

# SMB:

## SARATOGA MUSIC BOOSTERS

A 501(c)(3) organization supporting music programs in the Saratoga Union School District and Saratoga High School

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Regular Meeting in-person on August 13th, 2024, for 02 Hours 16 Minutes

Attendance: total number of attendees = 25

# Attendees

## Executive Board

Name	Role
Alicia de Fuentes	President / Pancake Breakfast Co-Chair
Mrudula Prashant	Co-VP Donations / Pancake Breakfast Co-Chair
Tista Kapoor	Co-VP Donations
Bharti Ramaswamy	Co-Recording Secretary
Nisha Hebbalae	Co-Recording Secretary
Ramya Vasu	Parliamentarian / SUSD & RMS Program Donations Chair
Sneha Melkote	Treasurer/ Pancake Breakfast Treasurer

## Music Directors

Name	School
Michael Boitz	SHS
Sean Clark	SHS
Beth Nitzan	SHS
Jason Shiuan	SHS
Jon Jow	RMS
Isabel McPherson	RMS

## Booster Members

Name	Role
Richard Aochi	Controller
Joyce Koh-Fernandez	Publicity
Beryl Liu	Publicity
Oliver Su	Student Webmaster
Vrinda Gopal	SHS Percussion Liaison
Dongni Chen	SHS Band
Josh Rupert	RMS Choir
Suzie Kim	RMS Orchestra
Jean Song	Member
Joshua Zhang	IT/Google Administrator
Dhanesh Vallurupalli	Member
Vidya Vineet	Member

Alicia calls the meeting to order at 7:05pm.

## SMB board introductions

**Alicia:** SMB president. She loves SMB for the opportunities it provides to students in musical education, she loves the teamwork and commitment that everyone involved brings to the program. She has a sophomore in orchestra, music theory and jazz.

**Mrudula:** Co-VP of donations. She loves SMB for the community and the music program for the teachers and what it teaches the children about teamwork and to love what they do. She has a sophomore in music.

**Beryl:** SMB publicity team. She has a Junior in percussion.

**Dongni:** Marching Band liaison. She has 3 kids in the music program. The youngest is a junior in the Marching Band. She loves the marching band for creating lifelong friendships and for being a healthy place for students in what is otherwise a very competitive environment.

**Sneha:** SMB treasurer and Pancake Breakfast treasurer. She is in SMB because all her friends are there. She moved to Saratoga for the schools and music programs.

**Richard:** Controller. He has a 10<sup>th</sup> grader in the Marching Band. Richard is involved with many local nonprofits, which is his way of giving back to the community and making good use of his time.

**Josh:** 5<sup>th</sup> grade liaison, his 3<sup>rd</sup> year at SMB. He finds SMB impressive at many levels: for the community involvement, great leadership and people who care. Josh has an 8<sup>th</sup> grader in RMS and a 5<sup>th</sup> grader at Argonaut.

**Joyce:** SMB publicity team. She is at SMB for the president Alicia, and music directors. She is involved with many organizations. Joyce loves SMB since it is a group of doers and volunteering is a great use of her time. Joyce has 3 kids in music: a 10<sup>th</sup> grader, an 8<sup>th</sup> grader, and a 6<sup>th</sup> grader who did not get her first choice of orchestra. She is glad she has a channel to raise this matter.

**Suzie:** RMS orchestra liaison. She has triplets in 8<sup>th</sup> grade in Chamber orchestra and band. They started because a former student encouraged them. She was motivated to join SMB by the music trips and tours. She also loves the music directors.

**Ramya:** Parliamentarian. She loves SMB since it is the only board that listens when she speaks 😊. She joined the SMB board before her kids were in the music program. Ramya has 2 kids in music: one in 8<sup>th</sup> grade band, another in 5<sup>th</sup> grade learning new instruments.

**Jean:** 2 students in music. Freshman band and 7<sup>th</sup> grader in orchestra. She heard about international trip cancellation and wanted to speak to the people here to learn more about it.

**Tista:** Co-VP donations. She has a 7<sup>th</sup> grader, 9<sup>th</sup> grader and senior in the music program. She finds the music program fabulous and wants to contribute to it. Also, Mrudula got her into SMB.

**Sean Clark:** SHS music director: band and percussion Sean finds it inspiring to be around the SMB community and how supportive it is.

**Vrinda:** Percussion liaison. Her son is a junior in percussion and band. She is excited to be a part of this gang.

**Michael:** SHS orchestra director. This is Michael's 27<sup>th</sup> year teaching music at Saratoga High. He loves the school community and working with high school kids. He finds the SMB board phenomenal for 26 years straight. He is grateful to the SMB for giving the students opportunities to fulfill their dreams.

**Oliver:** Student webmaster, who manages the SMB website and web store. Oliver joined the SMB since he wanted something to do.

**Dhanesh:** Parent member with an 11<sup>th</sup> grader. He appreciated how well the music events are conducted.

**Bharti:** Co-recording secretary. Bharti has a 9<sup>th</sup> grader in Marching Band and another in 1<sup>st</sup> grade at Argonaut who loves to sing. She loves the SMB community and the music programs.

