

Minutes of December 3, 2013
BHS School Site Council
Conference Room B, D Building
4:15 – 6:00pm

Present:

BHS Staff: Pasquale Scuderi, Anne Busacca-Ryan, Dharini Rasiah, Robin van der Vegt

Parents: Landi Ehnle, Sandi Hunt, Satish Rao, Margit Roos-Collins

Students: Sophie Andrews, Kevin Flood-Bryzman (serving as Chair)

Absent: Mark Griffin, Iris Grace, Alejandra Nuñez, Jesse Barber, Sophia Olaya-Hermes

Others Present: Javetta Cleveland (BUSD Deputy Superintendent), Jay Nitschke (BUSD Director of Technology), BSEP liaison (name?)

Call to order

Beginning Business Items (Decision)

- **SGC Members sign in**
- **Establish a quorum**
- **Approve agenda**, following recommendation and approval to move the agenda item “Questions for Principal” to follow Work Plan discussion

Comments from members of the BHS Community (Information) – No comments were presented

Principal’s Report (Information) – The second round of Constructed Responses has been completed and scored. Having time to score the CRs is a big challenge. Some teachers were paid a small stipend to perform a portion of the scoring over the Thanksgiving Break. In future years effort will be made to address this challenge through scheduling. The staff is working on getting feedback to the students, using an idea from Dave Borelli, and to build on the results.

Pasquale and the Superintendent visited Culver City High School in an effort to understand the source of their success. Culver City has seen 10 years of growth in the Academic Performance Index [API] results for African American students, with the API for this cohort improving by more than 100 point. A gap in API between AA and other students remains, but it is much smaller than in prior years. Some of the key findings of this brief visit include:

- There is a difference in the demographic characteristics of the school compared to BHS, with CC having fewer Socioeconomically Disadvantaged (SED) students among the 35% - 40% of students who are African American;
- Students who live outside the CC District are identified and are subject to regular review of their inter-district transfer permits and loss of the permits if they don’t meet academic and behavioral requirements;

- CC has developed a strong permit compliance culture among the students;
- There didn't seem to be any important stylistic or curriculum differences between the two schools; and
- The counselors keep a "Hot List" of students who need additional support, and information regarding these students is shared on a running email thread for each student among all of that student's teachers and counselors, who comment when the student does something good or troubling and thereby create a strong support network for the most at-risk students.

Anne Busacca-Ryan has a contact who is an African American senior at CC and who credits consistently strong teaching across all subjects as being the most important factor. The visiting team had also heard favorable comments about the quality of the teachers.

Attendance: Overall attendance is up slightly for October compared to last year. November results will be available in the next week or so. The Administration is hoping for a light flu season in January. Last year's average daily attendance numbers dropped significantly in January.

Suspensions: First quarter suspensions were down dramatically from the same period last year. There are still a disproportionate number of SED students receiving suspensions. The Administration is looking at whether fighting should continue to result in an automatic suspension. There have been only two fights so far this year, down significantly from last year. The Administration believes this is largely due to enhanced presence of Safety Officers in the halls. When tempers flare an adult intervenes very quickly, diffusing the situation.

SSC Work Plan: next steps, including what is best done in subcommittees and what to cover in regular meetings. (Discussion) There was a detailed discussion of the best way to develop a work plan for the SSC for the remainder of the year, to gain the best advantage of the time and commitment of the committee members. Pasquale suggested that there be a focus on Chapters 4 & 5 of the last WASC self-study document, which can be divided into five key topics 1) Organization, 2) Curriculum, 3) Instruction, 4) Assessment and Accountability, and 5) School Culture and Support for Student Growth. This will provide some preliminary ideas regarding action plans, and position the school for the limited WASC self-study which will be required in the 2014-2015 school year. . Pasquale would like to build an ongoing work group that will have a good understanding of the issues and data, and believes the SSC can contribute to that effort. There was discussion of SSC members submitting recommendations on areas for improvement, as well as the data needed to better understand the issues. Pasquale welcomed this type of input.

The group agreed to identify one of the items for the January meeting (Assessment), and work through how it may be presented. Anne Busacca-Ryan, and Sandi Hunt, and Margit Roos-Collins will work together as a subcommittee to review information in advance of the meeting, provided the results of the CR can be made available before the Winter Break. To the extent possible materials to be presented will be distributed in advance of the meeting, although the timing of the meeting, two days after school begins after the break, may be limiting.

Committee members who served on the SSC last year questioned how the proposed effort would differ from what transpired last year. The response was that the process last year focused more on quantitative measurement, and this effort will combine quantitative and qualitative assessment.

All SSC members are asked to read Chapters 4 & 5 of the WASC self-study and come prepared to discuss priorities for the order in which issues will be addressed. Pasquale will ask Daniel Roose to send out the most recent Action Plan to ensure everyone is working from the correct document. To the extent members would like to vet ideas with the administration or the rest of the committee before the meeting they are welcome to do so via email.

