



Los Angeles County

ARTS EDUCATION PROFILE:

Report on public schools, 2015-17

December 2017

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Now in its fifteenth year, the LA County Arts Education Collective (formerly Arts for All) is dedicated to making the arts core in K-12 public education. In addition to making grants to school districts, providing professional development to arts educators and administrators, and providing other support to the arts education community, the Arts Ed Collective also works to measure the quantity, quality and equity of arts education offered in public schools. This is a report of our findings from the Arts Ed Profile survey, covering the 2015-17 academic years.

The Arts Ed Profile school survey was administered to all 2,277 schools across LA County over an 18-month period. Schools in all 81 districts, four charter school districts, and a number of other individual charter schools were surveyed. A companion district-level survey was sent to administrators in the same districts and networks. In total, 924 schools in 78 districts completed at least part of the survey. In order to generalize the responses to all schools in LA County, survey weights for schools were calculated, and an adjustment for non-response was implemented. Using these statistical tools, it is possible to state with a high degree of confidence that the findings presented here—except the few instances noted in the text—apply to all schools in LA County, not just those that responded to the survey. This, then, is a story about the current state of public arts education in LA County.

This study found that **arts instruction is offered in nearly every public school in LA County**. In fact, **most schools offer instruction in two disciplines or more**. However, few schools offer year-long arts instruction to all students. In general, arts education becomes more widely available as students get older, but there is a notable decline that occurs at grade 8, after which arts instruction rises again, though never to the same height. It appears **arts instruction peaks in the middle school years**.

This study constructed composite scores for both the quantity and quality of arts education based on accepted standards in the field, and calculated scores for every school that responded to the survey. We found that, in general, the **quantity of arts education is higher at the elementary level**, while the **quality of arts instruction is higher at the secondary level**.

Assessment of student learning in the arts is more common in secondary grades than in elementary grades. Technology is used more often to teach the arts at the secondary level. Teacher participation in professional development in the arts is not particularly common and even less so at the elementary level.

These composite scores were used to explore whether the quantity and quality of arts education is equitably distributed across all schools, and they uncovered some troubling trends. The data suggest that schools with a larger share of students of color offer less arts instruction and lesser quality instruction. Quantity and quality scores were also lower in schools with larger percentages of students enrolled in free and reduced price meal programs, and schools with larger percentages of English Learners. These trends are more evident in schools with elementary grades than those with secondary grades.

These findings on the quantity, quality, and equity of arts education suggest specific action steps that school districts, schools, parents, advocates and other stakeholders could take to improve arts education. For example,

- A school can select a particular measure of quantity or quality and set a goal of improving it.
- School districts can look at whether the arts instruction offered in their schools with larger numbers of students enrolled in free and reduced price meals, English Learners or students of color, is equal to the schools with the best and most arts education in their district.
- Districts can examine feeder patterns for each discipline, and parents can ask whether their children will be able to continue to study the discipline they begin in elementary school through to graduation.

In sum, this study finds that arts education is part of the curriculum in most LA County public schools, that its quality can be improved, and that persistent problems of equity must be addressed if we are to ensure that all students have the benefits of high quality arts education.



IMPROVING ARTS EDUCATION IN LA COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

The role, effects and value of the arts in public education have long been a source of debate in the United States. Scholarly research has discovered some evidence of the benefits of arts education on academic achievement,¹ on skills like critical thinking and problem solving,² and on student behavior.³ There is also evidence to suggest the effect of arts education is stronger on students from lower socioeconomic backgrounds.⁴ At the same time, researchers have warned against expecting arts education to have non-arts effects on students, observing that educators do not expect other school subjects to have effects beyond the subject itself.⁵ The value of arts education, they say, is gaining the arts-specific skills and knowledge.

Arts education may also help students develop both soft skills and job-specific skills that will prepare them for careers. Employers consistently report on national surveys that they are seeking job candidates who are creative problem-solvers.⁶ Beyond this, in the LA County region, where the creative industries generate one out of every seven jobs,⁷ K-12 arts education can play a vital role in preparing young people to work in the creative economy. For students who do not go directly to college after finishing high school, arts education in K-12 schools is particularly important as it can help them prepare to enter a wide range of careers immediately.⁸

Recognizing the critical role of arts education in the local region in terms of both academics and careers, the LA County Arts Commission in the late 1990s convened an ad hoc Arts Education Task Force and commissioned a study on the state of K-12 arts education in local public schools. The 2001 study, **Arts in Focus: Los Angeles Countywide Arts Education Survey**,⁹ found that while high quality arts education was available, it was inconsistent and inequitably distributed across the County. Not all students had equal

access to arts education; those who were receiving arts education did not all have access to high quality arts education.

These findings were used to launch a series of community forums to develop a regional arts education project across all 81 school districts in the County. In 2002 the LA County Board of Supervisors, LA County Office of Education, and the LA County Arts Commission jointly adopted **Arts for All: Los Angeles County Regional Blueprint for Arts Education**.¹⁰

Now in its fifteenth year, this Arts for All initiative was recently renamed the LA County Arts Education Collective to acknowledge shared roles among the many participating partners. The Arts Ed Collective is dedicated to making the arts core in K-12 public education. One major component of this initiative is to measure the quantity, quality and equity of arts education offered in public schools.



A SHORT HISTORY OF ARTS EDUCATION DATA COLLECTION IN LA COUNTY

At the national level, the US Department of Education’s National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) maintains a comprehensive, annual, national database of all public elementary and secondary schools and school districts. NCES includes arts education data, such as information about enrollment, teachers and instruction, in its Common Core of Data.¹¹ They also issue occasional reports on arts education.¹²

The California Department of Education (CDE) collects data about all discrete courses—including arts courses—taught to grades 7 through 12 in all schools. This includes numbers of courses, numbers of students enrolled in each and counts of full time equivalent instructors. For many years these data were available only through CDE’s website. This changed in 2016 when the statewide arts education advocacy coalition Create CA partnered with CDE to launch the Arts Education Data Project,¹³ making the data more easily accessible through an interactive online data tool.

Perhaps the greatest limitation of CDE data—and thus the Arts Ed Data Project—is that it includes only data on discrete arts courses taught in grades 7 through 12. There is no administrative data available about arts education provided to students from pre-kindergarten through grade 6. Moreover, CDE data only provides basic information about quantity. It does not report on the quality of arts education provided to students in any grade.

Overcoming those limits by measuring arts education at the local level

The Arts Ed Collective's effort to measure the quantity, quality and equity of arts education in LA County public schools dates back to 2003 with the launch of the Arts Education Performance Indicators (AEPI) project.

This was a short survey administered to school districts, asking about five key factors believed to be critical to successful arts education.¹⁴ The AEPI was administered and the results published in 2003, 2005 and 2008. AEPI data were collected again in 2010 and 2011, but the response rate was deemed to be too low to justify data analysis.

In 2009, with funding from the Wallace Foundation, the Arts Ed Collective (then Arts for All) launched the far more ambitious School Arts Survey (SAS) project. A survey instrument was developed that districts were asked to complete as part of their Arts for All-funded arts education strategic planning process. This new instrument was based on a framework developed in the Wallace-sponsored 2009 report, **The Qualities of Quality: Understanding Excellence in Arts Education**.¹⁵ The SAS was much more in-depth than the AEPI, asking questions about each school and each discipline taught. Survey responses were indexed to create a single district-level score for each of the 16 indicators of quality arts education covered by the survey.

By 2014 only 28 of the 81 school districts in LA County had completed the SAS, and only when required by Arts for All to qualify for resources. Most districts were not using the data in a significant way in their arts education strategic planning. Analysis of the data uncovered a significant number of internal discrepancies in the way questions were answered. When question responses were shared back with school staff, they pointed out answers that they believed to be errors. In addition, Arts for All staff were not finding the data useful for their own program management purposes.

During this time, other jurisdictions, initiatives and organizations around the US were collecting administrative and survey data to measure arts education in their schools. For example,

- New York City Department of Education has issued an annual **Arts in Schools** report since the 2005-06 school year.¹⁶
- Chicago Public Schools has issued an annual **State of the Arts Progress Report** since 2012-13, and mapped it on **artlook**.¹⁷
- Seattle Public Schools has conducted an ongoing evaluation of its arts plan, **The Creative Advantage**.¹⁸

In each of those cases, the data were collected from a single school district. The SAS, by comparison, was designed to collect arts education data from schools in 81 school districts, including Los Angeles Unified, which is the second largest school district by enrollment in the US.

In 2014 the Arts Ed Collective undertook a major overhaul of the SAS. The Research and Evaluation division of the LA County Arts Commission conducted a comprehensive item-by-item review of the survey instrument and cross-walked it against other survey instruments used in other jurisdictions. The survey questionnaire was revised significantly, reducing the number of questions and removing those that schools and districts were unable to answer with certainty.

The new Arts Education Profile survey (Arts Ed Profile) was designed to measure the quantity of arts education offered in public schools in LA County, provide indicators of the quality of arts education being offered, and determine whether arts education is distributed equitably across the County. In addition, it was designed to allow the Arts Ed Collective to achieve the following three goals:

1. Provide meaningful data to districts that they can use to support their arts education strategic planning process;
2. Make data about the quantity, quality and equity of arts education at individual schools and districts easily accessible to parents, teachers, administrators and arts education advocates; and
3. Identify issues or factors on the County level that are associated with the quantity, quality and equity of arts education.

Each of these goal required different types of data, which led to development of a survey that is shorter than the SAS but still lengthy compared to arts education data collection in other jurisdictions. A summary of the questions asked on the survey questionnaires can be found in Appendix 1.

These three disparate goals also required three different types of Arts Ed Profile reporting:

1. Each district receives an individualized **DISTRICT PROFILE** as part of the arts education strategic planning resources provided by the Arts Ed Collective.
2. An **ONLINE TOOL** has been created where anyone can explore arts education facts about a school, a district or LA County as a whole.
3. This **COUNTYWIDE REPORT** provides a snapshot of the status of arts education across all 81 districts and four charter school networks in LA County, and identifies issues of concern related to quantity, quality and equity.

For those who want to know about a specific school or district, our online tool presents that information. For those who have questions about overall trends in public arts education in LA County, this report has many of the answers.

Survey administration: 2015-17

The Arts Ed Profile school survey was administered to all 2,277 schools across LA County over an eighteen month period. This included schools in all 81 districts, four charter school districts and a number of other individual charter schools. A companion district-level survey was sent to administrators in all 81 districts and four charter school networks. The school-level survey was completed by the principal or that person's designee. The district-level survey was completed by the arts education coordinator, if a person on staff had that role. If not, the superintendent completed it, or designated another district-level staff person.

Administration of the survey took place in three waves. The first wave was a field test in fall 2015, when 91 schools in six districts¹⁹ completed the survey. The second wave was in fall 2016, when 184 schools in 12 districts completed the survey. The third wave was in spring 2017, when the questionnaire was sent to all remaining schools and districts that had not yet completed it. Districts that had completed the surveys in the first two waves were given an opportunity to repeat it, and three districts (29 schools combined) opted to have their schools take the survey again. In total, 924 schools in 78 districts completed at least part of the survey.

For this reason, the data analyzed in this report reflects multiple school years. Most of the data are from the second and third waves and reflect the 2016-17 school year. The first wave reported on the 2015-16 school year with the exception of one school district that reported data for 2014-15. Because the volume, quality and distribution of arts education offerings generally do not vary significantly from year to year, it was deemed appropriate to combine all data in the analysis shown here.

On the Arts Ed Profile survey, elementary grades (grades pre-school through 8) were asked a slightly different set of questions from secondary grades (grades 9 through 12). The findings in this report are organized around this split, rather than the more familiar terms "elementary," "middle," and "high" schools. The reason is that the 2,277 schools in LA County appear in a remarkable variety of school types and combinations of grades. There are seven types of schools in addition to elementary, middle and high school: alternative schools, continuation schools, community day schools, juvenile court schools, preschools and special education schools. A single school may have as few as two grades and as many as 14 (including preschool and kindergarten). The grades that are present in any single school can overlap between traditional elementary, middle and high schools designations. Therefore we used a system similar to that used by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), which reports its Common Core of Data in three categories: preschool and kindergarten, grades 1 through 8, and grades 9 through 12. In our reporting, we combined preschool and kindergarten with elementary grades.

Most of the data reported here come from the Arts Ed Profile survey. For a small number of variables in the secondary grades, such as number of courses offered and number of credentialed instructors, the required data were available from CDE. For consistency, only those secondary schools that responded to the survey were included in the analysis, even though CDE data was available for all secondary schools.



A total of 924 schools at least partially completed the survey, for a response rate of 40.6 percent. For the purposes of analysis, districts were sorted into categories according to the number of schools in the district, as shown in Figure 1. Because LA Unified School District is so disproportionately large—it makes up nearly half of all schools in LA County—it was treated as its own category.

Because Long Beach Unified School District—itsself one of the 30 largest school districts in the US—is also significantly larger than the largest “large” districts, it was also treated as its own category. Due to the very low response rate for schools in Long Beach Unified (less than 10 percent), it was excluded from the weighting (see Box 1). Therefore it is not known whether the findings presented in this report apply to schools in the Long Beach district.

