



Integrating Arts Learning with the Common Core State Standards

Produced by: CCSESA Arts Initiative



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California County Superintendents Educational Services Association (CCSESA)

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Integrating Arts Learning with the Common Core State Standards

This paper was prepared by Patty Taylor, consultant for the California County Superintendents Educational Services Association's (CCSESA)' Arts Initiative. Patty Taylor served as the Visual and Performing Arts Consultant for the California Department of Education and was a key leader in developing the Visual and Performing Arts Framework for California Public Schools. This paper focuses on how the arts integrate into the curriculum and explores the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) and the Visual and Performing Arts Standards through the lens of CCSESA Arts Initiative's Core Principles.

Introduction

The vision of the CCSESA Arts Initiative is that the visual and performing arts are an integral part of a comprehensive curriculum and essential for learning in the 21st century. All California students from every culture, geographic region and socioeconomic level deserve quality arts learning in dance, music, theatre, visual arts and media arts as part of the core curriculum. With this position in mind, the CCSESA Arts Initiative also supports and recognizes the important advantages of integrating learning in the arts with learning in the Common Core State Standards (CCSS). The adoption of the CCSS provides an opportunity for teachers at all grade levels to integrate content and strategies used in arts education into their classroom pedagogy.

This document describes how learning in the arts connects to the CCSS and how the CCSS connect to the arts, which leads to a discussion of integrating the arts with learning in the common core. In this document, learning in the arts is based on the guiding principles and content standards found in the *Visual and Performing Arts Framework for California Public Schools Kindergarten Through Grade Twelve*² and the *CCSESA Arts Initiative Guiding Principles*.

At the center of the CCSESA Arts Initiative is a set of eight guiding principles distilled from research on the needs of, and effective approaches for, comprehensive arts instruction and research on school change. No single principle stands alone. The principles are inter-related. Reaching high levels of student success in the arts requires implementation of all eight principles. By using the guiding principles as a frame in this paper, we focus on areas critical to implementing quality learning that integrates the CCSS and the visual and performing arts in order to increase students' academic achievement and engagement.

The CCSESA Arts Initiative Core Principles include:

- Enriched and affirming learning environments
- Empowering pedagogy
- Challenging and relevant curriculum
- High quality instructional resources
- Valid and comprehensive assessment
- High quality professional preparation and support
- Powerful family and community engagement
- Advocacy-oriented administrative and leadership systems

For a full description of the Core Principles, see the inside back cover of this document.



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Learning in the Common Core and The Arts

The Common Core State Standards (CCSS) are a result of a voluntary state-led effort begun in 2009 with stakeholders from nearly every state in the country contributing to their development. The goal of the project was to develop a set of K-12 standards that would help prepare students with the knowledge and skills needed to succeed in education and careers after high school. The California State Board of Education adopted the CCSS in 2010. The standards address the content areas of English Language Arts (ELA) and Mathematics. The standards are research and evidence based, aligned with college and work expectations in multiple disciplines, rigorous, and internationally benchmarked.

Within the ELA standards are literacy standards for history/social studies, science, and technical subjects. These K-12 standards provide a progression of knowledge and skills that prepare students to graduate from high school ready for college and careers. The CCSS defines "technical subjects" as courses "devoted to a practical study, such as engineering, technology, design, business, or other workforce-related subjects; a technical aspect of a wider field of study, such as art or music."³ Literacy standards for grades 6-12 are predicated on teachers of ELA, history/social studies, science, and technical subjects using their content area expertise to help students meet the particular challenges of reading, writing, speaking, listening, and language in their respective fields. The grades 6-12 literacy standards are not meant to replace content standards in those areas but rather to supplement them.

The CCSS for ELA are divided into four sections: Reading, Writing, Speaking and Listening, and Language. Each section contains a series of College and Career Readiness Anchor Standards, which are overarching standards that apply to all grade levels. Each anchor standard has a corresponding grade-level standard, defining what it means for students to meet that standard in a grade-level-appropriate way.

The CCSS for math outline a set of skills expected of math students of all levels. The Standards for Mathematical Practice state that

"these skills rest on important processes and proficiencies."³ In brief form, mathematically proficient students:

- Make sense of problems and persevere in solving them
- Reason abstractly and quantitatively
- Construct viable arguments and critique the reasoning of others
- Model with mathematics
- Use appropriate tools strategically
- Attend to precision
- Look for and make use of structure
- Look for and express regularity in repeated reasoning

Being college and career ready is defined by the Partnership for 21st Century Skills⁴ as preparing students with the following skills:

- **Communication** – sharing thoughts, questions, ideas, and solutions
- **Collaboration** – working together to reach a goal by putting talent, expertise, and smarts to work
- **Critical Thinking** – looking at problems in a new way, linking learning across subjects and disciplines
- **Creativity** – trying new approaches to get things done equals innovation and invention

While the CCSS at this time only include ELA and Mathematics, it is clear that these standards extend into all of the curricular areas. For example, as children enthusiastically describe all of the details they see and analyze why the artist used the colors and lines he or she did in a well-known painting such as *Starry Night* by Vincent Van Gogh, they are honing their ELA skills. When they calculate what percent of the painting is blue, they are using mathematical skills. When they do all of this, they are learning in the visual arts.



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LEARNING IN AND THROUGH THE ARTS AND IN THE COMMON CORE

Essential to this discussion is the College Board's research report *The Arts and the Common Core: A Review of Connections between the Common Core State Standards and the National Core Arts Standards Conceptual Framework*.⁵ The report was produced in collaboration with the National Coalition for Core Arts Standards (NCCAS) and is divided into two parts. One part is a content-based alignment study that focuses on arts-based examples and references already present in the ELA CCSS. Part two investigates areas of overlap between skills and habits emphasized in the CCSS and those outlined in NCCAS's Conceptual Framework. One noteworthy section looks at all four groups of the ELA College and Career Readiness Anchor Standards and their corresponding grade-level standards, analyzing the function of specific references to the arts (dance, music, theatre, visual arts, and media arts) in these standards. For example, among the 220 Reading standards reviewed, the study found that 50 utilized arts-based content as a tool for strengthening analysis and observation skills.

The arts content standards in the *Visual and Performing Arts Framework for California Public Schools (VAPA Framework)* are grouped under five strands: artistic perception; creative expression; historical and cultural context; aesthetic valuing and connections; relationships and applications. These strands parallel the learning described in the NCCAS's core arts standards.

The VAPA Framework, which includes State Board of Education adopted content standards in dance, music, theatre, and the visual arts states that, "Curriculum based on the arts content standards requires active learning through the study, practice, creation, or performance of works of art. This is accomplished through an educational program in which the arts are studied as discrete disciplines, the arts are related to each other, and the arts are related to and/or integrated with other areas in the curriculum." Many of the goals and outcomes stated about the CCSS are echoed in the VAPA Framework in regards to learning in and through the visual and performing arts.

As one reads through the strands and content standards in the arts, it is obvious that learning in the arts requires many core curriculum skills such as engaging in reading, researching, analyzing, writing, reflecting and speaking. Many CCSS math standards are essential to learning in the arts such as problem solving, estimating, understanding patterning, representing symbolically, representing symmetry and asymmetry, and applying mathematical skills to solve problems arising in everyday life.

Strategies, habits of mind, and processes used in arts learning can be effective in teaching core curriculum concepts and skills and helping students acquire the 21st century skills. For example, along with creating works in the arts, the arts content standards require: reading about the arts and artists; researching the arts from the past and present; writing and talking about the arts and artists to reflect on one's own observations, experiences, and ideas about the arts and the world. Students use clear criteria while participating in arts criticism based on significant, recognized works in the arts and on the students' own work in the arts.

