











## **The LA County Arts Education Collective** is the regional initiative dedicated to making the arts a core part of every child's growth and development.

The success of this systems-change effort, coordinated by the LA County Department of Arts and Culture, relies on the diverse perspectives and contributions of policy makers, philanthropic partners, educators, artists and cultural organizations, young people, parents, advocates and allies who are committed to ensuring all young people grow up with the arts.

#### Join Us!

- Learn more at LA County Arts Ed Collective
- Download and share the Arts Ed Blueprint
- Contact us at <u>ArtsEdCollective@arts.lacounty.gov</u>

LEFT: "Art is Our Future & More" by Tia Reed, youth artist participating in programming led by Spirit Awakening Foundation, 2022 (commissioned for inclusion in this 20th Anniversary Celebration Book).

COVER (clockwise from top left): 1. Evelyn Serrano from the California Creative Learning Academy and Adriana Yugovich from the Humanitas Academy of Art & Technology build networks for action during the Art of Leadership series, 2019 (photo by Monica Almeida); 2. Spoken-word poet Justus Jones (formerly) with the Arts for Healing and Justice Network performs at a Community Arts Day in South LA, 2021 (photo by Sylvanus Leone); 3. Students from Lynwood Unified School District participate in the Annual Arts Festival & District Showcase, 2022 (photo courtesy of Mariana Astorga-Almanza.); 4. Photo by Sylvanus Leone; 5. Students from West Whittier Elementary School in Whittier City School District participate in music workshops led by teaching artists from Jail Guitar Doors, 2022 (photo by Chrysa Saade).

### **MESSAGE FROM KRISTIN SAKODA**

CROSS THE THRESHOLD

#### DIRECTOR, LA COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF ARTS AND CULTURE

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In Los Angeles County, our future relies on the investment we make in our young people today. Key to this investment is arts education. At the Department of Arts and Culture we believe that arts, culture, and creativity are vital to civic life—supporting the health and wellbeing of our communities, driving our local creative economy, building empathy and civic engagement, addressing inequity, and promoting cultural diversity, access, belonging, and inclusion. Yet investing in the arts is no more profound than when we invest in the creative equity of young people who are the key to tomorrow. For 20 years, that's what we have done. I'm proud to bring forward the next chapter of this work that is even bigger, bolder, and more beholden to the communities that have been historically excluded for too long.

In 2002, the Board of Supervisors adopted the first Arts for All: Los Angeles County Regional Blueprint for Arts Education, launching what we now know as the Arts Ed Collective as a countywide initiative focused on changing public systems so that all young people grow up with the arts.

Since then, we've worked with the Board to launch the groundbreaking Cultural Equity and Inclusion Initiative, create the LA County Department of Arts and Culture, partner with County departments, invest in arts for systems and justice-impacted youth, build equity through the Countywide Cultural Policy, and more. Through the Arts Ed Collective we've provided critical grant funding, resources, professional development, and support to expand access to arts learning, reaching 1 million young people each year. At the height of calls for reckoning on race and inequity in 2020, we developed and the Board unanimously adopted Arts for All Children, Youth, and Families: Los Angeles County's New Regional Blueprint for Arts Education. It sets a bold new vision for arts learning in our region—not just in school, but after school, in communities, in collaboration with other LA County agencies, and in ways that prepare young people for creative careers—with an equity lens.

Today, the stakes remain high, as we face civic challenges, as well as opportunities, ahead. All young people in all communities, regardless of their background, deserve access to arts and cultural resources. We are grateful for the leadership and support of the LA County Board of Supervisors, and all our partners in the Arts Ed Collective—funders, school districts, educators, teaching artists, arts organizations, advocates, County agencies, and youth. Thank you to the Arts Commission, our Arts Education division director Denise Grande, and our incredible staff. We invite everyone to join us for the next 20 years of arts, education, youth, equity, and collective impact.

RIGHT: Generative scribing captures conversations, perspectives, and insights shared by Art of Leadership participants who reconsider and reimagine ways to achieve scale and equity in arts education—and the different role(s) they are each uniquely positioned to play, 2019 (scribing by Play Steinberg for Presencing Institute; photo by Monica Almeida).

> - THAT EMBRACES THIS FRAGILE



## **MESSAGE FROM DENISE GRANDE**

#### DIVISION OF ARTS EDUCATION AND YOUTH DEVELOPMENT LA COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF ARTS AND CULTURE

The past two decades have brought dramatic changes in public education, youth development, arts and culture, and in the creative industries that drive our region's economy. But one thing has remained constant: our deep commitment to ensuring young people have access to the arts—all year, every year—as a core part of their growth and development.

When the LA County Board of Supervisors adopted the first LA County Regional Blueprint for Arts Education in 2002, they directed the then Arts Commission (now Department of Arts and Culture) and the LA County Office of Education to work together to restore the arts in public education. Beginning with just five LA County school districts all those years ago, the Arts Ed Collective has become a national model of public-private collective impact that engages a robust coalition of school districts, charter school networks, arts organizations and teaching artists, other County agencies, and philanthropic partners. The work is now guided by the 2020 Arts for All Children, Youth, and Families: Los Angeles County's New Regional Blueprint for Arts Education, which formally expanded the scope of the Arts Ed Collective to embrace arts learning in community settings, prioritizing resources for young people who historically have not had access to highquality, culturally sustaining arts education.

Today we celebrate 20 years of service to the young people of LA County and acknowledge the hundreds of new and longstanding partners who have come together to accomplish more than any of us could have achieved alone. As we take this moment to reflect on our progress to date, we also look to what's ahead—and invite you to join us in this effort. Together we can ensure our next generation has access to personally meaningful arts education, in schools and in communities, that allows every young person to develop the skills and self-awareness to reach their full potential.

> CENTER: Participant in The Learning Connection (TLC) after-school program at Vejar Elementary School in Pomona Unified School District shares her drawing from a workshop with No Easy Props, 2022 (photo courtesy of Pomona Unified).

RIGHT: Student artwork created during an arts and wellness lesson in Whittier City School District (photo by Chrysa Saade).





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- Shared Leadership & Learning
- Communications & Advocacy
- Research & Evaluation

Acknowledgements

LEFT: Musicians from Lynwood High School in Lynwood Unified School District march in the Camellia Parade in Temple City, 2019 (photo courtesy of Lynwood Unified).



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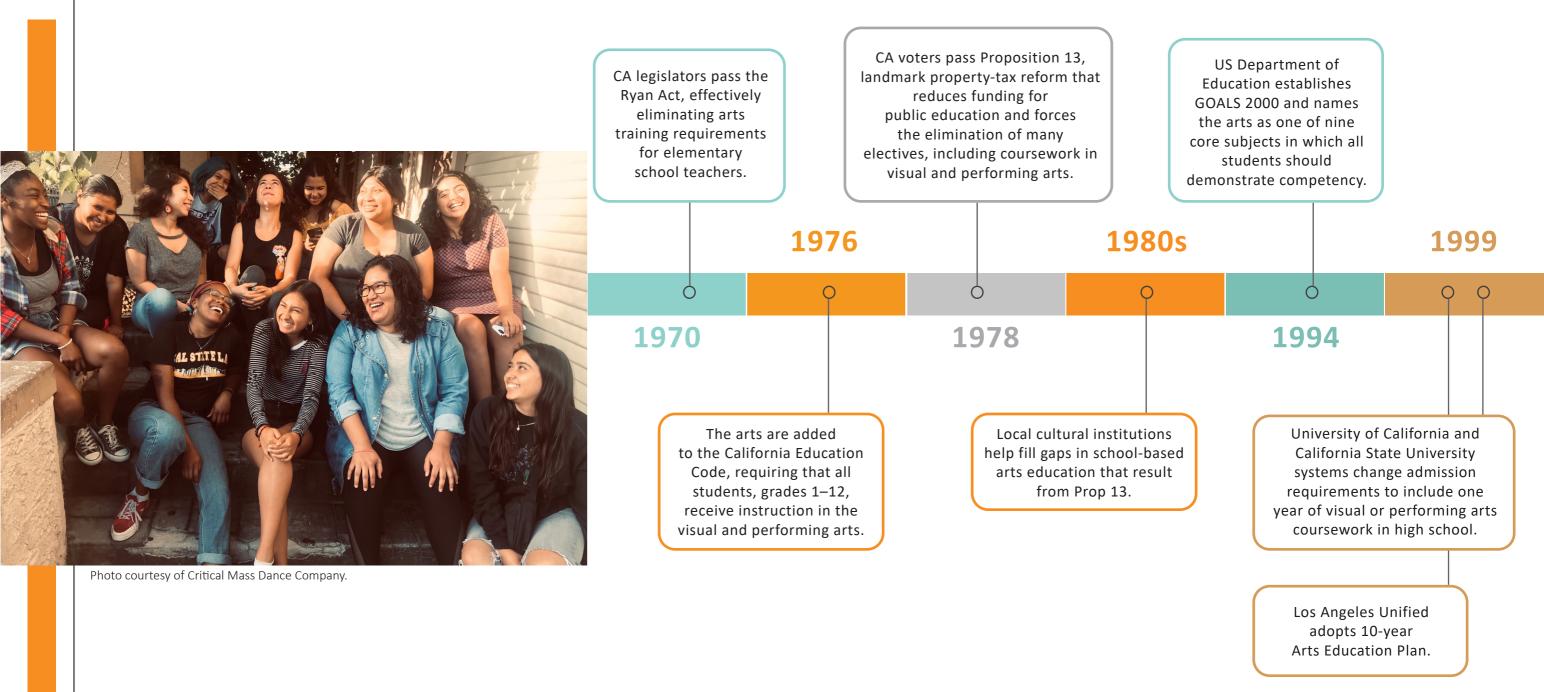
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The 2020 Arts Ed Blueprint maps a new direction