Principal's Question and Answer (Information)

During this period, the principal answers questions from SSC members, beginning with questions submitted in advance. Each questioner can ask a brief follow-up for clarification. The development of the work plan approach included Questions & Answers.

New School Funding Rules and How to Increase Funding (Javetta Cleveland) (Information and Discussion – Javetta Cleveland, joined by Jay Nitchke, presented information on the new school funding rules. Her presentation was based on a Powerpoint deck that is available on the School District's web site: <http://www.berkeleyschools.net/wp-content/uploads/2013/10/What-does-LCFF-mean-for-Berkeley-schools.pdf>.

There are 4 key changes taking place: 1) Proposition 30 provides for additional funding for all schools, 2) The State Budget is balanced, significantly reducing the uncertainty around funding, 3) The Common Core Standards are being implemented, and some additional funding is available to support those costs (\$1.8 million of the estimated \$3 million the district will need to spend to be compliant,) and 4) There is a new Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF).

The LCFF increases the transparency and complexity of the budget. The new budget provides for a varying level of per-student funding based on grade level. These funds go to the District, and the District decides how to allocate them to specific schools. In addition to the new base funding amount, districts receive supplemental funding based on the percentage of district students who receive Free or Reduced Price Lunch (FRPL), are English Language Learners (ELL) or are Foster children. The District's percentage will be fixed based on a three year average, with the current year being the first of the three years; Each school's FRPL percentage will be calculated as of March 1st, so that's the deadline for any enrollment increases that will help the district and school with the first year's number.

The District's FRPL percentage is currently approximately 40%. There was substantial discussion about strategies to increase compliance with filing for FRPL, particularly at BHS, where many students don't complete the necessary forms until their Junior or Senior year, because they then receive discounted Prom tickets and reduced fees for AP and IB exams. BHS shows only 15% of students in the at-risk categories, so there is significant room for improvement to approximate the District average. Anne Busacca-Ryan suggested an idea for universal in-class completion of the form, which she will pursue with the administration.

The state formula also provides for the possibility of receiving a 50% increase in funding if a district has 55% or more students in the at-risk categories. BUSD is unlikely to meet this level. The supplemental funding that the District receives must be spent on services for at-risk students.

Among the goals of the LCFE is a higher level of community engagement in the schools and the District's decision-making. Pages 9 and 14 of the presentation describe the Accountability Framework and provide a listing of some of the key stakeholders who must be consulted in developing the District's plan. For example, there must be a Parent Advisory Group and representation of English Language Learners. All schools in the District must be represented.

Pasquale noted that under the new formulas, the District may cover some expenses that are currently funded through the school's BSEP dollars, so long as those expenditures align with the eight state priorities, thereby potentially freeing up some of those funds for other purposes.

By 2021 BUSD is targeted to receive an additional \$15.5 million over 8 years, with \$650,000 allocated in the first year, growing to an ultimate annual rate of \$5.8 million. The growth rate of the new allocation will depend on the state of the economy and the State budget.

There will be a number of public forums to discuss the issues, which will be posted on the District's website and distributed through the etree.

Additional guidance from the California Department of Education (CDE) is expected to be provided by the end of January, and the template that must be completed to describe the District's plan is expected from the CDE by the end of March. The District must file its plan by July 1, and the County has until October 15 to accept or reject the Plan. This schedule presents challenges in having the necessary information available in time to make important decisions.

There were some questions regarding various current funding streams: CPR funds are not affected by the new formula. Career Technical Education is a priority of the Board. There are currently 100's of students enrolled in various CTE classes.

Adoption of Minutes (Decision) The minutes of the November meeting were adopted following corrections made by several committee members. There was a motion, a second, and a vote to adopt the minutes. A student member – Sophie Andrews, discussed her experience with Honors Math tutoring, in response to the discussion documented in the minutes. She has provided math tutoring, and observed that many Honors Math students are untrained in tutoring, and may give wrong answers. She expressed concern that students receiving tutoring will automatically assume that the tutor has the right answer, and as a result, may be harmed.

Discuss topics for next meeting, on January 7th – Satish Rao proposed that we include an agenda item on Stereotype Threat and how it affects learning of African American students. Satish referenced a study on a promising and simple intervention (circulated earlier this fall to the SSC members); Pasquale noted that Frank Worrell had independently provided it to him. There are numerous articles on the topic; Pasquale will circulate some of them in advance of the meeting. This item may be discussed in January, or may be put into the workplan as one of the issues to be assessed in more depth at a future meeting.

Scheduling of future meetings: It may be necessary to hold two meetings in February, on both the 1st and 3rd Tuesday, since the Superintendent would like to meet with the SSC in February and the Safety Committee should present the draft Safety Plan to the SSC that month. Several members mentioned that they must miss other commitments in order to attend the Tuesday meetings. Margit agreed to circulate a Doodle poll to attempt to find an alternate day of the week for one of those meetings.

Adjournment