

Ms. Martinez - Supporting Educational Equity, Student Achievement and Mastery of 21st Century Skills through Arts at the Core

Whereas, The Los Angeles Unified School District is committed to providing all students with equitable and rigorous learning opportunities and curricula to provide graduates with the skills and knowledge necessary for college readiness, career training and preparation for life after high school;

Whereas, LAUSD has adopted previous resolutions and policies that support these goals, including A-G, Multiple Pathways, Linked Learning, Restoration of Arts Education, Diplomas for All, Common Core Standards Implementation and Increasing Enrollment;

Whereas, the State of California and the LAUSD have embraced the Common Core Standards to equip students with essential 21st Century Skills such as critical thinking, communication, collaboration and creativity;

Whereas, the Framework for 21st Century Skills holistically combines a discrete focus on student outcomes with innovative support systems to help students master the multi-dimensional abilities required of them in the 21st Century;

Whereas, the Common Core Standards are directly aligned with the framework for 21st Century Skills and are rooted in critical thinking, communication, collaboration and creativity, all skills considered to be essential in every academic area, particularly for the mastery of mathematics and science;

Whereas, The implementation of the Common Core Standards provides an opportunity to improve teaching and learning and to focus on all students, including students most in need of support, to be more engaged and successful in schools and to acquire the necessary skills needed to participate in a 21st century workforce, including;

- English, including knowledge of, and appreciation for, literature and the language, as well as the skills of speaking, reading, listening, spelling, handwriting, and composition;
- Mathematics, including concepts, operational skills and problem solving;
- Social sciences, drawing upon the disciplines of anthropology, economics, geography, history, political science, psychology and sociology, designed to fit the maturity of the pupils;
- Science, including the biological and physical aspects, with emphasis on the processes of experimental inquiry and on the role of humans in ecological systems;
- Visual and performing arts, including instruction in the subjects of dance, music, theatre, and visual arts, aimed at the development of aesthetic appreciation and the skills of creative expression;
- Health, including instruction in the principles and practices of individual, family and community health;
- Physical education, with emphasis on physical activities for pupils that may be conducive to health and vigor of body and mind, for a total period of time of not less than 200 minutes each 10 school days, exclusive of recesses and the lunch period;

Whereas, the arts are an essential vehicle for demonstrating mastery of skills, an essential component to assessing student achievement through Common Core Standards, 21st Century Framework, Career Technical Education and Linked Learning;

Whereas, Multiple research studies, including the President's Committee on The Arts and Humanities, make clear that students who participate in a rigorous, sequential, standards-based arts education develop the ability to innovate, communicate, and collaborate;

Whereas, rigorous, sequential, standards-based arts education in schools increases test scores across every subject area, lowers dropout rates and helps close achievement and opportunity gaps for students of color and students from low-income families;

Whereas, Research on the contribution of the arts to human cognitive development shows a broad array of enhanced cognitive development in spatial-temporal abilities, verbal skills, memory and spatial reasoning;

Whereas, LAUSD is committed to enhancing parent engagement to support student achievement;

Whereas, Student performances, art shows and demonstrations provide unmatched opportunity for administrators and teachers to reach parents and increase their participation in their children's learning and to build engaging, community centered school environments;

Whereas, A rigorous, well-rounded curriculum, that includes high quality arts education and integrated arts instruction, increases average daily attendance and student enrollment;

Whereas, Research indicates that teenagers and young adults of low socioeconomic status (SES), who have a history of in-depth arts involvement, earn better grades, demonstrate higher rates of college enrollment, achieve higher GPA scores, develop greater self esteem and exhibit higher levels of civic involvement;

Whereas, Course offerings and cuts to arts education programs are experienced most severely by low income students of color and exacerbate inequality and the opportunity gap;

Whereas, CDE data confirms that high-school students attending Title I schools have decreased access to arts course offerings and are often unable to enroll in the A-G required arts class;

Whereas, School communities located in certain parts of the District are able raise additional funds to maintain arts programs by purchasing arts education opportunities including teachers, artist residencies and arts materials while schools serving large numbers of Title I students are more reliant on school purchased arts programs and less able to raise the private resources needed to provide equitable access to arts education opportunities, exacerbating existing unequal access;

Whereas, LAUSD is committed to providing every student, regardless of their socioeconomic status, sexual orientation or ethnic heritage, equitable access to high quality tools, differentiated learning opportunities and rigorous instruction in 21st century learning environments;

