



**CREATE CA**

*California's Statewide Arts Education Coalition*

# A Blueprint for Creative Schools

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A Report to State Superintendent of Public Instruction Tom Torlakson – 2015



# A Blueprint for Creative Schools

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# Executive Summary



## The Arts and Creativity

Why is a “creative” education important?

Creativity expert Sir Ken Robinson explains that creativity is a “disciplined process that requires skill, knowledge, and control...It’s a process, not a single event, and genuine creative processes involve critical thinking as well as imaginative insights and fresh ideas.”<sup>1</sup>

Clearly, the arts embody creativity, and they are taking a central role in many national studies, including reports from the Council on Foreign Relations, the U.S. Department of Education, and the National Endowment for the Arts. These studies emphasize “the importance of access to arts education, citing better grades, increased creativity, higher rates of college enrollment and graduation as well as higher aspirations and civic engagement.”<sup>2</sup>

As noted Stanford education professor Linda Darling-Hammond writes in her book, *The Flat World and Education*, “... the new mission of schools is to prepare students to work at jobs that do not yet exist, creating ideas and solutions for products and problems that have not yet been identified, using technologies that have not been invented.”<sup>3</sup>

We will not meet that mission unless all 6.2 million California students have access to a high-quality arts education. We also know the arts can be a key component of strategies to keep students in school, close the achievement gap, and give students the skills and experiences they need to live great and successful lives. Including the arts in the curricula

offers students more opportunities to discover their individual talents and find inspiration to ensure their own success and happiness.

## The Landscape

Arts education is vital to California’s robust, globally competitive, creative economy. Nevertheless, the inclusion of the arts—the disciplines of dance, music, theatre, and the visual arts—in the curricula has been eroding in our prekindergarten through grade 12 (preK–12) public schools. National trends over the last decade have emphasized skill mastery in English language arts and mathematics but have marginalized other subject areas, particularly the arts. California’s recent public education funding limitations have further exacerbated the state’s capacity to adequately support a creative education, although the new Local Control Funding Formula provides opportunities to restore programs in schools across the state.

Today, fiscal and policy realities are taking place within the context of California’s vibrant and rich arts centers, resources, communities, and creative



industries. Recent political and policy trends at the local, state, and national levels are focusing on the value of the arts as a central, educational component for all students. The arts are important for lifelong learning, the development of 21st century skills, and college and career readiness. They are a critical part of the foundational education everyone needs to fully engage in society.

Some California communities are responding to the need for arts education through local support, resulting in reinstated arts programs. Unfortunately, this approach relies heavily on community organizing and often extends inequities in access to arts education. Now is the time for the resurgence and expansion of arts instruction in California's public schools. Implementing a robust 21st century model of arts education will become the center for creative preK–12 education.

## The Arts Education Task Force and Its Report

In 2011, the California Department of Education (CDE) and the California Arts Council (CAC) received a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts to attend its Education Leaders Institute. The California delegation's leadership team returned from this highly focused meeting and set in motion a series of forums and ongoing conversations to advance an arts and creative education agenda, essential to meeting "The California Challenge," which reads..."Ensure each student reaches his or her full potential by broadening California's educational vision, policy, and practices to promote innovation, economic development, and creativity."<sup>4</sup> Subsequently, the CDE, the CAC, the California Alliance for Arts Education, the California County Superintendents Educational Services Association (CCSESA), and organizational partners formed the CREATE (Core Reforms Engaging Arts to Educate) CA reform movement, which views creative education as an essential part of the solution to the problems facing California schools.

To advance this effort, State Superintendent of Public Instruction Tom Torlakson appointed an Arts Education Task Force to draft recommendations for a new publication, *The Joint Arts Education Task Force Report: How the Arts and Creative Education Can Transform California's Classrooms*.<sup>5</sup> The task force's overarching goal was to reinstate the arts at the core of education for all students in California public schools. The group spent many hours identifying critical issues and making strategy recommendations about how we can make progress together, while remembering the context of the terrible financial emergency that California schools have faced during the past decade.

The task force's work is based on the belief that the state is within a key "window of opportunity" to broaden California's educational vision, policy, and practice to reverse the negative impact of narrow, test-driven educational policies. The group believes that implementing its recommendations can create a foundation to build and sustain public will to ensure that equitable access to high-quality arts education is a part of a more creative public school experience for every California student.

This report, *A Blueprint for Creative Schools*, provides a summary of the task force's full report, which has been streamlined and reorganized to clearly highlight the task force's important work. The *Blueprint* is divided into the following sections:

- > Supporting the Arts Curriculum
- > Enhancing Educator Quality, Preparation, and Professional Learning in the Arts
- > Producing High-Quality Arts Assessment, Research, and Evidence
- > Ensuring Equity and Access
- > Strengthening Collaborative Relationships
- > Expanding the Role of Business and Industry in the Creative Workforce
- > Providing Funding for the Arts

A copy of the complete 118-page report, *The Joint Arts Education Task Force Report: How the Arts and Creative Education Can Transform California's Classrooms*, is available at <http://blueprint.createca.net>.

# Supporting the Arts Curriculum

California schools are experiencing the effects of decades of underfunding for the arts, lack of arts preparation for elementary school teachers, and a decline in the statewide support for arts education. High-stakes testing has narrowed the curriculum, particularly in elementary schools. A generation of administrators who were not prepared with an arts education as K–12 students or in their teacher preparation programs has moved the arts to the outskirts of the educational landscape. The arts are further marginalized when the connections to success in college and career are not made explicit.

The over-arching goal of reinstating the arts at the core of education for all students in California public schools includes providing discipline-specific arts education as well as engaging the power of arts learning across the curriculum. Research supports the claim that arts education will result in students who are more creative, innovative, and ready to meet the challenges of the 21st century economy.<sup>6</sup>

## Visual and Performing Arts Standards and Curriculum

In the decade that has passed since the adoption of the *Visual and Performing Arts Content Standards for California Public Schools* in 2001 and the *Visual and Performing Arts Framework for California Public Schools* in 2004, extensive changes in education now call for a reexamination of the role of the arts in schools. In particular, the adoption since 2010 of new state standards (including the *Career Technical Education Model Curriculum Standards*, *California Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts* and *Mathematics*, *English Language Development Standards*, and *Next Generation Science Standards for California*

*Public Schools*);<sup>7</sup> the focus on 21st century skills; and the impact of technology provide an opportunity for the arts to be included at the center of teaching and learning, both as discrete areas of skill and knowledge and in cross-curricular inquiry. Similarly, new instructional materials will need to be developed for districts as they make local decisions.

