Arts Integration
Alum Rock Union School District

Focus Group Workshop
November 16th 4:00-5:15 pm | 2022

Danelle Finnen: Principal at Renaissance at Mathson (MS)
Veronica Talton: Music Teacher at George (MS) & Lyndale (ES)
Tara Bickford: Principal on Special Assignment (TOSA)
             Assessment and Accountability
Oscar Pangilinan: Music Teacher at Renaissance at Mathson (MS)
Maria Thomas: VAPA, PE, and Sports Coordinator

Next Steps:

Incorporate content from this interview into the Ed Specs design guidelines—then schedule round two video conference meetings with the same group to review the draft chapter for input in, March 2023.

Participants were oriented to understand what a Master Plan is and what Ed Specs are. Then highlights from the Ed Specs Visioning Workshop were shown, concluding with a list of learning shifts produced by Ed Specs Workshop participants as a vision for the future on the following page. After that, participants were asked a series of questions to confirm the program and vision for the future.

Learning Shifts Focus on Student Empowerment- DRAFT

ARUSD's learning environments will support students' development of *mind, body and spirit.* They will be empowered with the opportunity to try different ways of learning to discover how they learn best, *find their spark* and to *keep the curiosity* they were born with to become *expert lifelong learners*. ARUSD will work to give students and families who need additional support to have an *equal chance to thrive*, meeting all their needs.

EMPOWERING STUDENTS TO BECOME EXPERT LEARNERS
Multi-sensory and multi-intelligences learning
More control at the hands of the students
Independent choice and/or collaborative elective periods
Less teacher-directed time
Students setting individual goals
Student-driven activities
Student-chosen schedules
More independent work time
Relaxation rooms
No school uniforms

HIGHER COLLABORATION
Team collaboration across studies, play, and extra-curricular activities
Flexible and collaborative opportunities

EQUITY FOR STUDENTS AND THEIR FAMILIES
Spaces to support personal and basic needs (i.e. laundry services)
Full day kindergarten

MIND, BODY AND SPIRIT
More outside and exploration time
Play and naturalistic movement
Bring community into the class
Indoor and outdoor use spaces

ARTS INTEGRATION, ALUM ROCK UNION SCHOOL DISTRICT   LPA

Program Background:

1. Alum Rock Union School District Arts web page shows:

   Music Department , Jazz Band , Mariachi Program, Visual Arts, Media Arts,

   Visual Arts, Theater

2. Are there other programs not listed on the website? For each one of the above, please explain how it is offered at each cohort level. What are the group sizes for each?

Participants were asked questions to confirm their programs.

Program Background:

Music Department & Class:
 3 ES sites (Lyndale, Linda Vista, Cureton) have VAPA music rooms
 All other ES sites have music prep 4th-5th grade
 Piano courses at VAPA ES Sites
 Piano Lab, VAPA at Joseph George
Drum Line
Jazz Band (Renaissance II)
 Open to all MS students 3 days/week for 3 hours
 After school and summer program
Choir
Band
Mariachi (Lyndale, Hubbard, Adelante 1 and 2)
 After school program

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Program Background:

Visual Arts (Joseph George, Renaissance 1 and 2, and Sheppard)

Programming via outside contractors at 9 ES sites

Media Arts

Video and photography classes offered at Joseph George and Hubbard

Theater

Currently only an after school program

Some campuses offer show choir during the day

Program Background:

ARUSD has always had a foundation in supporting the arts programs as a means of supporting the whole child. This district is differentiated from the surrounding neighborhoods by its dedicated music staff and instrumental programming which are primed to optimize the transfer of skills from Elementary School courses to Middle School ensembles. The community is culturally diverse and hosts a wealth of talent that is expressed via curriculum and after school partnerships and organizations.

Current arts partnerships programs include Community Schools of Music and Arts, Mariachi, The Get Down, B.A.W.S.I., and Little Heroes. At the moment, some campuses use the Mexican Heritage Space for visual arts and performing arts showcases. ARUSD is looking for more grant funding to turn specific sites to Community Schools.

Participants were asked questions to confirm their programs.