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# **Our Journey**

The evolving arts education landscape



LA County Board of Supervisors adopt the first LA County **Regional Blueprint** for Arts Education and establish Arts for All as a countywide initiative to ensure all young people grow up with the arts.

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2002

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2001

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CA Department of

**Education adopts State** 

Standards in the Visual

and Performing Arts,

delineating what every

child should know

and be able to do in

dance, theater, music,

and visual arts.

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The Executive Committee (also known as the Leadership Council) is established to help

guide the initiative.

2003

Arts for All

launches initial

partnerships with

5 school districts

to help ensure all

students have access

to arts education.

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Arts for All [which became the Arts Ed Collective] is the most important legacy of the Department of Arts and Culture. It was the most comprehensive undertaking for putting the arts back into the schools at every grade level, made more challenging because of the 80 separate school systems in LA County. Arts for All required the input and participation of all stakeholders, including students, teachers, administrators, parents, school boards, communities, plus partnerships with nonprofits, corporations and government entities.

Well into our ten-year Arts for All plan, signs of success were happening in Los Angeles County schools, and we were receiving national accolades which generated other school systems in America to ask for our blueprint for adding the arts. As an artist and former teacher, I am proud to have served on the Los Angeles County Arts Commission during this important time, eventually affecting the lives of so many.

> Phoebe Beasley Artist and Former Arts Commission President Los Angeles County Arts Commission

The Pooled Fund (now known as the **Funders Council) launches** with a lead gift from the Entertainment Industry Foundation, formally establishing Arts for All as a public-private partnership.

2004

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Federal "No Child Left Behind" legislation focuses on math and English instruction, institutes high-stakes annual testing, and limits instructional time spent on the arts, social studies, science, and other subjects.

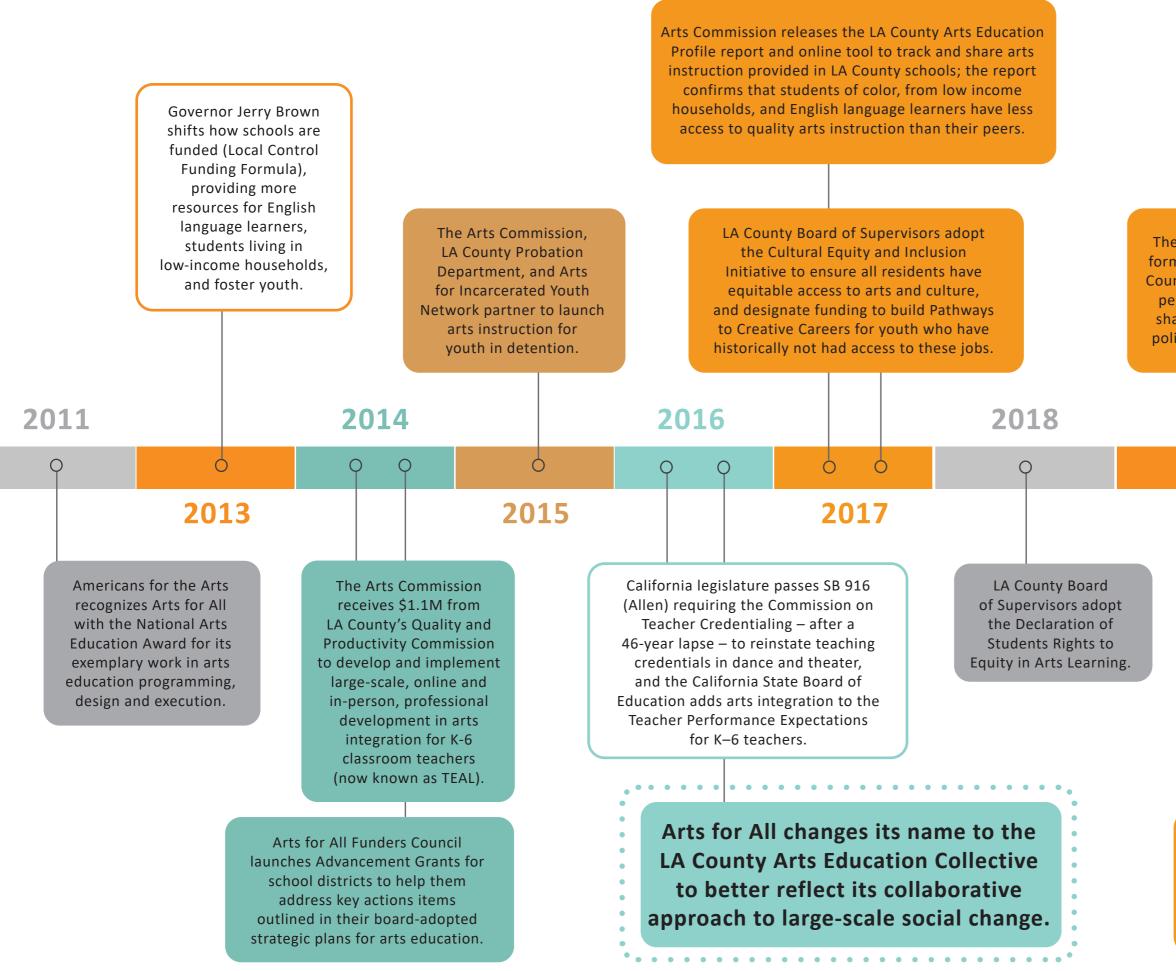
California Department of Education adopts Common Core State Standards, shifting public education from a focus on rote learning to critical thinking and higher order thinking skills (problemsolving, creativity, etc.).

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2010

#### 2008

A RAND Corporation case study cites Arts for All as a model of innovation that leverages resources and coordinates efforts among diverse community stakeholders to restore arts education.



LA County Board of Supervisors transition the Arts Commission to the Department of Arts and Culture, elevating the arts as core to County services.

The Arts Ed Collective forms a Youth Advisory Council to ensure youth perspectives help to shape arts education policies and practices.

