

ARTS AND MUSIC IN SCHOOLS:

# Exploring Prop 28 Implementation and Public Perceptions in Los Angeles County

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Photo by Rafael Hernandez



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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## Overview

Proposition 28, the Arts and Music in Schools Funding Guarantee and Accountability Act (Prop 28 AMS) was passed into law in 2022. Bringing nearly \$1 billion of annual funding into California's schools, Prop 28 AMS is the largest investment in arts education in U.S. history.

This research study explores how Prop 28 AMS is being implemented in public school districts and how it is being perceived by the public in Los Angeles County. This study used mixed methods, bringing together quantitative and qualitative analyses of interviews with district arts leaders and surveys of the general public in Los Angeles County. Data was collected between mid-June 2024 and late July 2024.

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## Findings

**School districts' implementation statuses vary.** Some districts took rapid action, while others were still building momentum or infrastructure to support future action.

**Districts are building on strengths and negotiating challenges.** Implementation efforts built on districts' strategic arts assets and navigated shortages of staff, space, and time for expanded arts education programs.

**Community members were less skeptical about Prop 28 AMS implementation when they perceived greater public involvement.** Survey respondents who believed that teachers, parents/guardians, students, and community-based organizations were involved were 75% less likely to doubt whether Prop 28 AMS would achieve its goals.

**Community members are interested in Prop 28 but disconnected from its implementation.** 89% of respondents believed Prop 28 to be very important, but only 20% were actively involved in their local schools' Prop 28 implementation efforts.

**Shared interest in oversight and transparency.** Despite their high levels of interest in Prop 28, 66% of survey respondents were unsure whether or how Prop 28 was being implemented in their local schools. The public and district arts leaders wanted to see more transparency, accountability, and oversight.



## Recommendations

**Get involved with strategic arts planning.** Ask about strategic plans, arts needs assessments, and opportunities to join arts advisory councils.

**Collaborate within and beyond districts.** Bring together practitioners within school districts to identify shared goals. Establish implementation networks to share strategies amongst practitioners and with the public.

**Strengthen capacity.** Support school and district-level leaders through county-wide technical assistance centers and other professional learning specific to Prop 28 implementation.

**Build affordable pathways for emerging arts teachers.** Subsidize teacher credential programs to bring more arts credential-seekers into classrooms.

**Create a statewide oversight and advisory committee.** Increase public and practitioner oversight by creating a statewide committee of administrators, teachers, students, families, and community partners as advisors and liaisons to their communities.

## Conclusion

While celebrating the potential of Prop 28 AMS, these findings also shed light on its complexities and opportunities to help fulfill its promise. To realize Prop 28 AMS's goal of equitably expanding arts education, schools and districts need support, and students deserve it.

Photo by Sarah M. Golonka





# INTRODUCTION



Photo by Rafael Hernandez

**Arts education faces a momentous opportunity.** After decades of being pushed to the margins, 2022 marked the start of a new era for arts education in California. Nearly 2 in 3 California voters supported Proposition 28, the Arts and Music in Schools Funding Guarantee and Accountability Act (Prop 28 AMS), passing it into law. Bringing nearly \$1 billion of annual funding into California’s schools, Prop 28 AMS is the largest investment in arts education in U.S. history.

Schools now have an unprecedented chance to expand their arts offerings. With local control over the funds, the implementation of Prop 28 AMS should be shaped by the visions and decisions of district-level arts leaders and community members.

Understanding how Los Angeles County district arts leaders approach these decisions—and how the general public perceives them—is vital to delivering on Prop 28 AMS’s promise to equitably increase access to arts education. This study aims to portray the vision of robust, equitable arts education through the eyes of Los Angeles County educators and community members to motivate coordinated implementation efforts at the local and county levels, inspire similar inquiry across the state, and activate advocacy for arts education policy nationwide.

This study brings together interviews with arts leaders in Los Angeles County school districts, an online survey for the general public, and public-use data from the California Department of Education (CDE). While interviews with arts leaders in school districts provided insight about Prop 28 AMS implementation in Los Angeles County school districts, the online survey gathered public perceptions, hopes, and expectations for Prop 28 AMS implementation, and CDE data put all these responses into the demographic context.



# TERMINOLOGY

**Arts education program.** According to Prop 28 AMS, “‘arts education program’ includes, but is not limited to, instruction and training, supplies, materials, and arts educational partnership programs, for instruction in: dance, media arts, music, theatre, and visual arts, including folk art, painting, sculpture, photography, and craft arts, creative expressions, including graphic arts and design, computer coding, animation, music composition and ensembles, and script writing, costume design, film, and video.”

**Arts education partnership.** A school or district working with an external arts-based organization to provide arts education services in schools. These arts-based organizations might include community-based organizations, cultural institutions, or other entities.

**District arts leaders.** For this study’s purposes, this term broadly refers to visual and performing arts coordinators, teachers on special assignment, or others who have a leadership role in a school district’s arts education programs and personnel.

**Visual and Performing Arts (VAPA) Coordinator.** A staff member, usually at the district level, whose role is to coordinate arts education programs, often across multiple school sites.

**Teacher on special assignment (TOSA).** A teacher who is assigned special responsibilities in addition to regular instructional duties. These duties may be specific to the TOSA’s school site and/or extend across multiple sites.

**Local education agency (LEA).** Includes school districts, county offices of education, and other entities responsible for one or more school sites.

**Full-time equivalent (FTE).** The measure of employment used to determine the number of full-time employees who work for an employer.

**Arts teachers.** For the purposes of this report, this term broadly refers to anyone who teaches the arts, whether they are credentialed or uncredentialed.

**Certificated staff.** This term refers to credentialed teachers or others who hold another type of certificate (e.g., an emergency permit or waiver).

**Classified staff.** This term refers to employees who work in a position that does not require a particular certificate or credential.

**Career technical education (CTE).** The pathway of courses equipping students with academic, technical, and occupational knowledge to pursue postsecondary studies and careers in a specialized field.



# STUDY DESIGN

The purpose of this research study is to explore how California Proposition 28, the Arts and Music in Schools Funding Guarantee and Accountability Act (Prop 28 AMS), is being implemented in public school districts and perceived by the general public in Los Angeles County.

To that end, the study investigates the following research questions and sub-questions:

## **How are school district leaders putting Prop 28 AMS into practice?**

- What strengths and strategies have supported Prop 28 AMS implementation in Los Angeles County public school districts?
- What challenges and needs remain?

## **How does the public perceive Prop 28 AMS?**

- What implementation efforts have they observed in their local schools?
- What changes do they hope to see as a result of Prop 28 AMS?

## **How do practitioner and public perspectives intersect?**

- How might these constituencies set achievable goals for Prop 28 AMS?
- How might they contribute to Prop 28 AMS implementation?



# BACKGROUND

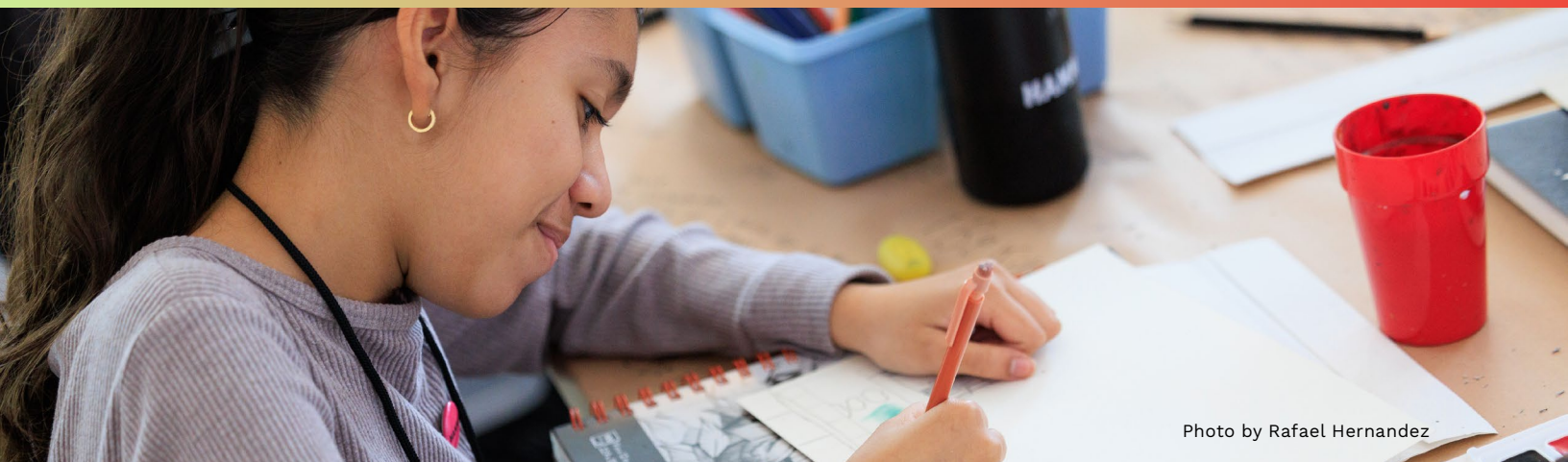


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## Overview: What is Prop 28 AMS?

California Proposition 28, the Arts and Music in Schools Funding Guarantee and Accountability Act (Prop 28 AMS), aims to increase access to arts education in California’s public K-12 schools. Authored by former LAUSD Superintendent Austin Beutner, Prop 28 AMS sets aside an amount equivalent to 1% of the state funding guaranteed to schools and community colleges each year, designating an estimated \$1 billion for arts education annually. Prop 28 AMS funds for arts education can only be reduced if the state legislature reduces education spending below the constitutional minimum established by Prop 98.<sup>1</sup> This means that, unlike other arts funding sources that provide temporary support (like the Arts, Music, and Instruction Materials Discretionary Funding Block Grant), Prop 28 AMS funds are here to stay.

California schools eligible to receive Prop 28 AMS funding include TK-12 public schools (including public charters), state-funded public preschools, and State Special Schools (California School for the Blind, Fremont; California School for the Deaf, Fremont; and California School for the Deaf, Riverside). Funds are distributed to eligible schools based on a formula that accounts for the school’s share of statewide enrollment and the share of low-income students enrolled at the school compared to the state at large. Based on CDE’s estimates for the February 2024 apportionment, Prop 28 AMS would bring \$938 million into schools statewide, with about \$218 million allocated to schools in Los Angeles County. The median allocation per local education agency<sup>2</sup> was approximately \$500,000 across California and \$1.2 million in Los Angeles County. Notably, Los Angeles County is also home to the largest Prop 28 AMS allocation made to any local education agency, at \$71 million for Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD). These allocations will be recalculated each year based on updated data, and allocations can be viewed on the Prop 28 AMS webpage on CDE’s website.<sup>3</sup>

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1 The constitutionally guaranteed minimum funding level for California schools and community colleges is established through Prop 98, which was adopted in 1988. This minimum funding level is calculated based on the state general fund and other factors. More information about Prop 98 and its current implications can be found through the Legislative Analyst’s Office: <https://lao.ca.gov/Publications/Report/4839>

2 Accounts for local education agencies with at least two school sites.

3 California Department of Education (CDE). (2024). *Proposition 28: Arts and Music in Schools Program: Funding Results for the Proposition 28: Arts and Music in Schools*. <https://www.cde.ca.gov/fg/aa/pa/prop28ams.asp>



## Requirements: How can Prop 28 AMS funds be spent?

Regardless of the amount, the law sets specific requirements around how schools can spend Prop 28 AMS funds. Above all, the law states that Prop 28 AMS funds must be used to “supplement” (increase), not “supplant” (replace) any arts programs. It also specifies that schools must use at least 80% of their Prop 28 AMS funds for arts teachers and teaching personnel, and may use up to 20% for other program expenses and up to 1% for administrative expenses (schools can apply to waive this rule, and schools with fewer than 500 students are exempt from it altogether). Schools should develop their expenditure plans in consultation with community members, and those plans should be made available to the public. Schools are also required to report back to the state about their Prop 28 AMS spending.

This study foregrounds three of Prop 28 AMS’s main requirements: (1) increasing arts access by supplementing, not supplanting arts offerings; (2) prioritizing arts teachers; and (3) transparency and public accountability.

### Increasing Arts Access

Prop 28 AMS funds are intended to increase arts opportunities, not just pay for what was already in place—in other words, “supplement, not supplant”—that is, to expand arts education, rather than reinforcing the status quo.

Limited and unequal access to arts education has been the norm in California. Over the past several decades, arts education has suffered the detrimental effects of policies like California’s Prop 13 (1978)<sup>4</sup> and No Child Left Behind (2004).<sup>5</sup> With limited funding and other resources, arts access has been both scarce and inequitable; Prop 28 AMS seeks to repair those gaps,<sup>6</sup> especially considering the unmet mandates of arts education for all.

The California Education Code requires schools to offer sequential, standards-aligned visual and performing arts education to all students,<sup>7</sup> but the overwhelming majority of schools statewide fail to do so. According to a 2022 study by SRI Education, only 11% of California schools meet those state requirements for visual and performing arts availability.<sup>8</sup> Among the few who do, schools with majority socioeconomically disadvantaged students meet those requirements at less than half the rate of schools serving mostly affluent students. That same study also found disparities by school size. High schools with more than 2,000 enrolled students meet those requirements at more than 10 times the rate of smaller schools with fewer than 1,000 enrolled students.

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4 Catterall, J. S., & Brizendine, E. (1985). Proposition 13: Effects on High School Curricula, 1978-1983. *American Journal of Education*, 93(3), 327–351. JSTOR.

5 Chapman, L. H. (2007). An Update on No Child Left Behind and National Trends in Education. *Arts Education Policy Review*, 109(1), 25–40. <https://doi.org/10.3200/AEPR.109.1.25-40>

6 Beutner, A., & Duncan, A. (2022, February 28). Arts education is woefully underfunded in California Schools. *CalMatters*. <https://calmatters.org/commentary/2022/02/arts-education-is-woefully-underfunded-in-california-schools/>

7 Section 51210 requires that schools offer visual and performing arts instruction to all students grades 1-6 and Section 51220 requires schools offer visual and performing arts courses to students grades 7-12.

8 Woodworth, K., Bengé, C., Fields, X., Zamora, C., & Levin-Guracar, E. (2022). *Creativity challenge: The state of arts education in California*. SRI Education. <https://www.sri.com/publication/education-learning-pubs/creativity-challenge-the-state-of-arts-education-in-california-full-report/>

These patterns are not unique to California. Across the United States, unequal access to robust arts education falls along socioeconomic lines and by school size. According to a nationally representative study, larger schools are more likely to offer multiple art forms, and fewer arts were available in schools with large proportions of socioeconomically disadvantaged students.<sup>9</sup> That same study and others have found dance and theater to be underrepresented nationally among schools' arts offerings compared to visual arts and music,<sup>10</sup> with smaller schools significantly less likely to offer dance and theater than larger schools.

With Prop 28 AMS, California schools have an opportunity to disrupt these inequities and activate the potential for arts education to nurture social-emotional development, strengthen social connectedness and school climate, affirm cultural identities and practices, and build pathways into 21st century careers in and beyond creative industries.

These possibilities—aligned with the goals of the 2020 California Arts Education Framework for Standards-Based Arts Education and building on the vision of artistic literacy in the National Core Arts Standards—are also supported by research, existing policy structures, and exemplary practice.