Figure 1: Number of schools that responded to the survey, by size and type

District	Elementary Schools	Middle Schools	High Schools	Other	Total
Small (10,000 students or fewer)	167	39	34	26	266
Medium (10,500 – 20,000 students)	148	29	35	20	232
Large (20,000 – 30,000 students)	98	25	28	14	165
Long Beach Unified (≈80,000 students)	1	2	3	2	8
Los Angeles Unified (≈640,000 students)	150	36	44	23	253
Total	564	131	144	85	924

Within each school district, the share of schools responding ranged from zero to 100 percent. The average district response rate was 54.0 percent. The response rate for each school district can be found in Appendix 2.

The findings presented in this report are organized by the Arts Ed Collective's three primary areas of concern: measuring the **quantity, quality and equity of arts education**. In each category, findings for schools with elementary grades are reported first, followed by findings for schools with secondary grades. By using statistical weighting procedures that adjusted for non-response bias (see Box 1), it is possible to state with a high degree of confidence that the findings presented here—except where otherwise noted—apply to all schools in LA County, not just those that responded to the survey. This, then, is a story about the current state of public arts education in LA County.

How we know these findings apply to all public schools in LA County even though all schools did not respond to the survey

The Arts Ed Profile survey was administered to all public schools in the LA County, however, not all schools responded. In order to generalize the responses to all schools in LA County, survey weights for schools were calculated, and an adjustment for non-response was implemented. All schools, regardless of their survey status, were grouped into mutually exclusive groups defined by the size of district in terms of student enrollment (small, medium, and large, as shown in Figure 1) and type of school (elementary, middle, high school, and others). The weights were calculated by getting the quotient of the total number of schools and the number of schools that completed the survey. There were two district exceptions, LA Unified and Long Beach Unified. LA Unified is such a large school district the weighting by type of school was done within that school district by itself. Long Beach Unified had a very low response rate and was deemed to have too few respondents to allow for inclusion in the weighting process.

In addition to school weights, student weights were calculated. This weight sums up to the total number of enrolled public school students in LA County. The process of deriving the student weight is the same as the school weight. Both size of district and type of school were used as factors to determine non-response adjustment. However, the weights were calculated by getting the quotient of the total number of enrolled students in all schools and the total number of enrolled students from schools that completed the survey. As with the school weighting, LA Unified was weighted by itself, and Long Beach Unified was excluded.

Box 1

Quantity

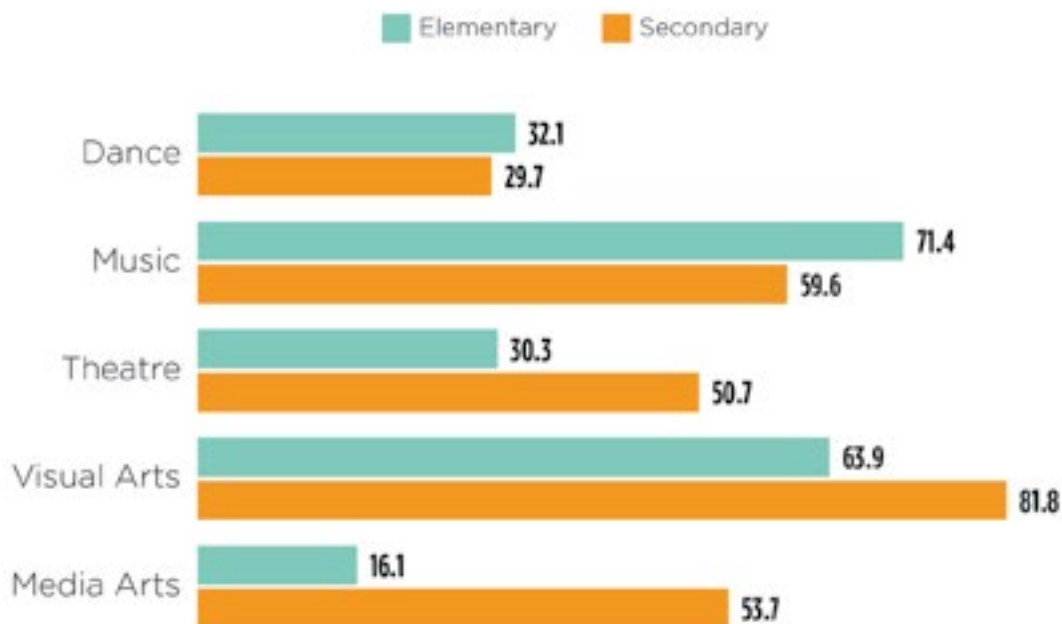
A total of **89.6 percent of all schools with elementary grades and 92.7 percent of all schools with secondary grades in LA County offered arts education to at least some students during the school day.** In addition, 53.4 percent of all schools with elementary grades and 36.6 percent of all schools with secondary grades reported offering arts instruction after school.

The quantity of arts education was analyzed in two different ways. First, measures of the amount of instruction provided are presented. Those are followed by measures of who provides that instruction.

How much instruction is offered

The amount of arts education offered varied by grade and by discipline, as Figure 2 shows. The most commonly available arts discipline in schools with elementary grades was Music, which was offered by 71.4 percent. Visual Arts was the most commonly available to secondary students, offered by 81.8 percent of schools. Dance was most consistent, offered by 32.1 percent of all schools with elementary grades and 29.7 percent of all schools with secondary grades.

Figure 2: Percent of schools offering each discipline



Elementary grades

Arts education offerings by discipline and grade Figure 3 examines only those schools where each discipline is offered to show how the amount of instruction varied by grade. For example, while 32.1 percent of schools with elementary grades offered Dance (see Figure 2), it was not offered to every grade. Among elementary schools where each discipline was offered, there was more variance in availability between disciplines in the earliest grades (Pre-K/TK²⁰ through 3) than for grades 4 through 8 (see Figure 3).

Comparing Figures 2 and 3, Music was offered by the largest share of schools with elementary grades overall (71.4 percent), but it was offered less consistently across grades than Visual Arts. In general, lower grades were offered less arts instruction than higher grades.

Figure 3: Distribution of arts across elementary grades

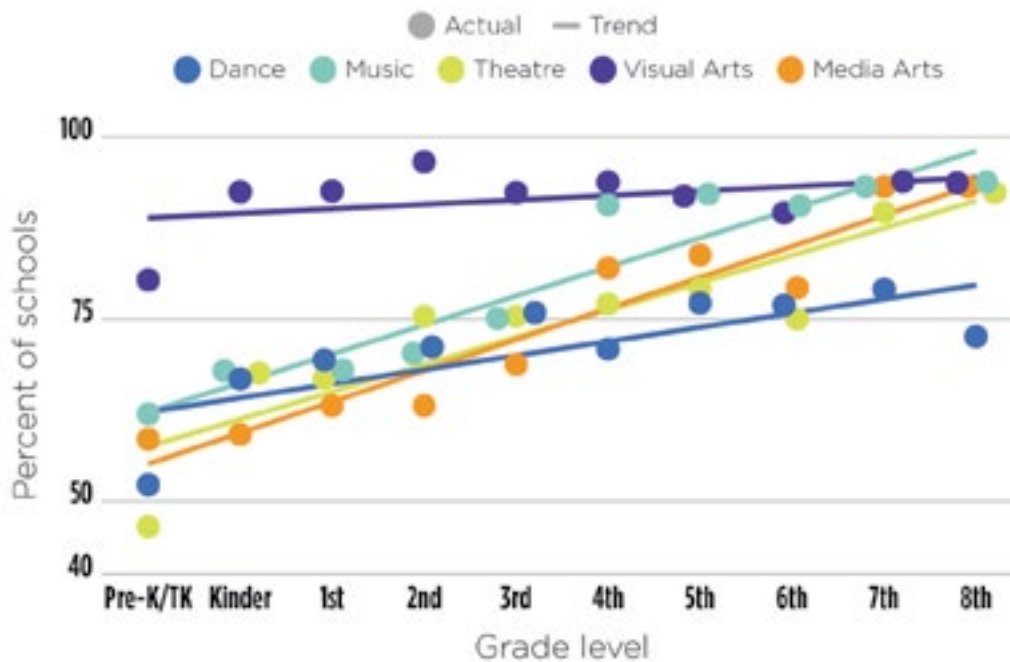
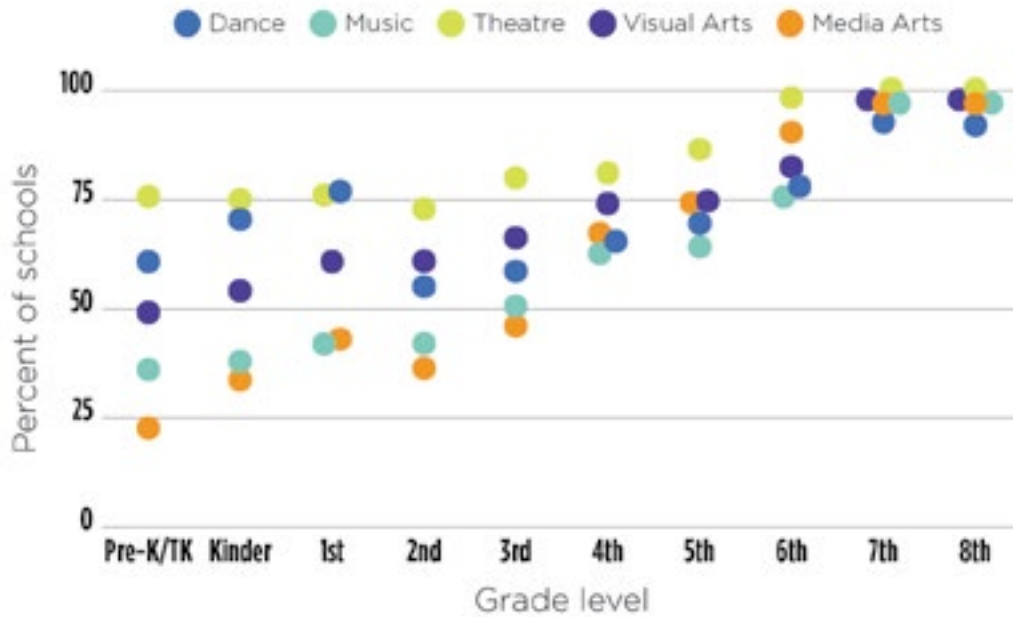


Figure 3 also includes trendlines, which show change across grade levels in each arts discipline. While Visual Arts instruction was fairly constant across elementary grades and thus has a relatively flat trendline, Theatre showed the most dramatic rise, offered by very few schools in the earliest grades but offered by nearly all schools by grade 8. Among schools that offered Visual Arts, other than in Pre-K /TK, instruction in Visual Arts was offered at every grade level by more than 89 percent of all schools. In fact, more than 90 percent of schools provided arts instruction in every discipline in grade 8 except for Dance, which was offered by 72.6 percent of schools.

Minutes of instruction In the field of arts education, more than 40 minutes of instruction per lesson is a recognized and appropriate standard. Figure 4 shows, for those schools that offer a discipline in each grade, what percent offer more than 40 minutes of instruction per lesson (30 minutes of instruction for Pre-K/TK through grade 1). This varied by discipline and by grade. The disparity seen in the youngest grades evened out by the oldest grades, when more than 90 percent of all schools were offering more than 40 minutes of instruction per lesson in all disciplines.

Figure 4: Share of schools offering more than 40 minutes per lesson, elementary grades

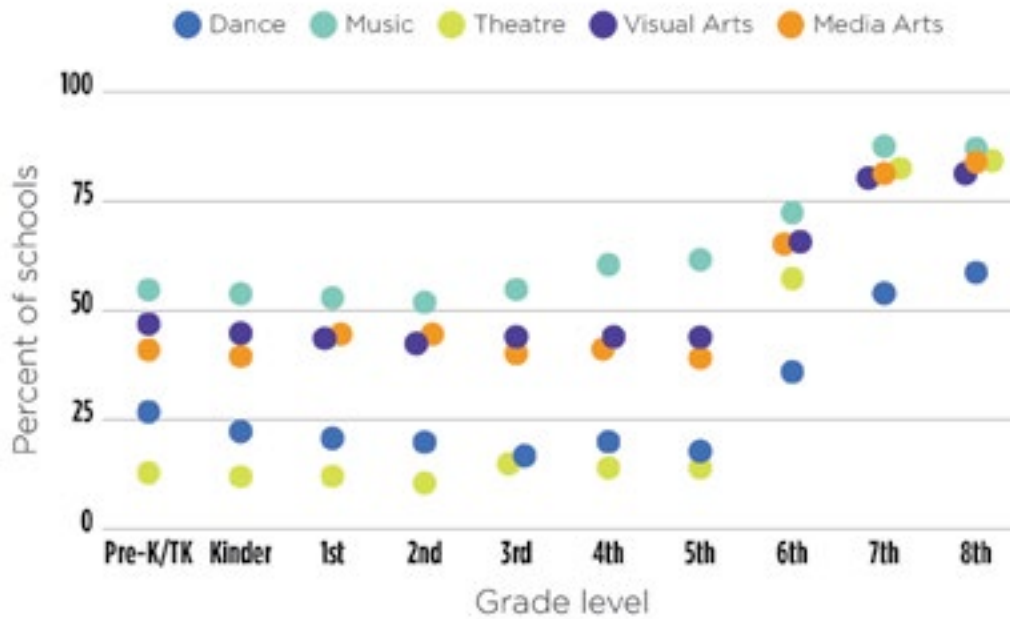


*More than 30 minutes for Pre-K/TK through grade 1

How often arts education was offered Two other recognized and appropriate standards are weekly year-long²¹ instruction in each discipline. In general, any single arts discipline was taught about four to five days per month from Pre-K/TK through grade 5. At grade 6 this figure rose, with the number of days per month any discipline was offered being between eight and 14 days. This rose again in grade 7 to between 13 and 17 days per month and remained about the same for grade 8.

