

**BSEP PLANNING & OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE MINUTES  
September 14, 2021**

**P&O Committee Members Present**

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

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

**P&O Committee Members Absent\*:**

Jerry Liang, *Pre-K Program*  
Carla Bryant, *Oxford*  
Nikhila Pai, *Ruth Acty (co-Rep)*  
Prashant Jawalikar, *King Middle School*

Chetan Kamdar, *King Middle School*  
Josh Irwin, *Berkeley High*  
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, John Muir Elementary, 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*  
Laura Menard, *Community Member*  
Lilana Spindler, *Community Member*

**BUSD Staff:**

Brent Stephens, *Superintendent of Schools*  
Natasha Beery, *Director of BSEP and Communications*  
Kathy Fleming, *Director of Local Resources*  
Ruben Aurelio, *Associate Superintendent for Ed Services*  
Max Eissler, *Director of Technology*  
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. Committee members, staff, and visitors introduced themselves.

**2. Establish the Quorum/Approve the Agenda**

The quorum was established with 10 voting members present.

The agenda was approved by unanimous consent.

**3. Chairperson's Comments**

*Nicole Chabot and Weldon Bradstreet*

Co-Chair Chabot thanked committee members and administrators for attending, acknowledging

how busy the start of the school year is. She welcomed Director Fleming, noting that the committee will be impressed with her experience and the extent to which she is hitting the ground running, and her commitment to working with the P&O as a team. She also recognized outgoing Director Beery for attending this final meeting in a working capacity.

#### **4. BSEP Director's Comments**

*Natasha Beery, outgoing Director of BSEP & Community Relations and Kathy Fleming, Director of Local Resources*

Director Fleming expressed her excitement at taking on this role, and how much she is looking forward to working with the P&O committee.

Director Beery shared that she would keep her introductory remarks brief but would share more in later agenda items.

#### **5. Superintendent's Report**

*Dr. Brent Stephens, Superintendent of Schools*

Dr. Stephens noted the ongoing theme in the district of overwhelming gratitude from students, families, and staff to be back together, and reiterated his and the District's commitment to do all work possible to protect this progress. Every positive contribution toward that goal is valuable and is appreciated. He noted how lucky BUSD is to have such a remarkable community asset in BSEP, and that this resource has been so well shepherded by Director Beery. Her contributions span measure renewal efforts, communications and special projects, providing a sounding board to colleagues, and much more. He adds his voice to the chorus of folks saying thank you and noting how much she will be missed, though the District will fortunately have her through a few more special projects this semester.

He also welcomed Director Fleming, noting that they do know each other from SFUSD. This allows him to know that BUSD really did get lucky to have someone with this depth of knowledge and with such similar and relevant experience. He also thanked Ms. Perez for acting as a bridge in the Director role transition.

He updated that the district continues its ongoing work to rethink the Middle School assignment policy, the engagement timeline for which is extended through another semester at the request of the School Board. He shared that district leaders are engaging with the Washington Elementary School community to select a new name for that campus. He also looked forward to inviting African American families back into the Principals' Learning Circle this school year, as well as to engaging English Learner (EL) families in revising the EL Master Plan, which will require a strong degree of partnership between staff and the community.

He ended that with the constantly-changing pandemic conditions, he is making best efforts to communicate ever changing regulations, and asked that the community keep looking out for those messages.

#### **6. Approval of Minutes**

*May 25, 2021*

Chair Bradstreet asked if there were any corrections to the minutes, there were none offered. The [5.25.21 Draft P&O Meeting Minutes](#) were approved by unanimous consent.

### **7. Public Comment**

Ms. Laura Menard and Ms. Lilana Spindler shared that they have concerns about inequity in tax collections by the City of Berkeley Finance Office.

Ms. Perez presented a public comment on behalf of Director of Categorical and Special Projects, Liza Estupin, publicizing the search for members for the new Multilingual Language Learner Master Plan (MLLMP). Director Estupin was ill and unable to attend the meeting to make the statement herself.