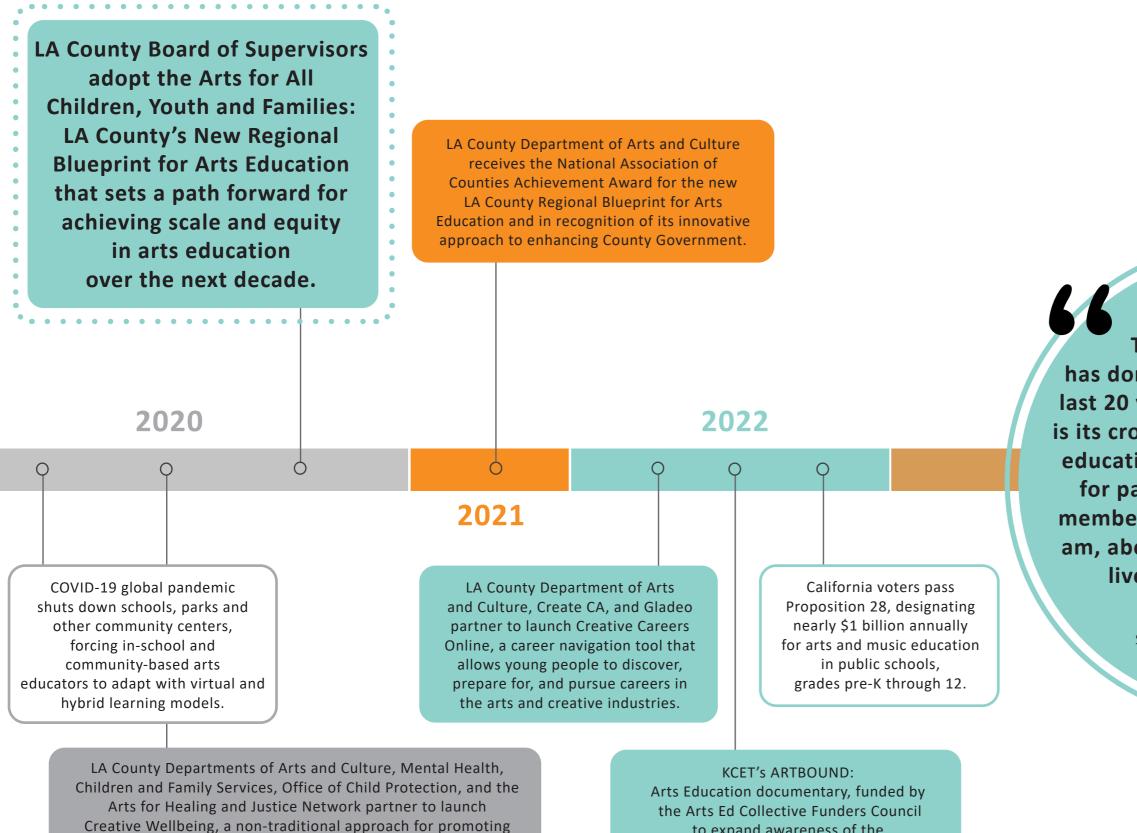
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2019

LA County Departments of Arts and Culture, Parks and Recreation, and the Arts for Incarcerated Youth Network partner to launch arts instruction in County parks for youth most at risk of becoming impacted by the justice system.

California Department of Education adopts updated California Arts Standards for Public Schools that align with Common Core State Standards and include media arts as a fifth arts discipline to be taught in schools.



the adults who care for them, through culturally relevant, healing-centered arts education.

mental health and wellbeing among systems-involved youth, and

Arts Education documentary, funded by the Arts Ed Collective Funders Council to expand awareness of the importance of arts education, is nominated for an Emmy Award and receives top honors at the National Arts Entertainment Journalism Awards. The Arts Ed Collective has done incredible work over the last 20 years, and its new Blueprint is its crown jewel. It's a roadmap for education and youth practitioners, for parents, and for community members who are passionate, like I am, about investing in the creative lives of our young people.

> Janice Hahn, Supervisor to the Fourth District

# **Our Story**

#### Collective leadership and action propel our progress

The Arts Ed Collective, coordinated by the LA County Department of Arts and Culture, now celebrates two decades as the regional initiative dedicated to making the arts a core part of every child's growth and development. But our story begins even earlier. It was 1999 when the Los Angeles Arts Education Task Force (an all-volunteer group of arts and arts education leaders from across LA County) first convened to address long-standing concerns about where and when the arts were–and were not–being taught in public schools. Decades-old policies had resulted in chronic underfunding and a lack of teacher training in the arts, which led to piecemeal approaches to arts instruction across schools and districts. The Task Force quickly recognized they needed to offer a new way of thinking about solutions.

Their first action was to commission the <u>Arts in Focus: Los Angeles Countywide</u> <u>Arts Education Survey</u>, which was released in 2001. Findings from this survey, now more than 20 years old, revealed contradictions that are still relevant today: school district leaders universally believed in the value of arts education and expressed a strong desire to improve and expand arts instruction, yet they acknowledged there were no real incentives for schools to offer consistent and sequential arts education for all children. More than half of all districts surveyed did not have an arts education policy or a written plan for moving forward.

In response to these findings, the LA County Arts Commission and the LA County Office of Education (LACOE) formed a 20-member Advisory Group of arts and public education leaders to develop goals and strategies for a Regional Blueprint for Arts Education. Over 18 months, this group gathered feedback from across the County to create a first-of-its-kind blueprint for action.

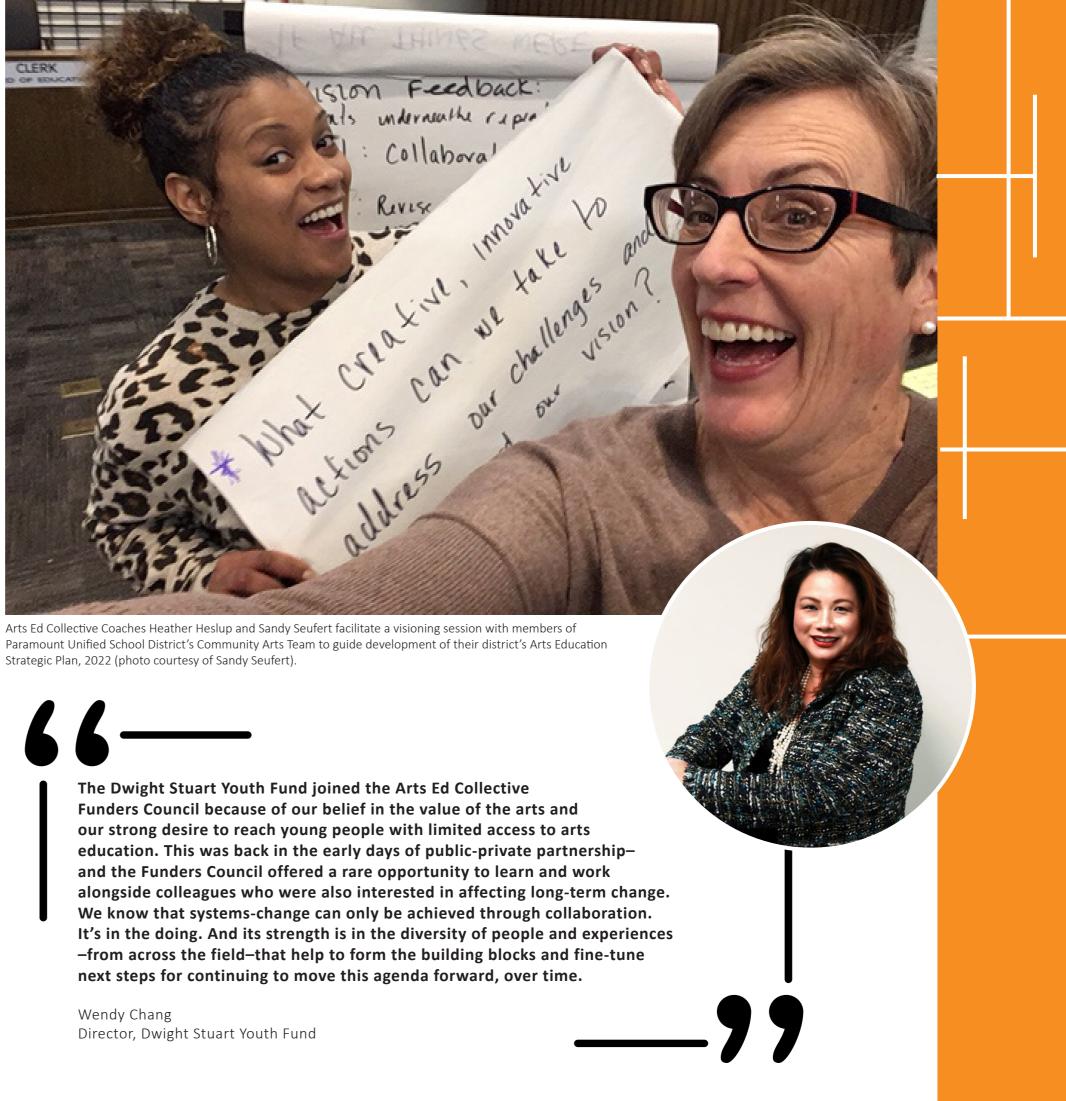
RIGHT: Dancers from Los Angeles Unified School District perform at the Valley Performing Arts Center, Cal State University Northridge, where community members gathered to provide input for the new LA County Regional Blueprint for Arts Education, 2019 (photo by Monica Almeida).