### Recommendations

The California State Board of Education and the California Department of Education should create, adopt, and support a new model for visual and performing arts standards and curriculum for all public schools to do the following:

- Align California's current *Visual and Performing Arts Content Standards* with the *California Common Core State Standards: English Language Arts (ELA)* and *Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects*; *Common Core State Standards: Mathematics*; *Next Generation Science Standards*; *National Core Arts Standards*;<sup>8</sup>



*California English Language Development (ELD) Standards; and ELA/ELD Framework.*

- > Embed the “4 C’s: critical thinking, communication, collaboration, and creativity” into the new *California Visual and Performing Arts Content Standards*, adopted or adapted from the *National Coalition for Core Arts Standards*.
- > Create inquiry-based models that promote innovative uses of technology and reflect best practices in teaching creativity, critical thinking, collaboration, and communication.
- > Explicitly address the role of powerful arts education for English learners, students of color, low-income students, special needs students, and other disenfranchised student populations, including foster youth.
- > Incorporate strategies that enable arts processes to be taught to support multiple literacies across the curriculum.
- > Establish clear expectations for curriculum, pedagogy, and instruction in all arts disciplines for all preK–12 public schools.
- > Increase awareness of California *Education Code* Sections 51210 and 51220 that require discrete instruction in dance, music, theatre, and visual arts as part of the core curriculum and communicate existing requirements to districts.
- > Provide strategies that implement the arts through the academic content and performance standards adopted by the State Board of Education (including, but not limited to, the *Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts and Mathematics*, *Career Technical Education Model Curriculum Standards*, *California English Language*

*Development Standards, and Next Generation Science Standards*).

## Media Arts

Media arts are an important component of 21st century global culture and of California’s robust creative economy. Young people enter the educational setting familiar with a vast array of digital tools and are accustomed to a media-rich environment. The identification of media arts as a fifth arts discipline, with associated standards, curriculum, and supportive programming structures, will foster quality and sustainable instructional programs in the entire range of media arts forms.

Through largely non-physical and integrative forms of cinema, animation, sound, web, virtual, and interactive design, media arts present engaging learning opportunities for students in interdisciplinary projects. These projects can integrate the arts and other core content areas, and engage the entire community. For example, the production of a video game can incorporate visual art and storytelling, experiential and environmental design, sound production, physics concepts, computer programming, 3D modeling and motion graphics, aspects of sociology and psychology, and accounting and marketing. Media arts are uniquely beneficial in supporting education’s adaptations to changes in California’s economy and society, as well as the infusion of educational technology.

California’s career technical education (CTE) programs includes media literacy both as an essential component of “career-ready practice” and rigorous content standards for design, visual arts, and media arts within the Arts, Media, and Entertainment industry sector courses. CTE is an educational

content and delivery system designed to prepare students for ongoing education, long-term careers, citizenship, and entry into the workplace. CTE responds to the economy's needs with regard to both industry focus and skills that are taught. The *California Career Technical Education Model Curriculum Standards* blend rigorous academic content with industry-specific knowledge and skills.

Media arts instruction emphasizes not just technology skills, but also aesthetic sensibility, creativity, cultural context, and integration across all arts disciplines and content areas. Media arts instruction provides all students with access to technologically enhanced, arts-based learning experiences that are

engaging, rigorous, relevant, and creative. Through media arts, students' creative expression can connect ideas, people, and communities; create a bridge across multiple arts disciplines; and engage students in diverse academic content areas. Media arts enhance 21st century educational development by providing tools and strategies to create, communicate, collaborate, think critically, and engage multiple literacies in a project-based instructional environment. These competencies are essential in preparing students for a rapidly changing digital culture and a creative economy that values flexibility, technological competence, and innovation, in addition to traditional skills and knowledge.



## Recommendations

- > In collaboration with community and industry partners, and the California State Board of Education, create and support a 21st century vision for the media arts within the visual and performing arts curriculum—not only as a discrete, separate area of study, but also as a powerful tool for integration and cross-curricular teaching among all arts disciplines and other content areas.
- > Update and revise the state’s current *Visual and Performing Arts Standards*, aligning them to the *National Core Arts Standards*, which include media arts for statewide implementation.
- > Identify current models for media arts courses that fulfill A-G requirements for admission to the University of California.
- > Assist qualitative, coherent development of media arts as a discrete area of study by creating structural supports in courses, credentialing, and networked resources that promote equitable, sustainable, and integrative development in alignment with other arts, industry, global resources, educational technology, and CTE.

## Arts Integration

Arts integration is instruction “combining two or more content areas, when the arts constitute one or more of the areas.”<sup>9</sup> Lynne B. Silverstein and Sean Layne of the Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts define arts integration as “an approach to teaching in which students construct and demonstrate understanding through an art form. Students engage in a creative process that connects an art form and another subject area and meets evolving objectives in both.”<sup>10</sup>

Over the past decade, arts integration in grades preK–6 and cross-curricular teaching in grades 7–12 have evolved as a process for powerful learning across multiple content areas. Well-documented research has verified that integrating the arts has benefits both in and out of the classroom. The President’s Committee on the Arts and the Humanities advocates for developing arts integration, noting, “Studies have now documented significant links between arts integration models and academic and social outcomes for students, efficacy for teachers, and school-wide improvements in culture and climate. Arts integration is efficient, addressing a number of outcomes at the same time. Most important, the greatest gains in schools with arts integration are often seen school-wide and also with the most hard-to-reach and economically disadvantaged students.”<sup>11</sup>

## Recommendations

The California State Board of Education and the California Department of Education should define and support the practice of arts integration (grades K–6) and cross-curricular arts instruction (grades 7–12) as vital components in a comprehensive arts education and take the following steps:

- > Create a model standards-based arts integrated curriculum for grades preK–6.
- > Create a standards-based cross-curricular model for grades 7–12.
- > Develop program and district assessment instruments and systems that promote robust, quality implementation of arts integrated programs.
- > Affirm that teaching in and about the arts and through each art form is a

comprehensive curriculum. Each art form has valuable skills and knowledge for students to learn to be creative, critical thinkers. Quality arts integration that involves teaching curricula of both the arts and other core disciplines, such as math, social studies, and language arts, also supports student learning through creativity.

