

BERKELEY PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
Board of Education  
1231 Addison St., Berkeley, CA 94702  
510-644-6206

Official Minutes  
November 18, 2020

President Judy Appel called the meeting to order at 7:03pm. She reported that the Board convened to Closed Session at 5:00pm.

Roll Call

Board of Education:

Judy Appel, President – Present  
Ty Alper, Vice President – Present  
Ka’Dijah Brown, Director/Clerk – Present  
Beatriz Leyva-Cutler, Director – Present  
Julie Sinai, Director -- Present  
Miles Miller, Student Director, BHS – Present

Administration:

Brent Stephens, Ed., D, Superintendent  
Baje Thiara, Associate Superintendent, Educational Services  
Pauline Follansbee, Assistant Superintendent, Business Services  
Samantha Tobias-Espinosa, Assistant Superintendent, Human Resources  
Lyz Chairez, Recorder

OPEN SESSION

APPROVAL OF REGULAR MEETING AGENDA

Motion to approve agenda for November 18, 2020  
Appel/Brown and unanimously approved.

REPORT CLOSED SESSION

Vice President Alper reported out on closed session:

Anticipated Litigation – Regarding costs of services provided to student - Three Matters - Ed. Code § 54956.9, subd. (e)(2)

BUSD Case No. 202021-16

Motion to approve staff recommendation:

Leyva-Cutler/Sinai and approved 3-0:  
Judy Appel, President – Yes

Ty Alper, Vice President – *Absent*  
Ka'Dijah Brown, Director/Clerk – *Absent*  
Beatriz Leyva-Cutler, Director – *Yes*  
Julie Sinai, Director -- *Yes*

BUSD Case No. 202021-17

Motion to approve staff recommendation:  
Sinai/Leyva-Cutler and approved 3-0:  
Judy Appel, President – *Yes*  
Ty Alper, Vice President – *Absent*  
Ka'Dijah Brown, Director/Clerk – *Absent*  
Beatriz Leyva-Cutler, Director – *Yes*  
Julie Sinai, Director -- *Yes*

OAH Case No. 2020090637

The Board heard an update and gave direction.

Conference with Real Property Negotiators (Government Code Section 54956.8)  
District Negotiator: John Calise; Negotiating Party: City of Berkeley; Property: Multiple  
Properties; Under Negotiation: Use Agreement

Collective Bargaining - Government Code Section 54957.6(a) (District Negotiator:  
Samantha Tobias-Espinosa)  
Berkeley Federation of Teachers (BFT)  
Berkeley Council of Classified Employees (BCCE)  
Local 21  
Union of Berkeley Administrators

**PUBLIC TESTIMONY**

A total of \_\_ people addressed the Board: .

Six student comments asking for schools to reopen.

Five comments in opposition to reopening schools

Eleven comments in support of a safe reopening

One student comment in support of the transgender and gender nonconforming  
policy.

Two comments in opposition to school phased reopening

one comment expressing concern that a hybrid model is unrealistic at bhs

Two comment expressing disappointment for BUSD missing the Oct reopening opportunity

#### UNION COMMENTS

BFT Janine Waddell commented watch video in email 11/18

#### COMMITTEE

Robert Collier commented that the parent community is divided and we respect people on all sides of this issues including teachers and administrators. On behalf of PTA Council, he advocated for flu shots to be encouraged. Secondly, he urged the high speed internet be provided for out student homes to ensure proper internet access.

#### BOARD MEMBER AND SUPERINTENDENT COMMENTS

Director Sinai thanked all who participated tonight and reiterated that there is no consensus on this issues. Things are polarized to we should not open until there is a vaccine and to health officials say we should open, so we should do so immediately. While we talk about following public health orders, she also hopes that the community continue to follow health orders even through the holidays. expressed feeling passionate about abiding by the public health guidelines and assured that busd has been doing that just. the green light to open on Oct 13 was contingent upon school's readiness. She thanked all of the teachers for their work through the summer. the reason why teachers were not immediately ready oct 13 was because they'd spend their summer refining and developing distance learning practices. She expressed her thanks to all who are coming up with constructive solutions. She assured the comm that we are working to reopen as safely as we can so we can.