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9 Elpus, K. (2020). Access to arts education in America: The availability of visual art, music, dance, and theater courses in U.S. high schools. *Arts Education Policy Review*, 123(2), 50–69. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10632913.2020.1773365>

10 Parsad, B., & Spiegelman, M. (2012). *Arts education in public elementary and secondary schools: 1999-2000 and 2009-10*. National Center for Education Statistics, Institute of Education Sciences, U.S. Department of Education.



Photo by Rafael Hernandez



### Social emotional development.

A growing body of evidence investigates and demonstrates the connection between the arts and social emotional learning,<sup>11 12</sup> and other states (New Jersey, for example) have formalized it in their own arts education frameworks.

### Social connectedness and school climate.

Researchers and practitioners recognize the potential for the arts to foster social connectedness, particularly in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic and in an era of complex societal conflicts.<sup>13 14 15</sup> Efforts to promote positive school climate and social connectedness also emerge among the state's Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF) Priorities, suggesting a place for the arts in strategic planning toward these targets.

### Affirming cultural identities.

Culturally relevant, responsive, and sustaining approaches to arts education have advanced justice by centering learners' cultural and linguistic strengths and identities,<sup>16 17 18</sup> and although not formally required by the California Arts Standards, are supported in its statement on Inclusive, Affirming, and Culturally Sustaining Arts Education.

### Creative career pathways.

Pursuit of creative careers—i.e., in the arts, culture, entertainment, or related fields—begins with foundational arts educational experiences.<sup>19</sup> With Los Angeles County's considerable contributions to California's robust creative economy,<sup>20</sup> equitable access to creative career pathways has emerged as a local priority in initiatives including Arts for LA's Creative Jobs Collective Impact Initiative<sup>21</sup> and the Los Angeles County Arts Ed Collective's continued interest in creative career pathways for youth.<sup>22</sup>

11 Edgar, S. N., & Morrison, B. (2021). A vision for Social Emotional Learning and arts education policy. *Arts Education Policy Review*, 122(3), 145–150. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10632913.2020.1774830>

12 Farrington, C. A., Maurer, J., Aska McBride, M. R., Nagaoka, J., Puller, J. S., Shewfelt, S., Weiss, E. M., & Wright, L. (2019). *Arts Education and Social-Emotional Learning Outcomes Among K-12 Students: Developing a Theory of Action*. University of Chicago Consortium on School Research.

13 Bell, A. (2024). *Fostering a Culture of Connection through the Arts*. The Kennedy Center. <https://www.kennedy-center.org/education/resources-for-educators/classroom-resources/articles-and-how-tos/articles/educators/professional-development/fostering-a-culture-of-connection-through-the-arts2/>

14 Koo, A., Lim, K., & Song, B. (2024). Belonging Pedagogy: Revisiting Identity, Culture, and Difference. *Studies in Art Education*, 65(1), 63–80. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00393541.2023.2285206>

15 Perkins, R., Mason-Bertrand, A., Tymoszuk, U., Spiro, N., Gee, K., & Williamon, A. (2021). Arts engagement supports social connectedness in adulthood: Findings from the HEartS Survey. *BMC Public Health*, 21(1), 1208. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12889-021-11233-6>

16 Alim, H. S., Paris, D., & Wong, C. P. (2020). Culturally sustaining pedagogy: A critical framework for centering communities. In N. S. Nasir, C. D. Lee, R. Pea, M. M. de Royston, & M. McKinney de Royston (Eds.), *Handbook of the Cultural Foundations of Learning* (1st ed., pp. 261–276). Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203774977>

17 Kane, K. M., Quartz, K. H., & Kunisaki, L. T. (2021). Multigenerational art making at a community school: A case study of transformative parent engagement. *Harvard Educational Review*, 91(4), 511–536. <https://doi.org/10.17763/1943-5045-91.4.511>

18 Pauly, N., Kingsley, K. V., & Baker, A. (2019). Culturally Sustaining Pedagogy Through Arts-Based Learning: Preservice Teachers Engage Emergent Bilinguals. *LEARNing Landscapes*, 12(1), 205–221. <https://doi.org/10.36510/learnland.v12i1.988>

19 Taylor, S., & Luckman, S. (Eds.). (2020). *Pathways into creative working lives*. Palgrave Macmillan US. <https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-38246-9>

20 Adler, P., & Osman, T. (2024). *California's creative economy: Key highlights from 2023*. Otis College of Art and Design. <https://www.otis.edu/about/initiatives/creative-economy/index.html>

21 Arts for LA. (n.d.). *Creative Jobs Collective Impact Initiative: A cross-sectoral partnership*. <https://www.artsforla.org/cjcii/>

22 Miller, T. P. (2019). *Building creative career pathways for youth: A field scan for Los Angeles County* (p. 115). Los Angeles County Arts Commission. [https://www.lacountyartsedcollective.org/sites/artsforall/files/lacaec/files/building\\_creative\\_career\\_pathways\\_for\\_youth\\_web.pdf](https://www.lacountyartsedcollective.org/sites/artsforall/files/lacaec/files/building_creative_career_pathways_for_youth_web.pdf)

## Prioritizing Arts Teachers

By prioritizing staffing, Prop 28 AMS ensures that expanded arts education programs are equipped with the qualified arts teachers they need. Specifically, Prop 28 AMS calls for FTE increases in certificated or classified staff to teach in arts education programs.

### Certificated staff

Certificated staff could include arts teachers who hold a credential (whether a multiple subject credential or single subject in art, dance, music, or theater), those with a CTE authorization, or those who have obtained an emergency permit authorizing them to teach in General Education Settings.<sup>23</sup>

Prop 28 AMS expands opportunities for certificated arts teachers, and uncredentialed arts teachers should know that there are four pathways<sup>24</sup> to certificated roles in Prop 28 AMS-funded classrooms. The California Commission on Teacher Credentialing outlines those pathways:<sup>25</sup> (1) residency; (2) traditional; (3) integrated undergraduate; or (4) intern. Prospective teachers might choose based on whether they have a bachelor's degree, want to earn-and-learn, and/or have prior experience and want to gain more on a part- or full-time basis. Prospective teachers can find support for these pursuits through grant programs like the Golden State Teacher Grant Program, California Commission on Teacher Credentialing Teacher Residency Grant Program, and others.

In addition to single or multiple subject credentials, uncredentialed arts teachers might consider pursuing a Designated Subject Credential to teach the arts through CTE.<sup>26</sup> Arts education programs can benefit from CTE instructors whose creative industry experience can guide students toward creative careers. While CTE instruction has historically been available to students in grades 7-12, some efforts have sought to expand it to the elementary level.

For example, Governor Gavin Newsom's 2024-25 budget proposal sought to do so through a proposed Elementary Arts and Music Education CTE pathway. Although intended to address the state's teacher shortage, this proposed pathway did not move forward, having met opposition by the California Music Educators Association (CMEA), California Educational Theatre Association (CTEA), California Dance Education Association (CDEA), and others, along with other controversy reported by EdSource.<sup>27</sup> Opponents of the proposed pathway cited concerns about CTE instructors' readiness to meet the developmental needs of younger students, as this is not required in the current CTE pathway. Opponents underscore this as a vital gap that could compromise the quality of arts education offered to these young learners.

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23 California Commission on Teacher Credentialing. (2024, January). *Arts and Music in Schools- Funding Guarantee and Accountability Act*. <https://www.ctc.ca.gov/credentials/assignment-resources/prop-28--arts-and-music-in-schools>

24 These pathways are specific to California; prospective arts teachers with out-of-state credentials should check the compatibility with California's requirements.

25 California Commission on Teacher Credentialing. (2024, April 26). *Preparation Pathway Comparison*. <https://www.ctc.ca.gov/credentials/roadmap-to-teaching/becoming-a-teacher-in-california/pathways-to-credentialing/preparation-pathway-comparison>

26 CTE credentialing processes are detailed on webpages by the [California Commission on Teacher Credentialing](#) and the [Los Angeles County Office of Education](#).

27 D'Souza, K. (2024, January 29). Gov. Newsom's budget proposal calls for expanding arts ed pathway. *EdSource*. <https://edsources.org/2024/gov-newsoms-budget-proposal-calls-for-expanding-arts-ed-pathway/704819>



Following the removal of that pathway from the Governor’s budget proposal, other advocates developed an alternative plan to expand supplementary authorization possibilities through AB 2473.<sup>28</sup> With this new legislation, credentialed teachers could demonstrate competency for a supplementary authorization in art, music, theater, or dance through a wider range of options than the current law permits. With AB 2473, teachers with single and multiple credentials could obtain a supplementary authorization in the arts through the California Subject Examinations for Teachers (CSET), coursework, and/or transcript review. These efforts aim to empower certificated (i.e., credentialed) teachers to help meet the need for more high quality arts instruction.

## Classified staff

Prop 28 AMS also allows funds to be used for classified personnel employed by LEAs to teach in arts education programs. This could include, for example, teaching aides, afterschool arts educators, or teaching artists who are employed by LEAs to bring their artistic expertise into schools under the supervision of a credentialed teacher.<sup>29</sup>

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28 CalMatters. (2024). *AB 2473: English Language Learner Acquisition and Development Pilot Program repeal: Teacher credentialing authorizations: Fingerprints and related information: High school coursework and graduation requirements for pupils participating in a newcomer program*. Digital Democracy. [https://digitaldemocracy.calmatters.org/bills/ca\\_202320240ab2473](https://digitaldemocracy.calmatters.org/bills/ca_202320240ab2473)

29 Engdahl, E. (2023). *Thanks to Prop 28 School Districts Need Arts teachers*. California County Superintendents Arts Initiative. [https://cacountyarts.org/wp-content/uploads/California-County-Superintendents-Teacher-Brief\\_UPDATED-6.15.23.pdf](https://cacountyarts.org/wp-content/uploads/California-County-Superintendents-Teacher-Brief_UPDATED-6.15.23.pdf)

Photo by Rafael Hernandez



## Public Accountability and Action to Date

According to the Prop 28 AMS campaign, spending plans should be informed by input from the community. Districts should make those plans available to the public, with regular updates on progress. To that end, numerous state and local entities have stepped forward to keep LEAs and the public up-to-date with the progress, strategies, and tools for advocacy and implementation. CDE’s webinar series<sup>30</sup> has provided guidance for LEAs to understand Prop 28 AMS’s requirements, navigate reporting, audit, and waiver processes, and witness successful examples of Prop 28 AMS implementation in practice. Create CA’s Prop 28 AMS Art and Music in Schools Planning Toolkit<sup>31</sup> offers instructions and downloadable templates for schools to take inventory of existing arts programming and expenses, plan for Prop 28 AMS-funded expenditures, and gather community input. That same webpage also includes advocacy resources for parents/guardians, including a downloadable flyer and slide deck in English/Spanish. At the county level, the Los Angeles County Office of Education’s Arts Education Funding<sup>32</sup> webpage also features Create CA’s toolkit and links to CDE’s Prop 28 AMS Frequently Asked Questions page, along with additional resources. Similarly, the Los Angeles County Arts Ed Collective’s Resources for Arts and Music in Schools (Prop 28) Implementation<sup>33</sup> webpage aggregates those and other resources for school leaders on implementation, advocacy, and teacher credentialing.

Yet, despite its promising possibilities and resources provided to date, implementation has been far from straightforward. Districts across the state (including in Los Angeles County) have been accused of misusing Prop 28 AMS funds in direct violation of this part of the law. In early 2024, ongoing reporting from the LA Times, EdSource, CalMatters, and others has alleged violations, including supplanting rather than supplementing arts programs, along with a general lack of transparency. Amid these alleged violations, State Superintendent Tony Thurmond issued a letter<sup>34</sup> to remind district superintendents of the law’s requirements, and former Superintendent Austin Beutner, unions, parents, and community members<sup>35</sup> have called for action and investigation in letters to local and state officials.

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30 California Department of Education (CDE). (2024). *Proposition 28—Arts and Music in Schools Funding*. <https://www.cde.ca.gov/eo/in/prop28artsandmusicdefunding.asp>

31 Create CA. (2024). *Prop 28: Arts and Music in Schools Planning Toolkit*. <https://createca.org/prop-28-arts-and-music-in-schools-planning-toolkit/>

32 Los Angeles County Office of Education (LACOE). (n.d.). *Arts Education Funding*. <https://www.lacoe.edu/services/curriculum-instruction/arts-steam/arts-funding>

33 Los Angeles County Arts Ed Collective. (2024, April 24). *Resources for Arts and Music in Schools (Prop 28) Implementation*. <https://www.lacountyartsedcollective.org/models-resources/resources/resources-prop-28-implementation>

34 Thurmond, T. (2024, April 29). *Reminder of Proposition 28: Arts and Music in Schools Funding Guarantee and Accountability Act Requirements*. <https://www.cde.ca.gov/nr/el/le/yr24ltr0429.asp>

35 Arias, M., Beutner, A., Myart-Cruz, C., Fox, L. A., & Garcia, L. (2024). *The Implementation of Prop 28 in LAUSD*. [https://drive.google.com/file/d/13h\\_HLqkn88ZlY0hinzOKa3uDohXpQ3kw/view](https://drive.google.com/file/d/13h_HLqkn88ZlY0hinzOKa3uDohXpQ3kw/view)



Meanwhile, some LEAs have successfully navigated the Prop 28 AMS planning process and have taken steps toward action and accountability. Create CA's LEA Arts Education Program Profiles,<sup>36</sup> along with webinars and other convenings hosted by CDE, the Los Angeles County Office of Education, and other local groups highlight diverse LEAs from across the state for their exemplary work to that end. These exemplars show coordinated efforts to understand needs at LEAs' school sites, build on existing program strengths, resources, and strategic goals, increase arts FTEs, engage with arts education partnerships, and introduce other programmatic expansions that reflect the interests of students and the broader community. The districts featured in these profiles and other events are diverse in size, demographic makeup, urbanicity, and other characteristics, but their approaches to implementation share a sense of commitment and creativity in fulfilling Prop 28 AMS's goals of equitably expanding arts education for all students.

