

Arts for All: The Vanguard Districts

CASE STUDIES FROM THE FIRST FIVE YEARS

Beverly Hills Unified School District
Burbank Unified School District
Castaic Union School District
Compton Unified School District
Culver City Unified School District
Hacienda La Puente Unified School District
Los Angeles County Office of Education School District
Norwalk-La Mirada Unified School District
Pasadena Unified School District
Rosemead School District
Santa Monica-Malibu Unified School District

A REPORT FOR THE *ARTS FOR ALL* EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

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2009

Arts for All: The Los Angeles County Regional Blueprint for Arts Education is a plan providing a series of policy changes and educational initiatives creating systemic change and ensuring that every public school student in Los Angeles County will receive a high-quality K-12 arts education in dance, music, theatre and the visual arts, based on the Visual and Performing Arts Standards (VAPA) for California Public Schools. To download the Blueprint, visit www.lacountyarts.org.

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Janice Pober, *Senior Vice President, Corporate Social Responsibility, Sony Pictures Entertainment*

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PREFACE

In 2002, Los Angeles County embarked on an initiative as ambitious as it was comprehensive. The goal of *Arts for All: Los Angeles County Regional Blueprint for Arts Education* was to restore quality, sequential arts education to all of the County's 81 school districts. The initiative garnered broad and deep commitment and has made significant progress. Today, 34 of the 81 school districts are working toward the goals of *Arts for All* and more than 100 community partners are engaged in helping to move the initiative forward.

The true test of *Arts for All*, however, lies in what is happening in the classroom. How does policy become reality for students, teachers and administrators? The Los Angeles County Arts Commission, which leads *Arts for All*, commissioned this study about the first 11 school districts to commit to the initiative's goals. We wanted to find out how much progress had been made, identify the barriers to reaching goals and how technical assistance could best be used to effect implementation.

This study was originally intended as an internal document but the findings are so compelling we felt it was important to share our lessons with the broader education community. Its publication is especially timely in light of the findings of the recently released National Assessment of Education Progress (NAEP) in the Arts report that arts education in America is "mediocre" and "lackluster." As U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan said, the report "should challenge all of us to make K-12 arts program more available to America's children."

Arts for All: The Vanguard Districts – Case Studies from the First Five Years fills a gap in our knowledge about arts education efforts. **There is a robust and rigorous body of research on the impact of arts education on students but there is sparse research on the effective strategies for implementing, sustaining and stewarding arts education efforts.** Not since Arts Education Partnership's (AEP) *Gaining the Arts Advantage* (1999) has there been a comprehensive study of how school districts animate the arts in their schools. We believe these case studies and subsequent cross-case analyses offer new insights about the differences between planning to restore arts education and making that plan a reality.

In reading this report, bear in mind that the study captures a moment in time, a snapshot of a massive work in progress that seeks to effect long-term change. Since these case studies were conducted in 2008, the economic climate in Los Angeles and California has changed dramatically as it has everywhere, but *Arts for All* has faced many challenges in its history. Fortunately, the initiative recently received a \$1.2 million grant from The Wallace Foundation to develop programs and strategies to deepen and strengthen the capacity of 28 *Arts for All* districts to fully implement their arts education plans. Because of the findings of these case studies, *Arts for All* is in a better position to provide more targeted professional development and technical assistance to all our school districts. Stay tuned.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Arts for All is a strategic planning initiative adopted in 2002 by the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors to restore arts education—in dance, music, theatre and visual arts—to all 81 school districts in Los Angeles County, including the Los Angeles County Office of Education classrooms. To date, 34 districts have become *Arts for All* districts. Managed by the Los Angeles County Arts Commission staff and more than 100 community partners, the initiative is a national model for arts education reform.

The following report contains findings from case studies of the first 11 districts to join the initiative, six in 2003-2004 and five in 2004-2005. These initial districts, referred to as the Vanguard Districts, developed strategic plans to guide efforts to offer sequential, standards-based arts instruction for all students. The case studies were written in 2008 to document the progress made and the issues confronted by each district during the early stages of planning and implementing their arts plans. A second purpose was to measure preliminary effects on the level of student access to arts instruction. The results of the research are intended for use in identifying meaningful ways for Arts Commission staff and its partners to provide technical assistance as the *Arts for All* initiative advances.

Key findings from the case studies are as follows:

- Eighty-two percent of Vanguard Districts reported they joined the *Arts for All* initiative to replace a patchwork approach to arts education with sequential instruction. Approximately half were also motivated by the opportunity to improve equitable access for all students.
- Within two years, all Vanguard districts developed and secured school board approval on a comprehensive multi-year district arts plan. In addition, they each wrote an arts education policy that committed their district to supporting the objectives of the arts plan.
- All district arts plans reflected basic components of a quality arts plan. These included standard-based curriculum, pedagogy, student assessment, professional development, program administration, arts personnel, facilities & equipment, partnerships & collaboration, an arts education policy, funding, evaluation, communication and district leadership. Districts recommended that internal accountability be added to the list.
- During the first phase of implementing their district arts plan, the Community Art Teams (CAT) focused on hiring personnel, acquiring materials and equipment, aligning curriculum, writing lesson plans and organizing staff development. These areas reflected the spending priorities of available funding as much as the action items in the plans.

- Factors that drove the implementation of the plan included state and district policies that supported sequential instruction and proactive stakeholders—including school board and district administrators, parents and civic-minded community partners.
- All the Vanguard Districts had either hired or assigned someone to coordinate the arts education reform effort—a factor that was considered critical to achieving their goals. In general, districts with full-time coordinators in administrative positions were able to progress the furthest.
- Half the Vanguard Districts adopted standards-based sequential curricula in music and visual arts within three years of initiating implementation. Fewer than 20 percent have added dance or theatre.
- At the secondary level, credentialed arts instructors or teachers with an art endorsement teach all arts courses across the districts. At the elementary level, generalist teachers are designated as the primary instructor for all four art disciplines in 73 percent of the districts.
- Districts have grown more discriminating in their use of community arts providers, weighing the cost against other objectives in the arts plan. Providers were increasingly hired to plan with and model instruction for teachers along with providing direct instruction for students.
- With the exception of the Los Angeles County of Education educational divisions, each Vanguard District has established an education foundation to supplement the district arts budget.
- Those districts with established community partnerships prior to joining *Arts for All* were able to expand those relationships through the planning process. Districts that had not developed strong partnerships beforehand evidenced little change in their ability to do so since, with the exception of Compton Unified School District, which has benefited from sizeable unsolicited private and corporate donations.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations for furthering the *Arts for All* initiative are based on meeting the needs of the Vanguard Districts as they continue adopting sequential arts curricula in the four art disciplines. The suggestions were gathered during CAT interviews or are based on trends that emerged during data analysis. In the area of capacity building, programmatic suggestions: 1) offering leadership academies for district and school administrators, 2) providing policy updates and other forms of supportive research to community advocacy teams, 3) coaching arts coordinators in management skills such as fundraising, advocacy,

program administration and evaluation as well as guiding effective staff development programs, and 4) providing a mentor during a newly hired arts coordinator's first year of implementing a district arts plan.

Recommendations for assisting the districts with financial needs include helping them develop a concrete plan for funding the rest of their implementation objectives—including preparing for future facility needs as more students gain access to arts instruction. In addition, the Arts Commission might consider developing a grant program to provide funding for operational expenses that create bottlenecks in the implementation process—such as contracting for temporary clerical assistance, website design, program evaluation, documentation and creating public relationship materials. Another possible grant program could provide matching funds for districts to use for professional development partnerships with qualifying community arts providers.

Two recommendations for continued research include conducting a study of emerging models for successfully adopting sequential curricula in all four art disciplines and conducting a school-level survey to better estimate the level of arts instruction students are actually receiving.

Arts for All: The Vanguard Districts

CASE STUDIES FROM THE FIRST FIVE YEARS (2003-2008)

INTRODUCTION

In 2002, the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors adopted *Arts for All*, an unprecedented strategic planning initiative aimed at assuring that “every public school student in Los Angeles County will receive a high-quality K-12 education in which the arts are an intrinsic part of the core curriculum”.¹ The mission of *Arts for All* is to engage school districts in developing and implementing arts education plans that will ultimately result in sequential learning opportunities in dance, music, theatre and visual arts for the 1.7 million students in Los Angeles County’s 81 school districts, including the Los Angeles County Office of Education (LACOE) classrooms. To date, 34 districts have joined the initiative, or 42 percent of all county districts. The initiative is managed by the Los Angeles County Arts Commission in partnership with more than 100 local agencies and foundations committed to restoring arts education to schools countywide.

Arts for All has played a key role in developing the infrastructure and capacity of school districts to create comprehensive arts education programs through technical assistance programs and targeted grants made possible through the *Arts for All* Pooled Fund. The Arts Commission *Arts for All* staff and strategic planning coaches (trained through the California Alliance of Arts Education’s (CAAE) *A Coach in Every Corner* program) have guided participating districts in the development of arts education plans. They also provided sustained support as the districts progressed in implementing those plans for adopting sequential curricula in each art discipline. This support included ongoing coaching, meeting facilitation, general advisement and professional development options.

The following report contains case studies on the progress of the first 11 districts to join *Arts for All*, starting in 2003 (see Appendix A). They include, in alphabetical order, Beverly Hills Unified School District, Burbank Unified School District, Castaic Union School District, Compton Unified School District, Culver City Unified School District, Hacienda La Puente School District, Los Angeles County Office of Education School District, Norwalk-La Mirada Unified School District, Pasadena Unified School District, Rosemead School District and Santa Monica-Malibu Unified School District. These 11 districts are referred to as the Vanguard Districts, a term that denotes the willingness of these earliest participants to engage in a monumental and pioneer effort that has become a national model for arts education reform.

The case studies were undertaken to 1) document lessons learned in creating and implementing a strategic plan for building a comprehensive district arts education program and 2) document changes in student access to quality instruction in the arts as the *Arts for All* initiative matures. The findings are intended to inform the design of further technical

¹ (July, 2002) *Arts for All: Los Angeles County Regional Blueprint for Arts Education*

assistance programs aimed at sustaining each district's implementation efforts and to guide the development of a longitudinal study on student access across Los Angeles County. It is important to note that these case studies describe the earliest experiences of districts that joined *Arts for All*. The initiative has continued to evolve in the years since 2003 based on lessons learned, and as a result, planning and implementation processes have also been modified.

RESEARCH METHODS

A mixed methods research design was used to capture a three-dimensional perspective of progress made by each of the Vanguard Districts since they joined in either 2003 or 2004. The researcher reviewed hundreds of pages of related documentation and conducted focus group interviews with representatives from each district's Community Arts Team (CAT) (see Appendix B for the interview protocol). In addition, each team completed two surveys at the close of the interview. The first was the Arts Education Program Implementation Continuum Survey, a rubric-based measure developed through the California Department of Education (CDE) that allows districts to rate their progress in developing a quality, comprehensive arts education program (see Appendix C).² The second was a pilot instrument that documented where changes have occurred according to indicators associated with increased student access to an education in the arts (see Appendix D).

Transcripts from each recorded focus group were verified for accuracy, then coded and analyzed according to indicators associated with comprehensive arts education programs. The indicators reflect the components of the CDE Arts Education Program Implementation Continuum, which have since been refined through the CAAE's *A Coach in Every Corner* program. These components include standard-based curriculum, pedagogy, student assessment, professional development, program administration, arts personnel, facilities & equipment, partnership & collaborations, an arts education policy, funding, evaluation, communication and district leadership. The interview data were then crosschecked against district records of activities associated with the *Arts for All* initiative and later confirmed through conversations with district arts coordinators and Los Angeles County Arts Commission staff monitoring the districts' progress. The findings from the two surveys were charted and used to create a single program quality index for each district. Appendix E and F contain the data charts for each measure.

From the collective evidence, case studies were prepared on the 11 districts. These offer a brief account of their motivations for joining *Arts for All*, the strategic planning process, implementation activities, and a summation of results of their efforts relative to the indicators of program quality and increased student access to arts instruction. A draft of each case was then sent to the respective CAT team for further verification. Finally a cross-analysis of the 11 districts was conducted, the results of which are contained in the main body of the report that follows.

² Excerpt from (2001) California Department of Education Press. *The Arts Education Program Toolkit, A Visual and Performing Arts Program Assessment Process*. Sacramento, California.

The first section provides a summary of evidence taken from across the case studies that expose patterns and differences in why districts chose to join the initiative, how they approached creating a strategic plan for arts education and what they have since accomplished through implementing their plans. This section also includes a description of dynamics identified in the districts' activities that either facilitated or challenged efforts to create sustained changes in their arts education programs. The second section contains an overview of outcomes achieved by the Vanguard Districts in terms of building comprehensive arts education programs and increasing student access to instruction in the four disciplines. The report concludes by offering possibilities for further technical assistance and recommendations for otherwise advancing the *Arts for All* initiative. Individual district case studies are contained in Appendix A, followed by the research instruments and survey data charts in Appendices B-F.

SECTION I: WHY *ARTS FOR ALL*?

Each of the 11 Vanguard Districts had their own reasons for joining the *Arts for All* initiative. Though these districts comprise just 14 percent of all Los Angeles County school districts, they represent a cross-section of the region in how they vary in size, economic resources and level of arts education programming. Rosemead is the smallest Vanguard District with a 2007 student enrollment of 3,121 while Compton is the largest with 28,081 students (see Table 1.1).

Table 1.1. 2007-2008 Student Enrollment Data³

Compton	28,081
Norwalk-La Mirada	22,092
Hacienda La Puente	21,997
Pasadena	20,905
Burbank	16,640
Santa Monica-Malibu	11,688
LACOE	10,109
Culver City	6,656
Beverly Hills	5,305
Castaic	3,397
Rosemead	3,121

Prior to joining the *Arts for All* initiative, Castaic depended on its elementary classroom teachers to provide whatever arts instruction their training afforded them. In contrast, Beverly Hills, located in a wealthy urban community, was able to employ arts specialists for its elementary schools in choral, instrumental music and visual arts due to a fiscal partnership with the City. At Hacienda-La Puente, high school music specialists reported their programs were in danger of failing due to the lack of adequately prepared student musicians transitioning from middle schools, while Santa Monica-Malibu had a nationally recognized secondary music program. Even within districts, inequity existed as some school arts programs were funded by active parent teacher associations (PTAs) and booster

³ California Department of Education website, accessed November 15, 2008.

clubs, while others were not. These considerable differences highlight the disparities in arts education programs across Los Angeles County.

There are many reasons districts chose to partner with *Arts for All*, as shown in Table 1.2. Several reported more than one reason, but the main one was in alignment with the mission of *Arts for All*: to restructure their existing approach to arts education so that every student had the opportunity to receive a sequential education in dance, music, theatre and visual arts. More than half of the districts had already begun the work of improving their arts education programs and the initiative dovetailed with their needs at the time. In addition, districts were attracted by the vision of providing equitable access to arts instruction for all students. Two Vanguard Districts abandoned previous plans to develop arts-focused schools when the initiative was announced.

Table 1.2. Primary Motivations for Joining *Arts for All*

	Districts	(%)
Replace patchwork approach with a comprehensive arts education program	9	82%
Good timing – the initiative aligned with existing goals for arts education	6	55%
Improve equitable access to arts instruction for all students	5	45%
Sustain and strengthen secondary arts programs	4	36%
Obtain funding or increase their ability to attract financial support	3	27%
Create a comprehensive, long-term, district-wide plan for arts education	2	18%
Improve the status of arts education as a core component of the curriculum	2	18%

N=11 Districts

Districts were also concerned about the status of high school arts programs, which in some cases were dwindling because incoming freshman had not been adequately prepared to participate during their elementary and middle school years. With the joint California State University/University of California A-G Admission Requirement of one year of study in a major art discipline, administrators were also concerned that students would be shut out of opportunities to attend a state college. On an operational level, districts welcomed assistance in creating strategic arts plans and hoped that the distinction of being an *Arts for All* Vanguard District would increase their ability to attract financial support for their goals.

Stage One: District Planning for Arts Education

All 11 Vanguard Districts participated in an extensive planning process that included working with an *Arts for All* planning coach. The planning process began with the formation of a CAT team composed of stakeholders from within a district and from the community served. The majority of CAT teams started with between 20-30 members. At least half of the teams paid teachers to attend the meetings, though this did not always ensure their attendance or sustained interest.

Most districts reduced the size of their CAT team once the arts plan was adopted and implementation began. They realized the make-up of the implementation team needed to be dictated by the strategic directions pursued. If a district was going to write curriculum, it added arts specialists to its team. If it was going to focus on fundraising, it invited community members with financial resources or business contacts. Notably, districts that had established arts partnerships in the school community prior to joining *Arts for All* tended to deepen and maximize those relationships through the planning process. Conversely, districts that had not developed strong partnerships beforehand evidenced little change in their ability—or perhaps, commitment—to do so since.

Creating a district arts plan took one or two years, depending on: 1) the social dynamics within a district; 2) the number of years the plan was designed to cover; 3) the amount of information that needed to be gathered and analyzed for informed decision-making; and 4) the frequency of planning meetings. Some groups met weekly or monthly, and later transitioned to bi-monthly or quarterly after the plan was completed and a coordinator was hired to take charge of the implementation process. Some of the larger districts spent weeks conducting an inventory of art supplies, equipment, facilities, staffing and instructional practices at each school while the smaller ones were able to gather this information more quickly. Each of the Vanguard District CAT teams also wrote arts education policies that were approved by their respective school boards, as were their completed arts plans.

All 11 district plans reflected key components of quality arts education programs that were presented to the CAT team by their *Arts for All* planning coach.⁴ The components aligned with instrumentation used by the California Department of Education in the Arts Education Program Toolkit and were organized into three categories: instructional content, district infrastructure and arts program sustainability. Within these categories, elements of communication and advocacy were sometimes listed in arts plans as action steps, rather than as core program components. During the focus group interviews some CAT teams discussed social agendas such as multiculturalism or community improvement. These items were not specifically listed in their district arts plan, but nonetheless influenced their thinking and decision-making. Two of the districts talked about a lack of teacher accountability in arts education and suggested adding that to the list of core components.

During focus group interviews, CAT team members repeatedly acknowledged the importance of having a written plan to support their requests for funding and for securing permission to pursue specific strategic directions each year. In all but one case, the planning process and the final written plan brought district arts leaders, teachers and community advocates together to forge a collective vision of an arts education roadmap suitable for their particular context. The written plan provided leverage to attract funding, either from the district budget or from external sources. It also, importantly, provided a focal point for ongoing school board discussions about positioning arts education as a core curriculum subject and as a key element in every school's instructional plan.

⁴ The key components include standard-based curriculum, pedagogy, student assessment, professional development, program administration, arts personnel, facilities & equipment, partnership & collaborations, an arts education policy, funding, evaluation, communication and district leadership.

In one district, however, the CAT team found the *Arts for All* strategic planning process to be overly structured, somewhat redundant and off-target for their immediate needs. This district already had a functioning arts committee in place with a clear arts education agenda established prior to joining *Arts for All*. It had made significant strides to develop an arts education program on its own. In this instance, the usual planning process was eventually abandoned and instead, through a series of informal discussions, the district arts plan was reframed to better reflect the prior achievements of the arts committee while continuing to align with the *Arts for All* mission. This experience suggests that while the planning process may be highly effective in most cases, it is important to consider the unique history and context of a district at the onset and let that guide the endeavor, and to be open to eliminating steps as the situation warrants.

Another challenge mentioned by several CAT teams was that some of the objectives in their plans appeared unrealistic in terms of the timeframe set forth or available resources. Because the teams did not take the time to break down the specific action steps in advance, districts sometimes underestimated the true budget, the time, and the staffing needed to follow through. To some, the plan read more like a “pie in the sky” wish list. The more practical-minded team members had difficulty understanding the value of creating a plan the school district had no clear way to fund. Once the plans were in place, however, team members found that funding unexpectedly became available through a variety of sources—most significantly, through the California legislative arts education block grants. Because these districts had a plan in place, the CAT teams were better prepared to make use of the unanticipated funding in an organized manner. Over time, it became clear that the art plans were living documents that needed to be revisited and revised on a regular basis in order to respond quickly and effectively to unforeseen opportunities and changes in district context from year to year.

The participants in the various district focus groups offered some candid advice to future school districts CAT teams:

- Include people with a broad vision on the team, who can think beyond the parameters of their own circle of influence or self-interests.
- Whether drawing from within the district or from the community, select art advocates who will work well in a group, even as they represent different constituencies. Detractors can stall the process unnecessarily.
- Have a procedure spelled out in advance for reducing team size when the planning stage is over or when adding new members needed for the implementation stage.
- If you have a K-8 district, invite arts personnel from the neighboring district’s high school to be on the CAT team and work together sequencing the instructional transition from middle to high school.

Stage Two: The Implementation Process

A cross-case analysis of the activities undertaken by the Vanguard Districts in the first two to three years since completing their plans revealed that they had primarily focused on the central work of schooling: hiring personnel, buying materials, aligning curriculum, writing lesson plans and organizing staff development. These activities could be considered the fundamental building blocks of an arts education program, as a district cannot provide quality arts instruction without knowledgeable staff, rigorous guidelines and adequate materials. They are also the components that educators are best equipped to provide, according to their training.

Another reason districts may have focused on these particular elements speaks to the funding that paid for their activities, which was primarily derived from their district's general budget and the legislative arts education block grants. For the most part, the use of these funds was pre-determined. Historically, districts had been paying for arts personnel, curriculum, supplies—and in a few cases, professional development—from the general budget. This pattern continued after they joined *Arts for All*. State block grants were earmarked for the same list of expenditures. Since public education budgets are determined and typically spent on an annual basis, once the arts education block grants were funded in 2006-2007, the CAT teams began to spend their district allotments as quickly and as thoughtfully as possible. A few held funds over a year while waiting for individual schools to turn in spending plans.

In reviewing the implementation process of each district, several patterns were noticeable. For one, all the districts either hired or appointed an arts coordinator in compliance with the intentions of the *Arts for All* initiative. In many cases, they took advantage of the *Arts for All* Pooled Fund's matching two-year support grant. In terms of increasing arts personnel, approximately 15 specialists were hired across the districts to fill instructional gaps—two-thirds of which were music educators. All of the districts had engaged in some form of curriculum alignment or adoption process. Districts either wrote their own curricula, adopted textbooks as curricula, or wrote sample standards-based lesson plans for each grade level that were later published as a sequence of instruction. Most districts focused on visual arts and music adoptions through 2008, with the exceptions of Compton and Norwalk-La Mirada, which adopted all four. Dance units were added to the physical education curriculum in at least three districts, indicating a trend to release elementary classroom teachers from that responsibility. The majority of districts also determined that credentialed theatre specialists and/or English teachers would eventually provide drama instruction at the secondary level, while classroom teachers would integrate it with language arts studies at the elementary level. No district has fully achieved this objective to date.

All Vanguard Districts sponsored professional development workshops based on the adoption of new curriculum materials, which were reported to include standards-based instruction, integration, grade level sequencing, and student assessment. During district focus group interviews, the majority of arts coordinators expressed an interest in receiving further guidance on designing and delivering quality professional development sessions in

the arts. Districts continued to contract with community arts providers to bring teaching artists into the schools, but the focus had, in many cases, shifted from filling instructional gaps to modeling standards-based lessons for teachers. Unique among the Vanguard Districts, Norwalk-La Mirada organized a leadership academy for district and school administrators to build on their capacity to supervise arts education programs in their schools.

The components of quality arts education programs that did not receive as much attention during the first phase of implementation were leadership development, fundraising, advocacy and program evaluation. Historically these areas are not central to the work of educators and all point to possibilities for further technical assistance opportunities by *Arts for All* staff. However, progress has been made in developing infrastructure to support these activities across the Vanguard Districts. For example, all districts except LACOE have established or redirected existing education foundations to eventually provide sustaining support for arts education programs. In addition, parent organizations are increasingly being invited to send a representative to attend general planning meetings to ensure their fundraising efforts align with and support the objectives of the district arts plan.

Dynamics of Change

As CAT team members talked about implementing their arts plans during focus group interviews, they identified a number of factors that either facilitated progress or created challenges along the way. The underlying mechanisms that appeared to aid the planning and implementation process fell into two categories: factors that *drive* the process and those that *facilitate* the process. The “drivers” were initiatory in that they motivated district personnel to take action in implementing the plan. As shown in Table 1.3, these included policies and people.

Table 1.3. Factors that Drive the Implementation Process

POLICIES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The California Department of Education’s expectation that all schools adopt and teach the state visual and performing arts content standards ● The need to help students qualify for the California university entrance requirements ● A superintendent’s mandate for weekly arts instruction ● Joining <i>Arts for All</i>, with its stated goal of sequential K-12 instruction in the arts
PRINCIPLE STAKEHOLDERS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Pro-active school board members, superintendents or other senior administrators ● Arts coordinators ● Committed teachers ● Parents who want their children to have an education in the arts ● Community partners with a vision for civic and social reform

The policies mentioned during the interviews were set forth by the California Department of Education, the state university systems and the district superintendents to encourage schools to provide systematic instruction in the arts. Many of the advocates on CAT teams likely stayed involved in the implementation process because they agree with these broad policies that were—and continued to be—in need of enforcement. For others, such as

classroom teachers with little experience in the arts, their willingness to go along with the changes brought on by the arts plan may be partly out of believing an education in the arts would benefit their students, or alternatively, out of peer pressure or fear of career consequences for students—or themselves—if they did not participate. At any rate, throughout all of the focus group interviews there was a sense of district personnel acquiescing to the policy tide, which, in the *Arts for All* districts, has turned in favor of the arts. Other drivers for plan implementation were identified as pro-active administrators and board members, energized arts coordinators, and parents and other community members who held specific educational and civic agendas relative to the arts.

Additional factors were identified as furthering the implementation process without actually driving it (see Table 1.4). These support mechanisms included an expanded list of stakeholders, internal district practices and financial resources. In this case, the stakeholders cooperated with or participated in the plans of the CAT team. They had been inspired by the collective vision created for their district through the *Arts for All* strategic planning process, and then took steps to uphold the effort to actualize that vision.

Table 1.4. Factors that Facilitate the Implementation Process

PRINCIPLE AND SECONDARY STAKEHOLDERS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School board members • Curriculum leaders • Parent organizations: PTA and booster clubs • Education foundation executives and board members • Community arts providers • Civic administrators • Corporate grantors
PRACTICES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Board policy in arts education • District arts plan • Building on successes of existing arts programs • Aligning instruction in the arts with instruction in other subjects • Conducting regular needs assessments of schools to ensure the actions taken by the CAT team and coordinator are responsive and relevant • Cohesive staff development plan
RESOURCES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Legislative funding • External grants and donations • Adequate supplies curriculum materials • Adequate musical instruments

The CAT teams also identified a number of implementation strategies that have been fundamental to their progress. Adopting a well-articulated school board policy that reflects core values in the district arts education agenda, writing and sharing the district arts plan, and creating a professional development plan were most often mentioned. Districts such as Santa Monica-Malibu and Castaic built on the successes of existing arts programs and honored the work of the past, rather than starting from scratch. Other districts are working to align their new arts curricula with existing systems of instruction (e.g., buying visual arts textbooks from their language arts textbook publisher), so as not to overwhelm teachers with entirely new teaching approaches. The state legislative block grants afforded all schools the opportunity to restock art rooms, stage equipment lockers and school band

closets and the *Arts for All* Pooled Fund grants enabled several districts to hire an arts coordinator. In addition, half of the Vanguard Districts have benefited from relationships with significant external donors that directly impacted what they could accomplish in implementing their arts plans.

Obstacles to Systemic Change

There were also factors that created challenges for the CAT team as they moved from the planning to the implementation stage. Regardless of the level of funding that districts had received for implementing their plans, money remained at the top of the challenge list. Many districts were experiencing declining enrollment and a state economic crisis was threatening to further impact their arts education allotments. One suggestion was for *Arts for All* staff to provide help in organizing a financial plan for moving forward.

Other challenges described by the CAT teams generally fell into three categories: district level, school level and arts coordinator level (see Table 1.5). At the district level, challenges were related to policies and practices adhered to by the school board and/or superintendent. Decisions were commonly made in reaction to academic pressures to raise standardized test scores that inadvertently demonstrated a lower valuing of arts education in the curriculum and in the instructional schedule. Leadership training was recommended to help district and school administrators envision how arts instruction could help them meet overall education objectives and how local policies and practices impact learning opportunities in the arts.

Table 1.5. Obstacles to Implementation

DISTRICT LEVEL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No Child Left Behind pressures • Conflicting policies and practices tied to academic goals • Lower prioritizing of the arts in the curriculum • Lack of accountability for the quality of arts instruction • Inconsistent adoption of instructional practices across a district
SCHOOL LEVEL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inconsistent support of school principals • Time constraints caused by academic watch status • Teachers’ lack of knowledge and confidence in teaching the arts • Teachers’ resistance to an overcrowded teaching schedule • Inadequate time for effective staff development • Inadequate funds to hire arts specialists at all three schools levels
ARTS COORDINATOR LEVEL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintaining membership on the CAT team • Reaching collective agreements • Setting achievable goals • Splitting up responsibilities • Finding time for communicating with teachers, parents and broader community • Staying on top of recordkeeping

At the school level, the challenges revolved around the level of support and buy-in from both principals and districts. While the majority of principals were described by CAT

teams as being supportive of the *Arts for All* initiative, they were often focused on other schooling priorities. In some cases, their leadership decisions reflected a lack of awareness of how to equitably balance support for arts education with other issues. Schools on academic watch can also present a problem as students are required to spend the majority of instructional time on math and language arts. However, in two Vanguard Districts facing that situation, teachers fought to maintain the arts program as well.

Challenges associated with classroom instruction revolved around the elementary classroom teachers, who, alone among all district personnel, are expected to learn how to provide quality instruction in as many as four art disciplines in addition to their current workload. Arts coordinators have asked for assistance in helping them understand how to coordinate and deliver quality professional development, develop classroom scheduling solutions for ongoing arts instruction and guide teachers in effective arts integration practices.

Specific challenges faced by the arts coordinators involved maintaining a constructive work dynamic with an evolving CAT team, keeping up with paperwork and consistently communicating with teachers, administrators and parents. Several of the coordinators saw these as important factors in determining how quickly and effectively a district's arts education infrastructure could grow. While coaching in project management may be a partial solution for these issues, clerical assistance and Internet technology support were more often named. As was previously mentioned, available funding streams did not appear to be good sources for covering such expenses.

SECTION II: INITIATIVE OUTCOMES

As the case studies in Appendix A will show, the effects of the *Arts for All* initiative on the Vanguard District's arts programs have been considerable. In at least five of the districts, the implementation of the strategic plan has caused a sea change in how districts think about and respond to possibilities for expanding arts instruction. Across all 11 districts, participation has strengthened the overall quality of arts education programs, as defined by the scaled items measured in the CDE's Arts Education Program Implementation Continuum Survey (see Appendix C). In the following pages, the results of the districts' planning and implementation efforts are presented. They are grouped according to the three principal elements of a quality arts education program: instructional content, district infrastructure and program sustainability. These findings are followed by evidence of change in student access to arts education.

Instructional content

As a group, districts focused most of their energy in the area of improving instructional content. An analysis of the evidence collected through document review and CAT team group interviews indicate they selected key standards for each grade level, bought instructional texts and other materials, wrote curricula and lesson plans, hired personnel,

reconfigured teaching assignments and provided staff development for teachers as art disciplines were adopted. As indicated in Table 2.1, six of the districts now have sequential, standards-based curricula for all grade levels in music and visual arts—in the form of textbooks, vetted lesson plans or a framework containing state standards, lesson ideas, resources and assessment options.

Table 2.1. District-level Adoption of Standards-based Arts Curricula

K-12	Districts (n)	(%)
Visual Arts	6	55%
Music	6	55%
Theatre	2	18%
Dance	1	9%
N=11 Districts		

The other five districts are in the midst of researching and piloting materials or adopting an art form in a few grades at a time. Two of the six districts have sequential curricula written for theatre and one for dance. These figures confirm that the majority of districts are adopting the art disciplines one at a time and have elected to focus on music and visual arts first. They also triangulate the finding that *Arts for All* districts are working to strengthen the entire K-12 sequence of arts instruction through identifying and filling gaps, although as previously stated, most efforts have been focused on the elementary level to date.

Vanguard Districts varied in their employment of credentialed arts instructors to teach the major arts disciplines in each school, as shown in Table 2.2. In this case, credentialed arts instructor may include arts specialist, a generalist teacher with an arts endorsement or a professional with an alternative teaching credential.⁵

With rare exceptions, credentialed arts instructors provide all arts instruction at the middle and high school level. Where no funding is available to hire credentialed arts instructors, courses simply are not offered. At the middle school level, some English teachers are teaching theatre while some physical education teachers are teaching dance, although it is not necessarily true for all schools within a given district.

Table 2.2. School Level Percentages of Districts That Employ Credentialed Arts Instructors to Teach the Major Disciplines

	Elementary	Middle School	High School
Visual Arts	9%	64%	100%
Music	27%	73%	89%
Theatre	0%	67%	67%
Dance (PE)	18%	36%	30%
N=11 Districts			

⁵ Alternative route certification (credentialing) is specifically for individuals who have not completed a traditional 4-year certification program through an accredited university, but seek an alternative way to attain a teaching certificate. Many are career changers, or have special skills, life or industry experience that would make them effective teachers. In almost every case, candidates have achieved their bachelor's degree, just not in the field of education. Quoted from <http://www.teacherssupportnetwork.com/corporate/TeacherToolsAdviceArticle.do?id=16>.

Perhaps the most notable finding is the high percentage of districts that are currently designating the generalist elementary teacher as the primary instructor for all four art forms, as shown in Table 2.3. Yet CAT teams reported that too few teachers currently have the knowledge or time to shoulder the responsibility. This situation has created a bottleneck in implementation plans and will require solutions that are customized to the goals and context of each district—and perhaps—of each school.

Table 2.3. Percentage of Districts Where Elementary Classroom Teachers Are Expected to Provide Arts Instruction

	Elementary
Visual Arts	91%
Music	73%
Theatre	100%
Dance (PE)	82%
N=11 Districts	

Deciding whether to teach an art form as a discrete subject or through integration with other subjects depended primarily on whether the designated instructor was an arts specialist or generalist classroom teacher. Districts reported that the specialists tend to teach the arts as discrete subjects, which effects all secondary level arts instruction. None of the districts reported sustained efforts to link high school arts instruction with other subjects. In a few cases, districts asked their middle school arts specialists to collaborate with other teachers in the interest of integration, especially when designing and/or modeling new lesson ideas. Otherwise, arts integration was linked with elementary level instruction and primarily referred to as a time saving device, in that two subjects could—at least hypothetically—be taught at the same time.

The figures in Table 2.4 indicate that most districts identified integration as the preferred approach to arts instruction in their elementary schools. However, the focus group interview data suggested that teachers are likely using distinct subject instruction as well, depending on the goal of specific lessons. The extent to which teachers have followed through on these intentions reported by the CAT teams has not yet been documented.

Arts assessment is currently being introduced to elementary teachers through curriculum materials and through staff development sessions where ways to check for student learning are discussed. At the elementary level, teachers are not generally held accountable for rigorously assessing student artwork or performances as of yet, though some exceptions stand out. For example, Beverly Hills is making a concerted effort to treat the arts like any other subject area, which includes developing ways to measure student progress on a regular basis. Santa Monica-Malibu has been the first to develop and pilot a district-wide on-line exam in general music knowledge, administered annually to every fifth grader transitioning from elementary school. Otherwise, most elementary teachers are currently required to assign a simple rating for visual and performing arts on student report cards, and it is not typically broken down by discipline. As a general rule, secondary arts specialists assess student coursework based on their demonstration of learning objectives

(e.g., using performance rubrics or project criteria based on state content standards), level of effort, and attendance in class and at student exhibitions and performances.

