

A monthly newsletter sharing school news with the community



BUSD A+ News Update

This is the second season of the **A+ News Update**. Find it on the BUSD website:

www.berkeley.k12.ca.us

BUSD Board Updates

Look for a detailed report on the Board's review of the BHS Redesign Plan at the February 3rd meeting in the Board Updates.

BUSD Board Updates reports on actions taken and highlights of Board Meetings, and are distributed through the Etrees on the Thursday following every School Board meeting.

Highlights inside:

- ❖ *BSEP Site Dollars go Far @ BHS*
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Berkeley High School Redesign Plan

By William Huyett, Superintendent



On February 3, 2010, at the Board of Education meeting, the Board will consider the proposed **Berkeley High School Redesign Plan**. One aspect of the proposed BHS Redesign Plan has sparked a lot of controversy, that is, a recommendation made by the school's leadership team and supported by the School Governance Council to direct some of the teacher time which has been assigned, for the past several years, to science lab classes held during the "0" or 7th period to "Equity Grants."

"Equity Grants" were intended to allow all disciplines and small schools to apply for any additional teachers allocated to the school to support struggling students. This proposal, however, raised concerns that if the extra time for AP/IB science classes was reduced, students may not receive instruction of the full curriculum and this might impair their ability to pass the AP and IB tests.

To examine the implications of this proposal, I met with the principal and six science teacher leaders for a number of hours over the course of the last several weeks and together we developed a revised proposal which is outlined below. This is part of what the School Board will be reviewing at its February 3rd meeting. The revised proposal from the administration and science teacher leaders is as follows:

- To continue to provide extra time as currently exists for AP and IB Biology, Chemistry and Physics. At this time, AP Environmental Science is not included in the recommendation for additional time, but this is still under review while we determine what is needed to meet the requirements for the College Board Standards for AP Environmental Science.
- To begin an enhanced science option in College Prep Biology, Chemistry and Physics for any student who requests it. This would be a credited lab course to be held once a week before or after school. Approximately, 1.0 additional FTE would be required to implement this program.



Teacher Uri Skowronski discusses blood-typing with students during an after school Advanced Biology Lab.

While I am in support of these recommendations, and believe that thoughtful work has gone into developing them, at this time, I can only pledge that these recommendations will be seriously considered during the District's budget development process for the next school year. We are just at the start of this process now and do not know with certainty what funds the District will have from either the State allocation or from the BSEP Special Tax. We know that the State budget is in grave condition and we are aware that we, along with most other districts, will have to again make major budget cuts both next year and the following year (2011-12). Therefore I want to emphasize that we must use our District process to determine whether there will be sufficient BSEP monies to provide additional allocation of teachers for all supplementary programs..

The budget development process will continue throughout this spring and will include discussions with the Superintendent's Budget Advisory Committee as well as with the BSEP Planning and Oversight Committee. These groups, as well as others, will be advising me about the recommendations which I ultimately bring to the Board of Education. As I stated earlier, I support this proposal for additional teachers for science labs at BHS, but my first responsibility is to determine the District's overall budget situation, to work through the District's budget development process, and then to bring my recommendations to the Board of Education after completing this process.

School Board Representatives to Board Committees

The Board is seeking applications for vacancies in these areas:

- Facilities Safety & Maintenance Oversight Committee (FSMOC)
- School Construction Oversight Committee (SCOC)
- City of Berkeley Youth Commission

Download applications and more information on the BUSD website: www.berkeley.k12.ca.us
Or call 510-644-6320.

The Board has received a number of applications for the Youth Commission and will conduct interviews prior to the board meeting on February 3rd.

