zoom. At 6:31 p.m. Chairperson Bradstreet called the meeting to order.

2. Establish the Quorum/Approve the Agenda

The quorum was established with 13 voting members present.

Chair Bradstreet asked for a motion to approve the agenda; Rep. Irwin moved to approve the agenda, Rep. Weisglass seconded, the agenda was approved by unanimous consent.

3. Chairperson's Comments

Weldon Bradstreet

Chair Chabot thanked the committee members for attending and continuing work in a challenging year. Chair Bradstreet asked members to raise their hands in addition to using the chat function to be sure that questions and comments are addressed in the meeting.

4. BSEP Director's Comments

Natasha Beery, Director of BSEP & Community Relations

Director Beery thanked the committee members for their presence and work as well. She also thanked the Steering Committee for convening the past week to begin a conversation that will be referenced and continued further in this meeting.

5. Superintendent's Report

Dr. Brent Stephens, Superintendent of Schools

Dr. Stephens praised the middle school Oratorical Festival from the previous week, and encouraged everyone to watch this and the elementary version taking place in the coming week. All can be viewed using the [BUSD YouTube channel](#). He thanked School Board Director Babitt for all of the work she's put into growing the event.

He updated the committee on recent School Board approvals, including two years of funding for a 7-period day pilot at Longfellow, \$1.8 million from COVID funding for allocations/grants to school sites, the 9 BSEP budgets recently approved by the P&O, and funding for a additional BREA analyst staffing, further adding to the staffing provided through BSEP for that team. He stated that the Board also appreciated the work of the P&O Committee to review the BSEP plans.

He also shared that BUSD will be welcoming Ruben Aurelio as its new Associate Superintendent for Educational Services in the coming school year. He will start on July 1, and the district owes many thanks to outgoing Associate Superintendent Bajé Thiara for her work the past two years.

6. Approval of Minutes

April 13, 2021

Rep. Chabot moved to approve the 4.13.21 Draft Minutes, Rep. Irwin seconded; the minutes were approved by unanimous consent.

7. Public Comment

Rep. Pai shared the frustration from the vantage point of Ruth Acty Elementary at not having support staff (Literacy Coach, Math and Writing Support) in their usual roles as school reopened, due to their being moved to online teaching roles in Distance Learning. Rep. Pai has seen many teachers providing after-school tutoring, sitting outside the school gates on the ground in attempts to help support kids' extra needs. She shared that though of course kids are glad to be back, there's been a lot of loss and the current situation is quite tough. The teachers are trying to make it work as best they can but Rep. Pai wanted to stress that schools need those support staff back at least in the Fall.

Rep. Glimme shared that it was exciting to have kids back in his classroom at BHS, holding labs and experiments the past two days, and that he is so glad to be moving forward. Rep. Abina shared that sentiment, that since the schools have reopened her son is engaged in school work and

loving it, the experience has been positive, and she expressed thanks to all the teachers and staff in the district. Rep. Bradstreet also expressed gratitude for teachers and staff.

Rep. Lim expressed concern around summer programs for students remaining in Distance Learning. Dr. Stephens explained that there will be DL versions of summer programs, but they won't be as robust as everything planned for in-person instruction. He directed interested families to learn more through the summer catalogue, which he would be happy to forward.

8. SBAC Update

Reps. Chabot, Pastika, Irwin, and Imani

Rep. Chabot shared that the latest SBAC meeting covered quite a lot. The main '21-22 budgeting question is around enrollment. The district is going with a conservative approach, anticipating that the current -7% enrollment and resultant reduction in overall budget will persist. This won't hit in '21-22, but in '22-23 if enrollment doesn't rebound, resulting in significant impacts to budgets. There are several other large moving parts next year, including contract negotiations and a huge variety of funds coming in one-time from the government, each restricted to different uses. District leaders are trying to figure out how to allocate for today's needs and also address the ongoing funding gap due to enrollment decline. There is a strong need to look at budgets to track that for anything put in, something else needs to come out accordingly.

Rep. Pastika asked, regarding the one-time funds from the state, if BUSD has qualified for the full available amount. Dr. Stephens responded that Berkeley will qualify for the full amount.

9. Recommendation for BERRA Funds in 2021-22: Educator Recruitment, Retention, and Development

Natasha Beery, Director of BSEP and Community Relations and Samantha Tobias-Espinosa, Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources

Director Beery presented the draft [2021-22 BERRA 5% Plan](#), and explained that this is the first draft of this Plan and it will be brought back for another reading before a vote by the committee. She explained that we are still in the midst of the first year of BERRA funding. She reminded the committee that BERRA primarily provides increased staff compensation, utilizing 95% of its revenues. Then the remaining 5% is set aside for staff recruitment, retention, and development strategies. See document for details.