On August 6, 2002, the LA County Board of Supervisors, Arts Commission, and LACOE adopted the Arts for All: LA County Regional Blueprint for Arts Education and launched the Countywide collective impact initiative to ensure comprehensive, sequential K-12 arts education for every public school student, setting four goals:

- 1. Each of the 82 school districts in LA County enacts a policy, plan, and budget for sequential K-12 arts education;
- 2. Practitioners and policy makers have adequate tools, information, and professional development;
- 3. Parents, students, arts advocates, and community/ business leaders mobilize to advocate for sequential K-12 arts education; and
- 4. Funding policies of public and private funders support and align with the vision and mission of the Regional Blueprint.

An Executive Committee (also known as the Leadership Council) was established to guide the initiative. Multiple new programs and resources followed-professional development, a directory of community arts partners, and coaching and grants for school districts-serving as key markers for demonstrating progress, early on. The private sector also invested in the initiative, formally establishing the Arts for All Pooled Fund (now known as the Arts Ed Collective Funders Council) in 2004 to support implementation of the Regional Blueprint through funding, aligned practices, and thought partnership.





By 2008, LA County had reason to celebrate, despite impending cuts to public education caused by the global financial crisis. With support from Arts for All, 34 of the then 81 school districts in LA County had adopted an arts education policy and plan, dedicated 5% or more of their total budget to arts education, retained a districtwide arts coordinator, and reported having no more than 400 students for every credentialed arts teacher. This marked the first Countywide improvement in school-based arts education since the passage of Proposition 13 in 1978.

Although state budget cuts posed a threat to these significant gains, school districts had the tools and resources to be resilient during challenging times. A <u>study</u> released by the Arts Commission found that between 2005-06 and 2012-13, arts education held steady in LA County, even as the total number of students in public schools declined. Ten years in, it became clear that Arts for All had helped to successfully steward both an expansion and then the maintenance of school-based arts education across LA County, reversing decades-long declines in arts programs and weathering a historic economic recession.

In 2014, staff from the Arts Commission joined the Campus Kilpatrick Replacement Project, a cross-agency initiative to reimagine juvenile justice in LA County. Participation in this effort significantly influenced the future direction of Arts for All, expanding its scope beyond the traditional K-12 school day, and refocusing resources to serve young people with the least access to arts instruction.

TOP: Fourth through fifth grade students from Tamara Sullivan's class at West Whittier Elementary School in Whittier City School District participate in a music lesson led by teaching artists Cole Berliner and Laena Myers-Ionita from Jail Guitar Doors, 2022 (photo by Chrysa Saade).

LEFT: Fabian Deborah, Artistic Director of Homeboy Arts Academy, participates in an artmaking workshop at a Community Arts Day in South LA, 2021 (photo by Sylvanus Leone). Arts for All marked its 15-year anniversary with a new name - the LA County Arts Education Collective (Arts Ed Collective) - to better reflect its collective impact approach. At that time, the initiative also released the most comprehensive survey of in-school arts instruction in LA County to date. Covering 2,277 schools, 81 school districts, and four charter networks, the LA County Arts Education Profile: Report on Public Schools, 2015-17 revealed how much had changed, and what had remained the same, since the initiative first launched:

- Arts education is offered in nearly every school in LA County, with most schools offering two or more arts disciplines.
- Nearly every school has at least one credentialed arts instructor and nearly every school district has an arts coordinator on staff.
- Teaching artists and nonprofit arts organizations provide arts instruction in more than half of all public schools.
- Despite significant progress, sobering realities remain:
  - Few schools provide year-long arts instruction for all students.
  - Schools with a larger share of English learners, students eligible for free/reduced-price meals, and students of color tend to provide less and lower-quality arts instruction.

While this report provided a deep dive into arts instruction provided in schools, its findings did not address the breadth and scope of work that was emerging within juvenile justice reform, community-based arts education, and pathways to the creative industries. Although the 2002 Regional Blueprint for Arts Education remained relevant, it was clear that the Arts Ed Collective would benefit from fresh perspectives brought by a younger generation, educators and artists currently working in classrooms and communities, and advocates who could surface needs and priorities for affecting change within today's educational landscape.

> Sixth through eighth grade students from Tisha Peterson's class at Katherine Edwards Middle School STEAM and Dual Immersion Academy in Whittier City School District create their own electronic music in workshops led by teaching artist Angela Ramirez from Give a Beat, 2022 (photo by Chrysa Saade).





We know that the arts promote creativity, critical thinking, and problem-solving skills. What is so bold and ambitious about the Arts Ed Collective's work is that it meets our young people where they are—in the classroom, in their neighborhoods, and in childcare, health, and justice settings—and connects them to arts education and services that will help them develop out-of-the-box solutions for the many challenges they will face as adults.

Photo by Sylvanus Leone, courtesy of the Arts for Healing and Justice Network.

The LA County Board of Supervisors therefore directed the Arts Commission to update the goals and strategies of the Regional Blueprint for Arts Education. Staff assembled a Guidance Team of diverse arts and education leaders, as well as a Youth Advisory Council that included young people with lived experience in the juvenile justice and foster care systems, to shape a new Blueprint that made sense for all. This effort also included ten community forums (two in each of the five County supervisorial districts) where input was gathered from over 600 stakeholders residing across all regions of the County.

Recommendations from these constituents—including teaching artists, classroom teachers, students, parents, and advocates—are the foundation of the Arts for All Children, Youth, and Families: LA County's New Regional Blueprint for Arts Education (Arts Ed Blueprint). Adopted by the Board of Supervisors in October 2020, the Arts Ed Blueprint sets our direction for the decade ahead, aiming to address large-scale societal inequities through the arts and to develop systems that support arts education and arts-based youth development, both in schools and in communities.



Nearly 100 community members gather at The dA Center for the Arts in Pomona to make art and provide input for the new LA County Regional Blueprint for Arts Education, 2019 (photo by Monica Almeida).

Sheila Kuehl, (Former) Supervisor to the Third District

# **By the Numbers**

Key outcomes and impact, thus far

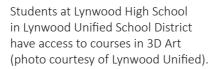


All of our young people deserve access to the arts. That belief was a driving force behind my work to develop LA County's **Cultural Equity and Inclusion Initiative.** It's also why I am so proud that through the Arts Ed Collective, a coalition of County departments, community basedorganizations, school district partners, and advocates have built up arts education to support the youth and families of Los Angeles County.

> Hilda L. Solis, Supervisor to the First District

## 300 +

arts education and youth development leaders annually attend learning & networking events



\$18.4M contributed to date by

corporate/foundation

partners

## \$7.5M

in grants awarded to 67 school districts and charter networks to date, leveraging \$14.8M in matching funds

## \$17.5

allocated to date from the Juvenile Justice Crime Prevention Act for arts organizations to serve systems-impacted youth

# \$59M

in public and private funding generated to date to expand opportunities for youth to engage in the arts

1,100 schools thus far have submitted data for the Arts Ed Profile

**600** LA County residents and 37 County agencies contributed input for the new **Arts Ed Blueprint** 

Teaching artist from P.S. ARTS leads a theatre lesson for fourth grade students at Los Cerritos Elementary School in Paramount Unified School District, 2020 (photo by Lindsey Best).

policy frameworks impacting equitable arts education adopted to date by the LA County Board of Supervisors

## 17

publications currently share promising practices and arts education research data

# **The Road Ahead**

The 2020 Arts Ed Blueprint maps a new direction

Adopted by the LA County Board of Supervisors in 2020, the new Arts Ed Blueprint formally expands our work from a sole focus on in-school arts education to now embrace arts learning that takes place after school and in communities. This updated policy framework also explicitly prioritizes resources for youth who stand to benefit most from the positive impacts the arts provide: those who've faced insurmountable societal challenges and have historically been denied access to the arts.

