REGION 8 COUNTY SUPERINTENDENTS OF SCHOOLS
Mary C. Barlow, Ed.D., Kern County Superintendent of Schools
James J. Brescia, Ed.D., San Luis Obispo County Superintendent of Schools
Susan Salcido, Ed.D., Santa Barbara County Superintendent of Schools
Stan Mantooth, Ventura County Superintendent of Schools

REGION 8 ARTS LEAD
Ventura County Office of Education
Dr. Jane Wagmeister
jwagmeister@vcoe.org
5189 Verdugo Way
Camarillo, CA 93012
805.437.1317
No matter what corner of the world someone comes from, visual and performing arts speak to us all in a common way. The Kern County Office of Education works in collaboration with numerous community organizations on behalf of our 47 school districts to ensure young people are given an opportunity of discovery and self expression.

– Mary C. Barlow, Ed.D., Kern County Superintendent of Schools

The Kern County Superintendent of Schools (KCSOS) values community collaboration that helps enrich students’ lives through the arts. What follows are a few of the highlights:

Young People’s Concerts
The KCSOS has long partnered with Bakersfield Symphony Orchestra to host three field trips throughout the year wherein thousands of local elementary students convene for a kid-friendly introduction to classical music and the types of instruments that make up the beautiful sounds of the symphony.

Bakersfield Symphony Orchestra Next (BSO NEXT)
Bakersfield Symphony Orchestra also gives away hundreds of tickets to students through its BSO NEXT program so they may attend the normal evening concerts with their families. The program started in 2014 as a donor-based endeavor that allows students from all over Kern County to experience live symphonic music. This program includes a special pre-concert lecture with the conductor, guest soloists and musicians, and a complimentary snack at intermission. Since most of the students sponsored are from underprivileged areas, the BSO NEXT program opens the world of possibilities for those who otherwise may never have the opportunity to attend due to financial limitations.
**Kern County**

**Nutcracker Field Trip**
Another community collaboration takes place every December when busloads of school children get a sneak peek at the production of Tchaikovsky’s *Nutcracker* ballet performed by the Civic Dance Center. The four performances over two mornings are a win-win. The field trip allows the dancers — the majority of whom are school-age kids themselves — to fine-tune their moves before the public opening, while giving kids from all across the county access to a holiday favorite that they might not otherwise have the fortune to see.

**Alternative Education Bridges Academy Art Exhibit**
One of the career and technical (CTE) pathway programs offered to students attending KCSOS’ Bridges Academy is Media Arts. Students may complete introductory courses in this discipline and discover career options in this field of study. Annual trips to CalArts and an Art Walk of downtown Bakersfield are favorite events each year. Student-generated art is featured in an art show and silent auction during the fall with all proceeds going back into the program. With new CTE funding expected this year, plans are to install a silkscreen studio where original designs can be transferred to products and complement the other entrepreneurial CTE and project-based classroom programs at the school.

**Honors Music Concerts**
The KCSOS also partners with the Kern County Music Educators Association and local school districts to bring two very special educational concerts to the community — one for junior high musicians and a second for those in high school.

In winter, the collaboration brings together 400 of the finest high school musicians and singers for the annual *It’s a Grand Night for Music* — a concert, wherein the students have an opportunity to work with guest conductors and directors. Students earn a place in this annual showcase of Kern County’s finest high school musicians and singers through an audition process.

The Kern County Honors Music Festival is a similar event that is geared toward junior high and middle school students and takes place every February.

**History Day**
*History Day in California* is an exciting, history-based learning experience, for students in grades 4-12. They not only learn about issues, ideas, people and events in history, but they apply what they have learned through creative and original productions. Beyond simply memorizing names and dates and reporting on historical events, *History Day* students develop invaluable research and analytical skills as they process the information gathered through intensive research and present their conclusions through visually-appealing presentation boards, web sites and performances.

**Oral Language Festival**
Schools all over Kern County participate in the *Oral Language Festival*, a competitive event where students perform interpretations of pieces of literature in front of an audience. Presentations are 3-5 minutes in length with students in grades 4-6 and in grades 7-8 competing separately. Categories of competition are: Verse Choir, Humorous Interpretation Solo, Humorous Interpretation Duo, Serious Interpretation Solo and Serious Interpretation Duo.
We need to recognize fine arts classes as core aspects of the academic curriculum rather than as merely ‘add-ons’ or ‘feel-good’ electives. Research is clear in indicating that students at all grade levels should be required to study the fine arts. In order to increase student opportunities, we should assure that funding for arts education in our schools is maintained or expanded. Ongoing maintenance of funding is necessary to continue the positive relationships between arts education and student learning as identified in the research literature."

