

Visual & Performing Arts District Advisory Committee (VAPA DAC)

Wednesday, January 19, 2022 – via Zoom

MINUTES

Attendees: Annie Azzariti, Deborah Berek, Rebecca Cardenas, Scott Ferguson, Janis Gabbert, Zina Josephs, Maria Leon-Vazquez, Dr. Jacqueline Mora, Lydia Muraro, Domi Piturro, Tom Whaley

1. The meeting was called to order at 7:15 by Co-Chair Janis Gabbert.
2. **Minutes** from the December meeting were approved by unanimous consent. (Berek)
3. **Calendar review** – Lydia Muraro suggested that, if the Stairway of the Stars concert is canceled, we schedule a DAC meeting in March. Dr. Mora and Tom Whaley agreed.
4. **P.S. ARTS** – Rebecca Cardenas reported that 2 schools began instruction after winter break and then had to go virtual. Other schools will be starting in a few weeks. Visual Arts kits are scheduled to arrive soon. Muir/SMASH had a virtual Family Art Night on January 18. The JAMS sack lunch art club program continues.
5. **Administrator Co-Chairperson** -- Dr. Jacqueline Mora reported on staffing challenges due to the surge, postponing professional development to focus on the need for substitute teachers, planning to launch an after school Folklorico dance program (coordinated by Tom Whaley) at Edison, McKinley, and Malibu Elementary Schools, with the hope to grow it to the middle and high schools in future. In response to a question about mixing co-horts for Dance instruction while it's not yet allowed for elementary Music instruction, Dr. Mora stated that COVID protocols won't allow that at this point.
6. **Staff Liaison and VAPA Coordinator** -- Tom Whaley reported that Chandra Narain was honored at the January 11 Board of Education meeting. Re the Stairway concert, due to the Omicron surge, they may not be able to mix co-horts, and the music teachers will decide whether to hold the concert. Re the Ballet Folklorico in grades 3-5, it's being designed by pathway (JAMS, LMS, and MMS). VAPA professional development is being postponed due to the lack of subs. ACES curriculum is being written now in order to implement in Fall 2022. The Samohi Jazz Band concert on

February 27 at 2 PM will be moved outside to the Quad. New PPE and tents have been re-ordered as elementary band and choir is still being taught outside. New Skutt kilns for the ceramics classes have been installed in a patio. The JAMS kiln needs a roof. Lydia Muraro reported that the Santa Monica Arts Parents Association (SMAPA) is paying for the Formstack Alisa Stewart is using for the Stairway concert and suggested that the district should pay for this.

7. **Board of Education Liaisons** – Maria Leon-Vazquez reported that there are changes almost every day from the LA County Department of Public Health. Diagnostic and assessments reports have been sent to families. Re mental health, the student members on the Board of Education have reported on student anxiety, with students feeling that they want to come to school but worry about spreading the virus. She’s excited that student music performances are continuing. Re summer school issues, Samohi and SMC are still working on it. There’s a possible schedule conflict with an orchestra trip. In February, the Board will be looking at budgets, and no cuts to VAPA programs are expected.

In response to a question about the possibility of alternate rotating schedules, she said that there have been conversations with high school principals, but not the Board, and they don’t see the need. It could be brought up again in the future. In response to a comment that students can only fit one elective into their schedules, she said that students have to choose. (Students at private schools don’t have to choose.) Another DAC member stated that making a graduation and/or UC requirement such as foreign language an “elective” comes at the expense of other electives. The A-G requirements include 2 years of a foreign language and 1 year of VAPA, for a total of 3 years of electives, and there’s some concern as to how students’ schedules will work when the Academies are implemented.

8. **Mid-Year Report to the Board of Education** – The draft report was reviewed and approved by unanimous consent. (Berek) Janis Gabbert will format the report.
9. **Public comments regarding items not on the agenda** – None.
10. **Agenda planning for February 23 meeting** – Depending on whether the Stairway concert get canceled, we could add a March DAC meeting.
11. **Adjournment** at 9 PM.