

Butte County

The arts play a crucial role in shaping our culture and society. Beyond fostering emotional intelligence and providing a positive outlet for stress and trauma, they ignite creativity, imagination, and innovation in our children. Having weathered years of local disasters, our small, rural school districts in Butte County understand the power of collaboration in maximizing resources. As the coordinating agency for the Kennedy Center’s Ensuring the Arts for Any Given Child Program, BCOE is proud to facilitate unity among some of our more rural districts, ensuring access and equity for arts education. Arts education is not just about creating professional artists; it’s about instilling a lifelong love of the arts in our students, fostering a profound understanding of the human condition. Every child deserves the opportunity to learn and develop through the arts as well as through all of the other core curricula. As education leaders, our commitment to ‘All Means All’ drives us to secure high-quality arts instruction for every student, regardless of their school’s setting.



– **Mary Sakuma, Butte County Superintendent of Schools**

Butte County Office of Education ■ Contact: Jennifer Spangler, jspangler@bcoe.org

PRIORITIZE PROFESSIONAL LEARNING IN ARTS INTEGRATION

We emphasize arts integration as an effective and efficient approach to teaching while building capacity in small and rural schools. Beginning in 2019 we implemented an online professional learning series in arts integration for all eight counties in Region 2. Unique arts integrated lessons were written with single subject

coaches and maintained on a newly launched North State Arts Education Consortium website (nsaec.bcoe.org). Since then we continued our regional focus by joining with the annual Region 2 Expanded Learning STEAM Institute at CSU Chico to offer workshops that emphasize the arts. For example, at the 2023 institute in August, our workshops explored the art form of animation through stop-motion technology, and how to integrate dance and science in workshops called “Exploring the Planets of Our Solar System with Dance” and “Modeling Earth Systems: Exploring Forces of Land, Water, and Air with Dance.” In late fall 2023, national teaching artist and education specialist, Melanie Rick, led a workshop on how and why arts integration improves student performance. TK-8 general education teachers dove into a lesson study that combined theatre arts, visual

arts, and history. Specifically, the *tableau* (“frozen picture”) art form, a portrait of Cesar Chavez by artist Octavio Ocampo, and a short-written biography were utilized in a lesson about Chavez’s life. Afterwards a teacher enthusiastically observed how well the arts integration approach supports universal design for learning and is “really motivating to change the way [we] teach.”

COORDINATE THE NEW ANY GIVEN CHILD COLLECTIVE IMPACT INITIATIVE

In 2021, three K-8 Oroville area school districts proudly became the 28th site of the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts national arts education network with BCOE partnering as the backbone organization. The three school districts were selected by the Kennedy Center largely because they are rural and semi-rural with low socio-



Elementary school teachers create a tableau of Cesar Chavez’s life during a professional learning workshop on arts integration.



economic populations, higher ELL populations, and limited arts learning opportunities.

The goal of the project, called *Ensuring the Arts for Every Given Child: Butte County Initiative*, is to secure support among a broad variety of community sectors and to nurture new leadership. Through this collective impact approach we performed an extensive data survey of current arts education programs, and an attitudinal study of principals and teachers. Then we completed our strategic plan. We set up a network of teachers as champions for arts education; started a system to support experiences at arts venues with infographics of standards-based lessons; created a teacher guide at a local history museum in collaboration with Chico State's arts education program; and obtained a California Arts Council (CAC) grant to offer free artist residencies at



Community Arts Team for Any Given Child: Butte County Initiative



Nelson Middle School band performs at press conference

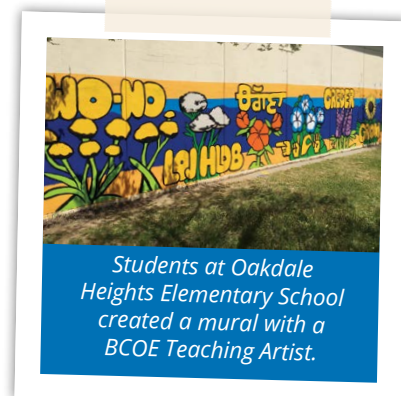
Any Given Child (AGC) schools. The initiative is steered by an implementation committee with the mission to advocate, promote, and connect to expand arts education in the districts.

DEVELOP THE BCOE TEACHING ARTISTS IN THE SCHOOLS PROGRAM

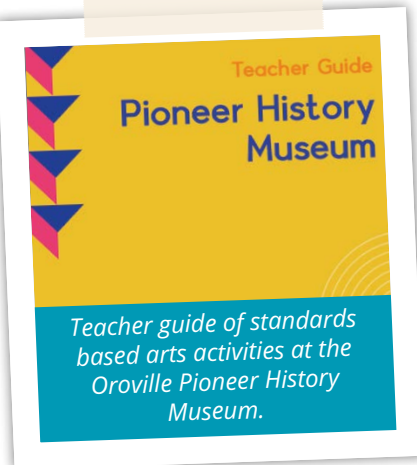
In 2018, a windstorm knocked down a power line in the Sierra Nevada foothills and started a wildfire that killed 85 people and destroyed most of the town of Paradise. In response to the devastation and trauma, BCOE initiated a trauma-informed Teaching Artists in the Schools Program. Understanding the inherent ability of the arts to improve a student's social and emotional learning (SEL), which can mitigate the effects of trauma, we developed this teaching artists

program with startup grants from our local community foundation and the Sierra Health Foundation. We recruited artists with discipline mastery and teaching experience. Then we oriented them to the SEL competencies. In our first year, we offered free artist residencies at Paradise area schools; Since then our teaching artists are being placed throughout Butte County on a fee basis, or subsidized by funding such as the CAC grant which supports the residencies at AGC schools.

In addition to offering greater arts education experiences and increasing SEL for Butte County students, our intention is to support teaching artists to improve their classroom practices. In August 2023, we offered our first professional learning series for teaching artists, supported by the Kennedy Center.



Students at Oakdale Heights Elementary School created a mural with a BCOE Teaching Artist.



REGION 2
NORTHEASTERN