

A monthly newsletter sharing school news with the community



BUSD A+ News Update

This is the second season of the A+ News Update. To receive the monthly A+ News Update electronically, please send an email to:

subscribeA+@berkeley.k12.ca.us and write *Subscribe* in the subject line.

The Update reports on the many accomplishments of our students, teachers and staff, and gives highlights of our community partnerships, and Board and administrative actions.

It is available on the home page of the BUSD website: www.berkeley.k12.ca.us
Previous issues are also available on the home page.

Highlights inside:

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Strengthening the Home-School Bond

William Huyett, Superintendent

The 2020 Vision to close the Achievement Gap is prompting us to focus intently on the relationship between families and their children's school. We strongly believe that we must empower parents to be able to work with teachers and school staff to improve the education of their children. We believe that promoting regular home-school communication, teaching parents and guardians how to boost learning in the home, and smoothing families' access to school and community resources will contribute to more equitable learning outcomes for all of our students.

While the 2020 Vision Planning Team is gathering feedback (see below) and prioritizing its recommendations to the City and the District, BUSD jumped ahead last year to implement an 18-month Internal Plan to Close the Achievement Gap; we are now at the mid-way point.

A major element in both the BUSD Plan and the 2020 Vision is to **Partner Meaningfully with Parents/Guardians**. We have already taken several concrete steps in this direction, including:

- **Holding forums and educational events** of interest to diverse parent groups, to provide opportunities for dialogue and increased understanding between parents and school staff;
- **Providing community-building and parent education opportunities** for families of children enrolled in our after school programs;
- **Articulating each school's commitment to the school-home partnership** and identifying resources to support it in the School Site Plans;
- **Training and supporting school staff and parent groups to be more collaborative** in ways that will impact student achievement; and
- **Conducting parent institutes** that are culturally appropriate and accessible (in both Spanish and English), so that parents are better equipped to navigate the schools and resources available to them. (Such institutes have already been offered at our middle schools and will soon be piloted in some of our elementary schools).

(Home-School Bond continued on Page 2)



On November 3, 2009 a draft of proposed recommendations to meet the 2020 Vision for Berkeley's Children and Youth was presented to a Joint meeting of the Berkeley Board of Education and the Berkeley City Council.

Community Feedback Requested on 2020 Vision Recommendations

The Berkeley community is invited to hear the draft 2020 Vision recommendations, ask questions, and give their feedback. The first two opportunities will take place at B-Tech (Berkeley Technology Academy), 2701 Martin Luther King Jr. Way (at Derby St.) on:

➔ **Monday, December 14, 2009, 7:00 - 9:00 pm** (re-scheduled from 11/19/09)

➔ **Saturday, January 9, 2010, 10:00 a.m. – 12:00 noon**

Childcare and Spanish translation provided. For more information contact the Berkeley Alliance at (510) 845-7103, info@berkeleyalliance.org or www.berkeleyalliance.org.

Census in Schools Program: It's About Us

What is the U.S. census?

Every ten years the United States government tries to find out the number of people who live in the United States by conducting a count called the **census**. This count is required by the U.S. Constitution.

Why is the U.S. census count necessary?

Census figures are used to determine the number of representatives each state receives in the U.S. Congress, as well as each county's representation in the state legislature. Government agencies use census data to make funding decisions totaling more than \$300 billion each year.

Watch for more about the 2010 Census in upcoming editions of the [A+ News Update](#)

SUBMIT YOUR COMMENTS:

WE ARE ALWAYS LOOKING FOR WAYS TO MAKE THE A+ NEWS BETTER SERVE THE COMMUNITY, AND WE WANT YOUR INPUT. WE ARE INTERESTED IN YOUR OPINIONS, IDEAS AND QUESTIONS, PLEASE SEND THEM TO:

[publicinfo@](mailto:publicinfo@berkeley.k12.ca.us)

berkeley.k12.ca.us

OR: SEND THEM TO THE BUSD PUBLIC INFORMATION OFFICE
2134 MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. WAY

(Home-School Bond from Page 1)

Central to this work is the reorganization of the Office of Family and Community Partnerships (OFCP), which is now under the leadership of Maya Hernandez. Maya's position as Manager of OFCP has been re-envisioned to allow her to spend more time building the capacity of our schools to engage with parents as partners. She also works with City and community groups and agencies that support families in the areas of public health and educational success. Working with Maya are two full-time parent outreach specialists and one part-time home-school liaison, who provide training and support to parents, teachers, staff, and administrators.

I hope you are already seeing this work in action at your own child's school. We are committed to continue our work to build partnerships with families and to break down barriers and build bridges. Now is the time to for us to make real and measurable progress to close the achievement gap for Berkeley's youth.



New Manager of Family and Community Partnerships

Maya Hernandez brings 15-plus years experience with family and student support services to her new job with BUSD as Manager of the Office of Family and Community Partnerships. Most recently she managed 34 after school programs in the West Contra Costa Unified School District. Previously she was involved in 21st Century Community Learning Centers, Healthy Start, and Migrant Education programming in the Bay Area and San Diego. Welcome, Maya!



H1N1 Vaccination Clinics Begin with Elementary Students

After much anticipation, the City of Berkeley Public Health Department has begun vaccinating Berkeley's school children against the H1N1 flu. From November 16 – 20 H1N1 Vaccination Clinics are taking place at each BUSD elementary school.

