



# SACRAMENTO CITY UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT BOARD OF EDUCATION

Agenda Item #11.4

**Meeting Date:** February 19, 2015

**Subject:** Arts Education Update

- Information Item Only
- Approval on Consent Agenda
- Conference (for discussion only)
- Conference/First Reading (Action Anticipated: \_\_\_\_\_)
- Conference/Action
- Action
- Public Hearing

**Division:** Academic Office/Curriculum & Instruction

**Recommendation:** NA

**Background/Rationale:** Sacramento City Unified School District (SCUSD) recognizes that high quality Arts Education is essential to the development of the whole child and contributes significantly to raising student achievement. This is underscored in Pillar I of the district's strategic plan, where Visual and Performing Arts are highlighted as an integral part of the district's blueprint for providing students with a relevant, rigorous and well-rounded education that prepares them for an array of post-secondary options. Likewise, this value of the importance of the Arts was echoed by our community throughout the LCAP process. As such, the district has remained committed to providing an array of K-12 Arts programs, and engages in a diverse range of partnerships in an effort to not only strengthen, but expand Arts opportunities for its students.

**Financial Considerations:** Costs associated with implementation of the Arts program include funding for middle school music teachers, professional learning, artists' residencies, arts exposure experiences, and maintenance of the district's music library. Total annual costs are estimated to be \$684,000 supported with a combination of LCFF, categorical, and grant funds.

**LCAP Goal(s):** College and Career Ready Students

**Documents Attached:**

1. Executive Summary

**Estimated Time of Presentation:** 15 minutes

**Submitted by:** Olivine Roberts, Chief Academic Office;  
Iris Taylor, Assistant Superintendent,  
Curriculum & Instruction; and Gayle Carrick,  
Fine Arts Training Specialist

**Approved by:** José L. Banda, Superintendent

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### I. Overview of Arts Education

Sacramento City Unified School District (SCUSD) recognizes that high quality Arts Education is essential to the development of the whole child and contributes significantly to raising student achievement. This is underscored in Pillar I of the district's strategic plan, where Visual and Performing Arts are highlighted as an integral part of the district's blueprint for providing students with a relevant, rigorous and well-rounded education that prepares them for an array of college and career options. Furthermore, the importance of the Arts was echoed by the community throughout the LCAP process. It is widely known that effective Arts instruction is crucial to developing skills needed in the 21st century workforce such as creativity, collaboration, critical thinking, problem solving, and communication. As such, SCUSD has remained committed in its efforts to maintain Arts programs in the midst of deep budget cuts and what has been described as one of the most challenging times in California's education history.

To provide a diverse range of relevant and meaningful Arts experiences and curricular programs for students, SCUSD offers three major forms of Arts education which include the following:

- Curricular Arts are stand alone, standards-based Visual and Performing Arts (VAPA) classes taught by certificated teachers in music, dance, theater and visual arts. The majority of these classes are offered in middle and high schools, and provide students with variety of courses to not only fulfill the fine arts requirement for high school graduation, but to explore different art forms.
- Arts integration is an approach to teaching and learning in which students engage in a creative process through the arts that addresses curricular standards in an art form and another subject area. For example, in a science class, students create and perform a dance to demonstrate their understanding of why seasons exist. Students use the dance to demonstrate the energy of the sun, the rotation and orbits of the planets, and the relationship of these to the seasons. This approach is most often used at the elementary level and/or in the Arts Pathways at the high school level.
- Arts Enhancement is the use of arts strategies and arts activities to enhance student learning in another subject area, to enhance the school environment, and as a vehicle to promote social emotional learning. The majority of these classes are offered through the Youth Services Department and take place before and/or after school.

In order to increase Arts programming for its students and to provide the most current Arts focused professional learning opportunities for its teachers, SCUSD has thoughtfully pursued partnerships with regional, state, and national arts education leaders such as the Sacramento

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Municipal Arts Commission (SMAC), The Kennedy Center, California County Superintendents Arts Initiative, CA Alliance for Arts Education, California Office to Reform Education (CORE), and The California Arts Project. These partnerships serve to move the district closer to its goal of providing access to high quality Arts programs and instruction for every SCUSD student.