The Arts Ed Blueprint is more than just words on paper. It is the vision of countless partners, ushering in a new, dynamic era for arts education. To activate its strategies and achieve its goals, the work of the Arts Ed Collective is now organized across six key strategies that drive our efforts:

- 1. School Based Arts Education
- 2. Community Based Arts Education
- 3. Creative Career Pathways for Youth
- 4. Shared Leadership and Learning
- 5. Communications and Advocacy
- 6. Research and Evaluation

Justice and equity for our communities must be a shared commitment. I admire the ways that the Arts Ed Collective's new **Regional Blueprint helps us achieve this by** stretching beyond the classroom and into our neighborhoods and County care systems—places where arts education used to be an afterthought. The new Blueprint lays out an approach to arts education with the scale and equity that Los Angeles County needs, and that our young people deserve. I wish the Arts Ed Collective a Happy 20th Anniversary, and I am excited to see their equity-driven education work continue.

> Holly J. Mitchell, Supervisor to the Second District

> > Sylvanus Leone, courtesy of the Arts for Healing and Justice Network).

ARTS

HEALING

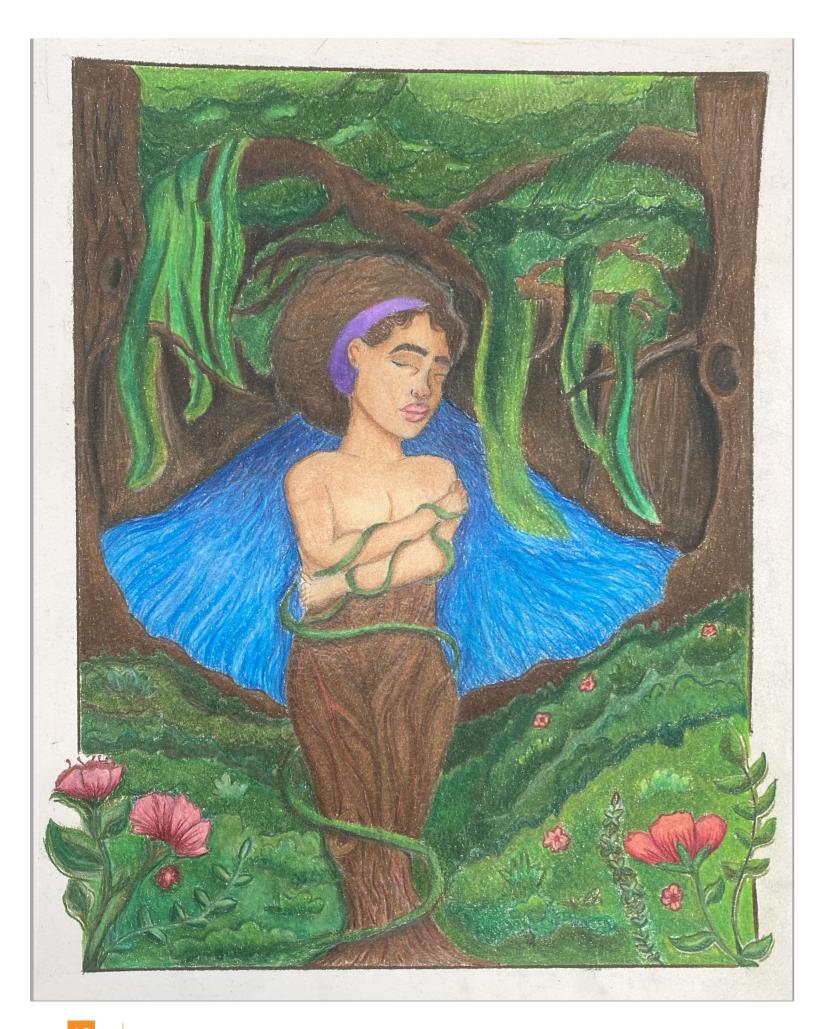
JUSTICE

ARTS

HEALING



Versa-Style Dance Company performs at a Community Arts Day at Chuco's Justice Center, 2021 (photo by



#### **1: SCHOOL BASED ARTS EDUCATION**

Schools and school districts play an essential role in ensuring young people grow up with the arts. But changing public education so that ALL schools provide arts instruction for ALL students is a tall order. The Arts Education Collective launched in 2002 with just five school district partners, but today includes 74 of LA County's 80 school districts, plus five charter school networks, each working to expand arts learning for students in all of their schools.

The Arts Ed Collective operates as a collective impact initiative, which means that many partners come together to make greater change than any single entity can accomplish alone. Our school districts are supported by the LA County Office of Education and hundreds of nonprofit arts organizations and teaching artists who work in classrooms. In addition, the LA County Department of Arts and Culture provides key <u>resources for school districts</u> to help them expand their impact:

- Coaching to create strategic plans that increase arts instruction in schools
- Matching grants to launch specific action items identified in their strategic plan
- Professional development for teachers to include the arts in their classrooms
- Networking with other school districts and community arts partners to share promising practices and strategies

These programs and services all date back to the earliest days of the Arts Ed Collective, have consistently evolved to remain relevant and responsive over time, and are recognized as model practices—regionally, statewide, and nationally—for building and sustaining arts education infrastructure in public schools. We could not be more proud to be in service to, and working in collaboration with, our school district partners.

LEFT: "May We Be One" by Mayah Aguilera, youth artist participating in programming led by Boyle Heights Arts Conservatory, 2022 (commissioned for inclusion in this 20th Anniversary Celebration Book).

ABOVE, RIGHT: Photo courtesy of reDiscover Center.



For two decades, the Arts Ed Collective has built partnerships that ensure young people have access to arts education and arts-based youth development. To the superintendents, school-board members, parents, educators, artists, and advocates doing this work, I honor all of you. The arts and creative learning improve student outcomes and build pathways to all kinds of careers, so I hope that your work and its reach continue to grow. Happy 20th Anniversary!

> Kathryn Barger, Supervisor to the Fifth District



Teaching artist Diana Teixeira with Symphonic Jazz Orchestra leads a music lesson for kindergarten students at Farragut Elementary School in Culver City Unified School District, 2020 (photo courtesy of Symphonic Jazz Orchestra).

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I am thinking back on the Irish dance program for third graders: I went to one of the performances at the end of a 10-week artist residency and saw this little boy whose footwork was amazing. You could tell he was so elated to be performing in front of an audience. The principal said this boy was one of her "frequent flyers" - he was always in her office, because he had a lot of energy and got in trouble a lot. She said after these performances, she noticed a huge difference in his engagement during class. Others had seen that he had this talent, they saw him in a different way, and so they were more tolerant of his energy and fidgeting. So I feel for that little boy. That dance class spoke to his strengths, and his passion, and connected him to his school site, to his peers, to his teachers.

Jefferey S. Lagozzino, Ph. D. Assistant Superintendent of Educational Services, Mountain View School District

Performance by sixth grade students from the Parkview Elementary School dance team in Mountain View Elementary School District, 2019 (photo by Jeff Lagozzino).



"Energy" by youth artists at Challenger Memorial Youth Detention Center (Lancaster), created in collaboration with artist Joseph Montalvo of the Armory Center for the Arts, 2016 (photo by Cam Sanders, courtesy of the Arts for Healing and Justice Network).

#### **2: COMMUNITY BASED ARTS EDUCATION**

While schools play an important role in providing students with access to the arts, communitybased arts learning has the power to cultivate creativity beyond the classroom. Thanks to the work of many collaborating partners, arts programs in neighborhoods across LA County are helping young people develop a deep sense of belonging and an appreciation for their own community.

This is especially true for our most vulnerable youth. The Arts Ed Collective therefore embraces non-traditional allies, and includes 14 County agencies and dozens of nonprofit organizations, all working together to bring the arts to:

- Youth in historically underserved communities
- Youth in foster care
- Youth enrolled in programs to divert them from becoming involved in the justice system
- Youth in detention

Our strength as a collective impact initiative is anchored in our shared commitment to promoting healing, personal growth, and overall well-being through the arts.