- > Clarify that arts integration represents all cross-disciplinary, arts-based curriculum, including instruction in the arts disciplines. While arts integration may include curriculum that ties content areas together, such as drawing instruction for a science journal, the arts disciplines should also be seen as a form of arts integration when they connect dance to history, or music to social studies.
- > In addition, schools and districts can do the following, which relate to career technical education:
  - Incorporate contextual teaching and learning in the Arts, Media, and Entertainment industry sector curriculum. Models such as service learning, career technical education, or inquiry-based learning link arts education with real-world challenges.
  - Provide students with real-world applications for their inventions and designs. This opportunity can be facilitated through the collaboration of schools with for-profit and nonprofit organizations.

## Culturally and Linguistically Responsive Curriculum

Attention to the quality of arts education for students in under-resourced communities is absolutely necessary. Instruction should be developmentally appropriate and provide teaching that helps students to think creatively and critically to develop a positive sense of identity and awareness of cultural roots and connections to others, and to analyze and interpret content and form. Quality arts education includes community building, open and supportive communication, collaboration, and relevancy as an acknowledgment that quality is multifaceted and incorporates the cultural standards students and families bring to the arts and learning.

An additional perspective on quality arts education must include an understanding of the role of culture. Culture is complex and includes multifaceted aspects of identity, such as age group, race, social class, gender, sexual orientation, and religion; and place, such as neighborhood, city, nation, and even the classroom. Thus, all students have culture as prior knowledge through which they interpret their experiences. Culturally and linguistically responsive arts education can help students to integrate, assess, critique, express, and transform their thinking and action.

Culturally and linguistically responsive arts education provides an approach to curriculum and instruction that is based on the cultural group's assets rather than on perceptions of deficiencies. Students learn that the arts already in their homes and communities are forms of cultural capital that they can offer and transform. Such student-centered arts education encourages engagement, ownership of learning,

and identity development, which can have a positive impact on the dropout rate of students.

Quality culturally and linguistically responsive arts education also should be intracultural and intercultural by exploring the connections between the arts from the students' cultures and those from other cultures.

### Recommendations

- > Promote the arts to teach and learn about self-knowledge, respect, self-respect, and empathy, as well as multicultural ways of knowing.
- > Include instruction on diversity grounded in the arts and use cultural knowledge to support young people's critical thinking and creative innovation, particularly those students who do not find the curriculum engaging.
- > Promote student voice as a primary focus of quality arts education. Adopt culturally and linguistically responsive arts education and arts integrated curricula that focus on positive identity development and ownership of learning as instructional goals. Support the cultural assets students bring to the classroom.
- > Build collaboration among classroom teachers, arts specialists, teaching artists (practicing professional artists with the complementary teaching skills), families, and community members. By incorporating local cultural expertise and leadership, the schools become an integral part of the community, which generates more resources for students in and out of school.
- > Strengthen communication between home and school cultures and increase family involvement by creating a welcoming school environment. Empower families, regardless of primary language, socioeconomic status, race, ethnicity, or educational background.

# Enhancing Educator Quality, Preparation, and Professional Learning in the Arts

California's educational workforce strives to meet the diverse needs of students in urban, suburban, and rural communities. To be responsive to the unique learning needs of all students, the state must address key barriers that exist in preparing high-quality teachers and administrators. The arts are a vital aspect of this preparation.

Research points directly to a critical tool that has the capacity to move the educational system firmly in the direction of high achievement for all students, effective and satisfied teachers in all schools, and engaged partners in support of education in every community—and that tool is high-quality arts education and arts integration in every classroom. When teachers are inspired, prepared, and supported (through job-embedded and sustained professional learning, adequate planning time, and administrative support) to teach and use the arts to support and inspire student learning and creativity, research shows that their students achieve higher levels of understanding, greater retention of material, and deeper capacity to compare and connect new ideas to prior knowledge.<sup>12</sup>

The process of building, nurturing, and sustaining creative schools requires administrators and teachers who embrace and are prepared for the work. Because many skills and “habits of mind” necessary for successful learning are uniquely developed in quality arts classrooms, administrator and teacher preparation programs must position themselves to meet the rigor and relevancy necessary to prepare

California's educational workforce so they can provide quality arts opportunities for all students.

As arts integration becomes a primary educational strategy in all classrooms, non-arts teachers must learn arts integrated content knowledge and related pedagogy. They must also be supported in implementing this new knowledge into their instructional design.

Arts partners in schools include the following educators and providers, and professional learning plans must recognize the differences among these groups:

- > Certified arts educators (credentialed single subject arts educators)
- > Certified non-arts educators (including generalist/multiple subject teachers and single subject teachers of non-arts subjects)
- > Providers of supplemental arts instruction (including qualified teaching artists, art interns, and after-school and community arts providers)

## Preparation of Quality Educators

The characteristics of quality practice in and through the arts include the following for teachers and administrators:

- > Employ inquiry-based, academic, experiential, and culturally and linguistically responsive approaches to teaching and learning in and through the arts.
- > Create and implement arts and arts integrated curricula to foster aesthetic understandings that include art knowledge, purposes, methods, and forms.
- > Engage in ongoing creative, critical thinking that includes a diversity of inter- and intra-cultural perspectives, assets, and reflective practices within and beyond the arts.

It is important to include the arts in discussions surrounding teacher and administrator preparation programs. Ideally, credentialing programs for both administrators and teachers should prepare them to plan, implement, support, sustain, and administer quality arts education programming. At present, such preparation or credentialing programs are, on a statewide level, inadequate to meet this end; they do not consistently address rigorous quality arts education, nor are they consistently informed by current practices and theory in arts education.

Additionally, it should be noted that professionals in the arts can apply for a Designated Subjects Career Technical Education teaching credential in Arts, Media, and Entertainment (AME). This credential is issued to individuals who meet the requirements outlined by the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing (CTC) for either the preliminary or clear CTE credential. AME has cross-disciplinary

interaction because the work in this sector is often project-based, requiring both independent work and interdependent management skills for career success. New technologies are also constantly reshaping the boundaries and skill sets of many arts career pathways.