Table 2.4. Arts Instruction as Discrete Disciplines versus Integrated

	Elementary		
	Discrete	Integrated	Not Taught
Visual Arts	36%	64%	---
Music	18%	73%	9%
Theatre	9%	55%	36%
Dance (PE)	18%	36%	45%

N=11 Districts

District Infrastructure

According to the CAAE’s map of principle arts program components in *The Insider’s Guide to Arts Education Planning* the infrastructure of a quality district program consists of the following: 1) arts administration/coordination; 2) teaching personnel; 3) facilities and equipment; and 4) community partnerships and collaborations.⁶ The Vanguard Districts made constructive changes in all four areas, with the most important change being the hiring or designation of an arts coordinator to act as a district-level driver for arts education.

As of 2008, five of the largest districts have hired salaried, full-time coordinators; two have part-time coordinators, three have contracted with external, part-time consultants, and in one case, an assistant principal fills the role of point person for the arts. The CAT teams that invested in full-time coordinators all recognized the maximum benefit of having one person focused solely on implementing the plan. Four of the districts also acknowledged the advantage of having hired an arts coordinator in an administrative capacity rather than as a Teacher on Special Assignment (TOSA), due to the authority the position carried and their ability to more easily communicate with and win the assistance or support of other district-level administrators. In addition, coordinators with administrative credentials were perceived as having a broader management skill set to bring to the work.

Several of the districts promoted an arts specialist to the coordinator position. Districts that hired from existing school staff remarked on the benefit of having the trust and support of fellow teachers from the beginning, although it was sometimes difficult to find an arts specialist who had the skills needed to handle the diverse responsibilities of a district-wide coordinator. Those hired from outside the district were challenged with building new collegial relationships while also getting acquainted with an arts plan they had not participated in writing. However, by hiring outside the district, CAT teams had more freedom to locate coordinators who had the diverse skill set needed to develop a complex and comprehensive arts program. On a more cautionary note, the evidence clearly showed that in cases where arts coordinators were hired as external consultants on contract, they

⁶ Components of an Arts Education Program Triangle Image (.pdf link). California Alliance of Arts Education <http://www.artsed411.org/insidersguide/chapter5.aspx>. Accessed December 1, 2008.

held the least authority or power to implement the activities listed in the district arts plan. In two of the three cases, the external coordinators reported their recommendations were often set aside in favor of other district plans and priorities. Arts coordinators that used the services of an *Arts for All* coach as a mentor during their first year on the job—as in Burbank, Culver City and Compton—noted the importance of that assistance in successfully launching the implementation process.

The hiring of additional arts specialists was a lesser priority for the majority of districts in the early stage of implementation, although six, or 55 percent, did hire music specialists to fill gaps in the K-12 instructional sequence. In addition, Pasadena created a part-time music coordinator position. Teacher salaries are primarily funded through a school district's general funds and with many of the districts currently facing declining enrollment and constricting budgets, hiring more staff was not an option. An exception was Beverly Hills, which has a unique arrangement in which the district allows community access to its school facilities for cultural, educational and recreational purposes in exchange for substantial operational funding from the City. This revenue stream made it possible for the district to hire additional art specialists at the elementary level.

Some of the districts alternatively chose to use portions of the ongoing legislative arts block grant to fund new music positions, which could make those specialists vulnerable to job loss should the grant be retracted. In addition, funding through the Los Angeles County Office of Education's Regional Occupation Program paid for new high school courses in theatre, photography and graphics design in at least two districts. Another way districts increased arts delivery was by having physical education teachers receive training and offer dance instruction at the middle school and elementary level.

In terms of facilities and equipment, all of the districts spent state legislative block grants on equipment, supplies and musical instruments. These expenditures were occasionally supplemented by district funds or corporate and foundation grants. In addition, designated arts rooms were created with the conversion of regular classrooms in one district, a dance space was remodeled in another, and visual arts and music rooms were constructed at a third. Other districts upgraded music and visual arts rooms or bought curtains and sound systems for their multipurpose rooms.

Several districts identified the lack of adequate performance facilities as an inhibiting factor in the development of theatre education programs and were unclear as to how to resolve the challenge. A facilities bond measure was mentioned as a possible solution, although the timing was considered poor, and such a measure faced competition from other district spending priorities. Santa Monica was successful in this regard, aided by having a written arts plan in place; the arts coordinator had recently secured school bond funding for new elementary-level arts facilities.

Across the Vanguard Districts, professional development in the arts has shifted from being a primarily school-directed activity to being more of a district-directed activity since joining *Arts for All*. This is partly because the districts now have arts coordinators to organize training opportunities, but also because the CAT teams recognized the need to provide all teachers with training when new instructional materials were introduced across schools. In

addition, teachers have requested training in effective integration practices. To help meet these needs, five of 11 districts reported contracting with community-based teaching artists to assist with instruction and staff development in the past year. This was possible, in part, due to a grant available through the *Arts for All* Pooled Fund. In two cases where districts did not have the resources to provide training for all elementary staff, select lead teachers attended California Arts Project (TCAP) workshops and then returned to their respective schools to share new insights and ideas with colleagues.

In terms of content, ten of the 11 districts have provided staff development in visual arts instruction for elementary teachers and at least 40 percent have offered music workshops during the past three years. Less than 20 percent of the districts have offered dance or drama education training on a systematic basis. In general, districts are finding that one round of workshops is not enough to train teachers unfamiliar with an art discipline. Accordingly, this has slowed the planned adoption process. Districts have begun to recognize that similar to other subject areas, offering instruction in the arts will require a sustained commitment to staff development.

All of the CAT teams identified community partners that have either supported or provided student learning opportunities since joining *Arts for All*. These external partners included local and national arts providers, regional arts institutions (e.g., art museums and performance halls), corporate donors, and local municipal agencies. In some cases, they provided instructional and/or professional development opportunities; in other cases, financial support. Their multipurpose role substantiates the district-community collaborative model as key to restoring comprehensive arts education to all schools. More specifically, their reported contributions included the following:

- Funding for access to performances, workshops and residencies with professional artists
- Funding for supplies, equipment and musical instruments
- Staff development workshops
- Access to visual and performance teaching artists
- Access to creative industry teaching professionals
- Afterschool instructional programming
- Field trip destinations
- Space and financial support for student exhibitions and performances

Program Sustainability

Of the three principle elements of quality arts programs—instructional content, district infrastructure, and program sustainability—the latter has received the least attention to date. Even so, some of the more significant outcomes from the *Arts for All* initiative fall under this category. Sustainability is also the area where CAT teams were most interested in receiving technical assistance in the near future. The indicators of program sustainability

include an arts education board policy, funding, program evaluation, communication, and district leadership.

All 11 Vanguard District CAT teams wrote or revised school board policies for arts education and ushered them through the steps to approval. The policy statements were based on examples furnished by the *Arts for All* coaches. Although there were similarities across them, each board policy contained elements that were specific to the aims of the individual CAT teams and their district arts plans. Most of the policies emphasized the need for K-12 sequential instruction in the four major art disciplines during the school day. Others included a commitment to the arts plan and to the ongoing review and development of the district arts programs. Some mentioned the need for ongoing staff development opportunities in the arts. In the case of Culver City, the policy clearly spelled out the range of individuals qualified as providers, giving a nod to long-standing relationships with the community. At least three of the district policies included a school board commitment to putting arts education on equal footing with other subject areas, particularly in terms of making equitable funding reductions in low budget years rather than eliminating arts programs altogether. Several policies mentioned evaluation and a commitment to accountability, a process that many arts education programs have lacked for years. Each of these factors was included to ensure that the effort to build a comprehensive arts program would be sustained.

During district focus group interviews, CAT teams provided examples of how the approved board policies had provided leverage in overcoming obstacles to implementing district arts plans. In two cases, it was used to prevent administrators from using money earmarked for arts instruction for other purposes. In another, the arts coordinator used the arts policy to convince the superintendent to mandate one hour of weekly K-5 instruction in the arts. In another, teachers used the policy as the basis for maintaining arts classes, even as the district was put on academic watch and forced to increase its focus on improving standardized math and reading scores. All CAT teams agreed that the written policy and the written arts plan were fundamental to the successes achieved to date in maintaining and expanding their arts education programs.

Several trends in arts education funding emerged from the Vanguard Districts documentation and interview data. While the goal for district spending in the arts is five percent of the overall budget, at least as set by *Arts for All* guidelines, it remains unclear how many districts are actually investing that amount on an annual basis, due in part to the inconsistent ways that financial data were reported. Santa Monica may be the closest at 3.9 percent.⁷ One finding that stood out was the rigid guidance attached to funding allotted for school arts programs. For example, district budgets paid for teaching salaries, supplies and, in some cases, staff development, but they did not always include the salary of the arts coordinator. As was previously stated, the state block grants were also designated for curriculum materials and supplies, staff development and the hiring of arts personnel.

⁷ Compton reported a five percent district budget for arts education in 2005 but that was not verified in the case study research.

With the exception of LACOE, the Vanguard Districts have each established an education foundation that is either currently supporting or planning to support arts education programs in the near future. In Compton and Santa Monica, arts education is the sole focus of their districts' foundation. Many of these foundations have directors or board members who play active roles in advocating for the district arts plan and they work in collaboration with the arts coordinators to attract external resources to further implementation, including sponsoring fundraising events. Monies received from foundations and other grants were typically used to pay for specific types of student learning opportunities (e.g., artist residences, field trips, assemblies, student exhibits) plus the materials and supplies needed for these supplemental programs. Half of the districts have benefited from sustained support and/or significant contributions provided through private or corporate donors and federal grants. These districts have moved furthest in the development of their arts program. The concerted efforts of individual arts coordinators were viewed as a major factor in these districts' ability to attract large donations, although sometimes they were awarded supplemental support simply because a funder heard about the arts education plan and wished to support it.

While the districts have used available funds within approved categories of spending, other needs expressed by the CAT teams have gone unfunded. For example, districts requested help with technology training and web design, clerical assistance, developing fund raising campaigns, public relations communication and program evaluation—none of which technically fall under the traditional categories of arts education spending. Rather, these could be considered operational expenses that, without a designated budget, have the potential to create stumbling blocks to implementation goals.

Program evaluation was an initial component in every district arts plan except Culver City, and has since been added to its list of planned activities. Each district has taken a slightly different approach to evaluating the status of its arts education program. To date, six have initiated some form of program evaluation, although none had findings to share at the writing of this report. Each of the districts reportedly completed an inventory of school resources and instructional time in the arts to inform planning when they joined *Arts for All*, but few retained the documentation of that effort as a baseline measure of later progress.

Beverly Hills and Pasadena did assess the quality of their school arts programs early on using the CDE Arts Education Program Toolkit and planned to use the data for comparative purposes when they conduct future program reviews. Rosemead conducted a second inventory to help decide how to spend legislative block grant monies. Norwalk La-Mirada's school-level arts plans now include an accountability section. Their schools will be asked for a progress report each year. Three other districts have tied evaluation to staff development to help ensure the relevance and effectiveness of training sessions. Evaluation was listed as a strategic direction in three additional district arts plans beginning in fall 2008. The majority of the arts coordinators said they were interested in tracking program outcomes and remarked that they would welcome assistance with evaluation design and instrumentation.

Communicating effectively with district teachers was considered an area of challenge for the larger districts; nonetheless, all of the CAT teams were engaged in activities intended

to get the word out on art events and opportunities for both students and teachers. At least half of the districts had established a communication liaison at each school. Other common ways of communicating were through emails, flyers and word of mouth. LACOE started a quarterly e-newsletter for teachers and site administrators that is colorful, friendly and effective in gaining feedback. Three districts have launched visual and performing arts websites, although keeping them up-to-date requires time the arts coordinators do not always have. Districts without websites requested assistance in developing them but also acknowledged that without clerical help, it would be difficult to maintain them, especially for coordinators in part-time positions. The larger districts reported that it was difficult to keep track of the arts events happening at each school because of the time involved in contacting people and gathering relevant information.

District administrators are generally kept in the arts information loop at administrative meetings, school board meetings, through email announcements and by organizing exhibitions where students' accomplishments can be acknowledged. Parents are kept informed of arts activities through district websites, flyers, press releases of student events sent to local newspapers and a community magazine and school board presentations—which, in at least two cases, were televised to the local community. District-wide events, including student exhibitions and performances, have been well attended and are considered the best form of advocacy with administrators, teachers and parents alike.

All of the Vanguard Districts reported benefiting from the support of senior administrators and school board members, many of whom had initially urged their districts to join the *Arts for All* initiative. While district leadership has often changed over the course of five years, the written arts education policies and district arts plans have proven effective in maintaining support for implementation.

Some ways that superintendents have shown their support are by approving teacher pay to attend planning meetings, mandating weekly instruction in the arts, advocating for the arts plan, increasing the district budget for the arts, upholding the board policy and holding teachers accountable for arts instruction to the same degree as other subjects. In the case of Norwalk-La Mirada, the superintendent demonstrated effective support by attending the leadership training sessions for district and school leaders. The solid endorsement of the school board is also considered crucial to the success of the district arts programs because the board plays an important role in approving funding for the activities of the CAT team.

Arts Program Quality

An analysis of the Arts Education Program Implementation Continuum Survey (see Appendix C) provided an initial look at the progress the CAT teams have made in each of the fundamental components of an effective district arts program. As previously stated, these included standards-based curriculum, instruction and methodology, student assessment, professional development, program administration and teaching staff, partnerships/collaborations, funding, resources and facilities, and evaluation tools. Using the survey, the CAT teams rated their progress on aspects of each component using a four-point scale with descriptors that identified the level of development as being either in a

Foundational phase, a Building phase or a Progressive phase. The scale was later converted to a 12-point scale for purposes of calculating a performance index based on the total points achieved by each district.

The comparative table in Appendix E provides detailed results of how the districts rated themselves on each topic. The results show that after four or five years of pursuing the *Arts for All* initiative, four districts are emerging from the Foundational phase of program development, six have reached the intermediate Building phase and one, Compton, has entered a Progressive phase. One of the main differences between districts still emerging from the foundational phase and those in more advance phases of implementation is the amount of external funding they had to work with. As might be anticipated, districts with access to more resources have progressed further.

Program Quality Index

Based on self-ratings of the nine components of a comprehensive arts program (see data table in Appendix E), a program quality index number was calculated for each Vanguard District that provides a way to quickly assess their progress in relation to the other districts. A list of the 11 district indexes can be found in Table 2.5. On a 12-point scale, an index rating of 12.0 would signify that K-12 sequential instruction in all four art disciplines is accessible to all students and a comprehensive support system is in place to sustain the arts program. Currently, all of the Vanguard Districts have self-rated between 4.1 and 9.3. These figures must be interpreted with caution, however, as they do not capture all of the progress made by districts. For example, this index could be expanded to include performance indicators associated with increased equity in arts education access.

Table 2.5. Program Quality Index (12-pt. scale)

Compton	9.3
Castaic	7.8
Beverly Hills	6.8
Pasadena	6.8
Burbank	6.7
Santa Monica-Malibu	6.6
Culver City	5.7
Rosemead	4.6
Hacienda La Puente	4.5
LACOE	4.2
Norwalk-La Mirada	4.1

While this analysis was primarily an effort to determine the utility of a research measure previously developed by CDE for a district self-assessment process, the results indicate that the Vanguard Districts are well underway toward meeting the goals of their respective arts plans. However, as the range in indices is currently well below the 12.0 goal, the data suggests that with most elementary teachers currently lacking the training or time to offer instruction in the four art disciplines and nearly all districts lacking the resources to pay for sufficient numbers of arts specialists at that level, it will take much longer than five years of

planning and implementation to bring self-sustaining, comprehensive arts programs to each Los Angeles County school district.

Student Access

As the Vanguard Districts have progressed through the planning stage and the first phase of implementation in improving their arts programs, evidence suggests that the amount of arts instruction that students have received has also increased. An objective of this study was to identify where these increases have occurred as a precursor to developing a set of *Arts for All* indicators for student access that can be tracked as the initiative progresses. As displayed in Table 2.6, a list of pilot indicators was assembled based on initial conversations with *Arts for All* staff. These student-centered outcomes are linked to the nine elements of a quality arts program and have been verified by the researcher’s experience in observing arts education programs around the country during the past decade. For purposes of this study, these indicators of student access were designed to document increased exposure to arts instruction, instructional resources and learning experiences that denote rich arts programs.

Table 2.6. Student Access Indicators

Area of Increase	Indicator
INSTRUCTIONAL RESOURCES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arts personnel (specialists) • Generalists teaching art • Equipment, instruments and supplies • Arts facilities (new space)
LEARNING EXPERIENCES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visiting artist residencies • Student productions and exhibitions • Assemblies and field trips • Afterschool programs • Integration of technology with the arts
EXPOSURE TO INSTRUCTION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arts classes offered • Student enrollment in arts classes • Hours of instruction offered • Access for students with special needs

During the focus group interviews, CAT team members were asked to discuss and record where changes had occurred in student access as a result of their implementation efforts since 2003. They also discussed whether the changes occurred district-wide or on a more limited basis (see Appendix D). The data were compared with anecdotal evidence presented in the focus groups, activity reports provided by each CAT team and follow-up conversations with each arts coordinator. The table in Appendix F displays data from ten of the districts. Norwalk-La Mirada opted out of reporting changes in student access as the activities of the CAT team had not been perceived as affecting change at the classroom level yet.

The evidence from the district documentation and the focus group interview data indicated that the areas where the districts focused on improving access to arts education correlated with categories of available funding and the areas of greatest accomplishment noted in the program quality survey data. The most visible change across all districts and all school levels was the increase in resources available to support instruction, such as musical instruments, arts supplies and performance-related equipment purchased with earmarked funding through the state legislative block grants, district budgets and private donations. The most notable changes in facilities were the addition of a music room and an art room—which provided creative spaces for all middle school students in Rosemead—and the passage of the school bond in Santa Monica earmarked, in part, for new arts facilities for elementary students. Beyond minor improvements made to dedicated art and music rooms in a handful of schools, adding new instructional facilities was not a priority during the early phase of implementation. Three districts reported that a lack of adequate performance space continues to adversely impact their theatre education programs.

In terms of exposure to arts instruction, all of the districts reported an increase in the number of arts classes being offered, the number of students enrolled in arts classes and the number of hours of overall instruction.⁸ These changes were attributed to the hiring of more arts specialists—particularly in music—and to the CAT teams’ assumption that classroom teachers were putting to use the new curriculum materials and arts training they had received. For example, Burbank, Beverly Hills, Compton and Castaic filled gaps in their music programs by hiring additional specialists. All four districts have K-12 music programs as a result.

Nine of the 11 districts reported an observable increase in arts instruction among generalist teachers, although the evidence was not clearly documented. In some cases, the reported increase was slight, and in others it was significant, but the evidence from the combination of data sources indicated that all districts had progressed toward providing sequential instruction in the four major arts disciplines. As of May 2008, Beverly Hills’s arts program was the most advanced in this regard, primarily due to its ability to hire art specialists at all three school levels. At this point, all high school students have access to classes in the four art disciplines taught by credentialed specialists. K-8 students also receive sequential instruction in dance (through physical education), music and visual arts and from specialists. The one curriculum area this district has yet to address is K-8 theatre education, which is intended to be taught by generalist teachers through integration with other subjects—mainly language arts. The data indicated that seven of the Vanguard Districts have made significant progress in adopting two art disciplines K-12, and two districts have adopted one discipline.

Another area of significant increase was in the number of student performances and exhibitions organized at both the district and school level. This was primarily attributed to opportunities presented by community advocates on the CAT teams, increased efforts by the music and visual arts specialists to locate opportunities for showcasing student work, and most importantly, to the presence of an arts coordinator who sought out and responded to opportunities and organized the events. An added benefit was that district-

⁸ LACOE did not report on this indicator.

wide events doubled as opportunities to advocate for arts programs with district leaders, community leaders and parents, which in the cases of Compton, Pasadena and Santa Monica has attracted hundreds of supporters. The increase in exhibitions and performances at the school level was attributed to more arts classes being offered and more teachers honing their abilities to produce quality student learning results.

To a lesser extent, districts also reported an increase in instructional opportunities related to assemblies, field trips and digital applications. In addition, all of the districts offer some form of afterschool instruction in the arts, although few reported a notable increase in classes or clubs since joining *Arts for All*. The exception is Culver City, which has a vibrant afterschool arts academy program that recently strengthened instructional and financial ties with two community colleges. The academy serves approximately 10 percent of the student body (about 200 students) and has been in operation for 14 years.

Ten of the Vanguard districts have made a concerted effort towards equalizing access to arts instruction by improving the sequencing of K-12 instruction, though obstacles remain. Districts with schools on academic watch have been challenged in needing to schedule some students for remedial courses in math or language arts while others receive arts instruction. Equity in access may even decrease—at least temporarily—in districts where individual schools decide which of the four art disciplines they want to adopt, such as in Norwalk-La Mirada and Hacienda La Puente. The arts coordinators have been working to find solutions to improving equitable access across all of the districts, including possibly extending the school day or offering more professional development to raise teachers' confidence in providing arts instruction in the elementary classroom. In one example, Burbank, music specialists received training in providing meaningful instruction for students with hearing loss.

While the identification of student access indicators clarifies ways in which Vanguard Districts have improved equitable access, the extent of change has not been fully documented. A survey that tracks available resources, learning opportunities and exposure to instruction at each grade level will be needed for a clearer understanding of how these changes align with success indicators for the overall *Arts for All* initiative.

SECTION III: CONCLUSIONS

The case studies of the Vanguard Districts provide an in-depth look at the processes and results of the *Arts for All* initiative after five years. This section offers a review of the findings as they pertain to advancing the quality and quantity of arts instruction in Los Angeles County schools. The majority of districts joined with the intent to repair a patchwork approach to arts education. All have made significant progress in developing standards-based, sequential programs. The strategic planning process proved highly effective in helping CAT teams create a cohesive vision for a quality arts program that was adaptable to their unique contexts. Under the advisement of *Arts for All* coaches, all 11 districts completed multi-year arts plans and wrote arts education policies that required a long-term commitment to the key elements of their vision. All plans and policies were passed by their

respective school boards and in most cases, have resulted in arts education being elevated to a core curriculum subject. As one arts coordinator put it, the *Arts for All* districts have awakened to the arts. The plan and the policy have together created a structural force that drives the districts toward their ultimate goal of providing equitable access to K-12 instruction in all four major art disciplines, thus advancing the *Arts for All* mission. In addition, the existence of the arts education policy and plan has brought both credence and stability to the effort of expanding each district's arts program. This is exemplified by the fact that all of the Vanguard Districts have continued with implementation activities even when key personnel - such as a district superintendent, supportive school board member or arts coordinator – have changed jobs.

The analysis of plan implementation revealed that the activities of the CAT teams were guided in part by their arts plans and in part by the spending parameters of funding made available through the California legislature, the districts' budgets, the *Arts for All* Pooled Fund and other grantors. During the early stages of plan implementation, the CAT teams focused on hiring an arts coordinator, curriculum adoption, staff development and/or hiring art specialists, and on stocking up on needed supplies, equipment and musical instruments. Despite the considerable resources available to the Vanguard Districts as they began implementing their arts plans, CAT teams reported that their most pressing challenge was a lack of sufficient funding to implement the entire plan on the initial timeline, which was typically five years. In particular, there appeared to be a lack of funding that could be spent on categories other than instructional content and student learning opportunities. For example, arts coordinators reported difficulties related to the lack of operational resources for clerical assistance or website technical support. In addition, few had the time or resources to be involved in external advocacy efforts beyond organizing district-wide student art events or speaking at occasional regional meetings.

In general, districts focused on increasing the quality and frequency of arts instruction in elementary schools first, although some changes were also made at the secondary level. Nine of the districts chose to fully adopt one art discipline at a time, complete with a written K-12 or K-8 curriculum and related professional development opportunities. All of the nine started with music and visual arts adoptions. Compton designed a unique system in which students would alternatively receive visual arts, music and theatre instruction on an annual rotational schedule during elementary school. Norwalk-La Mirada has allowed each elementary school to decide which art disciplines they preferred to adopt and was therefore preparing to offer district-wide teacher training in all four disciplines. On the whole, districts discovered that teachers need multiple and ongoing opportunities for training in unfamiliar art disciplines. This issue has affected the content of community artist residencies, which increasingly double as an opportunity for artists to model arts instruction for teachers as well as fill instructional gaps for students. In another staff development model that is worth further study, Norwalk-La Mirada offered a leadership academy in supervising arts instruction that was attended by district and school level administrators. The District's arts coordinator was preparing to request school accountability reports on arts education each year.

In terms of instructional delivery, secondary courses are generally taught by credentialed instructors—whether arts specialists, classroom teachers with an art endorsement, or

professional artists and artisans with an alternative teaching credential. At the elementary level, the classroom teacher is currently expected to provide instruction in all four art disciplines in the majority of the districts, typically without holding any art endorsements. This finding reveals the extraordinary pressure placed on the elementary classroom teacher as districts attempt to fulfill their vision for comprehensive arts programs. While districts tend to rely on integrated instruction as a solution at the elementary level, some arts coordinators have pointed out that it is not adequate. Beverly Hills's solution of employing specialists in music and visual arts and assigning dance to the physical education specialists relieves classroom teachers of all but theatre instruction, which can be well integrated with language arts. This example may be the most realistic model—and most expensive—to date, however other plausible models may emerge as districts tackle the challenge of adopting additional art disciplines.

As their arts programs continue to mature, a new set of challenges may lie ahead for the Vanguard Districts. Because the arts coordinator has been confirmed to be essential to the implementation process, it will be critical to ensure this position is secure in the face of across-the-board budget cuts. All coordinators welcomed the idea of further training to raise their capacity to be more effective in their position. High on their list of priorities were staff development guidance, student assessment in the arts, fundraising, technology applications, resolving classroom teachers' sense of overload, general administration skills and recordkeeping. All were interested in program evaluation as a way to track their progress as well as hold others accountable for their roles in implementing the district arts plan. As the schools adopt more arts curricula, professional development will be an ongoing need—and expense—along with refurbishment of supplies, equipment and musical instruments. While a few districts reported minor upgrades to their arts facilities, three others could only report the negative impact that inadequate performance space had on their theatre program—an area all districts are struggling to improve. This facility issue will likely become a critical program component as more students receive sequential instruction at the elementary level, because the secondary arts programs will attract increasing numbers of students with adequate skills to advance and new facilities will be needed to accommodate them.

With the exception of LACOE, each of the Vanguard Districts has established education foundations to help raise money for arts education, though some support other programs as well. Half have already benefited from large supplemental donations or grants. Even so, most of the education foundations are fledgling organizations and are as yet unable to provide substantial support for the schools. What emerges from these findings is the understanding that districts must rely on a variety of funding resources to develop their arts programs fully. It follows that those districts with the financial savvy and time to pursue external funding are in a stronger position to create both a comprehensive and sustainable arts education program. Helping the CAT teams find new funding solutions that will meet their current and future needs will be paramount to the continued success of their arts plans. The Beverly Hills civic partnership, which allows community use of school facilities after the regular school day, is an effective model in need of closer examination.

After five years, the commitment and enthusiasm of the CAT teams remain strong. Buy-in from teachers and the school communities is growing as districts begin to understand that

Arts for All is not a passing initiative, but represents a fundamental and permanent change in the way their arts education programs are organized and conducted. The Vanguard Districts have demonstrated their ability to create and implement effective arts plans. They have made admirable progress in developing program infrastructure that carries the potential to be self-sustaining in time. Adequate funding, relevant technical assistance and on-going revisions to the district arts plans remain essential for the districts to achieve their goal of comprehensive, sequential arts programs. However, it is the people involved in the process who are at the heart of the endeavor and ultimately hold the keys to success. Therefore, fostering supportive relationships both within and across the districts is essential to progress and to maintaining a collective vision for high quality arts education for all Los Angeles County schools. As long as arts coordinators are in place to keep the implementation process moving forward and the districts hold themselves accountable for achieving their annual goals, the *Arts for All* initiative will continue to realize progress.

Continuing Technical Assistance

Table 3.1 provides a list of areas where the Vanguard Districts could potentially benefit from continued technical assistance provided by *Arts for All* staff and consultants. The topics align with the three principal components of quality arts programs: instructional content, district infrastructure and program sustainability. The greatest emphasis is on the areas of developing program infrastructure and sustainability. Most topics are tied to providing coaching for the arts coordinators, who could then pass on information and guidance to their CAT teams and other district personnel.

Table 3.1 Technical Assistance Opportunities

Arts Program Component	Identified Need
INSTRUCTIONAL CONTENT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff development options, particularly in dance and arts integration ideas • Guidance on student assessment in the arts
DISTRICT INFRASTRUCTURE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training for arts coordinators in the following areas: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. General planning, administration and program coordination b. Access to research that can be used for advocacy c. Developing arts partnerships in funding and instruction d. Creating a financial plan for improving arts facilities e. Professional development coaching and guidelines f. Helping teachers balance arts instruction with other duties g. Documentation, record keeping, website construction
PROGRAM SUSTAINABILITY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assistance with improving two-way communication with teachers through website design and other digital solutions. • Ideas for pursuing grants and other sources of fiscal support • Designing a relevant evaluation plan with appropriate tools • District leadership training • School board advocacy

RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations reflect suggestions offered by CAT team members as well as conclusions reached through an analysis of cross-site data:

- Conduct leadership academies for district and school administrators, referencing Norwalk-La Mirada's program as a development model. Arts coordinators could potentially be trained to organize these academies. Topics to be covered might include budgeting for the arts, parent advocating, instructional leadership, experiences in the arts, curriculum models for sequential instruction, equitable access, balancing arts education with other priorities, scheduling for arts instruction and utilizing available resources. It could also address how instruction in the arts can support learning in other areas of the curriculum and how specific policies and practices at the school or district level inhibit arts education reform.
- Continue efforts to support and strengthen advocacy groups in each district by empowering them to obtain and provide district and school board leaders with the latest information on state policies in arts education and on research that supports arts education as a core academic subject.
- Provide arts coordinators with guidance on designing high quality professional development experiences, particularly on the topic of arts integration. Another topic is training them to help elementary teachers understand how arts instruction can fit into their teaching schedule through curriculum mapping.
- Provide coaching for arts coordinators in areas of program development that fall outside typical training for educators, such as fundraising, communication and advocacy, program administration and program evaluation.
- Due to the centrality of the district arts coordinator in the success of the *Arts for All* initiative, consider taking steps to elevate the coordinator's role within each district so they are seen as indispensable. This might include helping them take charge of tracking and reporting on arts education indicators in their districts before the task is assigned to someone else with less interest in the topic.
- Provide a year of coaching for newly hired arts coordinators to help orient them to the process of effectively implementing an arts education plan they may not have helped create.
- Advise CAT teams on developing concrete financial plans for funding their continued efforts to sequence arts instruction. A preliminary analysis of where districts are accessing—and not accessing—resources, and of the spending parameters placed on those funds, could reveal areas for targeted development efforts that are relevant to current needs as the implementation of their arts plans continues.

- Encourage districts to create a strategic plan for improving and expanding existing arts facilities in response to the anticipated level of need, once full implementation of the arts plan is realized.
- Create a grant program for operational expenses such as clerical staff, the development of advocacy materials, website design and program evaluation.
- Consider creating a grant program with matching funds for professional development, using credentialed arts specialists or sanctioned community arts providers as instructors.
- Fund a study that investigates the various models districts are using to adopt all four art disciplines at every school level. The findings will provide a set of solutions for districts across the County, state and nation that currently struggle with this issue.
- Deploy a school-level survey that captures changes in student access the arts instruction as the districts continue to implement their plan. Categories might include, but are not limited to, exposure to instruction, types of learning opportunities and quality of resources, including instructors.

THE CASE STUDIES

[listed in alphabetical order]

Beverly Hills Unified School District

2007-2008 student enrollment: 5,305

1 high school (grades 9-12)

4 elementary schools (grades K-8)

1 alternative school⁹

DISTRICT CONTEXT

Beverly Hills Unified School District is a small district located in an affluent urban community where parents are avid supporters of arts education. Prior to joining the *Arts for All* initiative in 2004, the four K-8 elementary schools employed full-time visual arts specialists and shared itinerant choral and band specialists. Dance and theatre instruction were offered periodically by classroom teachers with training or through residency visits by community arts providers. At the high school, elective courses are offered in dance, choral and instrumental music, theatre and visual arts. In contrast to teachers in other subject areas, the arts specialists made independent decisions on curriculum and instruction. The district had designated a visual arts specialist as an arts coordinator in the past, but there was no master plan in place and eventually the position was phased out.

Beverly Hills USD paid for teaching personnel and curriculum materials for the arts from the general budget. The district also received significant external funding through school PTAs, the Beverly Hills Education Foundation and grants. These funds inadvertently created inequities in arts education offerings at the four elementary schools. When the *Arts for All* initiative was announced, it was viewed as an opportunity to address the equity issue and to elevate the art disciplines as core subjects to be taught through a standards-based, sequential curriculum.

STRATEGIC PLANNING FOR THE ARTS

When the Beverly Hills *Arts for All* initiative began in 2004, the district established an arts advisory committee (CAT team) comprised of board of education members, district and school administrators, teachers, community advocates, parents and students. The committee worked with an *Arts for All* planning coach to assess the district's existing arts program, create a new vision and develop a three-year arts plan. The plan included recognized elements of a quality arts program: curriculum and instruction, evaluation, resources and facilities, funding and support, partnerships and communication, and program administration. Many of the plan's objectives were later viewed as unrealistic, given the budget and three-year period allotted.

As part of the planning process, the CAT team wrote a detailed arts education policy that was approved by the Beverly Hills Board of Education in February 2005. The policy states the board's intention is to "educate all students so they can experience, perform, produce

⁹ Alternative schools are addressed in the LACOE case study.

and appreciate the arts.” The policy also acknowledges that the arts should be taught during the school day as part of a comprehensive curriculum and that in times of budgetary cutbacks, reductions in funding would be distributed across all school programs, rather than eliminate the arts. Targeted objectives for the district were then described relative to the principal elements of the arts plan, including: a standards-based curriculum and assessment, a qualified arts coordinator, qualified teachers in all art disciplines K-12, ongoing professional development, opportunities during school hours for teachers to collaborate, an appropriate student-to-teacher ratio, standards-based instructional materials and facilities, equipped visual arts and performance rooms, exposing students to a wide variety of artistic styles, venues and performances, cross-school learning activities and the establishment of community resource partners, including businesses and parents.

When the district arts plan was updated in 2008 it reflected more realistic objectives than the first plan had. However, the plan did not include a calendar of action steps, so the CAT team will continue to meet to make decisions based on input from a needs assessment survey teachers completed. As of spring 2008, there were 23 CAT team members, although most decisions are made by a smaller, core group of participants. The team is currently composed of ten arts specialists, two school administrators, two high school students, the district arts coordinator, a board of education member, three PTA presidents, the Beverly Hills Education Foundation president, the Beverly Hills mayor, the city recreational services manager and the executive director of a Annenberg Center for the Performing Arts. The CAT team is set to expand again in 2008-2009 with the addition of more district arts specialists.

IMPLEMENTING THE ARTS PLAN

Implementation of the Beverly Hills *Arts for All* plan began with the hiring of a full-time arts coordinator as a teacher on special assignment position (TOSA), made possible through a matching two-year grant from the *Arts for All* Pooled Fund. A former K-8 music specialist, she worked with district arts specialists to align K-12 instruction in the major art disciplines with California visual and performing arts content standards. Curriculum alignment was happening simultaneously in all subject areas as part of a district-wide effort to forge a more cohesive instructional program. The arts coordinator also worked with teachers in scheduling time to share knowledge and collaborate in planning for quality, sequential instruction for all students.