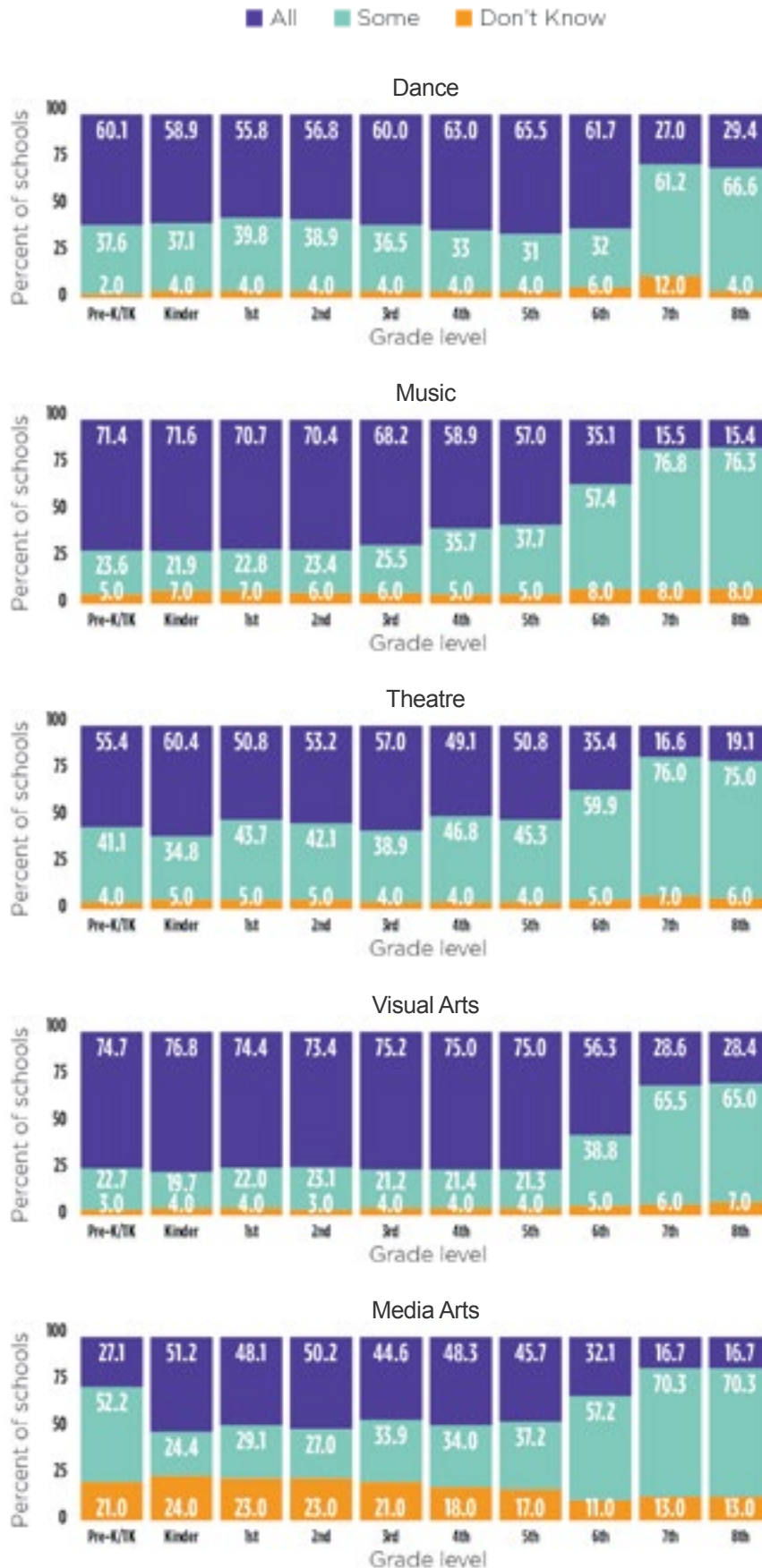
A somewhat similar pattern was observed for schools that offered arts education all year, as Figure 5 shows. For each discipline, the share of schools offering year-long instruction was fairly constant across grades Pre-K/TK through 5. The share of schools that offered year-long instruction in each discipline was higher in grade 6 and even higher in grades 7 and 8, which likely reflects the transition from self-contained classrooms to separate classes by subject in middle school. Across this trend, Music was the discipline most commonly offered for the full school year. Theatre was the least-commonly offered all year from Pre-K through grade 5. Dance was least common in grades 6 through 8.

Figure 5: Share of schools offering year-long arts instruction, elementary grades



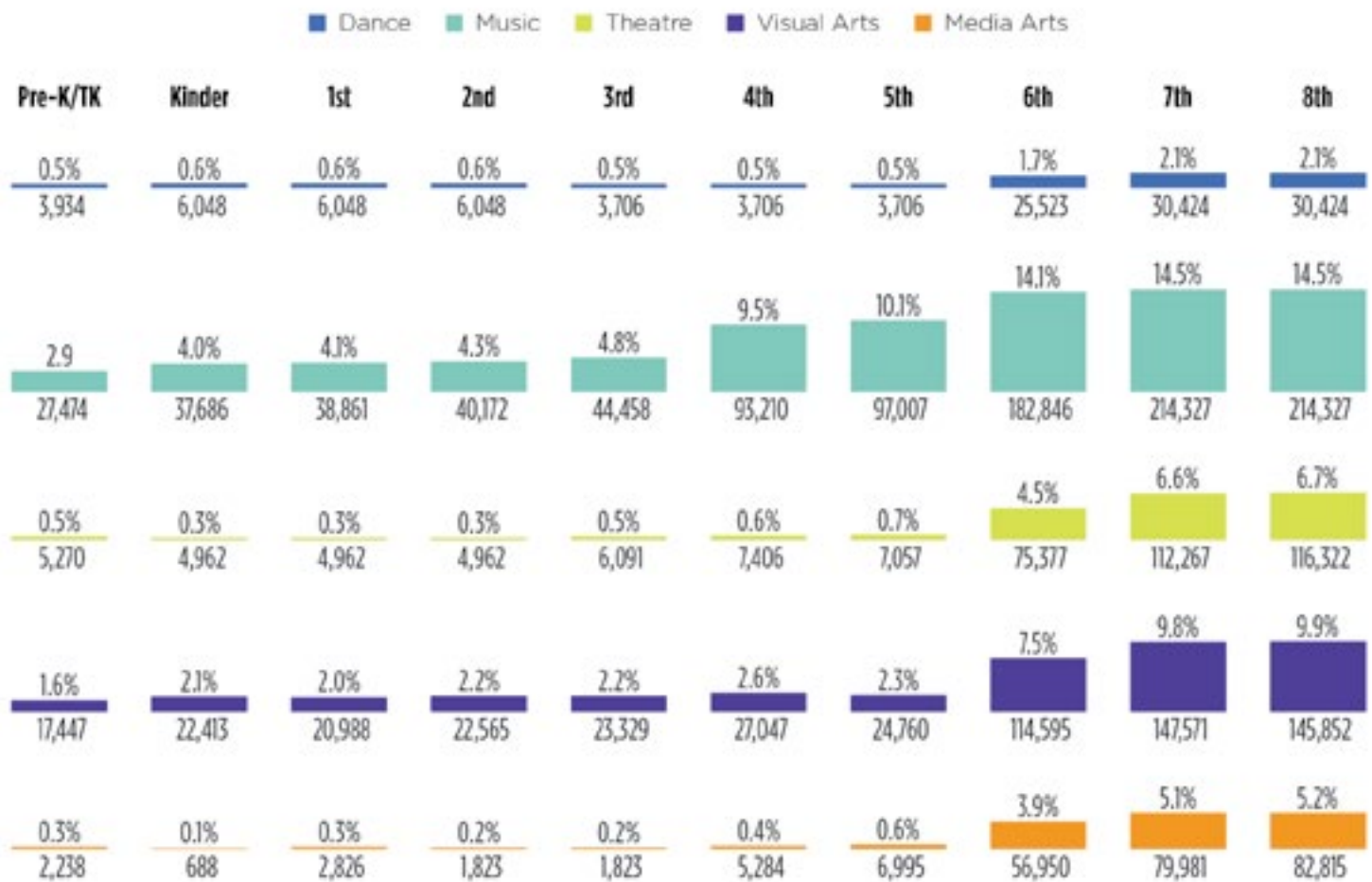
Some students or all In some cases, arts instruction was offered only to some students in a particular grade, but not all. Figure 6 breaks out the data in Figure 3 even further. This figure shows that, among the schools that offer arts instruction to each grade, what share offered instruction in each discipline to some or all students in that grade. The transition to middle school grades, where the arts are typically offered as elective courses, is reflected in the much larger percent of schools reporting that each discipline was offered only to some students. Overall, Visual Arts and Music were more likely to be offered to all students, compared to Dance or Theatre.

Figure 6: Arts instruction: offered to some students or all, by discipline



The previous figures function as something of a set of nesting matryoshka dolls, where Figures 3 through 6 provide detail about only those schools where a discipline is taught. Figure 7 takes us back to the high level, asking **What share of all schools offer year-long instruction to all students** in each elementary grade, for each discipline. Based on the percent of schools and school size, the number of students who could receive year-long instruction countywide was estimated. In every elementary grade, Music instruction was the most likely to be offered all year to all students, followed by Visual Arts. Media Arts was the least likely to be offered all year to all students in grades Pre-K/TK through 4, but Dance was least likely in grades 5 through 8.

Figure 7: Share of schools offering year-long arts instruction to all students; estimated number of students that benefited

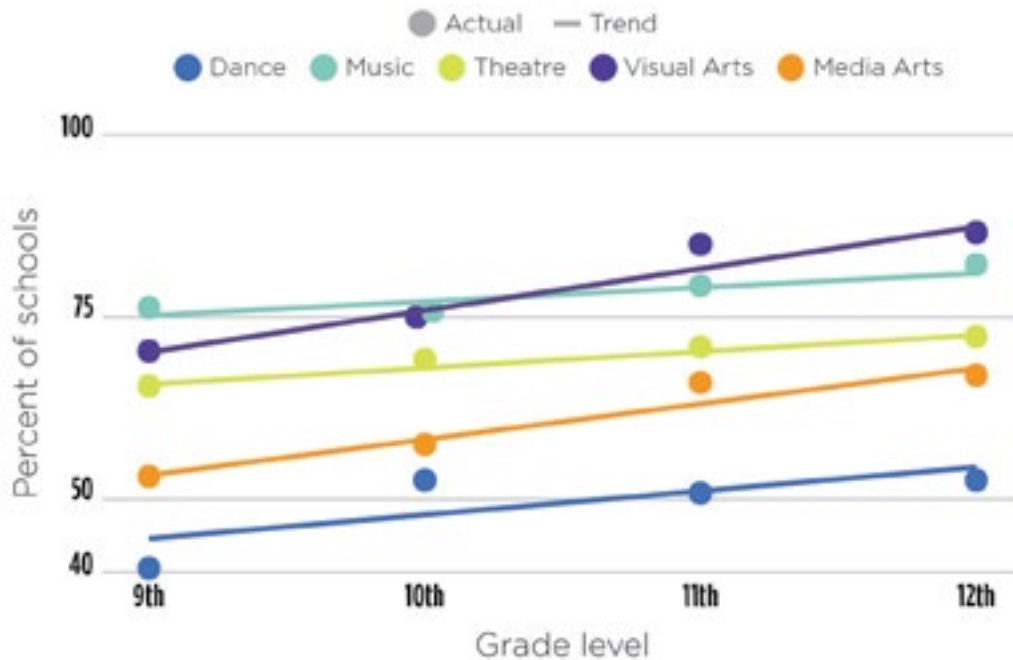


The percent shown is the percent of all schools with elementary grades that offer year-long instruction to all students. The number beneath it is the estimate of how many students in the County have access to it.