## Culturally and Linguistically Responsive Pedagogy

Culturally and linguistically responsive teaching is aimed at improving academic success through embracing and integrating students' cultural and linguistic heritage, including their home and community cultures and languages, in the school curriculum and learning environment. This teaching calls for using the cultural and linguistic knowledge, prior experiences, frames of reference, and performance styles of ethnically diverse students to make learning encounters more relevant to and effective for them. It teaches to and through these students' strengths. Culturally and linguistically responsive educators believe that culture and language deeply influence the way children learn. By recognizing their students' life histories and embracing their families and communities, teachers can help these students achieve success and develop a positive self-concept.

### Recommendation

- > Embed culturally and linguistically responsive pedagogy in the arts in teacher preparation programs, beginning teacher support programs, and professional learning for teachers and administrators.

## Credential Recommendations

To be considered highly qualified to teach the arts as a discrete subject in California K–12 schools, a teacher must have either (1) a single subject



credential in music, visual arts, English (theatre), or physical education (dance); or (2) a subject matter authorization in an art form attached to a multiple subject or single subject credential. (Subject matter authorizations are “add-ons” to a credential to allow an individual to teach a class in a subject outside the area in which he or she earned a credential.)

The following credentialing recommendations relate to issues that the California CTC should address.

### Single Subject Credential

Currently, single subject credentials in dance and theatre are no longer offered in California, with dance and theatre instruction subsumed under the physical education and English credentials respectively. This lack of credentials raises issues of equity, access, and opportunity in arts education statewide and compromises the preparation needed to provide high-quality dance and theatre education programming.

- > Restore dance and theatre single subject credentials, similar to those that already exist for music and the visual arts.
- > Add a media arts credential, if separate media arts standards are adopted.
- > Evaluate the California Subject Examination for Teachers (CSET) compared to subject matter programs for single subject certification.

### Multiple Subject Credential

Dance, music, theatre, and visual arts should be taught as discrete subjects, within the generalist classroom under a multiple subject credential. The CTC’s *Standards of Program Quality and Effectiveness for the Subject Matter Requirement for the Multiple Subject Teaching Credential* (2001) states that “...each

prospective multiple subject teacher studies and learns subjects that are required by *Education Code* Section 51210 and incorporated in *California Student Academic Content Standards* and *State Curriculum Frameworks...*”<sup>13</sup> This requirement includes the visual and performing arts. Standard 5.8 of the same CTC document states that preparation programs must offer “distinct coursework in at least two art forms.”

While multiple subject preparation programs differ in terms of instructional preparation for delivering arts education, the expectation is that multiple subject teacher candidates receive quality training in the arts. In fact, along with their coursework in the arts, they are required to pass a CSET that includes a subtest (III), which addresses the visual and performing arts (13 multiple choice questions and one constructed response).

- > Ensure that multiple subject teacher preparation programs provide quality preparation in all art forms.
- > Update the teacher credential requirements to provide a stronger focus on the arts.
- > Revise the *Standards of Program Quality and Effectiveness for the Subject Matter Requirement for the Multiple Subject Teaching Credential* requirements to provide elementary teachers with sufficient pedagogic content knowledge in the visual and performing arts to enable them to provide standards-based arts instruction to their students.
- > Explore issues of equity and access in California teacher preparation to identify and resolve gaps in arts preparation access.
- > Improve the monitoring and accreditation process for all teacher preparation programs



to ensure that they comply with the state's subject matter standards for the multiple subject credential and reflect best practices in the arts in terms of content, theory, and pedagogy. Programs should include training in discrete art instruction; instruction in arts integration; advocacy; culturally responsive and relevant instruction; critical reflection; collaborative practice; research methods; assessment; and alignment with new educational initiatives, including the new state standards adopted since 2010 by the State Board of Education.

- > Continue to work with the CTC to ensure the inclusion of new standards for the multiple subject credential that requires in-depth training in both discrete and integrated arts education.
- > Explore the consequences and efficacy of online teacher preparation programs, including blended programs, and make recommendations based on the research findings.



### Subject Matter Authorization

- > Review the rigor of and pedagogic requirements for subject matter authorizations (SMAs) in dance, music, theatre, visual arts, and media arts and clearly outline coursework required for SMAs in dance, theatre, and media arts. Include discipline-specific pedagogy as a part of the required coursework for introductory and specific SMAs in all art forms.
- > Explore the feasibility of creating a statewide arts integration authorization for generalist classroom teachers as well as arts specialists.

### Administrative Services Credential

Administrators at all levels—state, county, district, and school—are key players in building and sustaining creative schools; therefore, it is critical that they be prepared to do so. However, they are sorely lacking in preparation for administering successful arts programming. Administrative services credentials may be obtained through completion of an administrator preparation program, or by achieving a passing score on the California Preliminary Administrative Credential Examination. No coursework aligned to the arts is included in these preparation programs, no arts-related material is covered on the examination, and none of the innovative and creative strategies necessary to build a creative school community are addressed in either pathway to administrative credentialing.

- > Explore gaps in administrative preparation arts education and programming. Augment administrative services credentialing preparation to ensure access, equity, and quality of arts instruction.
- > Require administrator evaluations to document and reflect school leaders'

effectiveness in ensuring a sequential, standards-based arts education for all students.

### Non-Credentialed Arts Educators

In California, teaching artists (non-credentialed arts educators) collaborate with and support classroom teachers and arts specialists, providing both classroom instruction and professional learning. In some cases, they take the place of the credentialed arts specialists. At present, no systemic, statewide preparation or certification programs for teaching artists exist.

- > Establish a dialogue between a broad-based statewide coalition of agencies and organizational partners to explore (1) the preparation of and/or certification of teaching artists in the state, and (2) ethical issues concerning salary and benefits of teaching artists working in preK–12 classrooms. Make recommendations based on these conversations.

### Ongoing Professional Learning

Various California arts education professional organizations—the California Art Education Association, the California Association for Music Education, the California Dance Education Association, the California Educational Theatre Association, The California Arts Project, and the California County Superintendents Educational Services Association—provide discipline-specific professional learning opportunities for educators throughout their careers.

