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ENCINO NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCIL EDUCATION COMMITTEE

Approved Minutes 10/19/15

The meeting was called to order at 4:00 by Chair Shelley Rivlin. Present: Committee members Shelley, Jean Strauber, Cecily Lerner, Kathy Kantner which established a quorum. Also attending: Rebecca Galvan, Cheryl Gray-Sortin, Debby Epstein, Kristina Turpin, Lori Shackel Jill Setlin, Heather Penrod, Tracie Bowdoin, Erick Hansen, Peter Jeensalute, Diane Wilson, Maria Galloway, Lhani Van, Tre Tchedkidjian, Valerie Gordon, Suzanne Blake, Deena Fisk, Stacie Rains, Henry Stern (St Sen. Pavley) and Gurmet Khara (Councilman Paul Koretz). Introductions were made.

Minutes: Jean Strauber made a motion to approve the Minutes of September 10, 2015. Cecily Lerner seconded the motion. The motion passed.unanimously.

Shelley Rivlin explained that education committee will focus on the the arts this year. What can we do in both public and non-public schools to serve the needs of Encino students.

Update from Henry Stern, field representative from Senator Fran Pavley's office: Senator Pavley, a former 8th grade teacher, serves on the Senate Education Committee. The State budget was healthier this year. CAL STRS is getting paid down. Expanded Transitional Kindergarten programs were introduced to serve low-income 4 year olds; other Early Education initiatives received funding. Career pathways trust funding is another topic Senator Pavley supports: there is an application process and a timeline. The L.A. County Office of Education has some discretionary funding as well. The Apple program (loan forgiveness for teachers) and Governor's Teacher Fellowship program are priorities. Teacher recruitment is also a focus: within the past 12 years there has been a 74% drop in teachers entering the profession. The Senate Education Committee is looking at various means of addressing this issue and funding it, and is seeking community input and engaging in coalition building around this issue.

Ms. Rivlin noted examples of resources available to our schools. Reseda High School has a 1200 seat auditorium which could serve as a venue. Staff from Ms. Ratliff's office met with Shelley and made her aware that LAUSD TV station, KCLS, is inviting students to create promos for schools, starting with schools in Monica Ratliff's district, which will hopefully expand to schools in other board districts as well.

It was also noted that Mark Slavkin, former Education director of the Music Center was unable to attend our meeting but wants us to be aware that the The Wallis and the L.A. Music Center can partner with schools, and provide student visits. They do not pay for transportation.

Update from Suzanne Blake, LAUSD Director of Arts Instruction, Northwest District:

Ms. Blake notes that LAUSD's Arts branch provides 400 itinerant art instructors, deployed to schools in accordance with the arts equity index, based on information from principal questionnaires. Title One schools with high need student populations receive more District funded arts instruction than non-Title One schools. Northwest Superintendent Ekchian is interested in coming up with a plan so that students with a particular interest in the arts can pursue this interest in MS and HS. Many Middle Schools lack vibrant music programs. ES students may enjoy 9 weeks of music instruction, but music may not be offered at secondary schools. Superintendent Cortines would like to see every MS have a music program. We need to come up with better ways so that parents and students can access these programs, and not only through Magnet programs. Superintendent Ekchian has several focus areas, including Arts, Health and Wellness and Academics. LDNW will host a fair to showcase student work, March 5-6, 2016 at Woodley Park. Beyond the Bell could also offer arts enrichment to students in grades 3-5. LAUSD loses students to charters, especially in HS, so the idea is to promote the creative work fostered within LAUSD schools. There is a shortage of teachers. Years ago many art teachers were RIF'd; some of these teachers went on to work at charter or private schools. Most of these positions have not been reinstated and budget and funding issues remain problematic. The LAUSD BOE has prioritized arts programming in ES first, offered as 9 week programs to students in grades 3-5, in four areas: music, theater, dance and visual arts.

Next, meeting participants went around the room and were asked to identify resources, strengths, challenges and roadblocks to the arts at their school sites.

Portola MS: Roadblock: funding. They are trying to implement a dance program and are converting an existing classroom into a dance studio, but this requires funding for flooring and mirrors.

Strengths: interested students! Orchestra is fabulous, other arts classes are falling into place.

Principal support is key.

Reseda HS: Roadblock: funding for equipment; also branding and publicity to change perceptions about Reseda HS. Strengths: cultivating partnerships, including with Center Stage Opera and film industry partnerships, which LAUSD's Rory Pullens has established. Reseda teachers are taking a free class on film and will host a film festival in spring. They are using the SBAC iPads for their media and film projects. Would love to share their auditorium and share audiences for performances.

