

**Laguna Beach Unified School District**  
**Visual and Performing Arts Education Plan 2015-2020**  
**Executive Summary**

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**Mission**

Laguna Beach Unified School District will provide exemplary arts education programs to ensure that every child participates in high Quality K-12 arts learning that leads to success in college, career, and in the community in whatever field he/she pursues.

**Purpose**

Drawing on the rich history of the arts in Laguna Beach, this document describes an action plan to further the implementation of the Visual and Performing Arts programs of the Laguna Beach Unified School District. The goals herein align with the District's mission statement specifying that *each student gains the knowledge, experience, world perspectives, and skills needed to become a lifelong learner and producer in a competitive and interconnected world*. The plan provides a road map towards achieving an exemplary visual and performing arts program in which all students have the opportunity to develop their appreciation, skills, and literacy in the arts. Through mastery of the arts, students become effective communicators enhancing and expanding academic and life experiences. Students will possess the creative and collaborative skills of the 21<sup>st</sup> century learner, the "4 C's."

**Summary**

The Visual and Performing Arts Education Plan contains six goals that address the specific needs of a comprehensive arts program. The references used to help define these goals were the *National Core Arts Standards*, 2014; *The Qualities of Quality: Understanding Excellence in Arts Education*, Project Zero, Harvard University, 2009; and *Ed Codes 51210, 51220 and 8950*.

The Goals are:

- To design a comprehensive K-12 standards-based curriculum offering students access to knowledge and skills from a broad spectrum of visual and performing arts pathways.
- To connect and integrate the arts across academic disciplines.
- To provide students with learning spaces and materials, including technology, that promote high quality learning experiences in the arts.
- To partner with and utilize community resources in order to enhance the arts education programs.
- To provide teachers opportunities to enhance skills and knowledge.
- To establish leadership structures to implement a successful VAPA curriculum K-12.

Each Goal has specific action steps to be taken with resulting outcomes, budget implications, and recommended timelines for implementation. The timeline is identified in phases to allow flexibility considering mandates, fiscal restraints, and other district goals while still providing a roadmap for long-term implementation. A *Year 1 Implementation Activities* is included to provide an overview of first steps that may be considered as priority items.

**Rationale**

Study of the arts in its many forms- whether as a stand alone subject or integrated into the school curriculum- is an essential part of achieving success in school, life, and work.<sup>1</sup> The arts can help students become tenacious, team-oriented problem solvers who are confident and able to think creatively.<sup>2</sup> Purposeful student engagement required for visual and performing arts teaches the Partnership for 21<sup>st</sup> Century "4 C's" skills of creativity, collaboration, critical thinking, and

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communication. David Coleman, author of the Common Core State Standards and President and Chief Executive Officer of the College Board, states,

Meaningful appreciation and study of works of art begins with close observation. The Core Standards in Literacy similarly describe reading as the product of sustained observation and attention to detail. Particularly when encountering complex art, or reading the level of complex text students will need to be ready for college and careers, students will need to learn to re-examine and observe closely... The Core Standards in Literacy likewise require students to analyze “language that is particularly fresh, engaging, or beautiful.”<sup>3</sup>

Research further indicates positive outcomes for comprehensive, inclusive arts education, K-12. Current data indicates:

- Involvement in the arts promotes academic success.<sup>4</sup>
- Learning in the arts helps students develop a sense that they can be agents of their own learning and that they can make a positive change in their own lives and in their surroundings.<sup>5</sup>
- Improved student behavior and attendance rates are attributed to the schools’ arts programs.<sup>5</sup>
- The arts reach students who are not otherwise being reached.<sup>6</sup>
- The arts promote complexity in the learning experience.<sup>6</sup>

**The Visual and Performing Arts Education Plan**

The Laguna Beach Unified School District Visual and Performing Arts Education Plan was written by a team of District teachers, administrators, board members, parents, and community partners. The team’s work was facilitated by the Orange County Department of Education.

Research by the team leading up to the writing of this plan included: 1) discussing the District’s long-range goals, 2) learning about current educational initiatives including the new State Standards for Language Arts, and 3) reading the Qualities of Quality monograph on arts education from Harvard University’s Project Zero. Subsequently, the team envisioned what can be built upon in current exemplary arts programs to ensure that every child in the District receives a high quality K-12 arts education that leads to success in college, career, and community in whatever field he/she pursues. The plan should be monitored regularly and revisited in 2020 to evaluate accomplishments and re-envision new goals.

Attached are:

1. Visual and Performing Arts Education Plan Team Members
2. Year 1 Implementation Activities
3. 5-Year Visual and Performing Arts Education Plan

**References**

<sup>1</sup> *Making the Case for the Arts*, Arts Education Partnership, 2005

<sup>2</sup> Letter to School Education Community Leaders, Arne Duncan, Secretary of Education, 2009

<sup>3</sup> *Guiding Principles for the Arts: Grades K-12*, David Coleman, presentation for the New York State Department of Education, 2011

<sup>4</sup> *Involvement in the Arts and Human Development*, James S. Caterall, Chapleau, Iwanaga, 1999.

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<sup>5</sup> *Third Space: When Learning Matters and Critical Evidence: How the Arts Benefit Student Achievement*, National Assembly of State Arts Agencies, 2005.

<sup>6</sup> *Champions of Change: The Impact of the Arts on Learning*, Arts Education Partnership & President's Committee of the Arts and Humanities, 1999.