**Nisha:** Co-recording secretary/ Pancake Breakfast Co-chair. Nisha has a Senior in the SHS orchestra. Nisha loves the music program for how it has helped her son grow as a person and appreciates the music directors for their positive influence on the students. She loves how selfless everyone is in the SMB community, both the music directors and the parent volunteers.

**Beth Nitzan:** SHS music director: Choir, Philharmonic Orchestra and AP music theory. Beth started at SHS during the pandemic teaching online classes and finds that this is a great place to be. Beth grew up down the road in Palo Alto. Beth finds SMB and the music community very unique and very supportive.

**Isabel McPherson:** RMS orchestra director and 5<sup>th</sup> grade instrumental music. **Isabel** is in her 7<sup>th</sup> year teaching in the Saratoga schools and is amazed that the 6<sup>th</sup> graders she taught are seniors now. She is herself an alum of the Saratoga music program. Her mom was part of the music boosters, and she ran cookie dough fundraising. She is thankful to SMB for all the support.

**Jon Jow:** RMS music director. This is his 19<sup>th</sup> year as a teacher. Jon loves that SMB supported the music program and provided opportunities when he was a student in the district. He is among adults who are unconditionally supportive, with deeply involved parents. The students see this and get to bond with their parents in this manner, which pays dividends much later.

**Jason Shiuan:** Performing Arts department chair and SHS band director. This is his 9<sup>th</sup> year here as a nonstudent at SHS. Jason echoes everything his colleagues mentioned. He finds all the parents and community members great role models for our students. Students see their parents involved in the community and giving back through volunteer work and it inspires them to contribute in their way. He loves that the parents work hard and party hard too.

## June 2024 Meeting Minutes Approval

(presented by Alicia de Fuentes)

**Alicia:** Now I know why SMB is what it is. To hear each of them say what brings you here means a lot. Let us approve the meeting minutes from June. Are there any questions or comments about June's meeting minutes? If not, may we have a motion to approve them?

**Ramya** makes the motion to approve the minutes, seconded by **Vrinda**. May the record show that the motion passed unanimously.

## June 2024 Financials

(Presented by Sneha Melkote)

We need to fix some numbers to close the books from last academic year (2023-24). We need to move some highlighted areas around to make sense of the final numbers. I need 2 more days to do this with the previous year's treasurer, Rev. There is enough funds in the bank between BofA, Comerica and Schwab accounts to manage the SMB business. We are in a good financial position to start this year. We need to get all the numbers to match by going through financial statements. We will start by closing last year's books and creating a budget for the new year.

**Josh:** Question on health. We incurred expenses of \$1.5M last budget year. Our revenue was only \$1.3 M. How do we address that? How do we reconcile it?

**Alicia:** Last year there were wish lists from the music directors. The funds to fulfill them come from outside of donations. Every year we must account for them. They include items such as instruments for students that we invest in. Much of the \$200k in difference went for instruments such as: a new harp, cellos, cello cases, elementary school instruments. Every kid in elementary school needs an instrument and SMB covered that. We also offered grants for students to travel and perform. If we do the sum of all such purchases, you will get this amount.

**Josh:** Is there an ancillary account for this amt? Where is this coming from?

**Richard:** In May of last year, we had a meeting with Dave, our outgoing president. His advice to us was that we have more reserves than we need in our balance sheet. We were overfunded and he recommended that we use some of these funds to fulfill some of the needs of the music program.

**Josh:** We funded it from our reserves. How much is left? Are we at 0?

**Alicia:** We will get this info and present it at the next meeting.

**Sneha:** Balance sheet needs to be corrected to match the cash flow, before we can close the books and present it to the board.

**Alicia:** Are we ok to postpone the review of last year's financials and only approve the transaction list at this meeting?

**Richard:** That is fine.

**Sneha:** Should I present by email or at the next meeting?

**Alicia:** Can we please review it at the next meeting?

**Sneha:** ok.

**Alicia:** I would like to update the board that I went to Comerica and BofA with the Co-VPs of donations (Mrudula and Tista) and the new SMB treasurer (Sneha). We signed the paperwork to confirm the check signers for the accounts at both the banks for this fiscal year. We have yet to update our account with Charles Schwab, which we will be doing soon.

**Sneha:** I figured out why we are missing checks 1161, 1163 in our transaction list. We issued them this fiscal year and therefore did not include them in the remaining transaction list from last year for approval. We will present them next month when we approve this month's transactions.

## Approval of June-July transactions

**Alicia:** To explain to the new members: SMB had business to conduct during the previous months and checks were remitted to make payments. These transactions must be approved by the board. We also ensure that there are no missing checks. I circulated the transaction list in my email which hopefully everyone went through. The check numbers are 1135-1160, 1162 and 1164-1165. We are missing checks 1161 and 1163.

**Sneha:** Why are these checks missing? Have they been voided?

**Alicia:** We will look into these missing checks and update the board at the next meeting. We can go ahead and approve the valid transactions that have been submitted. If there are no more questions, may I request a motion to approve transactions 1135-1160, 1162 and 1164-1165?

**Vrinda** makes the motion to approve the June-July transactions 1135-1160, 1162 and 1164-1165, seconded by **Ramya**. May the record show that the motion passed unanimously.