In the fall of 2006, two additional instrumental music specialists were hired so each elementary school now has a full-time choral and instrumental (band and string) teacher for grades six through eight. Students in grades one through eight already received general music education and access to the music specialists was extended to kindergarteners in all

“None of these things would happen without the coordinator. Almost like the captain; you roll on a ship and the captain is giving the orders. You need a captain.”

schools. The state legislative block grants paid for musical instruments in all grade levels along with other art supplies and equipment, including digital cameras and computers to be used for documentation.

The students were offered new opportunities to showcase their work as well. Through a developing partnership between the district and the City of Beverly Hills, music and dance students were invited to perform in a multicultural festival. In one special project organized by a board member and a hotel developer, high school students painted a mural that was installed at a downtown construction site. The mural is still in place more than a year later, and includes the district's *Arts for All* logo as a public promotion for district arts programs.

As an additional instructional program and fundraising effort, the district also started a five-week Summer Arts Academy open to all Beverly Hills USD students as well as to students from surrounding districts. The Beverly Hills Education Foundation, which supports a range of school programming, covered the costs of the summer school and then donated the student enrollment fees to provide additional funding for the arts. The Summer Arts Academy proceeds were later used to pay professional development costs for district visual arts specialists, who were initiating an animation program.

In 2007-2008, a former Beverly Hills High School dance specialist and assistant principal was appointed as district arts coordinator when the former coordinator left to take a similar administrative position at the Los Angeles County Office of Education. While the former coordinator had been employed full time, her replacement, for personal reasons, asked for and received a half-time position. She also held the position of physical education coordinator. Thereafter, the arts committee was renamed the Arts and Physical Education Advisory Committee with a goal of incorporating more movement in the arts plan, primarily with dance instruction. Working with a matching grant from the *Arts for All* Pooled Fund, the district paid for a dance residency for all fifth graders and for physical education specialists to be trained in dance class organization. The arts coordinator also worked with kindergarten and first grade teachers on ways to incorporate dance and the other art disciplines into their curriculum.

Another area of focus during 2007-2008 was exploring formative and summative (end of year) student assessment in the arts. Responding to a district directive for improved accountability in student learning across all subject areas, arts specialists and classroom teachers met to discuss ways to assess students in the arts at all grade levels. Next steps for the CAT team includes targeting elementary classroom instruction, program evaluation, parent advocacy and strengthening local business and civic partnerships.

MECHANISMS AND CHALLENGES

The CAT team benefits from the strong support of parents who are active on the CAT team, the board of education, the school PTAs and the Beverly Hills Education Foundation. Individual school PTAs have contributed up to 25 percent of the total district expenditures in arts education. This school-community collaboration, along with the efforts of the board,

district administrators and its past and current arts coordinators, is at the heart of the Beverly Hills USD expansion in arts education. These and other mechanisms and challenges that have impacted the implementation of the district arts plan are listed below:

Mechanisms for Change

- *Administrative dynamics.* It was easier for the new arts coordinator to communicate with and gain the cooperation of principals from an administrative position, as opposed to approaching them as the former coordinator had, as a teacher on special assignment.
- *An arts coordinator with secondary teaching experience.* It was easier to garner participation from secondary arts specialists because they could relate to someone who understood their perspective on arts instruction.
- *Board of Education support.* The district arts plan and policy were swiftly approved, in part, because board members helped to prepare it. The board continues to show support by approving the hiring of additional personnel and the purchase of supplies and instruments.
- *Strong partners.* The Beverly Hills PTA and the Education Foundation aligned their objectives for supporting arts education with the district's arts plan and are helping to fill instructional gaps by funding programs according to the needs set forth by the CAT team.
- *Civic support.* The City administrators are committed to ensuring the arts are part of a comprehensive education for Beverly Hills USD students. The district and City have an on-going fiscal partnership that allows for community access to campuses after school hours for cultural, educational and recreational activities in exchange for significant operational funding. This funding made it possible to hire more art specialists at the elementary level.

Challenges of Change

- *Changing leadership.* A series of changes in senior administration has resulted in uneven attention being paid to the arts plan, which has stalled implementation efforts at times.
- *Teacher resistance.* With three arts specialists at each elementary level, classroom teachers questioned why they also needed to teach the arts through integration. The teachers also had a prior history of attempting a full adoption of the Getty Center for Education in the Art's Discipline-Based Arts Education instructional model and of failing to get everyone on board. Some teachers were hesitant to put their energy into another arts education initiative.
- *Crowded teaching schedule.* The elementary arts specialists reported that they barely get to see the students each week, so plans to add more dance and theatre instruction time into the regular teaching schedule has been a concern.
- *Lack of record keeping.* When the arts coordinator was hired in 2006, she found there was no organized documentation of the district's recent arts education expenditures or what had been accomplished since joining *Arts for All*. She also has

had a difficult time documenting more recent expenditures at the school level because it has been difficult to track funding that comes from a variety of places. She sees a benefit in tracking how all arts-related funds are spent in the district to assist schools in making an organized plan that supports the advancement of equitable access to learning opportunities in the arts.

OUTCOMES

Perhaps the most significant outcome at Beverly Hills USD to date was a policy decision: whatever administrative decisions on instructional practices affect other areas of the school curriculum now affect the arts education program as well. This indicates the arts are being taken seriously as a component of the core curriculum. Other changes in the district associated with the *Arts for All* initiative are briefly described below.

Content

Standards-based Curriculum. Beverly Hills USD is continuing to develop sequential curricula in the four major art disciplines (dance, music, theatre and visual arts). Presently, teachers at all grade levels rely on the state content standards to guide instruction. Additionally, the arts specialists at the high school level are working with K-8 teachers in aligning instruction and assessment in the arts to ensure a smooth transition for students from eighth grade into high school arts programs.

Pedagogy. Currently, Beverly Hills is primarily focused on teaching the arts as discrete disciplines, with some integration happening at the elementary level. The district now employs specialists for dance (9-12), music (K-12), theatre (9-12) and visual arts (grades K-12). With the reinstatement of a string instruments program in grades six through eight, the sequence from general music in the lower elementary grades to the high school music classes has been considerably strengthened. Dance has been incorporated into K-8 physical education classes by employing professional dancers to model effective instruction with students and then training the physical education teachers how to structure dance classes. Sequential theatre instruction has not been adopted yet at the K-8 level due to time constraints in the school day.

Student Assessment. During the 2007-2008 year, all district teachers participated in professional development about formative and summative assessments and how those practices might influence their instructional choices in core subject areas, including the arts. Resulting changes in classroom practice have not been documented to date.

Professional Development. In the past year, each district arts specialist participated in professional development days, including animation training for the visual arts specialists. Their students will soon learn to make drawings, upload them into a computer and animate

them. In addition, kindergarten and first grade teachers attended a session on integration led by the arts coordinator, creating an opportunity to share effective practices.

Infrastructure

Program Administration. The current arts coordinator holds a part-time administrative position, though it will be reconfigured as a part-time TOSA position in 2008-2009. She juggled the responsibility of overseeing both the arts and physical education programs for the past year, but now will focus solely on arts education and be relieved of some administrative duties.

Personnel. At the high school level, there were arts specialists on staff in all four art disciplines prior to joining *Arts for All*. District funds have been used to hire two additional music specialists for grades six through eight, so each K-8 site now has an instrumental specialist as well as a choral and visual arts specialist. In addition, K-8 physical education specialists have been trained to offer a unit in dance and choreography.

Facilities and Equipment. All Beverly Hills USD schools have functional performance spaces and dedicated rooms for visual arts and music. No significant physical improvements were made to these facilities in the past four years based on the arts plan. State legislative funds and general district funds were used to purchase musical instruments, art supplies and equipment. Teachers at each school were given the opportunity to create a wish list, so purchase decisions were made solely on a classroom-by-classroom basis.

Partnerships and collaborations. The Beverly Hill Education Foundation and the school PTAs have become good partners in finding ways to fill instructional gaps in the arts. Other instructional partners include the Music Center of Los Angeles County and Theatre 40, which send residency artists to work with students. Two developing civic partnerships, with the City of Beverly Hills and the Annenberg Center for the Performing Arts, will provide ongoing opportunities for students to exhibit and perform.

Sustainability

Policy. The district approved an arts education policy in 2005 that documented the board of education's commitment to develop a comprehensive K-12 sequential program and treat arts education on an equal basis with other core subjects. For the first time, the arts are to be held to similar accountability standards as well.

Funding. Beverly Hill USD funds its art education program through a combination of internal and external sources. Currently, the general budget covers salaries and some instructional resources. The high school's performing arts endowment was generated through a one-time private donation that pays for performance projects each year, sometimes in combination with matching funds from the district or other grants and donations. State block grants were used to purchase supplies over the past two years.

While the arts coordinator organizes and runs the Summer Arts Academy as a source of income, the Beverly Hills Education Foundation and the school PTAs raise additional funding for arts education programs beyond what the district can provide. However, the arts coordinator must then adjust for inequities that seep into school arts education programs because some PTAs raise more money than others. The Foundation has recently redirected its giving towards technology and arts education, and hopes to start an arts endowment in the future. As previously stated, it currently pays the overhead for the Summer Arts Academy and then donates student enrollment fees to the district arts programs. A District-City partnership that allows community use of the campuses provides operational funds for the district, freeing up other portions of the general budget for hiring additional arts personnel.

Evaluation. The CAT team conducted a district-wide assessment of arts education programming in 2004, which provided a baseline for measuring future progress. The revised district arts plan indicates that the arts coordinator will be spearheading an evaluation effort and program needs assessment in 2008-2009 to determine action steps going forward.

Communication and Advocacy. The arts coordinator has primarily used the district website for communication and advocacy. She has also attended PTA meetings and met with teachers to stay abreast of school schedules and other issues. In addition, she drafts a weekly update on implementation progress for the board of education, sends press releases to local newspapers and occasionally sends flyers out to teachers, as when she is recruiting students for the summer academy. She has also appeared on local access television when presenting the CAT team's activities and accomplishments to the board. Finally, to show the community what students are learning in the schools, student work is occasionally displayed in various city venues.

District Leadership. The original arts plan was strongly supported by an assistant superintendent who has since left Beverly Hills. The Beverly Hills Board of Education's solid endorsement of the arts education program is perceived as vital to ensuring its viability. Through the adopted board policy on arts education, the superintendent is responsible for implementing the plan and for providing for the ongoing review, evaluation and continued development of the district's arts education program. Two successive superintendents have remained supportive.

INCREASED ACCESS TO ARTS EDUCATION

The Beverly Hills CAT team has made progress in increasing student access to quality arts instruction in numerous areas. Three years of cross-site discussions on K-12 standards alignment, integration and assessment have set the stage for higher quality arts instruction in the classroom. Due to the hiring of additional arts personnel at both the K-8 and high school level, the number of visual arts and music classes has increased, meaning the number of hours of instruction and the number of students who receive instruction have also increased. This is particularly true with instruction in string instruments and with dance during physical education classes. In addition, a sculpture class was added at the high school

level and students (grade 6-12) will soon have access to animation coursework. Arts instruction in the elementary classroom is not perceived to have increased significantly as specialists teach two out of four major disciplines. The Beverly Hills Parks and Recreation Department offers arts programs afterschool at one elementary school that expanded slightly. Instructional resource purchases have included musical instruments, art supplies and equipment for all grades. Digital equipment such as digital cameras, computers and animation software has been provided for teachers at the secondary level (grades 6-12).

The arts specialists have increased their focus on ways to have their students' work shown publicly, which led to district-wide events being organized for the first time. For example, a string instruments festival was initiated as well as a juried band festival intended to prepare students for musical competitions. More students are now participating in national competitions due to the encouragement of the music specialists. In all, the five Beverly Hills schools sponsored over thirty arts events during the 2007-2008 school year, including 21 musical performances, eight plays, six art exhibitions and two dance performances. This was in addition to in-house events at each school resulting from artist residencies or classroom instruction. An additional play was produced in the winter by the high school drama department.

Areas of access that have not changed significantly are the number of elementary classroom teachers providing arts instruction or the condition of arts facilities. Access for students with special needs has not changed as they already participate in the current arts program. While the district has improved student access to dance and music and strengthened visual arts instruction through the alignment with state standards, perhaps its greatest challenge ahead is in finding ways to integrate theatre and more dance into the school day when teachers are already feeling overwhelmed by their workload. While the CAT team stressed the need for increased funding to sustain the Beverly Hills USD arts program, securing and sustaining the commitment of elementary classroom teachers will be of equal importance.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE OPPORTUNITIES

Seven areas for continued assistance through *Arts for All* were identified:

- Arts coordinator coaching on different aspects of implementation
- CAT team training in building a community advocacy campaign
- Completing a fully action-oriented strategic plan
- Increasing teacher buy-in through focused professional development
- Funds for teaching resources, professional development and arts personnel salaries
- Documentation notebook, so avoid the loss of history when an arts coordinator leaves
- Tools for tracking school expenditures for the arts

Burbank Unified School District

2007-2008 student enrollment: 16,640

2 high schools (grades 9-12)

3 middle schools (grades 6-8)

11 elementary schools (grades K-5)

6 alternative schools¹⁰

DISTRICT CONTEXT

When Burbank Unified School District joined *Arts for All* in 2004, it already had a respectable arts education program in place, however an initial assessment of resources revealed gaps in equity. Beyond salaries for secondary arts specialists that were paid by the district, school PTAs and booster clubs were the primary sources of funding for arts education. Each school planned for arts education independently and, as the amount of available financial support varied from site to site, some had developed stronger art programs than others.

“The plan has clarified everyone’s vision of what we want to see for our students. Arts education is on everybody’s radar now.”

At the high school level all four art disciplines were offered as electives, and the district had nurtured an award-winning vocal music program. At the middle school level, visual arts and music specialists provided elective courses. At the elementary level, there were no arts specialists on staff so instruction was based primarily on the interest and skill of individual classroom teachers or the encouragement of principals who valued the arts. At least some of the visual arts lessons offered by teachers stemmed from prior training in Discipline Based Arts Education (DBAE) at the Getty Center for Education in the Arts. Community arts providers also brought arts learning experiences into elementary classrooms through artist residencies when PTA or grant funding was available. Burbank USD viewed the *Arts for All* initiative as a way to improve the quality and content of arts instruction while helping to reduce inequities in learning opportunities across the school district.

STRATEGIC PLANNING FOR ARTS EDUCATION

The initial *Arts for All* Task Force (CAT team) had 23 members including a school board member, a deputy superintendent, the district grant coordinator, school principals, secondary arts specialists, elementary classroom teachers, PTA parents, community arts providers, a community relations executive from Warner Bros. Entertainment and an *Arts for All* planning coach. The five-year plan included six focus areas common to quality arts programs: 1) curriculum, assessment and professional development, 2) program

¹⁰ Alternative schools are addressed in the LACOE case study.

evaluation, 3) program administration and personnel, 4) partnerships and collaborations, 5) instructional materials and equipment, and 6) funding. The Burbank *Arts for All* Plan was approved in December 2005. Two years later, communication was added as a seventh focus area.

In discussing the value of the strategic planning process in 2008, Burbank CAT team members said that the systematic process and resulting master plan had been critical to making changes in arts education. It pulled district administrators and teachers together under a common vision of what they wanted to offer students. A school board policy for arts education was also written and approved in 2005 and provided additional authority for enacting the district arts plan. The policy acknowledged the arts as an integral part of the schools' core curriculum and supported the development of a comprehensive visual and performing arts program. Of particular interest was the stated commitment to "support the need to provide funding for high quality, standards-based K-12 arts education in an equitable manner, consistent with the principle that arts education in an integral part of the core curriculum."

Once the policy and plan were approved, the team was restructured to effectively transition from the planning stage to the implementation stage. The prevailing belief was that the implementation team should consist of those individuals most responsible for completing the work. In addition, the team recognized that reducing the number of people at the planning table would streamline decision-making. By excusing a few of the community representatives, the membership was reduced from 23 to 17.

IMPLEMENTING THE PLAN

Once the Burbank USD arts plan was approved, the CAT team turned to writing K-12 curricula for the four art disciplines, beginning with visual arts in 2005-2006. The plan for the elementary schools stipulated that music would be taught as a discrete subject by credentialed specialists while dance, theatre and visual arts would be taught by classroom teachers through integration with other academic subjects. To support the adoption of the visual arts curriculum, professional development workshops were conducted during the summer of 2006. Teaching artist residencies, scheduled through the Music Center of Los Angeles County, provided instructional modeling and teacher mentoring during 2006-2007.

A full time arts coordinator was hired in a Teacher on Special Assignment (TOSA) position by the district in mid-2006 to oversee the continued rollout of the arts plan using matching funds from the *Arts for All* Pooled Fund. At the same time, the vice president of corporate responsibility at Warner Bros. took the lead in creating the Burbank Arts Education Foundation to secure donations from parents, local businesses and philanthropic entities. While there were already two education foundations providing financial support for schools, the Arts Education Foundation was created to support the district's broader vision to increase equitable access to quality arts instruction for all Burbank students. The

Foundation was preparing to hold its first fundraiser targeted at nearby film and television corporations in June 2008.

In 2007, two itinerant music specialists were hired to provide instruction for the eleven elementary schools. The one-time block grant from the state legislature was used to pay for musical instruments, professional development, arts supplies and related equipment according to the stated needs of each school. A portion of the funding also paid for professional development and the expanding elementary music program. The new music specialists collaborated with two classroom teachers with music backgrounds and a consultant to write and pilot curriculum for grades two through five. Kindergarten and first grade sections will be added during 2008-2009 following a training workshop to introduce the entire K-5 sequence of instruction and to connect lessons to other subject areas.

During the 2007-2008 school year, Burbank USD took advantage of an *Arts for All* grant to host Music Center of Los Angeles County artist residencies at every elementary school and middle school. As a result of this effort, more teachers spent a portion of their summer break attending trainings at the Getty Center and the Music Center than in the past. The teachers reportedly found value in these programs because the trainings focused on skills and strategies that were standards-based and integrated with other core curricular areas.

MECHANISMS AND CHALLENGES

The CAT team agreed that the hiring of an arts coordinator was central to effectively rolling out the arts plan to date. Other mechanisms that supported implementation, as well as some of the challenges faced are listed below:

Mechanisms of Change

- *Experienced planning coach.* The *Arts for All* coach has provided advisement beyond the planning stage and was considered instrumental in orienting the arts coordinator when she was hired in 2006.
- *Full-time leader.* Having a full-time arts coordinator focused solely on actualizing the goals of the district arts plan accelerated implementation.
- *Board participation.* A school board member actively participated in the writing of the district arts policy and arts plan, which facilitated the approval process.
- *Corporate partnerships.* Burbank is the home of a number of high-profile film and television corporations including Warner Bros., which has become a major fiscal contributor and *Arts for All* collaborator.

Challenges to Change

- *Declining enrollment.* It has been difficult for the district to increase expenditures for arts education when a decline in student enrollment has led to a decrease in the general funds.

- *Uneven adoption.* Burbank elementary schools are at different stages of understanding and adoption of arts education and the district arts plan. The arts coordinator has had to assess each situation individually and calibrate implementation efforts accordingly.
- *Insufficient funds.* The success of the arts plan is dependent on having enough funding to write curriculum and pay for the necessary professional development to ensure a successful adoption.
- *Limited professional development.* Elementary teachers have received limited training in standards-based arts instruction due to the cost. Ongoing professional development will be needed following the adoption of each art discipline.
- *Teachers' pre-service training.* Classroom teachers tend to spend the most time on subjects they enjoy and feel confident teaching. Due, in part, to their own lack of pre-service training in the arts, they are not always given equal time in the classroom.
- *Full teaching schedules.* Elementary teachers already have a full schedule of subjects to cover, so the goal of adding four discrete art disciplines to the list represents a considerable challenge.
- *Lack of team planning time.* Teachers lack structured time to meet and collaborate on increasing arts education in their classrooms.

OUTCOMES

When interviewed, members of the CAT team identified a number of significant outcomes that were the direct result of joining the *Arts for All* initiative, including hiring an arts coordinator, writing visual arts and music curricula, developing an elementary music program with specialists, creating an arts education foundation, strengthening community support through arts partnerships and improving attendance at professional development sessions for arts education. Further details regarding these changes and other advancements in the district arts program are included below.

Content

Standards-based Curriculum. The district arts plan specifies adopting one art discipline at a time. To date, visual arts and music curricula have been written, approved, piloted and distributed to all elementary schools. Based on initial feedback from teachers, both curricula will be revised during 2008-2009 to better align with secondary instruction. Dance and theatre curricula have yet to be written.

Pedagogy. At all secondary schools, credentialed specialists teach the arts as electives, with the exception of middle school dance, which is now part of the physical education curriculum. Two itinerant music specialists provide instruction for grades two through five. Kindergarten and first grade teachers have received training and provide general music instruction. When the physical education program was expanded to provide a specialist for

third graders as well as fourth and fifth graders, two weeks of dance instruction were added to that syllabus. In general, dance instruction is focused on preparing students for school dance festivals. Visual arts, theatre and K-2 dance are the responsibility of the classroom teachers. The district upholds integration as the most realistic approach for including arts instruction in the elementary curriculum.

Student Assessment. The CAT team acknowledges that while elementary teachers have received training in assessing student artwork, it is not widely practiced. Future professional development will target aligning assessments with the state content standards. Arts specialists at the secondary level and classroom teachers at the elementary level currently determine report card grades in the arts.

Professional Development. Burbank USD's arts plan specifies that as curriculum in each art discipline is adopted, training opportunities will be provided for the elementary teachers. In the past, interested schools independently pursued professional development in the arts. Since creating the arts plan, more district-wide opportunities have been made available. To date, all elementary teachers have been given opportunities for training in the visual arts. By 2007-2008, over half of the schools had sent teachers for training at the Getty Center and welcomed Getty mentors into classrooms for observations. The CAT team has discovered that it takes more than one year to fully adopt an art discipline, so the arts coordinator is working to schedule further visual arts trainings through the Los Angeles County Arts Museum, Music Center of Los Angeles County, and other local visual arts providers for the 2008-2009 school year, in addition to planning K-5 music integration workshops. Development of a comprehensive, ongoing professional development program is also underway, based on teacher input.

Infrastructure

Program Administration. In 2006 a part-time arts coordinator (TOSA) was hired to oversee the arts plan's rollout. This has since become a full-time position. While the coordinator has taken on much of the work of implementation, the CAT team meets regularly to provide support as needed. As was previously mentioned, providing equitable support for all schools has been a challenge for the coordinator, as some started with much stronger arts programs in place than others.

Personnel. The CAT team believes that the strength of their arts programs reflects the quality of their arts specialists. They reported that secondary students get involved if there are good instructors in an art discipline; without them, they won't. A stagecraft teacher was hired to teach students about staging, lighting, sound systems and related special effects at one high school. In addition, the Los Angeles County Office of Education's Regional Occupation Program (ROP) paid for community professionals with alternative teaching certification to teach classes in photography, videography and the culinary arts. At the elementary level, two itinerant music teachers were hired to serve the eleven schools.

Facilities and Equipment. A major portion of the state block grants was used to purchase equipment, supplies and instruments for all district schools. There were already

auditoriums at each school and they were outfitted with new stage curtains, sound systems, and lighting as needed. In addition, several elementary schools created dedicated rooms for music classes.

Partnerships and Collaborations. Burbank USD is located in a city with a high concentration of television and film studios, and has established a notable relationship with Warner Bros. in addition to other corporations and non-profit arts providers. Financial donations from community partners are now channeled through the newly created Burbank Arts Education Foundation. The foundation board was planning its first fundraiser for the summer of 2008 with the intention of interesting more local creative industry businesses, individuals and other foundations to pledge financial support in the form of a pooled fund, or endowment. Burbank USD also enjoys a strong relationship with the Music Center of Los Angeles County and several other area visual and performing arts providers. Through a matching grant from the *Arts for All* Pooled Fund, Burbank USD was able to provide artist residencies at all elementary and middle schools during 2007-2008. The district has also strengthened its connection with the City of Burbank, and students have been invited to exhibit artwork or perform at the airport, local museums, art festivals and other public functions. All performance fees are used to sustain the school arts programs. In addition, a city staff member currently sits on the foundation's board of directors.

Recognizing the value of strong parent support, the CAT team made a special effort to include school PTAs and booster clubs in the planning and implementation process. The parents have become important allies in providing the means to fill instructional gaps in the arts, particularly for the youngest students (K-1). They have also paid community arts providers and creative industry professionals to deliver student instruction and professional development at individual schools plus send teachers to summer workshops. Afterschool programs are supported through PTA funding as well.

Sustainability

Policy. A school board policy for arts education was written and adopted in March 2005. The policy states that the board recognizes the arts as an integral part of the core curriculum, and encourages the implementation of a quality, standards-based K-12 program with equity and access for all. Beyond listing the essential elements of a quality arts program as set forth in the district arts plan, the policy also states that the board "supports the need to provide funding" for an arts education program.

Funding. Currently, Burbank USD has an art budget of approximately three percent of the total district budget, which is largely used to pay arts specialist salaries at the secondary level and to pay for materials, equipment and support staff at all schools. While falling short of the five percent goal set by *Arts for All*, this budget marks a significant increase up from 1.8 percent prior to joining the initiative. Despite declining enrollment counts and pending state budget cuts, the district has committed to continue paying the two elementary music teachers and the arts coordinators' salaries for the 2008-2009 school year at the request of the CAT team. This decision would free up any new block grant funding

for hiring additional elementary specialists or paying for more professional development and arts supplies.

PTA and booster clubs raise funds for arts programs each year, although the funds are typically directed to specific schools, creating an equity issue. Title 1 funds are also used to support K-5 arts instruction in qualifying schools. While Warner Bros. has provided seed money for the Burbank Art Education Foundation, additional funds must be raised before the endowment is large enough to support district-wide programs.

Evaluation. The CAT team was scheduled to meet during June 2008 to discuss their progress to date and create an action plan for the next year. Program evaluation was originally scheduled to begin in 2008-2009 but it may be tabled to focus on other priorities.

Communication and Advocacy. Each school has an identified arts liaison who communicates with the arts coordinator to facilitate the collection and dissemination of arts education news. School events and other arts opportunities for students and teachers are listed in the district website calendar. A visual and performing arts website and monthly arts e-newsletter are eventual goals, but are reliant on the availability of adequate clerical support.

“You actually have these kids in kindergarten, first and second grade who know about these wonderful [historical] artists. They know what period of art the work was related to. They know some of the key things—what the artist was thinking about when they were making their work.”

The Burbank CAT team reported that their best means of advocating for arts education has been through direct communication. One of the strongest tools has been the bi-monthly televised school board meetings that are watched by many parents and community members. Student artwork and performances are broadcast and newsworthy events and accomplishments are announced. In addition, the Burbank Arts Education Foundation pays for a public service announcement about the arts in Burbank schools and requests donations. Press releases on upcoming events have been frequently sent to the local newspapers. *Verdugo* Magazine, which targets readership in several adjoining communities, now includes a monthly listing of district arts activities and events.

District Leadership. One of Burbank USD’s strongest assets is the unflagging support the CAT team receives from district administrators. The deputy superintendent has been actively involved in and instrumental to the planning and implementation process from the onset in 2004. The superintendent and school board have shown their support through honoring the arts plan, increasing the district arts budget by 60 percent and working together to build sustainable financial relationships in the community, beyond the work of the CAT team.

CHANGES IN EQUITABLE ACCESS TO ARTS EDUCATION

The efforts of the Burbank CAT team have already resulted in positive changes in providing students with greater access to arts education. At the elementary level, increases were reported in the number of hours of arts instruction due to music being taught by itinerant specialists, visual arts being taught more frequently by trained classroom teachers and two weeks of dance being taught by physical education specialists. These activities were supplemented by teaching artists residencies in all elementary and middle schools. The addition of the stagecraft teacher and ROP courses taught by industry professionals increased variety and quality of high school arts electives.

Access for special populations improved slightly as well, as grant funding made it possible for students with special needs and their teachers to participate in Artist in Residency workshops, and Getty Center, Los Angeles County Arts Museum, and Music Center of Los Angeles County programs. The district music specialists also received adaptive training for teaching the deaf and hard of hearing.

Due in great part to the availability of state legislative funding for arts education, the district was able to acquire instruments, equipment and instructional materials for all schools. Student performances and exhibits also increased at all levels partly as a result of the heightened efforts of teachers and partly due to the efforts of the CAT team and the foundation board members drawing in new opportunities.

Overall, Burbank USD has made considerable progress in improving the state of arts education across the district, particularly through initiating the adoption of visual arts and music at the elementary schools. Work remains to be done in increasing equitable student access to dance and theatre education and in strengthening the quality of integrated arts instruction through continued professional development.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE OPPORTUNITIES

The CAT team identified five areas where continued *Arts for All* staff support would be useful:

- District and school administrator training in the arts, including hands-on arts experiences (Many have reportedly never had a personal arts experience)
- Guidance in providing effective professional development for secondary teachers—both arts specialists and classroom teachers
- Program evaluation
- Suggested fundraising ideas
- Website editing and newsletter writing. This would include creating an attractive and functional interactive design that streamlines the posting and updating of information.

Castaic Union School District

2007-2008 student enrollment: 3,397

1 middle school (grades 6-8)

3 elementary schools (grades K-5)

DISTRICT CONTEXT

Prior to 2003, Castaic Union School District had an active Visual and Performing Arts Teacher Advisory Committee (arts committee). It was headed by the Assistant Superintendent of Educational Services and upon her retirement, by the Director of Instruction and Special Projects (ISP), who includes arts education among her areas of responsibility. The district arts committee had been awarded a California Department of Education *Arts Work* grant three years in a row for their existing programs in music and visual arts, and to augment future programs in dance and theatre. The Castaic vision included infusing arts instruction into all areas of the curriculum. The arts committee had already compiled essential standards for the visual and performing arts based on the California Department of Education's Visual and Performing Arts (VAPA) Framework, designed a VAPA portfolio assessment system for students and in 2000, adopted textbooks in visual arts (K-8) and music (K-5). In addition, the essential visual and performing arts standards were posted in classrooms district-wide.

Depending on the grade level, visual arts were taught by elementary classroom teachers or by a middle school specialist. There was a music specialist with an award-winning instrumental music program and choir at the middle school. In addition, a full-time video production teacher had been on staff for several years. There was no dance program at the middle school but it was taught in the three elementary schools—either through a SPARKS physical education program or by knowledgeable classroom teachers. All four Castaic schools had small, but active theatre programs through integrated classroom instruction, afterschool clubs and the staging of annual plays. A district-wide musical theatre program was also available to all upper elementary (grades 4-6) Gifted and Talented Education (GATE) students each summer and drew broad participation.

Castaic welcomed artist-parent volunteers on a regular basis and had relationships with the Getty Center for Education in the Arts, Los Angeles County Arts Museum, Music Center of Los Angeles County Education Division, and California Institute for the Arts (Cal Arts). Castaic applied to join the *Arts for All* initiative in 2003 with hope of obtaining additional funding for professional development and instructional resources to fully actualize its goal to integrate arts instruction with all subject areas.

STRATEGIC PLANNING FOR ARTS EDUCATION

As Castaic already had a high-functioning arts committee consisting of district administrators, teachers, supportive parents and a board member, the process of adding additional community members was undertaken primarily to satisfy a planning requirement

set forth by the *Arts for All* coach assisting them. Some CAT team members were turned off by what was presented as a mandated, singular approach to strategic planning when the district had already adopted another style of planning. While the newly trained *Arts for All* coach attempted to stay true to the techniques—as she understood them—from the CAT team perspective, the approach was not adequately sensitive to their uniqueness as a district, their learning goals or administrative processes. In time, the dynamic of the group was negatively impacted and long-time enthusiasts stopped participating—effectively stalling the planning process.

In the second year of planning, an alternate coach was assigned to Castaic who worked with the director of ISP to restructure the arts plan to better align with their previous successes in arts education. The plan included the following components of a quality arts education program: standards-based instruction, a variety of teaching methodologies, student assessment and exhibition/performance outcomes, professional development, community partnerships, a committed administration, instilling arts appreciation, program evaluation, and funding for facilities and resources. The long-term goal for the district arts plan was sequential, standards-based instruction in the visual and performing arts offered to all students, at every grade level. Though not listed as a major component of the plan, the district also wanted to advance multicultural goals by offering arts appreciation instruction that reflected the many ethnicities of Castaic's diverse student population. The governing board approved an amended board policy in January 2005 and a strategic plan for arts education the following spring.

An existing arts education policy was updated to reflect an emphasis on standards-based instruction and to recognize the arts as part of the K-8 core curriculum. It also acknowledged the importance of the basic components included in the arts plan. Borrowing language from other districts' visual and performing arts board policies, the revised version also stated the board's support of the need to provide adequate funding for arts education programs and the need for regular review, evaluation and ongoing development of the arts plan.

IMPLEMENTING THE ARTS PLAN

Formal implementation began in 2005-2006 with a reorganization of the CAT team following its demise the previous school year. Under the leadership of the director of ISP, the reorganized team consisted primarily of those who were responsible for achieving the goals of the plan. The core of the team included the director of ISP, the arts specialists and two teachers from each school who had a special interest or training in an art discipline. Other teachers, school principals, artist-parents and the governing board president also attended regularly, schedules permitting.

Rather than follow the district arts plan exactly as written, the CAT team identified immediate priorities and opportunities and worked to achieve goals in those areas. For example, one full-time and one part-time certificated music specialist were immediately hired to service the three elementary schools. In the fall of 2007 the CAT team was

awarded a matching grant from the *Arts for All* Pooled Fund that helped pay for a former teacher/visual arts specialist to be hired on a stipend basis as a part-time arts coordinator to assist the director of ISP in implementing the plan.

Using a portion of the one-time state legislative block grant and another grant from the *Arts for All* Pooled Fund, musical instruments—including a tuba, wind instruments and guitars—were purchased for the middle school and keyboards were purchased for the elementary schools over a two-year period. The *Arts for All* Pooled Fund grant also provided funds toward professional development and the purchase of supplies and materials.

Students had opportunities to exhibit their artwork and stage both vocal and instrumental performances, as in the past. The elementary schools hosted annual arts celebrations with a variety of themes, and the middle school annually held a district-wide celebration called Arts Extravaganza. During this popular event, students in grades K-8 had an opportunity to display their artwork in a community gallery setting alongside teachers and other community artists. Middle school performance groups staged vocal and instrumental concerts, and visiting students could choose to participate in a Shakespeare theatre workshop, build with clay, and participate in street painting and chalk drawing.

The first project undertaken by the district arts coordinator during 2007-2008 was to design and lead a series of professional development classes that focused on state content standards and arts integration. Making the transition from art project-oriented professional development to studying standards-based instruction initially was challenging for teachers who had little formal background in the arts. They were accustomed to learning practical skills for teaching specific art lessons such as ceramics techniques or bookbinding, rather than discussing theories behind instructional choices. For the first time, middle school teachers outnumbered the elementary teachers in an arts education training program. They knew the arts coordinator as a former teaching colleague and wanted to try using integration as an instructional method. As a result, the sessions were geared to identify links between the arts and technology that would appeal to older students, such as political cartooning and creating graphic novels along with understanding how those lessons correspond with language arts standards.

To support the professional development effort, CAT team members attended curriculum fairs and were exposed to a range of new sheet music and instructional materials for elementary music and visual arts. The district planned to use ongoing legislative block grant funds to pay for these resources over time. In an effort to increase the use of technology among students and teachers, the district set up computer labs at all three elementary schools (labs were already in place at the middle school) and teachers received training on basic applications in the arts, including the use of graphic design elements like Clip Art to improve the appearance of class assignments or announcement flyers.

