

Subject: Resolution No. 102-9A1

Re-Naming the San Francisco High School of the Arts for Ruth Asawa

- Commissioners Jill Wynn, Jane Kim, Hydra B. Mendoza, Sandra Lee Fewer, Kim-Shree Maufas, Rachel Norton, Norman Yee, and Student Delegates Andie Rose Crug and Tristan Leder

WHEREAS: Ruth Asawa Lanier is a world famous San Francisco artist who has had her work in many of the finest museums in the world including recent one-woman shows at the new de Young and Oakland Museums, and

WHEREAS: Ruth Asawa created the Alvarado Arts Workshop and established the “artists in the schools” model of public school arts education, a model that has become a benchmark for arts education in American schools, and

WHEREAS: Ruth Asawa’s six children and many grandchildren attended San Francisco Unified School District schools and she and her husband were involved SFUSD parents and grandparents for decades, and

WHEREAS: Ruth Asawa and her late husband, Albert Lanier, a renowned architect, attended and met at Black Mountain College in North Carolina during the 1940’s, after she was interned at an internment camp for Japanese-Americans during World War II. Their teachers included Buckminster Fuller, Willem De Kooning, Merce Cunningham, and Josef Albers, Ruth’s mentor. They incorporated the lessons of this personal form of arts education into their philosophy and creative work, and

WHEREAS: Ruth’s woven wire sculptures hang in the education tower of the new de Young Museum. Her fountains grace Ghirardelli Square and the Japantown pedestrian mall, as well as the San Francisco fountain on the steps of the plaza of the Grand Hyatt on Union Square, which was made with schoolchildren, friends and well-known San Franciscans. Her tied wire sculpture can be seen on the façade of the Oakland Museum, and

WHEREAS: Ruth Asawa was the first artist trustee of the Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco and has served on the San Francisco Arts Commission, the California Arts Council and the Educational Panel for the National Endowment for the Arts, and, of course, the Superintendent’s Task Force for the High School of the Arts, and was the first recipient of the San Francisco Mayor’s Art Award; and

WHEREAS: Ruth Asawa was the driving force behind the establishment of the San Francisco High School of the Arts, at McAttee High School in 1981, and

WHEREAS: After SOTA moved to Font Street in 1991, Ruth was the inspiration behind the development of the wonderful gardens at that site, a tradition that continues today after SOTA moved back to the McAttee campus as a stand-alone high school in 2002; and

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WHEREAS: Whether at the McAteer campus, or when Ruth's long-held dream of a move to 135 Van Ness Avenue that would establish the San Francisco High School of the Arts in the Civic Center, Ruth Asawa's legacy as the dreamer and creator of San Francisco arts education as a model for the nation and the world must be a permanent and integral component of the School of the Arts, and

WHEREAS: A process of involving and building community input in the renaming of the High School of the Arts has taken place.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED: That the Board of Education and Superintendent of Schools of the San Francisco Unified School District thank Ruth Asawa for her dedication to the school children of San Francisco and her loving work to make our city and our schools more beautiful and joyful learning environments, and

FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED: That the Board of Education, with the support of the SOTA community, re-names the San Francisco High School of the Arts the ***Ruth Asawa San Francisco School of the Arts, A Public School***, and recognizes that Ruth Asawa is a living treasure that we cherish for as long as she remains among us and will remember as long as the Ruth Asawa San Francisco High School of the Arts, and San Francisco, the city we all love and she has graced for over sixty years, remains; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED: That this resolution suspends the policy of the Board of Education to allow the naming of this school for a living person due to the notable attributes of Ruth Asawa and the Board of Education requests the Superintendent of Schools to appropriate all attendant cost involved in the renaming of the school.

2/9/10

2/23/10