## Update on e-vote to approve music budgets.

(Presented by Nisha Hebbalae)

We conducted an e-vote to approve the following program budgets for the academic year 2024-25:

- SHS Percussion [Midwest Clinic](#) Trip Budget
- SHS Orchestra [ASTA National Orchestra Festival](#) Trip Budget
- SHS Music Program Budget which includes budgets for Marching Band, Concert Band, Jazz Bands, Orchestra, Choir, Winter Guard and Winter Percussion.

Thank you everyone for participating in the e-vote. Here are the results:

NAME	VOTE (HIDDEN)
Vrinda Gopal	Made the motion (YES)
Beryl Liu	Seconded (YES)
Chris Schilling	
Thea Widmer	
Josh Rupert	
Sneha Melkote (E)	
Alicia de Fuentes (E)	
Tista Kapoor (E)	
Nisha Hebbalae (E)	
Connor Yi	
Suzie Kim	
Richard Aochi	

Ramya Vasu (E)	
<b>Total number of votes</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>Number of Executive Board members to vote YES</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Number of YES votes</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>Number of NO votes</b>	<b>0</b>

Please find the approved budgets document at [2425 SHS Music Budgets as of 7.3.24.xlsx](#)

## Parliamentarian Update

(Presented by Ramya Vasu)

In May, I proposed updates to our [bylaws](#). I reworded the changes following the feedback at the May meeting. Here is the wording of the two sections after my updates.

### **Section D:**

*Saratoga Music Booster or its members in their official capacities shall not, directly or indirectly, participate or intervene (in any way, including the publishing or distributing of statements) in any political campaign. Consequently, a written or oral endorsement of a candidate is not allowed.*

### **Section F:**

*The authorized check signers must not be related by blood or marriage, reside in the same household, or hold an employer-employee relationship, as the authorized signers for the Booster's financial accounts.*

**Alicia:** If we have no questions or comments, may I request a motion to approve the changes to the two sections in the SMB bylaws?

**Suzie** makes the motion to approve the changes to the two sections in the SMB bylaws, seconded by **Vrinda**. May the record show that the motion passed unanimously.

## Music Directors' Reports

### Jason Shiuan

We held band camp last week. Thank you to the parents who fed our students, got the uniforms ready and volunteered in other ways. Excited for the new season. The highlight of this season is a performance in SoCal at the SoFi stadium, one of the newest NFL stadiums. Everyone liked the show we are planning to present there. We have picked music from Queen, Aretha Franklin, Seal and a few others. This is in a new direction from our usual performances, and we hope everyone enjoys it as much as we do.

**Josh:** Is this a competition?

**Jason:** It is a competition too. Most schools that are performing are from SoCal. SoCal band culture is very competitive, so it is great that we get to perform there. It will be great fun to bring our students there. The event is on the first Monday in November. We leave from here on Sunday, spend some time in SoCal and drive back on Tuesday.

**Alicia:** What is the theme for the show?

**Jason:** The theme is music royalty, and we have selected music from performers such as the band Queen and the Queen of soul, and also depicts the journey of a rock star. We have named our show “The Show Must Go On”. Mr. Clark is the mastermind. Last year, as we were walking from the awards ceremony, he came up with this theme and by the time we walked from the coach to the school, he had the whole thing ready.

**Michael:** I was jumping up and down, so exciting.

**Jason:** Today was our first day of school. Our band students have met for a week, so not technically a brand-new year for them, it does not feel like the first day, which is great for the new students.

## Beth Nitzan

We had an awesome first day. We also had Choir events over summer. Students put on a workshop and invited other students for a weekend of music. The Honor choir audition boot camp was last week. Students are going to the Regional Honors Choir and to the All-State Choir. Chamber choir has great energy. Great to see everyone back. We have a busy year ahead. We are planning a SoCal trip in April. Getting details together. Soon I will have info and budgets for the board to approve. We have not yet announced this to the students, keeping this a surprise for them.

**Josh:** Any updates on RMS after school choir?

**Beth:** We have not got the OK to host it from the school board. We cannot do it at RMS after school. I need to talk to Principal Louie about holding it at the high school. I have not received a clear answer yet, I will be following up on it.

## Sean Clark

We are working on designing our percussion show and making it come to life. Talking to designers. I got to catch the tail end of band camp last week. This week we had our first music ensemble. We will be learning new drills on Saturday. We are planning for the percussion ensemble trip to the [Midwest Clinic](#) in Chicago this December. We got the commissions today. We spent our time today repairing some instruments such as chimes and cleaning up the room.

## Michael Boitz

Our fall field show production is written and designed in house, which is unusual for any school. Mr. Shiuan is arranging the wind book part of the show. Mr. Clark came up with a concert for which he is writing the battery percussion part. Russell Crowe is part of that too. Every show is written for the kids.

It has been fun getting to hear from high school kids. Sean’s percussion students had a great summer as part of the [Blue Devils B corps](#). Also, many of our students participated in the [Aspen music festival](#), [Tanglewood music festival](#), just to name a few, over summer. We are in the heart of Silicon Valley and the birthplace of technology. We also see the love and passion kids have for music and performing arts. Our school provides a great outlet to exercise both sides of the brain.