Students were provided with numerous opportunities to share their accomplishments with fellow students and parents through exhibitions and performances at their schools, in district-wide shows and community venues. Grants from the *Arts for All* Pooled Fund were given to schools to use for assemblies and other performance costs. The Castaic District

also continued to partner with other community entities such as Cal Arts and the Music Center of Los Angeles County to increase student access to professional artists.

MECHANISMS AND CHALLENGES

As one CAT team member put it, the arts were very much alive in the Castaic District before the district's involvement with *Arts for All*. The high valuing of arts education by parents and district personnel is recognized as an important mechanism for continued program development. Other keys to change are listed below along with challenges faced by the CAT team:

Mechanisms for Change

- *District leadership.* The CAT team and the district arts plan are supported by all district leaders—including the governing board, the chief administrators and the school principals.
- *Successful grant writing.* The director of ISP has a proven track record for winning arts education grants.
- *Culture of collaboration and sharing.* The teachers in Castaic had previously developed a collaborative culture for sharing lesson plans and other instructional ideas that foster the use of arts instruction in the elementary classroom.
- *Arts-skilled classroom teachers.* Each elementary school has hired classroom teachers who have prior training—and in some cases, full certification—in one of the four major art disciplines. These teachers use their knowledge to integrate arts learning in other subjects and to share ideas with their colleagues.

Challenges of Change

- *Conflicted planning process.* The *Arts for All* strategic planning approach did not take into consideration the progress Castaic had already made in developing a full arts program in its schools. This alienated participants, causing a split between what was initially written in the plan and what the district was actually interested in implementing. This problem contributed to extending the planning time by an additional year.
- *Program Improvement status.* The year Castaic USD joined *Arts for All*, it was also put on academic watch. With this came the mandate to focus on raising math and reading test scores amongst struggling student subgroups. As a result, the CAT team reported that it became more difficult to ask for, and get approved, professional development or time for classroom instruction and student activities in the arts.
- *Lack of instructional time.* Elementary teachers find they have little time to teach history and science in addition to the mandated time spent on math and language arts, so adding more dance, music, theatre and visual arts instruction into their teaching schedule, even through integration, is perceived as an extremely difficult challenge.

OUTCOMES

Castaic's most visible progress in working to integrate arts instruction since joining the *Arts for All* initiative has been through increasing teaching supplies, hiring certificated music specialists, hiring a part-time arts coordinator and providing professional development in arts integration for K-8 teachers. However, the district has made advancements in most of the factors that define a quality arts program. These outcomes are listed below.

Content

Standards-based Curriculum. The district has identified essential visual and performing arts standards that were published and disseminated to all teachers. There are student textbooks available for music and visual arts instruction at all schools, but teachers primarily rely on the teacher's edition for lesson ideas. The CAT team is currently researching state-approved texts for purchase in the near future. In the fall of 2008, the title of arts coordinator will pass to a part-time classroom teacher who will lead the task of creating cross-curricular, K-8 lesson planning guides in all four art disciplines to deepen the rigor of arts integrated instruction.

Pedagogy. Castaic USD uses a combination of methods to bring learning opportunities to students. At the middle school level, visual arts and music electives are offered by certificated specialists, including instrumental band, guitar, string instruments, and an all-district choir. Classroom teachers have now received training in visual arts-integrated instruction. Currently there are no dance or theatre electives, but there is a drama club after school. At the elementary level, two certificated specialists (1.5 FTE) offer music instruction for the three elementary schools. Visual arts are taught through integration or as a discrete subject by teachers with adequate training. Theatre continues to be taught primarily by classroom teachers or during the GATE summer musical theatre program (grades 4-6 only), which is led by recent Cal Arts graduates. Because Castaic is currently subject to Program Improvement mandates by the California Department of Education, teachers spend the majority of instructional time on language arts and math. Integration provides a way for them to continue providing instruction in the arts as well.

Student Assessment. Students currently receive a letter grade for elective art classes at the middle school level. At the elementary school, students receive an Excellent, Satisfactory or Needs Improvement rating in visual and performing arts and music on their report card. The music rating is awarded by the music specialists. Prior to *Arts for All*, Castaic was working to adopt a student portfolio assessment process, however this plan went on hold when the district was put on academic watch.

Professional Development. The arts coordinator developed a series of afterschool workshops on teaching content standards through visual arts integration. These were primarily attended by the middle school teachers. The director of ISP plans to design future trainings in all four art disciplines for all grade levels.

Infrastructure

Program Administration. The director of ISP is responsible for administering all arts education programs in the district. In 2007, she hired a part-time external arts coordinator to organize the professional development series on integration and to take leadership in building relationships with community partners. A classroom teacher has assumed the role of arts coordinator (50% teacher/50% arts coordinator) for the 2008-2009 school year and will lead the effort to complete the development of cross-curricular lesson plan guides for each grade. She will also be working closely with school principals to schedule artist residencies with community arts providers.

Personnel. Full-time credentialed arts specialists are employed by the district to teach visual arts and music at the middle school level and two music specialists have been hired to teach music across the three elementary schools. In addition, the middle school has a video production teacher on staff. Classroom teachers are expected to provide dance and theatre instruction, though it is not mandated.

Facilities and Equipment. At the middle school, there are dedicated rooms for visual arts and music plus a multi-purpose room with a stage for use with any of the art disciplines. The back of the stage has ballet barres, mirrors and a wood floor for dance instruction. There is also an outdoor stage and choir room for performing arts instruction. At each elementary school, there are designated music rooms and a multi-purpose room with a stage, sound system and curtains. State legislative block grant funds were used to purchase portable exhibit walls and to replace components of the sound system in the middle school's performing arts center. Other arts equipment was also purchased, including musical instruments, arts supplies and curriculum materials for all four schools. With rollover funds remaining in 2008-2009, additional curriculum materials will be bought for visual arts and/or music.

Partnerships and Collaborations. The district has longstanding relationships with the City of Santa Clarita, Cal Arts, Castaic Education Foundation, Santa Clarita Valley Education Foundation, *Arts for All* and the PTAs for sponsoring or collaborating in creating student learning opportunities and community exhibitions. For example, students are annually recruited to participate in a local street art festival as well as a Children's Literacy and Arts Festival, with sponsorship obtained through the City of Santa Clarita and the Santa Clarita Education Foundation. They also take field trips to the Music Center of Los Angeles County for performances when funding is available.

Sustainability

Policy. An existing arts education policy was revised to reflect the district's goal of offering standards-based instruction in the visual and performing art for all students. While the governing board could not commit to providing funding for all of the goals set forth in the arts plan, it did acknowledge the need for the basic components of the plan to be set in place and to have progress evaluated on a periodic basis.

Funding. The Castaic USD arts education budget in 2007-2008 was 1.7 percent of the total budget, which is a slight increase over prior years. The district's primary sources for funding have been the general budget—including special program categorical funds, the state legislative block grant funding and grants from the Castaic Education Foundation, the Santa Clarita Valley Education Foundation, the City of Santa Clarita and the *Arts for All* Pooled Fund. Last year, 12 percent of the arts education budget came from grants and donations. A two-year grant from the Pooled Fund was used to pay the arts coordinator's stipend plus contributed to the purchase of instructional materials, supplies and professional development.

Evaluation. Informal program evaluation and reflective discussion have been regular components of the CAT team meetings since the initial needs assessment was conducted prior to joining *Arts for All* in 2004. A more formal evaluation is not a priority in the arts plan to date.

Communication and Advocacy. The CAT team reports on its activities and plans through the director of ISP at bi-weekly administrative council meetings that are attended by all school principals and district administrators. The director of ISP also sends out e-mails and flyers through each school's CAT team representative to keep teachers informed of student and community arts events and professional development opportunities. The CAT team continues to enjoy the strong support of the board, administrators and parents, despite the initial setbacks in *Arts for All* implementation. Student performances such as the spring choral concert, GATE summer musical theatre and the middle school's Arts Extravaganza celebration are well attended and are the district's affirmations of arts education's worth.

District Leadership. The two main district-level advocates are the assistant superintendent of educational services and the director of ISP who together hold broad authority over arts education planning and spending. The CAT team also benefits from the pro-active support of the Castaic Governing Board, the superintendent, the middle school principal and all three elementary principals. All principals fully cooperate with district-driven plans to improve arts education offerings in their schools. In addition, the newly hired middle school principal is a national board certified visual arts teacher.

CHANGES IN INCREASED ACCESS TO ARTS EDUCATION

Prior to *Arts for All*, students in each of Castaic's schools already had access to instruction in at least three of the four major art disciplines either during the school day or through extracurricular programs, although offerings were not necessarily equitable or adequate. In the past two years, a number of steps have been taken to improve these deficiencies.

Approximately 25 teachers mainly from the middle school received visual arts integration training in the last year, although the degree to which this training has changed classroom practices has not yet been documented. In an effort to incorporate dance instruction into the physical education curriculum, the middle school purchased a video sequence called the

Hops Program from which students learn about and practice creative movement. One challenge faced by the district is that middle school students in need of academic intervention are unable to include a music elective in their highly structured schedule. District administration is looking into the possibility of extending the school day with additional periods so these students have an equitable chance to participate. At the elementary level, access to and quality of music instruction increased notably with the hiring of two specialists that now provide instruction for all students in each elementary school, grades one through five. However, dance, theatre and visual arts continue to be taught by classroom teachers.

Teachers have responded to district conversations regarding multicultural approaches to visual and performing arts instruction. Some fifth grade elementary teachers have designed cross-curricular lessons that focus on the development of jazz music in New Orleans and the history of the “Blues” in Chicago. These lessons integrate language arts, social studies, music, visual arts and math, with emphasis on the historical influence of African-American culture on the development of these musical genres.

The schools benefited from state legislative block grants that paid for new musical equipment. To increase student access to a greater array of instruments, the elementary schools purchased keyboards and the middle school purchased guitars, sound equipment and a new tuba for the school band, among other items. Castaic already had textbooks in the classrooms for visual and performing arts, and is looking to update the visual arts and music texts in 2008-2009, as well as complete cross-curricular instructional guides to strengthen instruction in the arts. Though Castaic Union School District is currently in program improvement, its historic commitment to advancing arts education continues to remain strong even as it grapples with improving student subgroup performance in language arts and math.

“Having a passion for the arts, coupled with the ability to administrate and coordinate, is more important in running our programs than being an accomplished artist.”

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE OPPORTUNITIES

Based on the focus interview with CAT team members, the following areas present possibilities for technical assistance from *Arts for All* staff:

- Developing new arts partners in the vicinity, both fiscal and instructional
- Arts coordinator training in how to administer and coordinate effective arts education programs
- Curriculum mapping on fitting arts instruction into the teaching schedule
- Paid specialists or artist residencies to model dance and theatre integrated instruction
- Program evaluation measures

Compton Unified School District

2007-2008 student enrollment: 28,081

3 high schools (grades 9-12)

8 middle schools (grades 6-8, 7-8)

24 elementary schools (grades K-5, K-6, 3-8)

4 alternative schools¹¹

DISTRICT CONTEXT

Prior to joining *Arts for All* in 2004, Compton Unified School District offered limited choices in arts education instruction. The three high schools had band, choral and visual arts specialists; one site had a theatre program and no dance instruction was available. At the middle school level, four band teachers offered elective classes at eight sites and a dance elective was available at a single site. At the elementary level, there were no arts specialists on staff. Visual arts instruction was taught sporadically by a limited number of classroom teachers. Each school made its own decisions on providing students with access to arts instruction. This policy led to inequities in access across the district. Compton USD also lacked written curricula in any of the four art disciplines, K-12. Professional development in arts education was not available through the district with the exception of one high school band teacher who occasionally mentored middle school band teachers.

In late 2003, one of the associate superintendents and a member of the Compton Board of Trustees spearheaded the creation of the Compton Education Foundation with a mission to restore arts instruction to all schools in the district. When the *Arts for All* initiative was announced, the foundation and district administrators recognized an opportunity to receive help in creating a comprehensive plan for arts education and to leverage its ability to attract the funding to actualize it.

STRATEGIC PLANNING FOR THE ARTS

“...we stuck with the things that the majority of people thought it would be durable to do.”

To develop the district arts plan, a 17-member Community Art Team (CAT) was formed that included Compton administrators, community liaisons, two trustees, an interim arts coordinator, the district grant writer, three principals, two arts specialists, a community advocate and a high school student. Working with a California Alliance for Arts Education coach, the CAT team identified the following elements of a quality arts education program in their plan: standards-based curriculum, instruction and methodology, student assessment, professional development, program

¹¹ Alternative schools are addressed in the LACOE case study.

administration and personnel, funding, resources and facilities, plus program evaluation. Missing from the list were communication and advocacy, which were incorporated into action steps within the other components as implementation of the plan progressed.

The planning process lasted from the fall of 2004 to the spring of 2006, because the CAT team took time to conduct an inventory and needs assessment survey in the 39 schools before creating the plan. In addition, the team wanted to ensure that the plan was realistic and achievable. The team started by meeting weekly, then transitioned to holding monthly meetings, and finally met quarterly once implementation began. Taking advantage of a matching grant from the *Arts for All* Pooled Fund, the team hired a former Los Angeles USD English and drama teacher as the visual and performing arts administrator (coordinator) in the fall of 2006. At the same time, the CAT team membership shifted slightly to reflect new leadership needs during the implementation phase. As of 2007, a streamlined nine-member team included the new arts coordinator, a board member, the district grant writer, three arts specialists, the project manager for the city of Compton and two university professors who were acting site directors for *ArtsBridge*, an arts-integrated teaching program employing university students.

During the planning process, the CAT team wrote an arts education policy that was reviewed by the Compton Board of Trustees and approved in June 2005. Key points in the policy are as follows: The arts are part of a comprehensive education; teachers are encouraged to use arts integration as a teaching method; weekly instruction, qualified staff, training, facilities, curriculum resources and community arts partners are necessary for a quality program; and the curriculum should be standards-based and allow students to meet college entry requirements. In addition the policy stated that the superintendent would oversee the development of an arts plan with a budget and procedures to implement board of education policies, and would provide for the ongoing evaluation and development of Compton's arts education program.

IMPLEMENTING THE ARTS PLAN

In 2006-2007, the implementation process began with an effort to increase resources, teaching personnel and arts instruction time in the school day. Through the administrative assistance of Mr. Holland's Opus Foundation and donations of musical instruments by the Smith Barney Corporation and the Audrey & Sydney Irmas Charitable Foundation, the Compton CAT team was able to fully equip every secondary school in the district plus a handful of elementary schools with active music programs. Ongoing state legislative block grant money was used to pay the salaries of two middle school specialists, increasing middle schools arts elective offerings and strengthening equity in access to arts instruction.

At the urging of the arts coordinator, the superintendent sent a letter to all school principals with the following statement: "Compton Unified School District, being a member of the Los Angeles County *Arts for All* Organization, *has* committed to providing arts education to all students during the school day. The first phase of implementation is to mandate that every elementary school allot 60 minutes per week in their school schedules

for arts instruction beginning in the 2007-2008 academic year.” The letter informed the principals that textbooks had been selected that aligned with the district’s previously adopted English-language arts curriculum, that curriculum guides would be developed to accompany the books and ongoing professional development would be provided to facilitate their use.

The next project undertaken by the arts coordinator and the CAT team was to purchase arts curricula. Thus, state approved, standards-based music appreciation books were purchased for grades K-12; choral books for grades 9-12; visual arts appreciation for grades K-12, with an art history emphasis for grades 9-12; studio guides for grades 9-12; and theatre arts for grades K-5. The intention of the arts plan was that the arts would be taught by credentialed specialists at the middle and high levels and by classroom teachers at the elementary level. According to the arts coordinator, Compton students have a transient rate of 35 percent primarily within the district, and the CAT team wanted to ensure all students received a similar arts education experience regardless of which district school they attended. It was decided that kindergarten and third grade students would study visual arts, first and fourth graders would study general music and second and fifth graders would study theatre.

Once the books were ordered, the arts coordinator and a team of specialists wrote curriculum guides during the summer of 2007. The purpose of the guides was to help teachers with little or no experience in the arts understand the teacher’s edition of the textbooks and gain confidence in their ability to teach the arts lessons. The guides helped teachers learn appropriate arts vocabulary and provided examples of effective instructional

“The teachers are signing up in droves.....saying they want the training. They’re getting excited and the principals are getting excited because they know we’re not going away.”

pedagogy to be used with each lesson. In addition, the CAT team intended that the guides would serve as substantial instructional aids for the teachers if the arts coordinator or a specialist were not available to assist them with trying new lessons from the texts.

To support the adoption of the new curricula, a professional development program was designed with summer and afterschool workshops in the four art disciplines, relative to the grades at which instruction in each discipline was offered. The first workshops took place during the summer of 2006. In the second year (2007), 120 teachers are expected to participate. School principals reportedly expressed their enthusiasm over the teachers’ strong response, realizing the push for more arts education through the *Arts for All* initiative appeared to be sustained, unlike previous efforts to reestablish arts education. A full-time staff teacher with a background in music was hired in January 2008 to help with training. She and the arts coordinator have since visited classrooms and modeled theatre instruction as needed.

The CAT team helped district teachers organize new opportunities for students to exhibit or perform their work, such as a Holiday Showcase in December 2007 that attracted 900

parents and students. For the past two years the CAT team also organized a Community Arts Day in June in which students from all grades—including the exceptional adults school—participated in an art exhibition or performance. This event attracted 1800 visitors in 2007. The arts coordinator also forwarded announcements of student competitions and festivals to the secondary arts specialists so they could provide their students with more opportunities to demonstrate their skills and achievements in the arts.

In 2008-2009, the CAT team plans to continue providing professional development for elementary teachers, while beginning to address instructional gaps at the middle school level. In addition, the arts coordinator intends to organize a cadre of K-12 educators who are interested in being trained as lead teachers in visual arts and music integration to assist other teachers with fewer arts education skills. At the high school level, an animation program piloted this year will be extended to the other high schools and a dance class will be offered at Centennial High School.

MECHANISMS AND CHALLENGES

Perhaps the strongest arts education asset that Compton USD has is its proactive, visionary arts coordinator. As a district-level administrator, she has worked to implement the plan by successfully advocating for and sustaining the support of the superintendent, the arts specialists, parents and community donors. Other mechanisms that support implementation are listed below along with some of the challenges being confronted:

Mechanisms for Change

- *Instrument donations.* Large, private donations enabled the purchase of a sufficient number of musical instruments to provide music instruction at elementary schools with music programs, at every secondary school, and to have a band at each high school.
- *District level support.* District superintendent(s) and the board of trustees have been strong supporters for the arts and spearheaded the effort to start an education foundation for arts education and join the *Arts for All* initiative.
- *Parent support.* Parents have shown their support by attending district-wide arts programs in record numbers.
- *Community partnerships.* The arts coordinator has been able to attract and secure corporate underwriters to fund aspects of the arts plan.
- *Arts plan as leverage.* The arts plan has been used to leverage policy changes such as mandated instructional time and to attract grants and donations.
- *A vision of social change.* Both district staff and its external arts partners perceive restoring the arts to Compton schools as part of a larger process of creating constructive social change in the community.

Challenges of Change

- *Principal support.* Compton principals are primarily focused on meeting academic requirements of the No Child Left Behind law and are not always receptive to making time for arts instruction or excusing staff for planning meetings during the school day.
- *Arts are not taken seriously.* The CAT team continues to confront a perception held by some administrators and teachers that the purpose of the arts education program is primarily to provide entertainment at district-sponsored events or to provide signage for school hallways.
- *Insufficient funding.* While the district has been successful in attracting funds to purchase curriculum and initiate training for teachers, further implementation of the arts plan is reliant on developing sources of funding to supplement the district allocations.
- *Assigned course enrollment.* Historically, students in transition between schools or who need elective credits have been placed in arts classes whether they have an interest in the subject taught or not, which negatively impacts the instructional environment.

OUTCOMES

Compton's most notable outcomes have been 1) the purchase and distribution of curriculum materials, supplies and musical instruments needed to provide systemic instruction in the arts and 2) the creation and initiation of a professional development plan. However, progress has been made in all areas of the district plan. With a year to go, the arts coordinator projects the district will complete 80 percent of the 5-year objectives in the district arts plan.

Content

Standards-based Curriculum. The district purchased K-12 textbooks in visual arts and music plus theatre texts for grades K-5. The lessons in the books align with previously adopted language arts curricula to facilitate integrated instruction, particularly at the elementary level. The CAT team also assigned a committee to write curriculum guides to accompany the text—to help teachers translate the contents into instructional practice.

Pedagogy. At the secondary level, credentialed specialists teach all arts courses. Integrated instruction is not a priority at the secondary level, though the CAT team plans to pursue this direction as time and funding permit. Elective courses available at all secondary schools include visual arts, instrumental band and choir. They will extend to include animation courses in 2008-2009. Dance instruction will be available at one site in the fall, as continues to be the case with theatre instruction.

At the elementary level, teachers are mandated to provide at least one hour of arts instruction each week. During the K-5 years, students will have access to two years of

visual arts instruction, two year each of music and theatre on a rotating schedule, regardless of what district school they attend. Teachers may choose to use integration or teach the arts as discrete subjects.

Few of Compton schools have hosted afterschool programming in the arts in recent years. During 2007-2008, however, the district paid for an afterschool program called *Math in a Basket* at 23 of the 24 elementary sites. The program was provided by Dramatic Results, a local arts and cultural provider, and introduced students to spatial and geometric math concepts through basket weaving. This program is also being offered during the school day in 2008-2009 as part of a research study at two schools. In addition, the Young Musician's Foundation now provides afterschool music instruction at eight elementary schools.

“—We’ve learned to fish ourselves, so we’ll be fed for the rest of our life. That was the goal with the whole sustainability and capacity building [effort].”

Student Assessment. Lessons in the adopted textbooks include suggestions for student assessment and have been discussed during professional development workshops. The practice of arts assessment has not been documented yet, though teachers are expected to assess learning in the arts as they would in other subject areas. The arts coordinator meets regularly with state officials and other professional organizations to stay abreast of arts assessment policies and practices.

Professional Development. The CAT team has designed a comprehensive plan for professional development including summer institutes and workshops during the school year. At the workshops the teachers have been oriented to the new curriculum materials and have practiced teaching art lessons. They have access to ongoing training opportunities in at least one art discipline per grade. An immediate plan is to train a cadre of lead teachers with a background or credential in an art discipline to provide support for other teacher. Principals were scheduled to receive an orientation to supervising arts instruction during the summer of 2008, on a voluntary basis.

Infrastructure

Program Administration. A district-level arts administrator (arts coordinator) was hired in 2006. As an administrator, she has had direct access to other district leaders and has used her authority to gain the approval needed to enact the various steps in the plan. Currently, the coordinator is also the chairwoman of the Compton Education Foundation, providing direction and leadership in fundraising efforts. In 2009, the coordinator will assume expanded duties including overseeing advanced instructional programs such as Gifted and Talented Education, which is expected to impact her ability to focus on the arts education plan. In 2008 a teacher was prompted to work in the professional development center assisting the arts coordinator with training classroom teachers.

“You have to learn how to be an advocate for what you’re doing..... We are ambassadors for our arts.”

Personnel. With the hiring of four music specialists at the middle school level and the transfer of one specialist to the high school level, every secondary school now offers music and choral instruction. In addition, all three high schools now have marching bands. According to the arts coordinator, the district is committed to funding these positions during times of budget cuts.

Facilities and Equipment. At the secondary level, all buildings have multi-purpose rooms or gyms with stages and classrooms designed for visual arts and music instruction. Compton High School has a 1400-seat performance hall and Centennial High will complete construction of a space for

dance classes in the fall of 2008—with a wood floor, mirrors and ballet barres. The elementary schools also have multi-purpose rooms with a stage but most arts instruction takes place in classrooms. Supplies, equipment and musical instruments were purchased or received through significant donations. They were distributed according to the needs of each school, but with an emphasis on improving equitable access across the district whenever feasible.

Partnerships and Collaborations. Compton’s main goal of establishing partners is to raise the funds and instructional resources necessary to continue implementing the plan. The CAT team has benefited by attracting the interest of private donors as well. Some of Compton’s recent instructional partners and sources of support include Target Corporation, Smith Barney Corporation, Wells Fargo Bank, the Audrey & Sydney Irmas Charitable Foundation, Mr. Holland’s Opus, Dramatic Results, The Young Musician Foundation, UCLA *ArtsBridge* Program, and the U.S. Department of Education through its Arts Education Demonstration Grant program.

Sustainability

Policy. During the planning phase an arts education policy was approved by the board of trustees that acknowledges the importance of the arts being taught on a weekly basis by qualified teachers with adequate materials. The arts coordinator has used this board commitment to successfully advocate for weekly mandated instruction, the purchasing of instructions and textbooks and the development of a large-scale professional development program.

Funding. Funding for Compton’s arts education plan has been provided through the district’s general budget for personnel salaries; state legislative block grants for curriculum materials and the hiring of music specialists; Legislative Proposition 49, which funded afterschool visual arts programs; as well as external grants and donations for the purchase of musical instruments and direct instruction programs. District administrators and trustees established the Compton Education Foundation in 2005 to raise funds to sustain arts education instruction in the district. It has held fundraisers and attracted significant private donations with hopes to eventually create an endowment.

Evaluation. When Compton joined the *Arts for All* initiative, an inventory of facilities, equipment and instructional supplies was taken to inform strategic planning. Additionally, the CAT team collects exit surveys after every professional development workshop and polls teachers annually to stay current as to their training needs.

Communication and Advocacy. The arts coordinator meets with district leaders on a regular basis and uses research in the field and the district's affiliation with *Arts for All* to leverage support for implementation of the arts plan. She has used her new skills as a member of the district technology team to show classroom teachers how to create podcasts and share ideas and information. The arts coordinator hopes to create a visual and performing arts website where teachers can download information about arts education-related opportunities and events around the district—both for students and teachers. The district-wide arts events have functioned as advocacy efforts, engendering parent and community support. In one instance the district earned the praise of California Congresswoman Linda Sanchez who attended a Foundation fundraiser and student performance and afterwards sent a letter to prominent members of the school community. The arts coordinator has also advocated for Compton by speaking at arts education meetings in the region and has been interviewed for *The Wave*, a local newspaper, and in a widely read academic journal, *Education Weekly*.

District Leadership. The decision to join *Arts for All* was spearheaded by the associate superintendent of curriculum and public instruction and two trustees who had long advocated for the restoring of arts education to schools. All three participated in the strategic planning process and have continued to support efforts to implement the district arts plan. It bears repeating that a former superintendent mandated weekly arts instruction in 2007. Compton's newly hired superintendent is committed to ensuring all students are aware of the college entrance requirements in the arts and that students cultivate personal responsibility in meeting those requirements before they graduate.

INCREASED ACCESS TO ARTS EDUCATION

Considerable progress has been made in restoring sequential arts instruction to all Compton schools, although gaps remain, particularly at middle school level. Now in *Arts for All's* fourth year, students are already benefiting in tangible ways.

Compton's primary focus on increasing access has been at the elementary level. As of 2007, all K-5 students receive at least 60 minutes of weekly instruction in an art discipline, taught by their teachers. Students who stay in the Compton District throughout their elementary years will now receive two years each of music, visual arts and theatre instruction. Dance is not yet offered at this level except in cases where teachers have the skills, time and motivation to teach it. State-approved textbooks were provided in visual arts, music and theatre to help ensure standards-based instruction. While the lessons in the texts are linked to the language arts curriculum, integration is less of a priority than teaching the basic skills in each art discipline. The district is primarily aimed at keeping arts instruction within the

school day but it did apply for state funding to pay for the costs of a two-year afterschool visual arts program for 23 or 24 schools.

Access to arts instruction at the secondary level has seen improvement as well. With the hiring of additional specialists, music electives have increased at all schools. Two years ago there was one full band at Dominguez High School and a partial program at Compton High. With the transfer of a music specialist from the middle school level and the purchase of new instruments and uniforms, there are now marching bands at each of the three high schools as well as choir sections. Based on a student interest survey, music specialists are also to receive training in mariachi instruction at all secondary sites—expanding on existing programs at three schools. However, middle students receiving extra academic assistance may not be eligible to sign up for the music electives, simply because there are not enough periods in the school day and afterschool programs are not encouraged. An advanced visual arts class is now available at one high school and an animation program piloted at Compton is being extended to the other high schools in 2008-2009. Centennial High will offer a dance elective as well, in the newly remodeled dance space.

Students have also benefited from new opportunities to display or perform in the arts. District-wide exhibitions and performance events involved all district schools, including a school for adult learners. The school bands have marched during sports events and in civic parades. Visual arts students are now entering their artwork in local, state and national competitions and have won a number of awards. Secondary arts specialists reported increased invitations for their students to compete or perform, which they partly attribute to the advocacy efforts stemming from the *Arts for All* initiative.

Due to the progress made implementing the district arts plan, enthusiasm for arts education is reportedly beginning to snowball among staff and students. If the district can rely on its administrative advocates and community partnerships to raise the funding necessary to hire specialists in dance, theater and visual arts at the middle school level, and devise a way to teach dance basics at the elementary level, the realization of the vision for a comprehensive, standards-based arts program is within reach.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE OPPORTUNITIES

The following areas present possibilities for technical assistance from *Arts for All* staff:

- Ideas for funding sources
- Provide guidance in effective arts education website design and posting student work, whether written, in image, or a video format
- Set up on-line meetings and create information podcasts on pertinent topics
- Evaluation guidance
- Professional development guidance
- Student assessment guidance
- Research reports and articles that can be shared with Principals at administrative council meetings

Culver City Unified School District

2007-2008 student enrollment: 6,656

1 high school (grades 9-12)

1 middle school (grades 6-8)

5 elementary schools (grades K-5)

2 alternative schools¹²

DISTRICT CONTEXT

Culver City Unified School District has enjoyed a rich history of community partnership and planning for the arts prior to joining the *Arts for All* initiative. The City itself is an arts-rich community housing a number of entertainment industry corporations. This includes Sony Pictures Entertainment, which has provided financial and facilities support for the district for the past 14 years. One of the early programs funded by Sony was an afterschool high school arts academy that is still running strong today, with over 200 students attending courses in dance, digital media, various musical genres, theatre and visual arts.

Prior to 2003, all students in the district enjoyed some exposure to arts education, though it was not a sequential K-12 program. In addition to the Arts Academy, the high school offered classes in music and visual arts, with one Advanced Placement course in visual arts. Middle school electives were offered in music and visual arts. At the elementary level, an itinerant music specialist provided instruction for grades three through five at the five elementary schools. However, other art disciplines were left to the classroom teachers to cover at will, meaning instruction was sporadic and highly dependent on community arts programs brought to sites through PTA donations plus private foundation and government grant opportunities. Performing Tree, a regional broker of teaching artists, had also provided periodic artist-in-residency programs. A parent volunteer with a background in communication and lesson plan writing trained 25 other parent docents to deliver visual arts lessons in one elementary school. After two years of the docent program, the Music Center of Los Angeles County and Sony partnered with the school's PTA to develop a plan to transform it into an arts-centered campus.

When the *Arts for All* initiative was announced in 2003, Culver City was simultaneously experiencing a renaissance in arts and cultural appreciation and was highly motivated to partner with the district to enhance the artistic education of its next generation of citizens and workers. In addition, district administrators and arts partners recognized that the *Arts for All* initiative afforded a unique opportunity to bring systematic arts education to every elementary student in every school. On this basis, the district joined the first group of Vanguard Districts and commenced planning in the 2003-2004 school year.

¹² Alternative schools are addressed in the LACOE case study.

STRATEGIC PLANNING FOR ARTS EDUCATION

A 21-member Community Art Team (CAT team) was formed to develop the district arts plan. The CAT team contained broad representation by teachers, the assistant superintendent of education services, a school board member, PTA parents, the Culver City Education Foundation, community arts providers, municipal staff, corporate partners and *Arts for All* planning coach. The team later reported that the variety of stakeholder perspectives challenged the group's thinking and generated a more inclusive plan that might not have happened if it had been created exclusively by district personnel. Five years later, the CAT team has retained a high percentage of its original members, reportedly because they appreciate the opportunity to be included in the district's decision-making process regarding arts education. The district currently pays teachers an incentive stipend for their participation, although that policy has not been entirely effective in ensuring attendance at meetings. More typically, members attend because they are passionate about the arts and are committed to the implementation of the arts plan.

During the planning year, the CAT team was successful in gaining school board approval for a district arts education policy and three-year arts plan. In an effort to ensure success, a parent volunteer who co-chaired the CAT team created a short video capturing supportive

comments from various stakeholders around the district. There was strong attendance by advocates at the school board meeting when the video was shown and a brief speech was given by the other CAT team co-chair, the assistant superintendent of education services. Despite some initial concern over committing to a course of action the district might not be able to uphold, the plan was passed.

“In order for the District to truly embrace a fully integrated arts curriculum, it will take a deeper commitment on all levels.”

The three-year Culver City District arts plan consisted of three strategic directions that combined key elements of a quality arts program: 1) curriculum, instruction and professional development, 2) fundraising, resources and

facilities, and 3) communication, partnerships and advocacy. The district wanted to strengthen the feeder system into high school and college, so chose to improve arts instruction from the ground up, starting with the K-5 elementary schools.

IMPLEMENTING THE ARTS PLAN

Culver City USD began rolling out their plan during the 2004-2005 school year with a focus on visual arts. The teachers' edition of a state-approved visual arts textbook (SRA) was first piloted and then purchased for all K-5 teachers in the five elementary schools. The intent was that teachers would use the books to plan ways to integrate visual arts with other curricula being taught.

In the spring of 2005, the district hired a parent volunteer as a part-time arts consultant, (a.k.a. coordinator) to oversee the implementation of the arts plan. She was the acting co-chair of the CAT team and had organized the earlier elementary school docent program. When the visual arts textbooks were distributed, the new arts coordinator organized and delivered professional development for all teachers in using the new resources for integrated instruction.

In an effort to integrate visual arts instruction with digital technology learning, the middle school had been adopting pieces of an on-line animation curriculum over several years. To date, Sony and the Culver City Education Foundation have paid all the costs, including professional development for the teachers. Plans have now been made to extend the program into the high school in 2008-2009. Two other externally funded programs have increased student access to visual arts instruction. As the arts-centered elementary school had already created a vision of arts instruction that suited their needs prior to the *Arts for All* initiative, the school booster club moved forward on plans to hire an independent, non-credentialed artist teacher to work with all grades. Steps are currently being taken by the arts coordinator to strengthen communication with the school's PTA to ensure the school's actions are supported and remain aligned with district-wide goals in arts education. In the spring of 2007, teaching artists were contracted to initiate a visual arts program at the continuation high school. Partially funded by Sony, the program provides continuation students the opportunity to link with professional artists, cultural centers, and communities to imagine, produce and present new work.

In terms of music education, the high school music specialists had reported during the *Arts for All* planning stage that incoming freshmen were under-prepared for high school music courses. This created a challenge in preparing the band and orchestra to perform well in public or in interschool festivals and contests. They also pointed out that enabling students to perform in public—whether for civic events or private functions—could provide additional funding for the music program. To improve the quality and content of instruction, the district arts coordinator, music specialists and five classroom teachers who are also school choir directors have since begun to meet and develop a rigorous, standards-based K-12 music curriculum. Community arts providers have brought programs into the K-3 grades. The itinerant specialist continues to teach the recorder to all third graders and maintains the pullout instrumental program for fourth and fifth graders. In addition, new musical instruments were purchased for all district schools through private grants.

With Culver City USD's need to raise funds to implement the arts plan and its emphasis on building strong community partnerships, the arts coordinator has worked hard to secure program grants that provide for direct instruction opportunities for students. These grants have been used to pay for teaching artist residencies and art field trips to supplement the music and visual arts instruction received from their teachers and the itinerant music specialist. Some examples of the district's instructional arts partners include Wolf Trap, Los Angeles Symphonic Jazz Orchestra, American Ballet Theatre, and the Music Center of Los Angeles County.