### Recommendations

- > Establish, implement, and sustain ongoing arts education professional learning opportunities for teachers that cultivate the 21st century skills; align to California’s *Visual and Performing Arts Content Standards*; support *Common Core* content literacy in the technical subjects and the *Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts* and *Mathematics*; and encourage and provide standards-based instructional design and assessment for the classroom.
- > Provide professional learning in the foundations and practice of arts integration and cross-curricular instruction for teachers and administrators.
- > Provide school and district administrators with arts leadership and advocacy tools, which include current research supporting arts education, connections to *Common Core State Standards*, arts assessment, and equity of access.
- > Require coordinated professional learning plans at the county, district, and school levels focused on ongoing professional learning for administrators, teachers, and school communities to implement, improve, and sustain a creative school environment.
- > Provide funding for scientifically based research in connection with state-funded and state-administered teacher professional learning grants.

# Producing High-Quality Arts Assessment, Research, and Evidence

High-quality art is rarely produced in a day, like most things that are well done. For example, it usually requires students to collaborate on a performance or to create multiple sketches before creating a finished product. As a result, the arts require students to learn an iterative creative process that develops a way of thinking. Students and teachers engage in an inquiry process, problem solving along the way and looking at the work through multiple lenses. High-quality arts assessment is needed to measure this complex system.

Assessing knowledge, skill, and understanding is a crucial component of a sequential and comprehensive arts education. In the last decade, public education has evolved into a data-driven instructional model. The educational establishment has done much to refine programs and tailor instruction to content areas that are tested and included in accountability measures. The same attention needs to be focused on arts assessments.

In addition to assessment, research and evidence building contribute to educational improvement by integrating professional wisdom and the best available empirical evidence in making decisions about how to deliver instruction. There is general agreement that the state needs to adopt broader measures of school performance beyond standardized test scores, as reflected by the multiple measures incorporated into the state's new accountability program. This awareness presents a window of opportunity to develop new ways to measure and encourage quality arts education programs.

As schools and school districts augment their visual and performing arts offerings, they will need access to high-quality research to guide their decisions about how to deliver instruction.

## Recommendations

The California State Board of Education and the California Department of Education should do the following:

- > Develop standards-based performance assessments that schools can use to assess students' abilities to carry out grade-appropriate activities related to visual arts, music, theatre, and dance.
- > Demonstrate the arts' critical role in the culture of the school and community in both quantitative and qualitative terms.
- > Include program and district evaluation instruments and systems that promote

- robust, quality implementation of arts and integrated arts programs.
- > Promote rigorous arts learning through training for teachers on best practices in formative and summative assessment in the arts.
  - > Develop an “arts report card” for every district’s use. This public reporting system would allow districts to assess their own commitment to certain state-defined minimum requirements for arts education. In addition to reporting current efforts, the report should include specific steps the district proposes to expand access to arts education. The report would address the severe gap in information, data, and research across the state that prevents clear understanding related to access and equity, particularly in programs supported by public funding, thus hindering targeted interventions.
  - > Fund a “California Media Arts Education Portfolio” and a series of assessment tools that can begin to build a statewide resource for best practices.
  - > Continue to recognize schools with exemplary arts programs or career technical education—model arts, media, and entertainment programs—as part of the California Distinguished Schools Program.
  - > Biennially assess student access to arts education using a state-mandated information system. Conduct a statewide survey to establish a baseline for student access to the arts and establish procedures to share the information publicly.
  - > Develop tools for measuring student learning related to the arts that will be useful across all California public school contexts and subgroups.
- > Develop a culturally and linguistically appropriate assessment in the visual and performing arts in the next five years at the elementary and secondary levels. This assessment would assess basic conceptual knowledge of the visual arts, music, theatre, and dance, and it would also serve an equity purpose by indicating whether all students have access to high-quality arts instruction.
  - > Build evidence to support the role of the arts in developing capacities and dispositions related to both academic achievement and social-emotional well-being.
  - > Establish a practical, centrally supported digital platform for vetting and disseminating research findings, and for driving communication among educators, policymakers, and community stakeholders. The California Department of Education should also consider hosting an information portal where lesson plans and other materials could be submitted and vetted, so teachers feel confident in the quality of the lessons they download.
  - > Create a resource clearinghouse to support schools and districts in strengthening arts education. This clearinghouse should include relevant research studies, models of effective practice, and practical toolkit items to help schools districts assess their current offerings and develop effective plans for arts education.
  - > Explore and implement a creativity and innovation index along the lines suggested in Senate Bill 789 (Price, 2011). This index is a

tool to document the scope of course offerings and instructional programs that promote creativity in any academic discipline. The California Department of Education and the state legislature should undertake a broadly advised and deliberate process to decide how such an index might work and what it should include.

- > Include an assessment of the quality and scope of arts education programs in future school review programs that the State Superintendent of Public Instruction develops and implements as part of an accountability system. This assessment would include rubrics for local site visits to verify high-quality arts instruction.



# Ensuring Equity and Access

All California students deserve access to a creative education, regardless of their background or where they live. More than a mere technological tool or memorized fact, creativity is an ability that will last children a lifetime and will affect the global community. Creativity is crucial to youth voice, the desire to learn, diversity, and public participation in an intercultural world. Democracy's sustainability hinges on fostering problem solving and creative invention.

Students must learn to analyze issues and experiences from different, and sometimes opposite, perspectives. Their ability to do so requires an awareness of their own diverse cultural histories, as well as their innate curiosity and desire to create. No other discipline can replace the arts in the ability to foster creativity and critical reflection. Research continues to show the many benefits of participation. Children learn and express their innate intelligence in unique ways. Creative expression strengthens children's sense of self-efficacy and their faith in the capacity of their peers and community. Furthermore, arts instruction can strengthen language acquisition. Students who attend schools where the arts are integrated into classroom curricula outperform their peers, who did not have arts-integrated curricula, in math and reading.

The arts of all people are valued assets that bear important cultural knowledge. Culturally relevant and responsive arts education provides a necessary bridge for students to connect prior knowledge and cultural assets with their school experience and the curriculum. This connection is particularly important for those who face and internalize negative

assumptions about their capacities. Language and culture affirm the positive traits of heritage, identity, and resilience, which energize a child's ability to learn, make meaning, create, and contribute.

