



Friends of Ruth Asawa San Francisco School of the Arts Unified Position Statement

Whereas, at the October 10, 2017 FoSOTA Board of Directors (“Board”) meeting, which was attended by community members and Brent Stephens (Chief Academic Officer, SFUSD), Mr. Stephens provided the following guidance regarding the relationship between SFUSD and the Friends of Ruth Asawa San Francisco School of the Arts (“FoRASFSOTA”) with the Ruth Asawa San Francisco School of the Arts (“School”) and the Artists in Residence (“AIR”) program at the School:

1. The District and the BoE intend for SFUSD to assume employer status for the AIR program currently administered by FoRASFSOTA, as of the 2018-2019 school year — due to concern over potential liability related to the 1099 contractor status of the AIRs — with the expectation that FoRASFSOTA would continue to fund the AIR program.
2. Some members of the BoE have expressed concerns around financial transparency of FoRASFSOTA's accounting practices, even as a completed review of FoRASFSOTA's 2016-2017 school year financial records yielded no negative findings.
3. Some members of the BoE have questioned the appropriateness of the inclusion of box office receipts as FoRASFSOTA income, however, SFUSD has determined that FoRASFSOTA fundraising practices are consistent with that of a Booster Club, and that there has been no violation of ASB accounting practices.
4. The BoE has expressed that the organization's name, “Friends of School of the Arts” or “FOSOTA,” is a “flashpoint” issue, because it did not include “Ruth Asawa” in its name.
5. Mr. Stephens stated that he thinks “it's going to be problematic for the [District] to move forward with Colleen [Ivie]” in the position of Executive Director, given that “[t]here was interpersonal conflict between members of VAPA and the [Asawa] family.”



Regarding transition of the AIR program:

- The Board is concerned that the 38.25% increase in cost of the AIR program, due to administrative overhead imposed by SFUSD, would:
 - immediately consume 15% of FoRASFSOTA's current annual income,
 - necessarily and adversely affect the other programs and services provided to the School, and
 - negatively impact the fundraising capability of FoRASFSOTA within the School and donor community.
- The Board strongly proposes that SFUSD agree to cover all SFUSD-imposed additional administrative and overhead costs incurred for the AIR program for the first three years (i.e. through the 2020-2021 school year), and then re-evaluate before the end of the three years to determine the efficacy of the program.
- The Board stands by the belief that the changes being asked of the School site and the AIRs should be implemented equitably and uniformly across the SFUSD.
- The Board agrees to operate in good faith to raise funds for the new AIR program, but cannot be held liable if funds are not available to pay SFUSD employees. Moreover, the Board suggests adoption of a one-year probationary plan to monitor program success.
- The Board strongly urges SFUSD to hire the AIRs as W2 employees, and not under K Reso, since the AIRs cannot afford the required insurance under the K Reso rules, and are unable to purchase the required insurance as individuals.
- The Board proposes a two-month probationary period for SFUSD to pay the AIRs on time, or responsibility for payroll returns to FoRASFSOTA.
- The Board is prepared to continue to hire AIRs in the school year 2018-2019, as part-time employees or contractors, as appropriate to their work assignment, in order to preserve the standard of arts curriculum that the student body and School community have come to expect and deserve.
- The Board has agreed to re-define the FoRASFSOTA Mission Statement, given the premise that SFUSD will assume employer status over the AIR program in the school year 2018-2019.
- The Board requests that an official, public Letter of Intent for the transition of the AIR program to SFUSD be submitted to the Board.



Regarding financial transparency:

- The Board is in agreement with the findings of the review of the FoRASFSOTA books and records by a SFUSD CPA in May 2017, whereupon SFUSD determined that handling of these revenues is consistent with that of a Booster Club, and that there is no violation of ASB accounting practices.
- The Board has engaged the audit firm of Doran & Associates, at an expense of \$7,700, to conduct a formal audit of the financial books and records for fiscal year 2016-2017, which is currently underway.

Regarding the name of the organization:

- The Board has voted to change the name of the organization to the Friends of Ruth Asawa San Francisco School of the Arts, effective January 23, 2018.
- The Board requests guidance from SFUSD and the Ruth Asawa Foundation on any copyright permissions involving use of "Ruth Asawa" in the organization's name.

Regarding Colleen Ivie as Executive Director:

- The Board is committed to serving the School's students, faculty, administration, and arts departments in all ways possible, which is demonstrated in its hiring process and staffing. The Board stands by Ms. Ivie as an excellent and dedicated employee and leader.
- The Board has 100% confidence in Ms. Ivie, and has unanimously voted that she remain as the Executive Director of the organization.
- The Board believes that the aforementioned conflict is one-sided and in the past, and, in the spirit of community, is only interested in conversations that move the School forward to success.
- The Board is currently undergoing an annual review and performance evaluation of Executive Director Colleen Ivie.
- The Board is preparing to undertake a self-review process of the Board itself, as outlined in FoRASFSOTA's Board of Directors Roles & Responsibilities. Additionally, the Board is in the process of planning its annual Board Retreat, which will be held in the Fall.



Finally, as the Board has a limited number of volunteer members currently comprised of faculty, parents and alumni parents, civic leaders, and Executive Director Colleen Ivie:

- The Board has voted to initiate a campaign to expand and develop the Board to include more parents, leaders of external arts organizations with which the School collaborates, and community leaders; and to engage student and external advisors.
- The primary objectives of the campaign are:
 - to achieve diversity on the Board that reflects the community the School serves,
 - to increase the operational stability of the organization, and
 - to bear public witness of the financial transparency of the organization.
- The Board is eager to expand the fundraising capability of the organization, with the objective to increase revenue donated to the organization in the school year 2018-2019.

For information about Friends of Ruth Asawa San Francisco School of the Arts,
visit us on the web at
fosota.org/mission/