

Visual & Performing Arts District Advisory Committee (VAPA DAC)

February 23, 2022 –via Zoom

MINUTES (draft)

Attendees: Annie Azzariti, Deborah Berek, Rebecca Cardenas, Janis Gabbert, Linda Greenfield, Zina Josephs, Maria Leon-Vazquez, John Redfield, Richard Tahvildaran-Jesswein, Tom Whaley

1: The meeting was called to order at 7:10 by Co-Chair Janis Gabbert, and we spent some time reminiscing about Scott Ferguson, a member of the VAPA DAC since 2010, who recently passed away from COVID.

2. Minutes from the January meeting were approved by unanimous consent. (Berek)

3. Calendar review revealed that the Samohi Jazz Band concert date had been inadvertently omitted because it was originally scheduled for January 30. The new date is February 27.

4. **P.S. ARTS** – Rebecca Cardenas reported on programs starting at the end of January, beginning of March. The art kits are almost here. The virtual Art Night at McKinley had a good turnout.

5. **Administrator Co-Chairperson** -- Dr. Jacqueline Mora reported that the new elementary school Folklorico program will star on Monday, with about 25 students each at McKinley and Edison. 5 families in Malibu have expressed interest, but a minimum of 8 are required. In partnership with SMC, courses will be offered during the school day at Samohi in Fall 2022.

6. **Staff Liaison and VAPA Coordinator** – Tom Whaley reported that

- a. Elementary Music instruction will return to 2 times per week, plus band and choir classes will be allowed to return inside.
- b. 900 students will participate in the “Stairway of the Stars” concert in the Samohi Greek Theater on March 19.
- c. He’s asking Carey Upton for “art walls,” which are on wheels and fold up accordion style. They could be used for art shows in the lobby of the JAMS Performing Arts Center.
- d. Samohi Jazz Band Concert – from rehearsing on the Samohi basketball court to performing in the JAMS PAC.

- e. Many SMMUSD students have been selected for All-Southern California and All-State honor groups.
- f. Bringing back the Dance program at Samohi -- SMC will partner to teach a variety of genres in the fall, and then focus on specific types of dance in the spring.
- g. A principal from Palos Verdes call Tom for advice. His and other districts want to emulate the SMMUSD elementary music program.
- h. In response to a question about the current school facilities "tours," he replied that music teachers are attending those events to give input.

7. Board of Education Liaisons – Maria Leon-Vazquez reported that COVID seems to be waning. Dr. Mora is presenting student data and assessments to the Board. The district needs to provide support for students' mental health. The current facility tours are for future planning. School site councils will give the final okay on construction projects. Re the DAC Mid-Year Report recommendation about alternative high school schedules, Dr. Drati will form a committee of parents, teachers, students, counselors, and administrators to meet in spring and summer. A DAC member commented that this was wonderful news since we've discussed this topic for so many years. Dr. TJ noted that Maria now has a second grandchild.

8. VAPA DAC Mid-Year Report -- February 3rd Board of Education agenda:

<https://simbli.eboardsolutions.com/Meetings/Attachment.aspx?S=36030435&AID=209543&MID=9728>

Janis thanked Lydia for the new formatting this year. Maria commented about maintaining the Elementary Music program, expanding the Dance program to the middle schools, and expanding the music genres being taught to keep middle school students engaged. Regarding middle school Art instruction, i.e., the need for year-long classes at all grade levels and implementing a sequence of instruction from grades 6 to 8, one DAC member suggested expanding the discussion to include all 3 middle school art teachers.

9. GoFundMe campaign for scholarship in memory of Chandra Narain – Tom noted that about \$10,000 of a \$12,000 goal has been raised.

10. Impacts on arts electives –

- a. Lydia Muraro suggested that the goal should be for all students to be able to take all their classes during the school day. Dr. Tahvildaran-Jesswein stated that he will recommend that Lydia be included in the Samohi schedule committee.
- b. Lydia also suggested that if Samohi scheduled sports after school, as Malibu and Pali High do, students would have 6 periods available for academic cases. This would also secure foreign language, history, and science teachers' jobs as students could

take all those classes at Samohi rather than at SMC or WASC-accredited private language schools.

- c. Lydia noted that 62% of Samohi graduates go on to a 4-year college, so they need at least 2 years of a foreign language.
- d. Re ACES, she asked for a list of classes that will meet the requirement. She also suggested that the 10-credit Freshman Seminar class is a missed opportunity for fulfilling the requirement, and that 5 of the 10 credits at Malibu High are for Health.

11. Budget update/timeline for 2022-23 school year – Maria noted that the 2nd interim report will be presented to the Board of March 3rd. There will be budget items on the agendas from now until June. No budget reductions or teacher lay-offs are anticipated. Dr. Mora stated that the federal and state COVID funds are coming to an end and no additional funds are expected.

12. 6-Year Arts Education Strategic Plan (2019-2025) update – Maria noted that as the pandemic becomes endemic, the negativity that’s taken up so much of the Board’s time will ebb. Dr. Mora noted that the plan called for expanding programming and culturally relevant curriculum, and that the new mariachi and folklorico programs are part of that.

13. 6 VAPA DAC vacancies -- DAC Board Policy and Administrative Regulations

<https://www.smmusd.org/domain/118> -- According to Board Policy 1220, “*Membership recruitment will be ongoing throughout the year. Minimally, information about the District Advisory Committees will be shared with the public in August, November, and January. Applications for appointment to advisory committees may be submitted at any time during the year. Once per quarter, an item shall be placed on the Board of Education agenda listing committee vacancies.*” – A DAC member noted that only one VAPA DAC member has been appointed since 2017 and that, while the district has just generated a citywide e-blast to recruit new members for the Financial Oversight Committee, VAPA DAC members are told that we should go to PTA and Site Council meetings to recruit new members.

14. Board of Education February 17 agenda item J-6 -- Proposed statewide ballot initiative – “The Arts and Music in Schools Funding Guarantee Accountability Act” -- <https://caforartseducation.org> -- Dedicates new funding to arts and music education in public schools. SMMUSD could receive \$1 million per year in new funding. Petition signatures from 1 million registered voters are required to get the measure on the November ballot. Dr. TJ suggested that SMC students could help collect signatures at students performances. Sign up here to receive a petition in the mail, which you can then sign and mail back: <https://voteartsandminds.org/sign-the-petition> -- Share the Facebook page updates: <https://www.facebook.com/voteartsandminds>

15. **Public comments regarding items not on the agenda** – None

16. **Announcements** – Dr. TJ announced that his son has won a dance scholarship at NYU.

17. **Agenda planning for April 27 meeting** – Follow-up on the Samohi scheduling committee, middle school art curriculum, increasing community involvement in all the DACs.

18. **Adjournment in memory of Scott Ferguson** -- 8:50 PM (Berek)