Many documents that describe the CCSS include statements that reference the visual and performing arts. Examples include adding drawings or other visual displays to descriptions to clarify ideas, thought, and feelings, including multimedia components (e.g., graphics, sound). Also mentioned is using visual displays in presentations to enhance the development of main ideas or themes, creating engaging audio recordings of stories or poems that demonstrate fluid reading at an understandable pace, and reading text including scripts or musical scores.

There is an interdependent relationship between applying what is learned in the CCSS to learning in the arts and using strategies and content learned in the arts to teach the CCSS.



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THE BENEFITS OF INTEGRATING THE ARTS AND COMMON CORE

Integrating the arts promotes active and engaging project-based learning and assessment becomes performance based. It can be a new vision for all educators as to how the arts can be integrated into each of our everyday lives. While using arts strategies and processes in integrated lessons to support learning in the core curriculum does not provide a comprehensive and sequential curriculum in each of the arts disciplines, it does, however, open the doors to the arts for both teachers and students.

The challenge is to ensure that the arts are not used only as a tool to focus on other content, but are treated as a major content area (with identified skills, knowledge, and capacities) as in other curricular areas. This requires teachers to have content knowledge in the arts, an understanding of the sequential aspects of learning in the arts, and some experience with the pedagogy.

With the integration of the arts comes student motivation and engagement. This paper includes references to the unique ways in which the arts allow students to process information. This information comes from study and practice within the arts disciplines themselves and from all of the non-arts disciplines in the curriculum. For example, understanding and analyzing a variety of text is a key to achievement in the ELA CCSS. What might engage a student as much as written text is a script for a play, a well-recognized sculpture or painting, a musical score or perhaps lyrics and the dance that portrays those lyrics from a Broadway production. Students can engage in analysis of these varied texts. Analysis of these varied texts provides students with an engaging and creative approach to learning.

“The great news is that the common core standards call on so many things the arts do well,” wrote David Coleman, a lead writer of the ELA standards and president of the College Board. “The tradition of careful observation, attention to evidence and artists’ choices, the love of taking an artist’s work

seriously lies at the heart of these standards.” Careful analysis of specific scenes in drama, he added, provides a “particularly promising opportunity to explore at once textual evidence and visual interpretation” (Erik W. Robelen, Education Week).

DEFINING INTEGRATION

Dictionaries define “integration” as an act or instance of combining into an integral whole. An integral whole is one that is composed of parts that together constitute a whole with each part being necessary to the completeness of the whole. When this definition is applied to integrating the arts into the curriculum, we find a deeper approach to learning.

In their paper, *Defining Arts Integration*, Lynne B. Silverstein and Sean Layne note that the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts has provided programs and resources in both discrete arts instruction and in arts integration for over 34 years. They have recognized the growing interest in arts integration since 1999 and offer this definition of arts integration: “Arts Integration is an approach to teaching in which students construct and demonstrate understanding through an art form. Students engage in a creative process, which connects an art form and another subject area and meets evolving objectives in both.”⁶

The Southeast Center for Education in the Arts offers this definition: “Arts Integration is instruction combining two or more content areas, wherein the arts constitute one of the integrated areas. The integration is based on shared or related concepts, and instruction in each content area has depth and integrity reflected by embedded assessments, standards, and objectives.”⁷

In their book *Integrating the Arts Across the Content Areas*⁸ authors Lisa Donavon and Louise Pascale include the following definition: “Arts integration is the investigation of curricular content through artistic explorations. In this process, the arts provide an avenue for vigorous investigation, representation, expression, and reflection of both curricular content and the art form itself.” They sum up these definitions

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and state what integrating the arts can do for students in a way that explains the “what” and the “why” of arts integration:

"Integrating the arts is about deepening learning and about reaching all students of every ability, ethnicity, and linguistic background. It is most definitely about teaching students who learn in a variety of ways, not just through reading and writing. In the classroom, the arts are a vehicle for strengthening the core curriculum, and deepening and assessing learning. When the arts are integrated, learning is experienced in a variety of ways, allowing every student to be successful in various content areas."



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Core Principles to Guide The Integration Process

While the CCSESA Arts Initiative calls for a comprehensive and sequential arts education program for all students, it is recognized that there are many steps along the way to this goal. Considering the following eight Core Principles along with making connections between the visual and performing arts content standards and the CCSS is a step in the right direction. The core principles help us focus on the big picture that includes all of the factors that contribute to academic achievement and deeper learning for the students.

Under each core principle are guidelines, considerations, and/or examples that support and exemplify the Core Principle. You will find brief descriptions of lessons/units that are included in depth on the CCESSA Arts Initiative website.⁹

ENRICHED AND AFFIRMING LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS

A rich and affirming learning environment promotes participatory and inclusive learning in and through the arts for all students.

In the arts classroom, the environment is open to creativity, innovation, and practice. When students learn the language of the arts, they grow artistically and cognitively. They experience accomplishment and self-confidence as divergent, creative, and innovative learners. Learning in and through the arts builds solution seekers and problem solvers and allows for a diversity of learning styles and abilities. When participating in the arts, students collaborate as well as express their unique and personal style. In an environment that is safe, students affirm their understanding of respect and acceptance of others. This environment is where students thrive and learn the 21st century skills that they will need for their future.

Guidelines, Considerations, and Examples

Learning In and Through the Arts

Learning in and through the arts requires study, practice, and the creation and/or performance of works of art. The arts disciplines of dance, music, theatre, and the visual arts, including media arts, as with the content in any other curricular area, each have their own content standards and sequence of learning as detailed in the *Visual and Performing Arts Framework for California Public Schools, 2004*. While credentialed arts instructors deliver this program in middle and high schools, few elementary school classroom teachers have had the university courses or professional development to prepare them to teach the arts as discrete disciplines or to relate the arts to each other within the educational program for every student. All teachers should be able to integrate the arts with the CCSS and use arts strategies in teaching CCSS. The book *Integrating the Arts Across the Content Areas* provides an effective starting place for all teachers to explore arts integration and use arts strategies in their teaching.⁸

Studio Habits of Mind

"Studio thinking" or "Eight Habits of Mind" developed by Harvard Project Zero and the learning skills embodied in the CCSS are closely aligned.¹¹ Project Zero is an educational research group at the Harvard Graduate School of Education composed of multiple, independently-sponsored research projects. The eight studio habits of mind include developing craft, engaging and persisting, envisioning, expressing, observing, reflecting, stretching and exploring, and understanding the art world.^{10,11,12}

Three Aspects of Comprehensive Arts Instruction

- 1. Teaching the Discrete Arts Discipline** - Students learn the methods and techniques of the arts disciplines through active practice, creation and expression. In quality standards-based arts classrooms students read, research, communicate, reflect and critique the artistic process. Students understand the historical contexts of art works and cultural contributions of individual artists.

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2. Integration With Other Core Subjects - In arts integrated instruction there is clarity about disciplinary learning goals in the arts and in other content areas. Instruction is designed to integrate standards-based learning in both the arts and non-arts content areas. Students are engaging in the arts in disciplinary ways that develop, deepen and demonstrate their learning in other content areas.