– James J. Brescia, Ed.D., San Luis Obispo County Superintendent of Schools

San Luis Obispo County Office of Education

The San Luis Obispo County Office of Education (SLOCOE) acknowledges that 21st century American classrooms are becoming increasingly diverse. As total U.S. enrollment reaches 58 million future members of our democracy, we are committed to preserving and promoting the arts. Nearly one in four American students will experience English as a second language in our ever-changing society. We believe that a school system which teaches students to think rigorously and to creatively articulate thoughts promotes our democracy. The SLOCOE supports a humanities-based education that equips students for long-term career development in our rapidly changing global economy. Education is one of the biggest factors in promoting social mobility and social justice. Arts and humanities-based programs do not assume individuals occupy a fixed place in society. The local economy is more dependent on media, culture and tourism than ever before in history. We acknowledge that these fields are driven by the creativity of the arts and
San Luis Obispo County is committed to the Arts in Education. In addition to the many wonderful programs implemented throughout its eleven districts, the County Office of Education has created a Student Outreach program that connects students and professional artists. During the school year, school sites are offered the opportunity to have a professional arts organization visit their campus and provide both a performance as well as educational content for the attending students. These performances are generously funded by local donors. Some of the many professional partners include Opera San Luis Obispo, Wine Country Theatre, Drum and Perk, Classinova, Orchestra Novo and Symphony of the Vines. One recent example of this outreach was Opera San Luis Obispo presenting six outreach performances to various county schools highlighting their fall production of *South Pacific*. Professional musicians and actors performed highlights from the show, explained the process of becoming a professional artist and answered questions from each audience. Outreach performances are provided to enhance the exposure to the arts and are available to all county schools.

Another partnership with a professional organization is with a local arts studio, *Studios on the Park*. Through local donors, SLOCOE is able to lease a professional studio space alongside eleven other professional co-op spaces under the same roof. The SLOCOE Student Art Gallery is unique in its ability to showcase countywide student artwork. The county produces 6-8 exhibits annually in the space. Artists in grades K-12 are encouraged to participate in the various exhibits, whether they be countywide theme shows or shows highlighting a specific district. In addition, students from county high schools have the opportunity to be a student worker at the gallery. These student "Artist-in-Residences" work part-time on the weekends. Their duties include interacting with the public while they are creating their art, selling the artwork on display, and interacting with the professional artists surrounding them each and every work shift. This awesome partnership benefits the gallery and its workers, the community and most importantly the students of San Luis Obispo County.

The purpose of these local partnerships is three-fold:

- Help all students become lifelong learners and enthusiasts of the Arts.
- Experience local professional level artists in action.
- Envision the Arts beyond schooling and the limitless possibilities available to each student.
Santa Barbara County Office of Education

Contact: Valerie Cantella • vcantella@sbceo.org

“Arts education provides a form of expression and communication that is essential to the human experience.”

- Susan Salcido, Ed.D., Santa Barbara County Superintendent of Schools

Children’s Creative Project

We are proud to offer a vibrant arts education program in Santa Barbara County through vital partnerships with non-profit organizations such as the Santa Barbara County Bowl Foundation, the Music Academy of the West, and the Santa Maria Arts Council, to name a few. One of our incredible programs is through the Children’s Creative Project, a non-profit program of the Santa Barbara County Education Office (SBCEO).

The Children’s Creative Project (CCP) provides exceptional visual and performing arts experiences to students throughout the county. It brings together students and professional artists, enabling children to develop artistic perception, creative expression, and an understanding of artists, the creative process, and historical and cultural arts heritage. The project, founded in 1974, now reaches roughly 50,000 children annually during school hours in more than 100 schools in Santa Barbara and San Luis Obispo counties. The program includes visual and performing arts workshops conducted by resident artists, multicultural performances presented by professional touring artists at school sites, and a free annual performance event by a world-renowned artist for 2,000 to 4,000 students at a public theater venue.