Director Brown echoed Director Sinai's comments.

Director Miller shared concerns on behalf of students shared concerns of covid rate spike, however there are other activities like sport conditioning, club, art classes and any activity that can be safely implemented. He said that this planning is a group effort. It is the busd job to come up with the best plan, and it is student's and families job to adhere to health guidelines even through holidays so we can get back to school. He expressed his trust in the health dept and stands by their guidance.

Director Levva-Cutler also echoed Director Sinai's remarks. She thanked the student who spoke during public comment. Tonight is her last meeting, and will have some remarks to make at her last meeting on Dec 2. She will miss hearing from the

community at the meetings. She stressed that there is a commitment of the Board to listen and act on behalf of our students.

VP ALper appreciated his colleagues remarks. He thanked those who spoke. He reiterated comments about the long term of distance learning. A lot of money and time has happened to set in place necessary upgrades as they can't happen overnight. He encourage the public to say through the reopening plan presentation and appreciate the complexities. To families that say are comfortable sending their students to school should be able to with teachers that feel the same, and families that opt to stay home should be able to do that.

President Appel joined her colleagues in echoing Director Sinai's sentiments. Public health guidelines are key and numbers in Berkeley stayed low because Berkeley people have been careful. We could not open in October because it would not have been safe. She stressed that we all want to get our students back on campus, but we have to consider what is the safest for our community. Schools in New York that reopened now have to close effective tomorrow. She appreciated administration and staff who are ensuring that reopening schools is happening in the safest way possible. It is our responsibility that if we open, we are safe and thank staff for their commitment to safety.

Superintendent acknowledged that this is a passionate filled process. Thanked the board for its sense of community and shared responsibility. thanked staff for their work past exhaustion to prepare for distance learning.

He offered that he is both a father and a son. He clarified that his daughter has not stepped forward at school since March and has seen firsthand the effects it has on student. As a son his protective of his father. Ethical compromise that we have been forced to confront as a community. He mentions this to express his connection to the pain that we feel in the community. Establishing the heart behind the head as we stay together through this.

## CONSENT CALENDAR

Motion to approve the Consent Calendar:

Leyva-Cutler/Alper and unanimously approved 6-0/

## ACTION ITEMS

lifelong contract

Alper/Miller Sinai recuse due to conflict of interest

Approval of New Student Information System for 2020-2021 School Year

Director of Technology Jay Nitschke explained Illuminate will end in June 30, 2021. Requirements included gradebook interface that is easy to use for all teachers and can handle middle school grading scheme. BUSD has been watching.

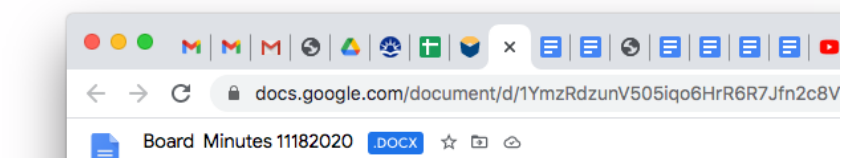
## The Three Finalists

Berkeley Unified has been watching other SIS selection processes during this period. The results of reviewing several processes including those run by the Santa Cruz COE, Fremont Unified, Monterey Peninsula, and others districts identified the top three contenders:

Aeries

Infinite Campus

Synergy (EduPoint)



Each vendor came in and gave 7 hour long presentations. Infinite campus emerged as the selection features include

## Infinite Campus emerged as the selection

Favored among teachers

Implemented the two-grade (HOW and SBP) system that Middle Schools use out of the box in both Teacher Gradebook and Parent Portal

Includes a built-in RTI/MTSS component

Includes useful extra including Covid features, online payments, Free/Reduced applications that will provide efficiency

Built on a modern database structure

Quicker implementation cycle with IC taking data direct from IlluminateEd

Although more expensive than ISI, provides a better value than Synergy

Motion to adopt: Brown/Sinai and approved 5-0.

