

From the Office of the Principal

July 25, 2018

Dear Denver School of the Arts Families:

It is our priority to keep you up-to-date about events that impact our school and students. I want to inform you that our vocal music teachers will not be returning to Denver School of the Arts (DSA). Our team is working to ensure there are strong academic and social-emotional plans in place to support students as we go through this transition.

I know that there has been considerable discussion and concern, both privately and publicly, over the last several months about the vocal music department, and I have heard from many of you and heard many different viewpoints. Because of privacy concerns –both student privacy and teacher privacy, I am not in the position to go into further detail here. However, please do know my absolute commitment is to ensure the safety and dignity of all our students; that concerns that are raised will be looked into with care and integrity; and that our teachers are treated fairly and with respect.

My team has begun the search for an interim director of vocal music who will serve for the coming year. As we move forward, we will also be asking that our vocal music community weigh in on how to make the vocal music program the very best program it can be. Once we employ our interim director, we will hire a team of guest artists to assist with our vocal music students throughout the year.

This will be a year of rebuilding and visioning for our vocal music program. I recognize that changes in the program may be difficult for some, but with change comes the opportunity for growth. By September 15, our leadership team will be forming a committee of vocal music parents to provide input into any changes and visioning for this program. My team will send an email to those parents on how to become involved in this process by August 27.

Please know that we are making every effort to ensure this transition is as smooth as possible. Our value of Students First is guiding our work to ensure our students receive consistency and high-quality instruction.

Finally, I wanted to stress my commitment to strengthening our culture and community at Denver School of the Arts. I am proud of and grateful for so many of our strengths at DSA and look forward to our work together going forward. As part of this, we have hired a Dean of Culture/Students and are in the process of hiring a Parent/Family Liaison to begin when school starts. Additionally, during the month of September, we will be forming both a High School Parent Principal Advisory Committee and a Middle School Parent Principal Advisory committee. We will be creating these same committees for our students at both the high school and middle school level.

Please know that our goal is to ensure that our culture is strong and supports academic and artistic excellence. To this end, we are engaging a professional facilitator beginning this semester to guide a conversation with families, staff, students and our school leadership team. We want to work with you to find common ground as a community as we collaborate to unleash our students' extraordinary talent.

Please do not hesitate to contact me should you have any questions or concerns.

Sincerely,



William M. Kohut,
Principal, Denver School of the Arts