3. Differentiated Instruction to Access Non-Arts Content - Arts learning instructional strategies provide teachers with multiple ways to engage students across all content areas. In differentiated instruction, students have multiple options for taking in information and making sense of ideas. This delivery model requires flexibility on the part of the teacher to adjust the curriculum and presentation of information to learners. Differentiated instruction is intended to address individual and diverse learning styles. In order for students to explore and deepen their understanding in the arts and non-arts content, the teacher must be able to recognize misunderstandings and redirect, modify or repeat instruction so that every child can demonstrate progress towards specific learning goals.

Learning Styles

Many people recognize that each person prefers different learning styles and techniques. Learning styles group common ways that people learn. Everyone has a mix of learning styles. One of the most widely used categorizations of the various types of learning styles is Fleming's VARK model,¹³ which includes visual learners, auditory learners, and kinesthetic/tactile learners. Visual learners have a preference for seeing in pictures and other visual aids and are supported through the visual arts. Auditory learners best learn through listening, which is supported through music. Kinesthetic/tactile learners prefer to learn through experience such as moving, touching, and doing, which is supported by dance. Theatre and the media arts cross the boundaries of each of the learning styles. Other learning styles may be added to this list such as verbal (linguistic), logical (mathematical), social (interpersonal), and solitary (intrapersonal). The point is that

including learning in the arts in the curriculum, helps meet the needs of all students.

Project-Based Learning

Project-based learning (PBL) is an instructional method that provides students with complex tasks based on challenging questions or problems that involve a student's problem solving, research, design, decision-making, investigative skills, and reflection. It includes teacher facilitation, but not direction. PBL is focused on questions that drive students to encounter the central concepts and principles of a subject in a hands-on method forming their own investigation of a guiding question. Through PBL, students learn from these experiences and apply them to the world outside their classroom. PBL emphasizes creative thinking skills by allowing students to find that there are many ways to solve a problem. Many definitions and examples of project-based learning including those that involve the arts can be found on the Edutopia web site.¹⁴

A Project-Based and Integrated Unit of Study Example

Michael Wantorek, a teacher in Southern California, developed a unit of instruction which provides an example of a 3rd and 4th grade arts integrated, project-based unit of study focused on the environment. This unit can be found in the CCSESA Arts Initiative Compendium of Teacher Learning.⁹ Using what they know about green architecture, students envision new technologies that could solve critical environmental issues in the future. Students create a pop-up model of their building with emphasis on foreground, middle ground and background, and explore creating a three-dimensional form (VAPA content standards). Students are encouraged to reflect on their work using the Studio Habits of Mind. This lesson integrates visual art, literacy and science. Students use reading, writing, listening, and speaking skills throughout the project, aligning to the core anchor standards in the CCSS.

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21st Century Learning Skills - The 4 Cs

As the Partnership for 21st Century Learning advocates states, “Learning and innovation skills increasingly are recognized as the skills that separate students who are prepared for increasingly complex life and work environments in the 21st century, and those who are not. A focus on creativity, critical thinking, communication and collaboration is essential to prepare students for the future.” They list the following skills as essential for 21st century college and career readiness often called the 4 Cs:

- Creativity and Innovation
- Critical Thinking and Problem Solving
- Communication
- Collaboration

When looking at the visual and performing arts content standards with an eye also on the CCSS, note how the pedagogy of the arts resembles what is asked for in the common core standards and the 21st century learning skills. This is evident in the following examples of Key Content Standards found in the VAPA Framework:

Discipline/ Grade Level	Example of 21st Century Learning
Theatre, Grade 2, Creative Expression Strand	Perform in group improvisational theatrical games that develop cooperative skills and concentration.
Music, Grade 3, Aesthetic Valuing Strand	Describe how specific musical elements communicate particular ideas or moods in music.
Visual Arts, Grade 4, Creative Expression	Use accurate proportions to create an expressive portrait or a figure drawing or painting.
Dance, Grade 5, Aesthetic Valuing Strand	Apply specific criteria to analyze and assess the quality of a dance performance by well-known dancers or dance companies (e.g., technical skill, musicality, dynamics, mood).

EMPOWERING PEDAGOGY

Empowering pedagogy is culturally and linguistically responsive, maximizing learning in and through the arts while developing student voice and opportunities for leadership for all students.

Making connections to students’ lives is a major component of effective instruction. The arts do just that since they require the expression of the individual’s life experience in solving artistic problems such as writing lyrics for a song, communicating his/her thoughts or feelings in a painting, becoming a character in an improvisation, or creating a series of dance movements. These experiences promote expression of a student’s voice. Pedagogy that encourages and supports students to bring their experiences, culture, heritage, and language into the classroom maximizes both learning in the CCSS and arts learning. Once engaged, the door is open for complex, hands-on learning experiences that call for active processing, deep and critical thinking, and personal reflection.

Guidelines, Considerations, and Examples

Culturally Responsive Pedagogies

Marguerite Vanden Wyngaard offers a four-part theory in her article, “Culturally Responsive Pedagogies” that supports the learning community as a whole while empowering each student intellectually, socially, emotionally, and politically by using cultural referents to impart knowledge, skills, and attitudes.¹⁵ The “4 Rs Theory” includes:

- **Relationship** – Educators establish strong relationships with students and offer opportunities to reflect and learn together.
- **Respect and Responsibility** – Students respect a teacher who is responsible for creating a safe learning environment and honors, listens to, and respects each student’s voice.

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- **Relevancy** – The teacher makes a link between the new learning and prior knowledge; understands and uses each student’s life outside the classroom; and finds ways to help their students see future possibilities for themselves and others.

History and Culture Strand

The Historical and Cultural Context strand in the VAPA Framework provides many opportunities for teachers to integrate learning in the arts and the CCSS in literacy and to understand the historical contributions and cultural dimensions of the arts. Students analyze the role of the arts in past and present cultures; they note human diversity as it relates to the arts and in the process they learn about their own heritage and about universal concepts. Students learn by applying their literacy skills to the present and the past cultural context and diversity of the arts. For example, in the 4th grade, students identify, sing, play, and compare musical styles from diverse cultures and time periods. In theatre they identify theatrical or storytelling traditions in the cultures of ethnic groups throughout the history of California.

Multicultural Dances Instructional Example

Heather Karsevar, a dance teacher at Clovis East High School, teaches a student Dance Repertory Company. She submitted the following project to the CCSESA Arts Initiative Arts Assessment Compendium¹⁷. It exemplifies pedagogy that is culturally responsive while developing student voice through dance. Photographs and videos of the student work are included online.

Learning Multicultural Dances - West African, Mexico, Hmong
Through this project students saw how influential cultural dances can be on developing their own style of dance. In general, life experiences influence us as artists. It is based on the assumption that once students understand this concept they can further understand the evolution of dance. This dance project utilized members of the Clovis East High School Dance Repertory Company, Hmong Dance Repertory (HDR),

the Folklorico Dance Company, and the Black Student Union (BSU). Students from HDR, Folklorico, and BSU taught their specific genre of dance to members of the Dance Repertory. After learning all three styles of dance including Asian Dance, Folkloric Dance, and West African Dance, members of the Dance Repertory created original dances to perform in class. Dance Repertory students incorporated more traditional Western styles of dance such as ballet, hip-hop, modern, and jazz, but had the opportunity to fuse the various cultural dances they learned into their own style.

In addition to learning how to recognize the evolution of dance, students also learned tolerance and understanding of students who are different from them. The arts bring students together who otherwise may not have known each other. Arts education, and this project in particular, opens doors for lifelong learning such as the ability to successfully communicate ideas to others, acceptance of those who are different from oneself, and the ability to question what one thinks one knows about another and to have the confidence and kindness to find the answer.