Assistant Superintendent Tobias-Espinosa explained the goals, objectives and available data and outcomes that are included in the Plan.

Rep. Chabot recalled the difficulty in hiring Special Education positions, and asked if one of the goals could be tied to how many of those roles are being filled or not in the district. She praised the tracking data on pages 7 and 8 to give context to what's going on, and asked if similar data for SpEd positions could be provided, which would help us understand whether these goals are sufficient and if they are being met.

Director Babitt added that the Teachers of Color Network is working with consultant RT Fisher on the African American success framework, and hoped that this work can be shared so that it's collaborative and streamlined.

Rep. Lim was pleased to see the stipends budgeted for pay differentials for SpEd and bilingual staff. It has been frequently noted over the years that it's so hard to recruit bilingual teachers. She would like to know if there is data that could evaluate the severity of difficulty in retaining bilingual staff at Longfellow. Assistant Superintendent Tobias-Espinosa responded that she can look at that data and share it with the committee.

Rep. Cline shared that she didn't understand why classified Professional Development is a part of BERRA. Assistant Superintendent Tobias-Espinosa answered that a part of retention for classified staff is keeping them feeling like there's room to grow and move up, so building their capacity to achieve new positions, providing a career ladder, keeps them in our district and part of our community. Rep. Cline observed that though the main point of BERRA is to raise wages, if classified staff aren't paid a living wage, you can train them as much as you want but you won't keep them in the district. She noted that she had also voted no on the BSEP PD plan, because she feels that the district has allocated lots of money to PD, but as a teacher she hasn't found the offerings profoundly useful. She would love to see how much is spent on PD across the district and how that compares to districts. She felt that perhaps this money would be better spent in increasing classified salaries.

Rep. Chabot agreed with Rep. Cline's comments and would like to understand district-wide PD more fully. This was supported by Reps. Lim, Flett, and Ball as well. Director Beery acknowledged that while 95% of BERRA funds are going to compensation increases in salaries for all positions at the same rate, that doesn't address whether folks at the bottom of the pay scale are lifted up. The only remaining BERRA funds with flexibility are this 5% budget which isn't sufficient, at under \$500,000 per year, to lift a significant number of classified salaries. She appreciated the comments and bringing focus to what has been a concern, even though it can't be resolved by this budget. Rep. Cline added that when a veteran teacher makes \$100,000 and gets a 7% raise, they get \$7,000; a classified staff person being paid \$50,000 annually only gets \$3,500, and that this effect is racist, because most of our teachers are white and most of our classified staff are people of color.

10. Recommendation for BSEP and BERRA Funds in 2021-22: Communication, Translation, Community Engagement, and Measure Oversight

Natasha Beery, Director of BSEP & Community Relations; Samantha Tobias-Espinosa, Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources

Director Beery presented the draft [2021-22 Oversight, Community Engagement Plan](#). She explained that BSEP sets aside 2% of all revenues, before any other allocations, to support measure oversight and community relations. BERRA sets aside 1% of available funds for the same purposes. Last year these resources were combined, as they are all in the purview of planning and oversight of these local tax resources. The intent is for both funds to contribute to the core purposes of supporting this committee, SSCs, and communications and community engagement. Planning for this first year, she and Assistant Superintendent Tobias-Espinosa estimated how much time of shared staff work would be spent supporting the different purposes.

This 2021-22 draft Plan includes a proposal for a reorganization of this office, making adjustments after a year of this new collaborative funding. This was presented to the P&O Steering Committee, with thanks for their help and thought partnership in reviewing the proposed changes the previous week. The core suggestion is that we look at the function of the Director of BSEP and Community Relations position.

Director Beery then shared a document laying out the proposed reorganized roles. She explained that the Director role shifts to focus much more strongly on oversight of BSEP and BERRA, removing much of the pressure from the Community Relations piece. She shared that as she enters her 10th year in this Director role, there continues to be a lot of need for communications and community relations work, and at times the challenge is to maintain enough time and focus on BSEP and BERRA plans, reports, meeting and committee support, plus working with SSCs to build out their functions, and having time and bandwidth to collaborate more intensively with other district leaders and their committees about oversight tasks, like the PAC with LCAP oversight. She noted that all district oversight committees share concerns with understanding what the funds are doing, whether they are effective, and how that can be measured, which has been a challenge for many reasons. There is a strong need to provide opportunities for these conversations to cross between groups and with the community at large. She also sees a lot of opportunity to use a certificated person in this role who is more deeply connected with BSEP- and BERRA-funded programs, almost all of which are managed from Ed Services.

