



**BEN BARTLETT**

CITY COUNCILMEMBER, DISTRICT 3

## **EMERGENCY ITEM AGENDA MATERIAL**

**Meeting date: May 21, 2024**

**Item Description: Funding to Berkeley Public Schools Fund for “Graduation Sashes” for (Berkeley International High School) BIHS and the African American Studies Department Graduation Ceremonies - Relinquishment of Council Office Budget Funds to General Fund and Grant of Such Funds**

**Submitted by: Councilmember Ben Bartlett**

### **Rationale:**

Pursuant to California Government Code Section 54954.2(b) (2), Councilmember Ben Bartlett submits the attached item to the City Council for placement on the May 21, 2024 meeting agenda. Gov. Code Section 54954.2(b) (2) states that “Upon a determination by a two-thirds vote of the members of a legislative body presents at the meeting, or, if less than two-thirds of the members are present, a unanimous vote of those members present, that there is a need to take immediate action and that the need for action came to the attention of the local agency subsequent to the agenda being posted as specified in subdivision.”

This item requires immediate action, and the need to take action arose after the agenda for this meeting was published, which would have required submitting the item on April 22, 2024.

Berkeley High School Graduations start on May 31, 2024, and the request for funds came in on May 14, 2024. The timeline needs us to do an emergency item.

CONSENT CALENDAR

May 23, 2024



## BEN BARTLETT

CITY COUNCILMEMBER, DISTRICT 3

To: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council

From: Councilmember Ben Bartlett (Author)

Subject: Berkeley Public Schools Fund: Funding for Graduation Sashes for Berkeley International High School (BIHS) and the African American Studies Department Graduation Ceremonies - Relinquishment of Council Office Budget Funds to General Fund and Grant of Such Funds

### RECOMMENDATION:

Adopt a Resolution approving the expenditure of funds, including \$1,000 from the discretionary Council Office Budget of Councilmember Ben Bartlett, to the Berkeley Public Schools Fund to procure "Graduation Sashes" for BIHS and the African American Studies Department Graduation Ceremonies. The funds will be relinquished to the City's General Fund from the Discretionary Council Office Budget of Councilmember Ben Bartlett and the Discretionary Council Office Budgets of any other Councilmembers who would like to contribute.

### BACKGROUND:

On May 14, 2024, Berkeley International High School (BIHS) parents were informed that BUSD would no longer provide graduation sashes due to rising graduation costs. Instead, families are asked to pay \$25 for a sash. As a result, constituents from BIHS and the African American Studies Department asked for assistance. The sashes are important symbols of educational attainment and provide life-long value to families. Our help to cover costs will significantly help subsidize the many students and families who cannot afford Graduation Sashes.

### ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY:

No negative impact.

### FISCAL IMPACTS OF RECOMMENDATION

There is no General Fund impact; \$1,000 is available from the discretionary council office budget of Councilmember Ben Bartlett. The cost is as follows: Berkeley Public Schools Fund is split evenly between African American Studies Department Graduation and Berkeley International High School (BIHS) Graduation.

### CONTACT PERSON:

Councilmember Ben Bartlett  
James Chang

bbartlett@cityofberkeley.info  
jchang@cityofberkeley.info

### ATTACHMENTS:

1. Resolution
2. Email Chain: Graduation Sashes for BIHS and the African American Studies



**BEN BARTLETT**

CITY COUNCILMEMBER, DISTRICT 3

Department Graduation Ceremonies

3. PDF Letter for Funding for Graduation Sashes for BIHS and the African American Studies Department Graduation Ceremonies

Attachment 1:

RESOLUTION NO. ##,###-N.S.



