



# Distance Learning Town Hall

April 9, 2020

# Thank You for Joining us Tonight

**Brent Stephens**, Superintendent

**Bajé Thiara**, Associate Superintendent for Educational Services

**Cheryl Hazell-Small**, Interim Executive Director of Special Education

**Ann Marie Callegari**, Supervisor, Office of Family Engagement & Equity (OFEE)

**Natasha Beery**, Director of BSEP & Community Relations

**Judy Appel**, President, Berkeley Public Schools Board of Education

# A Few of the Topics We'll Try to Cover:

<b>Distance Learning Plan:</b>	Overview, Grading, Supports
<b>Zoom, Google Meet:</b>	Current pause, evaluation, next steps
<b>Ed Services:</b>	Graduation, Admissions Process, Surveys
<b>IEPs and Special Ed:</b>	Plans to Continue Support
<b>Student/Family Support:</b>	Meals, Technology, Wellbeing
<b>Community Partners:</b>	Schools Fund, City of Berkeley, Public Health
<b>Big Questions:</b>	Closure Period

# **BUSD Distance Learning Plan**

1. **Technology** Access for Students and Families
2. **Distance Learning Activity Sets** by Teacher Leader Teams
3. **Weekly Lessons and Activities** delivered by teachers
4. **Teacher Office Hours**
5. **Support for Special Education and English Learner Students**
6. **Monitoring** Student Participation in Distance Learning
7. **Grading, Course Credit, and Graduation**
8. **Professional Development** for Teachers

## **Ongoing Feedback from Students, Parents, and Educators**

During the week of April 13 (our second week of district-wide distance learning), we plan to survey students, parents, and teachers about their initial experiences with distance learning. Please look for this communication.

## Grading and Graduation

For the second semester, all students in Grades 6-12 will receive "Pass" or "No Pass" grades for their courses. This decision aligns with options permitted by UC, CSU, and other college organizations.

No student will be denied the opportunity to graduate on the basis of their second semester grade.

## Video Conferencing & Zoom

Tuesday's "Zoombombing" incident took place even after the implementation of many of Zoom's security precautions, including:

- Migration to a BUSD "corporate" Zoom account
- Automatically enabling password protection, muting, and the "waiting room" feature
- Requiring active admission of each participant by the meeting host to the Zoom session

## Video Conferencing & Zoom

This week's Zoombombing incident at the high school mirrored the widespread national reporting about Zoom security breaches. These incidents are impacting schools, universities, local government, businesses, and civic organizations. They represent a challenge to districts' obligation to provide a safe learning environment that is free from harassment and discrimination.



## Video Conferencing & Zoom

- Zoom has been the subject of a recent FBI advisory, and several large districts, including New York City, have prohibited its use
- To date, BUSD has been working with Zoom to establish user authentication through Clever, a “single sign in” application used widely in BUSD at the elementary level, but without luck
- Google Meet employs a user authentication system to ensure that all participants are properly credentialed

## Pressing Pause on Video Conferencing

- This is a temporary pause
- BUSD is in direct contact with Zoom for technical support and closely studying other districts
- We are examining other video conferencing technologies, like Google Meet and WebEx
- We note that with other platforms, some functionality available to educators in Zoom may be lost

## **Moving Forward: Options Under Consideration**

- Use Zoom and mitigate risks as much as possible:
  - supplement safety and best practice guidance to teachers, parents, and students
- Restrict or eliminate the use of Zoom:
  - for the whole district or for some grade levels
  - and move to a different, more secure video conferencing platform

## Moving Forward: Options for Mitigating Risk in Zoom:

- Limit meeting size in Zoom, likely no larger than 10
- Require waiver and acknowledgement from parent/guardians, like a field trip permission slip
- Change the participant authentication method to require @students.berkeley.net

## **To the Berkeley Community**

I hear very clearly that video conferencing has made a difference to your children - it has provided a sense of connection and purpose during this difficult period.

We will work very quickly to improve the safety of our students while they are online.

# Chromebook Loans to Students

For families who do not have access to a device for their student:

1. Email [chromebook@berkeley.net](mailto:chromebook@berkeley.net)
2. Leave a message at (510) 644-8931
3. Fill out an e-form at [berkeleyschools.net/connecting](http://berkeleyschools.net/connecting)

## Middle and High School Students:

Friday, April 10     3:30-5:30

## Elementary School Students:

Monday, April 13     12:00-2:00

Pickup site:

Parking Lot next to the BUSD  
Visual and Performing Arts Building,

**Corner of Addison and Browning**

## Community Partners and Resources

- Berkeley Public Schools Fund - Volunteers, donations
- Berkeley Schools Excellence Program - Music, Library, Tech
- Bay Area - Public Health and County Offices of Education
- Sister Districts - local, statewide, and national networks
- City of Berkeley - Public Health and Communications

# Board of Education

Judy Appel

Ka'Dijah Brown

Beatriz Leyva-Cutler

Ty Alper

Julie Sinai







Q & A