The district also began hosting a professional development program for teaching artists through a partnership with the Los Angeles County Arts Commission, the Music Center

Los Angeles of Los Angeles County and the Pasadena Armory for the Arts. In this program, working artists train in live classrooms to become teaching artists and learn to develop and implement standards-based, integrated arts lessons. The program brings residencies to four of the elementary schools and the middle school. A new component is currently being designed to train classroom teachers how to collaborate more effectively with the teaching artists to ensure rich artistic and educational learning experiences are provided for students.

In an effort to improve student access to theatre education, during the 2007-2008 school year elementary teachers attended an 80-minute training in theatre education integrated with the language arts curriculum.

Somewhat unusual among the Vanguard Districts, Culver City has a strong focus on job and college preparedness through the afterschool High School Arts Academy. In addition to the ongoing partnership with Santa Monica College and Sony, a stronger alliance has developed with West Los Angeles Community College, which provides pay for interested high school arts specialists and college faculties to expand the course offerings. Students who take dual enrollment courses can transfer credits to the colleges. This has created a win-win partnership that benefits the afterschool program, the two colleges and the students interested in enrolling. Recently, the district approved an official transcript for Academy students that acknowledges their afterschool efforts and facilitates the transfer of credits.

The strategic emphasis in the district arts plan changes after three years of elementary level adoption to the broader recognition of the need to reinforce the entire K-12 arts curriculum, to advocate more strongly for parent and PTA support, and to collaborate more effectively across all school levels in sharing instructional ideas and developing new ways of attracting funding and student learning opportunities. Plans are currently in the works for a district-wide arts festival and a website for the visual and performing arts. In addition, the coordinator's position has been upgraded to full-time consultant.

MECHANISMS AND CHALLENGES

Culver City USD has made considerable strides in improving the visual arts and music education programs offered to elementary students during the school day. It has also succeeded in leveraging its community partnerships to offer numerous supplemental learning experiences for students that both reinforce and expand upon classroom lessons in the arts. However, the district's past policies and practices in arts education delivery have presented some challenges. With such strong and reliable support from community partners, the district has been able to sustain at least a modicum of arts instruction without a designated arts budget, which counters the goal of the *Arts for All* initiative to encourage a five percent arts budget commitment in every participating district. A list of other mechanisms and challenges that have affected the implementation rate are as follows:

Mechanisms of Change

- *Sustained commitment.* The majority of the original 21 CAT team members are still involved in the effort to bring more arts education to students.
- *Locally known arts coordinator.* The former parent volunteer has been creating arts programming for the district for over seven years.
- *Enduring community partnerships.* The district has benefited from the long-term material support of Sony and has a new fully committed partner in the civic administration.
- *Arts-centered community.* The district is situated in a city that highly values and promotes the arts as part of its identity.
- *Self-sustaining Arts Academy.* While the district may not be currently able to hire enough secondary arts specialists to teach all four art disciplines during the school day, a range of arts learning opportunities is available afterschool to all students, with numerous classes that qualify as college credits.

Challenges to Change

- *Teacher buy-in.* Teachers are busy and need to be convinced to attend professional development sessions for arts education, apply for available arts grants and take instructional risks in the classroom by teaching in and through the arts.
- *Fundraising competitiveness.* An old pattern of leaving it up to each school to raise its own funding for arts education has inadvertently created conflicts and potential inequities when more than one school has competed for the same large grant opportunities.
- *Lack of accountability.* Currently, there is no accountability for teaching the visual and performing arts standards at each grade level, which contradicts efforts to strengthen the K-12 learning continuum.
- *Limited time.* While teachers may be interested in teaching the arts, finding sufficient time in the school day to plan and provide instruction is reported as an ongoing challenge.
- *Adoption timelines.* As in other districts, the time it takes to train teachers to provide quality instruction in a given art discipline was underestimated, slowing the entire implementation process.
- *Facility maintenance.* The district eliminated a facilities manager position and the high school auditorium has since fallen into a state of disrepair that makes it unusable as a performance space.
- *Parent skepticism.* One principal reported that not all parents have fully understood the value of arts education for their students, leading to the need for a larger advocacy effort.

OUTCOMES

One of the notable results of the *Arts for All* initiative at Culver City is the deepening of its collaborative relationship with local arts partners who also bought into the vision of making

sequential instruction available to all students. This was a change in course from focusing on building afterschool programming and a single arts-focused elementary school, although those programs continue to serve a purpose and have been strengthened during the implementation process as well. Other results are listed in the following paragraphs.

Content

Standards-based Curriculum. Culver City USD purchased the teacher’s edition of SRA visual arts textbooks for all K-5 schools in 2004-2005. A committee of teachers and specialists developed a basic K-12, sequential teaching curriculum consisting of several textbook lessons per grade level containing authentic cross-curricular connections. An instrumental music curriculum for grades 4-12 had been in place for a number of years but did not reflect the new California Music Standards, nor was it well sequenced from one school level to the next. Five music-oriented elementary teachers and secondary music specialists began meeting for the first time in 2007-2008 to discuss updating and strengthening the K-12 curriculum. The group made progress in aligning their instruction and identifying important gaps in student learning. K-12 dance, theatre, and digital media curricula and instruction are considered important elements of the district arts program but have not been fully developed.

Pedagogy. As is true of other districts, the approach to arts instruction varies according to who is doing the teaching. Arts specialists at all three school levels primarily focus on teaching their respective art disciplines as discrete subjects, although integration techniques are increasingly being used at the middle and elementary levels. Classroom teachers at the elementary school are expected to integrate visual arts and theatre-based lessons with other subject areas—primarily language arts—and have received training for this. Arts providers, such as Wolf Trap artists, teach both an art discipline and work with primary classroom teachers on integration. At the high school level, arts specialists teach art courses as discrete subjects. Dance programs have not been established at any school level during the school day, though dance classes do take place after school. The Art Academy courses are primarily taught by the credentialed high school arts specialists or by community college faculty in a dual course enrollment agreement.

Student Assessment. Accountability is a recognized area of weakness in arts instruction. The committee intends to address the topic as teachers grow increasingly accustomed to providing arts experiences.

Professional Development. In past years, many of the elementary teachers have had access to professional development opportunities offered by community arts providers, but they were never tied to a curriculum. Since joining *Arts for All*, all elementary teachers have received training in the use of SRA visual arts textbooks. All kindergarten teachers have also received training in integrating music instruction through Wolf Trap. In 2008-2009, first through third grade teachers will receive training in integrating music into their curriculum. In addition, some elementary and middle school teachers are also scheduled to receive training on integration and teaching artists collaborations through the Los Angeles County Arts Commission’s Artist Training Program.

The arts coordinator noted that an increase in arts instruction was observable immediately following a training session; however, it tended to dissipate over time. She is currently leading an effort to develop a new training regimen for the elementary teachers to reinforce their use of the new materials and to find more ways to integrate visual arts and music instruction into their teaching regimen. The main idea is to help teachers feel more comfortable with arts instruction through exploring the natural links between art teaching and good, theory-based teaching in general.

Infrastructure

Program Administration. A full time arts coordinator was hired in 2005 to direct the CAT team and lead implementation efforts. While the coordinator handles much of the planning and implementation work alone, other CAT team members have worked together on large projects, such as curriculum adoption. Arts specialists—especially at the high school level—fulfill other administrative duties in the arts, particularly in conjunction with the afterschool Arts Academy. A former marketing and communications professional with long experience in writing visual arts lesson plans, the arts coordinator is currently working towards a master’s degree in education with an emphasis on leadership in restoring arts education.

Personnel. Hiring additional arts personnel has not been a priority in the district arts plan to date.

Facilities and Equipment. Equipment, instruments and supplies have been purchased to support the improvements in visual arts and music instruction and distributed to schools on an equitable basis. The CAT team is currently gathering data on facilities and other material needs, and has set aside state legislative block grant money to be used once priorities for spending have been determined. Currently, all elementary schools use their cafeterias for performance instruction – whether in music or theatre. Two of the elementary schools have designated visual arts rooms, but the others do not have them. The district has one performance hall, but it is currently in a state of disrepair. It is centrally located between several campuses and could become a tremendous resource for the performing arts if it were remodeled.

Partnerships and Collaborations. Pursuing and extending existing community partnerships has been a cornerstone of the district arts plan. The Culver City USD is situated in a community with numerous potential arts partners and has taken advantage of those resources over the years to secure programs for students as well as for training teachers. Since joining *Arts for All* the number of instructional partnerships has increased due to the efforts of the arts coordinator and other CAT team members that either represent a community arts provider or have access to one. Some examples of arts partners include the Culver City Education Foundation, Culver City municipality, Sony Entertainment, Wolf Trap, LA Symphonic Jazz Orchestra, American Ballet Theatre, Center Theater Group, the Actor’s Gang and the Music Center of Los Angeles County.

Sustainability

Policy. A school board policy for the visual and performing arts was passed in 2004. The policy is exemplary in its stated intention to ensure all students have access to sufficient resources for a balanced arts program and is adaptable to the needs at each site. It also acknowledges the need for consistent instruction time, credentialed staff, community artists, and ongoing professional development. Unique among the Vanguard art education policies, it states that professional development could be offered by credentialed staff, paraprofessionals, community artists, parents and others who might increase the quality of arts instruction. This statement recognizes the breadth of resources the district has used over the years to provide training for teachers.

Funding. Culver City USD currently pays the salaries of arts specialists at the secondary level. Without an arts education budget, per se, all other funding has been raised from external sources such as the legislative block grants, Art for All funding, grant awards from state and local sources, and PTAs and booster clubs. The arts coordinator worked with a grant writer in 2005 and successfully raised funds for musical instruments and digital equipment. Some of the state legislative money was used for K-3 music professional development and art supplies. Plans are still in development for the best use of some of the funding, while the ongoing arts education block grant was partly used to cover the coordinator's salary and administrative costs. In 2008-2009, the CAT team plans to meet with stakeholders both inside and outside the district to brainstorm new fundraising ideas.

Evaluation. According to the CAT team, one important element missing from their district arts plan is accountability. While they can provide training and materials for teachers to use, they have yet to set up a system to track the quality or consistency of instruction. Currently, it is perceived that program evaluation will eventually be tied to teacher training, as the arts coordinator is tracking attendance.

Communication and Advocacy. The CAT team has met monthly in an effort to keep members informed of the status of implementation activities. Teacher members then passed on information to other staff they worked with. However, this system did not ensure that every teacher in the school system was learning about opportunities in the arts nor did it provide a way to keep parents informed. To broaden communication and to encourage more cross-site collaboration, the district is currently creating a visual and performing arts website and is planning a district-wide festival to show parents the results of the arts program. The district has also been successful in getting articles and press releases about the arts program into the local papers, which helps to keep parents informed.

District Leadership. While district administrators and school board members have been supportive in passing an arts education policy and approving teacher stipends for those attending the bimonthly CAT team meetings, their decisions and directives do not always align with the implementation strategies proposed in the arts plan. The primary reasons appear to be shortfalls in the annual budget, the need to invest in meeting yearly academic targets in literacy and mathematics, and a lack of full awareness about how decisions that

involve relatively small program cuts impede the progress of the arts plan overall. For example, a preliminary proposal to save money by deleting one planning hour of a high school specialist threatened to shut down the student transcripts record system for the afterschool arts academy.

CHANGES IN EQUITABLE ACCESS TO ARTS EDUCATION

In terms of increasing student access to arts education, the CAT team has made its most evident gains through increasing visual arts and music learning opportunities at the elementary school level. Due to the fact that all teachers have received state-approved textbooks, supplies and training in visual arts, all students are presumed to have an increased amount of arts instruction, although it has yet to be documented. In fact, with visual arts at the elementary schools, visual arts and animation at the middle school, and visual arts/Advance Placement classes offered at the high school level, it would be possible to claim most students now have some access to standards-based visual arts training during the school day.

Student access to music education has doubled with the community arts providers bringing in learning experiences for K-3 students. The music specialist continues to teach third graders basic instrumentation training (recorder) and offer optional instrumental music in grades 4 and 5. Each school continues to offer optional choir as well. All elementary students K-5 now have the opportunity to receive music education on a weekly basis. In addition, musical instruments were purchased for use by all schools through private grants, benefiting the music programs at the secondary level as well.

Due in large part to the tenacity of the CAT team in pursuing community support and utilizing State funding, all elementary and secondary schools have also enlarged their afterschool programs, in terms of art clubs and performance groups (dance or theatre), all have acquired more digital media equipment (i.e., cameras, LCD projectors, animation resources and training), and all have noted an increase in field trips or artist residency opportunities. At the high school level, an increase in the number of afterschool arts academy courses offered through the West LA Community College partnership led to more student productions and exhibitions, arts-based assemblies and a new dance room.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE OPPORTUNITIES

The arts coordinator verified eight areas in which the district could potentially benefit from technical assistance efforts:

- District and principal arts leadership training
- Lobbying for a district arts education budget
- Creating learning communities within schools to sustain arts instruction
- Writing a school bond initiative to upgrade performance facilities

- Program evaluation
- Student assessment
- Developing a long-range professional development plan
- Transitioning the arts coordinator job from consultant to full time employee

Hacienda La Puente Unified School District

2007-2008 student enrollment: 21,997

4 high schools (grades 9-12)

6 middle schools (grades 6-8 and 7-8)

24 elementary schools (grades K-5, K-6, and K-8)

3 alternative schools¹³

DISTRICT CONTEXT

Hacienda La Puente has long been a divided school district where the teaching of the arts is concerned, particularly at the elementary level. Historically, the schools with principals and active parent teacher associations (PTAs) that valued the arts have been able to fill some of the gaps in arts education for their students, while other schools and their students have missed out. Some Title II schools have received federal money that could potentially be applied to arts education, while inequities have been created in other schools. These factors, along with declining enrollment and No Child Left Behind (NCLB Law) prioritizing, have resulted in a patchwork of uneven arts education offerings at the elementary level.

At the secondary level, the arts are taught by credentialed specialists—though course offerings are inconsistent across schools. In 2003 high school arts specialists reported that their programs were in danger of failing because students were unprepared when they transitioned from middle school and were not signing up for art courses. To address these problems, arts supporters on the Hacienda La Puente School Board pushed for the establishment of a committee to restore the arts to all students, beginning at the elementary level. Upon the recommendation of the school board, a retired principal was hired on a part-time consulting basis to act as the committee chair, or arts point person. Simultaneously, community advocates established the Visual and Performing Arts Foundation to fiscally support the expansion of arts education in the district. The launch of the *Arts for All* initiative was viewed as a timely opportunity to help the arts committee achieve its goal, so the district joined in 2004.

*“A plan is very,
very critical.”*

STRATEGIC PLANNING FOR ARTS EDUCATION

To create a comprehensive plan for arts education, the district arts committee expanded to include 37 diverse stakeholders and was renamed the Community Arts Team (CAT). Members included Hacienda La Puente District administrators, arts specialists, classroom teachers, parents and community arts providers. A notable feature of this team was that approximately half of the members were teachers, including some with no background in

¹³ Alternative schools are addressed in the LACOE case study.

the arts. These teachers brought a broader educational perspective to discussions that made the team more aware of the challenges to implementation.

Working with an *Arts for All* coach, the CAT team created a five-year master plan based on the seven core elements of comprehensive arts education programs: standards-based curriculum, professional development, arts administration and teaching personnel, student assessment and program evaluation, partnerships and collaborations, resources and facilities, and funding. The plan focused primarily on reviving arts instruction at the elementary school level in order to strengthen the feeder system into the middle and high school levels. While the district's intention was to eventually hire arts specialists at the elementary level, this was not immediately possible owing to declining enrollment and a constricted budget. In the meantime, the plan stipulated that all K-5 teachers be provided with standards-based materials and receive training in arts-integrated teaching methods. In this way, the arts would not be perceived as competing for instructional time with other subject areas.

During the planning year, the CAT team also gained approval for a school board policy for arts education, conducted an inventory of school arts resources, and created a system for rolling out the arts plan district-wide. This system involved identifying a visual and performing arts representative at each elementary school to act as a communication liaison with the arts point person.

IMPLEMENTING THE ARTS PLAN

After the year of planning and preparation the CAT team received board approval to initiate an ambitious implementation cycle. One art discipline was to be adopted each year, for four years. Theoretically, an adoption was to begin with integration training for teacher

representatives from each elementary school. These lead teachers would then pass on their new understandings to the rest of the staff at their respective schools. In addition, a group of six lead teachers were to receive training in writing standards-based lessons in the chosen discipline; develop a sequential, K-5 curriculum and make it available to all schools via the district website. Legislative block grant money and other district funds were set aside to pay for training for the lead teachers, curriculum writing and compensation for the part-time arts point person.

“With each little bit that we move, a lot of students are getting exposure. We may not be as far along as we like, but the opportunities are more equitable, so it is all worth it.”

The first art discipline selected for adoption was visual art. Lead teachers from 21 of the 24 elementary schools attended a series of The California Arts Project (TCAP) trainings in visual arts instruction during the summer and fall of 2005. During the spring of 2006, six of these teachers wrote sample lessons for each grade level. Simultaneously, all K-5 classroom teachers received

professional development in the supplemental *Art Masters* program, which was offered through a community arts provider from San Diego County. The program, funded by the Auen Foundation, the Los Angeles County Supervisor and the district Visual and Performing Arts Foundation consisted of an art history-based curriculum, art supplies and instructional training for classroom teachers. Functioning as a community partnership, the program invited senior citizens into the classroom to volunteer as instructional aids.

Discovering that their plan to adopt one art discipline per year was too ambitious, Hacienda La Puente spent two years on visual arts instruction. Teachers reportedly still wanted more time to learn about and practice instructional techniques. Even so, the CAT team wanted to move ahead with music, which was next in line for full adoption. An initial plan to equip every K-5 classroom with general music textbooks was derailed by a shortfall in funding. Although every elementary principal was willing to participate, the school board gave teachers the right to vote, to ensure they were not overwhelmed by other classroom responsibilities. Sixteen of 24 schools (66%) agreed to go forward with K-3 adoption. Others declined, stating conflicting priorities, such as concurrent adoptions in other state-tested subject areas. Meanwhile teachers from the 16 participating schools received music textbooks, related materials and training in their use.

In the third cycle (2007-2008), teachers were given the opportunity to receive TCAP training in theatre, and nine teachers participated. Examples of integrated lessons were written by cadres of lead teachers for music and theatre and are currently being vetted by the district curriculum director. Once approved, they will be posted on the district website along with the visual arts lessons that were previously written. Plans for further theatre and dance education workshops are currently on hold awaiting funding decisions and increased teacher buy-in.

As a result of the training teachers received at the elementary level and a greater sense of collaboration across schools, a district-wide visual arts show was organized in 2008. The juried exhibition was sponsored by the Hacienda La Puente Visual and Performing Arts Foundation and attracted broad participation by students from all grades, K-12. Currently, an effort is underway to revitalize a high school band festival, to provide students with increased opportunities to compete and strive for excellence in music. The Foundation lost momentum when an early plan to build the endowment through voluntary automatic paycheck deductions from teachers failed to materialize. The board of directors is currently rethinking its mission and its exclusive focus on arts education.

Inspired by the success of the Beverly Hills Unified School District, the arts point person initiated a district-wide summer arts camp in 2008 as a novel approach to combining arts instruction and fundraising. The objectives of the arts camp were to provide arts instruction for students, supplement pay of credentialed arts specialists who were teaching the courses, and, as the program established itself over time, apply any proceeds from enrollment fees toward other district arts programs. Enrollment information was being distributed at the time of the writing of this report.

Since 2004, the arts point person and individual teachers have also written grants and received additional funding from the County Supervisor, private foundations, and other

community sources. Hacienda La Puente Unified School District has funded the secondary arts specialist salaries, partial costs of professional development and district art events. Taking advantage of a matching grant from the *Arts for All* Pooled Fund, the district has also paid half of the point person's consulting fee. Based on a school board decision, all funding from the state legislature block grants were dispersed to schools to be spent as they saw fit.

MECHANISMS AND CHALLENGES

One of the driving motivations behind Hacienda La Puente's arts plan was the desire to provide more equitable access to arts instruction for all students. While significant steps have been taken to increase access, the inequality of arts instruction continues to represent a formidable challenge. Some of the other mechanisms and challenges that have impacted the implementation process are as follows:

Mechanisms for Change

- *Arts point person.* As a former principal with a demonstrated passion for the arts, the acting coordinator has much experience in school administration, district politics and arts program implementation.
- *Emphasis on K-12 sequencing.* Arts specialists are now collaborating across schools for the first time to facilitate student transitions from one school level to the next and share instructional ideas.
- *Long-term professional development plan.* While the five-year arts plan is rolling out more slowly than expected, implementation is proceeding in an organized and documented manner, which affords opportunities to reflect on progress and respond to changing circumstances in the district.
- *Collaborative funding.* Hacienda La Puente Unified School District and multiple community entities have provided funding to implement the arts plan. In addition, the arts point person has been instrumental in creating new opportunities for raising funds, such as the district's new summer arts camp.

The main challenges to implementation come from internal district policies and practices. They are listed as follows:

Challenges of Change

- *Academic pressure.* Schools are perceived to be at the breaking point due to No Child Left Behind (NCLB) compliance pressures, creating a difficult climate for adopting new curriculum areas.
- *Overruling the arts plan.* Recommendations on critical implementation strategies have been overruled in favor of other district priorities. For example, the objectives of the plan were ignored in the approval of unfettered distribution of earmarked state funds.

- *Local control.* Allowing teachers authority over whether to adopt arts curricula derailed efforts to ensure equity in access to instruction in all art disciplines.
- *Communication systems.* Constrained access to website posting and inadequate Internet technology support have prevented the sharing of lesson plans and district arts news.
- *Voluntary training.* Since most professional development workshops must be scheduled outside the school day, attendance is unenforceable and inevitably affects equity in instruction.

OUTCOMES

The CAT team reported that one of the most notable effects of the *Arts for All* initiative has been the dramatic improvement in the visibility and valuing of arts education across the district. Due in large part to the arts point person's efforts to follow through on implementing the arts plan, discussions and decision-making around arts education are now embedded activities from the school board level to the classroom. Areas where other notable changes in the quality of the arts program have occurred are listed below:

Content

Standards-based Curriculum. The elementary schools have adopted the supplemental K-5 *Art Masters* program and all teachers have received the curriculum, materials and instructional training to implement it. Two-thirds of schools have adopted a state-approved K-3 music textbook curriculum with materials and training for teachers. In addition, standards-based, integrated lesson plans were written by teams of lead teachers for elementary music, theatre and visual arts. These are to be posted on the district website after they are reviewed and approved by the director of curriculum.

Pedagogy. Integration is the principal delivery mode for all arts instruction at the elementary level. Classroom teachers are the main instructors at this level, with some assistance provided through artist-in-residency programs. Credentialed arts specialists are employed at the secondary level, though the programs are patchwork at best. At the middle schools, where little has changed relative to the district arts plan, all have band specialists, but just one of six sites has a visual arts specialist. Theatre is not an elective per se, but is sometimes taught during language arts. Dance is sometimes available through physical education afterschool clubs. At the high school level, most sites offer electives in theatre, chorus, band and visual arts.

“The District was like a sleeping giant, where the arts were concerned. The Arts for All project has woken them all up.”

Student Assessment. Measuring student outcomes is not a current priority in the district arts plan, though it has been discussed and recommended during professional development workshops. One K-8 elementary school hosted a training workshop on arts assessment and theatre integration that was well received. The CAT team is considering extending the training to other sites as funding permits.

Professional Development. Designated lead teachers from the 24 elementary schools attended a series of TCAP workshops in visual arts (21 teachers) and music (18) and theatre (9) over a three-year period. Theoretically, they were to return to their schools and provide coaching for other teachers on staff. The success of this process has not been documented. In addition, as mentioned above, all elementary teachers received training in the use of *Art Masters*, a supplemental visual arts curriculum. All teachers who adopted the K-3 music program will receive training in how to use those resources as well. It was found that teachers needed more training than was initially planned to gain the necessary confidence to use the new arts curricula materials to best effect.

Infrastructure

Program Administration. The plan is currently being implemented under the direction of a part-time point person who heads the community CAT team. A former principal, she has headed the CAT team since the inception of the planning process in 2004. Despite the considerable size of Hacienda La Puente, the school board will not approve the creation of a full-time arts coordinator position when teachers are currently being laid off due to declining enrollment counts.

Personnel. One choral teacher was added at the high school level, and several middle school band teachers received pay increases to assist with music instruction at select elementary sites. In general, adding arts personnel is not an immediate priority in the district arts plan because of the focus on elementary schools, where classroom teachers currently provide all arts instruction.

Facilities and Equipment. When a district arts education inventory was completed in 2005, schools were sent the legislative block grant funds to spend as they saw fit so the status of facilities and equipment across schools will need to be re-inventoried at some point.

Partnerships and Collaborations. With the immediate focus on curriculum adoption and teacher training in the arts, partnerships and collaborations are considered on a case-by-case basis when opportunities arise. Instructional partnerships have included The California Arts Project, and the Music Center of Los Angeles County and the Los Angeles County Office of Education. Financial supporters have included *Arts for All*, Los Angeles County Supervisor Don Knabe (pork belly funds), Auen Foundation, Toyota Corporation and the Hacienda La Puente Visual and Performing Arts Foundation.

Sustainability

Policy. An arts education policy was approved by the board of education in 2005. The policy states that Hacienda La Puente is committed to implementing and maintaining a comprehensive curriculum that includes sequential, standards-based arts education for all students in all grades.

It specifically refers to the goals of consistent instructional time, qualified and credentialed staff, standards-based professional development, quality instruction through integration and ongoing support of teachers. In addressing budget issues, the policy commits to maintaining equitable funding for art disciplines and for students served; encouraging community partnerships and, when necessary, making equitable funding reductions across all parts of the school curriculum rather than eliminating specific programs.

Funding. Money for arts education comes from a number of sources. Since 2004, the district has paid for arts personnel salaries and professional development matches. Though documentation was not available for review, it is assumed the on-time state legislative funds were spent on materials and supplies as intended. The ongoing block grant is distributed to schools as a supplemental arts budget. Local foundations and advocacy groups (e.g., PTA and booster clubs) have donated funding toward school arts events and curriculum materials. In the past year, funding sources have declined due to the reorganization of the Visual and Performing Arts Foundation and the relocation of the Auen Foundation to another community.

The Chief Financial Officer retains authority over the district arts education budget. Upon request, the arts point person is provided with a report of expenditures in a given year, but is not provided with a set budget for planning. She is able to make requests for purchases based on the district arts plan and the recommendations of the CAT team, but cannot be confident they will be approved.

Evaluation. Beyond conducting the initial resource needs assessment in 2005, program evaluation has not been a priority in the arts plan as the district is still early in the implementation process.

Communication and Advocacy. District-wide communication about arts education news happens primarily through word-of-mouth from the point person to school-level arts representatives and through e-mails to Hacienda La Puente administrators. Professional development opportunities and school events are posted in the district on-line calendar, but it is difficult to access. Currently, there is no newsletter or webpage for the visual and performance arts, and efforts to post lesson plans have been hampered by other Internet technology priorities and the lack of adequate support staff. In terms of advocating to the board of education, the point person is occasionally allowed ten minutes to present a progress report at their monthly leadership meetings and request approval on action items related to the district arts plans.

District Leadership. While the district superintendent and board of education originally spearheaded the drive to restore the arts to the elementary classroom, they have, on occasion, made policy decisions based on other critical curriculum projects. These decisions have slowed the implementation of the arts plan, thereby delaying progress in providing equitable student access to arts instruction. The CAT team perceives this dilemma as an unintended consequence of fiscally conscious decision-making in a challenging environment affected by declining enrollment, a state budget crisis, reactions to the NCLB mandates and a sensitivity to site-based control.

CHANGES IN EQUITABLE ACCESS TO ARTS EDUCATION

The CAT team at Hacienda La Puente USD began with high hopes of implementing its sweeping plan for district-wide adoption of curricula and instruction in all four art disciplines within four years. The first cycle of adoption went well with all elementary teachers receiving materials and training in visual arts instruction. Since then, the implementation timeline has faltered due to the expense of equitably serving 24 schools at once and to leadership decisions that placed the impetus for adoption on busy classroom teachers.

While the decisions were meant to uphold local control and ensure teachers were not overwhelmed by multiple curriculum adoptions in any given year, the consequence has been continued inequities in the district infrastructure for arts education delivery: One hundred percent of schools adopted a visual arts curriculum and received training in its use, 66 percent of elementary schools moved forward with music education and 38 percent with theatre education.

According to the Increased Student Access Survey (see Appendix B), indicators that point to a change in students' access to a quality arts education at the elementary level include increased classroom instruction, increased materials, increased integration with technology, and increased access for special populations, increased number of teachers providing instruction and increased student performances and exhibits. Slight improvements to these same areas were reported at the secondary level as well. Factors that have not changed appreciatively since 2004 are access to assemblies and field trips, number of artist residencies, available arts facilities, afterschool programs and arts personnel.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE OPPORTUNITIES

The Hacienda La Puente arts point person identified eight potential topics for further technical assistance support:

- District leadership training
- School board advocacy
- Professional development funding

- Dance training for physical education specialists and classroom teachers
- Teacher training on how to integrate arts into the school day
- Website assistance in posting arts lessons
- Student assessment
- Program evaluation

Los Angeles County Office of Education School District

2007-2008 student enrollment: 10,109

67 alternative education sites (6 PAU¹⁴ + 2 specialized high schools)

19 juvenile court and community schools (10 PAU)

23 special education sites (11 PAU)

DISTRICT CONTEXT

The Los Angeles County Office of Education (LACOE) provides support and services for more than 100 alternative education sites, juvenile court and community schools, and special education programs across the county. These sites are organized in 27 Principal Administrative Units (PAU), which comprise the LACOE classrooms. Prior to the *Arts for All* initiative, arts instruction in the three divisions was heavily reliant on the uneven skills of classroom teachers and scattered teaching artist residencies. This patchwork approach meant some students had little, if any access to a standards-based education in the arts. LACOE joined *Arts for All* in 2004 to improve the status of arts education for all of its schools dedicated to serving students who are at-risk or have special needs.

STRATEGIC PLANNING FOR ARTS EDUCATION

With the assistance of an *Arts for All* coach, LACOE established a Community Art Team (CAT) and created a multi-year plan based on essential elements of a quality arts program. These included standards-based curriculum, instruction and methodology, student assessment, professional development, program administration and personnel, partnerships and collaboration, funding, resources and facilities, and program evaluation. The plan identified three initial areas for strategic action: arts education policy, professional development and budget. As part of the planning work, the committee prepared a board of education policy for arts education, which was adopted in August 2004. The policy specifically stated, "Arts education, with its four domains dance, music, theatre and visual arts is part of the core academic curriculum. All students shall have equal access to this curriculum." It also stated that arts education is to be comprehensive, sequential, standards-based, assessment driven and taught by qualified and /or credentialed teachers. Finally, it acknowledged the LACOE's support of the need to fund quality materials and facilities, teacher training and an arts coordinator.

During the 2005-2006 school year an arts coordinator was hired and planning continued in the areas of curriculum and instruction. After reviewing the state art standards, the CAT team identified the most essential, or "power" standards they wanted teachers to cover when teaching the four art disciplines. Next, a subcommittee of teachers, leaders from The California Arts Project (TCAP) and LACOE administrators designed a five-year professional development program. The goal was to train both non-arts classroom teachers

¹⁴ Principal Administrative Units

and arts specialists to teach the California arts content standards, and to develop integrated instructional units relevant to the needs of their special population students. Another professional development goal was to build the capacity of select lead teachers to provide ongoing support for arts education within each LACOE school.

IMPLEMENTING THE ARTS PLAN

During the summer of 2006, 18 lead teachers—including arts specialists and general teachers—attended a TCAP professional development institute with a focus on teaching standards-based arts education. This was repeated in 2007. During the school year, community artists were also hired for residencies at several sites as funding and teacher interest allowed.

In early 2007, a change in staff resulted in a new arts coordinator being hired. This was an administrative post with the official title of Senior Program Specialist. For purposes of clarity and consistency, we will continue to use the term arts coordinator when referring to this position. The arts coordinator currently reports to the director of curriculum, reflecting the current focus of her work. Beyond her duties in the arts, she assists the director in developing curricula in other subject areas so must balance the two workloads. The arts coordinator holds a doctorate degree and has had prior experience as a K-8 school music specialist, district music mentor and district arts coordinator. Her stated priority has been to bring quality, integrated arts instruction to the students in all three LACOE school divisions.

The arts coordinator was new to LACOE and recognized that if she wanted to motivate the teachers to get interested in arts education, she needed to gain their trust. To do so, she spent months visiting schools and gaining an understanding of the needs of both teachers and students. She discovered that although the district arts plan had the goal of providing access to comprehensive, sequential arts instruction for all students, the model was not adequately sensitive to the realities of the special population of students served.

For example, she found that students who were placed in juvenile court schools and other alternative education schools have a high mobility rate. Particularly in the court system, it is not uncommon for students to be registered for as little as a day or a week, so planning a sequential course of study for them is not possible. In addition, these students are greatly restricted in the types of art materials they have access to due to personal safety concerns. The arts coordinator also realized that the students with special needs, ranging in age from 4 to 22, are not cognitively able to follow a sequential, standards-based course of study. These factors affected her approach to organizing professional development workshops and designing curriculum for the sites.

Initially, the arts coordinator organized professional development workshops in the visual arts for both specialists and classroom teachers. These sessions were held at various regional locations to make it more convenient for teachers to attend. However, they were usually scheduled during the school day and it proved difficult for teachers to attend due to a lack

of available qualified substitute teachers and other instructional priorities. In one instance, when 1,000 teachers were notified of a TCAP training institute, just eight responded.

Due to these circumstances, during the 2007-2008 school year the arts coordinator shifted her focus to fulfilling individual site requests. This primarily involved modeling effective classroom instruction. She also developed guides for instruction to help teachers gain a better understanding of terminology and techniques in the visual arts.

As many teachers were unable to attend trainings and learn to write their own arts lessons as originally planned, the arts coordinator prepared 30 weeks of visual arts lesson packets that secondary teachers could use at the alternative education sites and juvenile court schools. The teachers at these sites were especially interested in using integrated instruction to help students meet graduation requirements for two subject areas while taking one extended course. To address this need, the arts coordinator inserted visual arts standards into required learning guides for other subjects, effectively ensuring they would be taught through integration. For transient students at these schools, she developed one-week intensive courses in visual arts that would fulfill requirements for a week's credit. In addition, she identified visual arts instructional materials that could be used with students from a wide range of ability in all three schooling divisions. These included teacher editions, student textbooks and related supplies. Every PAU bought at least one set of visual arts instructional materials and planned to share across sites.

The one-time state legislative money was made available to schools once they had turned in an expenditure plan to the arts coordinator. However, she had little involvement in the development of the plans, unless schools specifically asked for guidance. Due to a miscommunication in how the funding was to be distributed, less than half the schools turned in an arts plan by the budget deadline in March 2008. The arts coordinator was unsure about the future availability of the unclaimed funds. While provided with occasional expense reports reflecting her work, she was not privy to overall budget figures for arts education and was unaware if additional funds had been raised from other sources prior to her date of employment.

In addition to her work in improving the relevancy of arts curricula and professional development, the arts coordinator worked with a part-time administrative assistant during 2007-2008 to create a quarterly e-mail newsletter for teachers announcing training opportunities, teaching tips in the arts and news of student activities at the various schools. The e-newsletter was attractive and personable in tone and was well received by teachers, who were unaware of arts activities going on in other schools. Due to the state budget crisis, the administrative assistant was transferred to another department in the summer of 2008, jeopardizing the future of the e-newsletter. As the economic downturn also left the arts coordinator vulnerable to job loss, implementation plans for the 2008-2009 school year had not been determined at the time this report was written.