## II. Driving Governance

In recent years, schools across the United States have substantially reduced Arts programs in response to budget concerns and pressures to improve academic test scores. However, a substantial body of research demonstrates that various forms of Arts Education including Arts integration, Arts enhancement, and Curricular Arts, can be an asset to districts and schools in achieving educational goals. Stanford Professor Elliot Eisner, asserts that a curriculum that includes music, dance, and art is essential in developing critical thinking skills because the arts teach children to make good judgments, celebrate multiple perspectives, and that problems can have multiple solutions. Similarly, Harvard's Project Zero found that through engaging in the Arts, students learn to persist at solving problems, develop craft, reach beyond one's capacities, and how to embrace the opportunity to learn from mistakes.

Building these competencies are also a focus of the Common Core State Standards (CCSS), which the district has been in the process of implementing over the past four years as a primary vehicle for actualizing the goals of college and career readiness. Thus, the Arts are a key lever in the district's implementation of the math and ELA Common Core State Standards, and will contribute greatly to student success in achieving the vision inherent within these standards. The Arts support the implementation of the Common Core Standards for Mathematical Practice, the Common Core English Language Arts (ELA) Standards, the new California ELD Standards, as well as provide students with meaningful content and contexts for the deep analytical thinking and reasoning called for in these standards.

Arts Education is also a driver in the district's pursuit of closing the achievement gap and creating greater educational equity. Studies find that students from low socio-economic backgrounds, English learners, and students with special needs (often underserved in public schools) show the greatest relative improvement in academic achievement when participating in the Arts. As such, a primary consideration in SCUSD's strategy for implementing Arts experiences and programs has been to increase access in schools that have limited Arts opportunities and where the achievement gap persists.

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### III. Budget

The budget that supports the district's Visual and Performing Arts initiatives covers various costs including those for professional learning, artists' residencies, arts exposure experiences, middle school music teachers, and maintenance of the district's music library. Sources of funding are a combination of LCFF, categorical, and grant funding as outlined in the following table.

Funding Source	Amount
LCFF (General Funds)	\$379,501
Categorical Funds	\$242,136
Grant Funds	\$ 62,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$683,637</b>

### IV. Goals, Objectives and Measures

The goals for the Visual and Performing Arts programs are to provide high quality learning experience and increase access to the Arts, particularly for student populations that are traditionally underserved in this area. The district will assess the quality and effectiveness of Visual and Performing Arts initiatives through multiple measures. The quality of instruction and professional learning will be determined through observations of instruction and teacher reflection. In addition, the district will collect perception data through student, teacher, and parent surveys, plus evaluations of professional learning. All results will be used to determine if program changes are warranted.

### V. Major Initiatives

The district utilizes a varied approach to providing high quality Arts programming to its students, which include initiatives such as curricular arts as well as arts integration and enhancement. In addition, SCUSD engages in key strategies to build teacher capacity to implement high quality instruction. Below is a description of the Arts initiatives and capacity building opportunities.

#### Arts Initiatives

- Curricular Arts

The district offers an array of Arts programs through elective courses offered in middle and high schools. Students at the high school level must complete ten (10) credits or one (1)

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course in the Arts as a requirement for graduation. Students are able to select from traditional Arts classes such as music, dance, theatre, and visual art, as well as other courses such as photography, graphic arts, and animation. Small schools that offer an intense programming in a single Linked Learning pathway provide arts integrated courses such as Visual Arts for Engineers to introduce students to the ways the Arts influence various industries and careers. At the elementary level, some schools provide Arts programming through music and art preparation periods, as well as through the integration of arts within other content areas.

As a means of strengthening the curricular Arts program at the secondary level, SCUSD has begun using Title-I funds to support the integration of the Arts and literacy as in intervention designed to build students' literacy achievement. Currently, six (6) middle schools are implementing this intervention as a part of their curricular programs.