At the conclusion of this project the students were able to do the following:

- Recognize, and be open to learning about, the differences in those around them
- Memorize and perform dances in a genre outside their own comfort zone
- Collaborate with others to create an original work
- Ask more in-depth questions about themselves, the differences they see in others, and the world around them
- Visually see how, as artists, every artistic experience influences our own personal style and as people every life experience influences who we are

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Opportunities for Student Leadership Connects to 21st Century Skills

The arts offer many opportunities for leadership. For example, a strategy in theatre called mini-dramas, offers opportunities for student to develop cooperative, organizational, and leadership skills along with skills in literacy and theatre. Each group of students is assigned a portion of a text to interpret, which can be written text such as a script, a portion of a video, an illustration or art work, or a dance or musical

piece. All group members act in the mini-dramas with each group member also taking on a specific role such as director, screenwriter, special effects, stage manager, or understudy. They decide on a story line, and write the script and perform for their classmates. All students take notes while watching other mini-dramas and ask questions about the other groups' interpretations of their assigned texts.¹⁶ Students learn key aspects of careers in theatre while actively engaging in the arts discipline.

CHALLENGING AND RELEVANT CURRICULUM

A challenging and relevant curriculum engages every student at each grade level in the arts. It also builds a full range of language, literacy, and other content area skills. This curriculum is cognitively complex, coherent, relevant, challenging and integrated with the common core.

For academic success in the arts, students need a rigorous, sequential, comprehensive, and well-articulated standards-based program with consistency in approach at each grade level each year. This will provide students with the aesthetic knowledge, skills, and capacities to live in and take responsibility for our complex 21st century global world that requires high level communication, innovation, and creativity as well as economic, political, and social knowledge about other cultures.

While students are learning in each of the arts disciplines they must become effective communicators in order to work together in a supportive environment. Discussion and reflection in the arts is a rich and compelling aspect of the creative process. The five strands that organize the visual and performing arts content standards reveal the challenging and relevant content of the arts and also

the many intersections of the arts and the common core. The strands are:

- Artistic Perception
- Creative Expression
- Cultural and Historical Context
- Aesthetic Valuing
- Connections, Relationships, Applications¹⁷

In a conversation about the arts content standards, a high school dance teacher said, "Students take dance so they don't have to read and write in class." After some reflection on this statement, she realized that even though dance is a non-verbal means of communication, ELA and mathematical skills are needed to be successful in the process of creating a dance. Her students did engage in research, reflection, and critiques that depend on reading, writing, speaking, listening, and language skills as well as solving problems relating to the use of space, time, and sequencing movement to music, which relate to mathematical processes and proficiencies. Teachers of theatre, choral music, and those who teach students to create and perform poetry are acutely aware of these cross curricular connections.

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Guidelines, Considerations, and Examples

Arts Integration Guide

A first step in thinking about integrating the arts and the common core might be to look at some of the documents in the CCSESA Arts Initiative Toolbox.⁹ Start with the *K-6 Visual and Performing Arts Curriculum Guide: Examples of Integrated Lessons*. This document was developed to provide elementary classroom teachers with a realistic and useful tool for creating arts integrated lessons. The connections made between disciplines are based on mutual concepts being taught. The guide includes examples of standards-based lessons in dance, music, theatre, and visual art, integrated with science, history-social science, math and language arts.

Lesson Design

The lesson design in the guide is based on the principles of *Understanding by Design* by Grant Wiggins and Jay McTigue. Subjects and standards are chosen based on shared concepts or big ideas, from which essential questions are formed. It is easy to incorporate the CCSS when using the lesson plan format provided. As you review a few of the lessons in the guide you begin to gain an understanding of how learning in each subject is enriched through the integrated student objective. For example, the first lesson is for Kindergarten and the essential question is “How do dancers and writers use lines?” The integrated student objective is stated in the following statement: “Students will be able to use lines to write letters of the alphabet, and to create shapes with their bodies.” A list of skills and materials/resources is given before the step-by-step lesson is presented.

The Visual and Performing Arts Content Standards

After reviewing the visual and performing arts content standards in the VAPA Framework, another way to become familiar with the arts content and how it spirals through the grade levels is to look at the reviewed Content Standards outlined in two CCSESA Arts Initiative documents on the CCSESA Arts Initiative web site. One document is *The Arts in*

the Elementary Classroom: A Visual and Performing Arts Content and Delivery Guide. The second is the *Middle Grades Visual and Performing Arts Content and Program Guide*.⁹ In these documents, the VAPA Content Standards make the essential ideas of the arts explicit in columns at each grade level. The presentation format makes the sequence of the content, vocabulary, processes and materials clear and evident, and some suggestions for the teacher and connections to the core curriculum are made at each grade level.

Reachable Objectives

When developing integrated curriculum, include reachable objectives in both the arts form and the common core standards being addressed in each lesson or unit. Consider what can be accomplished in one lesson and which objectives require the ongoing development of craft, practice, and persistence over time.

Clear Objectives in a Lesson Example

A lesson titled “From Fractions to Rhythm” found in the *K-6 Visual and Performing Arts Curriculum Guide: Examples of Integrated Lessons* includes the following essential question: “Why is the concept of fractional equivalency important to both dancers and mathematicians?”¹⁷ The integrated student objective is written in the following way: “Students will demonstrate an understanding of fractional equivalency by creating rhythmic movement phrases and notating those phrases with mathematical equations.” Students have prior knowledge in rhythmic perception and dance structure as well as fractions as parts of a whole. The new concepts are duration and note value, rhythm, and fractional equivalency. Prerequisite skills and new skills are listed for both dance and mathematics. As the students engage in the lesson, time is allowed for discussion, exploration, and practice in both subjects. It is assumed that after an assessment, the teacher will determine if students have met the objectives, or if further instruction beyond the one lesson is needed to fully achieve the objectives.

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Mutually Reinforcing

The visual arts are sometimes called “nonverbal” modes of communication. While this is true, other steps are involved in the artistic process. For example, painting a piece of artwork is a nonverbal activity. Often, other steps are involved such as research, reflection, and oral critique which depend on reading, language, and literacy skills. The connection between the arts and literacy is mutually reinforcing. For example, script writing and performance strategies from theatre provide creative ways for students to demonstrate their writing, speaking and listening skills. In his paper, *Guiding Principles for the Arts Grades K-12*, David Coleman, one of the authors of the Common Core Standards, points out connections between the CCSS and the arts. For example, the common core in literacy requires that students compare the evidence they see in a script, and observe how different productions draw on and interpret the script. Different renditions of a musical score or a landscape in a painting also provide evidence of how artists interpret the content.¹⁸

New Media

New media and electronic technology can be incorporated into lessons, presentations, and explorations in each of the arts disciplines and utilized to connect the arts with other curriculum areas. For example, middle school students create three-dimensional figures using animation software and blueprint design for a story they have written using their literacy skills. The media arts provide a perfect vehicle for students to create visual evidence, stories, documentaries, teaching tools, and performances of content from other subject areas.