Parents of elementary students were notified of this voluntary opportunity and gave written authorization allowing their children to be vaccinated. Although many BUSD students have already received the vaccine from their doctors, the goal is to ensure that as many children as possible are vaccinated in order to minimize the spread of the virus.



Jefferson Principal Maggie Riddle lends support to a student who preferred the nasal spray over the shot. Approximately 51% of the elementary students are receiving the vaccine at the school clinics.

Vaccination Clinics will be held at BUSD middle and high schools once sufficient supplies of the vaccine are in hand (anticipated to be in December), but families are encouraged to check with their health care provider to see if their child can receive the vaccination right away. For the latest information on BUSD's H1N1 Vaccination Clinics check the BUSD website: www.berkeley.k12.ca.us

BUSD Music Program - A Season of Performances

Thanks to the generosity of Berkeley voters in passing Measure A in 2006 (the BSEP property tax), BUSD is able to offer students a rich music education. The Winter Concert Series is a great opportunity to hear the results of the students' practice.



Berkeley High's Concert Band & Orchestra's Halloween Concert October 29, 2009.

Other Important Dates

Thursday, Nov. 19th
7:00-9:00 p.m.
Berkeley Arts Magnet
**District-wide
African-American
Parent Meeting**

Nov. 25th, 26th & 27th
**Thanksgiving
Holiday**

Performing Arts Winter Concert Calendar

- Berkeley High Jazz Ensemble – Saturday December 4th at 7 p.m. (at King)
- Berkeley High Choral Concert – Friday December 7th or 9th at 7 p.m. (at Longfellow)
- Willard Middle School Winter Concert – Tuesday December 8th 7 p.m.
- Berkeley High Concert Band & Orchestra – Thursday December 10th at 7 p.m.
- Berkeley High Jazz Lab Band – Friday December 11th at 7 p.m. (at King)
- Longfellow Middle School Winter Concert – Monday December 14th at 7 p.m.
- King Middle School Winter Concert – Tuesday December 15th at 7 p.m.
- Emerson Elementary Winter Concert – Wednesday December 16th at 6:30 p.m.
- Berkeley High Band & Orchestra Chamber Concert – Thursday January 14th at 7 p.m.

For more information call the BUSD Visual & Performing Arts office @ 644-8831.

KINDERGARTEN FAIR - SATURDAY, DECEMBER 5, 2009

Over 400 parents and students attend the Kindergarten Fair every year. Each K-5 school is represented by parents and teachers. BUSD staff will also be on hand to explain District services.

BUSD Kindergarten Fair
Saturday, December 5, 2009
10 a.m. - 1 p.m.
LeConte Elementary School
2241 Russell Street (one block west of Telegraph)



SCHEDULED BOARD MEETINGS WEDNESDAY

November 18, 2009
December 9, 2009
(The 2010 schedule is determined at the Dec. 9, 2009 meeting.)

Note: Board meetings begin at 7:30 pm, and can be heard on Berkeley Cable Channel 33, and radio KPFB FM 89.3

School Visits: Tuesday & Thursday Mornings Nov. 17 – Dec. 17, 2009 & Jan. 5 – Feb. 4, 2010

When you prepare to visit a school:

- Call the school before visiting to make an appointment so they know to expect you
- On arriving at the school, report to the front office to introduce yourself and sign in
- Please remember visits are for **adults only**

Find more information on the BUSD website: www.berkeley.k12.ca.us

**A+ NEWS
UPDATE
INCLUDES
STAFF PAGE**

The Staff Page focuses on news and updates primarily of interest to BUSD employees, although the community may appreciate these stories and highlights as well.

A+ News Update

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Send submissions to: busdschoolnews@berkeley.k12.ca.us

Or fax to: 540-5358

BUSD School Libraries Offer Books, Websites & More

Books? Check. Helpful websites? Check. Author interviews? Check. *Enciclopedia virtual en español? Sí.* And more, much more.

Thanks to the voters of Berkeley and BSEP/Measure A of 2006, each of Berkeley's public schools has a robust library program, complete with library media technicians, teacher/librarians, and an inventory of books with copyright dates well above the state and county standards. Each school library also has its own **library website** from which you can browse the catalog while making a list of the titles you'd like to check out.

On the library websites, you can also **read a book online in another language** (ICDL), check out powerful **photographs of California's colorful cultures and history** (Calisphere), **see a video of an author or illustrator** describing their inspirations (Teaching Books), gather some background knowledge from **World Book Online or Encyclopedia Hallazgos**, or catch up on the latest happenings via the **library or science blogs**. All of the school library websites are linked from the Department of Library Services: <http://berkeley.net/library-services>. Check them out!



All of the school websites are user-friendly and inviting, like Jefferson's.

Department Spotlight: Human Resources Classified Support Team

The BUSD Human Resources Classified Support Team works together to recruit, test, review, hire, and assign the District's 500+ Classified employees. And that's just the beginning. The Team provides ongoing support as well to everyone from secretaries and custodians, bus drivers and instructional aides, supervisors and managers. BUSD Classified employees are the hundreds of people whose work "behind the scenes" helps make our students successful in the classroom.



The H.R. Classified Support Team: Jana Jandra, Dana Malone and Francisco Martinez (Not pictured is Tracie DeAngelis).

Director of Classified Personnel Francisco Martinez also provides support to the Personnel Commission, a nonpartisan public body responsible for the administration of the BUSD Merit System. The three Commissioners are (left to right): Dan Lee, Shirley Van Bourg, and Degui Montrice Goodman.