Program Background:

Future arts program partnerships should include arts organizations that affirm the value of the arts and raise visibility for students of all races, genders, ages, and skill levels to access education. This should encompass partnerships with forward and out-of-the-box thinking organizations or younger non-profit start ups like Local Color San Jose and M.A.L.I.

There is an interest in increasing partnerships with educational networks, art presentation organizations, and performance organizations as a means of further connecting ARUSD to the larger community.

For example, educational networks like El Sistema would provide collaborative programming, conferences, and professional cross-support. Organizations like San Jose Jazz, San Jose Symphony, SJ Opera would provide workshop clinics, youth concerts, and other performance based events. Lastly, partnering with the office of Cultural Affairs in San Jose would help bring performances to ARUSD designated arts centers.

Participants were asked questions to confirm their programs.

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Before going into the Big Picture Questions, reference images below were shared. Participants were invited to leave comments on the photos.

MURAL LINK

Dedicated Classrooms & Flexible Furniture

Performance Spaces

Big Picture Questions:

- Are there peer institutions or specific libraries or media resource centers you've seen that you've liked (or didn't)? What did you like (or dislike) about them?

- What makes ARUSD unique? Please give examples of arts integration methods used in the classroom and outdoors.

- What makes an art studio integrated and collaborative?

- Describe your vision for arts partnerships.

- Is the current environment preventing you from achieving your vision, if at all?

- How should the environment change or look different in the future?

- What makes a performing art space inclusive and flexible?

- What types of collaboration, flex, and gallery spaces are desired?

Participants were asked questions to draw out their ideas to improve the learning environments to support the mission and vision of Alum Rock USD.

Big Picture Questions:

- Do any of the arts activities take place outdoors? If not, could you envision that in an ideal world? What would be needed to support the activities?

- Is there anything else we should know about how to support the Arts program in the future at ARUSD?

Reference Projects Shared by Participants:

- Overfelt- Theater and Art Space

- Santa Teresa High School

- Oakland School of Arts and Conservatory

- San Antonio Elementary - Outdoor Performance Space

- Laurel in Menlo Park - Classrooms and Mac Lab

- Valley Christian School - MPR

- San Jose State University - Hammer Theater

- Evergreen High School - Performing Arts Room

- SF Jazz - Joe Henderson Lab

- Gunn High School - Spannenberg Hall Rehearsal Spaces

- James Lick Middle School - Auditorium

The first question was intended to see if participants had reference projects to share with or felt that they were exemplary, whether it is in ARUSD or outside of the district. The following pages show the reference projects discussed.
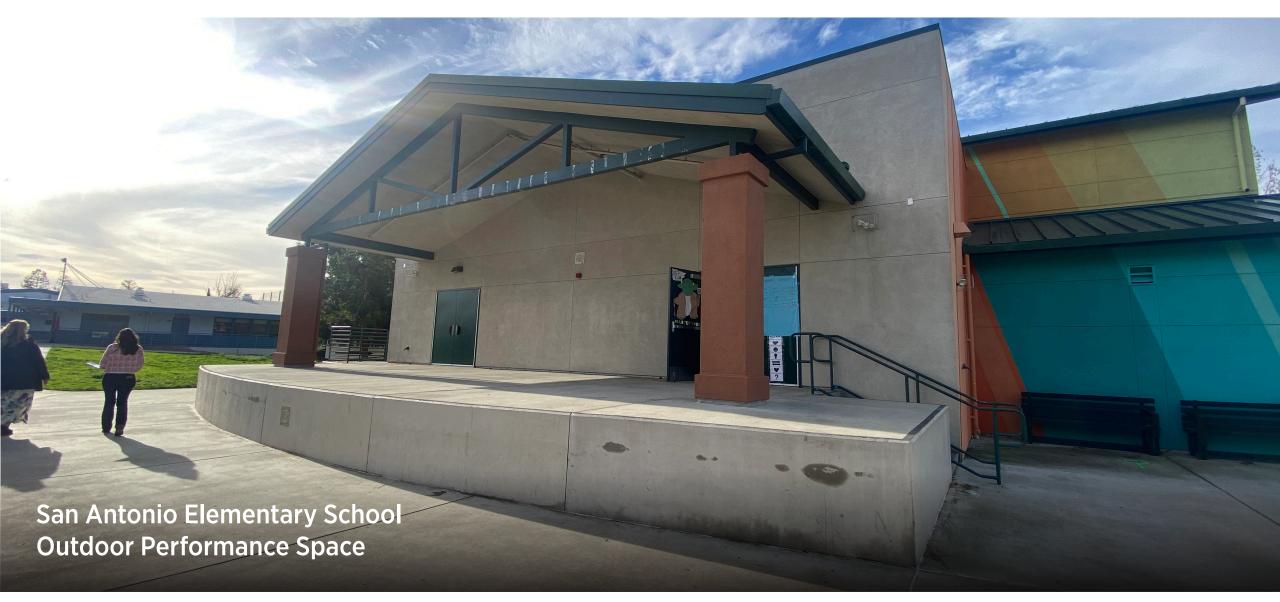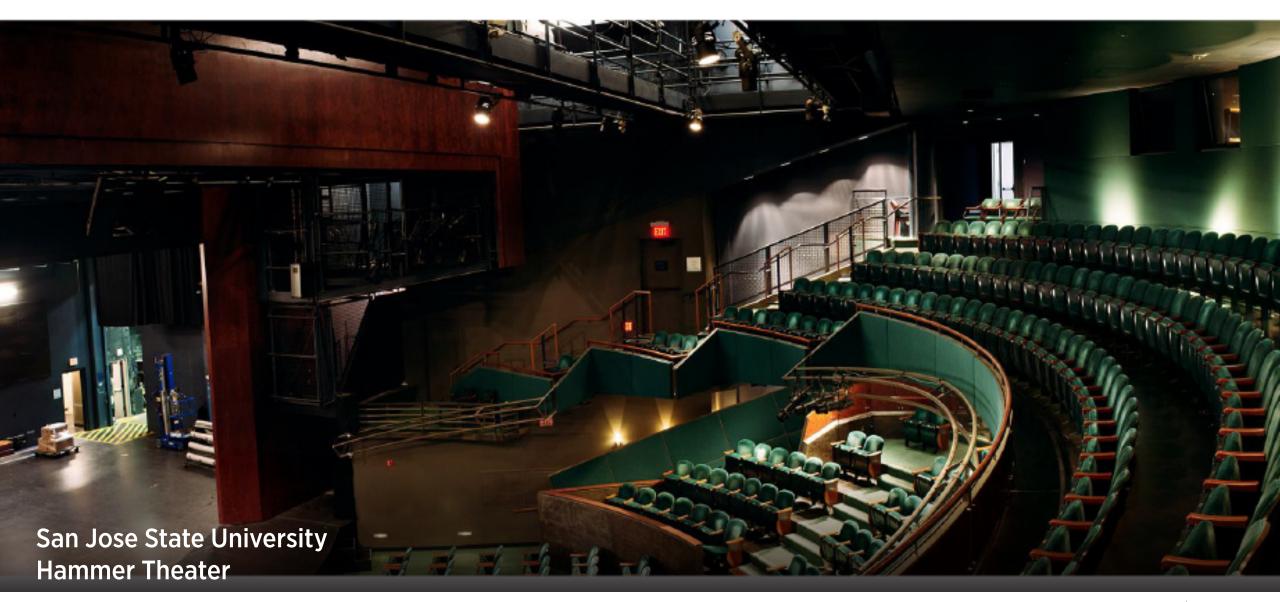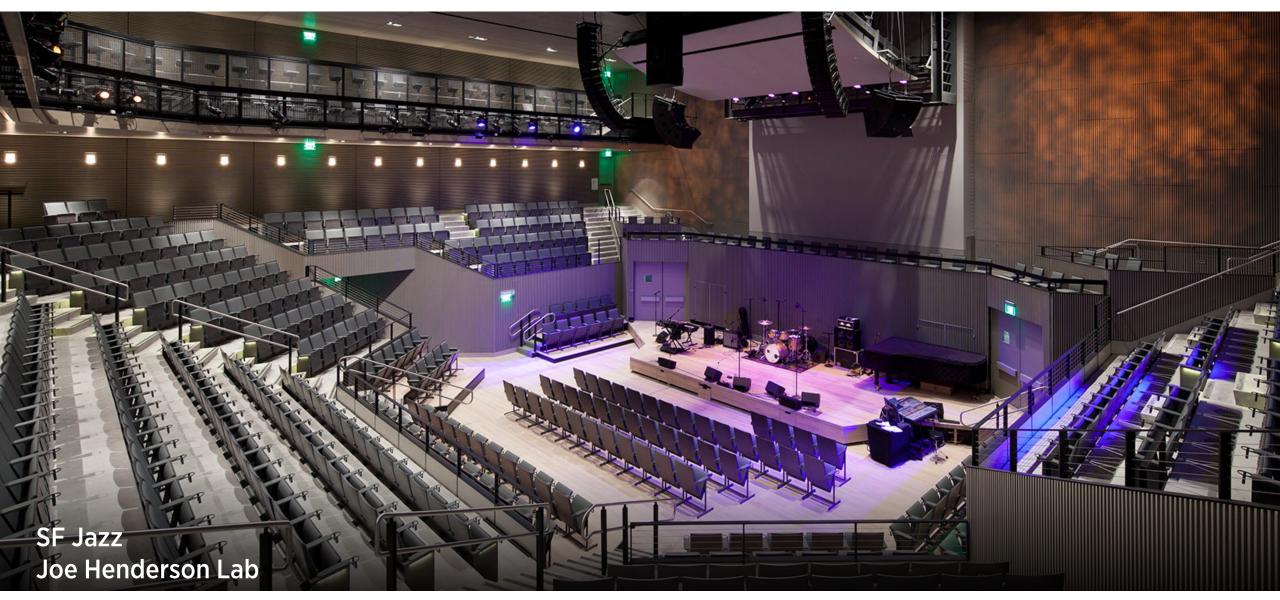
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Overfelt High School, ESUHSD
Theater and Art Space