BHS Raises \$10,700 for Haiti Relief

"Where Humanity Struggles to Live, Berkeley High Steps up to Give." That is the students' slogan for this campaign. According to their donations web page; "The scope of the disaster is truly enormous, and a tremendous influx of immediate aid is needed to avert an even greater loss of life. Partners In Health has been working in Haiti for nearly 25 years. Their local team is already working to ensure PIH's coordinated relief efforts, leveraging the skills of more than 120 doctors and nearly 500 nurses and nursing assistants who work at established sites throughout Haiti." Emerson Elementary School added \$500 to the BHS fund, and gave an additional \$1,000 to the Red Cross.



Berkeley High's Leadership Students collected \$4,433 at BHS, \$5,767 in on-line donations at: <http://act.pih.org/page/outreach/view/haitiearthquake/BHShelpHaiti> and \$500 from Emerson Elementary School

BSEP Site Dollars Go Far @ Berkeley High

Since 1987-88, 22 classes of seniors (16,000+ students) have graduated from Berkeley High School. For the past 22 years and continuing today, BUSD students have been the beneficiaries of the generosity of Berkeley voters, whose continued support of the Berkeley Schools Excellence Program (BSEP) property tax measures (most recently Measure A of 2006) have made a huge difference in the quality of our students' education.

Part of the BSEP Measure provides specific funds for each school to decide how best to use, to enhance student learning and improve student performance. At \$224 per pupil, BHS received \$717,248 of these BSEP School Discretionary dollars in 2009-2010. The 15 member Berkeley High BSEP Committee, made up of elected parents, students, teachers, and the principal, allocated 14 grants this year, funding a broad array of programs that touch virtually every BHS student and teacher. They are:

- College/Career Advisors (2.0 FTE*)
- Instructional Materials for Departments, Small Schools & Programs - \$125,000
- Instructional Media (Video) Technician (1.0 FTE)
- Instructional Specialist – Dance & Drum (.53 FTE)
- Freshman Team Coach Stipends (\$11,750)
- Student Academic Support:
 - Teacher - Student Academic Support Coordinator (1.0 FTE)
 - Study Group Leaders / AP Project (1,600 hours)
 - Algebra Tutors (1,600 hours)
 - R.I.S.E. Tutors (355 hours)
 - Bilingual Tutors & Youth Advisors (1,311 hours)
- Home-School Communications:
 - Parent Liaison – Parent Resource Center (.53 FTE)
 - Program Assistant – Volunteer Coordinator (.67 FTE)
 - Bilingual Home-School Liaison (.53 FTE)
- Student Attendance & Discipline Support:
 - Teacher – 9th & 10th Grade Intervention Coordinator (.60 FTE)
 - Student Welfare & Attendance Specialist – On-Campus Suspension (1.0 FTE)
 - Student Court Coordinator (.53 FTE)

* FTE = Full-time Equivalent

School Supplies Initiative Delivers in Berkeley

Every year, over 50,000 Berkeley, Oakland and West Contra Costa County students attend school unable to afford the basic school supplies needed to succeed. According to Benito Delgado-Olson, Executive Director of *KtoCollege*, this figure is 128,293 in the East Bay and over 3.1 million in California. The School Supply Initiative seeks to remedy this resource disparity by providing as many low-income students as possible with backpacks, notebooks, pencils, calculators, and other desperately needed necessities they would not otherwise have. Berkeley's distribution



Hundreds of volunteers participated in the 'School Supply Initiative's 1.7 Million Dollar Assembly' of 10,000 student packages on January 24, 2010.

will take place on Saturday, February 20th. BUSD families who qualify (via Free or Reduced Price lunch eligibility) will receive a confirmation letter directing them to one of two distribution sites in Berkeley. District administrators will be on hand to manage the confidential list of qualified families.

