

PIEDMONT UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

M E M O R A N D U M

TO: Board of Education

FROM: Randall Booker, Superintendent

DATE: October 27, 2021

RE: Performing Arts Center Update - Cover Sheet

Despite a range of COVID-19-related disruptions, the District expects to complete the Performing Arts Center on schedule later this Fall. Nonetheless, as outlined in the attached update, there are extended pandemic-related delays in delivery of theatrical components that are essential for a fully-functioning theater. As a result, there are a range of unknowns about when the essential equipment will be fully assembled, delivered, installed, programmed, commissioned and ready for use. Given these unknowns, the District is not yet scheduling performances in the new Alan Harvey Theater.

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RE: Performing Arts Center Update

I. SUPPORT INFORMATION

Despite a range of COVID-19-related disruptions, the District expects to complete the Performing Arts Center on schedule later this Fall. Nonetheless, there are extended pandemic-related delays in delivery of theatrical components that are essential for a fully-functioning theater. As discussed below, there are a range of unknowns about when the essential equipment will be fully assembled, delivered, installed, programmed, commissioned and ready for use. Given these unknowns, the District is not yet scheduling performances in the new Alan Harvey Theater.

A. Delays in Theatrical Equipment

There are only a few vendors that produce theatrical rigging equipment in the United States. Rigging systems are attached to structural joists in the theater ceiling and must be custom designed and engineered for each theater. In California public schools, the Division of State Architect (DSA) reviews and approves the design and engineering of the entire rigging system, including each engineered component.

COVID-19 introduced a range of unknowns about the ability of suppliers to meet their obligations. The District's contractor, Overaa Construction, managed the uncertainty -- and minimized disruptions and delays -- with contingency planning and changes in staffing, suppliers and workflow. Overaa continually searched for alternative suppliers and subcontractors, often with remarkable success. In the case of the motorized theatrical rigging, there are simply no alternative suppliers. In April 2020, upon DSA approval of the designs, Overaa entered into a contract with Wenger, one of the few theatrical rigging vendors. Switching vendors now would mean switching to a different rigging system, which would mean redesign, reengineering, and review and approval by DSA at significant additional cost and even greater delay.

The Wenger rigging system for the new Alan Harvey Theater includes 13 battens with hoist motors. Once the motorized battens are configured and installed, more than 100 theatrical light fixtures will be attached to the battens along with the orchestra shell and the stage drapes. Wenger fabricated the hoist motors in Vietnam, and both fabrication and shipping were delayed

by COVID-19. The motors were due to be delivered to Wenger's manufacturing plant in Syracuse, New York six months ago, but the motors remain in transit with no confirmed delivery date.

When the motors arrive at the plant, Wenger will fabricate the motorized battens. Currently, Wenger can complete up to four battens per week, so the process will take four weeks. The battens, which will be between 40 and 60 feet in length, will be shipped to Piedmont in pieces on three tractor trailers. Shipping and delivery will take one week.

Once on site, Wenger crews will attach the battens to the theater ceiling using scissor lifts. Putting scissor lifts on a finished, sprung-floor stage would ruin the stage, so stage installation will occur after rigging installation. The rigging installation will take three weeks to complete, followed by two weeks of stage installation.

After the stage is installed, the crew will attach more than 100 theatrical lights to the battens. Each light must be individually adjusted, programmed, and tested to ensure that all features are fully operational and photometrically balanced. Also, the crew will attach the orchestra shell and stage drapes. Once this process is complete, Wenger will train District staff on the operation and maintenance of this equipment. This work will take three to four weeks to complete.

Given the large number of unknowns about when this essential theatrical equipment will be fabricated, installed, commissioned, and ready for use, the District is not scheduling performances in the new Alan Harvey Theater.

A further complicating factor is that some of the theatrical light fixtures specified and ordered for the new theater are no longer manufactured due to COVID-19. The District's design team had to respecify these fixtures, which are being made to order with long lead times.

Staff will continue to update the Board and community about progress toward completion of the new Alan Harvey Theater.

Architectural drawings of the rigging system and battens for the new Alan Harvey Theater follow:

B. Performing Arts Center Progress Photos

Overaa recently poured the slab in the Performing Arts Center lobby and the east driveway, and removed scaffolding from the south and west sides of the building, as seen in the following photos:















II. **RECOMMENDATION: Review**

Review the Performing Arts Center update.