The SHS Orchestra got selected to participate at the [ASTA National Orchestra Festival](#) in Atlanta in March 2025. The Atlanta area has phenomenal music programs, and we are grateful to be selected. Our plan is to bring every SHS orchestra student to the festival. One group is part of our competitive ensemble. Another group will perform for ratings with the national panel of judges, similar to CMEA festival.

## Isabel McPherson

I was at SHS band camp. It was a fun experience. RMS has 200 kids in the orchestra this year. We are hoping the number goes up. We will see what happens with kids who did not get their first choice for elective. The kids will have to make an elective change request. We are not sure how the school will handle those requests.

**Alicia:** My recommendation is for the parents to write to Moira to Principal Hamm.

**Ramya:** I am going to email Moira and cc Principal Hamm. My daughter's friend called her and said she failed the orchestra audition because she did not get in. That is so disheartening for the kids.

**Isabel:** I am worried kids think they are not good enough, which is why they did not get in.

**Ramya:** You are telling tweens and teens that they are a failure because they did not get in.

**Alicia:** Principal Hamm said that the results would be made public after. I told him that the school cannot withhold results from students. He must disclose the results.

**Isabel:** Over summer I emailed them a draft I wrote and asked them if I could send it to our students. I did not receive a response.

**Alicia:** I will follow up with them on this.

**Isabel:** There is nothing we can do directly. We can only advise them to request a change.

**Joyce:** I started a poll today at 6:30pm, of parents whose kids did not get their music elective choice. 5 band students did not get in. 8 orchestra students did not get in and 3 choir students did not.

**Suzie:** Results will be made public and transparent to students. He agreed to oversee this. I took notes from our meeting with him, and I can forward them to you again.

**Alicia:** It will be good for parents to push first, and SMB will support them.

**Ramya:** This is a consistent prob every year. It is not right that students are denied like this.

**Joyce:** Recommendation is for parents to first write to Principal Hamm and copy Moira. I will share it with the parents.

**Ramya:** I will email them as a concerned parent. It affects my daughter.

**Isabel:** 700 students in school. The Superintendent said the enrollment did not decline this year.

**Ramya:** We have many new 8th graders in the district.

**Isabel:** We want every kid who wants to take music to be able to do it.

**Joyce:** Thank you for accepting all students who want to learn music.

**Isabel:** All the things we have done to expand access to students by music by moving the programs to the school day and that is getting undermined by this. They have to know parents are also concerned.

**Isabel:** We have some instrument needs in the orchestra. Jon also has a wish list.

**Alicia:** When you have a list please circulate it to the board.

**Isabel:** I have a price quote for 2 violas and 3 cellos. The expected cost is \$5500. Also looking at some bases. Another 6-7k of expected cost.

**Josh:** Do we purchase them from a local vendor?

**Isabel:** I started working with Sonar strings in Mountain View. I have worked with a national vendor. If the cost is comparable, I would like us to support the local business. I reached out to my contact for base, but they have not got back to me yet.

**Josh:** Are we ordering new instruments at SHS too?

**Isabel:** I asked Mrs. Hasegawa.

**Michael:** We should be in good shape at SHS.

**Suzie:** RMS sent an email asking for a donation of \$50 to support the music program. What was that about?

**Isabel:** This is the amount we request to loan the student an instrument. I was not consulted on this email. This will create confusion since this is not an expected donation from everyone and will conflict with the SMB donation request that will come later. I have this email and will follow up to correct the confusion.

## Jon Jow

- Looking forward to another year! We once again have 13 sections of music this school year at Redwood.
- The Disney trip was proposed to the school board in June and (assumedly) approved. We're hoping to tie in a donation campaign with this trip at the same time as program contribution donations to help maximize participation.
- Additionally, we're looking into the possibility of a field trip for our Intermediate Band and Intermediate Orchestra students. Stay tuned!

We have 200 kids in the RMS orchestra this year. We don't have enough chairs for all of them. These are ensemble posture chairs, not the usual classroom chairs. I sent an email to the RMS office staff asking the



district to provide the chairs. If they cannot do that, I would like to present this as a wish list item to SMB to get 20 ensemble posture chairs. The price quote for 20 chairs is \$ 3,330.68.

**Ramya:** I want to hear from the school district why they will not purchase this.

**Isabel:** I asked last year. They said that we can use the other classroom chairs. I had to explain why we need posture chairs for musicians. In the end, we made it work somehow.

**Ramya:** Let's see what the district says.

**Suzie:** Will the quote you have given us consider students who will change their elective to get into the music program?

**Isabel:** We have planned for that.

**Jon:** It takes 5 weeks for the chairs to arrive. So, the sooner we get the approval the sooner we can order them, and our students will have the correct chairs for musicians.

**Alicia:** If the district says no, we will move forward with an e-vote to approve the wish-list. We want to do right by our kids. I have a feeling it will pass. If it does not, we will support you here at SMB.

**Jon:** It is more than a chair; it is an essential piece of music equipment.

**Ramya:** The district does support age-appropriate furniture for other purposes. So, they can support this.

**Alicia:** Do you want to talk about updates to the 2024-25 RMS budget?

**Jon:** We updated our budget for RMS band sectionals and orchestra. We took the enrollment numbers from PowerSchool yesterday to get a better idea for suggested donation.