In a recent article entitled *More than Comic Books*, educator Bill Bowerman-Cornell shares how he has incorporated graphic novels to engage students in literature and the arts.¹⁹ He utilizes technology in providing a way for students to explore fiction/non-fiction through graphic design and technology. By using multiple media, he opens the door for students to think about narrative works in different ways. He writes that graphic novels employ a variety of styles of

art and lettering, which make them an excellent subject for study of the arts as students often include allusions to other works of arts by famous artists. This is not seen as supplanting regular reading methodologies, but to enhance relevance and engagement by students. Marc Prensky wrote in *Our Brains Extended* that “wise integration of our evolving and powerful technology demands that we rethink our curriculum. . . . As educators embrace these new capacities, it’s important to understand that technology isn’t just a ‘new way to do old things’ which is mostly how we use it in schools today. That is, in fact, the most trivial use of technology. . . . Technology’s great boon to education is that it enables students to do powerful new things that they couldn’t do before.”²⁰

Connecting ELA and the Arts

The Arts and the Common Core Curriculum Mapping Project developed by Common Core, Inc.²¹ promotes the importance of all students studying the arts. In this project, they have highlighted places where ELA instruction could be enhanced by connecting a genre or particular text, or a theme of a unit, to works of art, music, or film. They suggest, for example, that students study self-portraiture when they are encountering memoirs. Students might compare a novel, story, or play to its film or musical rendition. Where a particular period of literature or the literature of a particular region or country is addressed, works of art from that period or country may also be examined. In each case, connections are made to the standards in the CCSS themselves.

Teachers Work Together

ELA teachers who choose to use ELA Maps or other arts integrated materials may do so on their own, by team teaching with an art or music teacher or perhaps by sharing the materials with the art or music teacher, who could reinforce what students are learning during the ELA block. Using integrated curriculum should not substitute for or infringe in any way on the instruction students should receive in separate visual and performing arts classes.

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Core Principles to Guide The Integration Process

Snapshots of Possibilities

A look at the content of the arts gives a snapshot of possibilities for rich curriculum that integrates the arts and the CCSS. In each arts discipline, students participate in aesthetic valuing in which they describe, analyze, and do critiques of works in the arts, which leads to making informed judgments in assessing artworks. Theatre requires finely honed speaking and listening skills. Music provides an excellent venue for applying mathematical skills. Dances are choreographed in a sequence that requires careful physical and visual considerations. In visual arts, students express their thought and feelings in regard to the physical world they see as well as their personal thoughts and feelings.

HIGH QUALITY INSTRUCTIONAL RESOURCES

High-quality instructional resources are aligned with the common core standards and the visual and performing arts standards providing equitable access for all students.

The ELA CCSS provides many instructional resources. Districts need to adopt long-range plans for providing these resources to be used both in the ELA curriculum and in the arts curriculum. As learning in the arts progresses through the grade levels, so do the needs for appropriate instructional resources including facilities and equipment. The arts along with other curriculum areas also require the use of new media and electronic technology for researching, recording and editing student work and performances, and to use as an important art form in today's high tech world.

Guidelines, Considerations, and Examples

Criteria for Evaluating Instructional Materials

The California Visual and Performing Arts Framework includes "Criteria for Evaluating Instructional Materials: Kindergarten through Grade Eight" for use in California Public Schools.²² Providers of instructional materials in the visual and performing arts are encouraged to reinforce, when appropriate, the grade-level-designated content standards for mathematics, science, history-social science, or ELA to explain relationships and solve problems in the arts. It also calls for publishers to include recommendations for reading and writing about the arts that are aligned with the appropriate grade-level ELA standards. This speaks to the interdependence of the curricular areas and the standards for those areas.

Common Core State Standards Modules

The California Department of Education has produced a series of modules that help educators better understand CCSS and how they fit into the curriculum. Located on the Brokers of Expertise web site, these resources provide essential information regarding CCSS and implementation.²³

Student Access to the Arts as Text

When students are involved in reading and understanding text or examining evidence, the CCSS encourage teachers to select text from the wide range of materials including those that are a part of learning in the arts. A musical score is a text, as is a painting, a script, a DVD of a piece of choreography and a theatrical performance or script.¹⁷ Learning in ELA is greatly enhanced when students have access to reproductions of major artworks, and DVDs of performances in music, dance, and theatre to be used as a catalyst for learning to analyze and discuss text.



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Selecting Works in the Arts

As David Coleman points out, selecting works in the arts to use as text and worthy of close study must be carefully considered. The Publisher's Criteria for the Common Core State Standards in Literacy in the state of New York offers the following guidance: "Given the emphasis of the Common Core Standards on close reading, the texts selected should be worthy of close attention and careful re-reading. To become career and college ready, students must grapple with a range of works that span many genres, cultures, and eras and model the kinds of thinking and writing students should aspire to in their own work."²⁴ School districts may be forming teams of ELA teachers to select texts that support learning in the CCSS. Those teams should include arts teachers, arts administrators, and/or university arts and arts education professors.

VALID AND COMPREHENSIVE ASSESSMENT

Valid and comprehensive assessment promotes reflective practice and data-driven planning in order to improve academic, linguistic, and sociocultural outcomes for all students in both the common core standards and the visual and performing arts.

Informal and formal assessments should be ongoing, iterative practices in the classroom and designed to improve learning. This can be accomplished through observation, performance, and reflection. Much of what is learned in the arts is demonstrated in performance processes such as singing a song, creating a sculpture, acting a scene, creating and performing a dance. However, learning in the arts also includes skills and abilities learned in the CCSS. Integrated lessons and units that involve project-based learning require students to use many facets of the curriculum is powerful in that it reflects the integrated way in which we live our lives and it provides opportunities for assessment of student growth in multiple disciplines.

Guidelines, Considerations, and Examples

Build on Prior Knowledge

Learning must build on a student's prior knowledge in each subject area so it is important to assess students' prior knowledge and ability in understanding arts knowledge and skills. Students' understanding of content knowledge is often demonstrated through a variety of activities such as improvising a scene, drawing a picture, singing a song, or performing a dance sequence. Teachers should complete a range of assessments to determine both students' understanding and application of content. As teachers make the necessary shifts to CCSS, they will be guided by a range of assessments that will help provide feedback and data on student learning and achievement.

Evidence of Student Performance: Formative and Summative Assessment

Formative assessment is a term for any type of assessment used to gather student feedback and improve instruction. Formative assessments occur during the learning process, often while students are engaged in other activities. Anecdotal records, periodic quizzes or essays, diagnostic tests and in-class or homework assignments are all types of formative assessment because they provide information about a student's progress. Summative assessment occurs at the end of a unit of study in order to measure the amount of information a students has learned. Most traditional assessment types are considered summative.

Alternative Assessment

Alternative assessment, often called authentic, comprehensive, or performance assessment, is usually designed by the teacher to gauge a student's understanding of material. Examples of these measurements are open-ended questions, written compositions, oral presentations, projects, experiments, and portfolios of student work. Alternative assessments are designed so that the content of the assessment matches the content of the instruction. Effective assessments give students feedback on how well

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they understand the information and on what they need to improve, while helping teachers better design instruction. Assessment becomes even more relevant when students become involved in their own assessment. Students taking an active role in developing the scoring criteria, self-evaluation, and goal setting more readily accept that the assessment is adequately measuring their learning.

Performance assessments are natural to the arts. Performance assessments require students to perform as a means of showing they understand class material. The types of performances can include actual performing, as in performing a monologue, or performance by creating, as in creating a political cartoon. These assessments evaluate complex cognitive processes as well as attitude and social skills, and students often find them engaging. When developing performance assessments of student learning in an interdisciplinary lesson or unit, include rubrics and other assessment tools that assess both student learning in the CCSS and in the visual or performing arts content or strategy used.