Secondary grades

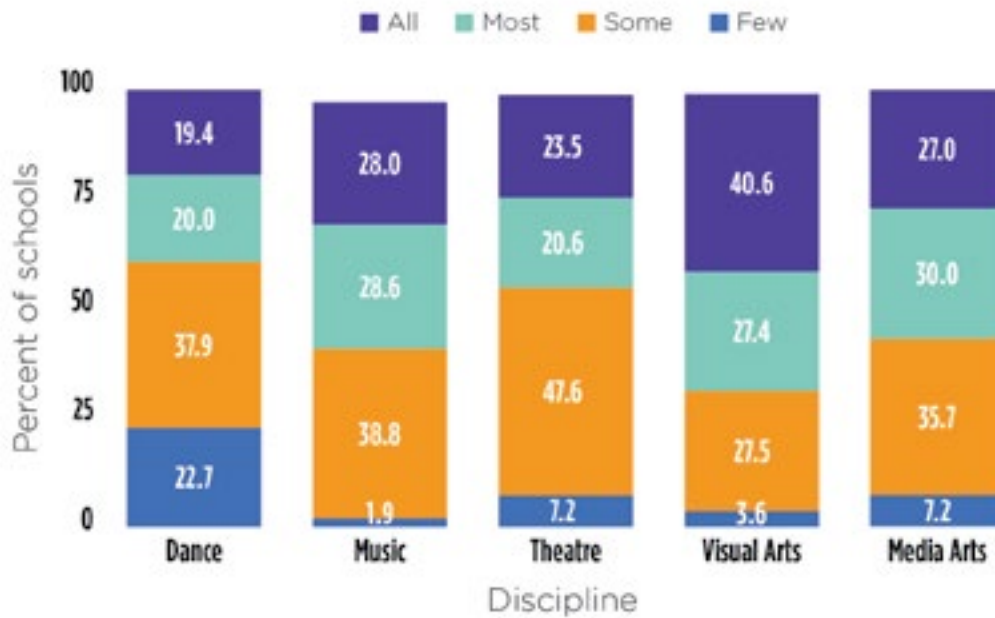
Arts education offerings by discipline and grade Figure 8 shows how those schools offering instruction in each discipline distributed that instruction across secondary grades. While in the elementary grades more than 90 percent of schools offering each discipline (except Dance) made it available to students in grade 8 (see Figure 3), this dropped to less than 80 percent of all schools offering any discipline in grade 9. As the trendlines show, the distribution of instruction was more consistent across secondary grades though it generally rose over the four years, but **the share of schools offering instruction was never as high as the levels seen in the middle school years.**

Figure 8: Distribution of arts across secondary grades



Some students or all At the secondary level, the question of whether all or some students were offered arts education was asked overall rather than by grade. Figure 9 shows the breakdown for those schools that offered each discipline. Visual Arts was the only discipline where the largest share of schools (40.6 percent) reported that the discipline was provided to all students. Most commonly, schools with secondary grades reported that instruction in each arts discipline was offered to some, though not most, students.

Figure 9: Share of schools offering arts education to all, most, some or few students, secondary grades*



*Totals may not equal 100 percent due to missing responses

Elementary and secondary grades

Number of disciplines offered Only 3.5 percent of schools with elementary grades offered all five disciplines, while 16.7 percent of schools with secondary grades offered all five, as Figure 10 shows. The most common number of disciplines offered was two, for both elementary and secondary grades. At the elementary level, the most common pair of disciplines was Music and Visual Arts (16.7 percent of schools). In the secondary grades the most common pair of disciplines was Visual Arts and Media Arts (6.8 percent of schools).

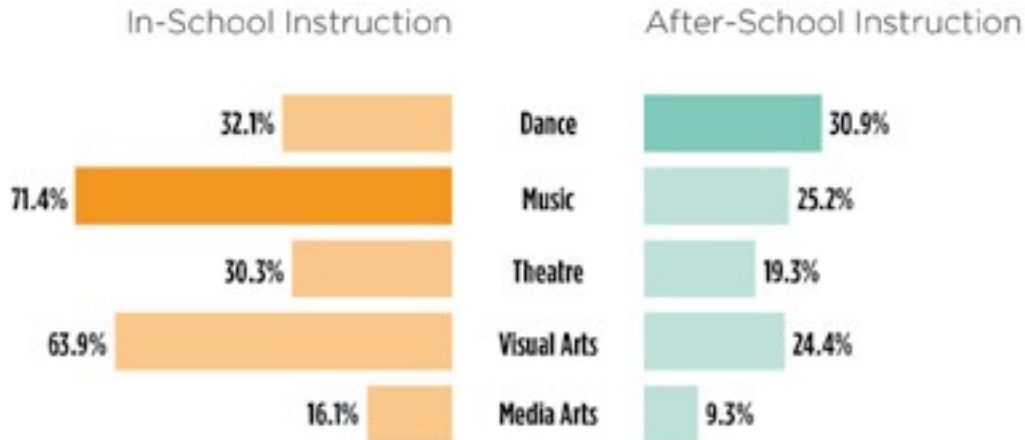
In total, **67.8 percent of schools with elementary grades offered arts instruction in at least two arts disciplines**. More than a third (37.3 percent) offered three or more disciplines. **Among secondary schools, nearly three-quarters (76.2 percent) offered at least two disciplines**, while more than half (53.4 percent) offered three or more.

Figure 10: Number of disciplines offered



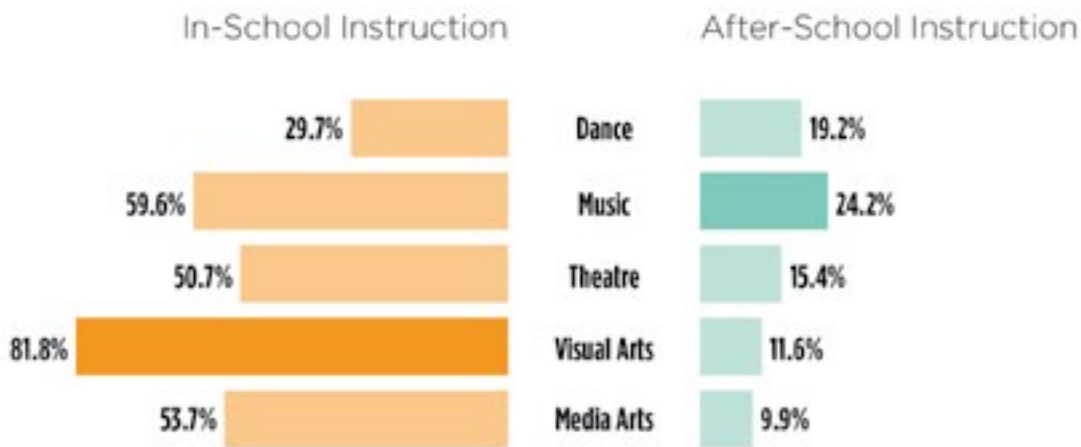
After-school arts instruction After-school arts instruction can include everything from a marching band led by a school staff member credentialed in music, to a salsa club led by a teacher who happens to love salsa, to painting classes taught by a nonprofit community arts partner. While Music was the most common discipline offered during the elementary school day (71.4 percent of schools), Dance (30.9 percent) was the most common after-school discipline (Figure 11).

Figure 11: In-school instruction compared to after-school instruction by discipline, elementary grades



At the secondary level, Visual Arts (81.8 percent) was most common during the school day while Music (24.2 percent) was most common after school (Figure 12).

Figure 12: In-school instruction compared to after-school instruction by discipline, secondary grades



These comparisons raised the question of whether after-school instruction was being used to overcome or supplement low levels of in-school arts instruction. Simple tests of Pearson’s correlation showed a weak but statistically significant positive relationship between the quantity of in-school instruction and the quantity of after-school instruction, at both the elementary and secondary level. In other words, there is some evidence—though it is not conclusive—that **schools offering more in-school arts instruction also offer more after-school arts instruction.**

Who provides arts instruction

Another critical aspect of arts education relates to who provides instruction. Schools had an opportunity on the survey to report five different types of instructors:²²

- instructor credentialed in the discipline they are teaching
- instructor credentialed in another subject
- teaching artist
- parent
- other

Credentialed instructors In California, teaching credentials are not available for all five disciplines. Therefore "credentialed instructor" was defined as one who meets applicable State certification or licensure requirements and holds at least a supplementary authorization in the discipline taught. Schools were permitted to report the percent of full time that a credentialed instructor teaches the discipline at that particular school. For example, a teacher with a Visual Arts credential who teaches Visual Arts 40 percent of his or her time would be reported at 40 percent of full time equivalent (FTE). A traveling teacher credentialed in Music who spends one day a week at a school would be reported at 20 percent FTE by that school.

Nearly every school at both the elementary and secondary level reported having at least one credentialed arts instructor, though this could be part time or full time, in each of the disciplines that they offered. However, when averaged out on a per-school basis, their presence declined, and the difference between elementary and secondary becomes evident. In schools with elementary grades there were far fewer credentialed art instructors, with an average of less than one per school for each discipline, as Figure 13 shows. Music was the only discipline with an average of more than one-half of a credentialed FTE per school.

Figure 13: Arts instructors credentialed in the discipline they taught, elementary grades

Discipline	Number of schools with at least one FTE	Average FTEs per school	Largest number reported by a single school
Dance	225	0.3	6
Music	532	0.7	6
Theatre	210	0.4	6
Visual Arts	480	0.4	6
Media Arts	123	0.4	3

Among schools with secondary grades, the smaller number of schools with at least one part time FTE instructor reflects the smaller number of such schools that exist (Figure 14). The average is a more useful

figure here, as it reflects the larger percent of FTEs across schools with secondary grades. These schools were most likely to have a credentialed Visual Arts instructor with an average of 1.8 FTEs per school, followed by Music with 1.4 FTEs per school. The largest number of credentialed instructors in a single discipline in a single school with secondary grades was reported as eight Visual Arts instructors.

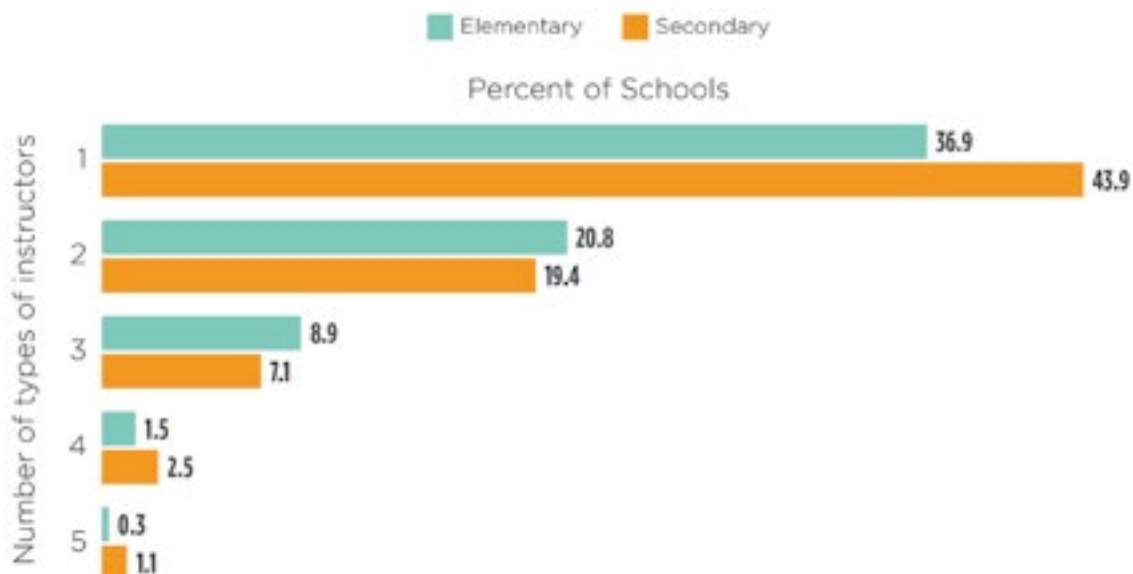
Figure 14: Arts instructors credentialed in the discipline they taught, secondary grades

Discipline	Number of schools with at least one FTE	Average FTEs per school	Largest number reported by a single school
Dance	46	0.4	1
Music	123	1.4	7
Theatre	101	0.7	3
Visual Arts	172	1.8	8
Media Arts	91	1.3	4

Shared instruction Shared instruction is measured here by the number of different types of instructors reported at a single school. Among schools with elementary grades, 36.9 percent reported they had only one type of arts instructor, as Figure 15 shows. Nearly 21 percent of schools with elementary grades reported two types of instructors, and a total of 10.7 percent of schools reported three or more types of instructors.

Figure 15 also shows that the pattern of shared instruction was somewhat similar at the secondary level, with 43.9 percent of schools reporting one type of arts instructor. Two types of instructors were reported by 19.4 percent of schools, and three or more types by 10.7 percent of schools.

Figure 15: Shared instruction: percent of schools with how many types of arts instructors



Community Arts Partners Community arts partners (CAPs) such as teaching artists and nonprofit organizations play a critical role in arts instruction in public schools. In 2014, the Arts Ed Collective surveyed teaching artists and organizations across LA County to find out how many CAPs were providing arts instruction in public schools during the school day. The findings were issued in the report, **We Are in This Together**.²³ Responses were received from 46 individual teaching artists and 139 arts organizations providing arts education services to 1,174 schools, serving 79 of LA County’s 81 school districts plus one State Board of Education charter school. That survey was administered via email to artists and arts organizations known to the LA County Arts Commission, and also distributed by other arts education organizations and advocates serving the County. We used a snowball sampling method, asking everyone who received the survey to share it with colleagues in the field.