Today's work has grown out of longstanding collaboration between the Department of Arts and Culture, the Probation Department, and the Arts for Healing and Justice Network, who began partnering in 2014 to provide arts instruction for youth in LA County detention facilities. The success of these efforts—using the arts as an intervention to support those most impacted by the justice system—has since grown to engage arts learning as a prevention strategy aimed at keeping young people from becoming impacted by the justice system in the first place.

Partnership with the Department of Parks and Recreation now brings the arts to youth in County parks located in our most underserved neighborhoods. Collaboration among the Departments of Arts and Culture, Mental Health, Children & Family Services, Office of Child Protection, and the Arts for Healing and Justice Network continues to expand the reach of Creative Wellbeing, a non-traditional approach for promoting mental health and wellbeing among systems-involved youth, and the adults who care for them, through culturally relevant, healing-centered arts education.

The LA County Juvenile Justice Coordinating Council currently allocates funding each year from California's Juvenile Justice Crime Prevention Act for arts programs that promote positive youth development and foster creativity, health, and wellness. This funding allows the Department of Arts and Culture to contract with community-based arts organizations—who've established trust and credibility in the communities they serve—to provide year-round arts instruction for youth in County parks, public housing sites, foster care, and for youth in detention.

Over the past several years, my role has been to improve education and wellbeing outcomes for youth in foster care and on probation. One thing I noticed early on was that the arts were being taught in the camps and halls for kids who'd been arrested. There the arts were being used as an alternative or supplement to traditional therapy, and the programs had been evaluated and were working well. But I was interested in taking a step back, in order to build robust protective factors for young people at highest risk. In other words, could we use the arts as prevention, in addition to using them as treatment? This seemed to be a promising opportunity.

We have come to the point now where we provide support for adults—teachers, parents, caregivers—offering them creative ways to engage in self-care, while also providing services for youth in schools, online, and in shared living facilities. We've made so much progress and have received great support from the Board of Supervisors, from school districts, and from other County departments. The work has snowballed, and we continue to build by bringing on new partners.

Stefanie Gluckman Project Director III Los Angeles County Office of Child Protection



Staff and artists from the Arts for Healing and Justice Network's member organizations host a Community Arts Day at Chuco's Justice Center in South LA, sponsored by the LA County Office of Youth Diversion and Development, 2021 (photo by Sylvanus Leone).

Before our partnership with the Arts Ed Collective, many Arts for Healing and Justice Network member organizations were working inside the camps and halls—as volunteers. But as part of a larger Countywide effort, we were able to make this work visible. Staff at the Department of Arts and Culture leveraged their role in the County to help prioritize the arts for system-impacted youth, validate the work that was already happening, and ensure teaching artists were properly compensated. The Arts Ed Collective is not just advancing work on the ground; it is actually changing how County government works with community, and its innovative, cross-sector, human-centered approach is ultimately transforming public systems.

Elida Ledesma Executive Director, Arts for Healing and Justice Network

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#### **3: CREATIVE CAREER PATHWAYS FOR YOUTH**

The arts teach us how to communicate, collaborate, problem solve, re-imagine, and innovate–all skills needed for success in the 21st century workforce. Even back in 2002, the LA County Board of Supervisors acknowledged the important role the arts play in preparing a "creative and competitive workforce to meet the economic opportunities of the present and future." Two decades later, the 2022 Otis Report cited California as an economic engine fueling over 1.3 million jobs in the creative economy, with the Los Angeles region serving as home to more than 437,000 of these salaried employees.

Following release of <u>Creative Work: How Arts Education Promotes Career Opportunities</u> <u>Beyond the Arts</u> (2015) and launch of LA County's <u>Cultural Equity & Inclusion Initiative</u> (2017), the Arts Ed Collective began examining ways to better prepare young people, ages 14-24, to contribute to LA County's robust economy. Our shared goal is to reduce barriers to access and change perceptions about creative careers so that all youth know about and can successfully compete for these living-wage, family-sustaining jobs in LA County. Our work is guided by recommendations put forward in the 2019 <u>Building Creative Career Pathways</u> for Youth: A Field Scan for Los Angeles County, which also provides a frame for directing resources and action across four areas:

- K-12 Arts Education
- Career Exploration
- College and Career Readiness
- Work-Based Learning

#### Today we see:

- school districts building pathways to creative careers as part of their strategic planning;
- school districts expanding curriculum that develops skills for jobs in the creative industries;
- a new digital resource, <u>Creative Careers Online</u>, that allows young people to explore careers suited to their interests and personality;
- new educational standards from the California Department of Education's Career Technical Education / Arts, Media & Entertainment Coalition that align with industry needs;
- a coalition of stakeholders working together as the Entertainment Equity Alliance to address systemic disparity in the entertainment industry;
- the emergence of <u>High Road Training Partnerships</u> that serve as models of school-to-career pipelines;
- community colleges and community-based arts organizations offering courses and programming specifically focused on creative careers; and
- the nation's largest paid arts intership program for college students, run by the LA County Department of Arts and Culture.

This progress aligns with the LA County Board of Supervisors' repeated call for expanding access to careers in the arts and creative industries. Four LA County policies now prioritize resources for youth of color, those impacted by the justice or foster care systems, those with limited awareness of job opportunities in the creative industries, and other young people who historically have experienced barriers to the workforce–setting the path for continued work ahead.



Artists from Side Street Project teach young people woodworking skills.



Sony Pictures is firmly committed to its role as a good citizen of the planet and we maintain a strong relationship with our local community. I believe that by supporting arts education in public schools, we are helping develop the next generation of creative thinkers, problem solvers and leaders. This is especially important in Los Angeles. After all, we are the entertainment capital of the world! As an entertainment company, Sony Pictures' future livelihood depends on cultivating a workforce that is able to tell both personal and universal stories through the written word, compelling performance, musical scores, and a visual aesthetic.

Trying to reshape arts education in a County as sprawling and complex as Los Angeles has required new kinds of thinking, based on listening and learning before funding. We couldn't have done that alone.

Janice Pober (Former) Senior Vice President for Global Corporate Social Responsibility Sony Pictures Entertainment



#### 4: SHARED LEADERSHIP & LEARNING

Our progress over two decades is rooted in the longstanding commitment of many partners who, since the beginning, have helped develop and guide this public-private, collective impact initiative. Throughout our history, the Department of Arts and Culture has gathered members of our community to promote Shared Leadership and Learning and to propel our work forward.

Each year, school district arts coordinators, classroom teachers, cultural partners, teaching artists, staff from other County departments, and funders come together to learn from and with one another, to network and collaborate, and to contribute their thought leadership to advancing arts education across our region. They are invited to share promising practices emerging from within their own work, exchange ideas, identify meaningful resources, and point to effective models for expanding culturally relevant teaching and learning in the arts.

From our earliest days, the Arts Ed Collective Leadership Council has helped to set priorities and establish key partnerships. The Arts Ed Collective Funders Council, formed in 2004, now includes more than two dozen philanthropic partners who support arts education on the local level, giving directly to arts organizations, while also supporting larger systems-change efforts by pooling resources, developing strategy, and funding innovative prototypes that address the goals of the countywide Arts Ed Blueprint.

Several years ago, the Department of Arts and Culture looked to expand the diversity of voices guiding the work of the Arts Ed Collective. Through both the Arts Ed Innovation Lab and the Art of Leadership, over 200 emerging and established leaders came together over five years to develop and activate new strategies for advancing arts education in LA County. A Youth Advisory Council was formed in 2019 to help develop the new Arts Ed Blueprint, and today young people continue to engage in the Arts Ed Collective as grant panelists, program consultants, content advisors, and guest speakers. In these ways, we've promoted lateral mentorship, nourished collaboration between communities, and expanded a network of leaders who are representative of the communities they serve.

More recently, members of the Arts Ed Collective have worked together to develop resources for the field. The Creative Wellbeing Curriculum Guide (produced in 2022 via collaboration among youth content advisors, arts organizations, teaching artists, and staff from several County agencies) inspires educators, mental health practitioners, and teaching artists to design and facilitate their own healing-centered arts activities. In 2022, the Department of Arts and Culture also began convening the Arts-Based Healing-Centered Engagement Working Group (comprised of youth, educators, artists, and cultural practitioners) to co-design a framework for building understanding and implementation of arts-based, healing-centered engagement.