Performance Tasks

Smarter Balanced defined performance tasks in their Race to the Top application as follows: "[Performance tasks]... will provide a measure of the student's ability to integrate knowledge and skills across multiple [content] standards — a key component of college- and career readiness. Performance [tasks] will be used to better measure capacities such as depth of understanding, research skills, and complex analysis, which cannot be adequately assessed with [selected response] or constructed response items."²⁵ These items are intended to help administrators and policymakers implement CCSS and prepare for next-generation assessments and provide an early look into the depth of understanding of the CCSS that will be measured through the new assessment system. While these items/tasks are not intended to be used as a sample test, they are helpful to educators so that they can meet the requirements of the new assessments.²⁶

The California Office to Reform Education "Arts by Design Institute" puts an emphasis on Smarter Balanced Performance Task Specifications. They frame the performance task process as providing a stimulus, processing information, and producing a product as seen in the following examples:

- **Stimulus** – Graphs, charts, 2D and 3D figures, models, maps, photos, readings, audio clips, video clips, data, issue/problem, artistic presentation, etc.
- **Information Processing** – Comprehension questions, research, investigation, small group discussion, analyses, etc.
- **Product** – Essay, story, script, oral presentation with graphics or media, displays, models, proof, design, etc.

A Compendium of Lessons and Units

The CCSESA online *Compendium of Teacher Learning and Exploration in Arts Assessment* represents K-12 specialist and generalist teachers from across California showcasing examples of teacher and student work in the arts.⁹ The goal of this project is to encourage K-12 arts specialist teachers and classroom teachers to develop and implement authentic, classroom-based curriculum and assessments. The online compendium features teacher practice, documents this curriculum development process and features multiple assessments that provide evidence of student learning and understanding in the arts. Many of the lessons and units include interdisciplinary learning and instruction.

Assessment Example

Christopher Lee is a high school filmmaking teacher. He documented a unit of instruction for the CCSESA Arts Initiative *Compendium of Lessons and Units*.²⁷ The unit is in filmmaking focusing on the art of dramatic storytelling in the narrative short format. From pre-production to final output, students are expected to develop skills in screenwriting, pre-production planning, digital video editing, and post production. Students created a 2-3 minute film that inspires hope, love, and/or triumph of the human spirit. While this unit was developed before the ELA CCSS were released, one can see applications of the ELA standards throughout. This

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is an excellent example of how arts teachers are already addressing ELA standards in their curriculum. After reading the unit goals, click on "How I am Using Assessment Results," "My Project Assessment," and the Resource section to see the assessment rubrics that were developed for this unit. This unit addresses the 21st Century skills contained in the CCSS.

Arts Assessment Resource Guide

Another important CCSESA publication is the *Arts Assessment Resource Guide*.²⁸ Myths about arts education assessment are dispelled and resources are provided in this guide. One notable study on arts assessment done by the National Art Education Association (Dorn, Madeja and Sabol) is cited in the guide which points out that at least 75% of the teachers involved in the study identified the following criteria as the five they most commonly used to assess students in visual arts. These five criteria relate directly to the 21st century skills that are contained in the CCSS:

1. **Effort** – Are students trying, particularly with something new or challenging?
2. **Problem-solving ability** – When faced with an obstacle, how do students respond? What do they do next?
3. **Improvement or growth** – Students may not master a technique or concept, but are they making progress toward that goal? Are students challenging themselves?
4. **Classroom behavior** – Classroom behavior might look a little different in an arts context. Are students supportive of each other, offering constructive criticism about each other's work? Are students working collaboratively when appropriate and independently when appropriate?
5. **Self-motivation or initiative** – Are students engaged? Are they pursuing answers to their own questions?

Formative Assessment

In the *Southeast Comprehensive Center's* policy brief entitled, *Using Formative Assessment to Improve Student Achievement in the Core Content Areas*, the writers underscore the importance of ongoing assessment: "As teachers and students are engaged in a continuous process of gathering evidence,

making judgments, and adjusting/ differentiating instruction with all students when a class, course, or unit begins, the frequency with which students are assessed, are engaged in forms of self-assessment, and teachers are making adjustments forward or backward are all part of effectively teaching and assessing with learning progressions."²⁹

HIGH QUALITY PROFESSIONAL PREPARATION AND SUPPORT

High-quality professional preparation and support provides comprehensive and ongoing opportunities for teachers and administrators to develop and implement powerful learning opportunities that connect arts strategies to learning in the Common Core State Standards for all students.

Administrators, classroom teachers, arts specialist teachers, and teachers in all content areas who are interested in the power of integrating the arts into their curriculum need high quality professional development. Professional development that most powerfully supports growth in classroom practice includes processes to deepen arts knowledge and content and provides opportunities for connections across disciplines and subject areas where appropriate. Professional development is seldom "one size fits all." Providers must be very aware of the prior knowledge of their participants just as teachers must of their students. Through well-developed professional learning educators strengthen their instructional practice. This often happens over time through meaningful professional development.



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Core Principles to Guide The Integration Process

Guidelines, Considerations, and Examples

Eleven Regional Arts Leads Offer Professional Development

The CCSESA Arts Initiative has positioned a county office in each of its 11 regions to expand their services to include a wide range of professional development, technical assistance, planning, and support programs for arts education. Through the Curriculum and Instruction Steering Committee and its Visual and Performing Arts Subcommittee, regional arts leads provide an infrastructure for arts leadership statewide to strengthen delivery of K-12 arts education. County offices of education are uniquely positioned to convene districts for professional development, resource sharing, collaborative learning and problem solving.

A Professional Development Resource

The *Guidebook for High Quality Professional Development in Arts Education* is a user-friendly toolkit for designing and implementing professional development in the visual and performing arts to meet needs identified through “big picture” planning by schools, districts, and counties.⁹ This guide provides a review of practical, research-based approaches for professional development of K-12 educators and cites examples of how county offices of education and other organizations have created effective programs and strategies in various settings around the state. It provides examples from urban, suburban, and rural counties. The guidebook builds knowledge of emerging best practices in professional development discovered through a survey of 46 county offices of education, as well as focused interviews of county and regional VAPA leads and an extensive analysis of current literature.

Example of a Professional Development Partnership

The following account of a professional development offering was submitted to the CCSESA Art Initiative publication *Counties on the Move* by Regional Arts Lead Linnea Mandell in Humboldt County.⁹

The flyer headline and quotation below helped attract a wide range of experienced teachers and pre-service teachers to an unusual and successful arts integration training created through a partnership between the Humboldt County Office of Education (HCOE) and the Humboldt State University (HSU) Elementary Education Program, with support from the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation and Ford Foundation Arts Education Initiatives received by HCOE and HSU respectively.

The workshop series, “Artful Teaching in Testy Times” was designed to address needs identified in surveys conducted through the CCSESA Arts Initiative. A number of elementary teachers who considered themselves “non-artsy” people expressed a desire to increase the amount of arts instruction in their daily academic programs; however, since their teacher preparation did not include arts instruction, they needed to learn more about using the arts standards and effectively designing and teaching arts-infused lessons. HSU student teachers and veteran teachers from many different districts attended the training together. The group included student teachers with university training in arts integration, attending both with and without their mentor teachers, as well as classroom teachers from diverse backgrounds with varied years of teaching experience.

Thanks to HSU’s grant, the workshop series was offered free to all mentor teachers attending as a team with their student teachers. The opportunity for this diverse group of educators to participate in the activities and discussions together enriched the learning for everyone. The training introduced participants to instruction integrating visual arts with social studies, language arts, science, and math. Lessons included African American history and Gees Bend quilts, descriptive poetry and bookmaking, aquatic ecosystems and fish printing, and geometry and constructing tetrahedrons.

