

Visual & Performing Arts District Advisory Committee (VAPA DAC)

June 12, 2024 – in-person

Board Room, SMMUSD District Office, 1717 - 4th Street, Santa Monica 90401

MINUTES

Attendees: Annie Azzariti, Deborah Berek, Janis Gabbert, Zina Josephs, Aimee Koeplin, Maria Leon-Vazquez, Elizabeth Manco, Lydia Muraro, Domi Piturro, Rebecca Terlizzi, and Tom Whaley, Lindsay Okumura, Sean Pawling, Nikki Kolhoff

1. The meeting was called to order at 7:05 PM by Co-Chair Janis Gabbert.
2. Minutes from the May meeting were approved by unanimous consent. (Berek)
3. **Staff Liaison and VAPA Coordinator Tom Whaley** reported the following:
 - a. Elementary music teacher Susan Justin (1.0 FTE) is retiring, Kirsten Bersch is at 0.8 FTE due to a medical issue, and elementary music staff is being reduced to 8.8 FTE. In the new schedule, Lindsay Okamura finishes at Malibu Elementary School at 12:30 and has to teach a class at Rogers at 1:30. Lydia stated that the Measure R budget is showing 10.0 FTE for elementary music staff. At the same time, the district is hiring credentialed P.E teachers.
 - b. Mariachi update -- A Mariachi Festival at the Moss Theater included the Samohi mariachi group. The middle school mariachi group will now rehearse twice a week at JAMS rather than at Virginia Avenue Park. The Samohi mariachi group is getting trajes. Tom hopes to include a mariachi performance in Stairway next year.
 - c. Music Composition Fellowship – This was a pilot in 2023-24 with 10 students. Chris Horvath was the instructor and, at the Samohi Senior Gala, a piece for orchestra by one of the 10th grade students was performed. Next year, this will be an after school class, with 1 hour of lecture and 1 hour of composition. The instructor will be paid by SMC. \$50,000 from Measure R will pay for equipment. The students will be required to enroll in a Samohi ensemble. Tom hopes to have a student composition performed at Stairway next year.
 - d. Prop 28 – Most of the additional staff hired with Prop 28 funds will be classified, other than 0.6 FTE for a dance teacher at Samohi. The Percussion Coordinator will add a spring drumline. A Theater Tech person at Samohi will set up and take down the orchestra shell and choral risers in Barnum Hall.

- e. Jazz Festival – The Samohi Jazz Combo took 1st place and the Jazz Band took 2nd.
- 4. **Board of Education Liaison Maria Leon-Vazquez** reported that there will be changes in leadership in 2024-25. Re Malibu unification, their total enrollment is less than 1,000. The June 20 Board meeting agenda will include LCAP.
- 5. **DAC End-of-Year Report** – The report was reviewed and approved by unanimous consent. (Azzariti)
- 6. **VAPA DAC draft charge for 2024-25** – The committee voted by unanimous consent to submit to the Board the same charge as for 2023-24. (Josephs)
- 7. **VAPA DAC vacancies** – Discussion of strategies for recruiting new members included talking to people in line for performances and art exhibits at the middle and high schools, as well as adding a calendar to the VAPA page on the district website. Re the Brown Act requirement that the DACs meet in-person, Richard TJ, who participated remotely, suggested changing the DACs from Board-appointed committees to Superintendent-appointed committees, which are not covered by the Brown Act, so we could meet on Zoom.
- 8. **PUBLIC COMMENT** -- Sean Pawling and Lindsay Okumura stated that, although the 2024-25 Measure R budget has an additional \$500,000, Susan Justin's 22 sections are being split among the remaining teachers. Re Measure R, Nikki Kolhoff stated that high school sports staff (soccer) is being reduced, eliminating 9th grade soccer. Re the 2024-25 budget, she stated that revenue is increasing by \$10 million, spending is increasing by \$14 million, the reserve is being reduced, and class size is being increased. Lydia Muraro stated that since Susan Justin's position is not being replaced, her 1.0 FTE could be re-allocated to a general education teacher, and she suggested that ISP funds are not being well spent.
- 9. The meeting adjourned at 9:05 PM.

Respectfully submitted by Zina Josephs, Secretary