



Sonoma County Arts Education Alliance  
 c/o Creative Sonoma  
 141 Stony Point Rd. #110, Santa Rosa, 95401  
[Debbie.yarrow@sonoma-county.org](mailto:Debbie.yarrow@sonoma-county.org)  
 707-565-6123

September 9, 2020

Dear School District Governance Teams,

The Sonoma County Arts Education Alliance (AEA) brings together students, parents, educators, and community members who understand the vital role of the arts in every student’s well-rounded education. This letter is to offer support for your school district in navigating the challenging budget and staffing decisions ahead. We are here to help.

The arts will be fundamental in addressing the needs of our students and families affected by the traumatic experiences unfolding. We ask that you not only plan to expand arts education in the transition to hybrid learning but also hold budget discussions to sustain arts education programs in upcoming years. The arts are a solution partner in addressing social emotional learning, practicing traits articulated in the Sonoma County [Portrait of a Graduate](#), encouraging attendance, and contributing to a joyful, welcoming school climate. Learning both in and through the arts remains an essential component of educating the whole child.


The arts are key to healing, learning, and resiliency of our students. We ask that some arts education programs are maintained in the current environment of distance learning. In this time of fear and isolation, continuing to provide a comprehensive, state-mandated arts education is integral for our students. If cuts are unavoidable, we would like to ensure that reductions to the arts are not disproportionate to other curriculum.

Everything begins with good communication, so the AEA requests that your district identify arts education liaisons who can connect and communicate with us to create effective arts education options that may not be readily apparent. Ideally these liaisons would represent key stakeholders in your district: board trustees, curriculum directors, district and school administrators, teachers, students and community members. We have a team ready with ideas and alternatives; we just need the contact information for your designated liaison(s).


Lastly, we encourage your district to utilize the Sonoma County [Arts Education Framework](#). This tool was created last year, not with this crisis in mind, but remains relevant by offering a menu of options to support access and equity in arts education. The Framework contains examples, strategies, and resources throughout the county.


The AEA is ready and committed to help you advocate for all our students’ access to the arts they need and deserve. We look forward to hearing from you and will touch base by phone or email to schedule a meeting as soon as your schedule allows. We look forward to working with you to bring a high quality arts education to every student!


Sincerely,  
 Sonoma County Arts Education Alliance

  
 William L. Adams  
 Windsor USD Trustee


  
 Karen McGahey  
 SCOE/Retired


  
 Liza Eichert  
 McNear Elementary  
 Principal

  
 Brett Wilson  
 Proctor Terrace Elementary  
 Principal


  
 Brandon Krueger  
 Windsor USD  
 Superintendent, Retired


  
 Betha MacClain  
 Cloverdale USD  
 Superintendent

  
 Kristen Madsen  
 Creative Sonoma

  
 Ashleigh Worley  
 Luther Burbank Center for the Arts

  
 Elizabeth Evans  
 Santa Rosa City Schools

  
 Wendy Cilman  
 Santa Rosa Symphony

  
 Debbie Yarrow  
 Creative Sonoma