36 Create CA. (2024). *LEA Arts Education Program Profiles*. <https://createca.org/category/partners/>

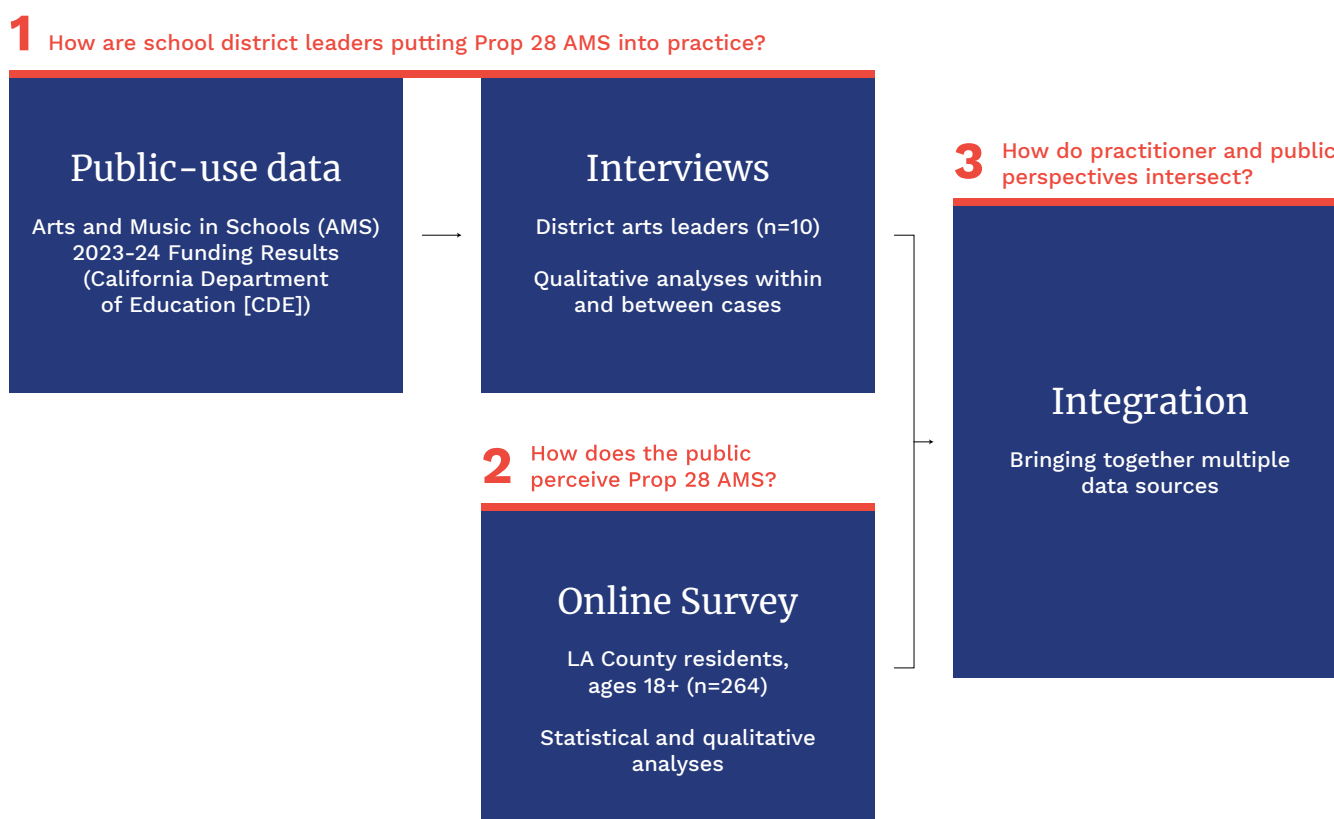
Photo by Rafael Hernandez



# METHODOLOGY

This study used mixed methods, bringing together quantitative and qualitative analyses of multiple data sources in a convergent triangulation design.<sup>37</sup> Data sources include interviews conducted with school district-level arts coordinators or other school district-level arts leaders in Los Angeles County, surveys from the general public (18 years of age or older), and secondary public-use data from the California Department of Education (2023-24 Funding Results, Proposition 28: Arts and Music in Schools<sup>38</sup> and cumulative enrollment data downloaded from CDE<sup>39</sup>).

Figure 1. Study Design and Methodology



37 Creswell, J. W., & Plano Clark, V. L. (2007). *Designing and conducting mixed methods research* (Nachdr.). SAGE Publications.  
38 California Department of Education (CDE). (2023). *Preliminary School Site Entitlements for Proposition 28: Arts and Music in Schools*. <https://www.cde.ca.gov/fg/fo/r14/prop28amresults.asp>  
39 California Department of Education (CDE). (n.d.). *Cumulative Enrollment Data*. <https://www.cde.ca.gov/ds/ad/filesenrcum.asp>



## Sample

### Interview sample

For the interviews, a sample of school district arts leaders (n=10) was selected using purposeful sampling for maximum variation,<sup>40</sup> stratified by school district size and proportion of free and reduced-price meal eligibility, seeking representation from all five Supervisorial Districts of Los Angeles County. Among these school district arts leaders were visual and performing arts (VAPA) coordinators, teachers on special assignment (TOSA), and other administrators with leadership roles in the arts for their respective school districts. Contact information for these district arts leaders was obtained from the Los Angeles County Office of Education (LACOE) and the Los Angeles County Department of Arts and Culture. Of the 80 eligible school districts in Los Angeles County, 57 had available contact information for their district arts leaders. Among them, 44 were invited to participate and 22.7% accepted, resulting in an interview sample size of 10 district arts leaders.

Among the ten interviewees, eight were VAPA coordinators and two were arts teachers on special assignment (TOSA). Among the eight VAPA coordinators, six were devoted entirely or mostly to the arts and two coordinated their districts' arts education programs and other subjects (e.g., STEAM, gifted education).

Interviewees' districts varied in type, size, free and reduced-price meal eligibility, and location. All but two were unified school districts, with one elementary and one high school district. Three districts were small (fewer than ten schools), three were medium (ten to nineteen schools), and four were large (twenty or more schools). In four school districts, the majority of schools had high rates of FRPM eligibility, where at least 75% of students were FRPM-eligible. Three districts had some high FRPM eligibility schools, and three districts had very few or none. All interviewees' districts were given pseudonyms to protect their confidentiality (see Figure 2 on the next page).

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40 Patton, M. Q. (2015). *Qualitative research & evaluation methods: Integrating theory and practice* (Fourth edition). SAGE Publications, Inc.

## Pseudonyms

For privacy purposes, all the interviewees’ districts were given pseudonyms used throughout this report. All these pseudonyms are entirely fictional and unrelated to districts’ real names and locations.

**Figure 2. Interviewee District Pseudonyms and Characteristics**

Icon	Pseudonym	District Type <sup>41</sup>	District size <sup>42</sup>	Proportion of high FRPM-eligibility schools <sup>43</sup>
	Central Unified School District	TK-12	Large	Most
	Eastway High School District	High school	Small	Most
	Forest Ridge Unified School District	TK-12	Large	Some
	Hillside Unified School District	TK-12	Large	Few
	Little City Unified School District	TK-12	Small	All
	Small Town Unified School District	TK-12	Medium	None
	Southpoint Unified School District	TK-12	Large	Some
	Stonecrest Elementary School District	Elementary	Small	Most
	Valley Unified School District	TK-12	Small	Some
	Westview Unified School District	TK-12	Medium	None

41 TK-12 = Transitional kindergarten through 12th grade. Elementary = Elementary grade levels only. High school = High school grade levels only.

42 District size was determined based on the count of schools within the district. Small = 2-9 schools. Medium = 10-19 schools. Large = 20+ schools.

43 Schools were classified as having high free and reduced-price meal eligibility if 75% or more students were eligible. Within each district, All = 100% of schools. Most = 51-99% of schools. Some = 26-50% of schools. Few = 1-25% of schools. None = 0% of schools.



## Survey sample

The survey sample included Los Angeles County residents aged 18 and older (n=264). The sample was recruited through announcements via email and social media by Arts for LA and their member organizations. These recruitment efforts aimed to reach a pool of potential respondents representing Los Angeles County residents' diverse identities and affiliations with arts education. Of the 302 respondents who attempted to complete the survey, 38 were either younger than 18 years old or lived outside of Los Angeles County, resulting in a sample size of 264 valid responses.

## Survey respondent demographics

Of the 264 respondents, 228 reported their demographic information. All were given the option to self-identify with multiple categories of gender and race/ethnicity. Among those who chose to self-identify, most identified as female (71.9%; n=164), followed by male (23.2%; n=53), and nonbinary (3.5%; n=8). Less than 1% identified as “transgender male”, “other,” “unsure,” or responded “prefer not to state.” By race and ethnicity, 63.6% (n=145) identified as White, 16.2% (n=37) identified as Hispanic/Latino/Latinx/Latine, 8.8% (n=20) identified as Asian, 8.3% (n=19) identified as Black/African American, 7.5% (n=17) identified as “other,” and 1.8% identified as American Indian/Alaska Native. Less than 1% identified as Middle Eastern/North African or Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander. Respondents also self-identified by age group. Among those who self-identified with any age group, nearly one-third of respondents were between ages 45-60 (32.9%; n=75), followed by ages 61-75 (28.5%; n=65), 76 or older (8.8%; n=20), 25-34 (8.3%; n=19), and 18-24 (2.6%; n=6). Respondents also indicated the highest level of education they had completed. Over half had completed an advanced degree, including master’s, professional, or doctoral degrees (50.4%; n=115). Just over one-third completed a bachelor’s degree (34.2%; n=78), followed by some college and no degree (10.5%; n=24) and associate’s degree (3.5%; n=8). Less than 1% indicated that they had completed a high school diploma or equivalent. See Appendix A for survey sample demographic tables.

## Survey respondent roles and affiliations

Respondents were also asked to indicate their affiliation with schools, the arts, or arts education. Many identified with multiple roles and affiliations. Almost two-thirds of respondents identified as working artists (64.4%; n=170), nearly half identified as employees of a community-based arts organization (46.4%; n=121), just over one-third identified as teaching artists (35.4%; n=93), one-quarter of respondents identified as a parent/guardian of a TK-12 student (25.0%; n=66), and a small portion of respondents identified as teachers (10.3%; n=27) and school district administrators (3.5%; n=9). See Appendix A for more details about respondents' roles and affiliations.



Photo by Rafael Hernandez

## Data collection

Interview and survey data were collected simultaneously between June 13, 2024 and July 26, 2024.

Interviews with district arts leaders explored school districts' decision-making processes, including (1) the extent to which Prop 28 AMS decisions were made at the district level, school level, and in consultation with community members; (2) efforts to hire new arts teaching personnel; and (3) district plans for partnerships with community-based organizations. Interviews were conducted via Zoom (approximately 30 to 45 minutes in duration), recorded, transcribed, and de-identified to preserve interviewees' confidentiality. Interview data was then linked to their respective districts' AMS 2023-24 Funding Results and cumulative enrollment data, both from CDE. These links to CDE data contributed insight into their districts' sociodemographic makeup and Prop 28 AMS allocations.

The survey instrument for the general public asked respondents about their (1) level of familiarity with Prop 28 AMS and general perceptions of it; (2) current level of involvement in Prop 28 AMS planning for their local schools; and (3) preference and desire for various changes to arts education in their local schools. The survey included 59 items total, the majority of which were five- or seven-point Likert-type scales prompting respondents to report their level of involvement, preference, and desire for change in various aspects of arts education in their local schools.<sup>44</sup> 7 of 59 items asked about respondents' affiliations with schools and/or arts education, 6 of the 59 asked for demographic information (i.e., respondents' gender, race/ethnicity, age range, educational attainment level, and ZIP code), and 5 of the 59 provided optional, open-ended space for additional commentary. The survey was administered via Qualtrics and took respondents an average of 14.2 minutes to complete.

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<sup>44</sup> In addition to the Likert-type response options, respondents were also given the option to select "I don't know" or "Decline to state" for these items. "Decline to state" responses were recoded as missing. In most cases, "I don't know" responses were also recoded as missing or reported separately, as detailed in the Findings section.



## Data analysis

The interview and survey data were first analyzed separately and were later integrated using triangulation techniques.

Interview data was analyzed to look closely within districts and make comparisons between districts, following the within-between-within sequence for multisite qualitative analysis.<sup>45</sup> Analyses began by coding each interview transcript to examine the context for Prop 28 AMS implementation in the interviewee's district. The next set of analyses identified common themes across multiple districts. Finally, additional analyses revisited each interview transcript for more detailed insights about how common themes applied in districts' specific circumstances. This analytic process revealed both cross-cutting patterns and unique strengths and challenges in each district, as will be described later in this report.

Survey data was analyzed using multiple analytic techniques. Descriptive statistics summarized the sociodemographic characteristics of the sample (e.g., by race/ethnicity, education level, age group, etc.) and basic distributions of the responses. Exploratory factor analyses were conducted on two sets of survey items. In the first set of items, respondents indicated the perceived level of involvement of district administrators, school leaders, teachers, parents/guardians, students, and community partners in Prop 28 implementation. Another factor analysis was conducted on the second set of items, where respondents reported the degree to which they hoped for a series of outcomes related to Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF) Priorities.<sup>46</sup> Additionally, cross-tabulations and mean comparisons were conducted to disaggregate survey by role/affiliation, sociodemographics (gender, race/ethnicity, and educational attainment level), and by other characteristics. Correlation and other regression analyses explored associations between respondent characteristics (e.g., role/affiliation) and their other responses. Additionally, qualitative analyses were conducted to identify themes in the comments reported in the open-ended survey items. Significant results are described in the body of the report, and other statistical details can be made available upon request.

These two data sources were integrated using joint display matrices, which placed interview and survey data side by side to show common themes that emerged in both datasets.<sup>47</sup> Triangulating these datasets brought to light shared interests and, at times, contrasting perspectives on related issues.

For more methodological details, see Appendix A and Appendix B.

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45 Jenkins, E. K., Slemmon, A., Haines-Saah, R. J., & Oliffe, J. (2018). A Guide to Multisite Qualitative Analysis. *Qualitative Health Research*, 28(12), 1969–1977. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1049732318786703>

46 California Department of Education (CDE). (2024, May). *LCFF Priorities/Whole Child Map*. <https://www.cde.ca.gov/eo/in/lcff1sys-resources.asp>

47 Creswell, J. W., & Plano Clark, V. L. (2007). *Designing and conducting mixed methods research* (Nachdr.). SAGE Publications.

# FINDINGS

## Overview

This section first summarizes the findings from the interviews with district arts leaders, followed by public perceptions of Prop 28 AMS as reported in the survey. Finally, this section integrates the two sets of findings.











## Prop 28 AMS in practice: Implementation in public school districts

Interviews with district arts leaders showed how Prop 28 AMS is being put into action in public school districts across Los Angeles County. This section begins with an overview of the status of Prop 28 AMS implementation in interviewees’ districts, then highlights assets and strategies that have strengthened these processes, as well as challenges and needs that have emerged along the way.

### Implementation status

Implementation varied among the interviewees’ districts. Based on the status of districts’ Prop 28 AMS plans and hiring actions during the 2023-24 school year, districts were placed into one of three categories: (1) rapid action; (2) building momentum; and (3) waiting to hire.

Figure 3. District pseudonyms, Prop 28 AMS implementation statuses, and other characteristics

Icon	Pseudonym	Implementation Status	District Type	District Size by School Count	High FRPM Eligibility Schools
	Forest Ridge Unified	Rapid Action	TK-12	Large	Some
	Southpoint Unified	Rapid Action	TK-12	Large	Some
	Valley Unified	Rapid Action	TK-12	Small	Some
	Eastway High	Building Momentum	High School	Small	Most
	Small Town Unified	Building Momentum	TK-12	Medium	None
	Stonecrest Elementary	Building Momentum	Elementary	Small	Most
	Westview Unified	Building Momentum	TK-12	Medium	None
	Central Unified	Waiting to Hire	TK-12	Large	Most
	Hillside Unified	Waiting to Hire	TK-12	Large	Few
	Little City Unified	Waiting to Hire	TK-12	Small	All



## Rapid action



**“I’m ready! Let’s do this!”**

– VAPA Coordinator, Forest Ridge Unified School District

The three districts that took rapid action in their Prop 28 AMS implementation had fully developed their plans and successfully hired for most or all of the roles created. All three were unified school districts; two were large (20 or more school sites) while one was small (fewer than 10 school sites). Less than half of their school sites were high FRPM eligibility schools, and they had similar median Prop 28 AMS allocations per site (between \$75,000 and \$90,000). Their median elementary allocations were between \$60,000 and \$70,000, and median high school allocations were between \$150,000 and \$200,000. There was more variation at the middle school level due to differences in enrollment. Enrollment at the sole middle school in Valley Unified was two to three times that of middle schools in Forest Ridge and Southpoint Unified, whose middle school enrollment was divided across multiple school sites.