**BEN BARTLETT**

CITY COUNCILMEMBER, DISTRICT 3

AUTHORIZE THE EXPENDITURE OF SURPLUS FUNDS FROM THE OFFICE EXPENSE ACCOUNTS OF THE MAYOR AND COUNCIL MEMBERS FOR A DONATION TO THE BERKELEY PUBLIC SCHOOLS FUND TO BIHS- BERKELEY INTERNATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL AND BHS - AFRICAN AMERICAN STUDIES DEPARTMENT

**WHEREAS**, Councilmember Ben Bartlett has funds in his office expenditure account, and

**WHEREAS**, Berkeley Public Schools Funds, a California non-profit organization, will receive funds for \$1,000 from Councilmember Ben Bartlett's office expenditure account; and

**WHEREAS**, the Berkeley Public Schools Fund supports equitable public education for students, families, and our community through grants and volunteer programs; and

**WHEREAS**, the provisions of such services would fulfill the municipal public purpose of providing students and the youth with opportunities through educational programs and activities to celebrate their academic accomplishments;

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** by the Council of the City of Berkeley that funds relinquished by the Mayor and Councilmembers from their office budgets, of an amount to be determined by each Councilmember, shall be granted to Berkeley Public Schools Fund for this purpose of graduation ceremonial assistance for students and families unable to pay for the cost of sashes.

Attachment 2:



# BEN BARTLETT

CITY COUNCILMEMBER, DISTRICT 3

[Redacted]

From: [Redacted]  
Sent: Tuesday, May 14, 2024 1:38 PM  
To: [Redacted]  
Subject: Fwd: Donation  
Attachments: Sash letter.pdf

**WARNING:** This is not a City of Berkeley email. Do not click links or attachments unless you trust the sender and know the content is safe.

Hi [Redacted],

Thank you again.

I have attached the letter from the BIHS department , as well as the email below from the African American Studies Department.

Please let me know what else you need.

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

From: "BHS African American Studies Dept." <bhsafamstudies@berkeley.net>  
Date: May 14, 2024 at 1:25:49 PM PDT  
To: BHSAfAmStudies@berkeley.net, [Redacted]  
Subject: Re: Donation

Hi [Redacted],

It was great speaking to you on the phone to hear your stories and share with you about the AFAM Studies Department.

As I mentioned, we don't receive any funding for sashes from the district anymore, so we have to pay ~\$25 dollars per sash, costing over \$5000 to pay for them. These are important for students who receive it at Black Graduation, and any help to cover costs is appreciated, especially to help subsidize for the many students & families who cannot afford one. A \$500 donation would be incredibly helpful to cover costs.

With Appreciation,  
[Redacted]

On Tue, May 14, 2024 at 1:00 PM [Redacted] wrote:  
May you give me a call.

[Redacted]

Thank you,

Attachment 3:



## BEN BARTLETT

CITY COUNCILMEMBER, DISTRICT 3

May 2024

Dear Families of BIHS 12th grade students,

We are getting ready to celebrate our seniors as they graduate from BIHS. We have a time-honored tradition in which each learning community gives students a sash at their small school celebration. Our small school celebration is on May 31st at 5pm at the Berkeley Community Theater. Students then wear these sashes to the whole school graduation. These sashes are beautifully embroidered with BIHS and the Class of 2024. If students cannot attend the small school ceremony they can still pick up their sash from us before the whole school graduation ceremony.

Due to the rising costs of graduation, **the district has decided to no longer cover the cost of sashes, so these must be financed by the individual learning communities. Sashes cost \$30/person or a total of \$4680 for all of our seniors. We ask that parents who are able please donate \$30 for their child's sash, and we would be grateful if you could also sponsor the sash of another student.**

If you are able to donate:

- \$30 pays for 1 sash (your child)
- \$60 pays 2 sashes (your child and another student)
- \$90 pays for 3 sashes (your child and two other students)

You can donate money for these sashes at <https://www.bhsdg.com/online-donation-form> and then designate the money to BIHS. You may also have your student bring in cash or check made out to BHSDG and write BIHS in the memo line. You can have your student turn in money to their history teacher.

Best,  
The BIHS Leadership Team