

PRESS RELEASE:
October 21, 2013

Contact: Sibyl O'Malley
(626) 578-9315 ext. 102

Arts Education Advocates Publish Survey of Humboldt School Board Candidates

New Local Control Funding Formula Provides Additional Per-Pupil Funding and Gives Local School Boards Unprecedented Power over How Funds Are Spent

Humboldt—With an estimated \$5.3 billion in educational funding set to invigorate California's schools due to Proposition 30, local school board leaders will be tasked with setting the priorities and direction for their schools' future. To help spark dialogue around arts and education issues, the Humboldt Alliance for Arts Education has published the results of a survey of candidates for local school boards detailing their views about arts and education.

Candidate survey questions prompt candidates to do everything from articulate their school district's position on arts education to reminisce about their own experiences with arts and culture in childhood. By being invited to complete the survey, candidates are often able to cement their perspectives on arts and culture in their schools and community, sometimes for the first time. On the voter side, residents who feel arts education is a significant priority can use the power of their vote to elect candidates whose views reflect their own.

This year is a high stakes election cycle for California schools. Governor Brown's new Local Control Funding Formula will start directing more per-pupil funding to every student in the state and gives local school boards unprecedented power about how to spend those funds. At the same time the adoption of Common Core Content Standards—which reiterates the arts as a core discipline—will help every school in forty-eight states establish shared benchmarks for what students should master at every point in their education. School board members play a critical role in making or breaking educational policy in the district and shoring up community support for changes.

With workforce development at top of mind for educators throughout California, school board members will be pressed to ensure all students in their district develop twenty-first century the skills desired by employers in our region: creativity, communication, collaboration, and critical thinking skills. A complete education that includes the arts is a proven and effective way to empower students to be successful in both college and the workforce; recent research compiled by Americans for the Arts indicates an education rich in the arts:

- Reduces the drop out rate for low-income students from 22% to 4%

- Empowers low-income students to graduate from college twice as often as their peers
- Makes a student 4 times as likely to be recognized for academic achievement
- Makes a student 3 times as likely to win an award for school attendance or be elected to class office

Voters are encouraged to visit the surveys and learn more about where each candidate stands on arts education before the election on November 5. The surveys serve as a powerful educational tool for voters who understand the importance of arts and culture to Humboldt's vibrant future.



The Humboldt surveys are part of a statewide effort to survey local school board candidates led by Arts for LA and the California Alliance for Arts Education. The Humboldt group is part of the California Alliance's Local Advocacy Network, which provides advocacy expertise, communications tools and professional development for local advocates. Now in over thirty California communities, these local advocacy groups are forging relationships with local school boards, building community support and offering alternatives to cuts to arts and music programs.

Learn more at http://www.artsed411.org/local_advocacy_coalitions/about

View the survey results at: http://www.artsed411.org/action_center/survey_candidates