Birmingham Charter HS: Strengths: very strong in the arts; Charter provides funding. Supportive principal. Roadblocks: Their school is Title One, with 85% of students on free/reduced lunch. Some members of their school community may find the arts frivolous and prefer that schools focus on academics. So there is a need to educate families about the importance of the arts, about employment and career pathways into the arts and entertainment industry. Birmingham has wonderful productions but hardly anyone comes to see them. Needs: marketing and audience.

Lanai ES: Strengths: has a District funded itinerant arts teacher once per week, supplemented with arts programming delivered by parent volunteers and/or parent fundraising which pays for programming. These programs are more extensive and flexible than what the District would

provide. Art Docent program is parent driven. Dance/theater programs rely on volunteers, many of whom work in the industry. After-school programs include chorus, orchestra and a theater program.

One school participates in the Arts Prototype program and had planned their budget accordingly but the funding was pulled. Roadblocks: funding - needs new microphones, art supplies, curtains for the stage. Their biggest challenge has been waiting for LAUSD to find a teacher.. Another roadblock is buy-in from parents.

Encino ES: Strengths: knowledgeable about how to secure resources. Non-Title One schools can't rely on the District to provide arts programming, they must raise money themselves. Encino has secured grant funding. It takes hours of time getting organized and researching grant opportunities; schools without this capacity are at a disadvantage. This committee can serve as a resource for various schools. There are free concerts available through the Hollywood Bowl. Not everyone has access to transportation, or the knowledge about how to access community arts resources.

Westmark: Roadblocks: limited resources devoted to arts, one teacher from grades 2-12, and an artists-in-residence program. Kids with learning disabilities spend a lot of time on remediation so it's hard to carve out space during the instructional day for the arts. When teachers aren't spread thin they can do wonderful things. Strengths: their students would like to perform for audiences; interested in sharing performances. They are willing to share resources and fund buses so other schools can attend Westmark performances.

More ideas for the resource list or a website:

- when local schools complete a production, they can then share their costumes with other schools;
- Encino Chamber of Commerce idea of creating a "resource van" with wireless mikes and other equipment that could be shared.

Crespi HS: Strengths: an independent school with adequate resources to support arts programming. They also benefit from many families who work in the entertainment industry. Roadblock: no theater venue at their school site.

Los Encinos ES: Strengths: this is a well resourced private/independent school funded by tuition and fundraising. The arts are woven into their school philosophy and academics. They are willing to share resources and give back. Also, for example, last year MOCA had few applications to their programs, people aren't filling out forms and applying for services that could be made available.

Nestle ES: Strength: they raised money for orchestra. Roadblock: LAUSD didn't have an orchestra teacher to send them. Their teachers are very open to the arts, however their teachers aren't thrilled with the quality of one District-funded art teacher.

Update from Gurmet Khara, Field Deputy for Councilmember Paul Koretz:

They can support the arts by funding buses schools can use for field trips or to attend performances. They will fund 2 buses per year for each school in their district. They can help schools with small \$500 requests (for arts supplies, etc.) occasionally. They will also provide schools with 100 chairs and 10 tables for one event per year, assistance with relaxing street parking restrictions, and LADOT. Shelley will contact Councilman Blumenfield's office to see what support is available. Unfortunately, at the last minute John Popoch from his office was unable to attend our meeting..

Holy Martyrs: private Armenian school (ES-HS). Roadblock: has seen declining enrollment over the years (10 or more students per year x 5-6 years), so arts have been cut. No auditorium. Funding is an issue. Instructors wear multiple hats.

Stacy, the Education Committee Chair from the Van Nuys Neighborhood Council introduced herself. She announced an upcoming VNNC Education Summit.

Hesby Oaks Span School: Strengths: visual arts program is parent-funded; Maria Galloway teaches every other week K-6th grade. Enjoying a consistent program year over year, and watching student skills develop is beneficial. LAUSD's program of 9 weeks with a new art teacher every year is not enough.

Shelley spoke to the teacher at a private music school in Encino and will continue to contact her.

Goals to work towards:

- 1) List of resources; Fliers for events, shared audiences, etc. More active approach to marketing and outreach.
- 2) Website: develop a new one, or via Encino Chamber of Commerce or ENC? Or consider a share site like Shutterfly, FB group. Shared Google dox. This would be a place to post fliers for events, seek audiences for performances, provide a more active approach to marketing and outreach.
- 3) Next October at Taste of Encino put together a shared student arts venue and showcase of student work and performances, a museum walk.

Announcements:

Jean Strauber reminded everyone that the Daily News will help promote school events; contact Holy.Andres@langnews.com -- 818-713-0058 FAX.

Shelley Rivlin announced that Henry Stern will run to replace Senator Fran Pavley, who is being termed out of office.

Meeting adjourned at 5:30 p.m

Respectfully submitted by Shelley Rivlin with notes from Kathy Kantner.