In the current Arts Ed Profile survey, we sought to answer the same question in a different way. We asked schools to report on the CAPs that are either coming into their school to provide arts instruction or assemblies, or where they took their students for arts field trips.

From **We Are in This Together**, the ten CAPs serving the largest number of schools during the school day are reported in Figure 16.

Figure 16: Ten Community Arts Partners providing arts instruction to the largest number of schools, from the 2015 **We Are in This Together** survey of providers

Community Arts Partner	Number of schools served
Autory Museum	343
The Music Center	312
Skirball Cultural Center	171
The Broad Stage	61
LA Opera	58
Will Geer's Theatricum Botanicum	54
Los Angeles County Museum of Art (LACMA)	43
Museum of Contemporary Art (MOCA)	43
Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra	41
Young Storytellers Foundation	37

In the Arts Ed Profile, which surveyed schools rather than providers, 522 schools (56.5 percent) reported working with at least one CAP. The services they provided could include everything from long-term residencies in a school to one-time assemblies to field trips to arts institutions. Four of the same organizations who responded to our earlier survey were reported most often by schools in this survey, and are shown in orange in the top ten list in Figure 17. In addition to the specific organizations named here, 129 schools reported that they did work with CAPs but did not name them.

Figure 17: Ten Community Arts Partners providing arts instruction to the largest number of schools, Arts Ed Profile survey of schools

Community Arts Partner	Number of schools served
The Music Center	125
The Getty	78
P.S. Arts	59
Los Angeles County Museum of Art (LACMA)	54
Santa Clarita Performing Arts Center at College of the Canyons	46
LA Phil	37
Armory Center for the Arts	26
Museum of Contemporary Art (MOCA)	22
LA Arts Group	19
LA Opera	16

While other data in this survey can be generalized to represent all of LA County, this data on CAPs cannot be weighted in the same way. Nonetheless, these two sets of data combined—one a survey of providers and the other a survey of schools—gives a sense of the size and scope of the role being played by teaching artists and nonprofit arts organizations in providing arts education to students in LA County public schools, identifying some of the most prolific providers.

Measuring the quantity of arts education: a new approach

Simple measures to quantify secondary arts education are relatively easy in states where the education department tracks courses. In California, CDE collects data on all courses offered in secondary grades, by course number. Arts courses can be parsed out, and simple counts of courses calculated along with enrollment.

Because arts education in elementary grades does not take place in separate courses it is much more difficult to calculate. In the Arts Ed Profile, we developed a survey based on accepted standards in the field, and asked schools to report on them by grade level, including minutes of instruction and year-long instruction.

We took this thinking about how to measure arts education at the elementary level and expanded it to the secondary level. Rather than simply count courses, we included other relevant measures such as the ratio of credentialed instructors to the student body, and a count of types of arts instructors.

The composite scores presented here can be seen as a proposal to the field, a new methodology for quantifying arts education at both the elementary and secondary level.

Box 2

Quantity composite scores

In order to measure whether the quantity of arts education was equitably distributed, it was necessary to construct a composite score for quantity that would take into account several of the variables discussed above. While one simple measure of quantity might be the number of arts courses offered, and these data are available from the California Department of Education (CDE), they are only available for discrete courses taught in grades 7 through 12. Moreover, those data do not take into account after-school instruction or other measures of quantity (see Box 2 for more detail). Figure 18 shows the variables included in the quantity score (items in orange text are the same for elementary and secondary grades):

Figure 18: Variables that make up the quantity composite score

Elementary Grades	Secondary Grades
How many arts disciplines are offered?	How many arts disciplines are offered?
In what disciplines is after-school arts instruction offered?	In what disciplines is after-school arts instruction offered?
What is the ratio of credentialed arts instructors to the student body?	What is the ratio of credentialed arts instructors to the student body?
How many different types of teachers provide arts instruction?	How many different types of teachers provide arts instruction?
What share of students are offered arts instruction (All, Some or None)?	How many arts courses are offered?
Is more than 40 minutes of instruction (30 minutes for grades Pre-K through 1) provided?	
Is arts instruction offered at least once a week?	
Is arts instruction offered all year?	

Elementary: quantity In this composite, the maximum number of points a school with elementary grades could receive was eight. Schools offering more disciplines during the school day received more points than those offering fewer, as would those offering more disciplines after-school. For all other variables, schools were measured only on those disciplines they did and were not penalized for disciplines they did not offer. The quantity composite also accounted for the differences in large, medium and small schools by using the ratio of classes to students enrolled.

Figure 19 shows the distribution of points across all schools that offered at least one discipline. Nearly one-third of all schools with elementary grades (33.2 percent) had three points and more than a quarter of schools (26.9 percent) had four points. Nearly 6 percent percent of schools had zero, and 11.7 percent had five points or better. No school had more than six points.

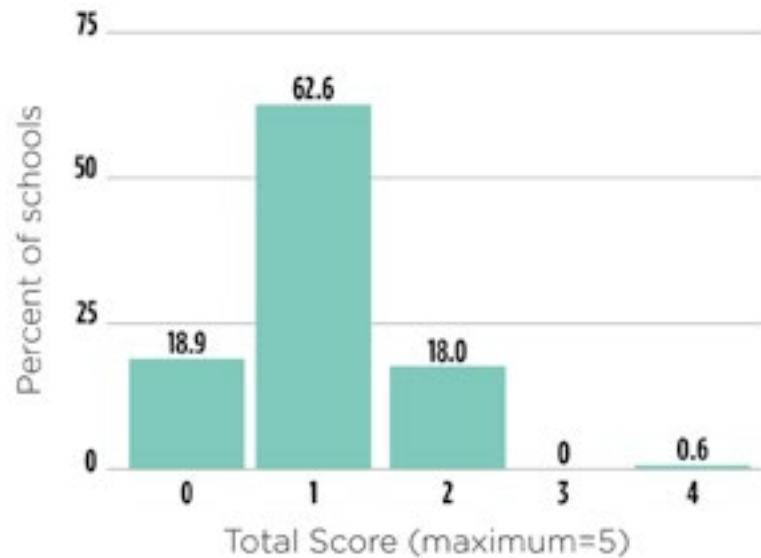
Figure 19: Distribution of quantity scores in schools with elementary grades



Each school's points were then standardized to a scale of zero to one by dividing each school's total points by the total number of points possible, to give the final composite score. The highest quantity score earned by any school with elementary grades was 0.87. The average score was 0.45, and the median score was 0.46. Ninety percent of schools with elementary grades scored 0.63 or lower.

Secondary: quantity Because fewer variables were included for schools with secondary grades, the maximum points possible was less than the elementary schools, at five. As Figure 20 shows, nearly two-thirds of schools had one point. Almost 20 percent had zero points, and more than half had one. Eighteen point six percent had two or more points. No school had more than four points.

Figure 20: Distribution of quantity scores in schools with secondary grades



As with the elementary grades, this was standardized to a scale of zero to one by dividing each school's points by the total points possible. The highest quantity score earned by any school with secondary grades was 0.87. The average score was 0.31, and the median score was also 0.31. Ninety percent of schools scored 0.47 or lower.

Quantity—in summary

In sum, the data tell us that arts instruction is offered in nearly every school in the County. It may be even more widespread than many arts education stakeholders believe. Music is the most common discipline in elementary grades, while Visual Arts is most common in secondary grades. At the same time, Visual Arts is most consistently taught across all grades at both the elementary and secondary levels.

Other important findings about the quantity of arts education include:

- In general, arts education becomes more widely available as students get older, but there is a marked decrease between grades 8 and 9, after which the amount of arts instruction rises again, though not as dramatically.
- In fact, the high point for arts education appears to be in grades 7 and 8.
- Most schools offer two or more disciplines, at both the elementary and secondary level.
- At the elementary level, Visual Arts tends to be offered to all students in more grades than other disciplines.
- A very small share of schools with elementary grades offer year-long instruction to all students in any discipline. Music is the discipline most commonly offered to all students all year, while Dance is the least commonly available.
- Credentialed arts instructors are more common in secondary grades than elementary, and most schools have at least two types of arts instructors.

In addition to this in-school instruction, more than half of all elementary and one-third of all secondary schools offer after-school instruction. Schools offering more in-school arts instruction also offer more after-school instruction.

The composite scores suggest that the quantity of arts instruction is higher at the elementary level (Pre-K/TK to 8) than the secondary level (9 to 12). The average elementary composite score is higher than secondary, and almost three times as many schools with secondary grades that offered arts instruction had a zero quantity score compared to schools with elementary grades

Quality

In a survey like the Arts Ed Profile, it is not possible to actually observe the quality of arts instruction taking place in the classroom. The Arts Ed Collective’s approach instead was to identify indicators of the overall quality of arts education. To do this, we selected key factors or variables that are generally accepted in the field as being associated with high quality arts instruction, and asked each school or district about those variables. The variables in our measure of quality include all of the following:

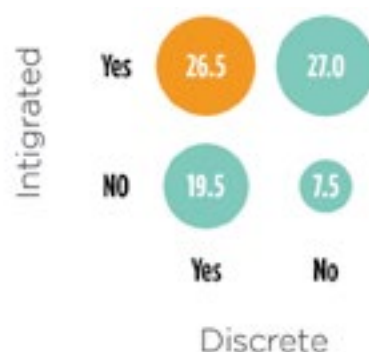
1. Is arts instruction offered in discrete courses, or integrated into other subjects, or both? (schools with elementary grades only)
2. Do instructors teaching the same discipline use a shared written curriculum? (schools with elementary grades only)
3. Do instructors conduct assessments in the arts, using either knowledge-based tools, performance-based tools, or both?
4. Is technology used in teaching the arts?
5. Do arts instructors participate in professional development training?

We also asked schools to report whether their financial resources allow them to provide high quality arts instruction.

Discrete and integrated instruction While 58.5 percent of schools with elementary grades reported the arts were typically integrated into other subject areas, 48.2 percent reported they were typically taught as discrete subjects. Nearly 27 percent reported they do both, as Figure 21 shows. The standard on this measure is providing both types of instruction.

Only 7.5 percent of schools reported offering neither integrated nor discrete arts instruction. In responding to both questions, a relatively large share of schools (10.1 percent) did not answer.

Figure 21: Percent of schools with elementary grades reporting they offer integrated or discrete arts instruction, or both



Shared written curriculum About a quarter of all schools with elementary grades that had more than one instructor in a discipline reported that they used a shared written curriculum always (6.4 percent of all schools) or sometimes (18.9 percent). A little more than a quarter of all schools with elementary grades and multiple instructors (28.2 percent) reported they did not use a shared written curriculum. Of equal note, respondents at nearly one-quarter (23.9 percent) of all these schools reported they did not know whether their instructors used a shared written curriculum.

Types of assessment There are two fundamental ways to assess student learning in the arts. Teachers may use performance-based methods, such as checklists, observation protocols, rubrics or reviews of student portfolios, or they may use knowledge-based methods, such as tests and quizzes. More schools with elementary grades used performance-based methods (52.7 percent) to assess student learning than knowledge-based methods (23.4 percent). Across all schools with elementary grades, 22.7 percent reported they used both performance- and knowledge-based methods to assess student learning in the arts.

Secondary grades were more likely to assess student learning than elementary grades, with 87.0 percent reporting they used performance-based methods and 70.8 percent reporting they used knowledge-based methods. Two-thirds of all schools with secondary grades (68.6 percent) reported they used both methods of assessment.

More than 20 percent of schools with elementary grades and more than 30 percent of schools with secondary grades did not respond to these questions, leaving it unclear whether those schools do or do not assess student learning in the arts.

Technology Technology is used in arts instruction for everything from digital photo editing to computer-aided design (CAD) software for theatre set design to videoing dance rehearsals for critique and instruction. Use of technology in arts instruction varied significantly by discipline, as Figure 22 shows. It was almost universal in teaching Media Arts at schools with elementary grades (93.2 percent of all schools that offer Media Arts) and schools with secondary grades (98.6 percent). Technology was used least in teaching Dance, at 11.6 percent of schools with elementary grades and 34.4 percent of schools with secondary grades that offered the discipline.