MECHANISMS AND CHALLENGES

The following paragraphs contain a brief description of identified mechanisms that have supported the implementation of the district arts plan along with several challenges that have slowed the effort. Two factors were viewed as being central to increasing student access to quality arts instruction: educational policies that pressured teachers to learn about and offer arts instruction and the pro-active, engaging personality of the arts coordinator who was primarily responsible for implementation. The obstacles were primarily financial and bureaucratic in nature.

Mechanisms for Change

- *College entrance requirements.* As the secondary teachers wanted their students to meet all graduation requirements and also be eligible for college, they were grateful for the arts coordinator's assistance in developing integrated lesson plans and modeling effective arts instruction.
- *A simplified list of state arts standards.* An abbreviated list of key visual arts content standards was perceived to be less daunting by teachers and was more easily displayed on posters in LACOE classrooms as a silent reminder of the need to teach them.
- *Hands-on arts coordinator.* As a former teacher, the coordinator had an extensive background in teaching and lesson preparation. By providing training sessions, lesson plans, instructional modeling and continuous communication, she gave teachers the support they needed to teach standards-based visual arts more often.
- *Coordinator as administrator.* Since the arts coordinator had an administrative position, she enjoyed greater access to and cooperation with principals and teachers. She was also able to select curriculum materials and approve school arts expenditures, which expedited implementation in these areas.
- *Revised approach to curriculum design.* Understanding that a rigid approach to sequential instruction would not work with these special student populations, the customization of lesson plans for the various divisions was fundamental to their increased use.
- *Attractive and personable e-newsletter.* Sent on a quarterly basis, the appearance and tone of the visual arts e-newsletter gained the interest of teachers and became a catalyst for engagement and sharing.

Challenges of Change

- *Experienced arts leadership.* Each special schooling division would benefit from having its own arts leader, experienced in working with the particular needs of the students within, such as students with disabilities or severe behavioral issues.
- *Gaining teacher cooperation.* Since the arts coordinator was new to the district, she felt it was necessary to spend an entire year visiting sites to become familiar with their issues around arts education and win the trust and cooperation of teachers.

- *Teacher participation.* Efforts to stage large scale training workshops resulted in poor attendance due to other instructional priorities and the inability of teachers to leave their classes during the day.
- *Resource restrictions.* Due to safety measures, students were greatly restricted in the type of arts activities they were permitted to explore, hence the singular focus on visual arts at present.
- *Loss of administrative assistant.* The transfer of the arts administrative assistant left the coordinator as the sole arts education resource for over 100 sites.
- *Internal policies.* Due to LACOE hierarchy rules, the arts coordinator was not privy to the amount of funding earmarked for arts education, which made it difficult to plan ahead. Technically, she could only propose ideas and wait on approval.
- *Excessive paperwork.* The amount of time spent completing and filing application forms for all three schooling divisions inhibited the arts coordinator from taking advantage of available grants.

OUTCOMES

The *Arts for All* initiative and the implementation of the district arts plan have created a new level of awareness and excitement about arts education in the three LACOE school divisions. In great part, this was due to the hands-on efforts of the arts coordinator to provide relevant and user-friendly instructional resources and training sessions for teachers. While the number of teachers whose instructional practice has changed has not yet been tracked, the arts coordinator reported that the teachers she worked with over the past 18 months have more materials at hand and have expressed more confidence in their ability to offer standards-based instruction. Other outcomes specific to program quality and equitable access are as follows:

Content

Standards-based Curriculum. The focus of the district arts plan is currently on increasing quality visual arts instruction in the three divisions, primarily at the secondary level. All textbooks and lesson plans adopted since the district joined *Arts for All* in 2004 are aligned with California Visual Arts Content Standards. Efforts to integrate visual arts instruction with other subject areas are based on meeting standards in both areas. While a sequential curriculum is not an immediate goal, it is hoped that as more standards-based learning opportunities are provided to students at all grade levels, a relevant continuum of instruction that is sensitive to the learning abilities of LACOE students will emerge. Curricula for dance, music and theatre have been tabled for the immediate future.

Pedagogy. In terms of instructional approach, visual art is taught as a discrete topic and also integrated with other areas of the curriculum. As more teachers attend professional development workshops, watch the arts coordinator model effective instruction and use available standards-based instructional packets and lessons, the likelihood that students will

receive a more equitable and quality education in the arts will increase. Community-based teaching artists trained in the state standards are also used to model instruction and provide rigorous learning experiences for students during grant-funded residencies.

Student Assessment. Documenting and assessing student work has not been a priority to date, as teachers are still getting accustomed to offering visual arts instruction. However, assessment tools are being considered for implementation in the 2009-2010 school year.

Professional Development. One of the unique features of the 2004 LACOE arts plan was a five-year professional development model designed to provide standards-based training for arts specialists and classroom teachers. The plan called for an initial focus on visual arts adoption, followed by music, then dance or theatre. While the plan was admirable in its objectives to strengthen both the quality and level of access to instruction, it did not account for the challenges teachers faced in being able to attend training sessions nor the safety restrictions on student access to specific kinds of arts equipment and learning opportunities. Once these factors were identified, steps were taken by school division administrators to release teachers and expand learning opportunities for students whenever possible. The arts coordinator currently designs professional development workshops with input from LACOE visual arts specialists. The workshops are taught either by the arts coordinator (in the case of standards, curriculum, or early childhood training) or by locally contracted teaching artists.

Infrastructure

Program Administration. LACOE hired a new arts coordinator in mid 2006-2007. With experience in music education, a doctorate in education, credentials as an administrator and a warm and caring personality, she was able to gain the trust and cooperation of principals and teachers in implementing the district arts plan. This ability to work efficiently with the administrative team that provides oversight for the three school divisions helped maintain her position in the face of budget reductions. An administrative assistant was added in 2007-2008 to help with paperwork and communication. As was previously mentioned, this position was eliminated when the LACOE general budget was reduced in Spring 2008.

Personnel. Increasing the number of school arts specialists has not been a priority in the district arts plan to date.

Facilities and Equipment. The opportunity to purchase supplies and equipment was made available through the one-time grant from the state legislature. At the writing of this report, less than half the schools had completed the plan of action necessary to gain access to the funds. This was partly due to a miscommunication about the process, and partly due to filing deadlines that put a halt to the process until the fall of 2008. In terms of arts facilities, most sites are not equipped to provide instruction in dance and instrumental music, although one of the juvenile court community schools installed a dance floor with public funds. Instead, most available funding was spent on visual arts teaching materials and professional development.

Partnerships and Collaborations. In the past two years, the arts coordinator has established or maintained effective instructional partnerships with the Music Center of Los Angeles County, Bluepalm, Theatre of Hearts, Angels Gate Cultural Center and Bott Design with additional funding provided through LACOE and through an *Arts for All* Pooled Fund grant. The primary challenge in this area for the arts coordinator is locating teaching artists with the unique skills and sensitivity to work with students with severe behavioral issues and other special needs. Another obstacle is dealing with excessive paperwork caused by having to write separate proposals for each school division when applying to the same funding source.

Sustainability

Policy. LACOE adopted an arts education policy in 2004 recognizing the arts as part of the core academic curriculum. The policy set forth the board of education's commitment to a five-to-seven year budgeted plan, standards-based resources, professional development for arts instructors (specialists and generalists), and an arts program coordinator. While simply written, the policy effectively clarified strategic directions for the CAT team and has provided a framework for implementation over the past two years.

Funding. The district has provided salaries for arts specialists, the arts coordinator and the (temporary) administrative assistant, and has paid for instructional materials. The funding from the state legislature block grant for the arts has covered other costs for arts education. These funds have been allotted according to the student enrollment count at each school. Principals retain full control over the use of these funds, within set parameters. While less than half had turned in plans by the spring cut-off deadline in 2008, the requests for funding typically covered materials, equipment, professional development or teaching artist residencies. Currently, the arts coordinator is investigating an option to charge fees for teachers from outside the LACOE divisions who would like to attend district-sponsored professional development sessions in order to generate income to support further implementation.

Evaluation. Informal, observation-based evaluation was undertaken by the arts coordinator in 2007 to gain feedback on the relevance of the district arts plan and accompanying technical assistance efforts. In addition, attendance at professional development sessions has been documented, which will provide a basis for understanding changes in instructional practices over time.

Communication and Advocacy. With more than 100 sites included in the three school divisions, communication has been a challenge. The 2007 launch of an e-newsletter for visual and performing arts announcements, events, and the sharing of ideas has been an effective means for informing sites of available arts resources and of activities underway in the three divisions. The e-newsletter reportedly helped teachers develop a sense of being part of a larger instructional movement in the arts and promoted deeper engagement. External advocacy for arts instruction has been primarily coordinated through another administrative unit within LACOE.

District Leadership. While LACOE administrators oversee the art education budget and approve salaries for arts personnel, it is primarily the work of the arts coordinator to implement the district arts plan, given available resources and circumstances. The school division administrators and principals have been responsive and collaborative in supporting her efforts to provide training and curriculum materials at the classroom level. In May 2008, the arts coordinator reported she has gained more authority and flexibility as she has become accustomed to working in the system and has earned the trust of her colleagues.

CHANGES IN EQUITABLE ACCESS TO ARTS EDUCATION

Improving the level of student access to quality arts instruction has been the clear goal of the district arts plan and the focus of the arts coordinator's work since January 2007. Based primarily on the combination of providing professional development and new lesson materials, the arts coordinator reported students in all three school divisions received more hours of instruction in the visual arts, however this has not yet been documented. Her efforts in modeling instructional techniques were thought to have also assisted teachers in providing more rigorous, integrated instruction to a wider range of students.

The new and revised curriculum packets, along with the desire to help students meet high school graduation and college entrance requirements in the arts, also meant more teachers were offering arts instruction at both the alternative high schools and juvenile court school sites. These changes met the criteria for improved access for special population students as well, as all LACOE District students fall under this designation. In addition, available funding allowed for some students with special needs to take field trips to art venues for the first time.

Beyond advances due to improved curriculum and standards-based teacher training, there was also an increase in community artist residencies during 2007-2008. Six teaching artists worked at both the special education and juvenile school sites in an effort to increase student exposure to quality arts instruction. The residencies were funded through the legislative arts block grant and two matching grants from the *Arts for All* Pooled Fund.

Since the arts coordinator's involvement with schools is currently based on individual site requests, increasing the equity of student access to quality arts instruction across the three LACOE divisions is not a strong focus at this stage of implementation. However, the requests from schools are increasing in number, indicating that the desire to offer arts instruction is growing. In addition, the arts coordinator's efforts to serve these special populations is addressing the discrepancy between the level of arts instruction offered by traditional K-12 schools in the region and the level offered at LACOE schools.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE OPPORTUNITIES

The arts coordinator identified five areas where continued guidance from *Arts for All* would be particularly useful:

- Creating professional development guidelines
- Obtaining clerical assistance, particularly with Internet applications
- Permitting the use of the *Arts for All* logo on district letterhead would add more clout to requests for cooperation from administrators, teachers, or external agencies
- Offering grant opportunities that do not require matching funds
- Providing ongoing support for the arts coordinator from a knowledgeable implementation coach.

Norwalk-La Mirada Unified School District

2007-2008 student enrollment: 22,092

3 high schools (grades 9-12)

7 middle schools (grades 6-8)

18 elementary (grades K-5)

1 alternative school¹⁵

DISTRICT CONTEXT

The Norwalk-La Mirada Unified School District joined the *Arts for All* initiative in 2003-2004 after being encouraged to do so by the district superintendent. She wanted to look into providing students with a more comprehensive education in the arts. At the time, elementary level art instruction was available to students based on the particular motivation of school principals, the know-how of classroom teachers, or sporadic instructional partnerships with community arts providers. In six schools (33%) for instance, the Parent Teacher Associations (PTA) funded a program called *Meet the Masters*, which brought visual arts lessons into the K-5 classrooms four times a year.

While the secondary schools offered elective courses in at least three of the four major art disciplines the number and types of arts classes were not consistent across schools. The high schools offered visual arts, drama and music instruction as electives; one offered an advanced dance course. The seven middle schools each offered music as an elective taught by a music specialist. Other art classes were taught by classroom teachers with prior training in an art discipline. Hence, two middle schools offered visual arts, three offered theatre, and two offered dance during the school day. One school also offered an afterschool class in jazz and another in theatre. Two key factors that affected the size of the district arts program were a general lack of funding and the prevailing belief that the limited amount of instruction provided by Norwalk-La Mirada was not so different from other urban California districts.

“I think that after Proposition 13, a great many districts started to think that not having the arts in the elementary [schools], for instance, is the norm, and even acceptable.”

STRATEGIC PLANNING FOR ARTS EDUCATION

The original district art team was named the District Arts Council (a.k.a. CAT team) and consisted primarily of school staff—including arts specialists, classroom teachers and principals. The superintendent was also on the team, and continues to play a central role in

¹⁵ Alternative schools are addressed in the LACOE case study.

approving and modifying the plan. Working with two *Arts for All* planning coaches, the district completed the initial draft of the arts education plan in 2004.

The major elements in the plan included the commonly identified factors of a quality arts program: standards based instruction, leadership infrastructure, highly-qualified teachers, professional development for leadership and instructors, community involvement, sustaining funding, facilities and resource infrastructure and a system for oversight and revision. Curriculum development was not on this list, as it was left to schools to decide which art disciplines and curricula they proposed to teach. A school board policy for arts education was also passed. It acknowledged critical factors in delivering a standards-based education and stated the district's commitment to the development and implementation of an arts plan, based on available funding.

At the start of the 2004-2005 school year, the district was heavily focused on increasing literacy rates across all schools. The superintendent asked the CAT team to revise the district arts plan to demonstrate how instruction in the arts could be used to improve literacy. The district was also involved in an arts integration planning effort with the Galef Institute, a regional arts education non-profit, and the superintendent wanted the two arts education initiatives to work in tandem. As a result, literary coaches were asked to join the CAT team and another year of planning commenced. The revision was complete in the spring of 2005.

IMPLEMENTING THE ARTS PLAN

Although the arts plan was approved, it was put on hold during the 2005-2006 school year due to the lack of an implementation budget. The district was experiencing declining enrollment and did not have funds available to hire an arts coordinator, even when a matching grant was offered through the *Arts for All* Pooled Fund. Then, when money became available through the California state legislature block grants in the spring of 2007, the superintendent acknowledged the enormous time and energy that had already gone into planning and gave the green light for implementation to begin.

At that point, the district promoted a high school music specialist to the position of arts coordinator with the designation of Teacher on Special Assignment (TOSA). Her job was to support schools in increasing student access to quality instruction. The CAT team decided to focus on the elementary level first in order to build a strong K-12 program from the ground up. It was also the level most lacking in arts instruction.

The next step was to conduct a survey of teachers' attitudes toward arts education. The results reportedly indicated that teachers believed arts instruction was important and that they were not resistant to a district-sponsored arts plan. A needs assessment was also completed and the results showed the elementary schools were at different places in terms of resources and amount of instruction offered. Rather than impose a one-size-fits-all plan, schools were allowed to write their own plan for providing standards-based arts instruction. The schools could focus on whatever art disciplines they were comfortable

adopting. To build the capacity of school and district administrators to oversee arts education programs, the arts coordinator designed and led a five-session arts leadership academy during the 2007-2008 school year. The objective was to familiarize the participants with learning experiences in the arts, the California Visual and Performing Arts (VAPA) Standards, available district resources for the arts, site level planning, collaboration and advocacy.

Concurrently, the coordinator had been helping schools create their plans using a district planning template. Each plan contained objectives, strategies, evaluation methods, and a budget for how the school proposed to use its enrollment-based allotment of the one-time state legislative funding. By the spring of 2008, 40 percent of schools had completed plans and received funds, primarily for supplies and musical instruments. Other principals waited to complete the arts leadership academy before writing their plan. A few schools opted to take another year to research arts education before deciding what their entry point would be. In general, those schools that had some arts education programming prior to the *Arts for All* initiative were able to create a plan more quickly than those who were starting from scratch. In addition, secondary school arts specialists used the California VAPA Frameworks to redesign courses to reflect the state content standards and meet college entrance requirements.

The next steps for the Norwalk-La Mirada District will be to provide afterschool professional development for elementary teachers in the four major art disciplines. The arts coordinator is working with individual schools to help them choose textbooks or fashion other forms of site-specific curricula (i.e., sample standards-based lesson plans per grade level).

MECHANISMS AND CHALLENGES

An analysis of data collected during a focus group interview with representatives of the CAT team revealed a number of mechanisms that appeared to facilitate the arts education planning and implement process. Obstacles that appear to slow or confound the process were identified as well. A listing of these factors is provided below:

Mechanisms for Change

- *Arts awareness.* Through the *Arts for All* initiative, the school board and superintendent became aware of what other districts were offering in arts education in comparison to their own. The data gathered from the needs assessment process helped them realize their deficits were not necessarily shared across the spectrum of schools regionally.
- *Strategic planning.* Taking the time for planning helped create leverage with the superintendent and school board to gain approval for implementation.
- *Curriculum alignment.* Dovetailing the district arts plan with the literacy initiative and the Galef Institute's integration plan is intended to minimize conflicts in instructional objectives.

- *Hiring an arts coordinator.* The addition of a full-time arts supervisor ensured that focused time and energy was given to the planning and implementation process.
- *Teacher buy-in.* The district-wide teacher survey confirmed buy-in for the arts plan and gave the CAT team the confidence to move forward with implementation decisions.
- *State funding.* Funds from the California legislature for arts education enabled the district to begin implementation of the plan.
- *Arts leadership training.* An arts leadership academy provided district and school administrators with a better understanding of the artistic experience, the instructional content, and advocacy methods they could employ in furthering arts education.

Challenges of Change

- *Declining enrollment.* A drop in enrollment inhibits the ability of the school to hire arts specialists or in other ways dedicate more funding for arts education
- *Few fiscal partnerships.* A lack of community funding partners beyond the Norwalk La Mirada Education Foundation and the *Arts for All* Pooled Fund.
- *Local control.* A climate of school-based control means the arts coordinator must help implement and evaluate 29 unique arts plans. This also makes it difficult to provide professional development to support the objectives of the individual school plans.
- *Variations in offerings.* The decision to let schools decide which art disciplines they want to teach and which curricula they want to use could potentially extend inequities in student access to comprehensive arts instruction.
- *Sparse facilities.* The district lacks performance facilities at most schools.

OUTCOMES

By taking the time for careful planning, building leadership capacity and being responsive to teachers' input, the Norwalk-La Mirada Unified School District has experienced a fundamental change in perception about the role of arts education in the district. According to the arts coordinator, the arts are now viewed as an essential part of the school curriculum. This changed was noted as critical to the continued implementation of the overall district arts plan and the individual school plans. Others areas where changes occurred are listed below, in accordance with the elements of a quality arts education program.

Content

Standards-based Curriculum. A yearlong pilot of state-approved visual arts and music textbooks was completed in spring 2008. The arts coordinator is currently assisting individual schools decide on textbook adoption or helping them develop their own

curricula. While meeting state standards was not what drove schools to join *Arts for All* originally, their chosen curricula will ultimately reflect the statewide content standards in the arts. At the secondary level, specialists have used the California State VAPA Frameworks and Content Standards to revise course syllabi. Courses have also been created to meet the state college entrance requirements.

Pedagogy. In time, all arts instruction at the high school and middle school levels is intended to be taught by credentialed specialists and at the elementary level, by classroom teachers. The district's central focus on increasing literacy rates will lead to elementary arts instruction that is integrated into language arts whenever possible, addressing content standards in both areas.

Student Assessment. At the elementary level, techniques in student assessment are considered a core part of teacher training and curriculum design in the arts. Currently, students are graded on whether they demonstrate comprehension of lesson objectives rather than the quality of what they create. Students receive a number rating on their report cards. This assessment system is currently under review. At the secondary level, students receive letter grades based on performance standards and completed visual arts projects.

Professional Development. In the Norwalk-La Mirada District, professional development started with the arts leadership academy for district and school administrators to improve their ability to provide oversight in subjects in which many have little knowledge or experience. All principals attended five sessions during the 2007-2008 year. A second after-school training academy is being organized for the 2008-2009 year to provide all elementary teachers the opportunity to learn about integrated instruction in their choice of art disciplines. A teacher survey indicated more teachers are comfortable beginning with visual arts or music rather than with dance or theatre. Attendance is expected to be voluntary and teachers will be paid, unless the ongoing legislative block grant funding is reduced.

Infrastructure

Program Administration. A district music specialist who was active on the planning team was promoted to full time arts coordinator in the spring of 2007. Currently, her work is focused on providing planning and implementation support for the elementary and middle schools. This includes coordinating professional development opportunities, helping to design plans and writing school level grants.

Personnel. Increasing the number of arts specialists in the district is not a priority at this time.

Facilities and Equipment. Currently, theatre is taught in regular classrooms and dance is taught in the school multi-purpose room. Reportedly there are no performance spaces in the schools with the exception of one high school auditorium that is in need of repair and upgrades. There is a performing arts center in the community, but the rental fee is

prohibitive at \$5,000 per event. Efforts to pursue facility upgrades have gone unrewarded to date. CAT team members view the passage of a school bond issue as a possible solution. But since a facilities bond was approved by voters within the last three years it is likely another bond issue will have to wait a while. As far as equipment is concerned, schools will be allowed to use their allotment of one-time state legislative funds for supplies, musical instruments or teacher training once they have turned in their expenditure plan for approval.

Partnerships and Collaborations. Currently, the district collaborates with four main community arts providers: Meet the Masters, which sends visual artists into schools using PTA or Title I funds; Cerritos Center for the Performing Art, which offers free dramatic and musical performances with related teacher in-service training; Music Center of Los Angeles County, which provides artist-in-residency programs; and La Mirada Symphony, which performs in its own concert hall and sends musicians to visit schools.

While external arts programs are offered to all schools, accessibility is based on instructional priorities and ability to pay. Two of the 18 elementary schools currently have externally provided music programs. At one school, the *In Harmony with Education Music Education* program developed by Boze Corporation demonstrates how music and science interrelate. Another school offers an extensive music program and is a member of the Music in Education National Consortium. The school is managed by a visionary principal who firmly believes that music instruction enhances academic performance in other subjects. Her school is currently involved in a research partnership with the New England Conservatory for Music, which provides funding for music instruction planning.

Sustainability

Policy. In 2004, a policy for arts education was approved by the school board that recognized the importance of the arts as an essential component of a quality education and as part of college preparation. The policy stipulated the development of a long-term plan that will provide for the implementation of standards-based instruction Pre-K through Grade 12 plus the ongoing review and development of arts education programs, as the district budget allows.

Funding. The district budget pays for the salaries of music and visual arts specialists at the secondary level and also funded the time for art members to meet and plan for two years. The ongoing block grant funding pays for the arts coordinator's salary and all other aspects of implementing the master arts plan. A grant from the *Arts for All* Pooled Fund covered one-third of the cost of an artist-in-residency program in five of 18 schools. The five residencies were used to explore aims of the district arts plan, including textbook adoption and language arts integration. While beneficial in providing the district with feedback on possible action steps, the residencies also forced administrators to consider the high expense of community partnerships.

Evaluation. Unique among the *Arts for All* Vanguard Districts is Norwalk-La Mirada's focus on evaluation and accountability as a fundamental piece of school-level arts education

planning and implementation. Data collection has not begun as many schools are still preparing their plans.

Communication and Advocacy. Each month, a district newsletter that includes a section written by the arts coordinator on visual and performing arts news is distributed to all school principals. She occasionally mails out other announcements, especially when there is positive news to share such as a performance event or a student award. School principals act as communication liaisons at the elementary and middle schools. Middle school music specialists are also included. The VAPA department chair is the communication contact at each high school.

District Leadership. The superintendent played an important role in the development of the district arts plan by attending planning meetings and setting guidelines for integrated instruction based on literacy goals. Another way her influence has been demonstrated is through controlling the distribution and use of the one-time state legislative funds by requiring schools to complete a standards-based arts education plan first. By attending the arts leadership academy presented by the arts coordinator, both district and school administrators are demonstrating their intention to support the implementation of the arts plan over time.

CHANGES IN EQUITABLE ACCESS TO ARTS INSTRUCTION

Since the district has spent much of the past five years in planning and waiting for funding, the CAT team had little to report in terms of increasing student access to a quality education in the arts. Regardless, the district has made important strides in creating an infrastructure that should well support an increase in student access to quality arts instruction in the next year or two.

It is worth summarizing the key elements of Norwalk-La Mirada's progress in this effort: Arts leadership training has been offered to all principals so they can share a common language and understanding of district objectives in the arts. Schools are developing instructional plans and looking at curriculum alternatives. Legislative dollars for supplies and instruments are being distributed equally according to school enrollment counts. Plans are underway for adding more electives at the middle school level. High school courses have been aligned with state content standards and college entrance requirements. Communication liaisons have been identified at every school and the arts coordinator provides regular news updates to all schools through newsletters and special announcements.

If the arts coordinator is able to hold schools accountable for turning in evaluation progress reports annually, and legislative block grant funding continues to be available to support the arts education roll out, the Norwalk-La Mirada District should be prepared to demonstrate measurable gains in providing all students with access to quality arts instruction.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE OPPORTUNITIES

Six potential areas for continued technical assistance from *Arts for All* were identified by the CAT team:

- Creating a financial plan for improving arts facilities in the district
- Student assessment practices
- Program evaluation measures
- Helping teachers who are already overwhelmed by classroom responsibilities balance arts instruction with other teaching duties
- Professional development guidance, in terms of identifying criteria for quality arts instruction
- Professional development opportunities for the arts coordinator and arts specialists with good ideas for arts integration across grade levels. It was suggested that each district could send a team for training.

Pasadena Unified School District

2007-2008 student enrollment: 20,905
3 high schools (grades 7-12 and 9-12)
3 middle schools (grades 6-8)
18 elementary schools (grades K- 5, K-6 and K-8)
9 alternative schools¹⁶

DISTRICT CONTEXT

Prior to 2003, Pasadena Unified School District had been working toward creating a K-8 magnet school in the arts, but those plans were abandoned when the *Arts for All* initiative was launched and a new administration embraced the idea of providing more equitable access to arts education for *all* students. The district employed arts specialists in visual arts and music at the secondary level and had a relatively strong music education program, but the arts were taught primarily by classroom teachers at the elementary level according to their own skill level and the encouragement of individual school administrators. Secondary music specialists in particular were worried about the collapse of their programs without a strong feeder system from the elementary level.

Pasadena is a city rich in arts organizations, many of which, prior to *Arts for All*, provided field trip opportunities, assembly programs or classroom residency experiences for district schools as grant money became available. At the time the *Arts for All* initiative was launched, the district and local arts organizations had already begun conversations about working together in new ways to ensure students received standards-based arts education, that teachers were trained to provide quality arts instruction, and that community artists were employed to their highest and best capacities. The *Arts for All* planning process was seen as a good fit to further this process and transform the intermittent nature of arts instruction—particularly at the elementary level—into a sequential, comprehensive K-12 program.

STRATEGIC PLANNING FOR ARTS EDUCATION

From the beginning, the planning team had strong, equal representation from the district and the community, and formed the district Art Team/Community Art Team, or DATCAT. The district members included school administrators, a school board member and secondary arts specialists, including one Teacher on Special Assignment who provided leadership during the planning phase. The Community members were arts providers, a Pasadena Education Foundation board member, a Pasadena Art Council member and an artist-parent. For purposes of this report, the planning team will be referred to simply as the CAT team.

¹⁶ Alternative schools are addressed in the LACOE case study.

Working with the assistance of an *Arts for All* planning coach, the CAT team prepared and submitted a ten-year master plan to the school board in the spring of 2004. As in other Vanguard Districts, the plan was based on essential elements of a quality arts program. Those elements were divided into three strategic groupings and designated to work committees for follow-through. They included: 1) Content: Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment, 2) Infrastructure: Professional development, Evaluation, Program Administration, and 3) Sustainability: Partnerships, Funding, Resources and Arts Awareness. The plan is presently being updated with the goal to identify relevant action steps for the next three years (2008-2009 through 2011-2012).

The district had previously passed a policy on arts education in 2001 stating support for the adoption of a comprehensive curriculum in the arts based on the visual and performing arts framework for California. It also acknowledged the importance of community instructional partners for students and a preference for utilizing arts-integrated instruction in all core subject areas. An addendum statement was approved in 2003, acknowledging the importance of weekly instructional time, credentialed teaching staff, an arts coordinator, community resources, facilities, and necessary supplies. It also noted the fundamental importance of ongoing professional development and directed the superintendent to develop an arts budget and provide for the review, evaluation and development of the Pasadena USD's arts education programs. These commitments provided the basis for and the leverage behind the district arts education plan.

IMPLEMENTING THE PLAN

Once the district arts plan was written and the work committees were formed, a number of key accomplishments were achieved between 2004 and 2006. In the area of instructional content, these included a decision to focus on improving elementary arts education during

the first phase of implementation, the researching of possible curriculum and instruction models, the adoption of the California Visual and Performing Arts Framework, the development and adoption of district art standards, and the writing of K-12 visual arts and music achievement benchmarks.

“I do think you have to be strategic and you have to figure out the right timing to do certain things....we always had to be very flexible.”

In the area of infrastructure, accomplishments included a professional development partnership with a newly hired city arts coordinator, a school-level assessment of arts education program quality, and the adoption of a school board policy and arts plan. In the area of program sustainability, the CAT team cataloged Pasadena's arts providers based on their educational services, established a one percent baseline district budget for the arts with a community match of one percent, created a list of plausible grant sources, inventoried all available arts

facilities and equipment, and hosted two district-wide events showcasing student work in the visual and performing arts as an advocacy measure. After completing the groundwork,

the CAT team narrowed its focus to impacting the quality of instruction and deepening the collaboration between the district and the city.

At this point, the team recognized they needed an administrator with diverse skills to move the arts plan forward. Given the work represented in the arts plan, the team hired a former non-profit executive director in 2006 with experience in fundraising, marketing, budgeting, education programming and event planning. While she had no prior teaching experience, she came from a theatre background and held a broad perspective of the benefits of learning in all four art disciplines. This new arts coordinator had to overcome two initial challenges. One was learning to function effectively in a district central office environment without a background in public education. This was complicated by a string of turnovers among senior administrators, meaning considerable time and energy had to be spent in rebuilding supportive relationships and defending the use of district funds to implement the arts plan.

The other challenge was transforming the dynamic among arts specialists from operating in relative isolation to working in a group and taking ownership of enacting the arts plan. It had been generally assumed that the arts coordinator would do all the work to ensure it was implemented. In addition, not all arts specialists were ready to give up their individual work styles. With the exception of some visual arts specialists, most had to be wooed to gain their trust and participation in the implementation process. By taking the time to get to know the existing arts specialists and community partners, the arts coordinator was eventually able to harness the participation of key stakeholders.

The arts coordinator also disbanded the work that had addressed the original strategic directions of content, infrastructure and program sustainability. As time went on, the educational partnership between the district and the City of Pasadena, the Foundation and the local arts providers was acknowledged as essential to sustaining the effort to realize the goal of equitable student access to quality arts instruction.

One of the goals of the district arts plan was that all K-5 students would receive 12 weeks of music instruction and 12 weeks of visual arts instruction each school year. To facilitate this, the CAT team purchased teachers' edition textbooks on visual arts and music for all elementary teachers in the fall of 2006. The one-time legislative block grant was used to pay for a year of training and mentoring. In addition, the district paid a consultant to create a special supplemental visual arts curriculum called, *My Masterpieces: Discovering Art in My Community*. This program matched community arts providers with specific grade levels, according to the district content standards to be taught. Beyond providing students with lessons that introduced them to significant original works of art, the program was designed to enable students to visit each

“The city also went through an arts planning process, so we had this communication between the District and the city. We decided we were going to be an egg with two yolks.”

of the major arts and cultural facilities in the city at least once during their elementary school years.

In 2007, the Pasadena USD arts program grew again when, as part of the plan, a middle school music teacher was promoted to district Music Coordinator and her responsibilities expanded to include supervising all school music specialists. The position was paid for partly through the ongoing legislative block grant funding and partly through the district personnel budget. As a supervisor, the music specialist schedules elementary music class rotations and distributes musical instruments, coordinates professional development workshops and organizes performance events, including the district-wide concerts. During 2008-2009, she will be preparing a plan for expanding the music program by strengthening the sequencing of instruction across school levels. This will ensure students obtain the skills they need to successfully transition into more demanding courses as they grow and, ultimately, revitalize the secondary music programs.

The arts coordinator intends to hire a district-level visual arts specialist during 2008-2009. Elementary theatre and dance instruction will be handled somewhat differently, at least in the short term, as there is no room in the schedule to teach these art disciplines as separate subjects like music and visual arts. Instead, the current plan is that theatre will be integrated with language arts instruction and dance will be offered during physical education or through afterschool programs.

MECHANISMS AND CHALLENGES

Perhaps the signature characteristic of the Pasadena story is the belief that the arts present an opportunity for direct civic participation in schools, and vice versa. In a city that values the arts and culture, the goal of the district-community collaboration is to help students develop an appreciation or passion for the arts, as they will become the next generation of civic leaders, business people, parents, arts audiences and creative artists. To this end, the arts coordinators from Pasadena USD and the City have worked closely in creating programming that serves the interests of all parties. While this partnership is central to the implementation of the Pasadena USD arts plan, other factors assist or impede progress. These are listed below as mechanisms and challenges of change:

Mechanisms of Change

- *Community expectations.* The community supports and values the arts and the expectation is that its schools will also.
- *Multitalented arts coordinator.* The arts coordinator's executive background and experience in non-profit arts and educational programming allows her to function well in numerous capacities.
- *Arts-experienced classroom teachers.* Between 25-30 percent of Pasadena USD's teaching core have background training in an art discipline.

- *A supportive school board.* Individual members are willing to take supportive actions even in the face of a small coalition of community opposition to arts education in the schools.
- *District and community art team co-chairs.* This partnership ensured a balance in power during the implementation process, and expanded their ability to gain the cooperation of others as needed.
- *Making goals visible through the arts plan.* An initial lack of interest shown by secondary music specialists was overcome when they realized there was the potential to develop a quality, sequential K-12 program.
- *Adequate funding to musical instruments.* Being able to purchase enough instruments to supply a district-wide K-12 music program was key to adoption and expansion.
- *Mandated weekly arts instruction.* Elementary teachers were encouraged to enlist in professional development workshops to fulfill the district mandate of one hour of arts instruction each week.

Challenges to Change

- *Open, fluid membership on the CAT team.* Too much flexibility in meeting attendance and membership meant that decision-making was slowed by the need to educate new members on preceding events and understandings.
- *Continual change in leadership.* Due to chronic turnover in high level administration, the district's governing structure has threatened to disrupt or slow implementation processes.
- *Conflicting priorities and administrative practices.* Internal policies and changes in day-to-day working practices created challenges in securing district-designated arts funding, as when funds were needed to carry over a year to cover larger curriculum purchases.
- *Lack of news media interest.* The local press has been critical of the school district, which made it difficult to showcase art events in the community newspaper.
- *Teacher buy-in.* Getting teachers to take ownership of the district arts plan remains a challenge, primarily because of their busy teaching schedules.
- *Excessive paperwork.* The arts coordinator would greatly benefit from an administrative assistant to keep up on paperwork for the arts program and for website updating.
- *Culture of local control.* In the Pasadena USD, each school historically operates as an independent entity, or an educational island. This caused a communication disconnect, as when a PTA president and another parent had wanted to try a new arts education initiative without knowing about the district arts plan or even thinking to check with the district arts coordinator.

