

2311 Prince Street
Berkeley, CA 94705
January 8, 1995
848-1797 FAX 848-6746

Dear Ms. Baker,

I am sorry it has taken me so long to get around to a reply. Your question is a much-asked one. I am aware of two methods of determining an answer. They yield answers which agree reasonably well.

Census data

9960 Children aged 5-17 residing in Berkeley according to the 1990 census.
7349 Berkeley residents enrolled in K-12 grades of the Berkeley Unified School District, 1989-1990, according to BUSD records.

2611 Difference. (26%)

This 26% figure is the one that is mentioned by critics of BUSD. Not all 2611 students are attending private school, though most probably are. Some of these students are attending public schools outside of Berkeley. A non-negligible number are being home-schooled.

Census data by "block group" can be and has been used in conjunction with BUSD population figures to determine the proportion according to neighborhood. The proportion is very strongly a function of neighborhood. (It is much higher in the hills.)

Public opinion survey

Another source of data is the survey conducted by Fairbank, Maslin, Maullin & Associates for the BUSD in April, 1994. This very credible survey contained a parent background question regarding childrens' school attendance. The response list provided no clear response option for home-schooling parents, so these may have been overlooked or fell in the "not applicable." The response was measured as follows.

55% Public in Berkeley
2% Public Elsewhere
25% Private/Parochial
15% Do not go to school yet
2% Refused to answer or not applicable.

If these percentages are normalized so that the school attendees (55+2+25) adds to 100%, the breakdown is:

67% Public in Berkeley
2% Public Elsewhere
30% Private/Parochial

This is all the information on the subject of which I am aware. You are welcome to call if you have questions.

Sincerely,



Bruce Wicinas
BUSD parent

DIANE A. BAKER
635 SAN FERNANDO AVENUE
BERKELEY, CA. 94707

December 19, 1994

Mr. Bruce Wickinas
2311 Prince Street
Berkeley, CA 94705

Dear Mr. Wickinas,

After reading in the San Francisco Chronicle today that you had compiled demographic studies for the Berkeley Public School District, I wondered whether you might be the person to answer a question many of my neighbors and I have discussed.

The question is, how many school aged children in Berkeley go to private schools? Is there any information about this, whether city-wide or by neighborhood?

I would deeply appreciate any information you find time to provide, whether it be actual information, or a suggestion about how to go about finding out the answer.

I can be reached through my home telephone: 524-7729; my office: 524-1325, voice & fax; or e-mail: Dianebak@aol.com.

Thank you for your attention.

Very truly yours,


Diane A. Baker