Interviewees (all of whom were VAPA coordinators) began advancing their districts’ plans before or immediately after Prop 28 AMS passed. In Forest Ridge Unified, for example, Prop 28 AMS implementation began just after the November 2022 election. With the district’s early approval, an advance on Prop 28 AMS funds allowed Forest Ridge Unified to act on its hiring needs almost immediately. Similarly, the VAPA coordinator from Valley Unified was prepared to take immediate action, having closely monitored Prop 28 AMS’s progress through the election:

“As soon as [Prop 28 AMS] made the ballot, I followed it to make sure it passed. When it passed, the day after it passed, I went into my superintendent’s office. I said, ‘Okay, so what are we going to do?’”

With administrative support and other strategic arts assets in place, Valley Unified and the other rapid action districts were equipped to move forward swiftly and decisively.

## Building momentum



**“I really think that Prop 28 is not going to fix our problems.”**

– Teacher on Special Assignment, Small Town Unified School District

Four districts were still in the process of developing their plans and/or had only partially completed their hiring as of summer 2024. Among them were two unified school districts, one elementary district, and one high school district. All were either small (with fewer than 10 school sites) or medium (10 to 19 school sites). The two unified school districts (both medium in size) had no high FRPM eligibility schools. In the elementary and high school districts, nearly 90% of schools had high FRPM eligibility. There was also wide variation in these districts’ Prop 28 AMS allocations, with median allocations per school site ranging from less than \$60,000 in Small Town Unified to upwards of \$300,000 in Eastway High School District.

Despite their differences, interviewees from all these districts indicated that their Prop 28 AMS actions were works in progress. Their processes had been hindered slightly by barriers that delayed but did not entirely prevent their Prop 28 AMS actions.

## Waiting to hire

**“Using resources takes effort.”**

– VAPA Coordinator, Central Unified School District

Three districts were still developing their Prop 28 AMS implementation plans as of summer 2024. Two districts devoted extra time to refining their strategic arts plans, while one was recalibrating after early missteps in their initial implementation attempt. All were unified school districts. Two were large (more than 20 school sites), and one was medium (between 10 and 19 school sites), and the proportions of high FRPM eligibility schools within these districts varied. High FRPM eligibility schools made up all of Little City Unified, most of Central Unified, and a very small proportion of Hillside Unified. The median Prop 28 AMS allocations in these districts ranged from about \$75,000 in Central Unified to just over \$95,000 in Little City Unified. Median allocations by elementary, middle, and high school were consistently highest in Little City Unified.

In all three of these districts, the 2023-24 school year was a time for planning, assessing needs, and building capacity for informed action.

## Assets and strategies

As districts prepared and implemented their Prop 28 AMS plans, they built on their existing strengths, including strategic arts plans, arts advisory councils, and arts education data practices.

### Strategic arts plans

Both the strategic arts planning process and the resulting document helped districts envision and articulate goals for their arts education programs, which ultimately informed their Prop 28 AMS actions. All interviewees' districts had a strategic arts plan, though some had been updated more recently.

Several, like Little City, Forest Ridge, and Southpoint Unified, had updated their strategic arts plans during the 2023-24 school year. At the time of the interview, they were either awaiting or had just received board approval. In these districts, strategic planning processes looked back at the progress toward goals established in previous plans and looked forward to a future supported by Prop 28 AMS funds and other resources.

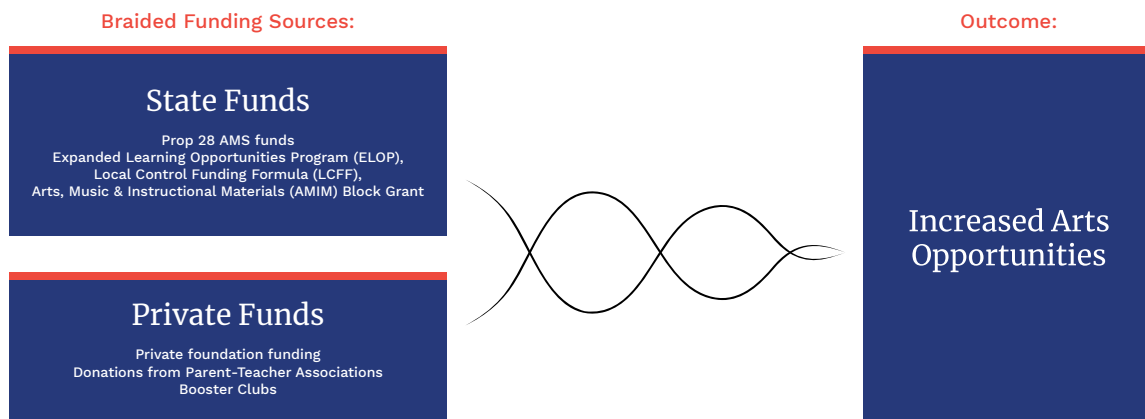
In other cases, strategic arts plans were out-of-date or perceived as misaligned with Prop 28 AMS requirements. Without a clear and relevant strategic vision, these districts were challenged by the dual needs to simultaneously define (or refine) a strategic direction and find a place for Prop 28 AMS funds within it. In Hillside Unified, for example, the VAPA coordinator was actively working toward revising the district's strategic arts plan, linking it to available resources, and doing so in ways

that would build on the district’s existing strengths rather than focusing only on what was missing. Shifting the district’s focus from deficits to assets, as the Hillside VAPA coordinator explained, would take time:

“The [previous strategic arts] plan was written in deficit. So [the district would] need, like, a two-year transition before you just start throwing people at it with no plan. That doesn’t assure anything, in my opinion.”

Here, the VAPA coordinator emphasizes that viewing Hillside’s needs simply as personnel deficits could miss opportunities to more thoughtfully integrate Prop 28 AMS-funded hiring decisions into Hillside’s current and future arts education offerings. In this VAPA coordinator’s view, reframing the strategic arts plan from this asset-based perspective would be a necessary first step to activating the potential of Prop 28 AMS funds and other strategic arts efforts in the district.

In addition to building on existing strengths, interviewees’ districts also considered how they could harness other resources in conjunction with Prop 28 AMS, braiding multiple funding sources with Prop 28 AMS funds. Most districts’ arts education programs were funded by a combination of public and private funds, including the Expanded Learning Opportunities Program (ELOP), Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF), Arts, Music & Instructional Materials (AMIM) Block Grant, private foundation funding, and donations from parent-teacher associations and booster clubs.



Interviewees described their strategic use of these funds to support aspects of their strategic plans that were outside the scope of what Prop 28 AMS could fund yet would be foundational to future Prop 28 AMS-funded activities. For example, because Little City Unified had built the arts into the district’s Local Control and Accountability Plan (LCAP), the VAPA coordinator could rely on LCFF-allocated funds to support the costs of arts teachers taking time away from their classrooms to join the Little City district-wide arts team. In Hillside Unified and Forest Ridge Unified, VAPA coordinators sought other grants to fund projects related to their Prop 28 AMS plans, even if ineligible for Prop 28 AMS funds. In Hillside’s case, this included curriculum development to support future arts teachers that would eventually be hired using Prop 28 AMS funds. The VAPA coordinator from Southpoint Unified described a robust plan to use ELOP funds to support culturally relevant afterschool programming with a local community-based arts provider, a block grant (AMIM) for purchasing musical instruments and other equipment, and using Prop 28 AMS funds to hire personnel that would expand and strengthen the related arts education pathways. The Southpoint VAPA coordinator explained, noting both the direct and indirect impact of Prop 28 AMS funds in Southpoint Unified and beyond:



**“It’s not all funded by Prop 28 , but it’s all inspired by Prop 28.”**

*– VAPA Coordinator, Southpoint Unified School District*

“Prop 28 [AMS] is finite, and so I was looking for ways to expand. But it’s because of the Prop 28 [AMS] money that I think districts are hiring coordinators, which are leading to all of these expanded opportunities, arts opportunities for kids...it’s not all funded by Prop 28 [AMS], but it’s all inspired by Prop 28 [AMS].”

This interviewee’s comments and strategies exemplify the intended impact of Prop 28 AMS funds: expanding arts opportunities in ways that align with local priorities, complement other resourcing practices, and build on the strengths of schools and communities.

### **Arts advisory councils**

Many districts also brought together various constituencies in arts advisory councils to guide their decisions. These included teachers, administrators, and, in some cases, students, parents/guardians, and community partners. Although some districts (e.g., Eastway High School District and Forest Ridge Unified) formed arts advisory councils specifically for the purposes of Prop 28 AMS planning, several others had a longer history of engaging with these councils.

For example, in Valley Unified and Little City Unified, arts advisory councils had been integral to the strategic arts planning processes in years past. The VAPA coordinator from Valley Unified reflected on the formation of their arts advisory council:

“We made a list of who should be represented on that team, and then I went and found the people. So we had teachers, administrators, parents, and we had some students. I reached out to all of our community partners that had previously worked with us...And since then, we’ve had like, two or three versions of the [council]. And for this update [of the strategic arts plan], it was pretty much the same people, with a few additions and a few changes because people don’t want to leave. They’re like, ‘I’m part of this. Let’s go!’ So, my goal was to be as transparent as possible—as inclusive as possible of our community—so that we’re representing our community and what our community wants and needs.”

This inclusive approach was also seen in Little City Unified. Both districts’ arts advisory councils brought together multiple constituencies to strengthen relations between the district-level VAPA coordinators, school sites, and communities, acknowledging how all contribute to the districts’ arts education ecosystems and offering the opportunity to shape the strategic arts plans around and directly related to Prop 28 AMS.

Bringing together multiple school sites was also advantageous, even when it occurred informally. Several interviewees mentioned collaborations amongst school site leaders to make the most of their Prop 28 AMS funds. In Stonecrest Elementary School District, Southpoint Unified, and Westview Unified, school sites opted to work together in identifying shared priorities across their sites (particularly at the elementary level, where Prop 28 AMS allocations tended to be smaller), then developing plans

to hire new arts teaching personnel that would be shared according to each site's contributions to the lump sum. In Westview Unified, school site leaders pooled 80% of their respective Prop 28 AMS allocations for these purposes and kept 20% under the school site's local control:

“One of the ideas is to take...the 20% and let the teachers—the [VAPA] departments— take turns spending it [on] those bigger expenses. So this year it was [spent on] a lot of big musical instruments. There's film equipment that needs to be purchased, or something. It's based on need. That's where we're servicing more of those different departments.”

This system distributes control over Prop 28 AMS funds across multiple district levels. At the departmental level, teachers have the autonomy to meet their department's needs using 20% of their school site's Prop 28 AMS allocation. At the school site level, principals work together to meet common needs. At the district level, the VAPA coordinator oversees these decisions and their impact on arts education pathways throughout the district.

Whether through informal collaborations or more formally designated arts advisory councils, multiple constituencies make key contributions to envisioning and executing Prop 28 AMS plans in all these cases.

### **Arts education data practices**

Prop 28 AMS decisions were also informed by districts' efforts to assess schools' needs and students' interests by engaging with their arts education data. Here, too, some districts mentioned gathering data specifically to inform Prop 28 AMS plans, and others had mentioned ongoing practices of collecting and using arts education data in their districts. This typically occurred in surveys given to teachers and school site leaders, and sometimes to parents/guardians and other community members. Some, including Westview Unified, Little City Unified, and Eastway High School District, had been conducting student surveys to understand their arts experiences, goals, and desires. The Eastway TOSA explained:

“We've been giving our own VAPA student surveys since 2020. [We ask] about VAPA classes, how students feel about VAPA, the SEL [social-emotional learning] component, the academic component, their arts lives prior to us, their arts lives, hopefully, after us, all this other stuff. The information we got [in the new Prop 28 AMS surveys] mirrored what we already knew and what we already had data for, which was, kids want more access. They want to be able to take higher levels of arts.”

Similarly, student surveys in Westview Unified also tended to yield unsurprising results, but still provided useful evidence of students' interests in photography and graphic design. Equipped with these insights, the Westview VAPA coordinator stepped into action to accommodate those interests using Prop 28 AMS funds.

## Challenges and needs

Districts also faced challenges in their Prop 28 AMS planning and implementation. This section details the challenges and needs that emerged in districts across implementation statuses.

### Finding more arts teachers

The teacher shortage posed challenges for many school districts. The TOSA from Eastway High School District summed it up:

**“We don’t have enough arts teachers in the state to cover what is going to be a massive need, which means we’re all fighting for the same people to grow these programs.”**

*– Teacher on Special Assignment, Eastway High School District*

In particularly short supply are certificated arts teachers, which most districts preferred over classified staff because, as the Valley Unified VAPA coordinator put it, “we need it to be certificated so they can be alone with the kids.” Only certificated staff are authorized to interact with students independently; classified staff require the presence and supervision of a certificated staff member at all times.

Yet, certificated staff members can be harder to find than classified staff, including for example, teaching artists. The VAPA coordinator from Forest Ridge Unified explained the distinction between these hiring processes:

“I’m more worried about credentialed teachers than teaching artists. I feel like there’s a lot of teaching artists out there. Whenever I put a call out for teaching artists, I get a lot of resumes.”

Difficulties finding certificated arts teachers caused delays in several interviewees’ districts. After navigating the complicated process of developing board- and union-approved job descriptions and postings, Stonecrest Elementary School District, for example, has made multiple hiring attempts:

“We came up with job descriptions, and then we came up with postings, and we’ve been flying the postings. We’ve had one round of interviews for the music/band teacher...There were a total of six applicants. Two came. One was a no show. Of the two, we hired one, and then he declined. So that is flying again.”

Like Stonecrest Elementary, other districts encountered or anticipated difficulties in their own hiring processes, which slowed their overall progress in Prop 28 AMS implementation.

### Making space and time for more arts education programs

Several interviewees expressed concerns about whether their districts could accommodate expanded arts education programs in schedules and on campus. Competing demands on instructional time arose amid declining test scores in Stonecrest Elementary School District and Little City Unified. VAPA coordinators in these districts had already observed teachers’ reluctance to surrender any



instructional time to the arts even before Prop 28 AMS; the coordinator from Little City Unified anticipated that convincing elementary teachers to increase time for arts would be a “nightmare.” The coordinator explained:

“I would say scheduling is the number one concern with elementary because elementary teachers have to teach everything, have to balance everything, and then they are going to see, like, here’s just here’s another thing to add...The challenge [of] Prop 28 [AMS] for secondary is space and how it fits into the master schedule...we actually don’t have the physical space—the appropriate space—to add, for example, a dance teacher at one of our middle schools. We don’t have dance at either middle school, but where would we put them?”

Similar concerns arose in Westview Unified, who hoped to hire a new photography teacher, “but we literally do not have space. So it’s great that we have money now for this teacher, but we have no space to put the person in.” The VAPA coordinator explained:

“The other big issue is, you know, we’ve been steadily growing our arts programs...in some form for 10 years, and we have constantly been growing, growing, and at some point...it becomes like...the [new] person may not be the biggest thing that I need right now. It’s really hard...We would hire an art teacher if we could put them somewhere.”

**“We would hire an art teacher if we could put them somewhere.”**

– VAPA Coordinator, Westview Unified School District

Districts facing challenges like these had yet to arrive at a solution at the time of the interview. The Westview VAPA coordinator considered arranging for new staff to share a classroom with another teacher. Facing similar issues, the VAPA coordinator from Stonecrest Elementary School District wondered if they should focus first on improving and expanding arts facilities to accommodate incoming arts teachers. While Prop 28 AMS demands expansions to arts education programs, these challenges of scheduling and space have left some districts at a difficult impasse.