Looking at creative education through the lens of access and equity helps to clarify participation rates and focus efforts to improve opportunities for all children. However, barriers to quality education for students from diverse racial, social class, national origin, or linguistic backgrounds have a long and well-recorded history in the United States. Geographic segregation continues to produce opportunity gaps for children, perpetuating exclusion and poverty, while leaving the creative potential of millions of children untapped.

According to the 2013–14 California Basic Educational Data System (CBEDS), 59 percent of California's children attending public schools qualify for free or reduced-price meals (FRPM). FRPM is a common indicator for students living in poverty. However, a focus solely on socioeconomic status misses significant indicators relevant to children's lives.



CBEDS data also reveal that poverty, race, and ethnicity collide to frame the lives of many children. Over 60 percent of Latino, African American, Pacific Islander, and American Indian children in California's public schools qualify for FRPM. These children are overrepresented among the poor. Latino children are 53 percent of the student body in California's public schools, while 79 percent of them qualify for FRPM. While African American children represent 6 percent of the students enrolled in California's public schools, 72 percent of them qualify for FRPM. Less than one percent of California students are of Pacific Islander heritage, but 64 percent of those children qualify for FRPM. Less than one percent of

children in California's public schools are American Indian, but 63 percent of them qualify for FRPM. By comparison, white and Asian children are more likely to benefit from larger household incomes than their African American, Latino, Pacific Islander, or American Indian counterparts.

According to an analysis of CBEDS data, only 27 percent of children in the FRPM program are enrolled in any kind of visual and performing arts courses. Higher income children have more of these courses to choose from and are further supplementing in-school options through private instruction outside of school. Low-income children



are offered fewer options in school and have less disposable income to engage in after-school study. The fact remains, supported by National Center for Education Statistics data, that creative, arts-infused schools are not universally accessible to all students and that "... students in high-poverty schools are more than twice as likely to have no access to a music or dance class."<sup>14</sup> However, attention only to the impact of poverty limits how educators approach the whole child; it is important to distinguish between the risk factors associated with poverty and the positive cultural assets represented by cultural and linguistic diversity. These factors do overlap but serve different functions in the child's experience.

It is impossible to design effective policies to improve access and equity without an ongoing assessment process to help identify, address, and improve access to the creative learning opportunities for California's students. Policies and funding streams must contain accurate, detailed knowledge of participation rates in the visual and performing arts that includes information about linguistic status and social class, ethnicity, and geography.

## Recommendations

Equitable access to arts education is the overriding theme of this *Blueprint*, and every recommendation in this document is intended to give *all* students in California access to a creative and arts-rich education.

- > Consider the issues of equity and access when implementing all policy recommendations on arts education.
- > Collect and disseminate demographic data on access and equity in arts and design education to inform policy, investment, and action. Make available to the public information on participation in the visual and performing arts. Include visual and performing arts and CTE course enrollment data on ethnicity, linguistic status, gender, and FRPM on the California Department of Education website.
- > Require local and state cultural agencies, including the California Arts Council, to collect and make public data on ethnicity, race, social class, linguistic status, gender, and geographic location on all grants awarded; include organizations funded and communities served. Such measures would provide a clearer picture of participation in the arts and help assess progress towards equitable access.



# Strengthening Collaborative Relationships



It is vital that California continues to foster and expand the role of collaborations and partnerships to prepare and build strong educators and to inspire creativity in our schools. Partnerships are intended for the joint solving of problems, resource exchange, cooperation, coordination, and coalition building. These collaborations and partnerships can provide creative and innovative solutions for teachers and students who are navigating a complex culture and society to meet a far-reaching mission that is broader in its scope than any one institution's mission. While state, regional, county, and local collaborations and partnerships exist, a broader effort is needed.

Numerous examples of strong arts education partnerships exist at the school, district, regional, state, and national levels. CREATE CA is one such partnership. Partnerships must be nurtured within and across sectors that include business, education, community, government, faith, and nonprofit leadership. These partnerships will be vital in helping arts education to successfully align to 21st century educational goals, expand resources, and develop “public will” toward supporting a commitment to arts learning.

In another example, the National Science Foundation, the federal agency that promotes science, awarded a \$2.6 million grant to the Art of Science Learning initiative for “Integrating Informal STEM [science, technology, engineering, and mathematics] and Arts-Based Learning to Foster Innovation.”<sup>15</sup> In addition, the National Endowment for the Arts, the federal agency that supports artistic excellence, now accepts

art and science initiatives under its ArtWorks grants. These two agencies recognize that arts and STEM education belong together, and these partnerships will change how schools approach STEM by adding an “A” for the arts (STEAM) to make it clear that the arts are crucial in preparing students for the workforce.

This report's recommendations have a greater likelihood of implementation through strategic partnerships, collaborations, and cooperation among participating institutions. As partnerships pool resources to address ongoing challenges and needs associated with providing a quality curriculum that includes the visual and performing arts, they are better prepared to impact policy changes. Strategic objectives requiring partnerships include:

- > Offering school-level, discipline-centered, and integrated arts instruction

- > Providing increased access and equitable distribution of learning opportunities in underserved educational settings
- > Building capacity of schools and districts through training, curriculum development, and funding
- > Providing professional learning in arts instruction and curricular integration
- > Making public and private direct and indirect investments, such as mentorship and training
- > Conducting qualitative and quantitative research illustrating best practices and model partnerships
- > Building awareness and public will through community engagement and mobilization
- > Making systematic change through advocacy at the local, regional, and state levels
- > Identifying and utilizing community cultural and linguistic resources

Seventy percent of California voters do not have children in school, and many have not benefited from a strong arts education themselves. Therefore, a compelling “call to action” must drive the public will, encourage partnerships, and demand a thriving arts learning commitment in schools. Partnerships at every level will also be necessary to create impactful messaging and design engagement campaigns.