### **8. Introduction: Director of Local Resources**

*Natasha Beery, outgoing Director of BSEP & Community Relations and Kathy Fleming, Director of Local Resources*

Director Beery, as outgoing Director of BSEP and Community Relations, echoes how incredibly fortunate the district is, and how relieved she is at this moment of stepping down, that Director Fleming is the person stepping up into the role. She could not imagine anyone more ideal to take on this work, who absolutely has the experience we are looking for. Director Fleming brings everything we had hoped for and imagined this past May. Director Fleming is taking the local tax funding seriously, and valuing the stewardship and transparency required for these resources. She is already working with program managers to ensure that these public funds will go to where they are most needed and will have the most impact. Director Fleming joined BUSD in mid-July, with some time in transition, and Director Fleming and Associate Superintendent Aurelio received a BSEP and BERRA orientation. She will continue to be available on a limited basis to coach them. With the skills and dedication of Director Fleming and Ms. Perez, Director Beery returned from vacation and found the ship sailing.

Director Fleming began with saying how happy she is to be part of the Berkeley community and in such a critical position. She feels honored to continue that work. She's come from SFUSD where she worked for 19 years in many capacities, she has been a teacher for almost 20 years, a TSA (Teacher on Special Assignment), a policy analyst for budgets and data, and has worked in district and school site programs. For 9 years she was the Director of SFUSD's Public Engagement and Enrichment Fund (PEEF), which is very similar to BSEP and BERRA. PEEF also had an advisory committee which she supported, and she was responsible for all aspects of implementing the measure and abiding by measure language. She is now looking forward to supporting all of the work of the P&O Committee. She sees how critical the funding streams are and is focusing on planning, implementation, and oversight. She thanked the Co-Chairs, Director Beery, and Ms. Perez and promised that she will do her best to fill Director Beery's shoes.

Chair Bradstreet also extended a welcome to Director Fleming to BUSD.

### **9. Review of Directors' BSEP Planning Presentation for 9/22 Board Meeting**

*Natasha Beery, outgoing Director of BSEP & Community Relations and Kathy Fleming, Director of Local Resources*

Director Fleming presented the Preview of Director's BSEP Planning Presentation for the September 22 School Board meeting. This will be presented to the Board the following week. See slides for details.

Director Beery explained that the current BSEP Measure E1 contained a built-in plan to grow the fund balance in the early years of the 8-year measure, to be drawn upon toward the end of its life, knowing that steady increases in costs may not be matched by annual Cost of Living Adjustments (COLAS) and thus overall revenues. In past measures, funds have run low because of not planning enough fund balance for later deficit spending. We must always keep an eye on the fund balance and be able to reach the end of the measure with a reserve, so that when we launch the next measure we have the required 3% ready. We don't want to be deficit spending in the last year of the measure, as happened with BSEP Measure A. We also don't want to increase the tax rate beyond the current rate at the next measure renewal, and thus we need to reduce deficit spending in an ongoing way such that BSEP is only funding programs that can be continued within the same tax rates. The district will need to make cuts in 2022-23 and this presentation is intended to start to get the community and Board comfortable with that planned reduction in spending, to reach these goals and to ensure sustainability of the fund balance going into the new measure.

Director Fleming emphasized that the assumptions in the presentation's models, like COLA, staffing costs, and enrollment are assumed to remain flat for now, but will be updated as each becomes known.

Rep. Chabot asked if the costs shown in this presentation take labor agreements from this past Spring and Fall into account. She would also like to see that need for a 3% reserve going into the next measure called out in takeaways as a dollar amount. She recalled that the P&O has talked many times about the ongoing seesaw between BSEP and the General Fund (GF), the necessary give and take helping to achieve needs through varying conditions. She noted that over the last 3 years BSEP has helped to avert GF cuts, even changing the calculations on class sizes. Unless the ask is for the GF to take costs out of BSEP over the waning years of Measure E1, we always said we would recognize these add-ins when we hit this moment in time. It is important not to forget these as we move forward. Heading into the next measure, she put forward as a member of the P&O that district leaders should not plan to ask for a tax increase from taxpayers.

Director Fleming responded that the planning documents do still need to true up the teacher costs, using the newly-negotiated compensation numbers. She will also update these numbers with a final COLA for the coming year, which will be known soon. These updates will give a better sense of the real numbers soon, and emphasized that this group should revisit this analysis as the months and available information progress.

