

Visual & Performing Arts District Advisory Committee (VAPA DAC)

September 24, 2025 – 7 PM – in-person

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

MINUTES

Attendees: Sarah Jane Barney, Deborah Berek, Kim Crawford, Janis Gabbert, Wendy Jaffa, Zina Josephs, Aimee Koeplin, Michael Mollo, Emily Senchuk, Rebecca Terlizzi, Maria Leon Vazquez, Dr. Jim Wang

1. The meeting was called to order by Co-Chair Janis Gabbert at 7:05 PM. Since there were several new parents in attendance, we all did brief introductions.
2. Minutes from the May meeting were approved by unanimous consent. (Terlizzi)
3. Calendar review – Dr. Wang has posted all VAPA events up through December on the VAPA website.
4. VAPA Coordinator Report – Dr. Jim Wang reported on the following:
 - a. Outreach and calendar -- Maryanne Solomon has updated the district website. Dr. Wang has updated the VAPA section and added a Mission and Vision statement. The new calendar includes VAPA events and ticketing links up through December. He's also created an Instagram account @SMMUSD.VAPA which is connected with the Facebook account. Re Barnum Hall, while the seats are being replaced, some concerts will take place at JAMS, and the Fazzioli concert grand piano is being refurbished. Rebecca Terlizzi noted that Barnum lighting needs replacing.
 - b. Curriculum – **DANCE:** 4th & 5th grade SMC Dance Academy. 6th grade Robert Gilliam. He's hiring 3 new instructors for Folklorico classes at Edison, Rogers, and JAMS. Samohi is requesting Prop. 28 funds for a 0.2 FTE dance instructor (one class).

MUSIC: Mariachi starts next week. High school dual enrollment with SMC includes 2 classes after school. He's hired a new elementary/middle school instructor who's a UCLA ethnomusicology major. He's looking for an accompanist for Lincoln MS, complicated by low pay. At Malibu High, scheduling issues are affecting the music classes.

The Samohi choir tour will include Amsterdam and Brussels. The Samhi orchestra tour will be in Asia.

THEATER: The after-school program at Lincoln MS will present "Frozen." Samohi will present a winter play in the black box theater, "The Play That Goes Wrong."

VISUAL ARTS: The Samohi photography teacher retired, and the replacement has to quit, so they're looking for a new CTE teacher.

MEDIA ARTS: Many elementary teachers are already doing this. The VAPA CTE classes at Samohi are currently listed under Visual Arts.

- c. Fiscal budget – Measure R funds are being used for Lincoln MS Jazz Band, taught by Ryan Rowls. Terry Sakow and Ryan are teaching the Samohi Jazz Bands. Prop 28 funds will be used to purchase more instruments for the elementary music program. Dr. Wang is hoping several elementary schools will pool their Prop 28 funds to hire a full-time elementary Visual Arts teacher.

5. **Board of Education Liaisons** -- Dr. Richard Tahvildaran-Jesswein was unable to attend the meeting. Maria Leon-Vazquez reported that there have been lots of retirements resulting in a new executive staff. The Superintendent's strategic plan requires professional development to implement project-based learning. SMMUSD passed its audit and is in good financial shape. However, the City of Santa Monica is experiencing financial distress, which could possibly affect the Joint Use Agreement.
 6. Public comments regarding items not on the agenda – None.
 7. The meeting adjourned at 8:55 PM.
- Respectfully submitted by Zina Josephs, Secretary