### Recommendations

- > Build positive collaborative relationships at all levels (state, regional, county, and local) among those responsible for preparation programs to ensure support of quality arts learning linked to the California’s new state standards adopted since 2010. Include higher education leaders, preservice program providers, classroom teachers (postsecondary and preK–12), teaching artists, and their organizations.
- > Develop compelling, research-based messaging that demonstrates the power of partnerships to provide an arts-rich, creative education and the development of a workforce that meets the needs of 21st century learning.
- > Mobilize existing networks and establish new networks through CREATE CA to address the critical needs related to educator preparation to support an understanding and knowledge of quality arts education and creative schools. For example, engage the California Federation of Teachers, the California Teachers Association, and teacher preparation providers in higher education.
- > Create a framework to collect and disseminate data and evidence of effective collaborations and partnerships, establishing guidelines that institutions can use to develop and sustain lasting collaborative partnerships.
- > Develop and launch a communications network whereby school districts, county offices, universities, arts organizations, businesses, and private partnerships share best practices and make contributions visible.
- > Promote positive collaborative partnerships that connect organizations, agencies, and institutions around key actionable recommendations. For example, utilize the California County Superintendents Educational Services Association’s regional arts infrastructure and The California Arts

- Project to connect teacher preparation programs.
- > Create an ongoing convening of higher education and teacher preparation programs to share best practices to ensure equity, access, and quality preparation in the arts.
  - > Recruit and empower an influential group of business, education, arts organization, museum, and community leaders to champion partnerships that ensure a creative education for every child. Seek investment from these leaders and organizations.
  - > Encourage best practices that would foster greater alignment, cooperation, and sustainability by facilitating an understanding of partners' needs, interests, organizational cultures, and assets (including non-financial resources, such as expertise, volunteers, and advocacy). Provide both qualitative and quantitative models of effective partnerships.
  - > Establish a network for screening and supporting visiting artists, teaching artists, artists-in-residence, and other mentorship programs.
  - > Develop and disseminate a California collaboration toolkit featuring best practices and practical advice for advancing collaborative partnerships at the school, district, county, and state levels. Seek corporate and foundation support to create and distribute the toolkits.
  - > Develop partnerships with expanded learning programs (summer, before- and after-school programs) that complement and support the school day.
- > Host a state summit that showcases national models for collaborative partnerships for creative schools/arts learning. The models would demonstrate best practices in business-to-school collaboration; higher education-to-school collaboration; community-based arts organizations-to-school collaboration; and professional arts-to-school (e.g., museums, orchestras) partnerships.
  - > Leverage philanthropic funding from regional and statewide foundations to form a "funders' collaborative" to provide seed funding for model partnerships and rigorously document the outcomes.
  - > Create and implement a professional learning program that incorporates the CCSESA regions and The California Arts Project and includes collaborative relationships within diverse communities.
  - > Facilitate statewide partnership initiatives that allow for consensus around objectives, actions, and resources. Partnerships might include "Arts Champions" and "Collaborative Partnerships for Creative Schools."
  - > Consider developing a "Higher Education Council on Creative Schools" to provide leadership in preservice training, research, and scholarship in arts and creative-learning research. Actions would include developing messaging, launching a media action campaign, and seeking endorsements from key public figures.
  - > Partner with the STEM movement.

# Expanding the Role of Business and Industry in the Creative Workforce



Business and industry leaders rightly view education as a supplier of the creative, thoughtful, confident employees they urgently need, yet they feel that California's education system is not meeting their expectations. The process of change must start with a wide-ranging discussion about the most effective strategies to adopt—partnerships among industry, career technical education, and academia; improved teaching methods that develop the critical attributes students need; and economic investments. With a focus on integrated, active, and ongoing learning, the timeline from novice-to-expert must be accelerated, and future workers must become more equipped to solve many problems that do not yet exist.

Business leaders have become quite vocal about the skills needed for their current and future workforce. These include the “4C’s”: critical thinking, communication, collaboration, and creativity. While there is much discussion about how to teach these various skills, the areas of education in which these skills are embedded are the arts and career technical education.

Business leaders express the desire to hire people who are lifelong learners, are literate, can analyze information, can generate new ideas on their own, can work well with other people, and can communicate clearly. Currently, there is a shortage of these skills in the workforce. These skills and concepts are taught within the scope of arts education. However, in our present culture of standardized testing, and the resulting narrowing of curricular offerings, arts integration and discrete arts education are too often removed from our schools, thus depriving students of the very skills business leaders value most.

More effective partnerships, coordination, and collaboration will strengthen both sectors. The challenge is to develop effective partnerships and conduits of communication that actively engage business leaders in education transformation with the understanding that industry's most urgent and immediate needs can best be met via long-term investment in educational reform.

Arts education contributes to the development of a creative individual who can communicate and is self-disciplined, inquiring, motivated, and innovative. The 2013 *Otis Report on the Creative Economy* estimated that creative industries are responsible for one in ten jobs in California (including one in seven in the Los Angeles region).<sup>16</sup> IBM's 2010 global survey of 1500 CEOs identifies creativity as the number one leadership competency of the future.<sup>17</sup>

## Recommendations

- > Focus corporate partnerships on further developing networks and resource distribution, which include “expanded learning” programs and existing programs provided by cultural institutions.
  - > Recruit and empower an influential group of business and education leaders to promote the vision and strategies for creative schools and create a California Education and Business/Industry Council to focus on the needs of businesses, the challenges schools face, and the importance of creating opportunities for students to gain the skills and qualities needed for the economic challenges business and industry face. Ensure that the Council includes business and industry of all sectors and sizes from throughout the state to ensure geographic diversity.
  - > Build partnerships with creative industry leaders to strengthen and expand school/university partnerships that link to private business and creative industry, cultivating a shared understanding for quality, equity, and access for arts as part of teacher education programs and services.
  - > Create a foundation for creative schools that business, industry, and individual donors can contribute to. This foundation will conduct research, build leadership capacity, collect evidence of successful partnerships, and promote improvements in preservice recruitment and professional learning that include creativity and the arts.
  - > Connect with businesses “on their own turf” via their professional organizations to engage and inform them about the work being done to transform education to meet their needs.
- > Pursue a partnership with the national STEM network to include STEAM data in its established database. Provide linkages to the many examples of excellence in partnering with business that are captured in the STEM and STEAM networks. Providing linkages to these and other growing databases is crucial to sharing best practices and exemplary models of success.
  - > Develop a cadre of key business/industry executives and leaders that involve chief executive officers interested in the future of California business competitiveness, who will act as public spokespersons for creativity, innovation, and the power of arts education to build public will around the importance of including rigorous, sequential arts learning preK–12 and beyond.





