Declaration of the Rights of All Students to Equity in Arts Learning
CREATE CA defines **EQUITY in Arts Education*** as the right of every student to engage and succeed in powerful, high quality, standards-based arts learning PreK-12. All students from every race, culture, language background, geographic region, and socio-economic level must have the opportunity to fully develop their own artistic, cultural, and linguistic heritage while expanding opportunities to study and explore artistic expressions across different cultures and time periods.

*We define arts education to include courses of study and interdisciplinary learning in dance, music, theatre, and visual and media arts, aligned with the State Standards and reflecting the provisions of the California State Education Code.*

1. The right to equitable access to PreK-12 free, coherent, and sequential standards-based arts learning that is part of the core curriculum and that provides both integrated and discrete visual and performing arts learning opportunities; and the right to equitable outcomes as a result of this access, without distinction on account of race, culture, language, religion, national origin, geographical location, or legal status.

*I have the right to participate and succeed in high-quality courses in all the arts disciplines as part of my basic education, regardless of my background, culture, language or place of residence.*
2. The right to special protection for every student’s artistic and aesthetic development. The right to protection from policies and practices that exclude or preclude certain students or populations from equitable access to and success in powerful and coherent arts learning PreK-12.

*I have the same right to fully develop my creative potential at every grade level and not be excluded for any reason.*

3. The right to arts learning that is culturally and linguistically responsive and relevant, with attention to those populations that have traditionally been excluded or precluded, such as English Learners, students of color, foster youth, homeless youth, students in poverty, migrant students, and special needs students.

*I have the right to engage in arts education that reflects, respects and builds on my culture, language and background.*

4. The right to arts learning programs in every school, district, and community that are funded and supported with the necessary resources, including qualified administrators, teachers, teaching artists, and other staff, adequate materials, and appropriate facilities to support powerful culturally and linguistically responsive arts learning.

*I have the right to receive the resources I need to be successful in my arts studies in dance, music, theatre, media and visual arts, including the proper supplies and facilities, and especially qualified teachers and curriculum that honor all cultures and languages.*

5. The right to educators, leaders, and parents/community who are knowledgeable about the intrinsic and extrinsic benefits of arts learning for individual students, families/communities, the nation, and global society.

*I have the right to be supported by leaders in my community and school who understand the benefits of an arts education to prepare me for college, career and life.*

6. The right to be brought up in school and community environments that value and protect the arts and equity as essential to the full development of every student, and that demonstrate those values/beliefs in their public policies and practices.

*I have the right to learn and practice the arts in a positive environment where everyone understands and acts on the knowledge that I am engaging in valuable and important work.*
STUDENT RIGHT #1:
THE RIGHT TO EQUITABLE ACCESS TO PREK-12 FREE, COHERENT, AND SEQUENTIAL STANDARDS-BASED ARTS LEARNING THAT IS PART OF THE CORE CURRICULUM AND THAT PROVIDES BOTH INTEGRATED AND DISCRETE VISUAL AND PERFORMING ARTS LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES; AND THE RIGHT TO EQUITABLE OUTCOMES AS A RESULT OF THIS ACCESS, WITHOUT DISTINCTION ON ACCOUNT OF RACE, CULTURE, LANGUAGE, RELIGION, NATIONAL ORIGIN, GEOGRAPHICAL LOCATION, OR LEGAL STATUS.

I HAVE THE RIGHT TO PARTICIPATE AND SUCCEED IN HIGH-QUALITY COURSES IN ALL THE ARTS DISCIPLINES AS PART OF MY BASIC EDUCATION, REGARDLESS OF MY BACKGROUND, CULTURE, LANGUAGE OR PLACE OF RESIDENCE.

DECLAREATION IN ACTION:

MURRIETA VALLEY UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

At the end of 2017, the pro-arts Murrieta Valley Unified School District (MVUSD) publicly strengthened their vision to provide all students with diverse opportunities for participation in arts instruction by adopting the Declaration of Student Rights to Equity in Arts Learning. The district has a young, affluent, family-centered population and this reinforced their awareness and appreciation of the value of the arts and arts education.

