

Visual & Performing Arts District Advisory Committee (VAPA DAC)

Wednesday, May 27, 2026 – in-person

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

MINUTES

Attendees: Lauren Applebaum, Deborah Berek, Cynthia Boorujy, Kim Crawford, Erin Dinielli, Janis Gabbert, Jenna Guggenheim, Wendy Jaffa, Zina Josephs, Maria Leon-Vazquez, Lydia Muraro, Emily Senchuk, Rebecca Terlizzi, Jim Wang, Dr. Stacy Williamson

1. The meeting was called to order at 7:06 PM by Co-Chair Janis Gabbert
2. Minutes from the April 2026 meeting were presented but not approved. Dr. Williams stated that staff reports should not be included in minutes.
3. Administrative Co-Chair and VAPA Coordinator, Dr. Jim Wang, presented his report.
4. Board Liaison Richard Tahvildaran did not attend the meeting. Board Liaison Maria Leon-Vazquez presented her report.
5. Erin Dinielli, AVID Director, spoke about the AVID programs at JAMS and Samohi. AVID stands for “Advancement via Individual Determination” and is considered an academic elective. 7th and 8th grade AVID students can schedule another elective because they’re allowed to take AM classes, whereas non-AVID students cannot. JAMS parents who wish their non-AVID students could take both a VAPA class and a foreign language were advised to talk to the JAMS principal.
6. Elementary Music Curriculum update – “SMMUSD Shares Update on Elementary Music Program Review, Emphasizes Expansion and Equity” –*SMMUSD 4/20/26 news release -- <https://resources.finalsite.net/images/v1777588209/smmusdorg/xjwik8q5kkab9vhhcc07/PR-VAPAElemMusicRecap043026.pdf>*
7. The DAC End-of-Year Report was reviewed, revised, and approved by unanimous consent. (Josephs)
8. The Measure R and Prop 28 updates were tabled.
9. Public comments regarding items not on the agenda: None
10. Addendum from Wendy Jaffa: Wendy reminded the committee that we never had a follow-up conversation on this year's Stairway production. Dr. Wang's reimagined day, which still highlighted the honor bands, orchestras and choirs, included smaller music ensembles, art exhibits and music vendors. The inclusivity and enthusiasm was felt by the entire SMMUSD music community and we hope that Dr. Wang will continue to organize this type of event in the future. It was suggested that next year, all of the VAPA DAC members have a role in supporting the day.
11. Adjournment at 9 PM.

Respectfully submitted by Zina Josephs, VAPA DAC Secretary

8:55 PM – **Announcements and adjournment**