# Providing Funding for the Arts

Since the submission of *The Joint Arts Education Task Force Report* to State Superintendent of Public Instruction Tom Torlakson, several significant changes have taken place in school funding that impact the funding and sustainability of arts education in California schools. After decades of research, policy discussions, and legislation promoting finance reform, in 2013 California adopted a major change in how schools are funded and held accountable: the Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF).

According to Children Now, “This new funding model is the most comprehensive education finance reform implemented in California in nearly 40 years, and will bring sweeping changes to the state’s K–12 system. School leaders, in partnership with their communities, will be provided more flexibility and planning opportunities to make the best decisions for their local students, while being held to a new accountability structure that focuses on improving student outcomes long-term. Most importantly, those students traditionally underserved—low income students, English learners, and foster youth—will receive additional, unprecedented funding under LCFF and school districts will have an opportunity to pursue innovative, coherent, and holistic approaches to meeting all students’ needs.”<sup>18</sup>

Many of these outcomes can be impacted by direct and/or integrated arts instruction. The following information summarizes priority focus areas to guide school and districts in allocating the new LCFF funding.<sup>19</sup>



Goals of LCFF	Benefits of Arts Education
<i>Credentialed Teachers</i>	Credentialed arts teachers enrich standards-based learning in classrooms. <sup>a</sup>
<i>Common Core State Standards</i>	The arts have a central and essential role in achieving the <i>Common Core</i> . <sup>b</sup>
<i>Broad Course of Study</i>	Theatre, dance, music, and the visual arts are a valued part of a broad course of study, as set out in the California <i>Education Code</i> Sections 51210 and 51220.
<i>Student Achievement</i>	The arts can boost test scores and achievement in literacy, English language arts, and mathematics, especially for English learners and low-income students. <sup>c</sup>
<i>Student Outcomes</i>	Arts education can increase graduation rates; and foster 21st century work skills, such as creativity, critical thinking, and collaboration. <sup>d</sup>
<i>Parent Involvement</i>	The arts increase parent and community involvement. <sup>e</sup>
<i>Student Engagement</i>	Higher attendance and lower dropout rates can result when students can participate in the arts. <sup>f</sup>
<i>School Climate</i>	Arts education decreases disciplinary problems and encourages positive student attitudes about their classrooms. <sup>g</sup>

**Notes:**

- a. Barry, N. H. 2010. *Oklahoma A+ Schools: What the Research Tells Us, 2002–2007*. Volume Three: Quantitative Measures. Oklahoma A+ Schools/University of Central Oklahoma.
- b. Architect of Common Core Speaks (letter). AiTeachers. 2012. <http://artsintegration.com/portal/architect-of-common-core-speaks/>.
- c. *Preparing Students for the Next America: The Benefits of an Arts Education*. Arts Education Partnership. 2013. <http://www.aep-arts.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/04/Preparing-Students-for-the-Next-America-FINAL.pdf>.
- d. *Preparing Students for the Next America: The Benefits of an Arts Education*. Arts Education Partnership. 2013. <http://www.aep-arts.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/04/Preparing-Students-for-the-Next-America-FINAL.pdf>. Barry, N. H. 2010. *Oklahoma A+ Schools: What the Research Tells Us, 2002–2007*. Volume Three: Quantitative Measures. Oklahoma A+ Schools/University of Central Oklahoma. Catterall, J. S., Dumais, S. A., & Hampden-Thompson, G. (2012). *The Arts and Achievement in At-Risk Youth: Findings From Four Longitudinal Studies*. National Endowment for the Arts. March 2012. <http://arts.gov/publications/arts-and-achievement-risk-youth-findings-four-longitudinal-studies>.
- e. See note a above.
- f. See note c above.
- g. See note a above.

As school districts, county offices of education, and local communities plan how to invest new funding that the LCFF provides, the arts can be a powerful tool in meeting the needs of the lowest performing students and English learners. Arts education can help teachers address the academic, social, emotional, and creative needs and interests of students through personalized and engaging connection to course content. The arts bring families and the community into the school as partners in student learning.

Each district and county office of education must prepare a Local Control and Accountability Plan (LCAP) to ensure that LCFF funding addresses the eight state priorities with express goals and actions.

### Recommendations

- > Provide guidance documents with research support detailing the impact of arts education on the eight priority areas identified in the LCAP.
- > Develop guidance to assist districts in ensuring English learners, students of color, low-income students, and foster youth have access to comprehensive, standards-aligned preK–12 arts education.
- > Create professional learning modules targeted to specific LCAP outcomes.
- > Research a voluntary assessment tool for measuring and reporting success in each of the LCAP priority areas that focuses on the role of arts education.
- > Provide guidance documents and support for the use of various federal funding streams for arts education.



# Endnotes



- 1 “Why Creativity Now? A Conversation with Sir Ken Robinson.” Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development. *Educational Leadership*. September 2009, Vol. 67, No. 1.  
<http://www.ascd.org/publications/educational-leadership/sept09/vol67/num01/Why-Creativity-Now%C2%A2-A-Conversation-with-Sir-Ken-Robinson.aspx>.
- 2 “PCAH Launches the Turnaround: Arts Initiative to Help Improve Low-Performing Schools.” President’s Committee on the Arts and the Humanities. April 2012.  
<http://www.pcah.gov/news/pcah-launches-turnaround-arts-initiative-help-improve-low-performing-schools>.
- 3 Darling-Hammond, Linda. 2010. *The Flat World and Education: How America’s Commitment to Equity Will Determine Our Future*, page 2. Teachers College Press.
- 4 “CREATE CA: Restoring the Arts to Schools.” California Arts Council. September 19, 2013.  
<http://www.cac.ca.gov/newsroom/atthecacdetail.php?id=586>.
- 5 *The Joint Arts Education Task Force Report: How the Arts and Creative Education Can Transform California’s Classrooms*. 2013. [http://createca.net/?page\\_id=15](http://createca.net/?page_id=15).
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*California's Statewide Arts Education Coalition*

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**INNOVATION • IMAGINATION**