Implementation of arts learning in MVUSD grew and was supported when a district drama teacher was hired to be the arts coordinator. She, along with board members, the Superintendent, and the Curriculum Director looked at an exemplary arts program in Palm Springs. This inspired the formation of a 30-member Steering Committee in 2017. The committee developed a Strategic Plan for the Arts, which will provide equitable and sequential standards-based arts learning for all students K-12. The committee included administrators, teachers, students, community members, teaching artists, parents, and a Board of Education member, and was coached by the California Alliance for Arts Education.
WHERE WE STARTED
- No adopted arts curriculum or scope and sequence
- No VAPA coordinator
- Few community partners

COMMITTED IN THE LCAP
- Used funding to build and support arts programs
- Committed funding for five years in the Strategic Plan for the Arts

GROWING
- Hired a full-time arts coordinator
- Created an Arts Steering Committee
- Adopted and developed a Strategic Plan for the Arts
- Developed scope and sequence at all levels
- Formed non-profit foundation for the arts

PRIORITY POPULATION: The student population is diverse, representing more than 8 ethnic groups and 39 languages and dialects. There are eight Title 1 schools in the district; 6% of the students are English learners and 33% qualify for free or reduced lunches.
STUDENT RIGHT #4: 
THE RIGHT TO ARTS LEARNING PROGRAMS IN EVERY SCHOOL, DISTRICT, AND COMMUNITY THAT ARE FUNDED AND SUPPORTED WITH THE NECESSARY RESOURCES, INCLUDING QUALIFIED ADMINISTRATORS, TEACHERS, TEACHING ARTISTS, AND OTHER STAFF, ADEQUATE MATERIALS, AND APPROPRIATE FACILITIES TO SUPPORT POWERFUL CULTURALLY AND LINGUISTICALLY RESPONSIVE ARTS LEARNING.

I HAVE THE RIGHT TO RECEIVE THE RESOURCES I NEED TO BE SUCCESSFUL IN MY ARTS STUDIES IN DANCE, MUSIC, THEATRE, MEDIA AND VISUAL ARTS, INCLUDING THE PROPER SUPPLIES AND FACILITIES, AND ESPECIALLY QUALIFIED TEACHERS AND CURRICULUM THAT HONOR ALL CULTURES AND LANGUAGES.

DECLARATION IN ACTION:
MORENO VALLEY UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

When Create CA launched its statewide effort to promote the Declaration of the Rights of All Students to Equity in Arts Learning, this district was an enthusiastic first adopter. The Declaration was presented at a School Board meeting by students who read the rights theatrically and wore costumes to emphasize their dedication to arts learning.

For the last six years, Moreno Valley Unified School District has been “growing the arts,” according to the district’s Visual and Performing Arts Coordinator. Due to exceptional support from the Superintendent and the School Board, students throughout the district from kindergarten to high school are receiving instruction in the arts, and professional development has been available to teachers.

PRIORITY POPULATION: Since 2015, our district is focusing providing opportunities for all ethnic groups, students of poverty, and foster youth in the Arts. Our focus is currently based on grade level. We are working to provide meaningful, standards-based arts instruction to the primary elementary grade levels and special education students.
WHERE WE STARTED
- No elementary music
- No VAPA Coordinator

COMMITTED IN THE LCAP
- Hired elementary music teachers
- Designated instructional space at the elementary and middle schools for arts instruction
- Upgraded seating, lighting and sound in existing high school theatres
- Building a 20 million dollar performing arts center on the campus of Moreno Valley High School

GROWING
- Implemented Ballet Folklorico and classes such as concert band and choir
- Provided more arts instruction in the lower grades
- Sparked student enthusiasm for participating in the arts
- Increased parent awareness of a wider range of arts courses

MORENO VALLEY
GROWING THE ARTS: PROGRESS CHART
STUDENT RIGHT #1: THE RIGHT TO EQUITABLE ACCESS TO PREK-12 FREE, COHERENT, AND SEQUENTIAL STANDARDS-BASED ARTS LEARNING THAT IS PART OF THE CORE CURRICULUM AND THAT PROVIDES BOTH INTEGRATED AND DISCRETE VISUAL AND PERFORMING ARTS LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES; AND THE RIGHT TO EQUITABLE OUTCOMES AS A RESULT OF THIS ACCESS, WITHOUT DISTINCTION ON ACCOUNT OF RACE, CULTURE, LANGUAGE, RELIGION, NATIONAL ORIGIN, GEOGRAPHICAL LOCATION, OR LEGAL STATUS.