### **Negotiating tensions within districts**

Additional barriers to Prop 28 AMS action arose from tensions within districts, which were described most explicitly in Little City Unified and Eastway High School Unified. Conflicting priorities strained the interviewees’ capacity to lead Prop 28 AMS implementation and hindered their districts’ progress.

Although both interviewees described their districts as generally supportive of the arts, the structural support (e.g., arts funding provided through the district’s Local Control and Accountability Plan and engagement with the Los Angeles County Arts Ed Collective) did not always translate into everyday practice.

In Little City Unified, the VAPA coordinator described a history of resistance to arts education, citing another district administrator’s recent attempt to reduce elementary arts instruction from 50 to 30 minutes per week (the VAPA coordinator’s negotiations resulted in a minimal reduction to 45 minutes per week). Prop 28 AMS had brought somewhat of a “shift” in these dynamics, but the VAPA

coordinator still anticipated opposition to expanding (and not replacing) the hard-won instructional time for arts education programs. Undeterred, the VAPA coordinator was committed to “fighting hard to keep our partnerships with our arts partners” and advocating for expansions. In grappling with these challenges, the VAPA coordinator highlighted the distinct advantage of having a designated arts leader in the district:

“I do feel that this district is better equipped than others because they have an arts coordinator. You know? In other school districts, they might have someone that splits the responsibilities, or they might—I don’t even know—they might not have anybody.”

This was the case for the two TOSAs who participated in the study. In the absence of a VAPA coordinator, TOSAs in Eastway High School District and Small Town Unified managed multiple responsibilities as liaisons between the district administration and school sites and as instructional leaders.

The TOSA in Eastway High School District was particularly limited in capacity, with fewer than 10 hours per week designated for leading the district’s arts education programs. With all other hours devoted to instructional duties alongside other VAPA teachers, the TOSA was acutely aware of the divide between Eastway’s teachers and the administration. This “disconnect,” as the TOSA put it, posed barriers to their attempts to initiate Prop 28 AMS planning in Eastway:

“I spent...basically all of 2023 trying to get the administrators to talk about Prop 28 [AMS]. And it was a non-starter. They wouldn’t do it. I asked to go to the principals’ meetings, or the assistant principal of curriculum meetings to give them a talk. The answer was no. I was not invited to those meetings. ‘It was inappropriate for me to be at those meetings,’ it was said. I couldn’t go and make a presentation...[I asked], ‘can we start talking about a plan?’ No, no, no—until February of 2024.”

The TOSA later learned the cause of this delay. Unbeknownst to the Eastway TOSA and other VAPA teachers, district administrators had apparently attempted to submit a waiver to CDE before the formal waiver process had opened. When asked how VAPA teachers perceived the district’s actions, the TOSA responded:

“We were not surprised. We were disheartened, but not surprised that our district had [done this]. Our fear was that they had asked to be able to spend the money outside VAPA. It became clear, in the intermittent months, when I went to the [CDE] webinar, that in fact, the waivers... weren’t going to be what my district wanted it to be. And I think that’s why they were like, ‘All right. Now we need a plan to spend this money.’”

At that point, the Eastway TOSA was tasked with creating and leading a committee of teachers and administrators to develop a plan for Prop 28 AMS. At the time of the interview, implementation had begun in Eastway, but questions remained about whether or how hiring processes would be completed before the start of the 2024-25 school year.

As the designated arts leaders in their districts, these interviewees found ways to advance their Prop 28 AMS plans while advocating for the arts and, importantly, the school communities they served. Their leadership in negotiating these tensions was essential to the efforts to expand arts education in their districts.

## Public perceptions of Prop 28 AMS

Survey responses showed a multitude of perspectives on Prop 28 AMS from Los Angeles County residents situated in and outside of schools. This section summarizes statistical results and other insights that emerged from respondents' comments in open-ended responses.

### Interest in Prop 28 AMS

Survey responses suggested that most respondents were highly interested in Prop 28 AMS, but most were fairly disengaged with Prop 28 AMS implementation in their local schools. 88.5% of all survey respondents reportedly believed Prop 28 AMS to be “very important,” most were unaware of and uninvolved in local schools' Prop 28 AMS plans. In fact, only 20% of respondents reported being at all involved in their local schools' Prop 28 AMS implementation efforts.

When asked to describe the status of Prop 28 AMS plans in their local schools, most survey respondents (65.9%) responded “I don't know,” with many calling for greater “transparency” in their comments. Among those who did know the status of Prop 28 AMS plans in their local schools (n=80), just over one quarter reported that planning had not yet begun (n=21) and about the same proportion reported that their local schools had begun implementing their Prop 28 AMS plans (n=22). Nearly half (n=37) reported that planning had begun, but implementation had not.

### Familiarity with Prop 28 AMS

64.4% of respondents reported being “somewhat familiar” or “very familiar” with Prop 28 AMS, and 26.1% were “somewhat unfamiliar” or “very unfamiliar.” Notably, parents/guardians and employees of community-based organizations reported being “very familiar” with Prop 28 AMS at significantly higher rates than those who did not identify with either of those groups. Accounting for all other roles/affiliations, respondents who were parents of K-12 students were 2.7 times more likely to report being “very familiar” with Prop 28 AMS than those who were not parents of K-12 students ( $p < .01$ ), and those who were employees of community-based organizations were 3.1 times more likely to do so compared to those who were not ( $p < .01$ ).

However, there are important exceptions to these patterns. Despite overall high levels of familiarity with Prop 28 AMS among most parents/guardians in the sample, one parent commented,

“I'm a very active parent...Why have I not heard of [Prop 28 AMS]? People need to know. Parents would push to have the benefits of Prop 28 [AMS] -- but most haven't heard about it.”

This parent's comments suggest that some community members' important perspectives may be missing from this study and the broader conversation around Prop 28 AMS.



## Perceived public involvement in Prop 28 AMS plans

Prop 28 AMS and its advocates recommend engaging the public in planning and implementation processes, but survey respondents reported mixed perceptions of public involvement in their local schools' Prop 28 AMS plans.

80.4% (n=189) of survey respondents reported that they themselves were not at all involved in their local schools' Prop 28 AMS plans, despite nearly 9 in 10 of them considering Prop 28 AMS to be “very important.” However, this varied by respondents' reported roles/affiliations. Those who identified as parents/guardians (n=64) were 2.9 times more likely to report being involved in Prop 28 AMS plans than those who did not identify as parents/guardians of K-12 students ( $p < .01$ ), and those who identified as employees of community-based organizations (n=121) were 3.3 times more likely to report being involved than those who did not ( $p < .001$ ).

Many respondents were also unsure who else was involved in Prop 28 AMS planning and implementation, with 39.8% to 47.7% responding “I don't know” when asked to describe the level of involvement of school district administrators, school site leaders, teachers, parents/guardians, students, and community-based organizations. The following sections refer to the perceptions of those who did respond to these items (n=125 to 135), excluding “I don't know” responses.

Respondents' perceptions of the involvement of teachers, parents/guardians, students, and community-based organizations were strongly interrelated (Cronbach's alpha = .85). Exploratory factor analysis indicated unidimensionality (Bartlett's test of sphericity: Chi-square = 169.87, df = 6,  $p < .001$ . Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin = .81), and these responses were combined into a single factor score.

Those who believed that teachers, parents/guardians, students, and community-based organizations were involved in developing their schools' Prop 28 AMS plans were significantly less likely to express doubt about whether Prop 28 AMS would achieve its goals. Logistic regressions showed that those perceiving greater involvement among these constituencies had 75.2% lower odds of doubting Prop 28 AMS's success (OR = .25,  $p < .01$ ), reinforcing the positive impact of perceived collaboration on confidence in Prop 28 AMS.

The following sections report survey respondents' perceptions of each constituency's involvement in developing Prop 28 AMS plans in their local schools.

Photo by Rafael Hernandez



## District administrators and school site leaders

Among those who did estimate the level of involvement of these constituencies, district administrators and school leaders were most often perceived as being highly involved. 32.0% (n=40) of respondents believed district administrators to be highly involved, and 36.2% (n=47) believed school site leaders to be highly involved.

From these respondents' perspectives, district administrators and school site leaders (e.g., principals, vice principals, etc.) were perceived as being involved at similar levels, with a moderate positive correlation between them ( $r(112) = .51, p < .001$ ). Despite these perceptions, one parent/guardian and employee of a community-based organization pointed out distinctions between the roles of school site leaders (i.e., principals) and district administrators:

**“Principals need support to take ownership of the planning and to advocate for their school. Districts need to be held accountable to the letter of the law.”**

*– Survey respondent: Parent/guardian and employee of a community-based organization*

“Principals should be leading the planning process, but the district is instead telling them what they will receive. Principals need support to take ownership of the planning and to advocate for their school. Districts need to be held accountable to the letter of the law.”

Still, comparative analyses showed that both district administrators and school site leaders are perceived as being, on average, significantly more involved in schools' Prop 28 AMS plans than teachers, parents/guardians, students, and community-based organizations.

## Teachers

Survey respondents' perceptions of teacher involvement were mixed. 29.6% (n=40) of respondents believed that teachers were not at all involved in Prop 28 AMS plans, while 23.7% (n=32) of respondents believed them to be highly involved. The remainder of responses were somewhere in between.

Teachers were perceived as being significantly less involved in Prop 28 AMS plans than district administrators or school site leaders, but they were perceived as being significantly more involved in Prop 28 AMS plans, on average, than were parents/guardians or students.

## Parents/guardians and students

According to survey responses, parents/guardians and students were most often perceived as being uninvolved in Prop 28 AMS plans. 54.5% (n=72) of respondents believed that parents/guardians were not at all involved in Prop 28 AMS planning (accounting for all other roles/affiliations). Even still, parents were perceived as being significantly more involved, on average, than were students.

Perceptions of student involvement were even lower. 66.7% (n=90) of these respondents believed that students were not at all involved in Prop 28 AMS planning. Survey respondents who identified

themselves as parents/guardians were 2.9 times more likely to hold this belief compared to those who did not identify as parents/guardians. Students were perceived as being significantly less involved than all other groups.

## Community-based organizations

Respondents reported mixed perceptions of the involvement of community-based organizations. 80.6% (n=117) believed community-based organizations to be at least slightly involved in local schools' Prop 28 AMS plans. On average, community-based organizations were perceived as being significantly more involved than parents/guardians and students, but significantly less involved than district and school site administrators.

Some respondents also believed that misuse of Prop 28 AMS funds had negatively affected community-based organizations' programs at schools. A respondent who identified as a parent/guardian, employee of a community-based organization, teaching artist, and working artist expressed this concern:

“In my role as an administrator at an Arts [community-based organization] I have had more trouble placing experienced Teaching Artists at schools because [my district] has used arts funding to supplant existing arts programs rather than expand service.”

Other survey respondents shared these concerns about districts supplanting arts education programs that were previously provided by community-based organizations.

## Desired results of Prop 28 AMS

Survey respondents also indicated strong beliefs about the types of arts education programs that should be expanded under Prop 28 AMS and the frequency by which they should occur. For nearly all possible Prop 28 AMS-funded expansions,<sup>48</sup> around or above 70% of respondents believed that schools “absolutely need it.” Respondents were especially supportive of offering arts to more students more often. As one elementary music teacher commented in the survey,

“I want to see...arts offered to every child AT LEAST once a week ALL YEAR ROUND...Currently, students may get an art form for around 10 weeks. So they may get music for 10 weeks in the Fall and then another 10 weeks of art in the Spring at some point. Maybe. There's no way to build continuity, a language, or an appreciation. Between Covid and technology/social media our kids need every chance to connect possible and the arts is that building bridge. We're failing our kids by not providing actual instruction, arts assemblies of different cultures, and opportunities off campus to learn.”

Like this survey respondent, others also reported high hopes for Prop 28 AMS, particularly when it came to arts access, with 82.5% (n=189) hoping for a “large increase” in the number of students participating in the arts during school and 69.6% (n=158) hoping for a “large increase” in the number of students participating in school-sponsored extracurricular arts activities. Additionally, two-thirds of survey respondents (n=150) hoped for a “large increase” in the number of students participating in programs provided by community-based organizations and 61.3% (n=138) hoped for a “large increase”

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48 Exceptions included extending the duration of arts instruction, offering more arts assemblies, and offering arts programs in languages spoken by students and families. For all these items, about 55% of respondents believed schools “absolutely need it,” while about 20% reported their level of preference as “really want it, but not essential.”



in the overall involvement of community-based organizations in schools. However, some survey respondents' comments suggested that these hopes remained unfulfilled, possibly due in part to the fact that Prop 28 AMS allows for a maximum of 20% of funds to be used for that purpose without a waiver.

Other responses underscored the need for more arts teaching personnel. 58.7% (n=131) of respondents hoped for a "large increase" in the number of arts teachers and 58.3% (n=130) hoped for a "large increase" in the number of teaching artists in schools. One respondent noted,

"Children who are engaged in sequential arts instruction by credentialed arts teachers who are familiar with the state and national sets standards, who receive a minimum of 60 minutes per week in...music, theatre, dance and visual art...grow emotionally, intellectually, physically and in community with their classmates. I want to see [my local school district] publish a coherent plan for increasing credentialed instruction of our children...If the children are truly important, (and they are our future) then I want to see VAPA leadership interacting with school leadership and central admin to actually commit plans to paper and TEACH OUR CHILDREN ARTS, every week of every year."

Respondents also expressed their hopes for changes in school climate measures aligned with the Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF) State Priorities, particularly in test scores, attendance, and graduation rates. Considering the strong interrelation of these measures (Cronbach's alpha = .83), these responses were combined into a single factor score, as exploratory factor analysis confirmed their unidimensionality (Bartlett's test of sphericity: Chi-square = 240.11, df = 3,  $p < .001$ ; Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin = .73).

Overall, 69.8% of respondents (n = 132) hoped for moderate or large increases in these areas. However, parents/guardians anticipated fewer improvements compared to non-parents ( $t = 2.20$ ,  $df = 187$ ,  $p < .05$ , Cohen's  $d = .36$ ).

Despite these respondents' interest in Prop 28 AMS, strong beliefs about how schools should expand their arts education programs, and high hopes for the results, most were both unaware of and uninvolved with schools' Prop 28 AMS plans. A teacher and board member of an arts education organization issues a call to address this gap:

"I would hope to see liaisons connecting the community, teachers (who are already overworked), administration (who don't have a clue) and working artists. I hope that is budgeted for."

This suggests a disconnect between the survey respondents' perceptions and the realities of Prop 28 AMS implementation in practice, underscoring a need for dialogue amongst these constituencies.

Photo by Rafael Hernandez



## Navigating Prop 28 AMS together: Setting achievable goals

Prop 28 AMS aims to increase equitable access to arts education opportunities by prioritizing increases in arts staffing. This section integrates interview findings and survey results to illustrate study participants' perspectives on engaging multiple constituencies to activate the potential of Prop 28 AMS.

Most study participants—including interviewees and survey respondents—expressed some level of confidence in achieving that goal but noted several concerns.

### Public accountability and transparency

In their comments, survey respondents of all roles and affiliations explicitly called for more “transparency” from schools and districts, sometimes doubting that Prop 28 AMS funds were being used to meet the law’s intent. As one survey respondent explained:

“[Prop 28 AMS] funds should expand substantive ongoing arts offerings, and train and hire more permanent arts instructors—rather than be used to defray existing costs for paltry, hit-or-miss activities that exist now. I’m afraid many school districts will try to play accounting games with these funds to do just that.”