Figure 22: Share of schools offering each discipline that use technology to teach the arts, by discipline

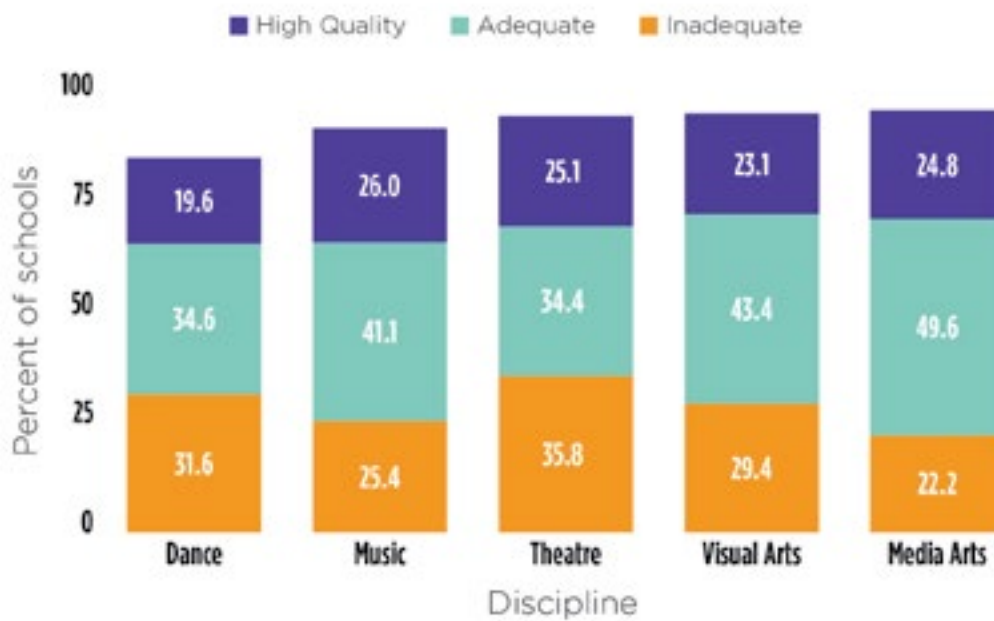
Discipline	Elementary	Secondary
Dance	11.6%	34.4%
Music	24.0%	64.3%
Theatre	25.9%	57.8%
Visual Arts	34.2%	72.4%
Media Arts	93.2%	98.6%

Professional development Teacher professional development in the arts was more common in secondary grades than elementary. In 39.1 percent of schools with elementary grades, at least one teacher participated in some kind of professional development training in the arts, compared to 55.3 percent of schools with secondary grades. Fully 17.7 percent of schools with elementary grades and 8.9 percent of schools with secondary grades reported they did not know if their teachers participated in any professional development training in the arts.

Financial resources and quality In LA County, schools are generally unable to report the exact amount of funding dedicated to arts education. In many budgets, for example, musical instruments are lumped into the same line as soccer balls, making it impossible to separate out spending on Music. Instead of asking for exact dollar amounts, we asked schools “In regard to [discipline] instruction offered at your school during the school day, my school's financial resources allow us to offer....”

Figure 23 shows that the largest share of schools with elementary grades reported their financial resources allowed them to offer high quality Music education (26.0 percent of schools), followed by Theatre education (25.1 percent). At the same time, more than one-third of schools (35.8 percent) reported offering inadequate Theatre education, and nearly one-third (31.6 percent) reported inadequate Dance education.

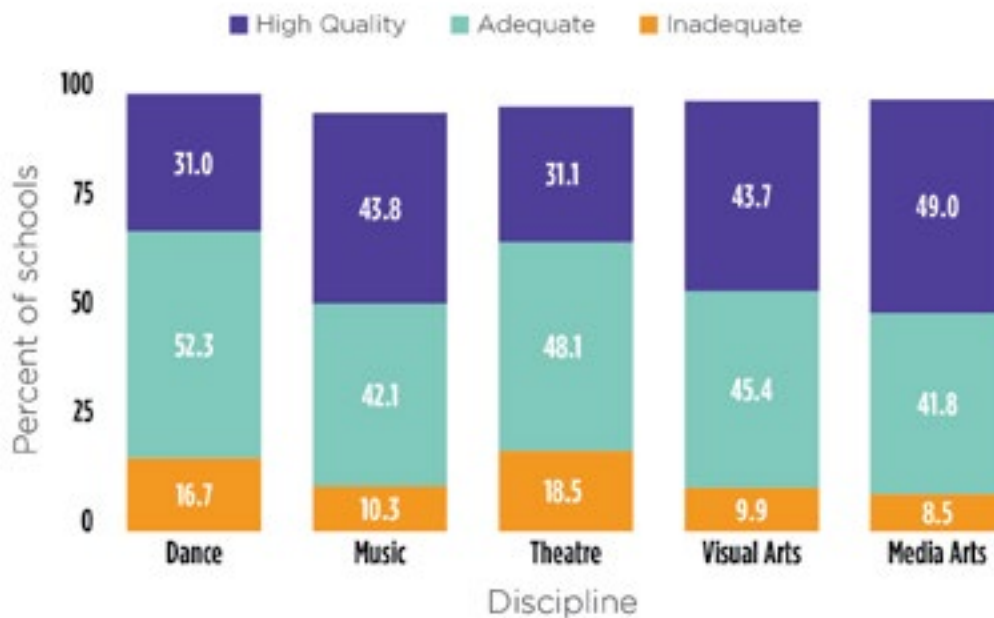
Figure 23: Self-reported quality of arts instruction provided, based on financial resources, schools with elementary grades



*Totals may not equal 100% due to missing or "Do not know" responses

In general, a larger share of schools with secondary grades reported their funding allowed them to offer high and adequate quality arts education, and a smaller share reported inadequate arts education (Figure 24). However, the disciplines were similar at either end of the spectrum. Nearly half of all schools with secondary grades (49.0 percent) reported high quality Media Arts education, followed by 43.8 percent reporting high quality Music education. Theatre was the discipline most often reported as inadequate at 18.5 percent of schools, followed by Dance at 16.7 percent.

Figure 24: Self-reported quality of arts instruction provided, based on financial resources, schools with secondary grades



*Totals may not equal 100% due to missing or "Do not know" responses

Quality composite scores

As was described earlier, measuring the quality of arts instruction is not possible without direct classroom observation. Therefore we identified a set of indicators generally accepted in the field that, if they are utilized by a school, would suggest high quality arts instruction. As with the composite score for quantity, the variables included in the quality score were slightly different for elementary and secondary grades, as Figure 25 shows:

Figure 25: Variables that make up the quality composite score

Elementary Grades	Secondary Grades
Is there at least one credentialed arts instructor (whether full time or less) teaching the discipline?	Is there at least one credentialed arts instructor (whether full time or less) teaching the discipline?
Is there shared delivery of instruction, with different types of teachers teaching the arts?	Is there shared delivery of instruction, with different types of teachers teaching the arts?
Do instructors conduct assessments in the arts, using either knowledge-based tools, performance-based tools, or both?	Do instructors conduct assessments in the arts, using either knowledge-based tools, performance-based tools, or both?
Is technology used in teaching the arts?	Is technology used in teaching the arts?
Is arts instruction offered in discrete courses, or integrated into other subjects, or both?	
Do instructors teaching the same discipline use a shared written curriculum?	

Elementary: quality The maximum quality points possible for schools with elementary grades was six. Figure 26 shows the distribution among schools that offered at least one discipline. No schools had six points. The largest share of schools, 27.7 percent, had two points. Eleven percent of schools had zero points. At the other end of the scale, 6.1 percent of schools had four or five points.

Figure 26: Distribution of quality scores in schools with elementary grades



These points were then converted to a composite score on a scale of zero to one. The highest quality score for a school with elementary grades was 0.85. The average was 0.34 and the median was also 0.34. Ninety percent of schools scored 0.55 or lower.

Secondary: quality Figure 27 shows the distribution of points across schools with secondary grades where at least one discipline was offered. Two percent of schools had three points. No schools had the maximum possible, four points. The largest share of schools (43.1 percent) had two points, followed closely behind by 40.9 percent of schools with one point.

Figure 27: Distribution of quality scores in schools with secondary grades



When these points were converted to quality composite scores on a scale of zero to one, they ran slightly higher than the secondary scores for quantity. While the highest score earned by any school with secondary grades was 0.80, the average was 0.48 and the median was 0.50. Ninety percent of schools with secondary grades scored 0.66 or lower.

Quality—in summary

While more arts instruction is offered at the elementary level than at the secondary, the quality of arts instruction is the reverse. This can be seen in both the individual indicators of quality, and the quality composite scores, which are higher for schools with secondary grades than elementary grades.

Some of the most important findings include

- Only a quarter of schools with elementary grades provide both discrete and integrated arts instruction, and fully ten percent of them do not know if they do.
- Assessment of student learning in the arts is far more common at the secondary level, where nearly two-thirds of schools report they use both knowledge- and performance-based methods.
- Technology is used in arts instruction far more commonly at the secondary level than at the elementary level, and it appears to be ubiquitous for Media Arts instruction in all grades.
- Participation in professional development in the arts is not widespread, and is even less common at the elementary level than the secondary level. Many schools reported they did not know if their teachers participated in it.

Schools with secondary grades generally reported that their finances allowed them to provide higher quality arts education compared to schools with elementary grades. The general trend across both levels suggests their finances permit the highest quality in Visual Arts and Media Arts and the lowest quality in Theatre and Dance. These trends were validated by the quality composite scores, where the average for secondary grades was higher than elementary grades.

This finding that the elementary level scored higher on quantity than quality, while the secondary level is reversed, higher on quality than quantity, may be related to our finding that assessment of arts learning is much more prevalent at the secondary level than the elementary. The relatively high percentage of Do Not Know answers on some of the variables related to quality raises questions about oversight of arts instruction within schools.

Equity

The question of whether high quality arts education is distributed equally to all students is critical to the mission of the Arts Ed Collective. Do all students in LA County have equal access to high quality arts instruction? Are there certain groups of students who have more or less access? Prior studies have suggested that students of color, students who are learning English and students from lower income families may have less access to arts instruction than other students. Is the size of the school or size of the district—both measured by student enrollment—associated with higher or lower arts education quantity or quality?

The first step in measuring the distribution of arts education across public schools in LA County was to construct composite scores for each school of both the quantity and quality of arts instruction within their school, as described in the previous sections. Once these were calculated, these composite scores were tested against a variety of characteristics to determine whether any particular types of schools (and by extension, students) might not have access to the same quantity or quality of arts education.

In analyzing race and ethnicity as a factor it was important not to lump all “students of color” together into a single category. Therefore schools were assigned to categories based on overall population figures for LA County (see Box 3 for more detail). For this analysis, “Hispanic/Latino” was treated as a separate category. All other race/ethnicity categories should be understood as non-Hispanic.

All other characteristics that were analyzed except district size were based on the overall average for all public schools in LA County. For some variables the breakdowns for schools with elementary grades were different from those for secondary grades. The tables below explain the characteristics and the categories within each, in detail:

Figure 28: How schools were assigned to categories for equity analysis

Race/Ethnicity

African American	Asian	Hispanic/Latino	White	Other
At least 8% African American	At least 14% Asian	At least 48% Hispanic/Latino	At least 27% White	Not elsewhere classified

English Learners

Category	Many	Average	Few
Elementary	41% or more of students	Between 14% and 41% of students	14% or fewer of students
Secondary	22.1% or more of students	Between 7.2% and 22.1% of students	7.2% or fewer of students

Students on free and reduced price meals

Category	Many	Average	Few
Elementary	90.8% or more of students	Between 61.1% and 90.8% of students	61.1% or fewer of students
Secondary	87.9% or more of students	Between 60% and 87.9% of students	60% or fewer of students

Total school enrollment

Category	Large	Medium	Small
Elementary	655 students or more	Between 338 and 655 students	338 students or fewer
Secondary	1,749 students or more	Between 134 and 1,749 students	134 students or fewer

Total district size

LA Unified	Large	Medium	Small
640,000 students	20,000 to 30,000 students	10,500 to 20,000 students	10,500 or fewer students

How schools were assigned to race/ethnicity categories

In order to run the statistical analysis on equity of distribution by race and ethnicity, each school was assigned to a race/ethnicity category based on whether the student body had a higher percent of that race/ethnicity than the County population as a whole. Because their percentages were relatively low in total, it was necessary to over-represent schools where the share of African American students was above the Countywide population, and the same for Asian students. Each school could be placed into one category only, for the purpose of this analysis. Therefore schools were put through a hierarchical step-wise process to categorize them, such that

- If the student body was at least eight percent African American, the school was categorized as African American.
- If the student body was less than eight percent African American AND the student body was at least 14 percent Asian, the school was categorized as Asian.
- If the student body was less than 14 percent Asian AND the student body was at least 48 percent Hispanic/Latino, then the school was categorized as Hispanic/Latino.
- If the student body was less than 48 percent Hispanic AND the student body was at least 27 percent non-Hispanic White, then the school was categorized as non-Hispanic White.
- Schools without any race/ethnicity data available were categorized as Other.

While some schools might qualify in more than one of these categories based on their student population, each was assigned to the single category they qualified for first in the order of the list above. It is important to remember that this analysis was not of individual schools, but of characteristics of schools. This process allowed us to calculate Countywide trends and generalize them to the whole population.

Box 3

The average composite scores for each category were then calculated. We utilized the Kruskal-Wallis test to determine whether the averages were different for different groups, and whether those differences were statistically significant.

We did find statistically significant differences in every category among schools at the elementary level, as Figure 28 shows. At the secondary level, the quantity and quality of arts education appears to be more independent of these characteristics. **One of our major findings on equity is similar to what emerged in our analysis of quantity and quality, namely, that arts instruction at the elementary level is different from the secondary level.**

Figure 29: Characteristics where differences in quantity and quality were statistically significant

	Elementary		Secondary	
	Quantity	Quality	Quantity	Quality
Race and ethnicity	✓	✓	No	✓
English Learners	✓	✓	✓	✓
Free and reduced price meals	✓	✓	No	No
School enrollment	✓	✓	✓	✓
District size	✓	✓	No	No

In the tables that follow, measures that were found to be statistically significant appear in orange text.

