

**Berkeley High School
School Site Council
November 17, 2015**

Beginning Business Items

- All SSC members and guests introduced themselves
- Review/Approval of October 20, 2015, SSC Meeting Minutes
 - Question from the floor: Is this the standard format for minutes? Answer: Yes (Principal Pasarow)
 - Move to approve 10/20/15 minutes from SSC Teacher Representative Jen Campbell
 - SSC Teacher Representative Claudia Gonzalez seconded the motion
 - Motion Approved via voice vote
- Selection of Timekeeper – SSC Teacher Representative Phil Halpern
- Selection of Process Observer – Ms. Campbell
- Introduction of New Classified Representative to SSC – Safety Officer Steven Saunders
- Comments from SSC Parent Representative Rani Marx
 - Request to review minutes before the meeting
 - Request for name tent cards
 - What is the process to put items on the agenda (first discussed two years ago)
- Clarifying issues related to establishing a quorum
 - Two students, Two parents/guardian, Two staff, then three from any group?
 - One half plus one (page 11 of SSC members' handbook), or nine people total
- Concerns re: selection/election of SSC student members
 - Mr. Halpern has recruited students from small schools to join us starting at the next meeting
 - Ms. Gonzalez will recruit an AMPS student
 - SSC student members are also working on recruiting classmates from small schools to attend SSC meetings

Public Comments (moved to the end of the meeting)

WASC Plan Update – Heidi Weber (Dean of Attendance and BHS Administrative Team Lead for WASC)

- Defined WASC acronym (Western Association of Schools and Colleges) and explained that it is the accrediting body for high schools; they visited BHS in March 2015 and wrote a [report](#) with findings that BHS must address
- A follow-up visit from WASC accreditation team will happen in March 2016
- A PowerPoint handout was shared with meeting attendees
- There was a pause for non-educators to be briefed on *edu-speak* terms in the PowerPoint slides
- Highlights
 - Progress on talking about data
 - Progress on participation in common assessments (especially in Math 1 so far)
 - Progress on norming “high expectations”

- Proportional representation of students by race/ethnicity in all learning communities (new work for 2015-2016)
- Timeline was presented for meeting WASC expectations
- Culture and climate updates were shared, including intent to hire Restorative Justice coordinator

Feedback on [District SSC Training](#)

- SSC Parent Representative Elena Condes attended the second half of the training
- It was great to see information re: BSEP property tax assessments and funding allocations; recent litigation in Alameda related to how commercial and residential properties are taxed may have an impact of up to \$3M in lost revenues; similar concerns may impact the future of class-size reduction and may impact how BSEP is presented during the 2016 election
- BSEP has been buying down class size even though state of California has reduced class sizes in grades TK-3 through the state's [Local Control Funding Formula](#)

[Principal's Report](#) (Sam Pasarow)

- [November 4 racist/terroristic threat](#)
 - Reviewed timeline of investigation
 - Reviewed timeline of student response and action
 - Acknowledges community discontent re: communication lapse and responded that there was an internal leak
 - Whether he believes that someone is going to something on December 9 is irrelevant, because of collective trauma BPD should have been involved immediately
 - Somewhat concerned about perceived lack of alignment related to events planned for +/- December 9
 - SSC feedback
 - For a staff member to leak the photo is "irresponsible"
 - Police presence on campus on December 9 might signal that they should be concerned about their safety
 - Staff of color have long expressed isolation and have aligned with students of color who feel the same way
 - Reminder that students are aware of lack of security on library computers
 - African American parents need to be brought into this conversation as well and should be brought onto campus on December 9 (along with parents of other ethnicities to show solidarity)
 - Honoring student voice is important related to securing the campus; thank you, Principal Pasarow, for doing so
 - Similar to police presence on Uni-Team Day, there should be a similar police presence because otherwise students won't think that we're taking this threat seriously
 - Students will see the increased presence not only as a safety move but will see it as a symbol of support; teachers are focusing not so much about the incident and the student but the symbolic value of the incident

- Many students felt like the Uni-Team Day safety response was seen as extreme, and yet our response to the November 4 was seen as “doing way too little”
- Some students feel ambivalent toward law enforcement
- If one of our WASC goals is related to student connectedness, then we need to focus on building strong, safe relationships
- When are we going to focus on what students need to feel safe? We need to work on hearing directly from students!
- What are the lines of delineation between BHS safety officers and BPD? Is there a protocol that can be shared?
- December 1 sexual harassment school-wide lesson
 - All 9th graders participated in an [assembly](#) that was produced in-house
 - There have been several cases this year where students are facing expulsion
 - Selected staff have been trained on the distinctions among harassment, battery and assault
 - It is clear that students in all grade levels need to be educated about these topics
 - This information will also be shared with families at the time it’s being shared with students
 - SSC feedback
 - How could the District impose these penalties without first informing students about it? Staff members have lots of questions...
 - We must keep in mind cultural differences as it relates to sexual harassment (actions that might be seen as inappropriate in one community may not be seen as inappropriate in another community) and keep that in mind when presenting the training/education
 - Students need to know of their rights and the consequences (“street law”) because more awareness leads to more reporting which may lead to more African American males being implicated
 - Because BHS students have been led off campus in handcuffs, there are many who are concerned about how law enforcement is handling things; there has been irreparable harm done this year on our campus
 - Will our training include guidelines about events that happen off campus as well as the influence of alcohol and drugs on affirmative consent

