

San Diego County

Our goal at the San Diego County Office of Education (SDCOE) is to reduce the number of students who are living in poverty by providing a pathway to economic mobility. We know that education plays a vital role in that, and introducing kids to the arts can also help improve the academic and economic futures of students. More arts funding is a matter of equity and improving student outcomes.

- Paul Gothold, San Diego County Superintendent of Schools



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The San Diego County Office of Education (SDCOE) serves the region's most vulnerable students, and supports school leaders, teachers, and students across the county. We support some 780 schools and nearly 500,000 students, including the children in our Juvenile Court and Community Schools.

SDCOE provides a variety of services for the 42 school districts, 129 charter schools, and five community college districts in the county. Our mission is to inspire and lead innovation in education, and our North Star goal over the next several years is to reduce the percentage of students qualifying for free or reduced lunch as part of a larger effort to elevate the needs of historically underserved students and families.

The full-time arts coordinator at SDCOE provides innovative, high-quality professional learning grounded in the California Arts Education Framework and Standards to strengthen academic instruction, and works to ensure equity and access for each and every student.

DESIGNING AND FACILITATING PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

SDCOE provides on-demand professional learning for schools, districts, and arts organizations grounded in the California Arts Education Framework and the California Arts Standards. Topics include assessments for learning, Grading for Equity, Arts Integration, and Universal Design for Learning.

Since 2013, the Arts Empower San Diego Mega Conference has been providing collaborative professional learning sessions for educators, school and district administrators, and teaching artists. This conference prides itself on offering topics that span all five arts disciplines as well as sessions centered on equity



and access, culturally responsive pedagogy, Universal Design for Learning, and inclusion of students with disabilities in the arts classroom.

In response to the dramatic increase in elementary arts teachers as a result of the implementation of Proposition 28, an online platform has been created to provide a space for elementary educators to learn practical ways to implement the state's Arts standards in their classrooms while building relationships with other educators across the county.

A regional book study was created around *Street Data* by Shane Safir and Jamila Dugan. Participants



read and discuss the book through the lens of increasing access to arts education. Collaborative conversations are designed to increase our own sense of belonging and community as we explore ways to improve inclusion for students in arts education. The timing of this study works as a companion to schools as they utilize their Proposition 28 funding as the CDE states: “School administrators—in collaboration with teachers, families, and students—should together make the choice that best serves students in their local school community.”

SUPPORTING THE DEVELOPMENT OF EDUCATOR LEADERSHIP

The Arts Leaders Collaborative meets regularly for learning, reflecting, and community building through the lens of providing all students an equitable and effective arts education. In response to the implementation of Proposition 28, this group is researching topics such as professional learning, arts materials and equipment, staffing, and partnerships. This model of collaborative learning continues to be an effective way to support the development of leaders who are in turn positioned to support educators in addressing the needs of all students.

The Increasing Access to Arts Education: Implementing Prop 28 series was created in spring 2023 and continues to grow and evolve as more information on the implementation of Proposition 28 funding becomes available. This series illustrates how to use the state Arts Education Framework as a guide to best serving the needs of all students when planning to allocate new funding.

NURTURING PARTNERSHIPS BETWEEN ARTS EDUCATION ENTITIES

The Arts Education Resource Organization (AERO) is a collective of arts organizations and artists dedicated to working together to build bridges between schools and the arts community. AERO began in 2006 with the vision that all San Diego County students have access to engaging, relevant, quality arts education. Members meet throughout the year to network, share promising practices, collaborate, and participate in professional learning. An online directory of arts organizations is made available to educators and leaders looking to bring on new partners to supplement the arts education happening in our schools.

Since 1999, La Jolla Playhouse and the Visual and Performing Arts Department of SDCOE, have been recognized as a Partners in Education site as certified by the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts in Washington, D.C. This unique partnership places professional teaching artists in schools with classroom teachers to incorporate theatre activities and exercises into existing curriculum, while providing professional learning opportunities for educators.



GUIDANCE TO EDUCATORS THROUGH CURATED RESOURCES

Whether districts in San Diego County are looking for assistance with an arts lens in writing their LCAP, addressing CA Dashboard indicators, or implementing Proposition 28, SDCOE is ready to respond. Using a variety of communication tools including websites, social media, newsletters, as well as in-person and virtual meetings, SDCOE provides current research and resources to answer the most pressing questions in the region in order to support all students. Curated resources include topics such as staffing, standards-based curriculum, professional learning, arts facilities and materials, leadership and advocacy development, partnerships, scheduling, arts integration, and student opportunities.

FACILITATING STRATEGIC ARTS EDUCATION PLANS

In collaboration with Arts Empower, the number of San Diego County school districts with completed strategic arts education plans continues to increase. This is timely and powerful as schools continue to receive arts education funding through the Arts & Music Block Grant, ELOP, LCAP, Title I, Title II, Title III, Title IV and Proposition 28. SDCOE is able to provide strategic planning facilitation to districts free of charge.