Race and ethnicity Schools that were categorized as White were found to have the highest average quality scores and the differences were statistically significant at both the elementary and secondary level. They also had the highest average quantity scores at the elementary level, though not at the secondary level. As Figure 30 shows, average quantity and quality composite scores at the elementary level were lowest for the Other category, followed by schools that were predominantly Hispanic/Latino. At the secondary level the lowest average quantity scores were for schools in the Other category, followed by African American and Hispanic/Latino schools. For quality at the secondary level, the lowest average score was in the Other category, followed by African American schools.

Figure 30: Average school composite scores by race/ethnicity categories

	Elementary		Secondary	
	Quantity	Quality	Quantity	Quality
African American	0.43	0.33	0.29	0.42
Asian	0.41	0.32	0.31	0.51
Hispanic/Latino	0.40	0.29	0.29	0.47
White	0.49	0.39	0.31	0.52
Other	0.35	0.27	0.17	0.32

Statistically significant measures in orange

English Learners Across all public schools in LA County, 21.8 percent of students are English Learners (ELs). Schools were sorted into categories based on the share of their students who are ELs. As Figure 31 shows, the greater the share of ELs in the student body, the lower both the average quantity and quality scores, but only at the elementary level. These differences were statistically significant.

At the secondary level a different pattern emerged. Schools with an average share of ELs had the highest quantity and quality scores, and the differences were statistically significant. Schools with both an above-average share of ELs and those with a below-average share had lower quality and quantity scores than schools with an average share. These differences were statistically significant.

Figure 31: Average school composite scores by the share of students who are English Learners

	Elementary		Secondary	
	Quantity	Quality	Quantity	Quality
Many	0.36	0.24	0.25	0.44
Average	0.42	0.31	0.31	0.49
Few	0.46	0.39	0.29	0.39

Statistically significant measures in orange

Free and reduced price meals Enrollment in the free and reduced price meals (FRPM) program is commonly used as a proxy for poverty levels in schools, as it is a means-tested program.²⁴ Across all public schools in LA County, more than two-thirds of students (67.3 percent) are eligible. At the elementary level, schools with the smallest share of students enrolled in FRPM—that is, schools with the fewest low income students—had the highest average quantity and quality scores. As Figure 32 shows, those differences were statistically significant.

In contrast, at the secondary level both average quantity and quality scores were highest for schools with an average share of low income students, but the differences were not statistically significant.

Figure 32: Average school composite scores by the share of students enrolled in free and reduced price meals

	Elementary		Secondary	
	Quantity	Quality	Quantity	Quality
Many	0.39	0.28	0.28	0.44
Average	0.40	0.30	0.30	0.46
Few	0.46	0.36	0.29	0.44

Statistically significant measures in orange

School enrollment Average public school enrollment across LA County is 653 students per school, but size varies widely. The size of school enrollment was associated with differences in quantity and quality of arts education for both the elementary and secondary level, as Figure 33 shows. At the elementary level, larger schools had higher average quantity and quality scores, and the difference was statistically significant. The same was true at the secondary level.

Figure 33: Average school composite scores by the size of the school enrollment

	Elementary		Secondary	
	Quantity	Quality	Quantity	Quality
Large	0.47	0.38	0.37	0.56
Medium	0.40	0.28	0.29	0.46
Small	0.39	0.29	0.22	0.32

Statistically significant measures in orange

District size The average district in LA County has 18,616 students enrolled, but as with schools, the range varies widely. Differences in district size were found to be statistically significant at the elementary level but not at the secondary level (Figure 34). Because LA Unified School district (LAUSD) is so much larger than every other district in the County, it was treated as its own category in this analysis. Long Beach Unified would have been treated as a separate category as well but because of the very low response rate of schools in the district it was excluded from this analysis.

At the elementary level LAUSD had the highest average quantity score, but medium and small districts followed close behind. Small districts had the highest average quality score, followed closely by LAUSD.

At the secondary level, large districts had the highest average quality score, but the difference was not statistically significant. Quantity scores at the secondary level clustered closely together and the differences were not statistically significant.

Figure 34: Average school composite scores by the size of district enrollment

	Elementary		Secondary	
	Quantity	Quality	Quantity	Quality
LA Unified	0.43	0.33	0.29	0.45
Large	0.37	0.26	0.30	0.50
Medium	0.42	0.32	0.28	0.43
Small	0.42	0.34	0.29	0.42

Statistically significant measures in orange

Equity—in summary

The equity analysis uncovered some troubling trends that mirror problems in the wider society. The data suggest schools with a larger share of students of color are offering less arts instruction and lower quality instruction. We analyzed this for every major Census category of race/ethnicity, and found schools that were categorized as Non-Hispanic White offer the most and best arts instruction. This is also true of schools with larger percentages of English Learners and students enrolled in free and reduced price meals. The larger the share of ELs and students enrolled on FRPM, the lower the quantity and quality, though this was consistently true only for schools with elementary grades.

Size of the school and district also matter, but not in the same way. Larger schools appear to have more arts instruction and higher quality arts instruction. At the same time, larger districts have less arts instruction and lesser quality. The exception is LA Unified school district, which had the highest average quantity scores and very high quality scores.

As notable as these details are, our broader discovery that equity issues are not the same at the elementary and secondary levels is also critical. The data suggest that elementary students from different backgrounds do not have as much access to arts instruction and it is of poorer quality. The evidence is less clear at the secondary level, but what evidence there is, points in the same direction.

Combined with the earlier finding that the quantity of arts education at the elementary level is higher than the secondary level, but that the trend is reversed for quality, we are left with the strong impression that elementary grades do not have the same needs as secondary grades. **In terms of developing programs, services or policies to improve arts education, one size does not fit all.**

School districts

Some aspects of arts education are better understood at the district level rather than the school level. Therefore a second component of the Arts Ed Profile was a survey administered to school district leaders. Fifty-four districts (63.5 percent) responded to this survey.

Arts coordinator Overall, 96.3 percent of districts reported having an arts coordinator on staff, a person responsible for overseeing arts education across the district. In some districts this was a full time arts coordinator with no other responsibilities. In other districts it was an administrator or a teacher who did arts coordination as part of their job. Across all responding districts, ten (18.5 percent) had a full time arts coordinator. Another ten districts reported their arts coordinator did this work more than one-quarter of their time but less than full time. More than half of the responding districts (57.4 percent) had an arts coordinator assigned to this work less than one-quarter of their time. The remaining eight districts reported no arts coordinator on staff.

While nearly every district had an arts coordinator, very few had someone dedicated to that position full time. Therefore we conducted a statistical test (Kruskal-Wallis) to determine whether the amount of time dedicated to coordinating arts education was associated the quantity and quality of arts education in the schools in that district. At the elementary level, districts with no arts coordinator at the district level had the lowest average quality and quantity scores. Districts with a full time arts coordinator had the highest average quality and (to a lesser degree) quantity scores. The evidence is less clear for districts that have a part time coordinator; having a larger percent of part time FTE arts coordination is not associated with higher scores. In all cases, the differences are statistically significant.

At the secondary level, the differences between school districts with full time, part time, and no arts coordinator were not statistically significant. This suggests that the role of the arts coordinator may be more salient at the elementary than secondary level.

Feeder patterns Districts were asked whether students who receive arts instruction in elementary school would be able to receive continued instruction in the same discipline when they move on to secondary school. Figure 35 shows what percent of districts reported that students could always, sometimes, or never continue, by each discipline. An option was given for districts to report that they were unsure. Visual Arts (60.0 percent) and Music (58.3 percent) are the two disciplines where continuing from elementary to secondary was most often possible. Dance (10.0 percent) and Media Arts (8.3 percent) are the disciplines where it was most often not possible.

Figure 35: Continuing instruction from elementary to secondary grades, by discipline

Discipline	Always	Sometimes	Never	Unknown
Dance	23.3%	56.7%	10.0%	10.0%
Music	58.3%	35.0%	0%	6.7%
Theatre	35.0%	53.3%	5.0%	6.7%
Visual Arts	60.0%	31.7%	1.7%	6.7%
Media Arts	38.3%	40.0%	8.3%	13.3%

Arts education strategies Districts were given an opportunity to write in their own words their top three strategies for sustaining or improving arts education. These were recoded into ten different categories. Overwhelmingly, strategies to *Expand arts curriculum or offerings* were the most common type. More than one-fifth of all responding districts (22.4 percent) named it as their top strategy. Another 14.1 percent listed it as their second highest strategy, and another 15.3 percent listed it as their third highest strategy. Figure 36 shows each of the ten categories, and what share of districts ranked it as one of their top three strategies.

Figure 36: Top ten strategies for sustaining or improving arts education*

Strategy	Percent of districts
Expand arts curriculum or offerings	51.8%
Integrate arts with other academic subjects	30.6%
Hire or assign an arts coordinator/lead/point person	23.5%
Professional development/capacity building	23.5%
Secure funding/resources	18.8%
Create or expand partnerships with community arts organizations	15.3%
Implement/develop a strategic plan for arts integration	4.7%
Increase/maintain community/stakeholders support	4.7%
Improve arts facilities	3.5%
Integrate technology into arts instruction	3.5%

*These findings reflect only those schools that responded and are not generalizable to all schools in LA County.

Funding sources Schools utilize funds from a wide variety of sources to pay for in-school arts education. Though they were not asked to report actual dollars spent on arts education, they were asked to report sources of funding. As can be seen in Figure 37, the six most commonly used sources of funding differed between elementary and secondary grades. In both cases, district budgets and school site budgets were the most commonly used sources for funding arts education, followed by Local Control Funding Formula dollars. PTA/PTO funds were among the top six for both elementary and secondary, but 31.1 percent of schools with elementary grades used those funds while only 14.4 percent of schools with secondary grades did.

The other two of the top six funding sources differed. Schools with secondary grades used Title I funds and government grants to fund arts education, while elementary schools used funds from the LA County Arts Ed Collective and their local education foundations. It should also be noted that a much larger share of schools with secondary grades used district budgets, school budgets and LCFF monies to fund arts education, compared to schools with elementary grades.

Figure 37: Most commonly used sources of funding for elementary and secondary arts instruction*

Elementary

Source	Percent of schools that use it
District funding or general fund	51.8%
School site based funding	40.9%
California Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF)	33.8%
Parent Teacher Association (PTA) or Parent Teacher Organization (PTO)	31.1%
LA County Arts Ed Collective	13.7%
Local Education Foundation (LEF)	13.4%

Secondary

Source	Percent of schools that use it
District funding or general fund	76.0%
School site based funding	65.4%
California Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF)	42.8%
Title I funds	21.2%
Grants from Federal, State, or City Agencies	18.8%
Parent Teacher Association (PTA) or Parent Teacher Organization (PTO)	14.4%

*These findings reflect only those schools that responded and are not generalizable to all schools in LA County.

School Districts—in summary

The majority of public school districts in LA County have someone on staff with responsibility for overseeing arts education. However, most arts coordinators do that work only part time. **Having a full time arts coordinator is associated with more arts instruction and higher quality arts instruction** than having a part time coordinator or none at all, though which is cause and which is effect cannot be determined. Perhaps it is not surprising to find that identifying an arts coordinator is one of the top three strategies districts report they are using to sustain or improve arts education.

Students who begin instruction in an arts discipline in elementary grades are not guaranteed an opportunity to continue it at the secondary level. Districts report learning is more likely to continue in Music and Visual Arts than other disciplines. The feeder pattern data reported by district staff parallel the quantity figures reported by individual schools: It does appear that the more arts are offered, the more likely a student will be able to continue arts instruction in a particular discipline throughout his or her time in school.

Differences between arts education at the elementary and secondary levels emerge again when looking at sources of funding. Three-quarters of schools with secondary grades use district funding while only half of schools with elementary grades do. Nearly three-quarters of schools with secondary grades use school site based funding, while it is used by forty percent of schools with elementary grades. Federal funds play a role in funding secondary arts education, while local education foundations are more prominent at the elementary level.



Arts education is common and widespread across public schools in LA County. Nearly every school offers their students at least some arts instruction during the school day, and the majority of schools that do, offer instruction in at least two arts disciplines. Schools and school districts continue to invest in arts education for their students, despite significant economic and funding challenges.

When viewed through a lens of what high quality arts education might look like based on accepted standards in the field—year-long arts instruction provided to all students—we find that very few schools provide it, so very few students have access to the standards. Music instruction is closest while Dance and Media Arts are furthest from it. Other measures of quality such as a combination of integrated and discrete instruction, assessment of arts instruction, and teacher participation in professional development, show other areas where there is room to grow and opportunities for improvement.

The trends identified in this survey mirror and even validate what was learned through interviews with school leaders in the 2001 study, **Arts in Focus: Los Angeles Countywide Arts Education Survey**. Fifteen years later, and despite the progress that has been made by the hard work of arts educators and arts education advocates, many of the same challenges persist. This study provides more detail about those challenges and how they have evolved, suggesting more targeted action steps to address them.