Director Beery shared that she will be stepping down from her Director role in the next few months, and has been working towards articulating what would most successfully serve this role at the transition point. The position opening will probably post by June, hopefully with a clear focus that will best serve the oversight of funds provided by the community, support this committee, and ultimately the students we're trying to serve. This minor reorganization dovetails with other much needed changes, including shifting the Public Information Officer (PIO) to a Communications Manager role, which is a more proactive approach to the district's communications. This change should alleviate some of the Communications pressure currently sitting on the BSEP Director role, including taking on more of the strategic work being done. The last component of the proposed reorganization is to change the BERRA-funded TSA for coordination and oversight--over the course of this school year we found it wasn't the best use of that TSA's time and their work evolved into directly supporting recruitment and retention efforts. So it's proposed to shift the oversight work to the Director role (along with and Asst. Supt of HR) which frees up a bit more funding for desperately needed help in communications.

Dr. Stephens offered his praise of and thanks to Director Beery, noting that there will be many more opportunities to celebrate her contributions to the district before her departure.

Rep. Chabot thanked Director Beery for the enormous amount of work and influence she's given to BUSD, including all the work that we can't see but that she's done. She noticed that in the proposed reorganization, the Director position may report to the Associate Superintendent for Ed Services. With our local tax resources making up 20% of the district budget, the expectation is that this position would have a seat on the Executive Cabinet. Director Beery explained that the Superintendent makes the call about who sits on Cabinet and who staff report to, this draft has this simply to suggest that the new Director would be more embedded with Ed Services. Dr.

Stephens agreed that this wouldn't be reflective of the new Director's place on Cabinet, just about organizational location, not rank or influence.

11. Recommendation for BSEP Funds in FY 2021-22: Measure A Carryover: HQI Family, Family Engagement and Equity, and Libraries

Natasha Beery, Director of BSEP & Community Relations

Director Beery volunteered to present these plans as her OFEE and Libraries colleagues attend to many other calls on their time. These are funds remaining from BSEP Measure A of 2006, waiting to be used until fully expended for originally allocated purposes.

She presented the draft plan for [OFEE Measure A Carryover in 2021-22](#), explaining that OFEE was originally a pilot initiative funded at 3 sites, but when the LCAP brought funds directed to higher-need students, one of its uses was an expansion of OFEE staffing to a part-time position at each elementary site. For a while staffing was paid by both BSEP and LCAP. Then, several years ago, there was a swap to move all OFEE staffing costs into LCAP budgets as that staff was focusing work on unduplicated students, and taking all Literacy Coach funding (which serves the general school populations) into BSEP. LCAP was able to pay for staffing, but not other needs. Other costs for OFEE, like supplies, PD, cell phones, small contracts, speaker stipends, and printing and mailing have been carried by BSEP carryover. This will continue as sustainable while measure A funds remain. This funding will last for about two more years, with three years left in our current BSEP measure. There hasn't yet been an opportunity to plan for that final year, though we do have carryover in the BSEP CSR budget, which had a program support component that could be used for things like this.

She then presented the draft plan for the [Library Program Measure A Carryover in 2021-22](#). Given the concern about replacing library books lost through the pandemic, this plan has three possible uses and we will wait to see what other funds may come to bear. The first priority is replacing library books, then there is a possible technology fund for library upgrades, and finally resources for freshening up library facilities. For this last use, there are some places in our school libraries that had been set up for large desktop computers, which could be made more usable for kids on chromebooks or for project space. The starting fund balance for '21-22 depends on how much is spent from library budgets this year. There are encumbrances from the plan this year to purchase more books, but depending on whether all that spending happens this fiscal year, that could increase the available fund balance to start next year. The Library budget is not deficit spending, so the carryover is completely available for supplemental spending as needed.

12. 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. Rep. Rabinowitz asked that Rep. Cline's comments around equity of classified staff pay and race be included in the statement. Rep. Bradstreet moved to approve the summary, Rep. Ball seconded; the summary overview was approved by unanimous consent.

Rep. Chabot asked who would be involved in selecting Director Beery's replacement, noting that if it's the Board's decision, she would love to express to them how important Director Beery has

been and this new hire will be. Director Beery explained that a Board member may be on the hiring panel, as is often the case for Cabinet positions. There will be two rounds of interviews with a Board member participating in the second round, and then before final hiring decisions there could be a panel with the Superintendent, a Board member, and a long-time P&O member, most likely a chair, although ultimately the final decision will be made by the Superintendent.

13. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned by acclamation at 8:00 p.m.