OUTCOMES

Pasadena USD's strongest areas of arts program development are standards-based curriculum adoption and the maturing community partnerships with the City and its arts

providers. The CAT team made substantial progress in other aspects as well, as indicated below:

Content

Standards-based Curriculum. Prior to *Arts for All*, the district had identified key content standards in the four major art disciplines that Pasadena teachers would use to guide their instruction. Next, state-approved textbooks (SRA) in visual arts and music were reviewed, adopted, purchased and distributed to all K-6 elementary teachers, using the one-time legislative block grant funding. Outdated curricula for secondary visual arts and music were also revised to align with the key content standards. The result was a K-12 sequential learning system in both art disciplines. *My Masterpieces*, a supplemental visual arts curriculum that introduces K-6 students to the art and art facilities in the community was written by an arts consultant in 2007-2008. It will be piloted in four schools during 2007-2008. Music integration materials were purchased for the fifth and sixth grades, and general music textbooks were purchased for fourth grade. Plans to introduce dance and theatre curricula have not yet begun.

Pedagogy. Perhaps the most fundamental change attributed to the *Arts for All* initiative has been the realization by elementary teachers that the arts were henceforth to be considered part of the core curriculum, rather than used for enrichment. To confirm this perspective, the teachers were mandated to teach one hour of music for 12 weeks and one hour of visual arts for another 12. Grade level pacing guides were developed for the K-6 visual arts and music curricula. In addition, a concerted effort was made to ensure that classroom teachers and community artists collaboratively plan standards-based lessons instead of just accepting whatever the artists suggest.

The combined changes in curriculum materials, professional development, encouragement from the district's central office and new expectations of teaching artists has reportedly resulted in an increased interest and frequency of instruction across the district. The arts are treated as discrete subjects mostly, although some integration is supported at the upper elementary grades during fifth and sixth grade music and through making visual arts-literacy connections with the SRA textbooks. Music instruction has expanded from an upper elementary instrumental program to an inclusive, general music program for grades K-6. Students at the lower grades are now exposed to band instruments to build interest in the upper grade (Grades 4-6) instrumental program. Currently, dance and theatre instruction continue to be offered on a sporadic basis by teachers with the skills and confidence to do so.

Student Assessment. Arts assessments are embedded in select K-6 visual arts and music lessons from the adopted textbooks. No data have been collected on student outcomes to date. A performing arts talent identification tool used in New York City public schools and others was also piloted in coordination with the district's Gifted and Talented Program (GATE).

Professional Development. Once the visual arts and music curricula was adopted, K-5 elementary teachers and principals were offered a day of orientation training in their use. The training was provided by art teachers, community artists and textbook publisher representatives. Recognizing and responding to the need for additional professional development, the district pursued—and won—external grants specifically targeted to support professional development for visual arts, including a grant from the U.S. Department of Education. Trained coaches—who were mainly retired teachers—rotated to schools and supported classroom teachers in trying selected lessons from the textbooks with their students. Afterschool and in-service workshops were also offered to expand the number and type of visual arts lessons being taught. During the summers, the district arts coordinator and the city arts consultant host an annual arts institute for teachers and interested community members. An area of special focus within the institute is providing arts instruction for English language learners and students with special needs.

Infrastructure

Program Administration. The district hired a three-quarter-time arts coordinator with a theatre and non-profit administration background. The position is paid out of ongoing state block grant funding. The district arts coordinator is expected to carry the bulk of the workload at this time. One significant challenge faced by the coordinator is that, as a mid-level administrator, she is somewhat confined to making changes in arts curricula and instruction and has more difficulty affecting improvements in areas such as arts facilities or in district budgeting for arts education, which are under the authority of other administrative departments.

Personnel. A part-time district-level music coordinator position was restored in 2007-2008 and a part-time district visual arts coordinator will be hired in 2008-2009. Their roles are to help the district arts coordinator strengthen curriculum connections across school levels, support teachers in professional development and coordinate arts events. The arts coordinator was also promoted from external consultant to administrative staff.

Facilities and Equipment. Since 2005, musical instruments, curricula, arts supplies and related equipment have been purchased and delivered to all Pasadena USD schools. Sixty percent of these costs were paid for through the state block grant money and another 40 percent were paid for from school budgets. A district-wide musical instrument inventory was completed in 2007 and a new tracking system is being explored to prevent loss and ensure equitable access to resources. Individual schools are presently creating plans for a one-time facilities upgrade as part of a school bond measure under development.

Partnerships and Collaborations. While attracting community arts partners has not been difficult for Pasadena USD, creating functional instructional teams that best serve the students has taken some time. The CAT team had to re-define what the district wanted from its community collaborators. The local arts providers had to change their delivery model to better reflect instructional needs in the classroom rather than provide experiences based primarily on their own interests. In the past, individual schools contracted separately with community arts providers to teach aspects of the visual and performing arts. While

some of that activity continues, the district now has a listing of 23 vetted arts organizations that deliver sequenced instruction through the *My Masterpieces: Great Art in My Community* curriculum. The district has also held an art exhibition in coordination with the nearby Art Center College of Design.

Sustainability

Policy. Pasadena USD had a board policy for arts education prior to joining *Arts for All*, but the CAT team has since spearheaded three revisions to reflect the adoption of the 2004 California Visual and Performing Arts Framework as well as the school board's recognition of the arts as part of the core curriculum. With recent high turnover in district administration, the arts coordinator reported she was able to refer to the policy as a way to stop challenges over arts spending from newly hired leaders. Having the policy in place has also given the arts coordinator a stronger say on district issues, such as the designation of instructional minutes for the arts.

Funding. The majority of funding used for arts education since joining *Arts for All* has come from state block grants, the district general funds, resources gathered through the collaborative efforts of the City and Education Foundation and grants that were pursued and won. The one-time legislative block grant was used primarily for purchasing needed supplies, materials and equipment. The ongoing block grant has been spent on the arts coordinator's salary, the district-level music specialist, and professional development. The district has paid for secondary arts specialist salaries, art supplies and equipment and curriculum materials. The Pasadena Education Foundation has also worked with the arts coordinator in attracting numerous funding opportunities from private and public grant sources including VH1. It was also instrumental in raising funds for district-wide arts exhibitions and music festivals and provided matching funds for the U.S. Department of Education professional development grant through private donors. Pasadena USD also had lottery funding and film location fees that were earmarked for arts education.

Evaluation. Pasadena is notable among the Vanguard Districts in its focus on program evaluation during the early stages of implementation. The district has been collecting periodic evidence on changes in arts education program quality from school sites, which has provided data for administrative reflection. The CAT team also conducted a site-base assessment of available facilities and resources both within the district and with community arts providers. All of this information has informed planning and implementation decisions. Professional development workshops are regularly evaluated and a multiyear study of their coaching model for visual arts training is being initiated in 2008-2009. The supplemental visual arts curriculum, *My Masterpieces*, also has an evaluation component being developed. What the district currently lacks is a cohesive design for their overall evaluation process.

Communication and Advocacy. Communication between the arts coordinator and the schools is conducted primarily through distributed flyers, e-mail announcements and the district's on-line master calendar. An arts education website has been posted but is not currently used to its full potential due to the lack of staff hours needed for continual

update. In terms of external communication and advocacy efforts, Pasadena USD employs a communications director, however media relations are handled largely by the district arts education office as time allows. In addition the arts coordinator is occasionally invited to speak to local civic groups such as the Pasadena Arts Commission, the Women's Club and Soroptimists International about the importance of the arts in education and to solicit private donations for the district arts program.

Two of the most visible ways the district demonstrates the arts program's impact are the annual district-wide music festival and biennial art exhibition. These events are gaining wider community recognition each year, with over 3,000 people attending the *No Boundaries* exhibit at two neighboring cultural institutions, the Pasadena Museum of California and the Pacific Asia Museum last May. The CAT team promotes these events to send a message to the school community that arts education has regained some permanence in the public education process.

District Leadership. Perhaps the biggest challenge faced by the Pasadena USD arts program is the high turnover of senior level administrators in recent years. Relationships are constantly disrupted and when new leaders are hired, the resulting shift in internal policies and practices sometimes creates obstacles to getting things approved or accomplished. In addition, each new superintendent's budget review represents a potential threat to funding previously earmarked for arts education.

CHANGES IN INCREASED ACCESS TO ARTS EDUCATION

Pasadena USD has been primarily focused on improving access to arts education at the elementary level, which is where the greatest changes were reported. With the influx of state funding, the district was able to provide curriculum materials and professional development to support sequence instruction in visual arts and music at all 18 schools. The superintendent also mandated that one hour of instructional time a week be devoted to the arts, so, for the first time in recent history, all K-5 students were slated to receive instruction in both areas during 2007-2008.

As the state block grant funding was to be distributed across all schools, the secondary schools equally benefited from infusions of materials, instruments, equipment and supplies. Due to stronger partnerships with city arts providers and available grant funding through the *Arts for All* Pooled Fund and other sources, the number of assemblies, field trips and community artist residencies increased across most schools. Student exhibitions and performances were also on the rise with the reinstatement of the district-wide music festival and *No Boundaries* visual arts show. This increase was due, in large part, to having an arts coordinator available to help organize such events. The high school level also offered more arts classes due to increased Regional Occupation Program (ROP) offerings made possible through the Los Angeles County Office of Education.

Areas of access that had not received focused attention as of May 2008 are afterschool programming—though there have been some offerings at the elementary and high school

levels—the hiring of school level arts specialists, access to new facilities or improved space, and linking arts instruction with technology on a systematic or wide-spread basis.

Overall, the Pasadena USD CAT team has made promising strides in documenting the status of art education in district schools, building the capacity of elementary teachers to offer visual arts and music instruction, and enjoining the surrounding community’s enthusiastic support for arts education. Without having joined *Arts for All* and developing a master arts plan, the CAT team reported the district would probably not have hired an arts coordinator, revived their all-district festivals, adopted visual arts or music curricula, attracted VHI funding, or created the *My Masterpieces* program. Team members also stated the belief that equity in access to arts education would have been unlikely to have improved across the schools in any significant way, due to the historic pattern of site-based decision-making. Instead, Pasadena is well positioned to tackle its next great challenge: providing sequential dance and theatre education for all K-12 students.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE OPPORTUNITIES

The following list represents ways that *Arts for All* could continue to support the Pasadena Unified School District CAT team:

- Building school board relationships
- Training in working with school principals: how to prepare them for arts education, how to understand their needs as administrators, and how to collaboratively meet their needs.
- Guidance on determining quality criteria for professional development
- Grants that do not require matching funds
- Branding the district arts program for advocacy purposes
- A workshop in how to design and maximize the use of a district arts website
- Designing a streamlined, yet comprehensive program evaluation

Rosemead School District

2007-2008 student enrollment: 3,121

4 elementary schools (grades K-6)

1 middle school (grades 7-8)

DISTRICT CONTEXT

Rosemead School District is the smallest of the Vanguard Districts, consisting of four elementary schools and one middle school. The superintendent spearheaded the effort to join the *Arts for All* initiative with the support of the community. Notable among the districts that joined in 2003-2004, Rosemead sent two school board members to receive strategic planning training along with the assistant principal at the middle school, who, five years later, still assumes the role of arts point person along with his current responsibilities.

In 2003, no specialists were employed in Rosemead at the elementary level. Art lessons were taught by classroom teachers who had some interests or qualifications to do so. Visual arts and music were taught by credentialed specialists at the middle school, limited square dancing was taught by a professional caller and there was an afterschool drama club overseen by an English teacher. The neighboring high school fared better with seven arts specialists covering the four art disciplines in 25 art classes, many of which fulfilled the state university admission requirement in the arts. The biggest challenge the district faced was the lack of adequate funding to provide high-quality elementary level instruction in any of the art disciplines. Rosemead joined *Arts for All* seeking new opportunities to support the growth of its arts program.

STRATEGIC PLANNING FOR ARTS EDUCATION

The initial Community Art Team (CAT) consisted of 22 handpicked representatives from the school community including district administrators, the community liaison, classroom teachers, middle school arts specialists, a high school curriculum leader and arts specialists from the neighboring school district, city parks and recreation staff, a parent, the school board president and the school board clerk. Beyond desiring broad stakeholder representation on the committee, the key criterion for inviting individuals to join was a demonstrable passion for the arts. The involvement of school board members at subsequent planning meetings was interpreted as a demonstration of their buy-in for increasing arts instruction in the schools. The Rosemead administration reflected its commitment by paying for substitutes so teachers could attend the daylong monthly planning meetings.

*“Our main asset?
Hardworking people who
are devoted and dedicated
to doing what’s right for
kids and making kids
well-rounded. That’s
really important.”*

During the first school year, the CAT team worked with an *Arts for All* coach and complete a five-year district arts plan, created and passed a school board policy on arts education and completed an inventory of arts education resources template included in the California Department of Education (CDE) Arts Education Program Toolkit.¹⁷ The arts plan included fundamental components of a quality arts program: standards-based curriculum, instructional methodology, student assessment, partnerships, funding, resources and facilities, and professional development. Two elements that were notably missing were evaluation and communication. In an effort to ensure a sustained commitment to arts education, a key statement was included in the board policy: “As the arts are a core subject, in times of budget setbacks, the board maintains that reductions must be distributed equitably across subject areas, rather than eliminating any specific programs.” This commitment reportedly helped save the arts program when the district’s annual budget was later reduced due to declining enrollment.

The CDE Toolkit-based inventory extended to the nearest high school in the neighboring district in order to align a sequential K-12 arts program. A benefit of the school-by-school inventory was that once the data were compiled, the CAT team was able to base its planning decisions on available resources and realistic ideas on how to improve equity in students’ access to arts instruction. The findings indicated the need for better facilities for theatre and visual arts, more equipment and supplies for all four major art disciplines, a sequential, standards-based K-12 curriculum and professional development for the elementary classroom teachers.

IMPLEMENTING THE ARTS PLAN

At the completion of planning, the configuration of the CAT team changed as implementation committees were formed around three strategic directions: curriculum, professional development, and funding. The first step toward implementation was partnering with The California Arts Project (TCAP) to provide introductory training on standards-based teaching in the four art disciplines. This effort, in turn, provided the five schools with insights on creating individual arts plans that included an arts budget based on their annual allotment of the legislative block grant funds. The district also provided schools with discretionary funds for arts education. When formulating their plan, schools used the district arts plan as a guide and then made independent decisions about how they would proceed and what resources they needed.

During the 2005-2006 school year the curriculum subcommittee identified essential standards for each of the art disciplines by selecting a manageable number from among the California Visual and Performing Arts Content Standards. With the goal to first increase arts instruction at the elementary schools, the middle school visual arts and music specialists wrote sample lesson plans to be taught at each grade level and provided classroom teachers with training in using them.

¹⁷ See description at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/pd/ca/vp/vapaguidance.asp>.

When the California legislature approved the one-time allocation for arts education, Rosemead adhered to its district arts plan and used the money to purchase visual arts and music curricula in the form of state-approved textbooks, supplemental reference libraries and musical instruments for the 2006-2007 school year. The CAT team took care to synchronize arts instruction with an existing instructional system to avoid overwhelming the teachers. For example, the CDE-approved visual arts and music textbooks were purchased from the same company that published the reading curriculum, allowing for purposeful integration across subject areas without changing the basic delivery structure. Teachers received orientation training in the use of the new materials. In addition, by bringing each school principal into the curriculum selection process, they received an orientation to the district's new arts education plan.

The textbook adoption ran into a stumbling block when it was discovered that teachers needed considerably more training and practice time than was initially allotted, in order to use the materials as they were intended. The CAT team has decided to temporarily postpone launching theatre and dance education programs at the elementary level and instead, continue providing professional development in visual arts and music. Nonetheless, progress has been made in the middle school dance program with square dance now taught to all seventh and eighth graders for four weeks by a professional dance caller. In addition, the middle school physical education specialist now provides an introduction to ballroom dancing each year for all students.

“Not everyone is a visionary, and you need a vision to be willing to stick with this through the difficult ramp-up time.”

In the funding subcommittee, district administrators wanted to provide a pipeline for supplemental resources, so they established the Rosemead Education Foundation in 2005. Its mission was to support a range of special programs in the five schools. As of spring 2008, the Foundation had yet to organize fundraisers or provide financial assistance for school arts.

MECHANISMS AND CHALLENGES

The CAT team noted the importance of the planning process as a way to create a district-wide focus on arts education not present prior to joining *Arts for All*. The planning coach was also acknowledged as an instrumental support during the planning process. However, some team members had difficulty justifying the creation of action plans at a time when there appeared to be no funding available to implement them. The team was unaware of statewide lobbying efforts to ensure legislative support for arts education, and later said that this would have given them more confidence in the potential success of their arts plan early on. Other mechanism and challenges to implementation were as follows:

Mechanisms of Change

- *Engaged superintendent and school board members.* Their involvement on the CAT team was a clear demonstration of their commitment to arts education for principals and teachers.
- *A planning team made up entirely of arts advocates.* The power of commonality continually fed the motivation of the CAT team.
- *Dedicated, hardworking classroom teachers and arts specialists.* Instructors were willing to put in the time and energy to launch the program and learn new ways of teaching.
- *Program evaluation.* Rosemead District has conducted two needs assessments with schools to guide decision-making on implementation priorities, resource purchases, and professional development.
- *Alignment of instructional systems.* By purchasing music and visual arts textbooks from the same publisher of their reading program, they avoided subjecting teachers to a new pedagogical approach. It also facilitated integration across subject areas. This was considered important for obtaining teacher buy-in.
- *Local resources.* The district used its middle school arts specialists to prepare supplemental curricula at the elementary level before block grant funding became available for materials.

Challenges to Change

- *Lack of arts specialists.* Due to its small size and budget constraints, it is unlikely the district will be able to afford arts specialists at the elementary level, at least in the foreseeable future.
- *Training time.* With other educational priorities in play, finding adequate time for professional development in the arts is an ongoing problem.
- *Unrealistic expectations.* The new visual arts curriculum required more training than was originally planned for, meaning the instructional uptake was slowed.
- *Instructional time.* The district is challenged in finding time to include instruction in four arts forms during the elementary school day.
- *No arts coordinator.* The lack of a full-time arts coordinator who is unencumbered by other job duties translates into an inability to take full advantage of grant opportunities or other forms of assistance offered through the *Arts for All* initiative.

OUTCOMES

On the whole, district administrators on the CAT team believe their district plan is working to increase both the quality and quantity of arts instruction in their five schools, starting with visual arts and music. Nonetheless, they found their original timeline for VAPA adoption proved too ambitious with teacher training taking longer to accomplish than originally projected. The most notable changes reported as direct effects of the *Arts for All* initiative were as follows:

Content

Standards-based Curriculum. With a focus on elementary schools, the first disciplines selected for curriculum adoption were music and visual arts. Essential standards were selected, sample lessons were created for each grade level by the middle school specialists, and state-approved textbooks were purchased that dovetailed with the language arts curriculum. General music textbooks were provided for grades K-6, as grades seven and eight already had them. Visual arts textbooks were provided for grades K-8. The initiative has also resulted in greater communication and planning with the nearby high school and has made administrators far more aware of the need to adequately prepare students to successfully transition into the higher level arts courses.

Pedagogy. All K-6 students now have access to standards-based music and visual arts instruction in the general classroom. However, the quality and quantity of instruction is undocumented. Owing to the cycle of textbook adoptions in other subject areas, the arts are intended to be taught through integration more than as discrete subjects. To this end, the sample lessons prepared for each grade level prior to the purchasing of textbooks were based on integrated instruction. The PTA Council has also provided supplemental visual arts instructional materials for all elementary schools.

Middle school students have access to arts and music instruction through courses taught by arts specialists and also through integrated instruction in other subject areas. A professional square dance caller and the physical education teacher now provide dance instruction for all students. A specialist in gifted and talented education provides an additional visual arts class for 30+ select students and the visual arts specialist now uses an art cart to collaborate with the social studies teacher on integration. A new string instrument program has been created for grades four through six after school and has resulted in three new classes during the school day for grades seven and eight.

Student Assessment. Student assessment in the arts is not area of focus in the district arts plan currently.

Professional Development. Teacher training in the arts is now paid for by Rosemead District, just as with every other subject area. Teachers at both the elementary and middle school levels have received training in using the new music and visual arts curricula materials and software. This is scheduled to continue in 2008-2009.

Infrastructure

Program Administration. With just five schools in the district, hiring an arts coordinator has not been perceived as a financially viable option. The assistant principal at the middle school, who led the CAT team during the planning stage, has continued to function as the arts point person for the past five years. Strategic directions are identified in annual planning meetings and implementation tasks are handled by committee.

Personnel. There has not been an increase in arts staffing, although the physical education teacher at the middle school level has added dance instruction into the syllabus. There are no plans to hire arts specialists at the elementary level.

Facilities and Equipment. A new visual arts room and music room were paid for out of a local school bond initiative. All four elementary schools have performance stages. The legislative funding was used to buy string instruments to start a parent-driven elective string instruments program for grades 4-8. Other arts supplies, equipment and instruments (recorders) were purchased for elementary schools and for the middle school dance units.

Partnerships and Collaborations. The Parent Teacher Association (PTA) Council has been an active collaborator from the beginning. It has participated in the planning process, provided funds for art materials in all elementary schools, and in 2007-2008, donated \$500 for a grade-level field trip to an art museum. Artist residencies have not been a priority during the first phase of implementation, although potential arts providers have been identified for the future as funding allows. In general, the schools are being more judicious about how they spend their budget allotment and instructional time in arts education. They are more selective about community arts program offerings and first check to see how they fit in with the overall arts education plan before participating.

Sustainability

Policy. The school board passed a district arts education policy in 2004. The middle school has since been identified as a Performance Improvement site by the CDE, but teachers fought to keep the arts classes in place despite the increased academic pressure. A school administrator acknowledged this would have been unlikely to occur in the past. However, it is also unlikely that the middle school theatre program will expand under these circumstances.

Funding. The arts education budget in Rosemead comes from a combination of sources: district general funds, school improvement funds, state legislative block grants, the PTA, and funds from Case Management, Outreach, Referral and Education (CORE), Gifted and Talented Education (GATE) and Accelerated College Enrollment (ACE) programs. The CAT team has not yet taken advantage of grants from offered through the *Arts for All* Pooled Fund because of a lack of fit with their current implementation focus or simply a lack of time to pursue the offerings. The district does not currently have funding for teaching artists other than what the PTA can provide through direct instruction programs at the elementary level. An education foundation has been established to provide supplemental funds for special programs, including the arts, but it has not made significant contributions to date.

“Having the state money available just as the planning stage was completed brought the implementation stage to life. The [impact] has exceeded our expectations.”

Evaluation. The district has conducted two needs assessment surveys over the past five years to document available resources and find out what schools need to advance their arts education plans. The data have strongly influenced the CAT team’s planning and spending decisions.

Communication and Advocacy. Since Rosemead is a small district, communication primarily happens through word of mouth or through an on-line “staff lounge” blog. In terms of parent advocacy, student artwork is now being exhibited as evidence of academic progress during Open House night.

District Leadership. The program is strongly supported by the superintendent and school board members as exemplified by their role on the CAT team and their willingness to spend district money on arts facilities, personnel, supplies, and professional development over the past five years. In addition, without a full time arts coordinator, the work of implementation is divided and accomplished by several district administrators, the assistant middle school principal and arts specialists.

CHANGES IN EQUITABLE ACCESS TO ARTS EDUCATION

The main areas of improved student access to learning experiences in the arts were increased instructional hours and new equipment (including instruments and supplies) at both the elementary and middle school levels. Prior to the *Arts for All* initiative, all elementary students participated in arts experiences, but they were not thought to be standards-based or sequential. Now all four elementary and the middle school have textbook curricula and related materials in the visual arts and music, and elementary teachers are receiving professional development to provide the instruction. All K-6 students received musical recorders, and a new string instrument program is offered after school for interested fourth, fifth and sixth graders.

At the middle school level, three new elective classes in string instruments are offered, filling the sequential gap between elementary and high school. In addition, the middle school used categorical funds to hire an arts specialist for a GATE visual arts class, and the physical education specialist teaches a new unit of ballroom dancing. The CAT team reported that approximately 80 percent of the student population take at least one elective class in art and in music during seventh and eighth grade, and now enjoy access to new arts-designated classrooms.

Parents have also responded positively to the district changes linked to the arts plan and have encouraged their students to become involved in the arts, so student participation rates have reportedly climbed, though are not currently documented. This was, however, reflected in a higher level of attendance in the district talent show that was revived after a three-year hiatus. It is anticipated that the amount and quality of arts instruction will continue to rise as classroom teachers engage in more training and practice.

While the district has made commendable improvements in its visual arts and music programs, dance education and theatre still need to be adopted in a significant way, which will require more funding. In addition, the extent to which teachers are able to apply what they learn in professional development workshops in the visual arts and music has yet to be adequately documented.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE OPPORTUNITIES

The CAT team identified five possible areas for further technical assistance through *Arts for All*:

- CAT team coaching at various phases of implementation
- Professional development coaching
- Grants for teaching artist residencies
- Advocacy letters to the school board and district administrators, reminding them to keep the arts on their front burner.
- An external program evaluator, to help them reflect on their progress

Santa Monica-Malibu Unified School District

2007-2008 student enrollment: 11,688

3 high schools (grades 6-12, 9-12)

2 middle schools (grades 6-8)

10 elementary schools (grades K-5)

2 alternative schools¹⁸

DISTRICT CONTEXT

The Santa Monica-Malibu Unified School District had a well-established music education program in its secondary schools prior to joining *Arts for All*. The district enjoyed strong parental support for arts instruction in general and had several community arts partnerships in place, including with the Santa Monica-Malibu Education Foundation. The district also had a written arts education policy in place. The document did not, however, reflect a commitment to providing a sequential, standards-based education in the arts, nor other essential elements of a quality arts education program. Significant gaps existed in arts offerings from kindergarten to Grade 12. There was also an imbalance in funding earmarked for arts education with 60 percent allotted to music programs, 30 percent to visual arts, 8 percent to theatre and 2 percent to dance. The district had a full-time fine arts coordinator and 36 arts specialists district-wide, primarily teaching at the secondary level. When the *Arts for All* initiative was announced, the district recognized and embraced the opportunity to create a comprehensive strategic plan to strengthen instruction in all four art disciplines, to receive guidance in revising the existing arts education policy and to receive funding and technical assistance in developing a more equitable and sequential approach to arts education.

STRATEGIC PLANNING FOR ARTS EDUCATION

The development of a strategic arts plan began in late 2003, with the formation of the district's *Arts for All* Committee (a.k.a. CAT team). There were 14 initial members including administrators, secondary arts specialists, community artists, parents, an *Arts for All* planning coach and representatives from the district's education foundation. The CAT team constructed a plan with a nine-year timeline with the eventual goal to offer sequential, standards-based arts instruction in the four major art disciplines—dance, music, theatre and visual arts—to all students.

The finished plan was entitled *Blueprint for Arts Education in the Santa Monica-Malibu Unified School District, 2004-2013*. It

“We didn’t even know we had a policy for arts education or that it was outdated. This process helped us to discover that and make a change.”

¹⁸ Alternative schools are addressed in the LACOE case study.

included known elements of a quality arts program: standards-based curriculum, instruction and methodology, student assessment, professional development for staff, program administration and personnel, partnerships and collaborations, funding, resources and facilities, and program evaluation. Elements not mentioned in the plan were communication and advocacy, although they were later recognized to be necessary components of effective implementation. The biggest drawback reported about the planning process was the creation of a comprehensive plan that the district did not have the means to pay for. Nonetheless, the CAT team chose to avoid dwelling on the overall price tag during the planning process, believing a cost analysis might have negatively impacted the chances of getting their strategic arts plan approved.

During the development of the plan, the CAT team conducted a needs assessment of all schools and revised the outdated board policy, adding clauses on standards-based instruction in all four major art disciplines during the school day, equitable access to arts instruction, and support for ongoing, community-based learning opportunities for both students and teachers. The revised arts education policy and the nine-year plan were approved by the school board in December 2004 and January 2005, respectively. A matching grant from the *Arts for All* Pooled Fund was used to extend the arts coordinator's job from a 10-month to a year-round position and to pay costs associated with the CAT team's monthly planning meetings.

IMPLEMENTING THE ARTS PLAN

Once the plan was finished, the CAT team worked together with Santa Monica-Malibu music and visual arts specialists, curriculum specialists and consultants from the dance and theater departments at the University of California at Los Angeles to create standards-based

curricula for all four art disciplines, Pre-K through Grade 12. The curricula contained grade level breakdowns of the California Visual and Performing Arts Content Standards, lesson strategies, recommended materials and assessment options. The curricula were completed in the spring of 2006 and have since been offered as models for other school districts to consider.

“A couple people have complimented me and the Arts for All team saying, ‘...you really did write the curriculum. You didn’t just talk about it and have meetings and debate about it. You actually put it down and you did it.’”

During 2005-2006, the CAT team also created a Pre-K through Grade 12 instructional framework, researched professional development needs across the district, investigated models for training, reviewed assessments, and worked to solidify existing community partnerships and other sources of support funding. It was decided that as far as possible, arts specialists would

provide arts instruction and classroom teachers would use integration methods to include the study of the arts in the general curriculum. At the elementary level, this meant that music and visual arts would be taught as discrete subjects by arts specialists, dance would be taught as part of the physical education curriculum and classroom teachers would learn to integrate theatre arts into their language arts lessons with the assistance of textbook lessons, visiting actors and existing teacher expertise. Visual arts courses were already taught by credentialed specialists at the secondary level.

In the fall of 2006, the CAT team began the multi-year effort of improving student access to quality arts instruction one art discipline at a time, starting with music. Although music was already the most highly developed program of the four major art disciplines, the CAT team wanted to solidify the instructional sequence and truly make music part of the curriculum for *all* students. Due to a new instructional schedule, it was possible for specialists to provide more consistent music instruction for elementary students in less time per week, which would allow time for the other art disciplines and for professional development. In order to make this change, the new ongoing arts education funding from the state legislature was used to hire four music specialists to join the existing six. Thereafter music was offered to an entire grade level at an elementary school by a team of credentialed instructors twice a week, rather than the “pullout program” that existed before the expansion. As a result, the elementary music program expanded to include a 40-minute weekly general music lesson for grade three by a music specialist as well as 40-minute band, orchestra and choir classes twice weekly for every fourth and fifth grader district-wide.

PTA donations continue to be earmarked to fund K-2 music education, using non-credentialed teachers. Professional development opportunities in all four art disciplines and arts integration were also provided for classroom teachers through a four-year U.S. Department of Education Arts Education Demonstration Grant through the SmART Schools program which had previously demonstrated success on the east coast. Santa Monica-Malibu is the first district on the west coast to have the SmART Schools program.

The CAT team also implemented changes beyond the elementary music program. At the middle school level, three theatre classes and one dance class were offered for the first time, in addition to music and visual arts electives. At Lincoln Middle School, the drama class was cut, but an afterschool theatre program was created for plays and musicals. The arts coordinator is working to restore the drama class that was dropped due to budget cuts. At the high school level, there is new Regional Occupation Program (ROP) dance teacher who teaches three dances classes. In addition, two new dual enrollment dance electives were created, with credits transferable to Santa Monica College. Funded by the Santa Monica-Malibu Education Foundation, two other dance classes were also initiated at Malibu and Olympic high schools (one dance class at each school).

To support arts instruction, the legislative block grants were distributed to all school sites by art discipline. The funds were to be spent on supplies, equipment and materials district-wide. Larger amounts were given to dance, theatre and visual arts programs because music programs had been so well supported by past budgets and/or booster clubs. The community also voted for a \$268 million schools facilities bond, part of which was

earmarked for new or improved visual and performing arts facilities for all school sites over time.

In 2008-2009 the CAT team's next major goal is to implement a district-wide professional development program in visual arts, pending available funding. In addition, arts specialists will be offered workshops to explore and develop student assessment models. The team also plans to advocate for adding theatre specialists at both middle schools as well as credentialed visual arts teachers at the elementary level. Two aspects that have not been fully implemented as intended is the development of Pre-K through Grade 12 assessments in all four art disciplines and to formally evaluate the progress and impact of the district arts plan at the school level. As of yet, neither adequate staff nor funding have been available to initiate these projects, with the exception of an annual district-wide assessment of fifth graders on general music knowledge—an on-line effort that began in 2005-2006.

Recognizing the difficulty of keeping Santa Monica-Malibu teachers informed of arts activities and opportunities, the arts coordinator has also begun to identify communication liaisons at each school to act as conduits for visual and performing arts news. A liaison is typically the school librarian, the community liaison, an arts specialist or a classroom teacher.

MECHANISMS AND CHALLENGES

More than any other Vanguard District, Santa Monica-Malibu places a strong value on hiring arts specialists to teach the four art disciplines as discrete subjects. The success with which the district will be able to actualize that vision is dependent on the availability of funding—not only in the district budget but also through community support. Other mechanisms that have supported the implementation of the district arts plan or have created obstacles are listed below.

Mechanisms of Change

- *Superintendent, school board and parent support.* Both Santa Monica-Malibu administrators and parents were strongly in favor of improving arts education when the initiative began.
- *Experienced arts coordinator.* The arts coordinator worked at the district for several years and was willing and able to take on the bulk of responsibility for implementing the plan.
- *Experienced curriculum staff on the planning team.* District arts advocates and leaders were instrumental in writing the board policy, the district arts plan, and the sequential curricula. Their leadership clout helped win approval of all documents from the school board.
- *Pre-existing music program.* The district had a successful K-12 music program on which to build.

- *Availability of state funding.* A portion of the state funding paid for the purchase of musical instruments, equipment for the elementary music program and arts supplies, which helped jumpstart the implementation process.
- *Strong community partnerships.* The district had a supportive education foundation and committed community partners that have readily helped meet the objectives of the arts plan.
- *Having a written plan.* The document has been used to attract funding, both from the district budget and external sources.

Challenges to Change

- *Declining enrollment.* Loss of district funding due to declining enrollment has prevented the hiring of elementary visual arts teachers, thus effectively disrupting the rollout of the district arts plan.
- *Communication.* Disseminating information on the progress of the CAT team, school art events and other related opportunities has reportedly been a challenge, despite the existence of a visual and performing arts website.
- *Low CAT team membership.* Membership on the CAT team has declined over five years from 13 to six active participants. The team has had difficulty attracting teachers to attend monthly meetings after school. In addition, bringing newcomers up to speed on the work of the CAT team has been perceived as a challenge. That being said, the team is planning a recruitment campaign for 2008-2009 that will target a broad range of stakeholders.
- *“The Three Barriers” to Arts Education: time, space and money.* The ability to move forward with implementation plans at the school level correlates strongly with these three factors.
- *Persistent perception that the arts are not core subjects.* Despite the adoption of Pre-K through Grade 12 curricula, the arts are not treated as core subjects because of the federally imposed emphasis on math and literacy.
- *Lack of funding or expertise in program evaluation.* The CAT team has lacked the internal resources to develop and implement an evaluation plan for arts programming today, however it intends to make this area a priority in 2008-2009.

OUTCOMES

In the early stages of the nine-year plan, the Santa Monica-Malibu CAT team has made notable strides in implementation of its district arts plan by focusing on strengthening the infrastructure of the overall arts program and designing Pre-K through Grade 12 curricula for all four major art disciplines. The following paragraphs provide an account of the kinds of changes that have occurred as a result of planning and implementation effort, relative to the elements of their plan.

Content

Standards-based Curriculum. CAT team members collaborated with district arts specialists and UCLA performing arts staff and wrote standards-based Pre-K through Grade 12 curricula in dance, music, theatre and visual arts during the first year of implementation. The curricula were designed to better prepare students to transition from one school level to the next, improving retention in arts programs and ensuring students have the preparatory skills they need to excel with each advancement. In addition, the curricula list the materials, supplies and resources needed to deliver standards-based instruction and list the types of assessment that can be used to determine whether or not students are meeting the standards. The curriculum framework is now being considered as a model for other subject areas and has been shared with other districts.