For our Band Sectionals, enrollment is at 209 students, with a suggested per student donation of \$385.

For our Orchestra, enrollment is at 200 students, with suggested per student donation of \$330.

Most of the funds pay for clinicians, who work more closely with our students.

I am waiting to hear from Mr. Ramirez about the RMS Choir numbers. I am also waiting for information from our Color Guard instructors on enrollment numbers.

**Alicia:** I will remind Mr. Ramirez that he is always invited to this meeting.

**Jon:** For RMS Percussion we are going to work with Mr. Clark.

**Ramya:** I have heard from a couple of students who did beginner Percussion last year and they did not get it as an elective this year.

**Sean:** Is Beginner Percussion a class offered at RMS?

**Ramya:** It is an elective.

**Sean:** We hired a percussion instructor. I am pushing an after-school program for winter percussion. Hopefully those students can get into that one.

**Isabel:** Families can reach out and let us know if they don't get a music elective they applied for, but we cannot do anything about it.

**Ramya:** I told them to email the counselor and the RMS principal first.

## SMB 50th anniversary Gala Update

(presented by Alicia de Fuentes)

**Alicia:** For those of you who don't know, it is a celebration of 50 years of SMB. Sep 21<sup>st</sup>, Saturday 6pm to 9pm. This is the menu that we have.



we are passionate about food!

[www.hautecuisinecatering.net](http://www.hautecuisinecatering.net) | 550 E. Remington Drive, Sunnyvale CA 94087 | 408-685-2058 | [info@hautecuisinecatering.net](mailto:info@hautecuisinecatering.net)

## SAMPLE BUFFET MENU (NO NUTS)

### Beverages

All beverages by venue, served by venue's bartenders  
Ice by venue

### Placed Hors D'oeuvres

#### Deluxe Charcuterie Board

A selection of cured meats, sausages, domestic and imported cheeses, assorted fresh and dried fruit, **nuts**, apricot preserves, Dijon mustard, olives, fresh baguette, assorted gourmet crackers and artisan breads

#### Mushroom Tartlets

#### Caprese Skewers

cherry tomatoes, mozzarella, basil, balsamic glaze

### Salad

#### Haute Cuisine Special (can be vegan)

baby lettuce, roasted pear, pomegranate, dried cranberries, **toasted pecans**  
goat cheese and lemon-thyme vinaigrette on the side

### Entrées & Sides

#### Chicken Carciofi alla Romana

sun-dried tomatoes, artichokes, bell peppers, onion, garlic, parsley in a white wine sauce

#### Braised Tri-Tip with Thyme & Pearl Onions

slowly cooked with spices, vegetables & au jus reduction

#### Spanish Vegetarian Saffron Paella (vegan)

artichoke hearts, zucchini, peas, tomatoes

#### Roasted Potatoes with Thyme and Paprika

#### Assorted Seasonal Grilled Vegetables

### Dessert

#### Assorted Dessert Bites

cream puffs, lemon bars, brownies

cheesecake bites: cappuccino, chocolate truffle, raspberry, lemon blueberry

Les Tarts Passion (coated on all sides in milk chocolate):

lemon, pear chocolate, apple vanilla, chocolate praline

#### Assorted Seasonal Fruit & Berry Display

**Nisha:** Since this is a fundraiser, can this be considered a donation?

**Alicia:** No, and I am glad you asked that. When we invite staff/community members, that is considered a donation. Also, if you donate to the event itself then it is a donation too. Donations may be corporate matched.

Event is at Club Sportiva, San Jose.

Ticket price for Early Bird Pricing: Adult \$180, Youth \$170

**Alicia:** Publicity is planning a documentary piece interviewing former and current SMB members.

**Beryl:** Possible to have the music program 3 weeks ahead of the gala?

**Shiuan:** We will try our best, that's the end of this month.

**Alicia:** Do we need background music? Do we need a DJ?

**Shiuan:** We can just play some background music when we are not performing.

**Oliver:** We have 2 pages on the website – do you want anything about this to go on those pages? I recommend extending the early bird date, there's not a lot of sale right now.

**Alicia:** Can I talk about this during Informance?

**Michael:** Yes, you can. That's on Aug 24.

**Alicia:** We should extend the deadline until the end of August, to give people some time to think about it.

**Ramya:** What's the dress code?

**Alicia:** It is formal.

## Google Workspace update

(presented by Oliver Su and Joshua Zhang)

**Alicia:** Over the summer, our dear team Oliver and Joshua, finally set up the Google workspace. Something that Ramya has been pushing for. And when Ramya pushes, we listen, we listen, there's NO other way 😊.

**Ramya:** And behind me was Vidya because she was the one who started it.

**Alicia:** Thank you, Oliver and Joshua, for taking the time to do this. Could you please give us what you've done, what it implies for us. What we need to do to start working on the workspace.