UPCOMING DATES

Feb 12th, 2010
Lincoln's Birthday
Holiday (no school)

Feb. 15th, 2010
Presidents' Day
Holiday (no school)

Feb. 18th, 2010
BHS Open House

SCHEDULED BOARD MEETINGS WEDNESDAY

February 3, 2010
February 24, 2010
March 10, 2010
March 24, 2010
April 14, 2010
April 28, 2010

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

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
BERKELEY, CA 94704*

African American History Month in Berkeley Schools

February 2010

Elementary

Arts Magnet: February 19

Cragmont: February 9

Emerson: May 2

Jefferson: February 18

February 19

John Muir: February 26

LeConte: February 26

Malcolm X: February 25

Oxford: February 4

Date TBA

Rosa Parks: February 10

Thousand Oaks: February 22

February 26

Washington: February 25

BAM All-stars/Bears potluck and performance 6pm

"Everyday Heroes" All day (9:30am) AND an evening program (6pm)

Multicultural Family Festival

Assembly, 8:30am in the cafeteria

Student performances 6:30pm

Kids' Village program and potluck 6:15pm

Potluck/Student Performance and Quilt Raffle 6-8pm

"Harlem Renaissance: History of a Cultural Revolution"

6pm after-school program's play and potluck dinner

Afro-Haitian Dance Performance/Student Showcase 4:15pm

Student performance of "Grandma's Hands"

"Tour of the World" 6pm

Assembly

Nikki Giovanni's "The Grasshopper's Song"

6pm Potluck/Student Performance

"Celebrating African American Talent!" Class performances

Middle Schools

King: February 26

Longfellow: February 25

Willard: February 25

"R.E.S.P.E.C.T" 6pm

6:30-8:30pm; will include dance and music performances

Black Excellence 6:30pm

Berkeley High School

Various events/dates, including guest speakers, debates, and performances. Contact the school for details.

Berkeley Technology Academy

Contact the school for details.

Call the schools for more details about each event.

BUSD Parent Resource Office 883-5222

**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.

Volunteer Opportunity: DEAR Day 2010 is March 5th

Friday, March 5th, 2010 marks the Berkeley School Volunteers' 17th annual **Drop Every- thing and Read Day (DEAR Day)** in the Berkeley schools. At 9:30 a.m., volunteers of all ages, colors, genders, and occupations, from fire fighters in uniform to lawyers in suits, from retired teachers to college students, will sit down in elementary and preschool classrooms across the district to read to students for twenty minutes. DEAR Day is a wonderful way to connect with Berkeley's schools, share your love of reading, and serve as a role model for eager young listeners. Contact Berkeley School Volunteers immediately to sign up at: (510) 644-8833 or bsv@berkeley.k12.ca.us.

If you would prefer to read to a particular grade level or at a particular school, be sure to mention it when you call.



Superintendent Bill Huyett reads "Cat in the Hat" to second graders at LeConte Elementary School in a previous DEAR Day

Nutrition Services Provides Healthy Snacks at BHS

While it's true that students won't find Coke or candy bars for sale in our schools, it isn't true that famished BHS students who need a healthy boost have no options. In addition to the variety of fresh, organic lunch choices available in the Berkeley High Food Court, Nutrition Services has opened a Snack Bar where students and staff can find healthy snacks all day long. From yogurt and granola with fresh fruit, to energy bars, baked organic chips, and other baked goods that meet the district nutritional standards, the Snack Bar has proven to be very popular with students.



Students can use the funds on their student ID cards at the Berkeley High Healthy Snack Bar

Did you know that you can pre-pay for meals or snacks by using an on-line credit card system, www.myschoolbucks.com or by sending a check made out to BUSD Child Nutrition Services to school with your student? The money goes right onto their student ID card.

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

Or fax to: 540-5358

Department Spotlight: Painting Specialists

The Berkeley Unified School District consists of 25 sites and structures that require a great deal of regular maintenance to function well and look appealing. Painting Specialists Willie Thibodeaux and Gerardo "Gerry" Reyes are responsible for the upkeep of BUSD's 1.7 million square feet of painted surfaces. With the assistance of Carlos Cil, who is also a professional painter and is now a Maintenance Engineer, and others in the Facilities Department, they meet the enormous challenge of keeping up with the district's continuous need for a fresh coat of paint.



There is a science to selecting the right paint and colors.

