

Copyright 2006 MediaNews Group, Inc. and ANG Newspapers
All Rights Reserved
Inside Bay Area (California)

June 29, 2006 Thursday

SECTION: TRI-VALLEY

LENGTH: 371 words

HEADLINE: District to see more of arts; trustees adopt new standards

BYLINE: By Kristofer Noceda, STAFF WRITER

BODY:

DUBLIN -- The Dublin Unified School District continues to reshape its curriculum by adding a performing arts policy and standards for its students.

Trustees took action Tuesday evening in adopting a visual and performing arts standards that would be formalized in the next five years.

The decision comes after trustees unanimously approved the adoption of new graduation requirements that would make high school education more rigorous two weeks ago.

Superintendent John Sugiyama said by emphasizing the arts into the curriculum, the district will have a more balanced program.

We want to raise rigor but recognize students have other interests, he said.

At the beginning of the school year, the district joined the State Model Arts Project Network -- a group of 114 school districts across the state, including Livermore and Pleasanton.

The network is part of a five-year program designed to revitalize the arts in school districts.

A District Arts Team -- comprised of district teachers and administrators -- was also formed to help create the arts plan. They say children who do not receive arts education are missing a vital part of creative development which adds significantly to a child's overall success.

The district offered twice as many art sections to high school students 10 years ago compared to what they currently offer.

That will change in the next five years as the plan calls for two sections of dance and vocal music, with an additional section of theater at the high school level.

A section of dance, theater and visual arts will also be added to each grade at the middle school level.

Other recommendations call for up to 10 weeks of recorder instruction for all third graders; each school to make a trip to a museum, a live performance and an art gallery; and an exhibition of student artwork to be showcased each spring.

The district will be looking for ways to fund the program. Beverly Heironimus, district chief business officer, said that it appears that the arts and music programs are some of the winners with the new state budget.

Sugiyama also recommended the District Arts Team approach the city to help fund the programs.

Kristofer Noceda can be reached at (925) 416-4808 or at knoceda@trivalleyherald.com .