Pedagogy. As a general rule, Santa Monica-Malibu pursues the best teaching talent available, believing instructional quality is key to student participation. As of 2007-2008, all four art disciplines are offered as electives at the high school level and taught by credentialed specialists; one of the two middle schools lacks dance and theatre offering. At the elementary level, all students in grades three through five receive weekly music lessons from credentialed specialists. All K-2 students also receive weekly music instruction from non-credentialed community artists through PTA funding.

In six of eleven elementary schools, the PTA also funds visual arts instruction in collaboration with community arts providers, such as P.S. Arts. Some classroom teachers with a background in the arts also provide periodic instruction, although the extent of this activity is not yet documented. The arts coordinator reported that due to teacher training and use of the district's new arts curricula, instruction is presumed to be more standards-based than before the *Arts for All* initiative.

Student Assessment. Based on the state music standards and the new music curriculum, an on-line music test was developed and piloted as an elementary school exit exam. Henceforth, it will be administered to all fifth graders on an annual basis. The purpose is to measure each student's musical knowledge as they prepare to transition to middle school music programs. It also provides a way to measure the effectiveness of the elementary curriculum and instruction. Other district-level arts assessments are currently being developed.

Professional Development. Teachers have been offered professional development opportunities in the arts each year, including The California Arts Project (TCAP) workshops, arts coordinator-led workshops, and grant-funded workshops taught through community arts providers such as the Santa Monica Art Museum and SmART Schools Institutes for Title I schools. Workshops are designed based on teacher interest and attendance is voluntary. The professional development sessions typically cover lesson planning, instructional practices and/or assessments in an art discipline.

Infrastructure

Program Administration. An arts coordinator and administrative assistant were already on staff when Santa Monica-Malibu joined *Arts for All*. Both have since increased their working schedule during the summer months. The coordinator also teaches a dual enrollment high school jazz class after school at Santa Monica high School. Communication liaisons are now being identified at each school to improve communication about arts education and to encourage more school representation on the CAT team.

Personnel. Since *Arts for All* began, the district has hired four additional elementary music specialists from the ongoing arts education block grant. While the district eventually plans to hire visual arts specialists to provide instruction for all fourth and fifth grade students, declining enrollment and the 2008 state budget crisis has prevented this to date. A dance teacher and music specialist were hired at the middle school level to fill instructional gaps. At the Santa Monica High School, one band director was promoted to a full time position and one full time orchestra teacher was added. In addition, three guitar classes were added through dual enrollment. At Malibu High, a part time orchestra/guitar teacher was added.

Facilities and Equipment. The passing of a 2006 school bond measure provided funding for new visual and performing arts facilities, primarily at the secondary school level. Details were not available at the writing of this report. Musical instruments, second and third grade music textbooks, art supplies and theater equipment were purchased from the legislative block grant funds and foundation grants.

Partnerships and Collaborations. Santa Monica-Malibu is situated in a community that contains tremendous potential for arts education partnerships—both instructional and fiscal—because it is home to numerous entertainment industry corporations, museums, galleries and arts organizations. In fact, there were at least seven partnerships in place providing either funding or programming for students prior to the district joining the *Arts for All* initiative. Since implementation of the district arts plan began, an even greater emphasis has been placed on actively seeking external funding support, particularly with the aid of the Santa Monica-Malibu Education Foundation. Current partnerships include a multi-year U.S. Department of Education Model Arts Demonstration grant, SmART Schools, P.S. Arts and Grammy Signature Schools, among others.

Sustainability

Policy. The school board approved a revised arts education policy in 2005. The new policy contains specific language about the districts' commitment to offering standards-based, sequential instruction by highly qualified and credentialed arts instructors. It also states that visual and performing arts instruction should be offered during the regular school day. The arts coordinator has, at times, referenced the tenets of the policy and district's commitment as an *Arts for All* district as a tool for persuading school principals to spend funds that were earmarked for arts education accordingly.

Funding. The district arts plan was used to attract funding that would not have been available for the arts in the past, including money from the district, the facilities bond measure and from external grant sources. The district has been particularly successful at raising external funding through grant writing and fundraising activities, producing 22 percent of the total arts budget. The school board increased arts education spending in 2007-2008 by half a percent to 3.88 percent and currently pays for more than 40 arts specialists, the arts coordinator, and an administrative assistant. It also provided supplemental funds to repair musical instruments and in other ways supports the advancement of arts education at each school. The one-time state legislative funding was also passed onto schools to spend primarily for equipment and supplies.

The Santa Monica-Malibu Education Foundation has played an important role in the development of the plan and the pursuit of sustaining resources beyond state funding.

“What’s exciting is that while enrollment is dropping, the number of music students...is not mirroring the big drop.”

Before the district joined *Arts for All*, the Foundation created an endowment called *For the Arts* to raise money for arts education. To help ensure the arts would never again be eliminated from the school curriculum, the endowment aims to provide annual funding for arts education programs. To date, the Foundation has helped pay for musical instruments, arts delivery programs and arts specialist salaries. It has also provided leadership on the CAT team over the past five years and continues to seek new avenues for generating sustained financial support. In addition to the funding contributions made by the endowment, the foundation has also been instrumental in sponsoring events that advocate for arts programs in the Santa Monica-Malibu district. These events include the annual “Celebration For The Arts” on the Santa Monica Pier and the annual Jackson Browne benefit concert.

Evaluation. The arts coordinator has taken preliminary steps to establish evaluation procedures, including talking over possibilities with RAND corporation and creating a template for tracking the completion of annual objectives in the arts plan. The coordinator holds regular meetings with district arts specialists to discuss program issues. This provides informal opportunities for reflection and adjustments to both program administration and classroom instruction. The CAT team is also considering tracking student enrollment levels in arts classes to find out whether any increase in attendance is taking place.

Communication and Advocacy. During 2008-2009, each school will identify an arts leader to act as a communication liaison for the arts coordinator. The administrative assistant for arts education also maintains a visual and performing arts website that is used to showcase events and advocate for the district arts program. The CAT team reported that their strongest form of advocacy is student performances, especially in music.

District Leadership. The Santa Monica-Malibu superintendent and school board members have provided strong support in terms of approving the district arts plan, the

revised arts education policy and paying the lion's share of salaries for the arts specialists and arts administrators. This is notable in that the superintendent and senior cabinet members have changed at least three times since the inception of *Arts for All*. Nonetheless, they have allowed the arts coordinator considerable support in implementing phases of the arts plan, when funding is available through external sources. In the context of declining enrollment, plans to hire visual arts specialists have been tabled and, at this point, it is increasingly unlikely that district expenditures for arts education will continue to expand in the near future. It should be noted that the majority of school board members are parents with students who participate in the district's music program.

CHANGES IN EQUITABLE ACCESS TO ARTS EDUCATION

The district has made the most progress in increasing student access to quality arts instruction in its Pre-K through Grade 12 music program. With the hiring of four additional elementary music specialists and with increased funding from school PTAs, all students in the district now have access—either mandatory or as an elective—to music education. Also at the elementary level, the CAT team reported increased hours of instruction due to music staffing, more community artist residency programs (in dance, theatre and visual arts) and varied professional development for classroom teachers. The one-time legislative block grant allotment afforded the purchase of musical instruments and instructional supplies, including Apple i-pods for studying musical compositions.

At the middle school level, dance and theatre classes were added at one site, a music teacher was hired at another, and new supplies, equipment and musical instruments were provided for all arts specialists. Both middle schools purchased orchestra risers and an orchestra shell. An increased number of musical performances were reported at this level as well.

At the high school level, dance classes were added with the hiring of a dance teacher at one school. The University of California's *Arts Bridge* artist residency program brought increased dance opportunities to another. Regional Occupation Program (ROP) classes in digital design, theatre and music production/engineering were expanded at two high schools. New dual enrollment classes with Santa Monica College included choir, dance, drawing and jazz band. An additional band and a string instruments teacher were hired at Santa Monica High School and a part-time string/guitar teacher was hired at Malibu High. Arts specialists have been given laptops and digital cameras as well, to help with documentation, assessment and other instructional purposes.

The only recent upgrade in facilities was the installment of an air conditioning system in the music and choir rooms at Santa Monica High. However, all arts specialists received supplies and equipment from the state block grants. While student enrollment across the district has declined recently, the arts coordinator reported that music course enrollment has not, indicating that the percentage of secondary students taking elective music classes is increasing slightly. More students reportedly participated in festivals and music contests this year as well.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE OPPORTUNITIES

The CAT team mentioned six areas where technical assistance would be valuable at this time:

- Professional development planning
- Student assessment in the arts
- Program evaluation
- Gaining an increased financial commitment from the district and school board
- Locating funding for elementary arts specialist salaries
- Matching funds grants to provide incentives for increased district funding

ARTS FOR ALL INTERVIEW DISTRICT INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Leading Inquiry: How have the planning efforts of the vanguard Arts for All Districts resulted in increased student access to a quality arts education? "Increased access" is defined as increased resources for students and increased instructional hours in the four art forms over the past 4-5 years.

TOPIC: PLANNING

1. Review elements of initial plan:

Prompt: what were the key influences behind choosing the specific elements in your plan? [local concerns and underlying values regarding arts education]

Prompt: what was good about that first planning effort?

Prompt: What was problematic?

Prompt: What changes have been made to the plan since that time?

2. Effects of District Board policy

Prompt: What reaction did you face when you presented the board policy?

Prompt: What do you wish you could change about the policy now, if anything?

TOPIC: IMPLEMENTATION

3. [Clarify strategic directions pursued each year]

Prompt: Let's talk about how the core elements of your plan reflect the basic components of a quality arts education program [show triangle of quality program elements].

Prompt: What areas have you been focusing on each year since finishing your plan?

Prompt: What factors had a positive influence on outcomes

4. What have been the main assets this district has had to draw on over the past five years of implementing the arts education plan?

5. What have been the main challenges to implementation?

6. Review annual art budget data for past 5 years.

7. What are you doing in terms of evaluating the progress of your art program?

8. How is communication inside your district and with your community partners affecting the implementation of the arts plan?

9. What steps are you taking, if any, in terms of district-wide advocacy and as part of the broader regional or state level advocacy efforts to preserve and increase arts education funding?
10. How is District leadership influencing the development of your arts education program?

TOPIC: RESULTS TO DATE- INCREASED STUDENT ACCESS TO ARTS AND RESOURCES

12. What things have changed in this district that you believe would have been unlikely to have happened if you have not initiated the strategic planning process for arts education?
13. Where can you point to increased student access to resources (facilities, supplies, instruments) and increased instructional access in the art forms (hours or classes per grade level)?

[Introduce Increased Access Survey]

15. What kind of additional support from Arts for All would be helpful at this point?
16. [Complete CDE Continuum Survey as a team.]

Arts Education Program Implementation Continuum Survey

Directions

The continuum is designed to generate conversation, stimulate research, build consensus, enhance decision-making, and support planning. As each criterion is discussed, issues and questions will arise about the elements of an arts education program that your district values. As you work through the continuum, keep a copy of the *Visual and Performing Arts Framework for California Public Schools, Kindergarten Through Grade Twelve* (1996) on hand for reference and help in clarifying terminology.

Make extra copies of the continuum so you can use it many times. With your district arts team members, work your way across the levels for each focus area, from Foundation to Best Practices, discussing each criterion. Put a check or a score beside each criterion.

For the purposes of assigning a score to a criterion, you may use the following scale:

- 4 = Fully implemented, exemplary accomplishment
- 3 = Implemented and operational
- 2 = Introduced, evidence of progress but not fully operational
- 1 = Not attempted or at the beginning level of development or implementation
- 0 = Not applicable

Teams who use the continuum find that for any focus area some criteria may be implemented in each of the three levels. For example, all the criteria at the Foundation level may not have been fully implemented, yet some criteria at the Building and Best Practices levels may be implemented and are starting to have results.

The Continuum Grid, which is available in this section of the toolkit, provides an overview of the level of program implementation. You may check each criterion on the grid under the Foundation, Building, or Best Practices columns or, as with the continuum, go to a deeper level of evaluation and assign a score that uses the 4-to-0 scale discussed above. A review of the grid indicates in which areas the school district is in the process of implementing a comprehensive, standards-based arts education program for all students.

Some school districts are structuring a foundation for program improvement. Some school districts demonstrate all aspects of the building process. Some school districts have established best practices in arts education. In moving toward providing arts education programs for all students in California public schools, models at each level of implementation are essential. Given the number and diversity of school districts in California, the need to network and to share successes is evident.

Arts Education Program Implementation Continuum

Foundation	Building	Best practices
<p>A1. Framework: A district arts committee does an analysis of the <i>Visual and Performing Arts Framework for California Public Schools, Kindergarten Through Grade Twelve</i>.</p> <p>A2. Standards process: A process is underway to draft standards for adoption by the district board of education. The standards take into consideration the state arts content standards and the principles discussed in the framework.</p> <p>A3. Sequential curriculum: The arts are recognized by the district and site administrations as a part of the core curriculum. The need for a sequential, written curriculum is identified.</p> <p>A4. Integration: There is a district-wide understanding that the arts can be a vital part of an integrated curricular approach.</p>	<p>B1. Framework: Representatives from all schools in the district schools develop an in-depth understanding of arts education in all the arts as described in the framework and as defined by the community.</p> <p>B2. Standards process: The district board adopts visual and performing arts standards and begins an implementation plan.</p> <p>B3. Sequential curriculum: A plan for developing a standards-based visual and performing arts curriculum for each discipline at every grade level is developed and is underway for one or more of the arts.</p> <p>B4. Integration: The arts curriculum is under development, and the arts are considered to be discrete disciplines that should be integrated into other curricular areas as appropriate.</p>	<p>C1. Framework: The district curriculum provides for comprehensive instruction in each of the arts and includes artistic perception, creative expression, historical and cultural context, aesthetic valuing, and connections and application to other disciplines and to careers.</p> <p>C2. Standards process: An ongoing review and refinement process is in place for the adopted and implemented standards, based on an examination of student work over time.</p> <p>C3. Sequential curriculum: A sequential, standards-based curriculum in each of the arts disciplines at every grade level is being implemented as a part of the core curriculum for all students.</p> <p>C4. Integration: The curriculum is expanded in all subject areas to allow for the integration and the application of arts-related knowledge and skills in a way that is aligned with the standards.</p>

1. Standards-based curriculum

Source: The format for this continuum was developed from work produced by the Australian Student Traineeship Foundation, the Australian Quality Council, and the Kennedy Center Alliance for Arts Education Network.

Note: For the purposes of assigning a score to a criterion, you may use the following scale: 4 = fully implemented, exemplary accomplishment; 3 = implemented and operational; 2 = introduced, evidence of progress but not fully operational; 1 = not attempted or at the beginning level of development or implementation; 0 = not applicable

Arts Education Program Implementation Continuum—Continued

Foundation	Building	Best practices
<p>A5. Students' progress and outcomes: There is recognition that instruction in the arts must be based on students' progress toward arts standards.</p> <p>A6. Equal access and inclusion: There is recognition that all students should have the opportunity to receive instruction in comprehensive standards-based arts education.</p> <p>A7. Variety of methodology: There is an understanding of the need to use a variety of teaching methodologies to address students' diverse learning styles.</p> <p>A8. Quality instruction: Generalist teachers and arts specialists are supported in their efforts to deliver standards-based instruction in the arts.</p> <p>A9. Support resources: Local community arts resources are identified and recognized as valuable partners in instruction.</p>	<p>B5. Students' progress and outcomes: Instructional choices are focused on helping students in making progress toward achieving discipline-specific arts standards.</p> <p>B6. Equal access and inclusion: Model strategies for assisting all students in meeting arts standards are continually designed, implemented, and refined by district teachers.</p> <p>B7. Variety of methodology: A variety of instructional strategies are effectively used in two or more of the arts disciplines.</p> <p>B8. Quality instruction: Each school employs credentialed arts specialist teachers in two or more of the arts disciplines. Generalist classroom teachers are provided with opportunities to refine and to expand their content knowledge and instructional strategies in the arts.</p> <p>B9. Support resources: Arts instruction incorporates the unique resources of artists and of the whole community.</p>	<p>C5. Students' progress and outcomes: Instruction is consistently reviewed and refined based on an analysis of students' work in relation to a high level of achievement of standards.</p> <p>C6. Equal access and inclusion: Teachers design and modify their instructional practices to ensure that all students make progress toward achieving the standards.</p> <p>C7. Variety of methodology: Instruction in all four arts disciplines includes a variety of effective and innovative methodologies that address diversity in teaching and learning styles.</p> <p>C8. Quality instruction: Qualified credentialed arts teachers and classroom teachers are recruited to teach all arts disciplines and are actively supported by the administration to ensure quality instruction at all levels.</p> <p>C9. Support resources: Instruction in all four arts disciplines reflects collaboration between teachers and community arts providers, artists, business organizations, and others.</p>

2. Instruction and methodology

Note: For the purposes of assigning a score to a criterion, you may use the following scale: 4 = fully implemented, exemplary accomplishment; 3 = implemented and operational; 2 = introduced, evidence of progress but not fully operational; 1 = not attempted or at the beginning level of development or implementation; 0 = not applicable

Arts Education Program Implementation Continuum—Continued

Foundation	Building	Best practices
<p>A10. Approaches: Teachers and administrators recognize that arts assessment is possible and necessary and should be based on students' progress toward achieving standards. Educators review and evaluate a variety of assessment models.</p> <p>A11. Formal assessment: A district policy and plan for formally assessing students' work in the arts are being considered. The policy and plan include assigning letter grades and using standardized assessment at elementary, middle, and high school levels.</p> <p>A12. Information to improve teaching and learning: District committees review examples of students' work and performances in the arts at various grade levels to identify optimal teaching strategies.</p> <p>A13. Performance and portfolio: The creative products of students' work in the arts are seen as an integral part of the assessment process.</p> <p>A14. Embedded strategies: District arts committees understand the need for arts assessment strategies that are embedded in standards-based curricula.</p>	<p>B10. Approaches: A variety of assessment models are being piloted in one or more of the arts disciplines and at various grade levels. A forum for feedback and comparison has been established and will lead to a districtwide assessment policy and plan for all the arts.</p> <p>B11. Formal assessment: The district policy and plan support professional development for teachers in the use of assessment tools for making a formal assessment in one or more of the arts at each school level.</p> <p>B12. Information to improve teaching and learning: The district uses baseline formal and informal assessments in two or more of the arts disciplines to refine and to implement its arts curriculum and instruction.</p> <p>B13. Performance and portfolio: Teachers provide students with opportunities to demonstrate their progress toward standards through carefully designed portfolio activities and performance activities in two or more of the arts.</p> <p>B14. Embedded strategies: Embedded student assessment strategies are an instructional component of two or more arts disciplines across grade levels.</p>	<p>C10. Approaches: The district has developed and maintains a current, research-based, comprehensive, standards-based approach to assessing students' work in the arts at every grade level.</p> <p>C11. Formal assessment: Teachers at each school level use multiple measures that were developed as a part of the district's policy and plan for assessing students' work in the arts.</p> <p>C12. Information to improve teaching and learning: Teachers and administrators continually review data gathered from assessments of students' work to refocus and to revise standards-based arts curricula in all arts disciplines, kindergarten through grade twelve.</p> <p>C13. Performance and portfolio: Students at all levels in all arts disciplines maintain portfolios of their work and their performances for which consistent scoring guides have been designed.</p> <p>C14. Embedded strategies: Teachers at all grade levels in all four arts disciplines embed assessment strategies in their curricula on a regular basis.</p>

3. Student assessment

Note: For the purposes of assigning a score to a criterion, you may use the following scale: 4 = fully implemented, exemplary accomplishment; 3 = implemented and operational; 2 = introduced, evidence of progress but not fully operational; 1 = not attempted or at the beginning level of development or implementation; 0 = not applicable

Arts Education Program Implementation Continuum—Continued

Foundation	Building	Best practices
<p>A15. Long-range plan: A district-wide needs assessment is being administered to develop a professional development plan in arts education for classroom teachers, artists, arts specialists, and administrators.</p> <p>A16. Knowledge base: The district recognizes the need for a professional development program in arts education that provides training based on an understanding of the framework and standards and that uses a variety of strategies and activities.</p> <p>A17. Professional development resources: The district begins identifying resources for professional development in all four arts disciplines.</p> <p>A18. Collaborations: Plans for professional development opportunities extend to all persons who participate in arts instruction, such as generalist teachers, art specialist teachers, artists, and parents.</p>	<p>B15. Long-range plan: A defined, long-term professional development plan that is based on assessed needs is created for all four arts disciplines. The plan is being implemented in selected disciplines.</p> <p>B16. Knowledge base: The districtwide professional development program is based on the framework, arts standards, and standards in other subject areas. The program incorporates strategies to include all educators.</p> <p>B17. Professional development resources: The district provides funds annually for continued internal and external professional development in one or more of the arts disciplines.</p> <p>B18. Collaborations: Specialist teachers and visiting artists who teach are regarded as members of the school team and are provided with opportunities to share their expertise with the entire staff.</p>	<p>C15. Long-range plan: A districtwide, long-range, comprehensive professional development plan is well established and ongoing for all four arts disciplines. The plan is reviewed and evaluated annually, and it is integrated into other professional development activities.</p> <p>C16. Knowledge base: Professional development is provided for all kindergarten-through-grade-twelve educators, administrators, teachers, specialists, and artists to ensure the implementation of discrete and integrated instruction in all four arts disciplines.</p> <p>C17. Professional development resources: Funds and release time are provided to ensure personal and professional growth through educators' participation in conferences, workshops, and institutes in all four arts disciplines.</p> <p>C18. Collaborations: Teachers, specialist teachers, and visiting artists who teach have time to work in partnership with each other to share best instructional practices.</p>
<p>A19. Policy: The school board considers the arts to be an integral part of the curriculum.</p> <p>A20. Staff: A district plan is established for staffing a comprehensive arts education program.</p> <p>A21. Leadership: Leadership roles at the district and at the school site are defined for the implementation of a standards-based curriculum, for program development, and for evaluation.</p>	<p>B19. Policy: The school board and all members of the administration serve as advocates for arts education.</p> <p>B20. Staff: Personnel are identified and provide arts instruction in the schools in a minimum of two of the arts disciplines.</p> <p>B21. Leadership: An identified district arts coordinator or administrator clearly articulates the goals and the objectives of the arts education program and establishes a collegial relationship with administrative staff, teachers, and personnel.</p>	<p>C19. Policy: The school board has adopted and supports a clearly articulated arts education policy.</p> <p>C20. Staff: Qualified personnel in all four arts disciplines provide comprehensive, standards-based arts instruction.</p> <p>C21. Leadership: Designated administrators in the arts disciplines provide leadership, a vision of the future, and planning capabilities. They oversee implementation of the arts education program in all district schools</p>

Note: For the purposes of assigning a score to a criterion, you may use the following scale: 4 = fully implemented, exemplary accomplishment; 3 = implemented and operational; 2 = introduced, evidence of progress but not fully operational; 1 = not attempted or at the beginning level of development or implementation; 0 = not applicable

Arts Education Program Implementation Continuum—Continued

6. Partnerships and collaborations	Foundation	Building	Best practices
<p>A22. Outside agencies: The district identifies as potential partners in implementing arts education programs local, regional, state, and national resources, including institutions of higher education, arts agencies, and the business community.</p> <p>A23. Partnerships: The district establishes a plan for implementing partnerships to provide arts education experiences.</p> <p>A24. School organizations: The district and organizations that support schools (e.g., PTAs, foundations, booster clubs, and site councils) are made aware of the needs and the issues of the arts education program.</p>	<p>B22. Outside agencies: Working relationships with local, regional, state, and national resources for arts education are established through the coordination of specific personnel.</p> <p>B23. Partnerships: Partnerships are established to provide a variety of resources that will support arts education programs.</p> <p>B24. School organizations: The district and organizations that support the arts in schools actively contribute to the implementation of comprehensive arts programs in all four arts disciplines.</p>	<p>C22. Outside agencies: Strong relationships with outside agencies are developed and maintained to optimally implement arts education programs.</p> <p>C23. Partnerships: Partnerships support arts education programs that are coordinated, in-depth, and comprehensive.</p> <p>C24. School organizations: A coordinated and articulated relationship exists between the district and the organizations that support schools to meet the ongoing needs of arts education programs.</p>	<p>C25. Budget: An annual budget funds a comprehensive, sequential visual and performing arts program in all four arts disciplines at each school site.</p> <p>C26. Stability: The assessment of funding needs is reviewed and revised annually. Funds are provided to fully support the arts programs in each of the arts disciplines and to provide for program growth.</p> <p>C27. Partnerships: Partnerships are developed and maintained to provide a variety of long-term and short-term funding resources.</p> <p>C28. Oversight: Funding resources and budget oversight mechanisms for all four arts disciplines are coordinated at the district level and at the school site level.</p>
<p>A25. Budget: The need for an effective visual and performing arts budget is recognized.</p> <p>A26. Stability: An assessment of funding needs has been conducted to use as the basis for making budget decisions.</p> <p>A27. Partnerships: Potential funding sources are identified.</p> <p>A28. Oversight: Budget oversight mechanisms at the district level and at the school site level are being developed for the distribution and the monitoring of funds for arts programs.</p>	<p>B25. Budget: Appropriate funds are allocated to implement a basic arts education program in two or more arts disciplines at each school site.</p> <p>B26. Stability: Based on an assessment of funding needs, district funds and school site funds are provided to support the arts program in two or more arts disciplines.</p> <p>B27. Partnerships: Partnerships are established with one or more local, regional, state, or national resources for ongoing funding of special projects and grants.</p> <p>B28. Oversight: Funding resources are monitored at the district level and at the school site level to provide for program implementation in two or more of the arts disciplines</p>	<p>C25. Budget: An annual budget funds a comprehensive, sequential visual and performing arts program in all four arts disciplines at each school site.</p> <p>C26. Stability: The assessment of funding needs is reviewed and revised annually. Funds are provided to fully support the arts programs in each of the arts disciplines and to provide for program growth.</p> <p>C27. Partnerships: Partnerships are developed and maintained to provide a variety of long-term and short-term funding resources.</p> <p>C28. Oversight: Funding resources and budget oversight mechanisms for all four arts disciplines are coordinated at the district level and at the school site level.</p>	<p>C25. Budget: An annual budget funds a comprehensive, sequential visual and performing arts program in all four arts disciplines at each school site.</p> <p>C26. Stability: The assessment of funding needs is reviewed and revised annually. Funds are provided to fully support the arts programs in each of the arts disciplines and to provide for program growth.</p> <p>C27. Partnerships: Partnerships are developed and maintained to provide a variety of long-term and short-term funding resources.</p> <p>C28. Oversight: Funding resources and budget oversight mechanisms for all four arts disciplines are coordinated at the district level and at the school site level.</p>

Note: For the purposes of assigning a score to a criterion, you may use the following scale: 4 = fully implemented, exemplary accomplishment; 3 = implemented and operational; 2 = introduced, evidence of progress but not fully operational; 1 = not attempted or at the beginning level of development or implementation; 0 = not applicable

Arts Education Program Implementation Continuum—Continued

	Foundation	Building	Best practices
8. Resources and facilities	<p>A29. Facilities, storage, and safety: Facilities, storage space, and student safety have been identified as essential to the success of the arts program.</p> <p>A30. Equipment and materials: The equipment and materials that are needed to support a basic arts program have been identified and prioritized.</p> <p>A31. Outside resources: Local, regional, state, and national resources for arts-related facilities, maintenance service, and technical services have been investigated.</p>	<p>B29. Facilities, storage, and safety: School facilities, storage space, and equipment are provided and maintained for two or more arts disciplines.</p> <p>B30. Equipment and materials: Arts-related equipment and materials are provided to all school sites to support instruction in most of the four arts disciplines.</p> <p>B31. Outside resources: A strategic plan is in place that connects administrators, teachers, and students to resources and arts facilities in the community, region, state, and nation.</p>	<p>C29. Facilities, storage, and safety: All school sites have facilities and storage space that are specifically designed and maintained to guarantee full implementation of an arts education program in a safe environment. Such facilities include dedicated space for arts instruction in all four arts disciplines (e.g., wooden floors for dance, risers for choirs, stages for theatre, and vented kilns for the visual arts).</p> <p>C30. Equipment and materials: High-quality, arts-related equipment and materials are provided at all school sites for all four art forms and are systematically inventoried for replacement, repair, and upgrading.</p> <p>C31. Outside resources: All schools in the district use local, regional, state, and national resources and facilities to create an exemplary arts program.</p>
	<p>A32. Evaluation tools: Evaluation is identified as a necessary component of arts education program development and improvement.</p>	<p>B32. Evaluation tools: Students, staff, and community members participate in a variety of internal and external evaluations that provide qualitative and quantitative data for program implementation and improvement.</p>	<p>C32. Evaluation tools: Evaluation data drive long-term planning efforts to refine and to expand a comprehensive arts education program</p>
	9. Program Evaluation		

Note: For the purposes of assigning a score to a criterion, you may use the following scale: 4 = fully implemented, exemplary accomplishment; 3 = implemented and operational; 2 = introduced, evidence of progress but not fully operational; 1 = not attempted or at the beginning level of development or implementation; 0 = not applicable

APPENDIX D

Increased Student Access Chart

Scale: 0 = No increase in student access
 1 = An increase at individual schools
 2 = An increase at most of all schools

Indicator	Elementary	Middle School	High School
Art classes offered			
Student enrollment in art classes			
Hours of instruction offered			
Afterschool programs			
Art teaching personnel (specialists)			
Generalists teaching art			
Student productions and exhibitions			
Assemblies and field trips			
Visiting artist residencies			
Access for students with special needs			
Equipment, instruments, or supplies			
Art facilities (new space)			
Increased intersect of technology with art			

Arts Education Program Implementation Continuum

CONTINUUM RATING	FOUNDATIONAL				BUILDING						PROGRESSIVE	
	Norwalk La Mirada	LACOE	Hacienda La Puente	Rosemead	Culver City	Santa Monica	Burbank	Pasadena	Beverly Hills	Castaic		Compton
1. Standards-based Curriculum												
A1. Framework	6	1	6	10	7	10	10	6	6	10	7	7
A2. Standards process	6	6	6	7	6	10	8	7	10	10	8	8
A3. Sequential curriculum	0	5	1	10	5	10	7	7	6	10	8	8
A4. Integration	5	4	6	6	6	10	6	6	6	10	7	7
2. Instruction and Methodology												
A5. Students' progress and outcomes	3	3	1	6	6	10	10	6	7	7	6	6
A6. Equal access and inclusion	3	6	6	4	6	10	6	6	6	6	6	6
A7. Variety of methodology	8	7	6	7	2	7	7	6	7	8	8	8
A8. Quality instruction	2	3	3	3	2	7	3	7	7	3	11	11
A9. Support resources	6	7	6	4	11	7	11	7	5	7	8	8
3. Student Assessment												
A10. Approaches	1	3	1	3	6	6	6	6	6	3	7	7
A11. Formal assessment	5	6	1	1	6	6	6	6	7	7	11	11
A12. Information to improve T&L	1	2	1	1	1	2	5	6	5	7	11	11
A13. Performances & portfolio	7	0	1	1	2	6	6	7	6	11	11	11
A14. Embedded strategies	2	1	1	2	6	6	7	6	6	6	8	8
4. Professional Development												
A15. Long-range plan	1	4	4	3	5	1	1	7	6	11	8	8
A16. Knowledge bases	2	6	6	5	6	5	6	7	5	7	11	11
A17. Professional development resources	2	11	6	3	7	3	6	7	10	12	8	8
A18. Collaboration	3	4	7	5	3	3	6	7	11	12	11	11
5. Program Administration & Staff												
A19. Policy	11	10	10	11	12	10	11	10	11	12	12	12
A20. Staff	7	2	7	6	1	7	6	7	10	8	8	8
A21. Leadership	8	8	8	4	8	8	7	9	11	11	8	8
6. Partnerships/Collaborations												
A22. Outside agencies	8	6	6	1	11	11	11	10	6	3	12	12
A23. Partnerships	7	7	7	1	7	10	7	10	6	6	8	8
A24. School organization	2	2	4	1	6	8	7	10	3	7	12	12
7. Funding												
A25. Budget	3	5	4	8	2	3	6	4	7	11	8	8
A26. Stability	2	4	3	7	1	3	6	4	7	7	8	8
A27. Partnerships	2	2	6	2	12	10	6	8	3	3	11	11
A28. Oversight	7	0	7	6	7	5	7	5	6	11	12	12
8. Resources and Facilities												
A29. Facilities, storage and safety	2	1	6	7	7	6	5	6	7	7	12	12
A30. Equipment and materials	3	1	2	6	6	5	7	7	7	8	12	12
A31. Outside resources	3	6	5	2	7	3	10	5	7	2	7	7
9. Evaluation Tools												
A32. Evaluation tools	4	2	1	5	2	2	1	6	5	7	11	11
DISTRICT INDEX (out of 12 pts.)	4.1	4.2	4.5	4.6	5.7	6.6	6.7	6.8	6.8	7.8	9.3	9.3
DISTANCE ALONG CONTINUUM	34%	35%	38%	39%	47%	55%	56%	57%	57%	65%	77%	77%
NOTE: Survey ratings were converted to a 12 pt. continuum for analysis Legend: Foundational Building Progressive												

Increased Student Access

Scale: 0 = No increase in student access
 1 = An increase at individual schools
 2 = An increase at most or all schools

Area of Increased Access	Hacienda La Puente			Rosemead			LACOE			Culver City			Sta Monica-Malibu			Burbank			Pasadena			Beverly Hills			Castaic			Compton											
	E	M	H	E	M	H	SE	JC	Alt	E	M	H	E	M	H	E	M	H	E	M	H	E	M	H	E	M	H	E	M	H									
School Level	2	1	1	1	1	na	2	2	2	2	1	1	1	1	1	2	1	1	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	1	1	na	2	1	na	2	1	na	2	1
Art classes offered	2	1	1	1	1	na	2	2	2	2	1	1	1	1	1	2	1	1	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	na	2	1	na	2	1	na	2	1
Student enrollment in arts classes	1	1	1	1	1	na	2	2	2	2	1	1	2	1	1	2	1	1	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	na	2	1	na	2	1	na	2	1
Hours of instruction offered	1	1	1	2	1	na	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	1	1	2	1	1	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	na	2	1	na	2	1	na	2	1
Afterschool programs	1	1	1	1	1	na	1	2	2	2	2	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Art teaching personnel (specialists)	1	1	1	1	1	na	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	1	1	2	1	1	2	2	2	2	2	2	na	2	1	na	2	1	na	2	1
Generalists teaching art	2	1	1	1	1	na	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	1	1	2	1	1	2	2	2	2	2	2	na	2	1	na	2	1	na	2	1
Student production & exhibitions	2	1	1	1	1	na	2	1	1	2	1	1	2	1	1	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	na	2	1	na	2	1	na	2	1
Assemblies and field trips	1	1	1	1	1	na	1	2	2	2	2	2	1	1	1	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	na	2	1	na	2	1	na	2	1
Visiting artist residencies	2	2	2	2	2	na	2	2	2	2	2	2	1	1	1	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	na	2	1	na	2	1	na	2	1
Access for students with special needs	2	2	2	2	2	na	2	2	2	2	2	2	1	1	1	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	na	2	1	na	2	1	na	2	1
Equipment, instruments, or supplies	2	2	2	2	2	na	1	1	1	2	1	1	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	na	2	1	na	2	1	na	2	1
Art facilities (new space)	1	1	1	1	1	na	1	1	1	1	2	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	na	2	1	na	2	1	na	2	1
Integration of technology with art	1	1	1	1	1	na	2	1	1	2	2	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	na	2	1	na	2	1	na	2	1

Note: Norwalk-La Mirada USD elected not to complete this survey, as they had not begun to affect student access at the time of the focus group interview.