The CCP supports individual schools and school districts in creating programs that meet their needs and budgets through resident artist workshops. Artists provide sequential, participatory lessons in dance, drama, vocal music, and visual arts, providing opportunities for creative
Santa Barbara County

expression, skill development, and joyful discovery. These workshops address the California Arts Standards and can integrate the arts with other academic subject areas.

Santa Maria-Bonita School District is one of CCP’s partners providing essential support for K-6 arts education, reaching more than 400 classrooms in 16 schools. CCP works alongside the district to design its program, providing instruction in vocal music, visual arts, dance, and theatre. The support also offers touring artist performances for each school from a catalog of 135 multicultural artists. Another example is Carpinteria Unified School District, where the four elementary schools participate in a district-wide arts instruction program.

Created in 1987 by CCP Executive Director Kathy Koury, the Madonnari Italian Street Painting Festival is the primary fundraiser for the CCP. The festival, the first of its kind in North America, attracts 25,000 visitors annually and has become one of Santa Barbara’s most popular events. A true celebration of the arts and the creative process, Madonnari features live music and authentic Italian cuisine in addition to the unique street paintings that serve as its inspiration.

The festival demonstrates the power of local partnerships as it draws significant support from local businesses, service clubs, and individuals.

Another one of the highlights of arts in Santa Barbara County is the annual recognition of an outstanding educator in the performing arts. The Santa Barbara County Performing Arts Teacher of the Year award is given annually to an exemplary performing arts teacher. Since 2016, the Teachers Network, a program of SBCEO, and the Santa Barbara Bowl Foundation, the foundation for Santa Barbara’s premier outdoor concert venue, have chosen a deserving recipient from among the many talented K-12 performing arts teachers. Each recipient is selected for their inspirational work to build students’ skills and creativity, and they serve as an ambassador for performing arts in education.

Finally, one of our newer collaborations is the Sing! Program with the Music Academy of the West. The Music Academy of the West is among the nation’s preeminent summer schools and festivals for gifted young classically-trained musicians and is uniquely positioned to provide arts education. Sing!, a free, after-school choral initiative, engages students, ages 7-12, in vocal music performance. Students learn about music and culture, singing in at least five languages. They gain confidence by performing at preeminent venues, and will be performing with the London Symphony Orchestra in the future. The Santa Barbara County Office of Education collaborates with the Music Academy to support the Sing!’s expansion to other elementary schools and provide opportunities for performances at several events, including the annual A Salute to Teachers event, where the Santa Barbara County Bowl Performing Arts Teacher of the Year is recognized.

Arts education is flourishing in Santa Barbara County, and these experiences enrich the lives of the 70,000 students served by public education.
Ventura County

Ventura County Office of Education
Contact: Dr. Jane Wagmeister • jwagmeister@vcoe.org

“Ventura County and our County Office of Education have consistently supported arts education and are fortunate that through partnerships with our local schools and community arts associations we continue to provide our students with this critical area of knowledge. It is my belief that any well-rounded instructional program includes rich learning experiences in all aspects of the arts.”

– Stan Mantooth, Ventura County Superintendent of Schools

Ventura County Arts Network
The Ventura County Arts Network continues to strive to support the visual and performing arts in our schools. We meet triennially and host several events throughout the year. This year, we are providing a variety of trainings to support the Revised California Arts Standards and UDL in the Arts classroom. The vision and mission are to provide professional learning, disseminate state-level information and resources, and provide a range of learning opportunities in the arts. Participants report on art program models, devise solutions to common barriers, celebrate successes, extend invitations for site demonstration days, art shows, performances, STEAM projects, as well as best practices. For more information, please visit the VCOE Arts Website https://www.vcoe.org/Curriculum-and-Instruction/Content-Areas/Arts
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Ventura County Partnerships
The Ventura County Office of Education (VCOE) is committed to quality arts education for all, partnering with local community and educational arts organizations. The Ventura County Arts Council, ArtTrek, Museum of Ventura County, and California Lutheran University – Shakespeare Educational Tour are instrumental in providing Ventura County students access to the arts.

“When we teach a child to sing or play the flute, we teach her how to listen. When we teach her to draw, we teach her to see. When we teach a child to dance, we teach him about his body and about space, and when he acts on stage, he learns about character and motivation. When we teach a child design, we reveal the geometry of the world. When we teach children about the folk and traditional arts and the great masterpieces of the world, we teach them to celebrate their roots and find their own place in history.”

– Jane Alexander, former Director for the National Endowment of the Arts