Interviewees shed more light on the “accounting games” and other budgeting complications that had caused confusion even within their own districts. The VAPA coordinator from Forest Ridge Unified wondered how other districts would determine the “total spending on arts education in the previous audit year,” which, in this interviewee’s view, left room for misinterpretation. The VAPA coordinator explained:

“The expenditure report...says ‘total spending on arts education in the previous audit year.’ I think there’s going to be a lot of interpretations of how to put that together. Because even with my budget person, when I first met with her, she’s like, ‘Okay, I pulled your budget from your department.’ I’m like, ‘That is not the total expenditures on arts education.’ What lives in [the VAPA] department is one portion of it. There’s all those [others]: all the staff at all the schools, [other grant-funded activities], there’s CTE...there’s so many different sources that you have to pull all together. The arts is always a puzzle piece. So I’m curious how people are putting that number together.”

While Forest Ridge Unified eventually did report a more accurate total for the previous year’s arts education expenditures, this VAPA coordinator’s comments suggest that other districts may not have taken such careful steps.

Understanding these budget complexities proved difficult even for district administrators. A survey respondent recommended strategies to strengthen budget literacy in districts, schools, and the public:

“I want to see budget literacy and transparency mandated in policy and practice at the school site, school community, and district level. I want all stakeholders such as students, parents, and school staff to be able to effectively access and interpret budget information with user-friendly

ease so we have common language and updated financial information to reference during school budgeting cycles, particularly in light of Title I school needs.”

This survey respondent self-identified as a parent/guardian, teacher, working artist, CBO employee, and arts advocate who had also led the development of content standards in a local school district.

Taken together, these perspectives suggest that increased transparency should be accompanied by concerted efforts to equip multiple constituencies with the necessary knowledge and skills to interpret this budgetary information. Building capacity to both share and interpret this information is key to the public’s confidence in fulfilling the goals of Prop 28 AMS.

## Increasing arts staffing

Among survey respondents and interviewees, there were mixed perceptions of progress toward Prop 28 AMS’s goal of increasing arts teaching personnel. Some reported having observed staffing increases that would align with strategic arts goals, while others were less confident that Prop 28 AMS funds could meet those needs.

Most interviewees’ districts reported at least some arts staffing increases (either by hiring new arts teaching personnel or by expanding existing FTEs). Valley Unified, Westview Unified, Forest Ridge Unified, and Stonecrest Elementary School District increased their arts teaching personnel to improve the continuity of their arts education pathways through elementary, middle, and high school. Meanwhile, a few survey respondents commented on the staffing increases they had observed, reporting that their local schools had added one to two arts teachers in various arts disciplines.

Others were doubtful. Several survey respondents and interviewees noted that Prop 28 AMS allocations to some school sites would be insufficient to hire any new arts teaching personnel. The VAPA coordinator from Hillside Unified described the situation for Hillside elementary schools:

“Okay, we have money, but it’s not enough to hire our teachers. Not even close. Not even in the ballpark.”

This challenge also emerged in Small Town Unified, where the median school site allocation was less than \$60,000. Possibilities seemed limited, according to the TOSA:

“I really think that [Prop 28 AMS] is not going to fix our problems...If you look at our money, you’re like,...‘How can this make a difference?’”

As the Small Town Unified interviewee later explained, the “problems” referenced here included “major gaps in access equity in the arts,” particularly for learners who are multilingual (English learners). A resident of the area surrounding Small Town Unified had observed this barrier, commenting, “changes are slightly noticeable but our district has had a challenge getting up and running...Next year promises to be better.”

One survey respondent anticipated challenges like those in Small Town Unified and called for more legislative guidance to address them. The respondent, who self-identified as a school board member, commented:

“Legislation does not have all the answers for the many questions K-12 school districts have for the rules of Prop 28 [AMS] monies. 80% is to be spent on staff, but how is this possible at the



high school level? K-8 level? A master schedule makes this difficult to implement.”

Putting these challenges into perspective, another survey respondent (also a self-identified school board member and arts advocate) acknowledges both the significance of Prop 28 AMS funds and their limitations:

“The measure is an important step forward. Most schools will gain one arts teacher at best. We should not expect transformative change based on this modest new resource.”

Another common concern held by interviewees and survey respondents was the shortage of arts teachers. As described previously, this issue delayed the Prop 28 AMS implementation processes of interviewees who were attempting to hire new arts teaching personnel. One survey respondent (self-identified as a teaching artist with nearly three decades of experience) underscored the issue:

“I think it’s going to take time, likely years, to rectify the problem of a lack of qualified arts teachers, before our state and school districts are able to catch up. We are not nearly ready to meet this moment...We need more teaching artist training programs; we must also design and develop (agree upon) more pathways for artists to become trained and qualified to teach.”

Other survey respondents and interviewees concurred, calling on institutions of higher education to train more upcoming arts educators. With about 4.5% of survey respondents self-identifying as working in higher education, some insights emerged from these faculty and staff perspectives. One professor of music education called on districts and institutions of higher education to “be proactive in partnering with universities in the county to help grow the needed teacher pool.” A professor of arts education recommended:

**“We need more financially feasible pathways to teaching the arts.”**

*– Survey respondent: Professor of arts education*

“First we need more financially feasible pathways to teaching the arts. Pay student teachers and provide residency grants for arts credential students. This will help increase the amount of credentialed teachers.”

The emphasis on affordability and feasibility emerged in other study participants’ comments. As one interviewee pointed out, “many people that we would love to hire just can’t afford to not work while they do their student teaching.” Others called for streamlining the process for out-of-state credential holders to gain authorization in California. Expanding CTE pathways was as controversial among interviewees and survey respondents as it had been in public discourse, with arguments for and against it emerging among both samples.

Despite these mixed perceptions, the urgent need for more arts teachers was clear. While schools and districts make the most of their Prop 28 AMS funds to increase arts teaching personnel, institutions should strengthen an equitable, affordable, and efficient pathway into classrooms.

## Administrative capacity and oversight

As the VAPA coordinator from Central Unified put it, “using resources—like planning to spend the resources—takes effort.” Limited administrative capacity at the school, district, county, and state level raised concerns among interviewees and survey respondents.

At the school site level, survey respondents and several interviewees noted that limited administrative bandwidth could leave school sites uninformed and unprepared for Prop 28 AMS implementation. A survey respondent commented, “Teachers, principals, etc. are very confused about Prop 28 [AMS] and how to go about accessing funds. They are tremendously busy.”

The VAPA coordinator from Central Unified equated this with challenges the district had faced in years prior to Prop 28 AMS, when the district had allocated arts funding to school sites only to find much of it unused at the year’s end. Searching for possible explanations, the coordinator described two contrasting views:

“[One opinion was], ‘Well, [principals] don’t care about the arts.’ And then my reaction is, ‘Okay, maybe. But maybe they’re also very overwhelmed.’ Because we know that school site administrators are very, very overwhelmed at this point in the history of education.”

Seeing similarities with Prop 28 AMS implementation, the coordinator from Central Unified empathized with principals:

“I feel that principals...have so much to deal with. And I’ve discovered in my work with them, there are things that I feel like a principal should know [about Prop 28 AMS], and they don’t. So, I’ve had to really practice a lot of empathy and compassion and just feel like, you know, these folks are overwhelmed...hopefully our district will be able to do a little more professional development with principals about how they could use it.”

As the Central Unified interviewee and others noted, equipping principals with Prop 28 AMS information (and the bandwidth to make use of it) would be essential to envisioning and, more importantly, implementing the intended expansions to arts education programs. Another survey respondent (self-identified as an arts teacher) underscores the issue, describing how a Prop 28 AMS-funded expansion fell through without adequate administrative support:

“I was hired to start a theatre program on [Prop 28 AMS] funds but displaced after a year (dance was also disbanded and now it is only visual arts and band, no orchestra or choir etc.)...Performing arts, especially theatre, require a lot of support and extra involvement by administrators that they may not want to do or be able to do (or know how to do and are unwilling to admit it...). In order to...see NEW programs I think there would need to be financial incentive for the [assistant principal] supporting them or an entirely new logistical position or ‘program director’ whose specific role is to support performing arts programs in their logistical concerns, production elements, navigating the district, calendaring etc. because otherwise it’s requiring [administrators] who are already at bandwidth to do extra work they may not already value, have time for, or if which they are not interested or knowledgeable.”

As this survey respondent’s comments illustrate, designated administrative support, particularly at the school site level, is essential to implementing and sustaining Prop 28 AMS-funded programs.

Similar concerns emerged at the district level. With Prop 28 AMS came new needs to plan and eventually oversee expanded arts education programs and personnel, exerting new strains on district arts leaders' capacity. A few VAPA coordinators hoped to find administrative support either by recruiting the attention of other administrative assistants in the district or by hiring new arts administrative assistants using a maximum of 1% of their Prop 28 AMS funds.

Additionally, all interviewees found support from the Los Angeles County Office of Education (LACOE) and/or Los Angeles County Arts Ed Collective. All had sought guidance from one or both these county offices in developing their strategic arts plans and Prop 28 AMS actions. Many mentioned having sought advice during formal convenings or informally via text message, but they worried about county-level resources to support Prop 28 AMS inquiries like theirs. One interviewee commented, "from what I'm understanding from my [county] people, Prop 28 [AMS] didn't add anything at the county level right to help facilitate this." Both LACOE and the Arts Ed Collective were important sources of information and guidance for these districts; whether and how this support will continue (or expand) may be vital to Prop 28 AMS implementation more broadly.

Interviewees and survey respondents also hoped for more guidance and oversight at the state level. All interviewees turned to the California Department of Education (CDE) for technical information about Prop 28 AMS implementation. Many mentioned having attended the CDE webinars hosted in the 2023-24 school year (often seeking further guidance locally between the releases of this information), and later relayed that information to administrators and other constituencies in their districts.

Interviewees, like many survey respondents, also hoped for more state-level oversight and accountability. Put simply by one survey respondent (self-identified as a parent/guardian, teaching artist, and community-based organization employee), "There isn't enough oversight or transparency on how funds are being used."

Other survey respondents shared similar perceptions, which tended to be accompanied by lower confidence or greater doubts in Prop 28 AMS overall. These survey respondents were joined by several interviewees in their calls for greater accountability and oversight from the state. One interviewee worried that, in the absence of more robust state oversight, informal work groups had emerged as de facto leaders to that end:

"CDE now needs to be the ones to take charge in overseeing it. I worry because [this working group] is private...[and] then that's the information that's being given to the field, but it's not [from] the CDE. The CDE [would] follow a different process in order to have a committee—like how it's vetted, who gets to be part of these discussions...[But] you can't find information on [this private work group]. You don't know who's on it. It's like a secret membership list."

This interviewee later described their hope for a state-level oversight committee with more rigorous and transparent vetting processes and expressed eagerness to be a part of it alongside other practitioners from across the state.

Considering all these perspectives, leaders at all levels could benefit from more support. Transparency, accountability, and oversight can strengthen opportunities for practitioners and the public to step into effective and equitable Prop 28 AMS implementation.



# RECOMMENDATIONS

## 1. Build and update strategic arts plans that include Prop 28 AMS

Develop a vision for arts education in schools and the district level. Ground this vision in the perspectives of students, families, teachers, administrators, and community partners. Build on the strengths and existing resources to identify opportunities for Prop 28 AMS to increase equitable access to arts education.

No.	Recommendation	Resources
1a	<b>Schools and districts:</b>	
1a.1	<p>Consider following these steps, as recommended by the Los Angeles County Arts Ed Collective and Create CA:</p> <p><b>Stage 1.</b> Building an arts planning team</p> <p><b>Stage 2.</b> Assessing current arts education and reviewing baseline data.</p> <p><b>Stage 3.</b> Establishing an arts education policy.</p> <p><b>Stage 4.</b> Generating the strategic plan.</p> <p><b>Stage 5.</b> Developing a funding strategy.</p> <p><b>Stage 6.</b> Launching and introducing the plan with leadership and the community.</p> <p><b>Stage 7.</b> Implementing the plan.</p>	<p><b>Strategic Arts Education Planning Guide, 4th Edition</b> (Los Angeles County Arts Ed Collective): <a href="https://www.lacountyartsedcollective.org/models-resources/strategic-arts-education-planning-guide">https://www.lacountyartsedcollective.org/models-resources/strategic-arts-education-planning-guide</a></p> <p><b>Directory of Strategic Arts Education Planners</b> (Create CA): <a href="https://createca.org/directory-of-strategic-arts-education-planner/">https://createca.org/directory-of-strategic-arts-education-planner/</a></p> <p><b>Prop 28 AMS Inventory of Arts Education Programming and Expenditures</b> (Create CA): <a href="https://createca.org/prop-28-arts-and-music-in-schools-planning-toolkit/">https://createca.org/prop-28-arts-and-music-in-schools-planning-toolkit/</a></p>
1a.2	Building on the strategic arts plan, find opportunities to braid multiple funding sources together with Prop 28 AMS funds to maximize their impact.	<p><b>Arts Education Funding Sources</b> (Create CA): <a href="https://drive.google.com/file/d/1jjNiCADq4YGEQxJV6y2iQ0Hk5idy61oY/view">https://drive.google.com/file/d/1jjNiCADq4YGEQxJV6y2iQ0Hk5idy61oY/view</a></p> <p><b>Arts Education Funding Resources</b> (California County Superintendents Arts Initiative): <a href="https://cacountyarts.org/funding/">https://cacountyarts.org/funding/</a></p>
1b	<b>Community-based organizations:</b> Request access to results of schools' and districts' arts education needs assessments, strategic arts plans, expenditure plans, expenditure reports, and other arts education documents. Align arts education offerings with the priorities listed there, ensuring that new (and existing) programs are rigorously aligned with standards and schools' needs.	<p><b>California Arts Education Data Project</b> (Create CA &amp; Arts Education Data Project): <a href="https://createca.org/california-arts-education-data-project/">https://createca.org/california-arts-education-data-project/</a></p>
1c	<b>Students and families:</b> Get to know your schools' and districts' arts leadership and join the arts team or arts advisory council. Participate in arts education surveys and share your expertise to identify opportunities and address barriers (e.g., competing priorities on instructional time, master schedules, inadequate or unavailable facilities).	<p><b>Advocacy Toolkit</b> (Create CA): <a href="https://createca.org/tools-you-need-to-support-the-arts-music-in-schools-act/">https://createca.org/tools-you-need-to-support-the-arts-music-in-schools-act/</a></p>
1d	<b>Government:</b> Ensure that arts education data are updated and available to schools and districts for their strategic planning. Strengthen arts education data systems to capture a more robust snapshot of arts availability in schools, particularly at the elementary level.	<p><b>Creativity challenge: The state of arts education in California</b> (SRI Education): <a href="https://www.sri.com/publication/education-learning-pubs/creativity-challenge-the-state-of-arts-education-in-california-full-report/">https://www.sri.com/publication/education-learning-pubs/creativity-challenge-the-state-of-arts-education-in-california-full-report/</a></p>

## 2. Collaborate within and beyond districts

Bring together practitioners within school districts to identify shared goals. Strengthen supportive implementation networks.