San Antonio Elementary School
Outdoor Performance Space

Valley Christian High School
Multi-Purpose Room

Laurel School in Menlo Park
Classrooms and Mac Lab

**Evergreen High School
Performing Arts Space**

San Jose State University
Hammer Theater

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SF Jazz
Joe Henderson Lab

ARTS INTEGRATION, ALUM ROCK UNION SCHOOL DISTRICT

Sections:

1. Activities
2. Current Challenges
3. Design Objectives
4. Affordances
5. Sizing and Adjacencies

1
Activities

- Photography and video film

- Painting

- Crafting

- Set building

- Ceramics

- Drum-line

- Dance

- Cultural events

- School celebrations

- Theatrical performances

- Musical performances from band, jazz band, mariachi, piano, choir, etc.

- School assemblies

- Arts Showcases

- Instrument storage and repair

2
Current Challenges

- Lack of adequately sized performance spaces that can hold students and all family members of performers. Currently, some sites use their cafeterias to host performances and others use the Mexican Heritage Space; however neither on site MPRs nor community centers have a large enough capacity.

- Lack of designated rehearsal spaces that are differentiated from performance space for musical programs

- Lack of supportive spaces for arts like cleaning stations or maker's craft stations for visual arts and tech rooms for digital art

- Extreme lack of storage for equipment across all Visual Arts & Performing Arts (VAPA) programs within the schools day programs and outside organizations' P.M. programs

- Lack of acoustic treatments, multi-audiovisual infrastructure and sound systems to support either performance or rehearsal and adapt to changing AV standards.

2
Current Challenges

- At the middle school and K-8 campuses, the district is band heavy, while orchestra and choir have less infrastructure and instructors. There is less of a long term support system for orchestra and choir, which effects how much students can engage with those courses throughout their academic career.

- School layouts don't support loading docks for performance gear deliveries or tours (e.g. Jazz Band trucks), nor do the car concourses and entry points support easy drop off and audience parking

- Engagement in VAPA at the Elementary School sites is positive, however there are challenges with the perception of the VAPA program quality at the middle school sites that results in drop offs in the transition from 5th to 6th grade music.

3
Design Objectives

Visual Arts and Performing Arts spaces should support ARUSD campuses' role as **artistic centers within each site's neighborhood**. The larger community is relatively an art desert, so families and students rely on the schools as a **collective artistic and even cultural gathering spaces**. Support for family and community engagement is paramount and should be accomplished through adequately sized and furnished audience spaces as well as safe visitor parking for arts events. This should include a lobby space that can host ticket booths and function as a display or small gallery space.