**Oliver:** I think Josh sent you a slideshow.

**Alicia:** One second, let me see. Oh, here it is.

### [8.13.24 SMB Google Workspace Update](#)

**Alicia:** Are you ready to go?

**Oliver:** Yes. Okay, so like as Alicia said, over the summer we set up Google Workspace. We got all the accounts running. We worked with Google's team and set everything up. There are some things that I wanted, and we both [Josh and I] want to discuss about how we are going to utilize Workspace.

We talked a little bit about this in the June meeting. If you can go two slides over, their initial proposal was to set up personal accounts for everyone. But when we did that, not a lot of people activated their accounts. So, we are now thinking whether we really need personal accounts for everyone. One proposal is for all the executives to have their own accounts, and that's it.

And then we will have separate accounts as and when needed - just like right now we are using a Gala account [gala@saratogamusicboosters.org](mailto:gala@saratogamusicboosters.org). We will have one for donations, one for the web master, and one for financial. And also, one account for parents to reach us, so we don't get those mixed up with the personal emails. So, do we want to have individual accounts for everyone plus those forward-facing accounts, or just the forward-facing ones?

**Alicia:** For example, Donations team - do you want to have an account that goes directly to you, or do you want to have an account that's exclusively for donations? If you want to think about it, that's fine. How do you see yourself using Google Workspace? It is the same as using your personal desktop, except you are sharing the account with the community, and the account is in the Workspace. We will have a common drive; it will help with the reporting.

**Oliver:** Right now, there is the [donationssmb@gmail.com](mailto:donationssmb@gmail.com) account. We have already started migrating all our webmaster stuff over to the shared account. I was wondering if you guys wanted to do the same thing and have your own [donations@saratogamusicboosters.org](mailto:donations@saratogamusicboosters.org). It would make the handoff easier as well - just share the credentials/password with whoever is coming in next as the donations team.

Do you want to start the process of the transfer?

**Tista:** We will talk it over and send you an email.

**Nisha:** Going forward, can we use that account?

**Alicia:** Yes, you can.

**Nisha:** We are fine with using the shared secretaries' account.

**Oliver:** Just send us an email, we will set it up for you.

**Ramya:** Does this apply only to the executive board positions, or do we want other email addresses? I am just bringing it up because now we have a dedicated space.

**Nisha:** Are you thinking of the cookie dough fundraiser, pancake fundraiser, and so on?

**Ramya:** Yes, for pancake breakfast we would need a separate account. We would even have like a pancake breakfast treasurer account, that sort of thing. But I am also thinking of Redwood Middle liaison, or band liaison - do we want to have accounts for these positions? I am just throwing it out there to see what you think.

**Oliver:** There is no limit to what accounts we can create.

**Alicia:** It depends on how the liaisons see themselves using a common account. Sometimes you get lost in the name and sometimes you want your personal connection. It is something to think about.

I think that liaisons have been communicating through WhatsApp. That's what I feel.

**Vrinda:** Yes, we don't use email that much, we mostly communicate through WhatsApp.

**Richard:** On the flip side, would it be useful if you had an email trail of your predecessors, that you would look and refer to?

**Alicia:** Ah yes, I see how that will be useful.

**Oliver:** We could continue to use our personal email for internal stuff. Anything that is public-facing, you know for parents for instance, if I am a parent and I want to contact donations - it is good to have the front-facing account.

**Alicia:** Yes, for the executive positions for sure.

**Oliver:** We can have an email for donations, and then you can reply from your own email too. So it will be like a group, you know what I am saying? Two accounts under one email, that's what I mean.

Josh is not here, so we will keep going. Josh has been working on a bunch of other proposals. He said that teams have their own team accounts - the group account I was talking about. And then we have the shared drive - it is a lot easier to share documents between users.

We have an SMB calendar that we can migrate over to our SMB Workspace account.

**Alicia:** SHS directors will need accounts.

**Oliver:** Yes, we can set that up separately.

**Ramya:** But even if you have directors' email created, they don't even have to log into that. You can just have an email forward setup as a placeholder. Not to add too much work for them.

**Alicia:** Good to see you Joshua, thank you very much for working on this over the summer.

**Joshua:** We've already set up Workspace, we just have to get everyone on board and do the migrations. I have also communicated with members of the Publicity team. I think Beryl you are part of it. You probably saw my email with some suggestions. We can follow up offline on those suggestions.

**Alicia:** Just one comment. When Joshua says getting everybody on board, it means that when you guys communicate with them saying I want to have the account set up this way, they create something and you will get a link to accept it, which is time bound. So, when you are ready to onboard, I suggest that you work together with Joshua or Oliver and click the ready to receive link that lets you do that.

**Joshua:** This is a proposal - I have talked to Alicia a little bit about this. What I am suggesting is that the board members have their own accounts. You can have a distribution list, like a group. Basically, it allows us to communicate easily for SMB related stuff. Like for me, personally, I prefer an SMB account for my IT stuff because in my personal account I have a lot of other things and sometimes the email for SMB might get mixed in there.

Additional accounts can be created for volunteers or other leads, or for any other purposes we need just feel free to let me know.

And then we have shared drives. I highly recommend it for individual teams and committees for storing and collaborating files. We have a total storage of 100 TB, which should be plenty for a very long time. It is a good place for archiving old documents.