No.	Recommendation	Resources
2a	<b>Schools and districts:</b> Bring together multiple departments and school sites.	
2a.1	Partner with other departments with shared interests (e.g., ethnic studies; special education; diversity, equity and inclusion)	
2a.2	Convene school site leaders to identify shared goals and potential opportunities for pooling resources and expanding, reassigning, or adding FTEs accordingly.	<b>LEA Profiles: Mariposa County Unified School District</b> (Create CA): <a href="https://createca.org/lea-profiles-mariposa-county-unified-school-district-a-partnership-driven-community/">https://createca.org/lea-profiles-mariposa-county-unified-school-district-a-partnership-driven-community/</a>
2a.3	For districts partnered with a commission-approved teacher credentialing program, consider using Prop 28 AMS funds to increase the number of district-employed arts credential candidates in intern credential programs or teacher residency programs.	<b>Thanks to Prop 28 School Districts Need Arts teachers</b> (Dr. Eric Engdahl & California County Superintendents Arts Initiative): <a href="https://cacountyarts.org/wp-content/uploads/California-County-Superintendents-Teacher-Brief_UPDATED-6.15.23.pdf">https://cacountyarts.org/wp-content/uploads/California-County-Superintendents-Teacher-Brief_UPDATED-6.15.23.pdf</a>
2b	<b>Government:</b>	
2b.1	Continue building and strengthening Prop 28 AMS implementation networks that bring together practitioners (from school sites and districts) and community partner organizations.	<b>Los Angeles County Arts Ed Collective's School District Arts Coordinator Network Convenings:</b> <a href="https://www.lacountyartsedcollective.org/">https://www.lacountyartsedcollective.org/</a>
2b.2	Offer access to county-owned facilities for schools seeking space for their expanded arts education programs, building on recommendations in Strategy 18 of the Countywide Cultural Policy Strategic Plan.	<b>Countywide Cultural Policy Strategic Plan</b> (Los Angeles County Department of the Arts and Culture, see p. 33): <a href="https://www.lacountyarts.org/sites/default/files/documents/pdfs/cultural-policy-strategic-plan_7-1-f.pdf">https://www.lacountyarts.org/sites/default/files/documents/pdfs/cultural-policy-strategic-plan_7-1-f.pdf</a>

### 3. Strengthen capacity

No.	Recommendation	Resources
3a	<b>Schools and districts:</b>	
3a.1	Designate a district-level arts leader to oversee Prop 28 AMS implementation and coordinate ongoing mentorship, professional learning communities, and other instructional supports, especially for beginning arts teachers.	
3a.2	Consider expanding and strengthening arts integration to increase arts instruction while minimizing impact on schedules. Professional development in this area can introduce innovative approaches, and creating a professional learning community or appointing an arts lead at each school site can ensure ongoing support for teachers.	<b>Creativity at the Core</b> (California County Superintendents Arts Initiative): <a href="https://cacountyarts.org/modules/">https://cacountyarts.org/modules/</a>
3b	<b>Government, philanthropy, and higher education:</b>	
3b.1	Provide subsidized Prop 28 AMS professional development for principals. These offerings can be supported by the county (e.g., through the Advancement Grant Program, as articulated in Strategy 10 of the Countywide Cultural Policy Strategic Plan), institutions of higher education, or the state (e.g., 21st Century California School Leadership Academy (21CSLA) or other regional convenings, bootcamps, etc.).	<b>Countywide Cultural Policy Strategic Plan</b> (Los Angeles County Department of the Arts and Culture, see p. 26): <a href="https://www.lacountyarts.org/sites/default/files/documents/pdfs/cultural-policy-strategic-plan_7-1-f.pdf">https://www.lacountyarts.org/sites/default/files/documents/pdfs/cultural-policy-strategic-plan_7-1-f.pdf</a> <b>21st Century California School Leadership Academy</b> (CDE): <a href="https://www.cde.ca.gov/ci/pl/ca21csla.asp">https://www.cde.ca.gov/ci/pl/ca21csla.asp</a>
3b.2	Create and fund county-level technical assistance centers to support schools and districts with their Prop 28 AMS implementation, for example, through convenings, coaching, and consultations.	<b>The Role of California’s County Offices of Education and Implications for Arts Education</b> (SRI Education): <a href="https://www.sri.com/publication/education-learning-pubs/the-role-of-californias-county-offices-of-education-and-implications-for-artseducation/">https://www.sri.com/publication/education-learning-pubs/the-role-of-californias-county-offices-of-education-and-implications-for-artseducation/</a>
3c	Higher education: Increase recruitment and program capacity in arts teacher preparation programs to accommodate larger cohorts. Equip arts credential-seekers with subject matter expertise, culturally relevant teaching skills, and knowledge of human development and pedagogy.	



## 4. Create affordable pathways for emerging arts teachers

No.	Recommendation	Resources
4a	<p><b>Philanthropy:</b> Subsidize credentials or other certification in the arts, including single-subject, multiple subject, CTE, and supplementary authorization for credential holders with a background in the arts. Subsidies could include scholarship funds to cover the cost of tuition for a credentialing program or support with other associated fees for applications, exams and assessments, and other clearances. For example, credential program tuition for 2024-25 would be approximately \$7,000 for full-time enrollment or \$4,100 for part-time enrollment through CSU (which issues nearly half of California’s new teaching credentials), plus additional fees noted on the Fee Schedule for Teacher Credentialing.</p>	<p><b>Teacher Supply in California 2021-22: A Report to the Legislature</b> (California Commission on Teacher Credentialing): <a href="https://www.ctc.ca.gov/docs/default-source/commission/agendas/2023-04/2023-04-5c.pdf?sfvrsn=79721b1_3">https://www.ctc.ca.gov/docs/default-source/commission/agendas/2023-04/2023-04-5c.pdf?sfvrsn=79721b1_3</a></p> <p><b>Fee Schedule for Teacher Credentialing</b> (California Commission on Teacher Credentialing): <a href="https://www.ctc.ca.gov/credentials/leaflets/fee-schedule-information-(cl-659)">https://www.ctc.ca.gov/credentials/leaflets/fee-schedule-information-(cl-659)</a></p>
4b	<p><b>Higher education and philanthropy:</b> Fundraise for full scholarships covering direct and indirect costs for arts credential seekers. For example, in partnership with a local education agency, apply for a Teacher Residency Grant to support arts credential candidates.</p>	<p><b>California Teacher Residency Grant Program:</b> (California Commission on Teacher Credentialing): <a href="https://www.ctc.ca.gov/educator-prep/grant-funded-programs/teacher-residency-grant-program">https://www.ctc.ca.gov/educator-prep/grant-funded-programs/teacher-residency-grant-program</a></p> <p><b>CDE Foundation’s Residency Lab:</b> <a href="https://cdefoundation.org/cde_programs/thelab/">https://cdefoundation.org/cde_programs/thelab/</a></p>
4c	<p><b>Government:</b> Designate Visual and Performing Arts (VAPA) as a shortage field, which will help create more financial aid opportunities for arts credential-seekers.</p>	<p><b>Arts Education Legislative &amp; Policy Agenda</b> (Create CA): <a href="https://createca.org/legislation-policy/">https://createca.org/legislation-policy/</a></p>
4d	<p><b>Artists and teaching artists:</b> Bring your creativity and expertise into classrooms. There are many different pathways for it. Earn up to a full-time teaching salary while working toward your credential through teacher residencies and intern teaching credentialing programs. Through these programs, consider pursuing a multiple subject credential for elementary or single-subject arts credential or support older students’ creative career pursuits as a CTE-certified educator.</p>	<p><b>Beginning Teacher Programs</b> (Los Angeles County Office of Education): <a href="https://www.lacoe.edu/services/staff-support/credential-programs/beginning-teacher-programs">https://www.lacoe.edu/services/staff-support/credential-programs/beginning-teacher-programs</a></p> <p><b>Funding Your Future in Teaching: A Financial Resource for Aspiring Educators</b> (California Commission on Teacher Credentialing): <a href="https://www.ctc.ca.gov/docs/default-source/career-counseling/funding-your-future-in-teaching.pdf?sfvrsn=4b303db1_12">https://www.ctc.ca.gov/docs/default-source/career-counseling/funding-your-future-in-teaching.pdf?sfvrsn=4b303db1_12</a></p> <p><b>Intern Teacher Credentialing Programs</b> (California Commission on Teacher Credentialing): <a href="https://www.ctc.ca.gov/credentials/roadmap-to-teaching/becoming-a-teacher-in-california/pathways-to-credentialing/intern-teacher-credentialing-program">https://www.ctc.ca.gov/credentials/roadmap-to-teaching/becoming-a-teacher-in-california/pathways-to-credentialing/intern-teacher-credentialing-program</a></p> <p><b>Teacher Residency</b> (Teach California): <a href="https://www.teachcalifornia.org/Steps/TeacherResidency">https://www.teachcalifornia.org/Steps/TeacherResidency</a></p> <p><b>Career Technical Education</b> (Los Angeles County Office of Education): <a href="https://www.lacoe.edu/services/accountability/cte">https://www.lacoe.edu/services/accountability/cte</a></p>

## 5. Advocate for transparency and accountability

No.	Recommendation	Resources
5a	<b>Schools and districts:</b> Publish Prop 28 AMS expenditure plans, reports, and any other information about Prop 28 AMS actions in the district. Ensure these materials are accessible to diverse constituencies (e.g., in videos, webinars, town halls, and multilingual communications).	<b>Prop 28 AMS School Site Expenditure Plan Template</b> (Create CA): <a href="https://createca.org/prop-28-arts-and-music-in-schools-planning-toolkit/">https://createca.org/prop-28-arts-and-music-in-schools-planning-toolkit/</a>
5b	<b>Government:</b> Form a statewide Prop 28 AMS oversight and advisory committee of practitioners and members of the public. Include teachers, administrators, community-based organizations, families, and students as liaisons to their schools and communities. Ensure the selection process is equitable, transparent, and representative of schools and communities.	
5c	<b>Community members:</b> Engage with policymakers, elected officials, and CDE to report any losses due to supplanting, or any other instances of non-compliance. Help schools and districts achieve their other goals so that they can make the most of Prop 28 AMS funds.	

# LIMITATIONS

Like all research, this study had several limitations.

This study is limited by its cross-sectional and single-phase mixed methods design. As a cross-sectional study conducted in summer 2024, the findings can offer only a glimpse of Prop 28 AMS implementation and perceptions at this point in time. How these evolve over time was beyond the scope of this study. Additionally, this mixed methods study was designed to concurrently collect survey and interview data. While this approach maximized efficiency, it limited the extent to which themes from one dataset could inform the instrument design for the other. Still, gathering perspectives from samples of these two distinct populations (i.e., district arts leaders and the general public) revealed, at times, misconceptions, intersections, and shared interests across them.

Another limitation relates to the study's samples for both the survey and interviews. Considering these sampling limitations, the author cautions against generalizing these findings across Los Angeles County or California at large. While the survey sample's demographics resemble those of the creative workforce in Los Angeles County<sup>49</sup>, the sample is not representative of Los Angeles County's general population. Among the most overrepresented groups are those who identified as female, White, earned a master's degree or higher, and were between the ages of 45 and 60. In addition to the nonrepresentative demographics, the survey may be limited by non-response bias. The respondents were generally highly interested in the Prop 28 AMS discourse, but those who were least familiar with Prop 28 AMS may have been less inclined to participate in the study. Additionally, the survey was only distributed in English and via email, limiting access for those who speak a language other than English and/or have limited internet access.

The interview sample's main limitations were its size and composition. While maximum variation sampling techniques<sup>50</sup> sought to diversify by district size, free and reduced-price meal eligibility, and location, the sample of ten districts was too small to have observed significant patterns across those characteristics. The interview sample may also be impacted by selection bias. Invitations to participate were sent to district arts leaders whose contact information was provided by the Los Angeles County Office of Education (LACOE) and Los Angeles County Department of Arts and Culture. Although the contact list represented 57 of the 80 districts in Los Angeles County, it would have missed districts without a designated arts leader. Those districts may have been differently positioned to plan for and implement Prop 28 AMS, and further study should seek to contact those remaining districts.

Relatedly, this study brings together the perspectives of district arts leaders and community members who were at least 18 years old, but some important perspectives are missing. First, school site leaders (i.e. principals, assistant principals, etc.) are represented in neither the survey nor interviews. Given their contributions to Prop 28 AMS plans in many of the districts that were represented here, future studies might seek to engage directly with them.

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49 Roscoe, R., Voss, Z., Benoit-Bryan, J., & Fonner, D. (2024). *Demographics of the Arts and Culture Workforce in Los Angeles County: 2023 Update*. Los Angeles County Department of Arts and Culture. <https://www.lacountyarts.org/article/demographics-arts-and-culture-workforce-los-angeles-county-2023-update>

50 Patton, M. Q. (2015). *Qualitative research & evaluation methods: Integrating theory and practice* (Fourth edition). SAGE Publications, Inc.



# CONCLUSION

This study brought together multiple perspectives on this historic investment in arts education. Interviews with district arts leaders offered a snapshot of early implementation during Prop 28 AMS's first year. Survey responses uplifted public perceptions of Prop 28 AMS and expectations for its impact. Integrating these sets of findings revealed how multiple constituencies might contribute to the future of Prop 28 AMS in schools.

While celebrating the potential of Prop 28 AMS, these findings also shed light on its complexities and opportunities to help fulfill its promise. Having garnered such tremendous support from voters was a triumph for arts education in our state. Prop 28 AMS stands to position California as a leading example for the nation if this momentum catalyzes effective and equitable implementation. This study's findings issue a call for joint efforts to that end.

At the intersection of this study's perspectives is a shared appreciation of what we stand to gain: more creative teaching and learning, more opportunities for more young people to encounter more art forms, explore their identities, emotions, and connections to others, and pursue their creative career aspirations. To realize Prop 28 AMS's goal of equitably expanded arts opportunities, schools and districts need support, and students deserve it.

Photo by Rafael Hernandez



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# ABOUT ARTS FOR LA



Incorporated in 2006, Arts for LA leads communities, artists, and organizations to advocate for an equitable, healthy, and vibrant Los Angeles region through the arts. As the only cross-sector and cross-discipline arts advocacy organization in Los Angeles County with a powerful community that includes 75,000 supporters, 400 Member Advocates, and over 100 Member Organizations, Arts for LA reaches deeply into communities to forge relationships, create partnerships, and bring people together to explore the ways arts and culture increase our quality of life and drive the economy. The organization and its leadership serve as advisors to elected officials and their staff, create opportunities for arts leaders to collaborate, and participate in coalitions around larger issues in which arts and culture play a strategic role.

In June 2017, Arts for LA announced the Laura Zucker Fellowship for Policy and Research, named in honor of Laura Zucker on the occasion of her retirement from her 25-year tenure as Executive Director of the Los Angeles County Arts Commission. The fellowship is the first of its kind for individuals to effect change at the regional level focused on arts and cultural policy development, reform, and implementation in Los Angeles County and the accompanying research necessary to inform such policies. The Fellowship is open to recent graduates in Public Affairs, Public Policy, Arts Administration/Management or related fields of study, as well as local community leaders and arts professionals with a minimum of five years' experience (regardless of educational background) who have a demonstrated interest in conducting research and/or crafting public policy pertaining to the arts and cultural landscape of the Los Angeles region.



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# APPENDICES

## Appendix A: Sample demographics

The following tables summarize the demographics and roles/affiliations that were self-reported by survey respondents.