Director Beery urged caution around language when discussing BSEP and the GF. We tend to say BSEP "helps" the GF, or the GF "helps" BSEP, but really both resources help students and staff. We try to figure out what revenue stream is best brought to bear on various needs and asks. SBAC is the group in which this big-picture examination happens. Director Fleming will have conversations with Associate Superintendent Aurelio about programs in Ed Services, and with the Superintendent, etc. This is something that we are going to have to continue to monitor. It is

important to call it out now, as we have 3 years left in E1 and this needs to be in front of the Board, managers, and other district leaders. It is highly likely that reductions in BSEP spending will need to be made.

Rep. Pastika noted that prior to Director Beery's transition out of the BSEP role, the P&O felt that it was important that the new Director would be a part of the Executive Cabinet. This was included in the P&O statement to the Board prior to this transition. However, if Director Fleming is reporting to Assoc. Superintendent Aurelio, it appears she is not a part of the Cabinet. Dr. Stephens responded that a huge majority of the programs BSEP funds are taking place in Ed Services, and knowing what is covered in Cabinet versus what is tackled in Ed Services meetings made Director Fleming working with Assoc. Sup't. Aurelio a best fit. This doesn't mean that Director Fleming doesn't have direct access to him, and he can still solicit advice from her about BSEP. His feeling is that this is the right set of relationships, particularly with the current goal of improving evaluation of the use of these funds. Rep. Pastika stated that she understood positioning the role closer to the programming, but one concern was maintaining the Director's balance of responsibility to the community, maintaining independence to fairly weigh the sometimes competing interests involved. She asked how that balance between community interest versus program interests is being structured into the reorganization, especially if we're being asked to consider cuts. Dr. Stephens responded that he is confident that Director Fleming is familiar with the types of tension being described. Also, the fiduciary oversight on Director Fleming is shared with this P&O Committee, and she comes in with a strong background in that reporting, and in her role communicating fiscal responsibilities to managers--around reporting, fiscal tracking, measurable outcomes, etc.. Those should still remain intact, and not impacted by the change of reporting relationship to the Assoc. Sup't. rather than to the Superintendent. Director Fleming agreed that she is very familiar with this situation, and understands acting as a conduit between the oversight committee and district leadership, as well as supporting the committee and its oversight and communicating that oversight to leadership and the Board. Acting as a representative of this group, she will work hard with the co-Chairs to understand the ins and outs, concerns, and interests of the committee to be communicated to senior leadership and Board. She is used to this situation, knows how to inject aspects of concern and oversight, and is always open to finding ways to improve that as well. She understands the tensions and concerns and will work to ensure that the P&O Committee is well represented.

Director Beery explained that this year is really focusing on the current measure, and shepherding it through its sunset years, then starting next year the planning for the new measure will begin in earnest. Leaders will need to engage the school and larger communities about any potential changes. Leaders will begin cueing up discussions in the P&O meetings and with the Board, and then the '23-24 school year is when things kick into high gear, to get something on the ballot in November of 2024.

Board Member Babitt interjected that wants to see how we can add marketing/community engagement events into this timeline. She felt we need to rebuild favor with any families or community members we may or may not have lost through the pandemic. Focus on rebranding and marketing, to highlight the great things about BUSD as we plan to go out to the community again for voting support.

Director Fleming introduced a new way to gather notes and feedback from all committee members using a Jam Board. This is a way to break into small groups and capture things that haven't yet been shared. She asked each group to call out at least one important item or concern from the presentation.

Group 1: Their main concern, which has come up quite a bit in the P&O the past few years, is getting good evaluations in place, to figure out what we're weighing as we look at potential cuts. This could help us figure out what programs to cut or not, and they hope evaluations will be addressed in next measure as well.

Group 2: They were appreciative of having multi-year projections early and often, and understand the work it takes to generate them. By the math presented, it looks like the trajectory is going to culminate in significant cuts, so the sooner we start to realize the reality of that number, the more helpful that will be. These look to be pretty big in comparison to what we've seen in the past. Additionally, last year the P&O talked about what determines how we spend money, is it across the board for school or by student, because we want to bring up targeted universalism. This involves having the same goals for each school and student, but recognizing that different amounts of resources are required depending on the site and situation.