Leyva cutler revised had to miss this discussion

## DISCUSSION ITEMS

### Update on School Reopening

Superintendent explained that the course of this planning has been guided by a set of values with the health and safety of staff and students at the forefronts as well as the social emotional. There are 3 key documents on the website including the readiness dashboard, the COVID 19 case dashboard offering a school by school cases. The Board has agreed to approve the reopening process in a phased manner. The board agreed on a Jan 13 reopening

Director Natasha Beery reported that in accordance with the tier system provided by the state of California. We were in the widespread throughout the summer. When the waiver process was introduced, we also moved a level down and received additional guidance for cohorts and small group based services. We did not expect a rapid move from red to orange, and then heard that the county would allow for school reopening on Oct 13 with many substantial updates and upgrades that BUSD need to put into place before being able to reopen safely. She noted that no school district in the county has been able to reopen safely. We had set Jan 13 target date and now we have moved back up to purple which may result in a change to the Jan 13 target date. We still have small cohorts at three sites as permitted in the purple category, but there is little certainty where we will be in Jan.

Dr. Stephens explained that despite the purple widespread status cohort based program as still permitted, school district that have not opened must remain closed, school and districts that have opened may remain open with modifications, and schools and districts with elementary waivers can open. We will not be permitted to open so long as the county and city is in the purple widespread category. The timing requirements established for school reopening. in order to move to the re

Week of	Key Activities
November 2	Educator Work Group Recruitment
November 9	Start of Educator Surveys
November 16	November 19, Town Hall for Elementary Families in English (6:00) and Spanish (7:15)
November 23	Thanksgiving Break
November 30	Expansion of Phase 1 Cohort Program -8 students per cohort to 12 students Town Hall Meetings for Middle School Families, and High School Families High School Student Feedback Session
December 7	
December 14	Goal: Prior to Winter Break, share details of BUSD's Hybrid Learning Plan with families
December 21	Winter Break
January 4	Goal: Town Hall Meetings to describe Hybrid Learning program
January 11	January 13 Launch of Hybrid Learning in Pre-K, Transitional Kindergarten, and Grades 1-2
January 18	January 20 Launch of Hybrid Learning in Grades 3-5
TBD	Hybrid Learning Launch for Middle and High Schools

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d leave, metric must be satisfied for two week. An additoan two weeks are required before permitted to reopen. Among the key milestones in proposed timeline/.

A serious of townahlls will be scheduled to gauge the interes of families to stay home or return to campus. For all purposes, we contrunue to operate on this timeline and gake seriously the board call that this will be the planning directive to staff as we move forward. Provided enrollment number in phase 1 that was indicative of hesitation among families to return to campus. He shared hyrbind planning assumptions, these will be further discussed at future townhalls, they iclude that a hybrid model should be designed to minimize disruptions, attempt to choose a flexible model that will allow students to go back and forth between distance and in-person learning. Introduces some possible models. One mode kept same start time and its advantages was its flexibility and impact on staffing. Another model allows for students to come to campus two days a week. Questions and discussion followed.

Director Miller asked if the s

Policy: Transgender and Gender Nonconforming Students, First Reading

President Appel explained that the purpose is to provide an environment free from stigma and discrimination. She walked the Board and viewing audience through the language. She educated the community on some of the terms in the policy relative to. What is unique about this policy is that it included gender segregating activities as there are times as teachers use gender specific activities like lining boys and girls up separately. This policy calls that it is done only when necessary. Policy will ask staff to be conscientious about the kind of activities with students, be aware of activities that isolate students by gender. One element has to do with training to staff. Questions and discussion followed. This policy will come back for approval on Dec 2.

Director Brown suggested adding language around training for teachers and staff. President Appel agreed and said the version presented for approval on Dec 2 will contain this addition.

#### Update on BUSD's Black Lives Matter Resolution

Ann Callegari, Natasha Beery, Thom Reihart, Baje Thiara, Adelita Martinez

Ms. Beery updated on the banner as a symbol of BUSD. A BLM banner is displayed in the Board chambers is completed.

Thiara updated on the Black Lives Matter at school week from Feb 1-5. Teachers at the elementary and middle school level have reviewed the resolution and plan to feature ..