The work of the Arts Ed Collective has always been guided by those with deep knowledge and expertise in the field. This requires active listening, intentional collaboration, and collective action. By learning from and with one another, uplifting exemplary models, and engaging leaders who are representative of diverse communities across LA County, we continue to expand the coalition working to increase young people's access to arts education and artsbased youth development.

Youth Advisory Council met over six months to identify goals and strategies to be included in the new Arts Ed Blueprint, 2019 (photo by Monica Almeida).



ABOVE: Collaborating with fellow educators, teacher Bryant Aquino from Rowland Unified School District experiments with ways to connect theatre and music to other classroom instruction, as part of TEAL professional development led by the LA County Office of Education's Center for Distance and Online Learning, YR (photo courtesy of LACOE).



I joined the Arts Ed Collective Youth Advisory Council in 2019, when the Department of Arts and Culture put out a call for youth to help develop a new LA County Regional Blueprint for Arts Education. Young people (ages 18-24) from each Supervisorial District applied, and I was selected to represent District 5. At the time I was looking for a peer group—in my work, most of the people around me were older, and I wanted to be involved in coalition building with people my own age. I also wanted to focus on public service, so this was a way to get involved.

Youth Advisory Council members participated in community workshops, attended regular meetings, and gave feedback on the new Arts Ed Blueprint. I've since been invited back to support other projects as a Youth Advisory Council alum: I've served on Advancement Grant panels (scoring grant applications), evaluated proposals for Creative Careers Online, presented at an Arts in Education Action Forum and the Department's annual Datathon, and contributed expertise and artwork as a Youth Content Advisor helping to develop the <u>Creative Wellbeing Curriculum Guide</u>.

I've always made art. I was involved with Ryman Arts during high school and was able to take intense college-level art classes. That was incredible. I went on to Rhode Island School of Design (RISD), and although I worked my way into this amazing school, there wasn't a lot of real access in college. I was a painting major—so, for example, I would get a class syllabus and see \$500-\$600 of supplies that I was supposed to buy. It felt like: okay—I'm here, I'm qualified, but the opportunities are still out of reach. Arts teachers also don't reflect the diversity of their students, and leadership in the arts is still mostly white. Why? Young people aren't being recruited and retained. The problem is the pipeline: young, diverse professionals are finding early-career jobs, but they aren't staying and moving on to leadership positions.

You can't always have every person, every place, or every experience represented in LA County—it is so vast and diverse. But outreach is important, and working directly with the communities you serve is a great way to be inclusive and fulfill your public service mission. An organization's first interaction with a marginalized community is often, 'Oh I haven't worked with your community before, I don't know your community, but come engage with our programs!' And then they're surprised that engagement is low. But how are they building the relationship with community members? There needs to be respect, trust, and agency on all sides.

The Youth Advisory Council was formed to address the representation gap—as well as the historical lack of trust, respect, and agency between organizations and communities—by directly engaging community members who are affected by the policies and programs being developed. Valuing different perspectives is important. When community members engage with government or offer their lived experiences as expertise, they should be respected and compensated for the relationships, connections, and prior work in communities they bring to the table. The Arts Ed Collective's Youth Advisory Council is a powerful example of how to do that.

Danielle Galván Gomez Arts Ed Collective Youth Advisory Council Alum



#### **5: COMMUNICATIONS & ADVOCACY**

From the beginning, the Arts Ed Collective has worked to advance policies that ensure all young people grow up with the arts and to build awareness about the importance of arts education.

Close collaboration with advocacy organizations allows our region to inform-and be informed by—the larger, statewide agenda. Both Arts for LA and Create CA (formerly the California Alliance for Arts Education) play a key role in helping to identify and shape policies for increasing access to the arts, while also empowering advocates. For nearly a decade, Arts for LA has produced the ACTIVATE Arts Advocacy Leadership Program and Create CA has produced a Student Voices campaign, equipping hundreds of arts and cultural practitioners, as well as young people, with advocacy and organizing skills they need to bring about change in their schools and communities. Similarly, the LA County Board of Supervisors have long included arts education in their annual legislative agenda and continue to direct their lobbyists to advocate for state and federal policies that advance our shared goals.

These consistent, collective efforts have contributed to important gains. California's Theatre and Dance Act (2016) established single-subject teaching credentials in dance and theatre, fully legitimizing them as discrete subject areas. In 2018, LA County became the first municipality to adopt the <u>Declaration of Students' Rights to Equity in Arts Learning</u>, reaffirming our commitment to ensuring all LA County students receive high-quality arts education regardless of their background, culture, language, or place of residence. To date, 74 of LA County's 80 school boards have adopted local policies, plans, and budgets for advancing arts education in their schools. And now, Proposition 28 (passed by voters in 2022) provides nearly \$1B each year to increase arts instruction in California public schools.

In 2018, the LA County Arts Commission also partnered with Create CA and the Alameda County Arts Commission to launch parallel public awareness campaigns. New, shared messaging positioned arts education as a social justice/ cultural equity issue and underscored how creativity is essential for addressing civic and social challenges. The following year, the Arts Ed Collective Funders Council commissioned a television documentary that would elevate the status of arts education, raise its visibility as an equity issue, and provoke urgency for achieving scale. The "Arts Education" special episode of KCET's critically acclaimed ARTBOUND series premiered in April 2021 and continues to champion the importance of arts education.

Moving forward, the Arts Ed Collective looks to expand opportunities for young people, particularly those impacted by the justice and foster care systems, to tell their own stories, change the way they are perceived by others, and uplift ways they are engaging the arts to promote wellbeing and narrative change—all to support them in achieving their full potential.

LEFT: Art-making activity offered as part of the Community Arts Day held at Chuco's Justice Center in South LA, 2021 (photo by Sylvanus Leone).

#### **6: RESEARCH & EVALUATION**

The LA County Arts Ed Collective was founded on, and continues to be guided by, data and research. Over the years, the Department of Arts and Culture has produced more than a dozen <u>research studies</u> to track the initiative's progress, share what we are learning, and identify what is still needed to ensure every child in LA County has access to the arts–all year, every year.

Our early Arts Education Performance Indicators Reports (2008, 2005, 2004) helped to define and track critical infrastructure needed for school districts to advance arts education in their schools. The <u>School Arts Survey</u> (2011) that followed allowed for deeper analysis of the quality, access, and equity of arts instruction offered, and was the first of its kind to quantify stark disparities in arts education for students in Title 1 schools. These findings led our advocacy partners to develop <u>A Policy Pathway: Embracing Arts Education to Achieve Title I Goals (2014)</u>, and were further validated by the <u>Arts Ed Profile</u> (2017). The Arts Ed Profile revealed that while arts instruction was offered in nearly every LA County public school, few schools are providing year-long instruction for all students, and those with a larger share of students eligible for free/reduced-price meals, of color, and/or learning English as a second language tend to provide less and lower quality arts education.

Guided by this data, the Arts Ed Collective now prioritizes resources for young people who historically have not had access to the arts, and particularly for those who often face barriers within the traditional public education system. This new lens has led us to examine and share promising practices that best serve our most vulnerable young people through the arts-those impacted by the justice, foster care, and other County government systems. The <u>Creative</u> Wellbeing: Arts, Schools, and Resilience Evaluation and Tips for Implementation (2021), Healing Centered Engagement-Lessons and Insights From the Field (2021), and <u>Creative</u> Wellbeing curriculum Guide (2022) all offer tools and templates for designing, building, and replicating impactful arts programming–uplifting expertise within the field, to support the field. Additionally, both <u>Creative Work</u> (2015) and <u>Building Creative Career Pathways</u> for Youth: A Field Scan for LA County (2017) provide important labor market data, analysis, and recommendations for increasing young people's access to living-wage, family-sustaining careers in the arts and creative industries.

As we work to achieve the goals of the new Arts Ed Blueprint in the decade ahead, we will build upon this substantial body of research to continuously refine our strategies and track our progress, over time. This will include updates to previous studies, as well as development of new tools to assess how we are affecting systems, infrastructure, partnerships/ collaborations, and public awareness that, combined, ensure all our young people grow up with the arts.

> RIGHT: Students at Leuzinger High School in Centinela Valley Union High School District enjoy a dance performance by UniverSoul Hip-Hop, 2020 (photo by Lindsey Best).



## Join Us!

At the heart of the Arts Ed Collective are the people who work individually, in community, and across sectors to improve conditions, transform systems, and develop new opportunities for young people in LA County.