There is a desire for the arts spaces to be centralized to one another and easily accessible via road access to allow for delivery drop-off of instruments, equipment, and materials. The **centralization of spaces** would increase visibility of the programs and highlight their importance to the school, thus **encouraging student engagement** and providing faculty with a stronger foundation to advocate for the district's support in their funding and instruction.

3
Design Objectives

Ideas for the physical environment to support the vision for learning

Music-Specific

- Quality acoustic treatment for music rehearsal and performance spaces to equally optimize performer and audience perception of music.

- Isolation and sound booths included in practice rooms that are modernized to allow students individual space

- Instrument repair spaces to support on-site repairs by musical staff

- Reconfigurable space to support a spectrum of musical practices, like band, choir, strings, and electronic music

- Specified orchestra rooms

3
Design Objectives

Ideas for the physical environment to support the vision for learning

Performance Space-Specific

- Automated and reconfigurable acoustic treatment systems that can be adjusted with ease to meet the needs of a performance group (e.g., automated drop curtains).

- Augment interior spaces with an outdoor performance space, such as an amphitheater to support acoustic performances w/out the need for PA reinforcement.

- Rooms with reconfigurable partitions to accommodate a spectrum of performance formats, including display space/gallery space for visual arts.

- Performance spaces available for rent; making support staff available at a fee to provide support for community led performances/events.

- Box offices to support ticketed events.

- Sufficient audience space and seating that can be tucked away.

- Gallery space with digital signage that can be easily reconfigured to display relevant information to attendees.

3

Design Objectives

Ideas for the physical environment to support the vision for learning

Visual Arts -Specific

- Designated spaces for specific visual arts programs.

- Wood shop or metal shop spaces for visual arts that could even be used to support stagecraft for theater programs as part of the curriculum or part of an after school program.

4
Affordances

Furniture & Equipment

- Built in risers for choir

- Flexible furniture, seating and tables that can be reconfigured for multiple performance types.

- Properly sized cleaning stations for various visual arts endeavors to accommodate the disposal of multiple materials.

- Plenty of student storage to house instruments, supplies, and projects.

- Kiln rooms

- Curtain/drapes for all stages

- Shade or canopies needed for outdoor spaces

- Green screens zones or rooms

4
Affordances

Technology

- Computer lab with MIDI keyboards and desktop computers capable of supporting student learning with Digital Audio Workstations (DAW) software (e.g., Logic/Ableton/ProTools)

- Digital management systems like Creston Electronics control surfaces that allow teachers to manage AV from a single device over Ethernet/Wifi

- 21st Century inventory management systems that leverage Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) or other trackers to support instrument inventory and loss-prevention measures.

- Reliable and scalable network infrastructure to support our growing list of connected devices Internet of Things (IoT)

- Gallery spaces with digital signage that can be easily reconfigured to display relevant information to attendees

- Pan-tilt-zoom (PTZ) Cameras or other recording infrastructure to capture and catalog performances for our community locally and abroad (streaming)

4
Affordances

Technology

- Promethean smart boards and/or digital projectors with Apple TVs that enhance student engagement with lesson content.

- Sound Booths with modern digital boards

- Sound systems at the theater, potentially with the ability to shift into a movie theater setting with lights and projectors to display media arts or the work students do digitally.

- Marquees or other digital signage to display promotional information for all performances at a site.

5
Sizing and Adjacencies

- Rooms with reconfigurable partitions to accommodate a spectrum of performance formats.

- Backstage space for performances that accommodates multiple types of storage.

- Isolation booths (e.g., Wenger booths) that provide students opportunities to practice/record in acoustically isolated environments.

- Having dedicated rehearsal spaces attached to a larger performance area with visibility between one another.

- Display areas to showcase student work, raise visibility for programming, and honor student achievement.

- An office space that encourages teacher collaboration across disciplines (Choir > Theater > Orchestra).

- Accessible parking to support community and family attendance at events.

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Appendix

Please follow the links to the Mural board to see artifacts from the focus group interview and the Ed Specs Visioning Workshop link to see the Artifacts from the workshop.

Mural Link: HERE

Ed Specs Visioning Workshop Link: HERE