Perhaps the most critical findings in this survey are the apparent differences between elementary and secondary arts education. The data suggest that schools with elementary grades (Pre-K/TK) provide more arts

instruction while schools with secondary grades (9 to 12) provide higher quality arts instruction. This can be seen in both self-reported survey responses and the composite scores constructed here. The trend plays itself out in the fact that students who begin instruction in an arts discipline in elementary school are not guaranteed an opportunity to continue it in secondary school.

The difference between elementary and secondary arts education is also visible on questions of equity. The data suggest that students from low income communities, English Learners and students of color have less access to arts education, and the arts instruction they are offered is of lower quality. The evidence is stronger at the elementary level than at the secondary. Small and medium districts appear to be doing better for their students than larger districts, with the exception of LA Unified.

For school districts seeking to improve arts instruction, these findings offer potential direction and focus. They can begin by looking at whether the arts instruction offered in their schools with larger numbers of students on FRPM, English Learners, and students of color is equal to that of the schools in their district offering the best arts education. They might put particular emphasis on improving equity in the elementary grades. They might also compare whether their smaller schools have equal access to what their larger schools have. They can explore improving quality at the elementary level, while increasing quantity at the secondary level. One approach to this could be to examine where specific disciplines decline in their school feeder patterns. Finally, they can explore whether they are funding elementary and secondary arts education differently, and look for opportunities to leverage resources.

Many of these same findings are relevant at the school site level as well. Schools with elementary grades might start by improving the quality of arts instruction offered, while schools with secondary grades might begin by increasing the amount of what they offer. A school could select a particular measure of quantity or quality and set a goal of, for example, adding a new discipline, expanding instruction in a single discipline to all students in all grades, or making sure their arts teachers participate in professional development.

For parents and other arts education stakeholders, these findings suggest specific questions to ask of their schools and districts. Does my district have a designated arts coordinator on staff? Are arts instructors using technology in the classroom? Are they using both knowledge- and performance-based methods of assessing arts learning? Will my child be able to continue to study the discipline they begin in elementary school through to graduation?

In sum, these findings tell us that the arts education community need not consider itself on the margins of public education in LA County. Arts education advocates can move forward from a place of strength. Arts education has a strong base to work from, and this study points out specific opportunities for improving quantity, quality and equity of arts education for everyone. Together, we can ensure that all students in all of LA County's diverse communities experience the benefits of high quality arts instruction.



APPENDIX 1

Arts Ed Profile survey instrument

Summary of the school site questionnaire

(a full version of the survey can be found at <https://www.lacountyartsedcollective.org/profile/school-survey>)

For principals with any grades, Pre-K through 12

- Who, besides a credentialed arts teacher, teaches the arts?
- Does the school partner with teaching artists or community arts organizations?
- Do teachers participate in arts professional development?
- Are teachers assessing the arts? What kind of assessments are they using?
- Do students use technology tools in their arts classes?
- What kinds of spaces are used for instruction in each discipline?

Additional questions for principals of schools with grades Pre-K/TK to 8

By grade level, for each discipline (dance, music, theatre, visual arts and media arts):

- Is the discipline taught to all students?
- How often is the discipline taught?
- How many minutes is the arts lesson?
- Are credentialed teachers teaching the discipline?
- Are the arts typically integrated? Are they also taught discretely?
- Are teachers using a shared curriculum?

Summary of the school district questionnaire

(a full version of the survey can be found at <https://www.lacountyartsedcollective.org/profile/district-survey>)

- Does your district have a staff person that oversees arts education? If so, how much time does that person spend on arts education?
- Do your district's students enter secondary school with grade level proficiency corresponding to the California Visual and Performing Arts Standards (by discipline)
- If a student receives art instruction in elementary school, will the student be able to receive continued instruction in that discipline in middle and high school? (by discipline)
- Do students with disabilities in your district have equal access to arts education? Do English Learners in your district have equal access?
- How does your district incorporate the arts into student report cards?
- What are your top strategies for sustaining and improving arts education?

Appendix 2

School survey response rate by district

District	Number of schools surveyed	Number of schools that completed the survey	District response rate
ABC Unified	30	4	13%
Acton-Agua Dulce Unified	24	0	0%
Alhambra Unified	18	2	11%
Antelope Valley Union High	15	10	67%
Arcadia Unified	11	0	0%
Azusa Unified	18	3	17%
Baldwin Park Unified	22	14	64%
Bassett Unified	7	3	43%
Bellflower Unified	15	12	80%
Beverly Hills Unified	6	4	67%
Bonita Unified	15	2	13%
Burbank Unified	21	19	90%
Castaic Union	4	1	25%
Centinela Valley Union High	8	3	38%
Charter Oak Unified	10	4	40%
Claremont Unified	12	12	100%
Compton Unified	41	6	15%
Covina-Valley Unified	18	17	94%
Culver City Unified	9	8	89%
Downey Unified	20	19	95%
Duarte Unified	9	7	78%
East Whittier City Elementary	13	13	100%
Eastside Union Elementary	6	0	0%
El Monte City	15	15	100%
El Monte Union High	7	4	57%
El Rancho Unified	14	7	50%
El Segundo Unified	5	5	100%
Garvey Elementary	10	0	0%
Glendale Unified	33	15	45%
Glendora Unified	9	0	0%
Gorman Elementary	2	1	50%
Green Dot Public Schools	18	4	22%

District	Number of schools surveyed	Number of schools that completed the survey	District response rate
Hacienda La Puente Unified	36	34	94%
Hawthorne	11	11	100%
Hermosa Beach City Elementary	2	1	50%
Hughes-Elizabeth Lakes Union Elementary	1	1	100%
ICEF Public Schools	9	9	100%
Inglewood Unified	23	17	74%
Keppel Union Elementary	7	7	100%
La Canada Unified	4	1	25%
Lancaster Elementary	23	8	35%
Las Virgenes Unified	15	14	93%
Lawndale Elementary	9	8	89%
Lennox	9	6	67%
Little Lake City Elementary	9	2	22%
Long Beach Unified	87	8	9%
Los Angeles County Office of Education	40	12	30%
Los Angeles Unified	980	253	26%
Los Nietos	4	2	50%
Lowell Joint	6	1	17%
Lynwood Unified	20	7	35%
Magnolia Public Schools	8	8	100%
Manhattan Beach Unified	8	2	25%
Monrovia Unified	11	6	55%
Montebello Unified	30	28	93%
Mountain View Elementary	12	12	100%
Newhall	10	10	100%
Norwalk-La Mirada Unified	28	14	50%
PUC Schools	14	9	64%
Palmdale Elementary	31	27	87%
Palos Verdes Peninsula Unified	16	7	44%
Paramount Unified	19	9	47%
Pasadena Unified	33	27	82%
Pomona Unified	42	39	93%
Redondo Beach Unified	13	1	8%
Rosemead Elementary	5	2	40%

District	Number of schools surveyed	Number of schools that completed the survey	District response rate
Rowland Unified	23	1	4%
San Gabriel Unified	9	2	22%
San Marino Unified	4	4	100%
Santa Monica-Malibu Unified	17	16	94%
Saugus Union	15	15	100%
South Pasadena Unified	5	2	40%
South Whittier Elementary	7	1	14%
State Board of Education	10	0	0%
Sulphur Springs Union	9	9	100%
Temple City Unified	8	6	75%
Torrance Unified	32	12	38%
Valle Lindo Elementary	2	0	0%
Walnut Valley Unified	15	6	40%
West Covina Unified	18	1	6%
Westside Union Elementary	12	0	0%
Whittier City Elementary	13	11	85%
Whittier Union High	7	7	100%
William S. Hart Union High	20	5	25%
Wilsona Elementary	3	1	33%
Wiseburn Unified	8	8	100%
Total	2,277	924	41%



¹ See, for example

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² See, for example,

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⁴ See, for example,

James Catterall. *Doing Well and Doing Good by Doing Art: A 12-year national study of education in the visual and performing arts, effects on the achievements and values of young adults*. Los Angeles: I-Group Books, 2009.

Margaret S. Osborne, Gary E. McPherson, Robert Faulkner, Jane W. Davidson, and Margaret S. Barrett, "Exploring the academic and psychosocial impact of El Sistema-inspired music programs within two low socio-economic schools," *Music Education Research*, 18, no. 2 (2015): 156-175.

⁵ Lois Hetland and Ellen Winner, "The Arts and Academic Achievement: What the evidence shows," *Arts Education Policy Review*, 102, no. 5 (2001): 3-6.

⁶ See, for example,

"Watch the skills gap: See how U.S. executives see the skills gap impacting the American workforce," *AdeccoUSA.com*. Last modified July 26, 2017. <https://www.adeccousa.com/employers/resources/skills-gap-in-the-american-workforce>.

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⁷ Somjita Mitra, Kimberly Ritter-Martinez, and Rafael DeAnda. *2017 Otis Report on the Creative Economy: Los Angeles Region*. Los Angeles: LA County Economic Development Corporation, May 2017, <https://www.otis.edu/sites/default/files/2017-LA-Region-Creative-Economy-Report-FINAL-WEB.pdf>.

⁸ Bronwyn Mauldin. *Creative Work: How arts education promotes career opportunities beyond the arts*. Los Angeles: Los Angeles County Arts Commission, April 2015, https://www.lacountyarts.org/sites/default/files/pdfs/lacac_creativereportb_final2.pdf.

⁹ *Arts in Focus: Los Angeles Countywide Arts Education Survey*. Los Angeles: Arts Education Task Force of Arts for LA, 2001, https://www.lacountyartsedcollective.org/sites/lacaec/files/media/pdf/materials/aifmay01_0.pdf.

¹⁰ *Arts for All: Los Angeles County Regional Blueprint for Arts Education*. Los Angeles: Los Angeles County Arts Commission, July 2002, https://www.lacountyartsedcollective.org/sites/lacaec/files/media/pdf/materials/artsedu_artsforall09-02_0.pdf.

¹¹ The Common Core of Data (CCD) is the US Department of Education's primary database on public elementary and secondary education. It is a comprehensive, annual, national database of all public elementary and secondary schools and school districts. See <https://nces.ed.gov/ccd> for more information.

¹² See, for example

Basmat Parsad and Maura Spiegelman. *Arts Education in Public Elementary and Secondary Schools, 1999-2000 and 2009-10*. Washington, DC: US Department of Education, 2012, <https://nces.ed.gov/pubs2012/2012014rev.pdf>.

¹³ For more information, see <http://www.createca.dreamhosters.com/artsed-dataproject>.

¹⁴ The five AEPI indicators were

- Board-adopted arts education policy
- Board-adopted arts education plan
- District level arts coordinator
- 5% or more of general budget for arts education
- Ratio of 400:1 students to credentialed arts teachers

¹⁵ Steve Seidel, Shari Tishman, Ellen Winner, Lois Hetland, and Patricia Palmer. *The Qualities of Quality: Understanding excellence in arts education*. Boston: Project Zero, Harvard Graduate School of Education, June 2009, <http://www.wallacefoundation.org/knowledge-center/Documents/Understanding-Excellence-in-Arts-Education.pdf>.

¹⁶ *Arts in Schools Report, 2015-16*. New York: New York City Department of Education, 2016, http://schools.nyc.gov/offices/teachlearn/arts/files/ArtsCount/Office_of_the_Arts_Annual_Report_web_ready_2015-2016.pdf.

¹⁷ Yael Silk and Ingenuity. *State of the Arts in Chicago Public Schools: Progress report 2015-16*. Chicago: Ingenuity, Inc, October 2016, https://www.ingenuity-inc.org/filebin/StateoftheArts_2015-16_FINAL_web_compressed.pdf.

¹⁸ *The Creative Advantage: 2015 progress report*. Seattle: Seattle Public Schools, 2016, http://www.creativeadvantageseattle.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/06/FINAL_CA_16ProgressRep.pdf.

¹⁹ Four charter schools that have partnered with the Arts Ed Collective were included in the overall data collection. Where “school district” is referred to generically in these report findings, the term includes these four charter networks.

²⁰ Pre-K/TK refers to pre-kindergarten and transitional kindergarten, which were combined in this analysis.

²¹ In this study, “year-long” and “all year” are used interchangeably to refer to the academic year only and do not include summer school.

²² For secondary schools, the data on credentialed instructors was taken from CDE

²³ Bronwyn Mauldin. *We Are in This Together: A survey of community arts partners in LA County Public Schools*. Los Angeles: Los Angeles County Arts Commission, 2015, https://www.lacountyarts.org/sites/default/files/pdfs/lacac_artspartnersreport_2015.pdf.

²⁴ Enrollment in FRPM is not an actual measure of the percent of students in the school who are below the federal poverty level, as eligibility for FRPM is at higher income levels than the federal poverty level. Eligibility for free and reduced price meals is based on household income and family size and is set by each state. For example, in the 2016-17 year a four-person household would be eligible if total household income was less than \$31,590. See <https://www.cde.ca.gov/ls/nu/rs/scales1617.asp> for more details.

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