Professional Learning Communities

In multiple settings across the state, professional learning communities (PLCs) have been established to allow teachers to join other educators to professionally grow together.

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Professional learning communities are comprised of groups of educators, administrators, community members, and other stakeholders who collectively examine and improve their own professional practice. Typically, individual groups are small and meet regularly over a significant period of time. PLCs can be school-based, district based, cross-district, or national; the membership in a particular PLC is determined by its focus. For example, after participating in an arts integration professional development course, a grade-level team of teachers may form a PLC to focus on improving their ability to integrate the visual and performing arts with the CCSS; a multi-grade group of teachers may collaborate on ways to ensure a coherent learning pathway for their students. Effective PLCs are data-informed, standards-driven, and focused on instruction, equity, and results. As in study or support groups, the work of PLCs expands the knowledge of participants and encourages innovation and excellence.

The California Arts Project

The California Arts Project (TCAP),³⁰ one of the California Subject Matter Projects, is a statewide professional development network with the mission to improve teaching and learning in dance, music, theatre, and visual arts. TCAP offers a variety of statewide and regional leadership and professional development programs serving as a learning community of educators.

POWERFUL FAMILY AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Powerful family and community engagement builds on the wealth of knowledge in the community to inform, support, and enhance learning in the arts and the common core.

Positive and supportive relationships develop among students, teachers, parents, and the school community when they are involved in creating and performing in the arts. Student performances and art exhibits bring the community to the school. The arts change the school environment in ways that build a sense of community within and around the school. It becomes evident to the community that the arts are helping students learn in the CCSS when they hear students describe their work in the arts and what they learned while creating and performing in the arts. Those who understand the power of the arts in the education of each student have the opportunity to take a role in community discussions as an advocate for integrating the arts into the new direction the curriculum will be taking. The CDE developed a list of resources for parents and guardians that will help provide guidance on CCSS implementation.³¹

Guidelines, Considerations, Examples, Comments

Community Resources and Parent Involvement

Section 4 of the VAPA Framework titled “Guidance for Visual and Performing Arts Programs” provides an overview of the school program in each of the arts disciplines. Within those four sections for dance, music, theatre, and the visual arts is a very useful description of community resources and parent involvement.



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California State PTA Resources

The California State PTA believes the arts are essential for a creative, engaged, work-prepared and civic-minded student population and that the arts are a critical link to learning success. That is why, through their SMARTS program, they are leading an effort to create a sustainable and ever-growing network of parents, family members and caring adults who will act at the local and state levels to promote and support access for all students to a complete education that includes the arts. As they help parents understand the CCSS, they also support the integration of the arts with the CCSS. For excellent information on powerful family and community engagement in the arts, go to the California State PTA website.³² Click on SMARTS. Here you will find the publication jointly produced by the CCSESA Arts Initiative and the California State PTA entitled *Be a Leader for Arts Education: A Guidebook to Expand Arts Learning in Public Schools* as well as many other resources.

Leading the Way

The CCSESA Arts Initiative document, *Leading the Way to Arts Education: A Reference Guide for Educational Leaders*⁹ encourages district leaders to empower parents to:

- Develop collaborations with local education foundations
- Educate local policymakers by telling their own stories and bringing policymakers on site visits to observe successes and challenges in the arts program
- Conduct letter writing campaigns in support of quality arts education to local and state legislators
- Participate in district and school site planning committees
- Provide translators at events and written materials in multiple languages
- Provide hands on arts workshops
- Plan and offer family art and music nights

Parents as Community Assets and Advocates

Parents are a valuable resource as their children's first and most influential teachers and advocates. This makes parents the best advocates for arts programs in their schools and districts. Parents understand their children as unique individuals, and most believe that the whole child must be considered to realize their potential in their community and society. District leaders should work with their schools' staff to promote parents' understanding of the value of arts education for the holistic development of all children and how arts education promotes achievement in the CCSS. It is important for parents to be able to recognize a quality arts education program and that students learn better if they're creating and appreciating the arts. District leaders should help parents become familiar with the VAPA content standards and should facilitate their understanding of the research that demonstrates that the arts are essential to equitable classrooms and can be employed to address issues of diverse languages, race, culture and learning styles through multiple entry points. Resources should be collected and organized to help parents answer specific questions as well as to gain broader understanding about arts education opportunities and the challenges related to implementing arts programs in the schools.



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Core Principles to Guide The Integration Process

ADVOCACY-ORIENTED ADMINISTRATIVE AND LEADERSHIP SYSTEMS

Advocacy-oriented administrative and leadership systems institute systemwide mechanisms to focus stakeholders on the need for all students to experience the benefits of learning in and through the visual and performing arts.

The entire school community has to take ownership of including the arts in every child's education. The arts taught as an important aspect of learning in the core curriculum provides a powerful way for schools to begin working towards an educational program that includes the arts as discrete disciplines. Administrators need to ensure that all stakeholders are aware of the power of the arts. This requires an ongoing expansion of the district's community of arts education supporters.

Guidelines, Considerations, Examples, Comments

Advocating for Arts Education

Advocating for arts as part of the core curriculum can take on many different forms. Making arts learning visible is a powerful way to engage community, parent, and education leaders. The arts themselves provide an impetus for great conversations about the benefit learning in dance, music, theatre, and visual arts has on student motivation, engagement, and achievement. Advocates can be especially effective if they develop strategic messages for specific audiences and determine a thoughtful course to pursue using a wide array of strategies. The most important aspect of advocacy is keeping the child center stage! A wealth of resources have been created to support arts advocacy efforts at the state, region, county, and local levels.

National and State Resources

One click on a web search for Arts Education Advocacy brings you to multiple high-level national organizations that provide excellent resources for advocacy and leadership in the arts. Three such national organizations are the Arts Education Partnership,³³ the Americans for the Arts,³⁴ and the Kennedy Center for Performing Arts.³⁵ The California Alliance for Arts Education works on a statewide level to advocate for the arts and supports the connection between the arts and the CCSS.

CCSESA Arts Initiative Resources

The CCSESA Arts Initiative website has two resources on advocacy and leadership for the arts. One is *Leading the Way to Arts Education: A Reference Guide for Educational Leaders*, and the other is the *Advocacy Toolkit for K-12 Arts Education in California Schools*. Both provide information about key steps in advocacy and educational leadership to facilitate inclusion of the arts in the educational program of every student. *Leading the Way to Arts Education* includes leadership roles, responsibilities and resources for district administrators, school board members, school site leaders, teachers, and the leadership role teaching artists can take.



Conclusion

The CCSS implementation indicates a new direction in education. These internationally benchmarked standards represent a nationwide recognition that students need to do more than memorize information for recall. As students advance through the grade levels, they must have the ability, inclination, and alertness to apply new skills and knowledge to different situations, including those that are novel. Educators are being called upon to help students develop the critical inquiry skills of artists, writers, mathematicians, scientists, and historians and encourage them to generate new ideas and self-expression through collaboration, risk-taking and problem solving.

In view of the goals of the CCSS, every student in California deserves to be offered a comprehensive curriculum that includes learning in the arts. In classrooms where they gain knowledge and skills in and through the arts, students will also gain the tools and life skills that dance, music, theatre, visual arts, and the media arts provide, such as being capable of imagining what is possible and realizing that they have the potential and ability to contribute to their communities and to society.