Google calendar - this is something that should be easy to migrate and change the ownership to SMB.

Also, I would like to volunteer to help as an IT administrator. This includes any support needed, such as password reset or something like that. I am happy to continue helping as much as I can with this throughout the years.

Next, I will give an overview of the different tools that are available.

> Google Analytics, or GA for short is one of them. We are currently on the 4th version.

> There is also Google Tag Manager, or GTM. This is for tagging the website so that we can collect data.

> Google Analytics is a web analytics tool that is widely used in the industry. My former company Sony used it. So, I have touched a little bit on that part when I was interning there.

We have some advanced features compared to Weebly. You can do things that Weebly cannot - Weebly does their own analytics too, but there are things that Google Analytics does better. I suggest putting up a privacy policy and cookie consent banner on the website, especially if we use the Analytics tool since it collects usage data. We can try using Analytics, but if we do not want to do that, then it is totally fine. It may help with Marketing or understanding stuff on the website.

**Oliver:** Use case for Analytics is that allows us to see what pages people are visiting, so the publicity team wants to know that. They want to know if a certain page is gaining traction, Analytics helps with this kind of data. Are people looking at certain pages?

The downside would be that this requires uploading cookies to people's computers. It is kind of a privacy issue. But the upside is that we can see what pages people are going to, and we can use this to our advantage.

**Nisha:** Speaking of privacy, what information are we exactly going to collect?

**Joshua:** The information is basically like - how many people have viewed a certain page? What is the geographic location? It does not give you the exact address where someone's house is but tells you a rough location - like San Jose or Chicago or somewhere like that. The kind of data that is generally useful for marketing. It is very common for websites to do this. For this, we can set up a privacy policy. We did this at my previous company. People can choose what type of data they want to allow to be collected. They can also choose to decline any data collection. This gives us protection; if we give people the choice to select what is collected.

**Nisha:** And how will we determine the consent? Will the board approve what we collect?

**Joshua:** Yes, everything will go via the board.

**Nisha:** Every field that we collect will have to be approved by the board.

**Joshua:** Yes, absolutely.

There's a couple of other slides. There is a Search Console, which I feel will be helpful for us. From the board's perspective, it is a good way to get some insight into what people are searching for.

**Oliver:** I am thinking that this would be useful for publicity if they want to start bumping up our index on google search engine.

The question is, is this necessary? As a music organization, we really don't know if we want this.

**Joshua:** This one is pretty broad; it is just a lot of different marketing products. Again, these are more specifically for the publicity team to evaluate and decide whether they are required or not.

**Oliver:** The Google Marketing platform can be used to run advertisements - for example Pancake breakfast ads, or for running ads for the Gala.

**Joshua:** I would also like to add that Google Ads gives non-profits a certain amount of credit, like \$500. We can use that to our advantage for these events.

**Oliver:** Next slide please. So, there's already some privacy risk with Google Workspace. As a big company, there is always some amount of risk. But everything we are proposing right now is part of one section of Google Workspace.

The other section we talked about accounts is separate. Joshua has a lot more knowledge about that than me. So, any questions on privacy risks, you can reach out to him.

**Alicia:** When I share this information with the team, I will also share Joshua's contact information.

**Joshua:** I will do my best to answer any questions, but if I do not know something then I can reach out to my contacts that work at Google who might be able to provide the answers.

There is another tool we want to talk about. This is completely separate from Google - earlier tools that we talked about were just within our Google accounts. Google offers all these services and tools for free, at least for the most part. For TechSoup, this is another website that gives non-profits free or discounted options to use Adobe and QuickBooks. I know some of you use QuickBooks for your accounting and finance stuff. We currently do not have a profile, if we want to pursue this, I can look into it.

**Oliver:** Adobe is really good for publicity, for making posters and stuff like that. If you want to edit videos, you can do that in Premiere. So, Adobe is really good for just content creation for publicity. There is also Adobe Rush, which you can use to make Instagram reels or Instagram posts.

**Alicia:** Thank you for doing all this, this is a wonderful step in the right direction. What I would say, without wanting to overstep my peers - my initial thought is that everything has to progressively go in a certain direction. Our immediate goal is to get everyone on board with their accounts and start using the Workspace for basic stuff. As we get more experienced, we get an understanding of what we can do, we can explore the other tools.

What I do not want to happen is what I see in my garage. I have a display of tools which no one uses 😊. If my husband is here, he will know I am talking about him 😊. So, what I would ask everybody who is going to be looking at this is - please get comfortable with using the Workspace. But then, honestly ask yourselves - will I use the tool? Will I use it this year, am I ready to start using it this year? Just to have because we can have, doesn't make sense. To have it because we need it makes sense.

**Ramya:** We should also continue to use the tools we are using currently. For example, Pro Canva is currently used. If Joshua and Oliver can see how they can connect these tools and get that set up. It will be good to first look at what we are using. The answer may be no, they cannot be connected. And then we can choose whether we want the new tool or not.

**Alicia:** Each team needs to evaluate what tools might be useful - for example, the recording team would want to look at the tool to use for recording of the minutes. That's why I ask - please look honestly and see what you need.

