

March 12, 2020

Dear Longfellow Community -

Below this message, I hope you will take a moment to read a message from Principal Stacey Wyatt's about her resignation as principal of Longfellow School. I hope you'll join me in thanking her for her service to Longfellow and Berkeley Unified, and in wishing her the very best in the next steps of her career. Stacey is a dynamic charismatic leader; I look forward to supporting her with this transition, and thank her in advance for her work to help us finish the year on a positive note.

As Principal Wyatt transitions from Longfellow, I have reflected on the needs of the school community, and particularly on the desires I hear from staff and parents for stability and experience. For this reason, I am appointing Paco Furlan, the long-time and well-regarded principal of Rosa Parks Elementary School in Berkeley to be the principal of Longfellow for the 2020-2021 school year.

From 2010-2019, Mr. Furlan was the principal of Rosa Parks, where he supervised three special programs within the school (Spanish Two way immersion, Environmental Science, and a regional Autism program). Also during this tenure, Mr. Furlan worked with the district committee to restructure Two Way Immersion services in the district. Mr. Furlan is approachable, values collaboration with teachers and the community, and holds students at the center of his work.

Mr. Furlan will come to Longfellow with a strong familiarity with Berkeley Unified systems and programs. He has supported teachers to use our BUSD math curriculum and reading workshop, and implemented a school-wide social emotional learning program. He values teacher leadership and partnered with Mills College for over 9 years to support teacher inquiry.

Mr. Furlan is passionate about Spanish and immersion education, enjoys building strong, predictable systems, and is excited to join the Longfellow community. He will begin to communicate over the coming weeks with parents and teachers about his transition to Longfellow. He is currently finishing a sabbatical in Spain, and won't be back in the Bay Area until late July. However, he'll be ready for the start of the new school year!

I also want to thank Ms. Bracamontes for her work this year, and look forward to introducing Ms. Bracamontes and Mr. Furlan to each other.

I can be reached at superintendent@berkeley.net, and welcome your feedback about this news and suggestions for how to make this transition in leadership work well for the whole Longfellow community.

Sincerely,

Brent Stephens

Superintendent

03/11/2020

Dear Longfellow Community,

I am writing to inform you of my resignation as the Principal of Longfellow. This information will be public soon and I wanted to be the first to tell you. Unfortunately, I am at a conference on professional development, so I am not on site to speak with you. Feel free to reach out to me via email, but I won't be able to see you in person until next week.

On 3/10/20, I tendered my resignation to Superintendent Stephens. I will complete the school year, unless an opportunity I cannot turn down presents itself. In my two short years with you, I have experienced some of my highest levels of hope for public education. I excitedly took on the charge of and stayed at Longfellow, for several reasons:

- Its incredible diversity. On a variety of levels, Longfellow's diversity is reminiscent of the Bay Area, and Berkeley in particular, in its heyday. It is a beautiful sight to see our students in friendship and struggle, learning together. I will never stop believing that going through this struggle, strife, and growth together is the key to equity and erasure of racism. I see Longfellow as a place where the seeds of social justice could be planted.
- The deep level of educator experience. Very few spaces remain, where the majority of the teachers are veteran teachers. Even fewer spaces remain where so many teachers hold the institutional knowledge of a space. As an experienced administrator I saw this as one of our greatest strengths, my experience also informed me of the fact that this could also be one of our biggest hurdles when it came to asking folks to shift from old, safe patterns. But none of the work we've done at Longfellow could've been done without these incredible people. Longfellow teachers care deeply about their work and their students. We were on a path that would've helped that love and work produce consistent academic success for our students. I'm sure it will continue.
- The nonstop push and perseverance of so many of our classified staff. These incredible people showed up every day at Longfellow for our students because they loved their jobs. Not for the pay, not for the title, but for the true love of the work. As a person who has worked as an Instructional Assistant and as a Nurse's Aide before, I know what it feels like to be the person doing some of the most difficult work. I engaged deeply and often with these folks, and I often leached off of their indomitable strength and found my own strength to show up "ret' to go" whenever I stepped onto the site.

- The huge parent support and engagement. Whether a parent who is highly involved in the SSC or PTA, or a parent who sat with me in the many impassioned conversations, phone calls, and emails...the LOVE for your children and for Longfellow is deeply felt. The fact that we are working in service of and for the love of young people has never stopped being at the forefront for me, because of Longfellow parents. I watched you come hard. I've watched you respect my process and I thank you for that. It was an experience I long desired as an administrator and one that I appreciated greatly from you.
- Lastly, my babies, the kiddos, the adults in training. I am not magic. I get non-stop love from these young people, even when they are angry with me, because I spent each day at Longfellow working to be a true reflection of what the children of Longfellow are: The Truth. From the moment I stepped foot on campus, I could see that our students were vibrant, opinionated, hopeful, resilient, highly intelligent agents of change. I simply validated those internal thoughts and then asked them to live up to what it meant to be all those things within a community. It was never an easy, pretty, or even always a clear path. But, when has the rearing of children ever been? The kids are and always be the absolute best part of this work.

So, it is with great sadness that I inform you of my resignation as Principal of Longfellow. I consider myself a transformational leader, in that consideration, I understand that transformation is a process that doesn't move quickly if you desire it to be intentional, authentic and complete. For many reasons, I no longer believe my pace, practice, and beliefs align with the path that Longfellow is on. This work is work of partnership and cannot ever stand in truth if it is forced, no matter who is doing the forcing. At their most basic, educators are charged with ensuring children can read, write, and do some math. But at our best, we are truly charged with providing our students with the foundational weapons to change the world. What we do or don't do is the difference between the status quo and whether a man walks on the moon. Yup! Educators are that important. Here I stand, finding myself in an ethical dilemma: Do I continue to push an agenda I find important when it may not be the right fit for the right time? Sadly, I must say no, I cannot.

I will miss everyone at Longfellow. I am a Bay Area girl, fo' life, fo' sho', so I will be around. Thank you all for every lesson learned in my short time here. I wish the entire Longfellow community the best of luck and success in every effort it takes after my departure. I will close out this year strong and with as many of our initiatives laid out as much as possible so that Paco Furlan can do so with ease.

In Community,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "A. E. Wyatt". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a large initial "A" and "E".

Stacey Wyattt