Design Team Update (Tamara Friedman, Co-Leader for Teacher Professional Development at BHS, and Hasmig Minassian, Co-Teacher Leader for Communication Arts and Sciences [CAS])

- Outgrowth of 9th grade redesign effort that was slowed following departure of Kristin Glenchur (BHS principal during 2014-2015 school year) and an internal re-assessment that took place earlier this fall
- Based on input from the Berkeley Federation of Teachers (or BFT, which is the teachers’ union), a new team was seated by BFT President Cathy Campbell and Principal Pasarow; the team meets regularly

- A Berkeley Schools volunteer and policy expert on high school design (Peter Ross) is advising the team; *Summary of Research on Successful High Schools* handout was presented to faculty on 10/12/2015
- Nothing will change in the fall of 2016
- Any proposals would be vetted by a broad group of stakeholders and the team would seek lots of feedback
- Because this is an effort to co-construct a new structural model for BHS with 20 people on the team, there has been a lot of information-gathering; the next meeting is December 14
- SSC attendees were invited to review the one-page summary
- SSC questions/feedback
 - The documents are very hopeful
 - Where does student feedback fit in? Examples include completing anonymous surveys about their experiences in the classroom
 - Is there an opportunity for new members to join the Design Team?
 - Will there be additional progress reports?
 - Can articles referenced be available on the SSC drive?
 - Are we starting over, or fixing what we have? We shouldn't create new issues if there are still some that need to be fixed.
 - Concern about the role of teachers and the curriculum in the creation of "white space"; changes in teacher practice and pedagogy don't change just because we have diverse-looking classrooms
 - The narrative that surrounded the establishment of BIHS has positioned BIHS as an elitist program has never been challenged; lack of funding prevents BIHS from providing "high expectations/high help"
 - We don't want the problem related to disproportionality moved from 9th grade to 10th grade as a result of 9th grade redesign
 - How will student voice be captured in the design process? They can let us know if a teacher has the potential for personalization because they're in the classes every day
 - If small schools will be dismantled, how will students still receive the support and community that are a hallmark of small schools?
 - Affirmation of the importance of personalization
 - In order to teach in a culturally relevant way, then teachers must be, themselves, culturally relevant
 - African American students are frustrated about being ignored in classes by teachers; how can we accommodate the needs of students who learn differently, but still have capacity to succeed?
 - When AC & BIHS were originally created, there were students on the design teams

Public Comments

- Elizabeth Wells (also known as Wiz) – concern about students who have to proctor Math classes as a requirement for enrolling in Advanced Math classes
- Below is the full text of her comments (provided via Email):

"Hi, my name is Elizabeth Wells. I have two children here, a senior in BIHS and a freshman in AC. After the discussion earlier, what I have to say may sound small (or petty). But, it is an issue for my child and other children here at BHS. Before I get to it, I was glad to hear the discussion about addressing sexual assault, because I am a victim, and survivor, of childhood sexual assault.

I am actually here today to speak to you about Berkeley High School (BHS) Math, and the demands BHS places on the honors students around math. What I want to talk about and ask you to think about is the proctoring requirement you have in place for the advanced math students. HOW DOES IT BENEFIT THEM?

Picture this: your senior year. College applications, AP/IB tests, hard classes, including college-level math (at Berkeley City College or UC Berkeley). You have a free period Monday, Wednesday, and Friday - you are required to proctor a math class.

Now picture this: your senior year. College applications, AP/IB tests, hard classes. You have a free period Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday. You can proctor if you like, with any teacher you want.

Why the disparity? Why not let these few students, who already were required to tutor other students for three years, have a break? Why must they proctor math?

Why do you have something in place, a policy, that these students see as punitive? So again, I ask you to consider: How does the requirement to proctor a math class benefit the advanced students? HOW DOES THE REQUIREMENT TO PROCTOR MATH BENEFIT THEM?

SSC Member Closing Comments

- SSC Co-Chair and Teacher Representative Matt Carton: appreciation for administration's response to November 4 racist/terroristic threat
- SSC Teacher Representative Kimberly D'Adamo: concern about process related to selecting SSC co-chairs; during the last meeting, there was not enough time and attention given to explaining responsibilities of SSC leadership, which has led to the perpetuation of white space
- SSC Parent Representative Elena Condes: we should honor students who did step up because it's not clear how students are notified about SSC Student Representative opportunities
- SSC Parent Representative Shelly Ball: SSC co-chairs were nominated, not volunteered
- SSC Parent Representative Babalwa Kwanele: there is a misunderstanding about the distribution of information to students of color at BHS (conversations about SSC are not happening with students of color); it is a crisis that students are feeling unsafe and unwelcome; students of color have complained that they have not had a teacher of color at BHS, so can this be a priority of the SSC?

All agreed that a review of the officer election/selection process is in order for the next SSC meeting.

Process check (Ms. Campbell): success for students and respect for time has been modeled throughout the meeting; every single conversation tonight focused on students.

The meeting adjourned at 6:00.

Respectfully submitted,
Felicia Phillips, Appointed Notetaker