

Inyo County

We know that the arts can foster powerful emotions within our students, allowing for more empathetic, creative, and imaginative thinkers – qualities that are needed in all fields of study. It is especially important in our small and rural communities that we continue to find ways to expose our students to the arts.

In Inyo County, as with most small and rural counties, we have found it is imperative to look for opportunities within our local community to provide high-quality arts programming in our schools. To that end, we are proud to partner with our local arts community, which includes the Inyo Council for the Arts (ICA) and C5, a local nonprofit arts center, that is able to bring local artists and musicians into our schools. With their help we have been able to provide a variety of arts and music programming that enriches our students educational experience while also contributing to their social and emotional health. Keeping the arts alive for our students should be a foundational goal in every educational organization.

– **Barry D. Simpson, Inyo County Superintendent of Schools**



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ARTS IN INYO COUNTY

Inyo county is located in the remote, eastern part of California where the beauty of the Sierra Nevada, White Mountains and Death Valley inspire our artists, teachers, and students. The communities along the Highway 395 corridor and in Shoshone recognize the value and importance of making arts a part of every students' experience while integrating it into our community events and spaces. Inyo County Office of Education (ICOE) partners with two community-based organizations and our neighboring county to provide high-quality professional learning for educators, including addressing social emotional competencies, as well as arts education for students.

PROFESSIONAL LEARNING FOR EDUCATORS

In 2022, ICOE partnered with the California County Superintendents Arts Initiative and community organizations to provide a unique, retreat-style professional learning event for educators in the Eastern Sierra. The theme of the conference, "Arts Integration and Social Emotional Learning (SEL)," was addressed through two keynotes and several workshops. Aaron Bryan of the Fresno County Superintendent of Schools office eloquently shared his "One Heart Beating: The Unifying Power of the Arts" keynote to kickoff the event. Sessions on several arts media were included: Flowers and Pollination through Cooperative Recycled Materials Art; Exploring Dance through Conflict Resolution; and Language Expression through the Stage. The second keynote entitled "Our Town: Connecting



Teaching Artist, Allison Peeler, teaches participants to use songs for students to demonstrate their knowledge of historical concepts.

the Community to the Classroom" was specific to issues in rural arts education and was presented by Cara Goger of the Mariposa County Office of Education. In addition to the sessions, educators also had the option of participating in a yoga session or guided painting workshop. Attending to adult social



Teachers create a visual arts project using recycled materials to show a science concept.

emotional learning was central in planning the event. Educators left feeling refreshed to finish out the school year, inspired to make long-term arts planning part of what we do in rural education, and ready to use tools for integrating arts into many different subjects.

This past year, there were several opportunities to further educators' understanding of arts integration with workshops offered by visual and media artist Naomi Hart of C5 Studios. Working from a space where the arts become the approach to teaching and the vehicle for learning, teachers had the option of participating in two different workshops addressing two different curricular areas. The first workshop looked at integrating Dance and Music with Social Studies, and the second using Visual Arts in Mathematics. In addition, educational leaders gathered in July for a Proposition 28 Bootcamp. This effort helped districts understand what is required by Proposition 28 as well as some protected time for planning implementation.

ARTS EDUCATION

Through a partnership with community-based organizations, ICOE is able to offer several arts programs for students.

K-5 Art Docent Program: The Art Docent program provides visual art curriculum training for volunteer classroom docents who then combine history and art theory lessons with engaging hands-on art activities for students. ICA and ICOE have brought this program into classrooms across the county, including many Spanish-English dual immersion programs, for the past nine years.

Poetry Out Loud: Inyo Council for the Arts (ICA) and ICOE facilitate countywide participation in the National Endowment for the Arts and the California Arts Council's Poetry Out Loud competition, which encourages students to learn about great poetry, master public speaking skills, build self-confidence, and learn about their literary heritage.

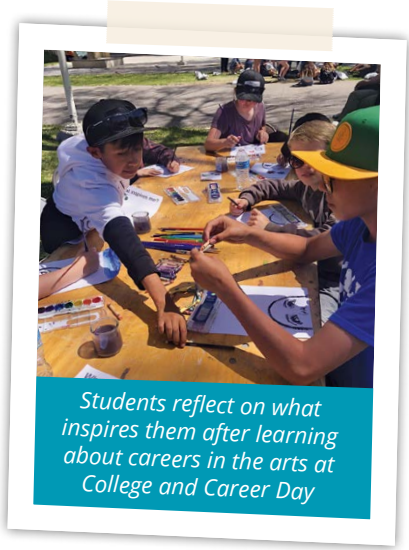
After-School Art Classes: ICOE and ICA, with additional support from the California Arts Council, are in their seventh year of offering a wide array of after-school arts classes in such subjects as oil and watercolor painting, ceramics, music (guitar), beading, caricature drawing, aboriginal dot art, and origami. These classes are taught by local artists and are presented at sites across the county, including schools for at-risk student populations.



Elementary students participate in a School Arts Day event.

School Arts Days: Annually at each elementary school in the county, students participate in an art activity with volunteer leaders and receive an art kit to take home. The art project is paired with a story that the students read in class.

Career Day: Grade 5 students explore careers related to the arts at an annual day-long College and Career Day in partnership with our local Community College.



Students reflect on what inspires them after learning about careers in the arts at College and Career Day