**Table A1. Interviewee District Characteristics (n=10)**

	Count	%
District type		
TK-12	8	80%
Elementary only	1	10%
High school only	1	10%
District size		
Small (2-9 schools)	4	40%
Medium (10-19 schools)	2	20%
Large (20 or more schools)	4	40%
Proportion of Title I schools		
None (0%)	2	20%
Few (1-25%)	1	10%
Some (26-50%)	3	30%
Most (51-99%)	3	30%
All (100%)	1	10%

**Table A2. Survey Respondents by Gender (n=228)**

	Count	%
Female	164	71.9%
Male	53	23.3%
Nonbinary	8	3.5%
Other/unsure	3	0.9%

**Table A3. Survey Respondents by Race/ethnicity (n=228)<sup>51</sup>**

	Count	%
American Indian/Alaska Native	4	1.8%
Asian	20	8.8%
Black/African American	19	8.3%
Latinx/Latine/Hispanic	37	16.2%
Middle Eastern/North African	1	0.4%
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	2	0.9%
White	145	63.6%
Other	17	7.5%

**Table A4. Survey Respondents by Age Group (n=228)**

	Count	%
18-24 years old	6	2.6%
25-34 years old	19	8.3%
35-44 years old	37	16.2%
45-60 years old	75	32.9%
61-75 years old	65	28.5%
76 or more years old	20	8.8%

**Table A5. Survey Respondents by Educational Attainment Level (n=228)**

	Count	%
High school diploma or equivalent	1	0.4%
Some college, no degree	24	10.5%
Associate's degree	8	3.5%
Bachelor's degree	78	34.2%
Advanced degree (e.g., master's, professional, doctorate)	115	50.4%

<sup>51</sup> Total does not add to 100% because some respondents made multiple selections. Unreported by 36 respondents (13.6% of total valid responses).

**Table A6. Survey Respondents by Role/affiliation (n=228)**

	Count	%
Parent/guardian of a TK-12 student	66	25.0%
Teacher	27	10.3%
School site leader	0	0.0%
School district administrator	9	3.5%
Community-based org employee	121	46.4%
Teaching artist	93	35.4%
Working artist	170	64.4%



## Appendix B: Instruments

### Survey Instrument

#### INFORMATION ABOUT THE RESEARCH

A New Era for Equitable Arts Education: Prop 28 Perspectives in Los Angeles County

#### INTRODUCTION

Lindsey Kunisaki, Ed.M., from the Visual and Performing Arts Education (VAPAE) Program at the University of California, Los Angeles and Arts for LA is conducting a research study. You were selected as a possible participant in this study because you are a resident of Los Angeles County and are 18 years or older. Your participation in this research study is voluntary.

#### WHAT SHOULD I KNOW ABOUT A RESEARCH STUDY?

Someone will explain this research study to you.

Whether or not you take part is up to you.

You can choose not to take part.

You can agree to take part and later change your mind.

Your decision will not be held against you.

You can ask all the questions you want before you decide.

#### WHY IS THIS RESEARCH BEING DONE?

A new era for arts education began in California when voters overwhelmingly supported Proposition 28, the Arts and Music in Schools Funding Guarantee and Accountability Act (Prop 28) in 2022. Bringing up to \$1 billion of annual funding into California's schools, Prop 28 stands to transform the role of the arts in schools—and raises important questions about how these changes are occurring. This study investigates how Los Angeles County community members and educators in K-12 schools are envisioning and witnessing the impact of Prop 28.

#### HOW LONG WILL THE RESEARCH LAST AND WHAT WILL I NEED TO DO?

Participation will take a total of about 10-15 minutes.

If you volunteer to participate in this study, the researcher will ask you to do the following:

Complete an online survey using a computer or mobile device.

Answer questions about your perspective on Prop 28 and arts education in general.

#### ARE THERE ANY RISKS IF I PARTICIPATE?

There are no anticipated risks or discomforts.

### **ARE THERE ANY BENEFITS IF I PARTICIPATE?**

You may benefit from the study by learning about the general goals of Prop 28.

The results of the research may benefit K-12 students, schools, and communities in Los Angeles County by informing decisions about how to increase access to arts education.

### **HOW WILL INFORMATION ABOUT ME AND MY PARTICIPATION BE KEPT CONFIDENTIAL?**

The researcher will do their best to make sure that your private information is kept confidential. Information about you will be handled as confidentially as possible, but participating in research may involve a loss of privacy and the potential for a breach in confidentiality. Study data will be physically and electronically secured. As with any use of electronic means to store data, there is a risk of breach of data security.

Use of personal information that can identify you: You will not be asked to give your name. Any personal information will be used only to link your responses to other publicly available information (for example, state data about schools in your ZIP code).

How information about you will be stored: Your responses will be stored electronically on a secure hard drive maintained by the researcher.

People and agencies that will have access to your information: The research team, authorized UCLA personnel, and the study sponsor, may have access to study data and records to monitor the study.

Research records provided to authorized, non-UCLA personnel will not contain identifiable information about you. Publications and/or presentations that result from this study will not identify you by name. Employees of the University may have access to identifiable information as part of routine processing of your information, such as lab work or processing payment. However, University employees are bound by strict rules of confidentiality.

How long information from the study will be kept: Information from the study will be kept for five years.

### **USE OF DATA FOR FUTURE RESEARCH**

Your data, including de-identified data may be kept for use in future research.

### **WHO CAN I CONTACT IF I HAVE QUESTIONS ABOUT THIS STUDY?**

If you have any questions, comments or concerns about the research, you can talk to the researcher. Please contact: Lindsey Kunisaki at (310)794-4822 or [ltkunisaki@arts.ucla.edu](mailto:ltkunisaki@arts.ucla.edu).

UCLA Office of the Human Research Protection Program (OHRPP):

If you have questions about your rights as a research subject, or you have concerns or suggestions and you want to talk to someone other than the researchers, you may contact the UCLA OHRPP by phone: (310) 206-2040; by email: [participants@research.ucla.edu](mailto:participants@research.ucla.edu) or by mail: Box 951406, Los Angeles, CA 90095-1406.

**WHAT ARE MY RIGHTS IF I TAKE PART IN THIS STUDY?**

You can choose whether or not you want to be in this study, and you may withdraw your consent and discontinue participation at any time.

Whatever decision you make, there will be no penalty to you, and no loss of benefits to which you were otherwise entitled.

You may refuse to answer any questions that you do not want to answer and still remain in the study.

**Do you agree to participate in this study by completing this survey?**

*Response options:*

[Yes, I agree to participate in this study.]

[No, I do not agree to participate in this study.] \*\*if selected, exits from survey

**Are you 18 years of age or older?**

*Response options:*

[Yes, I am at least 18 years old.]

[No, I am younger than 18 years old.] \*\*if selected, exits from survey

**Do you live in Los Angeles County?**

*Response options:*

[Yes, I am at least 18 years old.]

[No, I am younger than 18 years old.] \*\*if selected, exits from survey

**About You**

Are you a **parent/guardian** of a K-12 student?

Are you a **teacher** at a K-12 school?

Are you a **principal, vice principal, or assistant principal** at a K-12 school?

Do you work in a **district-level staff or administrative role** in a school district?

Do you work as an **artist?** (in any art form)

Do you work as a **teaching artist?** (in any art form, in or outside of schools, with any age group)

Do you work for a **community-based organization or cultural institution that provides arts education services?**

*The series of questions above offered the following response options:*

[Yes]

[No]

Optional: Is there anything else you would like to share about your affiliation with arts education or schools in general?

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## Your Connection to Proposition 28

**Overall, how familiar or unfamiliar are you with Prop 28?**

*Response options:*

[Very familiar]

[Somewhat familiar]

[Neither familiar nor unfamiliar]

[Somewhat unfamiliar]

[Very unfamiliar]

[I don't know]

[Decline to state]

**Ultimately, the goal of Prop 28 is to increase access to arts education in California schools. How confident or doubtful are you about achieving that goal in your local school(s)?**

*Response options:*

[Very confident]

[Somewhat confident]

[Neither confident nor doubtful]

[Somewhat doubtful]

[Very doubtful]

[I don't know]

[Decline to state]

**From your personal perspective, how important or unimportant is Prop 28?**

*Response options:*

[Very important]

[Somewhat important]

[Neither important nor unimportant]

[Somewhat unimportant]

[Very unimportant]

[I don't know]

[Decline to state]



**The next few questions will ask for your perspective on who has been involved in the decisions about Prop 28-related plans in your local schools.**

**Based on what you know today, how would you describe the status of Prop 28-related plans in your local schools?**

*Response options:*

[Plan has been developed and is being executed]

[Planning has begun]

[Neither important nor unimportant]

[Planning has not yet begun]

[I don't know]

[Decline to state]

How involved are you, personally, in developing Prop 28 plans in your local schools?

How involved do you think **district leadership** is in developing Prop 28 plans in your local schools?

How involved do you think **school leadership** (principals, vice principals, assistant principals) is in developing Prop 28 plans in your local schools?

How involved do you think **teachers** are in developing Prop 28 plans in your local schools?

How involved do you think **students** are in developing Prop 28 plans in your local schools?

How involved do you think **parents/guardians** are in developing Prop 28 plans in your local schools?

How involved do you think **community-based organizations** are in developing Prop 28 plans in your local schools?

*The series of questions above offered the following response options:*

[Required to be involved]

[Highly involved]

[Moderately involved]

[Slightly involved]

[Not at all involved]

## Expanded Arts Activities

Prop 28 provides funding to offer more arts education in schools. The next few questions will ask about your level of preference for the following Prop 28-funded arts activities.

### How do you feel about offering...

more arts activities during the school day? (e.g., arts classes, arts lessons in the classroom, etc.)

more school-sponsored extracurricular arts activities? (e.g., school theater productions, band, etc.)

more arts activities provided by community-based organizations? (e.g., artist residencies, assemblies, school-based workshops, field trips, etc.)

more arts events at school? (e.g., concerts, performances, exhibitions)

more arts assemblies at school?

more arts-based field trips?

arts activities more often? (more days out of the week, month, or school year)

longer arts activities? (extending the duration of arts activities)

more visual art in schools?

more music in schools?

more dance in schools?

more drama/theatre in schools?

more media arts in schools?

more instruction relating arts to other academic subjects?

more arts that relate to students' and families' cultural backgrounds?

more arts instruction in languages spoken by students and their families?

more social emotional learning through the arts?

more exposure to creative careers? (i.e. in the arts, culture, entertainment, or related fields)

*The series of questions above offered the following response options:*

[Absolutely need it]

[Really want it, but not essential]

[Want it, but don't need it]

[Kind of want it, but not that important]

[No preference]

[I don't know]

[Decline to state]

Optional: Is there anything else you would like to add about the kinds of Prop 28-funded arts activities you would like to see?

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## Expected Results of Prop 28

This section will ask about any changes you would hope to see as a result of Prop 28.

### As a result of Prop 28, what changes do you hope to see in the...

number of arts teachers in your local schools?

number of visiting artists who teach in your local schools?

number of students participating in the arts during the school day? (e.g. arts classes, lessons, etc.)

number of students participating in school-sponsored extracurricular arts activities? (e.g. school theater productions, choir, band, etc.)

number of students participating in arts activities provided by community-based organizations? (e.g. artist residencies, assemblies, arts workshops, field trips, etc.)

number of parents/guardians/families participating in school-based arts activities?

overall involvement of community-based arts organizations in your local school(s)?

overall sense of social connectedness at your school(s)?

overall sense of safety at your school(s)?

standardized test scores at your school(s)?

attendance rates at your school(s)?

graduation rates at your school(s)?

dropout rates at your school(s)?

disciplinary actions at your school(s)? (e.g., suspensions, expulsions)

*The series of questions above offered the following response options:*

[Large increase]

[Moderate increase]

[Slight increase]

[No change]

[Slight decrease]

[Moderate decrease]

[Large decrease]

[I don't know]

[Decline to state]

### Optional: Are there any other changes you would hope to see as a result of Prop 28?

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### Optional: Have you already seen any changes as a result of Prop 28? If so, please describe.

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## Additional Comments

**Optional: Is there anything else you would like to add about your experience with Prop 28?**

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## Demographics

This final section will ask some demographic questions about you.

**How would you describe your gender? Please select all that apply.**

*Response options:*

[Female]

[Male]

[Non-binary]

[Transgender Female]

[Transgender Male]

[Unsure]

[Other: \_\_\_\_\_]

[Prefer not to say]

**How do you describe your race/ethnicity? Please select all that apply.**

*Response options:*

[American Indian / Alaska Native]

[Asian]

[Black / African American]

[Hispanic / Latino / Latinx / Latine]

[Middle Eastern / North African]

[Native Hawaiian / Pacific Islander]

[White / European]

[Other: \_\_\_\_\_]

[Prefer not to say]

**Which of these best describes your age?**

*Response options:*

[18-24 years old]

[25-34 years old]

[35-44 years old]



[45-60 years old]

[61-75 years old]

[76 or more years old]

[Prefer not to say]

**What is the highest level of education that you have completed?**

*Response options:*

[Did not complete high school]

[High school diploma or equivalent]

[Some college, no degree]

[Associate's degree]

[Bachelor's degree]

[Advanced degree (e.g., master's, professional, or doctoral degree)]

[Prefer not to say]

**What is your ZIP code?**

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## Semi-structured Interview Protocol

Interviews were conducted using a semi-structured technique, approaching the interview with a set of predetermined questions while remaining open to other topics that might emerge in dialogue with the interviewee. The protocol listed below includes examples of questions that were addressed in the interviews.

### Process

In a few words, how would you describe your district's general orientation toward the arts?

What is the current state of your district's strategic arts plan?

- Does your district have one?
- If so, when was it last updated?

How would you describe the current status of your district's Prop 28-related plans?

How would you describe your district's approach to decision-making around Prop 28-funded changes in personnel and programming?

- How would you describe the role of school sites in that decision-making process?
- How would you describe the role of community members in that decision-making process?

Are these Prop 28-related plans connected to other structures and processes (e.g., existing strategic arts plans, LCAPs, anything else)?

### Programming

I'm wondering if we can shift our focus toward the Prop 28-funded arts programming in your district. Ideally, when would it happen, who would be teaching, who would participate, what would they be doing, making, learning?

As a result of Prop 28-funded programming, what are some of the desired outcomes that students, families, or any other members of school communities might experience?

What barriers or opportunities do you see in reaching the desired outcomes?

### Personnel

Has your district already begun hiring NEW arts teaching personnel — whether they're credentialed teachers, classified staff, aides, afterschool staff, or anything else?

How many FTEs are/were you seeking to fill?

What kinds of roles are/were you seeking to fill? (single site vs. itinerant, FTE?)

In your recruitment and hiring, what qualifications are/were you looking for? (certificates/credentials, industry experience, teaching experience, preferred art form?)

Are there any other characteristics you're prioritizing? (e.g. identity matching, art form)

## Partners

How would you describe your district's work with arts providers or other arts community-based organizations prior to the passing of Prop 28?

How (if at all) have community-based arts orgs' contributions changed since the passing of Prop 28, or how do you think they will change in the future?

- Is there any interest in seeking new community-based arts partnerships, either at the district level or at individual school sites?
- Since Prop 28 has passed, what kind of services would you want community-based arts partner orgs to provide? (if any)
- What kind of unique contributions would community-based arts orgs provide in new, Prop 28-funded arts programming?

## Perceptions

What questions do you still have about Prop 28 and its impact (or potential impact) on your district?

Prop 28 has generally been described as aiming to expand access to arts education for students. What would you and your district need in order to attain that goal?

Ultimately, what do you hope to see as a result of Prop 28 in your district?

Is there anything else you'd like to mention about the status of your district's Prop 28-related activities?