The ed services is ready to support BLM

## Resources for Educators and Families

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- Elementary Literacy Coaches from each site are engaging in a book study on Gholdy Muhammad's "Cultivating Genius".
  - The research in this book presents a teaching and learning model through the lens of historical African American literary societies and offers an equity framework .
  - The goal of the book study is to engage the team on how to move the work forward at a systems level, site level and classroom level
- In partnership with the Office of Family Engagement & Equity, 3 Family Support Seminars have been hosted:
  - September 22, 2020 "Building Student Agency, Self Awareness & Empowerment"
  - October 6, 2020 "Helping Our Children Thrive in Distance Learning"
  - October 27, 2020 " Black Families in BUSD - Supports & Celebrations" featuring Dr. Khalid White

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Adelita Martinez

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## Resources for Educators and Families- What's Next

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January 25th district TK-8 PD

- Continue to deepen our learning on abolitionist teaching

January 27th district wide elementary collaboration

- Continue to reflect on focal student writing

Teacher Equity Leaders

- Resources to support BLM and Black History Month

Literacy Coach Network book study

- Continue to reflect/plan around "Cultivating Genius" equity framework

Family Support Seminars

- Sessions 3-6 on "Building Student Agency, Self Awareness & Empowerment"
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Provided overview of resources provided for Educators and Families.

Dr. Stephens: with respect to the Black Joy campaign work will start when we return from work.

Ann Callegari updated on work coming out of the OFEE. In action to family program, there is a partnership with the city.

## Resources that Focus on the Well-Being of Black Families

That the Berkeley Unified School District's Office of Family Engagement and Equity will consult with parents, educators, and community groups to develop additional resources that focus on the well-being of Black families and caregivers, for the purpose of contributing to the ongoing need for healing;

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### **Black/African American Parent Principal Learning Circles Project**

OFEE and the City of Berkeley's 2020 Vision collaboration: Engaging administrators and Black/African American parents from all TK - 8th grade schools through three facilitated learning circles to better support the success of Black/African American students.

October 20, 2020 Sharing Experiences, Expectations, Challenges and Hopes

November 17, 2020 Opportunities for Change~Identifying Priorities

February 16, 2021 Progress Check-In and opportunities for strengthening partnerships

Expected Outcomes: The primary outcome of this project is to promote communication, understanding and respect between Black/African American parents and school leaders.

Renaming Jefferson and Washington

Beery updated that this has started and the Board has received.

superintendent:

## Proactively Identify Class and Cultural Biases

The Board of Education vows to work to proactively identify class and cultural biases as well as practices, policies, and institutional barriers that negatively influence student learning, perpetuate achievement gaps, and impede equal access to opportunities for all students in order to eradicate institutional bias of any kind, including implicit or unintentional biases and prejudices that affect student achievement, and to eliminate disparities in educational outcomes for students from historically underserved and underrepresented populations.

BSEP funds have been set aside to support the creation of an African American Success Framework, and to define the work of an African American Community Advisory Council; we expect both to begin in January.

Reinhard:

topics that can be investigated:

## Identify Additional Measures of Racial Inequity

That the Berkeley Unified School District's BREA department will consult with parents, educators, and community groups to identify additional measures of racial inequity in the district, and propose a method for the collection of this data; and that the district commits to the collection of this data for the purpose of illuminating and resolving areas of the district's programs that are still marked by racial disparities;

PROPOSED TOPICS	Preliminary Examples
CHRONIC ABSENTEEISM	Effects of home to school distance on attendance. Analyze home address, school assignment and attendance patterns. (existing data)
OPPORTUNITY AND ACCESS	Access to advanced coursework. Review enrollment procedures, parent knowledge of program options, and student choice (existing data; interview of students, parents, and staff)
IMPLICIT BIAS	Assignment to intervention services and behavioral referrals; effectiveness of intervention programs. (Fall and Spring SEL survey, existing enrollment data, behavioral referral analysis, classroom observations, analysis of entry process and requirements)

Questions and discussion followed.

Director Brown

#### EXTENDED COMMENTS

One comment on the indeed to work on priorities

One comment expressing disappointment about not bringing up students with disabilities

One comment opposed to opening schools

#### EXTENDED COMMENT BY BOARD

Presinfe Appel expressed feeling enriched having this be her last meeting

ADJOURNMENT

10:33pm