The Humboldt County Office of Education (HCOE) has been, over the years, in support of a quality arts education for all students. Over eleven years ago, their Regional Arts Lead began that effort. What was challenging then, and is still a challenge for the current Arts Lead is the lay of the land. Humboldt County is widely diverse with a small population but large footprint. They have the highest number of residents having an ACE (Adverse Childhood Experience) score of 4 or higher. Of the nearly 8,729 7-12 grade students in the county, only 36% received instruction in the arts in high school while in middle school it dwindled to 29%.

HCOE has just adopted an Arts Education Plan that creates greater awareness with districts, schools, and the community so that every student engages in the highest quality education in the arts. The aim is for all students to develop skills and literacy in the arts that develop habits of mind transferable to other academics, to their role in the community and to careers.

Among the strategic directions for the county and the districts is to increase the use of LCAP funding for the arts and to commit financial resources to improve facilities, buy equipment and materials, and to provide professional development for teachers.

HCOE is a leader to be watched as they strive to support districts and the community to overcome challenges and rural obstacles in order to provide high-quality arts education for all students.

STUDENT RIGHT #4: THE RIGHT TO ARTS LEARNING PROGRAMS IN EVERY SCHOOL, DISTRICT, AND COMMUNITY THAT ARE FUNDED AND SUPPORTED WITH THE NECESSARY RESOURCES, INCLUDING QUALIFIED ADMINISTRATORS, TEACHERS, TEACHING ARTISTS, AND OTHER STAFF, ADEQUATE MATERIALS, AND APPROPRIATE FACILITIES TO SUPPORT POWERFUL CULTURALLY AND LINGUISTICALLY RESPONSIVE ARTS LEARNING.

DECLARATION IN ACTION:

HUMBOLDT COUNTY OFFICE OF EDUCATION

The Humboldt County Office of Education (HCOE) has been, over the years, in support of a quality arts education for all students. Over eleven years ago, their Regional Arts Lead began that effort. What was challenging then, and is still a challenge for the current Arts Lead is the lay of the land. Humboldt County is widely diverse with a small population but large footprint. They have the highest number of residents having an ACE (Adverse Childhood Experience) score of 4 or higher. Of the nearly 8,729 7-12 grade students in the county, only 36% received instruction in the arts in high school while in middle school it dwindled to 29%.

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Among the strategic directions for the county and the districts is to increase the use of LCAP funding for the arts and to commit financial resources to improve facilities, buy equipment and materials, and to provide professional development for teachers.

HCOE is a leader to be watched as they strive to support districts and the community to overcome challenges and rural obstacles in order to provide high-quality arts education for all students.
**WHERE WE STARTED**
- Few arts programs due to rural and socioeconomic barriers
- Few arts courses offered at the secondary level
- No plan in place for improving the access to, quality of, or availability of arts instruction for all students

**GROWING**
- More funding and resources available to support arts education
- Classroom teachers learning to provide arts integration instruction
- More non-profit organizations partnering with schools
- Using local resources such as working artists in the schools

**COMMITTED IN THE LCAP**
- Districts used $13,000 for instrument repair
- One fourth of the 31 districts in the county called out the arts in their LCAP funding
- Districts will be guided in using LCAP funds to help implement the goals of the Strategic Plan
STUDENT RIGHT #4:
**THE RIGHT TO ARTS LEARNING PROGRAMS IN EVERY SCHOOL, DISTRICT, AND COMMUNITY THAT ARE FUNDED AND SUPPORTED WITH THE NECESSARY RESOURCES, INCLUDING QUALIFIED ADMINISTRATORS, TEACHERS, TEACHING ARTISTS, AND OTHER STAFF, ADEQUATE MATERIALS, AND APPROPRIATE FACILITIES TO SUPPORT POWERFUL CULTURALLY AND LINGUISTICALLY RESPONSIVE ARTS LEARNING.**

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**I HAVE THE RIGHT TO RECEIVE THE RESOURCES I NEED TO BE SUCCESSFUL IN MY ARTS STUDIES IN DANCE, MUSIC, THEATRE, MEDIA AND VISUAL ARTS, INCLUDING THE PROPER SUPPLIES AND FACILITIES, AND ESPECIALLY QUALIFIED TEACHERS AND CURRICULUM THAT HONOR ALL CULTURES AND LANGUAGES.**

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DECLARATION IN ACTION:

**MORGAN HILL UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT**

Since 2014, Morgan Hill Unified School District (MHUSD) has been on the move toward ensuring the right of every student to be successful in a robust Visual and Performing Arts (VAPA) program. The district had a record of providing exceptional arts courses at the high school, but there was little instruction in the arts in the middle schools and less in K-6. Now the there is a new focus on arts education.