Whereas, As cited in the 2011 Los Angeles Economic Development Corporation's Report on the Creative Economy, commissioned by Otis College of Art and Design, the Los Angeles region is internationally regarded as the Creative Capital of the United States and the creative sector provides one-in-eight jobs in the local economy;

Whereas, Employment in the creative sector requires an ever increasing mastery of 21st Century Skills;

Whereas, The Board of Education and the Superintendent are committed to ensuring that all students have equal opportunity to compete for employment in the local creative economy;

Whereas, From 1999-2011, over \$300 million was invested by the District to develop and implement the nationally recognized Elementary Arts Program and, in 2009, LAUSD took unprecedented leadership to restore sequential, standards-based K-12 arts education;

Whereas, The economic downturn of 2008 caused school districts across the state, including LAUSD, to face multimillion dollar deficits. Over a three-year period, the District has reduced its ongoing investment to restoring arts education but, despite this barrier, LAUSD adopted a three-year plan in 2011 that now serves as a blueprint for continued restoration of arts education for every student in the district;

Whereas, Private philanthropy, local nonprofit arts and arts advocacy organizations, creative economy businesses and labor organizations, parents, artists and teachers represent a committed and crucial component of the arts education delivery system and remain critical to the mission of increasing the availability, quality and vitality of arts education in LAUSD;

Whereas, The Los Angeles Fund for Public Education has made arts education and access to the arts a priority and is launching a citywide program supporting arts education and raising funding for arts integration programs throughout LAUSD;

Whereas, LAUSD's long-standing commitment to rigorous arts education, coupled with a 125 years of investment in music education, will continue to be at risk in every future budget cycle without a renewed and comprehensive commitment to arts education as an essential component of a rigorous academic program for every student; now, therefore be it

Resolved, That to assure equitable access to quality arts instruction across LAUSD and to address District goals for achievement and equity, the Governing Board of the Los Angeles Unified School District will establish Arts Education as a Core Subject;

Resolved further, That the next three years, beginning with the 2012-2013 academic year, will be considered a period of planning and capacity building for arts as a core subject ("Arts at the Core") and the Arts Education Branch shall be funded at no less, and significantly more as the economic environment improves, than the funding level for the 2011-2012 academic year and will include appropriate and adequate central administrative support in dance, music, theatre, visual and media arts;

Resolved further, That the Superintendent is instructed to develop a plan by July 1, 2013, for the implementation of Arts at the Core, that will include the recommendations from the report, "Reinvesting in Arts Education: Winning America's Future through Creative Schools," and detailed strategies for:

1. Funding arts education and integrated arts instruction;
2. Supporting high quality professional development in pedagogy and curriculum;
3. Systemic data collection to measure the progress of student learning in and through the arts; and
4. Oversight for implementation across the district and annual benchmarks for success.

Resolved further, That the Arts at the Core Plan will include the restoral, within five years, of funding to match or exceed funding levels in the 2007-2008 academic year to help ensure sequential art course offerings for all elementary and secondary schools.

Resolved further, That the Arts at the Core Plan will include strategies for increasing the numbers of elementary arts teachers, within 10 years, to be commensurate with other large, urban districts such as Dallas, New York City, Chicago, Seattle, Pittsburg and Philadelphia and middle school arts bridging teachers to a number that will assure a minimum of three arts disciplines offered in every middle school.

Resolved further, That the Arts at the Core Plan will include policy guidelines that are consistent with the California Department of Education guidelines that allow use of state and federal categorical funds for research based arts education strategies to bridge the achievement gap through improving student achievement in ELA and math at Title I schools and for other categorical funds that may be used for professional development, strategic partnerships with nonprofit arts organizations, model program development and the dissemination of best practices;

Resolved further, That the Arts at the Core Plan will include budgeting provisions for individual school sites to receive a dollar amount each year, based on student enrollment, to supplement centrally funded teachers for purposes such as art supplies, additional days of credentialed elementary arts teacher services, secondary off-norm credentialed arts teachers, arts productions, professional development and qualified services from external arts partners;

Resolved further, That the Arts at the Core Plan will include provisions for recruiting, training, evaluating and retaining highly qualified arts teachers for the future and will reaffirm the District's current commitment to protect an adequate number of credentialed and tenured arts teachers, and centrally funded dedicated arts teachers, to insure foundational instruction in the arts from future Reductions in Force.