

Solano County

Solano County Office of Education

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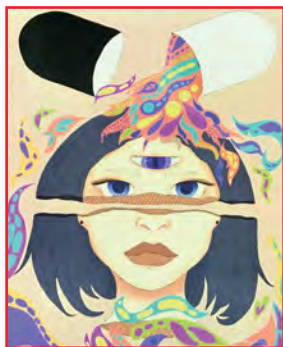
“Visual and Performing Arts are a vitally important link to increased academic success through the advancement of a child’s creativity, language and motor skills, critical thinking, and cultural awareness. Each year in Solano County, we host a Student Art Faire to showcase our local student artists’ amazing talent presented in a variety of formats. The event celebrates the importance of the arts in education and also honors the instructional gifts of our county’s wonderful art teachers!”



- Lisette Estrella-Henderson, Solano County Superintendent of Schools

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The Solano County Office of Education (SCOE) works collaboratively with our districts and community partners to ensure that all students have access to the arts throughout their educational experiences. SCOE recognizes that an education in the arts—dance, media arts, music, theatre, and visual arts—develops engaged students with creative skills for expression, thought, and language use. In order to meaningfully engage our districts in arts education we provide professional learning opportunities at both the site and county level. Solano County also offers opportunities for stakeholders to meet as a Visual and Performing Arts consortium, and SCOE continually collaborates



to develop innovative ways to integrate the arts into a multitude of learning environments.

The SCOE has also been partnering with local districts and community partners to update and implement the Solano County Arts Education Plan.



SCOE’s Youth Service’s Department coordinates and hosts the Solano County Annual Student Art Faire, showcasing incredible works of art from students, grades 4-12 attending schools across the county. The expansive art exhibit, featuring a wide array of media, is open to the public and centrally located at the Solano County Fairgrounds. The students, as well as their creative

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works, are celebrated with an artist reception bringing community members, classmates, teachers, family and friends together to recognize the passion and talent expressed by each unique individual. The student artwork is then displayed year-round at public buildings including the SCOE and Solano County Superior Court Hall of Justice. SCOE is proud of the learning and creative opportunities the *Student Art Faire* has provided to Solano students for over 35 years.

SCOE partners with the *Integrated Learning Specialist Program (ILSP)*, with support from The William and Flora Hewlett Foundation, in order to offer educators of all levels the opportunity to grow professionally and deepen contemporary educational strategies with a focus on arts integration and equity. Workshops hosted by SCOE and facilitated by ILSP specialists offer hands-on professional learning focused on an introduction to arts integrated teaching and learning, curriculum development, and assessment grounded in contemporary arts and educational frameworks from *Harvard's Project Zero: Teaching for Understanding, Studio Thinking, and Making Learning Visible*. During these workshops, participants explore concepts in math, science, history and language



arts through two arts disciplines, investigating the different ways that creative arts help students formulate questions, synthesize, and express learning in core subjects.

Benicia Unified School District, one of Solano County's six districts, has a strong history of working to ensure that arts are accessible to all students. Elementary schools partner with various professionals in the community to offer a Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, Math (STEAM) wheel to students in grades 3-5. These students get three different five-week classes such as: dance, drawing, music, robotics, coding, chess, tinkering, singing/voice, and drama. At the middle school level, Benicia has very popular art electives as well



as a great band and Viking TV! Middle school drama classes are wonderful and put on shows every year. There is also a stagecraft class for those choosing to work behind the scenes. At Benicia's comprehensive high school, there is a wide variety of popular art classes including sculpture, photography, and imaging. Drama and music are also popular classes at Benicia High School (BHS). Benicia also works in partnership with the local arts community so that students from the continuation high school have opportunities for integrated arts projects and to participate in art centered field trips.

In the Fairfield-Suisun Unified School District, Oakbrook Academy of the Arts was recently recognized with the California Exemplary Arts Education Award. At the TK-8 school, the mission is "to drive arts integration — where curriculum comes alive for students through the arts and where every student can find a way — traditionally or through the arts — to show success academically". Students in TK, kindergarten and fourth grades focus on music, first and fifth grades place an emphasis on dance, second and sixth emphasize visual arts, and third and seventh grade focus on theater. Eighth graders concentrate on all four of the visual and performing arts.

Students at Oakbrook Academy of the Arts are also provided with opportunities to participate in the arts through experiences in the surrounding communities. Oakbrook Academy students have been able to participate in field trips to the Geary Theater in San Francisco, the Mondavi Center at UC Davis, and "Nutcracker" performances at the Vacaville Performing Arts Theatre. The school also hosts performances from visiting artists on campus. Justine Turner, principal of Oakbrook Academy plays an active role in promoting the arts throughout Solano County, sharing Oakbrook's work and having conversations with site and district leaders to help them integrate the arts into their own existing programs.