The arts are a vital part of a well-rounded education for every student. Combining music, art, dance and drama with subjects such as math, reading and language can enhance student engagement and boost academic achievement. The arts help create a positive learning environment that fosters teaching innovation and prepares students for success in the information age.

– Debra Duardo, M.S.W., Ed.D., Los Angeles County Superintendent of Schools

The arts are trending throughout the hundreds of school sites that make up the Los Angeles County Office of Education and are an essential component of a robust and high-quality educational experience. LACOE provides leadership and support for quality arts programs in 80 school districts serving 1.5 million students within the county. Our work in providing classroom strategies, professional development and an infusion of innovative arts programs has created a new level of engagement and creativity among teachers, administrators and staff throughout the massive county educational system. We sponsor arts competitions, we have critical partnerships with iconic companies like Disney and Universal and we are looking to bring innovative pathways in the way our schools integrate the arts into classrooms and students’ lives.

Arts Integration, SEL, MTSS and supporting English Learners funded through State and Federal Grants

TEAL – Technology Enhanced Arts Learning (TEAL) Project

• The Los Angeles County Office of Education (LACOE) has partnered with the Los Angeles County Department of Arts and Culture and the Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health (DMH) to forge and implement high-quality professional development through a blended learning model, focused on Arts Integration, Social Emotional Learning (SEL), and Healing-Informed practices. This integrated approach energizes classroom practices. For participants, it cultivates a Multi-Tiered System of Support.
(MTSS) mindset and produces equitable outcomes with the TEAL Project, by aligning MTSS/PBIS (Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports) frameworks, and the Local Accountability Plan (LCAP).

Scale Up Academy! and Teaching English Learners through the Arts (TELA) Grants • This approach by LACOE’s Center for Distance and Online Learning (CDOL) Unit, has captured several important grants supporting use of the arts to address the whole child. There are, through, two grants which were unique, in offering one-of-a-kind funding opportunities. LACOE received the only Student Support and Academic Enrichment Grant Program (SSAE), under the category Effective Use of Technology which is completely focused on the arts. This funding allowed LACOE to include 30 school districts and four additional county offices of education, as participants in the Scale Up! Project, which included both charter and private school networks. This five-day professional development was customized to support schools with capacity-building strategies and blended professional development opportunities that focused on increasing their Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS) and Arts Integration knowledge and strategies using effective technology.

The second unique grant secured by LACOE, was a federal grant from the Office of English Language Acquisition (OELA). This funding supports our Teaching English Learners through the Arts Project (TELA), an innovative program to improve effective instruction for English Learners for both in-service and pre-service teachers. The approach encourages strong partnerships and engagement of parents/families. TELA online and in-person resources deliver the Visual and Performing Arts disciplines, and include resources to increase the engagement and production of language development and content area knowledge for English Learners (EL’s), as well as supporting Social Emotional Learning (SEL).

Student Educational Programs
The Los Angeles County High School for the Arts (LACHSA), run by the LACOE in partnership with California State University, Los Angeles sits proudly on the university campus, and offers a tuition-free specialized program combining college-preparatory academic instruction and conservatory-style training in the visual and performing arts. Recognized as one of the premier public arts high schools in the country, LACHSA is the recipient of numerous awards, including the California Distinguished School for Academic Excellence, CSBA’s Golden Bell Award, Grammy Signature School, Bravo Award for excellence in arts education and the Exemplary School Designation by the Arts Schools Network.

The Poetry Out Loud National Recitation Contest is conducted by LACOE in partnership with the California Arts Council. Sponsored by the National Endowment for the Arts and the National Poetry Foundation, this contest encourages high school students to study and appreciate poetry through practice, performance, and competition. The Very Special Arts Festival is an annual event celebrating the artistic achievements of students with disabilities and their mainstream peers. The festival which is held at the Los Angeles Music Center, features student art exhibits, student and professional performances, and visual and performing arts workshops. Co-sponsored by LACOE and the Los Angeles Unified School District with generous support from multiple public and private organizations, this popular event is open to students in all grade levels.