

MEMORANDUM

TO: Arlington School Board
FROM: Arts Advisory Committee
DATE: March 1, 2013
SUBJECT: Non-recommending Year Report

The Arts Advisory Committee focuses on arts education in Arlington Public Schools, including instrumental and vocal music, visual arts, and theater arts. The committee meets monthly.

Current Year Activities:

The committee is conducting a survey of arts teachers, both to support the committee's 2011-2012 recommendation areas (below) and to identify new arts education needs, including:

- How arts supplies funds are allocated and distributed at the middle school level, and whether a modest per-student allocation, as is done in elementary schools, is needed to provide middle school arts students with adequate supplies.
- Whether APS access to performance and rehearsal space at schools with joint or shared use facilities is adequate.
- Input from APS guidance counselors as to their perspectives on arts enrollment and possible impediments, such as the new online high school virtual course and the personal finance course. .

Update of Previous Recommendations:

Recommendation #1:

APS should review the proposed Middle School Schedule to be implemented in the 2013-14 academic year and assess its impact on fine arts instruction.

Status: No longer relevant.

Recommendation #2:

APS should offer flexible and affordable class options to satisfy the economics/personal finance course requirement. APS should monitor the impact of the course on students' access to fine arts courses, including their ability to maintain continuity of fine arts classes across the four years of high school.

Status: We are monitoring the impact of the Economics and Personal Finance course on students' access to fine arts courses in high school, especially whether consistent and progressive arts education is maintained. We are requesting that APS provide data on enrollment in arts electives in grades 10-12 as a correlation of finance course enrollment. Because the finance course was implemented in 2012-13, data will become more meaningful

over time. The committee will also monitor enrollment for the summer 2013 finance course and any impact on arts enrollment during the 2013-14 school year. We continue to support flexible options to satisfy the finance course requirement, including the possibility of an online course, which is already offered in Fairfax County.

2011-17 Strategic Plan Alignment:

Goal 1: Every student is challenged and engaged

Goal 2: Eliminate achievement gaps

Goal 3: High quality staff

Goal 4: Optimal learning environments

Goal 5: Meets the needs of the whole child.

Budgetary Implications: None.

ACI vote: 21-3-3

Recommendation #3:

APS should continue to improve opportunities in choral music education with a specific focus on middle schools, in light of the 2010 Arts Education Program Evaluation Report, which found a 42% decline in middle school choral enrollment from 2005-06 to 2009-10 and lower participation in the arts overall for students identified as Hispanic and LEP or disadvantaged.

Status: The Middle School Honors Chorus, an outgrowth of this committee's 2009-2010 recommendation, has flourished in its second year of operation, reaching its maximum capacity of 75 students and more than demonstrating the need for this program. The committee is surveying these students to evaluate their experience and any constraints; we are also asking APS to track these students as to whether they continue choral music in high school. We continue to monitor vocal music programs in view of the substantial decline in choral arts enrollment cited above and in Appendix C of the committee's 2012 Report. We continue to support improved opportunities for choral music education, with a specific focus on middle schools. The Arts Education Supervisor has requested \$3,000 in operating expenses for the Middle School Honors Chorus for the 2014 fiscal year. That request is pending.

2011-17 Strategic Plan Alignment: Goals 1-5, listed above.

Budgetary Implications: \$3,000 for operating costs (adjudicators, music, printing, mailing and transportation, pyramid concerts and district assessment festivals)

ACI vote: 20-2-5

Recommendation #4:

APS should contract with a professional theater safety company to conduct site analysis of nine middle, high and secondary schools' performing arts facilities to determine inspection needs.

Status: The Arts Education Supervisor updated the committee on training of personnel and annual safety inspection of APS arts spaces and theaters. During 2012, repairs were done at Jefferson, Kenmore, Arlington Traditional, Gunston, H-B Woodlawn, Science Focus and Williamsburg schools, totaling \$595,410 and paid from the facilities budget for fiscal years 2011 and 2012. The committee will rely on the arts teachers' survey to determine other specific safety needs.

2011-17 Strategic Plan Alignment: Goals 1-5, above.

Budgetary implications: \$2,250 for initial site analyses and report, no longer relevant.

ACI vote: 26-0-1

Recommendation #5:

APS should carefully examine both the size and quality of instructional grade space assigned to elementary school band, orchestra, general music, and visual arts classes when challenged with the allocation of rooms due to over-enrollment.

Status: The arts teachers' survey will provide the committee with updated information on the adequacy of arts instructional space, equipment and supplies.

2011-17 Strategic Plan Alignment: Goals 1-5, above

Budgetary implications: none

ACI vote: 25-0-2

Arts Advisory Committee members 2012-2013:

Co-chairs: Cheryl Scott, Eileen Putman

Members: Chris Ditta, Hanna Eun, Louisa Marinaccio, Tina Masciangioli, Mod Mekkawi, Susan Scott, Michael Shea, Karen Dunlap (member observer), Pam Farrell (Arts Education Supervisor and liaison to the Arts Advisory Committee.)

Appendix:

Arts Advisory Committee 2012 Recommending Year Report:

http://www.apsva.us/cms/lib2/VA01000586/Centricity/Domain/29/FEBRUARY%208%20-%20ARTS_report_to_ACI_2012_Final.pdf