BE A HERO FOR ARTS EDUCATION
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**ADVOCATE FEARLESSLY**
Share how arts education benefits all students! One of the best ways to promote arts education is to take every opportunity to let people know of its benefits. Arts education:

- Stimulates and develops the imagination and critical thinking, and refines cognitive and creative skills.
- Has proven to help level the “learning field” across socio-economic boundaries.
- Strengthens problem-solving skills, adding to overall academic achievement and school success.
- Develops a sense of craftsmanship, quality task performance, and goal-setting.
- Teaches children life skills such as developing an informed perception; articulating a vision; learning to solve problems and make decisions; building self-confidence and self-discipline; developing the ability to imagine what might be; and accepting responsibility to complete tasks from start to finish.
- Nurtures important values, including team-building skills; respecting alternative viewpoints; and appreciating and being aware of different cultures and traditions.

Source: Americans for the Arts. [http://www.artsusa.org/get_involved/advocacy/funding_resources/default_005.asp](http://www.artsusa.org/get_involved/advocacy/funding_resources/default_005.asp)

**PLAN PERSISTENTLY**
Successful arts education programs share basic key elements and are responsive to and reflective of their community.

- Provide strong leadership and support. Build alignment of support with administrators, board members, parents, teachers, community members, and students.
- Conduct an audit. Review data to determine how many students are served by arts learning programs in your school or district.
- Set clear goals. Develop measurable outcomes for access to standards-based, comprehensive, sequential arts learning.
- Strategically plan with partners. Develop an arts team that implements arts learning with other school programs. Be sure to include culturally and linguistically responsive strategies to meet the needs of diverse learners.
- Build capacity with all stakeholders. Provide professional learning opportunities for administrators, teachers, parents, and school board members to understand the benefits of arts education. Equip teachers and teaching artists to be able to teach quality arts in the classroom.
- Leverage and expand resources. Leverage existing resources and look for new avenues of funding to support arts learning in the schools. Partner with community organizations to meet your goals.
- Make arts learning visible. Find ways to showcase student work in the arts and acknowledge contributions by teachers and students.

**BOLDLY SEIZE OPPORTUNITIES**
Common Core State Standards
New standards, called Common Core State Standards (CCSS), are on the way for all students in California in math and English Language Arts beginning in the 2014-2015 school year. The new standards encourage students to move toward deeper learning, critical thinking and analysis, and collaboration. Not only must visual and performing arts be taught as their own disciplines, but the arts are also an essential way to teach children life skills such as developing an informed perception; articulating a vision; learning to solve problems and make decisions; building self-confidence and self-discipline; developing the ability to imagine what might be; and accepting responsibility to complete tasks from start to finish.

- Are teachers, artists, and arts organizations part of your school district’s planning and implementation process for curriculum design and professional development?
- Are lessons being developed to integrate the arts into language arts, math, science and history?

**TITLE I**
Schools that are designated by the U.S. Department of Education as “Title I” are schools identified for the purpose of improving achievement of students who are failing or at risk of failing to meet state standards. Research shows that the arts are a powerful tool to help all children succeed. The U.S. Department of Education has released guidance stating that “activities that support the arts, in conjunction with other activities, can help all children succeed.” The U.S. Department of Education has released guidance requiring schools to engage parents, teachers and local communities in creating a Local Control and Accountability Plan (LCAP). These plans must describe goals and specific measures the district will take to achieve them in eight priority areas – including providing students with access to required areas of study such as the arts. Every LCAP presents an opportunity for local districts to ensure there is a plan for arts education, dedicated resources, and a way to measure progress.

- Are parents, teachers, administrators and community members engaged in the Local Control Accountability Plan development and adoption process?
- What arts programs are currently being offered and what more should be done?
- How can arts education be considered as a way to raise achievement and support for high-needs students?

**LCEF and LCAP**
California has launched a historic new system for funding schools. The Local Control Funding Formula (LCPF) provides additional funding to support low-income and English-Language Learner students, as well as foster youth. It also dramatically shifts decision-making from the state to the school district level, with flexibility for local communities to decide how to best spend resources. The new law requires school districts to engage parents, teachers and local communities in creating a Local Control and Accountability Plan (LCAP). These plans must describe goals and specific measures the district will take to achieve them in eight priority areas – including providing students with access to required areas of study such as the arts. Every LCAP presents an opportunity for local districts to ensure there is a plan for arts education, dedicated resources, and a way to measure progress.

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**DRAW ON MIGHTY RESOURCES**
Visit the Arts Education Partnership’s online research repository, ArtsEdSearch, [www.artsedssearch.org/students/research-overview#q=hash.kgP87qH2z.dpu](http://www.artsedssearch.org/students/research-overview#q=hash.kgP87qH2z.dpu)

California Department of Education’s Arts Education Task Force [www.cde.ca.gov/oe/ia/artedtaskforce.asp](http://www.cde.ca.gov/oe/ia/artedtaskforce.asp)

The California state education code states the arts should be taught to every student (Section 51210). Know the state-adopted Visual and Performing Arts Framework for California Public Schools. [www.cde.ca.gov/ci/cr/cf/documents/vpaframework.pdf](http://www.cde.ca.gov/ci/cr/cf/documents/vpaframework.pdf)

“Be a Leader for Arts Education,” this guide offers concrete actions you can take to grow arts education in the public school system. [www.cccsearts.org/CCSESA_FILES/BeALeader.pdf](http://www.cccsearts.org/CCSESA_FILES/BeALeader.pdf)

**About CCSESA:**
The California County Superintendents Educational Services Association (CCSESA) supports students, schools, districts, and communities to continuously improve student achievement statewide via a fully-equipped and comprehensive network. Through the network of all 58 County Superintendents of Schools and their staff, and an established regional infrastructure, CCSESA works at all levels to tie arts education firmly into the core curriculum offered to every student in every school every day. Visit the CCSESA Arts Initiative website and find a wealth of resources at [www.cccsearts.org](http://www.cccsearts.org).

**About California State PTA:**
With nearly 850,000 members, California State PTA’s mission is to positively impact the lives of all children and families. PTA focuses on four major areas: education, health, parent involvement and community concerns. As part of that focus, PTA has a long-standing commitment to arts education for every student at every school, in conjunction with a comprehensive, quality education. Learn more about why PTA believes the arts are essential and join the SMARTS, Parents for the Arts network, at [www.capta.org](http://www.capta.org).

**OUR DARING ARTIST • Nicolás Sánchez**
Nicolás Gabriel Sánchez was named after two illustrious authors – Nicolás Guillén and Gabriel García Márquez. He has lived up to this creative legacy through his own work as a visual artist and interior designer. His organization, Urban Arts, Inc., features his gritty and often stylized artwork that has a strong social justice perspective. Taking great care in setting up a platform in each of his pieces of artwork, Nicolás thrives on igniting an emotion from those who see his work. White or black, it’s his way of perhaps helping thrust dialog to what otherwise may be thought but never openly discussed. In 2013, When I Dream/Cuando Sueño was published by Velazquez Press, featuring Sánchez’s original illustrations. In addition to his featured work, he has created original artwork for San Bernardino County Office of Education, San Francisco Unified School District, the California County Superintendents’ Arts Initiative, and the California Association for Bilingual Education.