

Talking Points for School Board P&O Committee Comment - November 16

Good Evening Members of the Board, Superintendent, District Staff, and members of the Community,

My name is _____, and I serve on the BSEP Planning and Oversight Committee, the District-Wide Committee which provides oversight for the Berkeley Schools Excellence Program, also known as BSEP, the special local tax which provides 20% of the funding for the Berkeley Public Schools. The BSEP Measure was first approved by the Berkeley voters in 1986 as a response to the devastating impact of Proposition 13 on state funding for education. Berkeley voters approved new BSEP measures in 1994, 2004, and 2006 to continue and expand local support. Last August, the board voted to put a BSEP measure on the November 2016 ballot, after substantial public input to determine what that measure would contain.

So a week ago, on November 8, we not only chose a new President for our country, as well as senators, mayors, city council members and other representatives, we also voted on state propositions and local measures. And while the vote was split in many areas of the ballot, the new BSEP Measure of 2016, Measure E1 garnered ____% of the vote. As a special tax, it needed 66.7% to pass. [Comment here on what happened in terms of the actual vote.]

On behalf of the BSEP Planning and Oversight Committee, we would like to take a few minutes tonight to express our gratitude to all of those whose volunteer labor was invaluable in involving and informing the public about Measure E1 during the planning stages and during the campaign.

Countless volunteer hours have been spent by school and district committee members, teachers, staff, parents, grandparents, students, alumni, members of the Board and a cadre of devoted Berkeley citizens marching in parades, visiting community meetings, staffing booths at community festivals, writing letters, making phone calls and knocking on doors. The time and effort was provided gladly, as the volunteers recognized the importance of BSEP to our schools and to our whole community.

We would like to particularly recognize the co-chairs of the E1 Campaign, Board Director Ty Alper, and BFT President Cathy Campbell, who provided efficient facilitation and inspired leadership throughout. We are grateful to live in a community which supports children by ensuring that our schools are funded beyond the low level provided by the state. Thank you, Berkeley. We take the support and trust of the Berkeley voters very seriously, and remind the public that the BSEP Planning & Oversight Meetings are open and subject to the Brown Act. The next meeting is December 13 at 2020 Bonar in Room 126. Please join us. Thank you!