**Joshua:** Canva is actually pretty easy to set up, I can get the non-profit deal. If you want to pursue using that, which I would recommend, is a really easy tool to use. The application is really quick. I just put in my SMB email and then they verify if we are nonprofit, and they approve it.

**Alicia:** Okay, so the message is clear. This will be circulating. Look at your area and evaluate the tools.

**Bharti:** Are Hangouts and Meet available too?

**Oliver:** Yes, they are. If you have other suggestions, just send an email to [webmaster@saratogamusicboosters.org](mailto:webmaster@saratogamusicboosters.org). Our goal is to keep the cost as low as possible, because at the end of the day we are using parents' money here, right? So, we want to act in the parents' best interest. We do not want to be spending unnecessary money on stuff we don't need.

**Alicia:** Exactly, that's my nature as well. Any other comments or questions? Thank you, ladies and gentlemen.

## Discussion on District Sponsored International Travel

**Josh:** How often are you guys presented with international opportunities?

**Michael:** It is a long process; you need to start the process a couple of years in advance. We are looking at 2026, maybe 2027 at this point.

**Josh:** What's available in 2026?

**Michael:** We may be kicked out of Japan at this point. But we have a lot of other options. We cannot work on it unless the Superintendent gives the go-ahead.

**Alicia:** Yes, it is a lot of time to invest in, and later get denied. My daughter went on a non-school sponsored route. It is not the same.

**Josh:** Can we identify a few 2026 events that we like to apply for, and present it to the superintendent to decide? We cannot sit on this for another year.

**Michael:** Sure, I can send you a couple of options. We have many opportunities in Europe. We should do a separate meeting for it; it is a long discussion.

A lot of discussion took place and the following best captures the essence:

Many concerns were shared by the attendees, and we all agree that the pressure to ensure these trips happen should not be lifted otherwise this decades long opportunity will be lost due to the unwillingness of the district leadership to work collaboratively with music educators and SMB leadership.

## Summary of Motions

Approval of June SMB Meeting Minutes	Ramya moves, Vrinda seconds, motion carries.
Approval of transactions (1135-1160, 1162 and 1164-1165)	Vrinda moves, Ramya seconds, motion carries.
Approval of update to SMB by-laws	Suzie moves, Vrinda seconds, motion carries

The meeting adjourned at 9:21 pm.

## Addenda

### E-vote to approve SHS Choir Trip budget

Ms. Nitzan has planned a SoCal trip for SHS Choir students. The trip is planned for April 3-5, 2025. The budget needed to be approved in time to make the first deposit the first week of September. An e-vote was called on August 24. The proposed trip budget can be found at [Proposed Anaheim Budget - Google Sheets](#).

E-vote results:

NAME	VOTE (HIDDEN)
Vrinda Gopal	Made the motion (YES)
Joyce Koh-Fernandez	Seconded (YES)
Connor Yi	
Mrudula Prashant (E)	
Suzie Kim	
Beryl Liu	
Alicia de Fuentes (E)	
Sneha Melkote (E)	

<b>Tista Kapoor (E)</b>	
<b>Nisha Hebbalae (E)</b>	
<b>Total number of votes</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Number of Executive Board members to vote YES</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Number of YES votes</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Number of NO votes</b>	<b>0</b>

The April 2025 SHS choir SoCal trip budget was approved by the SMB board by a vote of 10-0 with 5 executive board members voting a YES.

## E-vote to approve SMB grant to purchase RMS musical instruments

There was a need to purchase additional musical instruments at RMS to ensure that every student enrolling in the orchestra program gets an assigned instrument. SUSD school district gave Ms. McPherson the go-ahead to purchase them. Ms. McPherson put forth a grant request for instruments to the sum of **\$18859.84** and presented the invoices from the stores Sono Strings and Kamimoto String Instruments as supporting documents.

The invoices to support the grant request can be found here:

[Est 146 from Jon Lee Violins Bows Corp 16488.pdf](#)

[Redwood Middle School 8-27-24.pdf](#)

An e-vote to approve the SMB grant to purchase additional musical instruments for Redwood Middle School was called on August 29 and the results reported on September 3.

E-vote results:

<b>NAME</b>	<b>VOTE (HIDDEN)</b>
<b>Ramya Vasu (E)</b>	<b>Made the motion (YES)</b>
<b>Joyce Koh-Fernandez</b>	<b>Seconded (YES)</b>
<b>Tista Kapoor (E)</b>	
<b>Alicia de Fuentes (E)</b>	
<b>Richard Aochi</b>	
<b>Sneha Melkote (E)</b>	
<b>Beryl Liu</b>	
<b>Suzie Kim</b>	
<b>Dongni Chen</b>	
<b>Mrudula Prashant (E)</b>	
<b>Dorothea Widmer</b>	
<b>Vrinda Gopal</b>	
<b>Nisha Hebbalae (E)</b>	
<b>Total number of votes</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>Number of Executive Board members to vote YES</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Number of YES votes</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>Number of NO votes</b>	<b>0</b>

The SMB grant to purchase additional musical instruments for Redwood Middle School was approved by the SMB board by a vote of **13-0** with **6** executive board members voting a YES.

Bharti Ramaswamy/ Nisha Hebbalae  
Co-Recording Secretaries