A cadre of teachers participated in professional development in standards based arts instruction and integrating the arts into the curriculum. Then the teachers formed a VAPA Steering Committee. A district-wide strategic plan for the arts is in its final draft with the assistance of the California Alliance for Arts Education and in 2017, the district adopted the Declaration of Student Rights for Learning in the Arts.

Now, MHUSD provides arts learning in every school. VAPA programs began to be included in their LCAP funding and the amount was doubled in 2018-2019. Five elementary schools are focus academies with themed interdisciplinary arts curriculum around STEAM, Math and Music, Heath Science, Environmental Science, and Engineering. All students have equitable access to the arts in these programs.

**PRIORITY POPULATION:** MHUSD is making a concerted effort to maintain students’ interest in the arts starting in the upper elementary grades and through middle school with the goal of more underserved students in high school VAPA courses and programs.
WHERE WE STARTED
- Arts courses in high school, but little arts instruction in middle and elementary schools
- Lack of professional development in integrating the arts or arts discipline specific instruction
- No plan for a district-wide VAPA program inclusive of all students

COMMITTED IN THE LCAP
- Funds provided for College and Career Readiness with a focus on the arts
- Funding providing for student engagement and school climate through the arts

GROWING
- A strategic plan for VAPA is in its final draft
- Professional development provided for classroom and arts teachers
- Focused academies include instruction in the arts for all students

WHERE WE STARTED
- Arts courses in high school, but little arts instruction in middle and elementary schools
- Lack of professional development in integrating the arts or arts discipline specific instruction
- No plan for a district-wide VAPA program inclusive of all students
I have the right to learn and practice the arts in a positive environment where everyone understands and acts on the knowledge that I am engaging in valuable and important work.

The adoption of the Declaration of the Rights of All Students to Equity in Arts Learning by the Chula Vista Elementary School District (CVESD) was a public affirmation that the school district and the community 100% values and will continue to protect the right of all students to learn and practice the arts.

It began with the “Community Opus Project” in 2010 as an after-school music education program on the high-need west side of Chula Vista. The program soon grew from two pilot schools to six. Then, work began with arts organizations on a Visual and Performing Arts (VAPA) Strategic Plan. That strategic plan positioned Chula Vista Elementary School District (CVESD) well for the significant changes in public education coming down the pike such as the implementation of the state’s new funding formula for schools.

The School Board of Education adopted the VAPA Strategic Plan followed by a critical funding decision in 2014-15—a commitment to hire full-time music instructors and provide music and arts instruction during the school day for all students.
WHERE WE STARTED
- Few VAPA teachers
- Arts not included in the school day for all students
- No Strategic Plan for the Arts in place

COMMITTED IN THE LCAP
- Invested $15 million in arts instruction over three years
- Funded arts instruction during the school day
- Funded full-time VAPA teachers
- Targeted additional support for disadvantaged students

GROWING
- Developed and adopted a VAPA strategic plan for the district
- Hired full-time music instructors
- Provided music and arts instruction during school day for all students

CHULA VISTA
GROWING THE ARTS: PROGRESS CHART
All California students deserve to have equitable access to quality culturally and linguistically responsive arts education to provide them with the skills they need to succeed in college, career, and life in today's globalized world environment.

Yet particular groups of students experience significant barriers to access, participation and success in arts learning that are directly linked to pervasive inequities in our educational system. Recognizing this, Create CA reviewed data from the Arts Ed Data Project* about student participation in arts learning across the state and determined that the following groups of students have the least access: African American, Latino and students on free and reduced lunch. Given this situation, Create CA has made these groups the priority of the statewide work and has launched a Declaration of the Rights of All Students to Equitable Arts Learning.

We encourage each district to review its own data in all its forms** and determine which group(s) of students have the lowest participation rate(s). These can become the priority for the district. Often, the data indicates that systemic problems are affecting multiple groups and solving that specific problem can have a major impact. Legal barriers that seem insurmountable (i.e. mandatory time in Language Development classes or receiving Special Education services) can be overcome in a variety of creative ways, which could include artists in the classroom with the main teacher, training for the teacher in arts integration, or other collaborative models that have been highly successful in small sample sizes.