

San Joaquin County

In San Joaquin County, our local districts value arts education and the extraordinary impact it has on students. As such, the San Joaquin County Office of Education (SJCOE) offers several innovative programs and events to support access to high-quality arts education for all students. This can be seen through our longstanding programs like Artists-in-Schools residencies, which brings professional artists into county classrooms for art lessons, as well as newer programs like the Color the Summer Art Camp, a scholarship-based experience that allows younger students to learn art skills from high school instructors during an overnight stay at the Sky Mountain Outdoor Education Center. We are also expanding opportunities to recognize student artists and showcase their works by hosting a countywide art show and an exhibition featuring artwork by students in our juvenile justice system.



We understand that arts education is about enriching students' lives and helping them develop creativity, critical thinking, and more. Art allows students to tell their stories and provides educators an opportunity to connect with each student. We are proud to continue supporting arts education at the SJCOE and are grateful for the administrators and arts educators who work to develop students' talent and creativity each day.

- Troy A. Brown, San Joaquin County Superintendent of Schools

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STUDENT ARTISTS THRIVE AT SUMMER CAMP IN MOUNTAINS

The Second Annual Color the Summer Art Camp took place in June 2023 at the San Joaquin County Office of Education's (SJCOE) Sky Mountain Outdoor Education Center. Students in grades 4 through 8 spent time expanding their art skills and knowledge with numerous exercises and art sessions led by talented high school art instructors who shared their knowledge in this outdoor setting.

"It is critical to engage our students with art," said Erika Chapman, who coordinates student activities and events at the SJCOE, including the summer sleepaway camp focused on the arts. "They are growing in a digital world where creativity is driving the workforce. We want to foster these young artists and



guide them in their journey to self-expression."

Eighth grade camper, Sirius, was a first-time attendee this year, but she cannot wait to come back as an instructor. "I have a love of art in general – the expression of drawing characters and backgrounds," she said. "I hope to apply as a student leader next year."

The young campers came from school districts across San Joaquin County. So did the high school students who provided artistic instruction. "We wanted to connect to students in a relatable way," Chapman said. "As well as encourage high school artists to not only continue expanding their craft, but to receive real-life work experience too."

Sophia, a student from Mountain House High School (Lammersville Unified School District), taught a lesson on pointillism – the technique of painting small, distinct dots in patterns to form an image. She loved the challenge of teaching her craft to the younger students. "Teaching is different than just creating," she said, "I have to be mindful of the time and have to stop to explain my process to my students."

Activities for students ranged from making resin jewelry and wire sculptures to using watercolors and bubble art. Each of the activities were strategically implemented to ensure students learned key art lessons and specific techniques like 2D-to-3D building, color exposure, and the seven elements of art.

In total, 153 students were guided through twelve activities. In between, students had free time to swim, canoe, sing campfire songs, and play games with fellow campers.

In order to remove financial barriers to attending the camp, scholarships were available for every student through funding from the SJCOE, Changing FACES Theatre Company, California Arts Council, Linden Unified School District, and Manteca Unified School District.

BUILDING CONFIDENCE AND CONTINUITY IN ART THROUGH ARTIST RESIDENCIES

“Miss Dani!” The first grade students at Golden West Elementary School (Manteca Unified School District) were thrilled to see Daniela Valles Garcia, or “Miss Dani,” back in their classroom for a fourth consecutive week. Garcia is an artist-in-residence as part of the San Joaquin County Office of Education (SJCOE) Artists-in-Schools program, which has brought professional artists into classrooms throughout San Joaquin County for 22 years.

Through the program, schools within the county can book professional artists for an hour of classroom arts instruction across a four- or eight-week residency, where students build foundational knowledge of art concepts, genres, and techniques using different mediums, such as oil pastels, tempera paint, drawing pencils, and watercolors. The goal is to build students’ confidence with



the skills they learn, and empower them to continue making art beyond the residency.

Each artist creates their own California Standards-based lesson plans for their residencies to ensure the lessons taught match their expertise. To incorporate the program’s annual theme of social-emotional learning, Garcia and her colleagues are helping students create, experiment, imagine, and express themselves through art, all while taking risks and sharing emotions in a safe controlled environment.

“There are no mistakes in art, only happy accidents,” she said, echoing famed artist Bob Ross to reassure students as they learned about monochromatic colors through a watercolor activity. If you listened to their collaboration, you heard students using terminology learned from previous weeks, such as shading, realism, and even landscape and portrait page orientation.”

“The students really benefit from having artists in the classroom,” said Dawn Inthavong, a teacher at Golden West Elementary School. “I’m not able to teach them this skill, so it’s nice that an artist is able to come in and provide them with an art and art history lesson every week.”

Interest in the program has grown over the years, increasing from 727 county classrooms receiving services during the 2021-2022 school year to 1,136 in 2023-2024.

Due to the high demand, the SJCOE hired seven new resident artists this school year, including Garcia, in order to offer seventeen resident artists to county schools.

one.CRUIKSHANK JUVENILE JUSTICE CENTER HOLDS FIRST ART COMPETITION AND SHOW

one.Cruikshank is a year-round alternative education program for individuals enrolled in the Juvenile Court School. It hosted its first facility-wide art show in October 2023. The show, titled “SEASONS,” featured six unique and colorful student art pieces depicting “a season of self-love.” The displayed works were the winning pieces of the 28 submitted for the school’s art competition, which was judged by teachers, court judges, and other volunteers. Each piece took students around twelve hours across two months to complete. The art projects were created as part of the first quarter’s ethnic studies lesson on self-love.