Group 3: Shared that they resonated with the concern over BSEP E1 funding running low or out. They had concerns about the significant unknowns in this process (COLAs, enrollment, tax increase or not, etc.). They also wanted to know more about the potential effect of increased housing stock on revenue. They were also very concerned about how deep the cuts in '22-23 will be, and how can we also be laser-focused on equity. With cuts looming, must keep equity in mind and that "budgets are moral documents."

Group 4: Resonated with the public comments, noting that all three were apt and timely. They appreciated the concerns about taxes, knowing it is outside the scope of the committee but is a concern. They were also interested in the MLLMP (new multilingual support committee), noting how rooted we are and lucky to have Sylvia Mendez Elementary for multilingualism. This group was interested in how we might increase awareness, engagement, and knowledge of what is being provided to multilingual learners in BUSD.

## **10. BSEP and BERRA Plan Updates**

*Natasha Beery, outgoing Director of BSEP & Community Relations and Kathy Fleming, Director of Local Resources*

Director Fleming presented two updates, one written and the other verbal with more information to come at a later meeting when more is known.

The [P&O Update to the BSEP BREA budget document](#) narrates the .10 FTE addition from the BSEP BREA budget starting in '20-21 to the Director of Categorical and Special Projects position, in recognition of work done by this position supervising BREA around evaluation of the LCAP.

The second change, figures for which will be provided at a subsequent meeting, is to the BSEP Oversight and Communications budget. Director Beery will continue working for BUSD in a

scaled-down capacity to assist on special projects with Communications and to provide additional support to the BSEP office through the leadership transition.

## **11. SSC Election Timeline**

*Danielle Perez, BSEP Program Specialist*

Ms. Perez presented the [SSC Election Calendar 2021-22](#), explaining that she, Director Fleming, and new Director of Categorical and Special Projects Liza Estupin have met multiple times to plan how best to support Principals and SSCs this year, taking into account needs and requirements around BSEP site funding as well as state and federal resources like one-time COVID funding, and Title I funding. The first step is to get all sites successfully through elections and constituting their SSCs. They provided this standardized calendar, and based on requests from Principals, the election deadlines have been added to each of the Principals' google calendars. Digital templates for nomination forms, online ballots, and vote counting documents have been dropped into every school's shared SSC folders, as well.

The 2020-21 school year forced all SSC elections to be entirely digital; this year with students being back in person, there are options to also use physical ballots if sites choose. She asked if any members were aware of issues or challenges around this transition back, and would love to think ahead about how to support Principals if any issues are known.

Once elections are complete, the next steps are to get all committee members ready to attend the district-wide orientation/training event on October 21st, which will be virtual again this year. The SSCs should vote to elect or approve the P&O representatives for their sites at the 10/21 meetings. If current P&O members are planning to volunteer again for '21-22, she noted it would be good to mark your calendars to attend that 10/21 meeting to meet the new SSC at your school, and to plan how and when you'll be bringing updates to that committee, especially if you aren't an SSC member.

The first meeting of the 2021-22 Planning and Oversight Committee will be on November 9. Any current P&O members who don't plan to continue with the committee for the coming year are encouraged to meet with their school's new representative(s) to provide them with any site-specific concerns or considerations, and also to give them a friendly rundown of what to expect as a member of this committee. As always, any current, prospective, or incoming members as well as all Principals are encouraged to reach out to Ms. Perez and Director Fleming with questions or for any other support needs.

Rep. Flett asked if Ms. Perez and Director Fleming might send a list of talking points to "sell" the P&O Rep position to potential new members. Chair Bradstreet suggested sending recruitment points to all community members and to mention that you don't have to be an SSC member to serve as a P&O rep for your school. Ms. Perez would send a list of common talking points to the current P&O members to add to and use when recruiting at their sites.

## **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. The summary overview was

approved by unanimous consent.

**13. Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned by acclamation at 8:30 p.m.