- Arts Integration and Enhancement

A completion of a district-wide needs assessment determined that the greatest demand existed at the elementary level. The district acknowledges that early exposure and experiences in the arts at the elementary level contribute to the quality of its programs at the secondary level. Thus, strengthening Arts opportunities at the elementary continues to be a focus, in spite of the limited resources, as indicated by the following initiatives:

- *Any Given Child*

In 2009, Sacramento became the first *Any Given Child* city in the nation, as a result of a partnership between Mayor Kevin Johnson and Michael Kaiser of the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts. The primary goal of the Kennedy Center's *Any Given Child* program is to assist communities in developing a plan to expand arts education in their schools that will ensure access and equity for all students in grades K-8. Over the last three years, in SCUSD, this continued partnership has brought over 20 Kennedy Center professional learning opportunities to teachers and staff, offered annual Arts exposure experience to every site K-8, and provided 40 artists in residence. This year *Any Given Child* teaching artists will provide 10-week residencies in 15 classrooms. Both artists and classroom teachers will be trained by Kennedy Center staff on the Kennedy model of arts integration and continue to meet for facilitated planning sessions. Artists and teachers will collaborate to provide students a series of classes that address agreed upon curriculum standards in the artist's discipline and in another subject areas. This year, the residency program will impact approximately 450 students.

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#### ○ *Link Up*

In partnership with the Carnegie Hall's *Link Up* national program and the Sacramento Philharmonic Orchestra, teachers in SCUSD and other surrounding school districts, participate in professional learning designed to teach recorders to 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup> or 5<sup>th</sup> grade students using the Carnegie Hall Curriculum. The *Link Up* program provides recorders and music books for students and a teacher guide along with interactive online learning resources for the classroom. Throughout the learning process, members of the Sacramento Philharmonic are available for school visits to share with students what it is like to be a professional musician and to be a part of an orchestra. This year, 650 students from six schools (William Land, Leonardo Da Vinci, Father Keith B. Kenny, Abraham Lincoln, Caroline Wenzel, and Elder Creek) will learn pieces of music that they will perform along with the Sacramento Philharmonic Orchestra. This culminating event will be held in April at the Community Center Theatre.

#### ○ *Overture*

*Overture* is a collaboration with the Sacramento Youth Symphony, Sacramento State String Project, and SCUSD. It is designed to empower students and their families through music. Inspired by the El Sistema movement from Venezuela, *Overture* is a program of social change through music. As students become citizens of the orchestra, they are transformed into citizens of the community. SCUSD's first program was based at Fruit Ridge Elementary School and now resides at Father Keith B. Kenny School serving over 100 students. This year, the program expanded to Pacific Elementary with the implementation of a beginning class. No prior music experience is required and instruments are provided at no charge.

*Overture* takes a holistic approach to teaching and supporting children and families. Each day, the students learn their instrument by playing in an orchestra. During the week, students also receive group instruction. The students learn and then teach what they have learned to the family members. As the students advance, they begin to mentor students new to the orchestra. The lead teacher develops a relationship with each family to ensure that students are supported and parents are fully engaged in the program. The overall goal is for the *Overture* site to become a nucleus for the school community, creating pride and encouraging community participation.

### **Capacity Building**

The district has initiated several approaches to building teacher and leader capacity to support and strengthen the quality of Arts instruction and programming at their sites. Through a range of partnerships with local, regional, and national Arts organizations, SCUSD has been able to

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provide the most current professional learning to its teachers in the areas of Common Core and the Arts. Below are some of the capacity building opportunities that are being provided to teachers.

- *DRIVE 4 ARTS*

The *DRIVE 4 ARTS* grant is a professional learning Arts Education grant from the U.S. Department of Education with the primary goal of Arts resurgence and teacher sustainability. The grant supports building and expanding capacity for K-8 multiple subject teachers to implement and sustain arts integration, and for K-12 Arts teachers to implement the Common Core Literacy Standards, as part of a high quality, comprehensive education for students. The grant requires multi-district collaboration and the involvement of community partners. The *DRIVE 4 ARTS* project builds on the partnership with SCUSD, Twin Rivers Unified School District, The California Arts Project (TCAP), the Kennedy Center's Any Given Child program, Partners in Education, Carnegie Hall *Link Up*, and current and previous grants to provide professional learning in the Arts. Since 2012, seventy-five (75) SCUSD single subject arts teachers, multiple subject teachers, afterschool providers, and administrators have participated in professional learning including Arts integration using the Kennedy Center's definition and model, the Common Core State Standards for Literacy in Technical Subjects, the new National Visual and Performing Arts Standards, and the backward design lesson planning framework to support sustained and intensive learning in designing and delivering high quality arts integrated lessons and units of study.