Equitable classrooms are created when every child has the opportunity to learn in the ways they learn best. Learning in and through the arts provides multiple ways for every child to practice and apply critical thinking, to acquire and apply knowledge in meaningful ways, to discover and express their own experiences, to investigate creative ideas, to make new connections for themselves and others, and to learn the value of collaboration, interdependence, and compassion.

As we hand over this world of complex and challenging problems to our children, we must also provide them the tools to develop the creativity and flexibility to solve problems we cannot yet imagine. The arts are essential for envisioning solutions and perceiving and communicating meaning in a multifaceted and nuanced world that demands continual planning and decision making. We owe it to our children and to our collective future to develop their minds to learn, to think, to imagine, and to discover solutions through the arts.



Endnotes

- 1 CCSESA is comprised of California's 58 county superintendents of schools. CCSESA Arts Initiative Web site: www.ccsesa.org.
- 2 Curriculum Development and Supplemental Materials Commission, *Visual and Performing Arts Framework for California Public Schools* (California Department of Education, 2004), Web site: www.cde.ca.gov/re/pn/fd/documents/vpa.pdf.
- 3 Common Core State Standards Web site: <http://www.corestandards.org/>.
- 4 Partnership for 21 Century Skills, Web site: <http://p21.org/>.
- 5 The College Board, *The Arts and the Common Core: A Review of Connections Between the Common Core State Standards and the National Core Arts Standards Conceptual Framework*, New York, N.Y., December 2012.
- 6 Kennedy Center ArtsEdge, <http://artsedge.kennedy-center.org/~media/ArtsEdge/LessonPrintables/articles/arts-integration/DefiningArtsIntegration.pdf>.
- 7 Southeast Center for Education in the Arts, The University of Tennessee at Chattanooga <http://www.utc.edu/Outreach/SCEA/SCEA-Arts-Integration-Definition.pdf>.
- 8 Donavon, L., and Pascale, L. *Integrating the Arts Across the Content Areas*. Huntington Beach, CA: Shell Education Publishing, Inc., 2012.
- 9 California County Superintendents Educational Services Association (CCSESA) Arts Initiative Web site: www.ccsesaarts.org. Navigation tips: Click on Toolbox, then Arts Assessment Compendium. Scroll down to Find Project. The lessons and units are sorted by discipline, grade, and by teacher.
- 10 Studio Habits of Mind from Studio Thinking, Hetland, Winner, et al, Teachers College Press, 2007.
- 11 Studio Habits of Mind. Web site: http://www.pz.gse.harvard.edu/studio_thinking.php.
- 12 Harvard Graduate School of Education. The Studio Thinking Project. Web site: http://www.pz.gse.harvard.edu/studio_thinking.php.
- 13 VARK Learning Styles. Neil Fleming. Web site: <http://www.vark-learn.com/english/index.asp>.
- 14 Edutopia Project –Based Learning. Web site: <http://www.edutopia.org/project-based-learning>.
- 15 Article included in *Teaching City Kids*; ed. Joe L. Kincheloe and Kecia Hayes; New York; Peter Lang, 2007.
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- 18 Coleman, David. *Guiding Principles for the Arts Grades K-12*. Web site: <http://usny.nysed.gov/rttt/docs/guidingprinciples-arts.pdf>.
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- 21 Common Core Curriculum Project, Common Core, Inc. Web site: <http://commoncore.org>.
- 22 California Department of Education. *Visual and Performing Arts Framework for California Public Schools*. California Department of Education, 2004. Web site: www.cde.ca.gov/ci/cr/cf/documents/vpaframewrk.pdf.
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- 24 Coleman, D. and Pimentel, S. Revised Publishers' *Criteria for the Common Core State Standards in English Language Arts and Literacy*. National Governors Association, Council of Chief State School Officers, Achieve, Council of Great City Schools, National Association of School Boards of Education, 2012. Web site: http://www.corestandards.org/assets/Publishers_Criteria_for_3-12.pdf.
- 25 Smarter Balanced Web site: General Item Specifications: Web site: <http://www.ode.state.or.us/wma/teachlearn/commoncore/performance-tasks.pdf>.
- 26 Smarter Balanced Web site: <http://www.smarterbalanced.org/sample-items-and-performance-tasks/>.
- 27 The unit is available in the compendium at CCSESA Arts Initiative Web site: <http://www.ccsesaarts.org/content/assessmentCompendium.asp>. Click on the list of teachers to find Christopher Lee and his unit.
- 28 The Arts Assessment Resource Guidebook is available at the CCSESA Arts Initiative Web site: http://www.ccsesaarts.org/content/assessment_guide.asp.
- 29 Southeast Comprehensive Center: <http://secc.sedl.org/>.
- 30 Information about the California Arts Project can be found at the TCAP Web site: <http://csmg.ucop.edu/tcap/>.
- 31 California Department of Education. Common Core State Standards Resources for Parents and Guardians can be accessed at the following Web site link: <http://www.cde.ca.gov/re/cc/documents/ccsresourcesforparentsandguardians.pdf#search=common%20core%20standards%20california%20parent&view=FitH&pagemode=none>.
- 32 California State PTA Web site: <http://www.capta.org>.
- 33 Arts Education Partnership Web site: <http://www.aep-arts.org/>.
- 34 Americans for the Arts Web site: http://www.americansforthearts.org/get_involved/advocate.asp.
- 35 Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts Web site: <http://www.kennedy-center.org/about/>.

CCSESA Arts Initiative Vision and Core Principles

The visual and performing arts are an integral part of a comprehensive curriculum and are essential for learning in the 21st century. All California students from every culture, geographic region and socio-economic level, deserve quality arts learning in dance, music, theatre, and visual arts as part of the core curriculum.

Rich & Affirming Learning Environments

Create a safe, affirming, and enriched environment for participatory and inclusive learning in and through the visual and performing arts for every group of students.

Empowering Pedagogy

Use culturally and linguistically responsive pedagogy that maximizes learning in and through the visual and performing arts, actively accesses and develops student voice, and provides opportunities for leadership for every group of students.

Challenging & Relevant Curriculum

Engage every group of students in comprehensive, well-articulated and age-appropriate visual and performing arts curriculum that also purposefully builds a full range of language, literacy, and other content area skills, including whenever possible, bilingualism, biliteracy, and multiculturalism. This curriculum is cognitively complex, coherent, relevant, and challenging.

High Quality Instructional Resources

Provide and utilize high quality, standards-aligned visual and performing arts instructional resources that provide each group of students with equitable access to core curriculum and academic language in the classroom, school, and community.

Valid & Comprehensive Assessment

Build and implement valid and comprehensive visual and performing arts assessment systems designed to promote reflective practice and data-driven planning in order to improve academic, linguistic, and sociocultural outcomes for each specific group of students.

High Quality Professional Preparation & Support

Provide coherent, comprehensive and ongoing visual and performing arts professional preparation and support programs based on well-defined standards of practice. These programs are designed to create professional learning communities of administrators, teachers, and other staff to implement a powerful vision of excellent arts instruction for each group of students.

Powerful Family/Community Engagement

Implement strong family and community engagement programs that build leadership capacity and value and draw upon community funds of knowledge to inform, support, and enhance visual and performing arts teaching and learning for each specific group of students.

Advocacy-Oriented Administrative/Leadership Systems

Provide advocacy-oriented administration and leadership that institute systemwide mechanisms to focus all stakeholders on the diverse visual and performing arts needs and assets of each specific group of students. These administrative and leadership systems structure, organize, coordinate, and integrate visual and performing arts programs and services to respond systemically to the needs and strengths of each group of students.



CCSESA

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