

Kern County

Visual and performing arts are an essential part of a well-rounded education. By participating in the various arts events the Kern County Superintendent of Schools office co-hosts, students are afforded the opportunity of discovery and driven to excel not only in their chosen art form, but also in life.

- John G. Mendiburu, Kern County Superintendent of Schools



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The Kern County Superintendent of Schools (KCSOS) values community collaboration that helps enrich students' lives through the arts. What follows are a few of the highlights of the county's programs.

YOUNG PEOPLE'S CONCERTS

The KCSOS has long partnered with Bakersfield Symphony Orchestra to host three field trips throughout the year wherein thousands of local elementary students convene for a kid-friendly introduction to classical music and the types of instruments that make up the beautiful sounds of the symphony.

BAKERSFIELD SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA NEXT (BSO NEXT)

Bakersfield Symphony Orchestra also gives away hundreds of tickets to students through its BSO NEXT program so they may attend evening concerts with their families. The program started in 2014 as a donor-based endeavor



that allows students from all over Kern County to experience live symphonic music. This program includes a special pre-concert lecture with the conductor, guest soloists and musicians, and a complimentary snack at intermission. Since most of the students sponsored are from underprivileged areas, the BSO NEXT program opens the world of possibilities for those who otherwise may never have the opportunity to attend due to financial limitations.

NUTCRACKER FIELD TRIP

Another community collaboration takes place every December when busloads of school children get a sneak peek at the production of Tchaikovsky's Nutcracker ballet performed by the Civic Dance Center. The four performances over two mornings are a win-win. The field trip allows the dancers — the majority of whom are school-age kids themselves — to fine-tune their moves before the public opening, while giving kids from throughout the county access to a holiday favorite that they might not otherwise be fortunate to see.



ALTERNATIVE EDUCATION BRIDGES ACADEMY ART EXHIBIT

One of the career technical education (CTE) pathway programs offered to students attending KCSOS' Bridges Academy is Media Arts. Students may complete introductory courses in this discipline and discover career options in this field of study. Annual trips to CalArts and an Art Walk of downtown Bakersfield are favorite events each year. Student-generated art is featured in an art show and silent auction during the fall, with all proceeds going back into the program. With new CTE funding expected this year, plans are to install a silkscreen studio where original designs can be transferred to products and complement the other entrepreneurial CTE and project-based classroom programs at the school.

HONORS MUSIC CONCERTS

The KCSOS also partners with the Kern County Music Educators Association and local school districts to bring two very special educational concerts to the community — one for junior high musicians and a second for high schoolers. In winter, the collaboration brings together 400

of the finest high school musicians and singers for the annual "It's a Grand Night for Music" — a concert wherein the students have an opportunity to work with guest conductors and directors. Students earn a place in this annual showcase of Kern County's most promising high school musicians and singers through an audition process. The Kern County Honors Music Festival is a similar event that is geared toward junior high and middle school students and takes place every February.

HISTORY DAY

History Day in California is an exciting, history-based learning experience for students in grades four to twelve. They not only learn about issues, ideas, people, and events in history, but they apply what they have learned through creative and original productions. Beyond simply memorizing names and dates and reporting on historical events, History Day students develop invaluable research and analytical skills as they process the information gathered through intensive research and present their conclusions through visually-appealing presentation boards, websites and performances.



ORAL LANGUAGE FESTIVAL

Schools all over Kern County participate in the Oral Language Festival, a competitive event where students perform interpretations of pieces of literature in front of an audience. Presentations are three to five minutes in length with students in grades four to six and in grades seven to eight competing separately. Categories of competition are: Verse Choir, Humorous Interpretation Solo, Humorous Interpretation Duo, Serious Interpretation Solo, and Serious Interpretation Duo.