- *ELA Common Core State Standards and Arts Integration Professional Learning*

Arts integration professional learning is being provided this year as a strand in the district's ELA Common Core sessions for school leadership teams. In these sessions, K-12 teachers and administrators learn about what is Arts integration, how it help students learn, what it look like in the classroom, and how it aligns to and supports the Common Core State Standards. Participants engage in hands-on arts experiences that deepen learning, promote critical thinking and problem solving skills, and ignite academic inquiry. Sessions have also been offered at sites, upon request, for the entire staff and in collaboration with other departments such as Special Education and the Multilingual Literacy departments. As a result of these learning opportunities, teachers have access to resources that support ongoing learning and development in Arts integration and a network of teachers engaging in a community of practice.

- *Visual And Performing Arts (VAPA) Common Planning Time (CPT)*

Common Planning Time (CPT) for arts teachers is provided in two-hour sessions once a month. These sessions provide VAPA teachers the opportunity to engage in hands-on

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activities in Arts integration of Common Core Literacy Standards in the arts classroom. These teachers become familiar with the Common Core Reading Writing and Speaking Standards for Technical Subjects, how to engage students with complex texts in art and music, and strategies to provide students with opportunities to respond to art/music orally and in writing. Student work is then evaluated using the data inquiry method. This year, ELA training specialists are sharing and incorporating the arts integration strategies within their daily work with schools. Hence, providing a vehicle for teachers to collaborate across sites and across subject areas.

- *Fine Arts Training Specialist*

The Fine Arts training specialist serves as a vehicle for providing differentiated support to teachers for building instructional capacity in the area of Arts integration and enhancement and renders customized support through collaborating with individuals or teams of teachers to design Arts integration lessons, observe and provide feedback, model effective practices, and facilitate the school-wide and district-wide professional learning. The Fine Arts training specialist works closely with the district's math and ELA/ELD training specialists to support teachers in integrating the Arts within math and literacy lessons to increase access to subject matter content and concepts. In addition, the Fine Arts training specialist serves as the liaison to local, regional, state-wide, and national Arts organizations and works to build strong partnerships and expand Arts opportunities for SCUSD's students.

## VI. Results

Although state assessments and standardized measures to assess student learning in and through the Arts are not available, current indicators of progress and results from district initiatives are outlined as follows:

- Students are engaged in school through the arts. Surveys show that students participating in the Arts are excited to come to school and are motivated to do well in other classes in order to take advantage of the various extra-curricular arts activities and field trips.
- Teachers report that they are excited to participate in the Arts professional learning sessions that equip them with useful strategies that have high impact on student learning and attitudes.
- Principals have noted that the Arts opportunities have contributed to student learning, fewer behavior referrals, and less absences.
- The Any Given Child program has expanded, from 12 to 15, to offer more Artists in Residence experiences. This component of the program has also grown from three to five schools.

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- The Link Up program has increased from five to six elementary school sites this year.
- The Overture program has grown to include beginning and advance String classes at Father Keith B Kenny and now includes a beginning Strings class at Pacific Elementary.

### VII. Lessons Learned/Next Steps

The district continues to assess its Arts programming and therefore, has learned many lessons over the past few years. Some key lessons learned and next steps are outlined:

- The vision outlined in the district's strategic plan is a powerful force that consistently guides this work.
- Increasing access at the elementary level is vital to providing equitable distribution of programming as well as to support pathways to age appropriate, quality programs at the secondary level.
- The Arts are a high leverage strategy in the implementation of the CCSS, and must be integrated seamlessly.
- Continue to garner community input regarding the Arts programs via the LCAP process.
- Maintain support and build the capacity of site administrators and teachers so they may champion and lead the Arts initiatives at their site.
- Continue to build capacity for Arts integration as a specific strategy to increase access to the arts for elementary students, support Title-I goals, enhance Common Core teaching and learning, and provide entry points for special populations of students.
- Increase communication regarding SCUSD's Arts initiatives to a wide range of stakeholders and partners.
- Seek additional opportunities to expand the Arts in SCUSD through grants, and other strategic partnerships.