The progress reflected in these pages is the result of work by people, organizations, and networks who contribute leadership, expertise, artistry, and perspective to arts-based youth development-every day:

- teaching artists and educators who work with young people in classrooms and community centers;
- school district and arts organization administrators who guide, innovate, and deliver programming to their communities;
- funders, advocates, and allies who continue to push for equitable access for all young people; and
- elected officials and policymakers who set a new direction for the work ahead.

Thanks to all, for your ongoing dedication to arts education and arts-based youth development.

Contact us at ArtsEdCollective@arts.lacounty.gov

Follow us on social media Facebook: LACountyArtsEd Twitter: @LACountyArtsEd Instagram: <u>@LACountyArts</u>

# Learn more at LA County Arts Ed Collective Download and share the Arts Ed Blueprint

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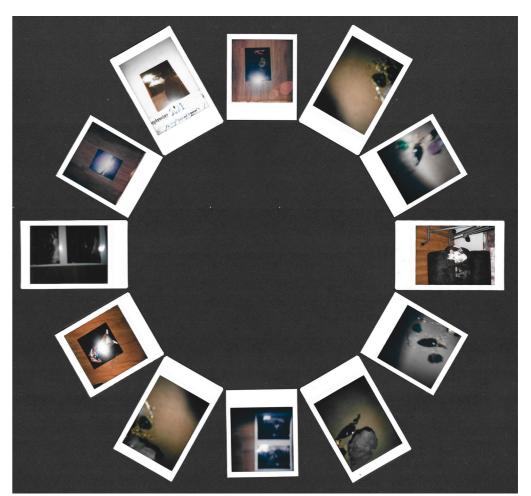
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The Healing Centered Engagement Working Group was facilitated by CHRIS NGUON, DIANA QUINTANA, and JANE LEE from FLOURISH AGENDA.



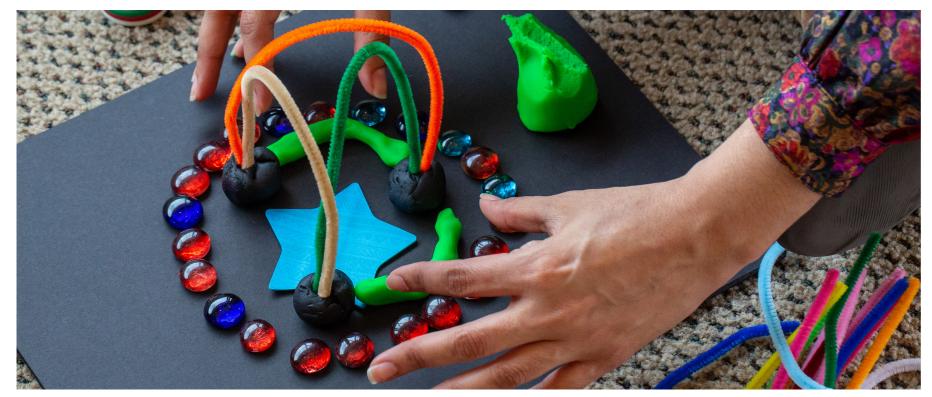
Artwork by Oswaldo Lira, Creative Wellbeing Youth Content Advisor, 2022. Reflecting on circles of support, Lira's Polaroid photographs of special people, places, objects, and moments point to resources for comfort and grounding in everyday life.

- GIANCARLO ARZU 🔘 JACQUELINE MARTINEZ

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#### ARTS ED COLLECTIVE ART OF LEADERSHIP ALUMNI - COHORT I

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CREATIVE PLAYGROUND	Ο	JUSTICE FOR MY SISTER	ROGUE ARTIST ENSEMBLE 🤇
CRITICAL MASS DANCE COMPANY	Ο	KADIMA STRING QUARTET	ROYER STUDIOS ANIMATE YOUR LEARNING! 🤇
CULTURE SHOCK LOS ANGELES	Ο	KAREN GOLDEN	SANTA CECILIA ORCHESTRA 🤇
DA CENTER FOR THE ARTS	Ο	KESHET CHAIM DANCE ENSEMBLE	SANTA CLARITA PERFORMING ARTS CENTER 🤇

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SANTA MONICA PLAYHOUSE SATURDAY NIGHT BATH CONCERT FUND SHAKESPEARE AT PLAY, INC. SHAKESPEARE CENTER OF LA SIDE STREET PROJECTS SKIRBALL CULTURAL CENTER SLAM! PROGRAM LOS ANGELES SOPHIE OLSON DANCE EXPLOSION SOUTHLAND SINGS SOUTHWEST CHAMBER MUSIC SPIRIT AWAKENING STELLA ADLER STUDIO - LOS ANGELES STREET BEAT STREET POETS STUDIO ZANNI SUSANA ELENA/ ECOS DE ESPANA SUZANNE TENG SYMPHONIC JAZZ ORCHESTRA THE ACTORS' GANG THE ADVOT PROJECT THE HARMONY PROJECT THE UNUSUAL SUSPECTS THEATRE COMPANY THEATRE OF HEARTS/ YOUTH FIRST THEATRE OF WILL ) TÍA CHUCHA'S CENTRO CULTURAL TOP HAT DANCERS, INCORPORATED ) UNIVERSOUL HIP HOP VENICE ARTS VERSA-STYLE VIVER BRASIL DANCE WALLIS ANNENBERG CENTER FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS WILL GEER THEATRICUM BOTANCIUM ) WILLIAM LOYA WRITEGIRL/ BOLD INK WRITERS YOUNG MUSICIANS FOUNDATION ) YOUNG STORYTELLERS FOUNDATION YOUTHINK ZIMMER CHILDREN'S MUSEUM

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  - JILL NEWMAN ()

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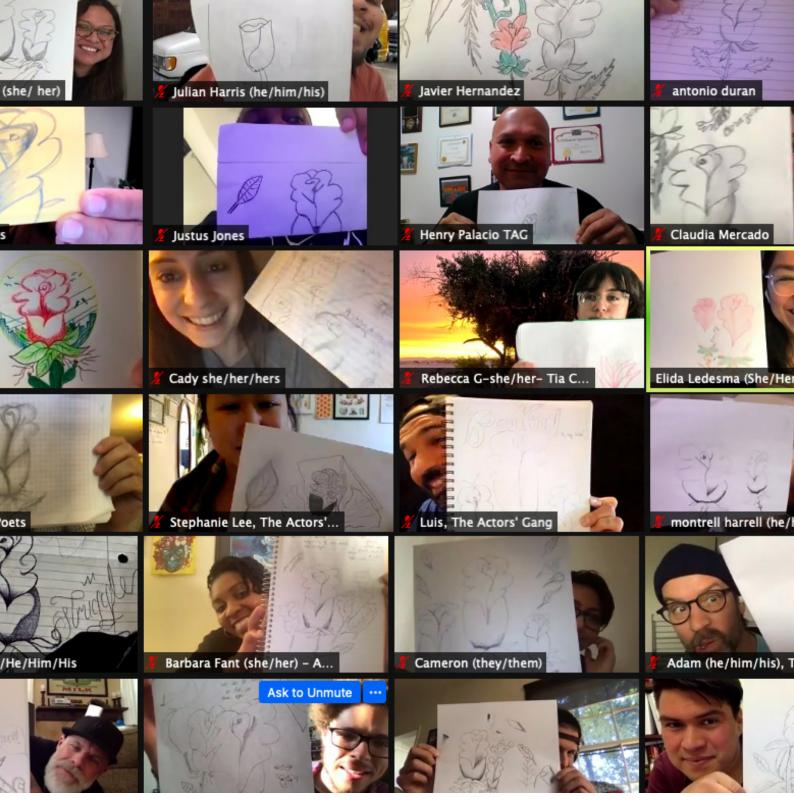


T's ARTBOUND: Arts Education ocumentary special, funded by the Arts Ed Collective Funders ncil to expand awareness of the portance of arts education, was inated for an Emmy Award and ived top honors at the National Arts Entertainment Journalism Awards in 2022.

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Teaching artists and staff from the Arts for Healing and Justice Network member organizations participate in online professional development that uplifts arts-based, healing-centered practices to promote health and wellness, 2022 (photo by Elida Ledesma).

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