

Design Team Board Comments 4.20

Good evening Superintendent Evans, Board Chairwoman Leyva-Cutler and Members of the School Board: We are Hasmig Minassian and Tamara Friedman, co-facilitators of the Berkeley High Design Team and we are here to give you and the community an update on our progress and process.

As many of you know, last spring, Interim Principal Kristin Glenchur began the work of selecting a “Design Team” to explore the work around creating a new structure for Berkeley High School. In August, Principal Sam Pasarow committed to continuing the work of the “Design Team,” by partnering with the Berkeley Federation of Teachers to select a group of Teacher Leaders who would meet to critically examine the current structure of BHS and consider possibilities for a change in the structure of our school. Over the course of the year, we’ve added students, parents, and classified staff. We are currently a team of 40 diverse representatives from across the the school’s roles and learning communities.

Our guiding questions as we began this process were:

- *How can we better align Berkeley High School to existing research around effective High Schools across the country? What does the data say? What are we already doing? What can we do better?*
- *Is the structure we currently have really the best one for all the students in our school?*
- *What changes can we make so that more students can reach the goals of a 21st century student?*

The Design Team has been meeting twice a month with one (and a second one planned) off-site all day retreats thanks to a generous grant from the Berkeley Public Schools Fund. We have been using current educational research to drive a staff-wide conversation on which features best align with strong outcomes for all students.

We have had a total of 5 staff meetings or all-day PD days dedicated to digging into the features of the research, our definition of a Berkeley high graduate, and some proposals for change. We will meet again with the staff on May 2nd to show the most current version of the proposals and collect their feedback and edits.

In addition to staff engagement, we have met with The African-American Studies Department, ELAC (English Learner Advisory Council), The Academic Choice Parent Advisory Council, the Berkeley International High School Advisory Council, Small Schools Counselors, A Staff of Color Mixer, Student Leadership, The Berkeley High Jacket, The Queer Straight Alliance, various student classrooms. Also, we've held open office hours for all campus staff through "Design Dialogues" where we meet with our colleagues to discuss their concerns, experiences, and ideas. In addition, we've been to Board member office hours, presented at the Berkeley Public Schools Fund, and the Superintendent's Executive Cabinet.

Moving forward we are planning to continue with our outreach to the community. Our very active student design team members are planning forums for their counterparts at Berkeley High. We are in communication with Parents of Children of African Descent (PCAD) and the BHS Chicano Latinos for the Academic and Social Success of Students with dates on the calendar for community meetings with these groups.

We have confirmed dates for the Community Redesign Workshops and are also in the process of confirming dates for each of the BUSD middle schools. We are also proposing to schedule a public study session with this school board in the hopes of getting your expertise and perspective.

Following our May 2nd staff meeting, the Design Team will use staff and community input to land on one proposal to recommend to the BHS administration. In order to move a proposal forward to the school board, we are committed to a robust community vetting process and support of the BHS staff.

Any proposed changes that are approved will **not** affect current students or incoming 9th graders. The earliest implementation of any proposed changes would be for 9th graders only in 2017-2018 school year, with change gradually implemented in each subsequent year.

We want to express our gratitude to the school community for engaging so authentically in this process and for keeping equitable outcomes for all students at the heart of our work. We invite any members of the public to please reach out to us at designteam@berkeley.net. That's "design team all one word" at berkeley.net. Within the next week, you will also find a link on the Berkeley High website where you can find all of the dates and times for our community meetings, given the limited time here to list each date. We look forward to building on the existing strength of Berkeley High and thank you for your support.

Future Outreach:

- **Wednesday May 4** BHS Family Forum 7:00 - 9:00 p.m. in library
- **Thursday May 5**, Chicano/Latino Bilingual Family Workshop, 7:00 - 9:00 pm in BHS College and Career Center
- **Saturday May 7**, PCAD Forum in BHS Library, 10am-12pm
- **Sunday May 22**, Chicano/Latino Spanish Only Family Workshop, 9:00 - 10:30 am in BHS College and Career

Middle School Family Outreach

Wednesday, May 11 Longfellow Family Forum 2016, 6:00 - 7:30

Wednesday, May 18 Willard Family Forum , 2016 7:00 - 8:30

Wednesday, May 25 King Family Forum, 2016 7:00 - 8:30