



Come Join Us & Senator Ben Allen in Celebrating the Passage of
SB 916 THEATRE AND DANCE ACT (TADA!)
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CO-HOSTED BY



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Event photos available upon request

California Arts Education Advocates Celebrate the Return of Dance and Theatre Credentials in Schools

Event to Thank Senator Ben Allen for Leadership in Passage of "Theatre and Dance Act" (TADA!)

LOS ANGELES, CA—Today at the Wallis Annenberg Center for the Performing Arts, the **California Alliance for Arts Education** hosted a special event for California leaders in arts advocacy to thank **State Senator Ben Allen** for his role in passing Senate Bill 916 to establish single-subject teaching credentials in dance and theatre. The celebratory reception and remarks were followed by *Dance Sundays*, featuring "Break the Floor Hip-Hop," a free fun and energetic outdoor dance class for all ages led by hip-hop master Chantel Heath hosted at The Wallis.

September 26, 2016, was a momentous day for California's arts education community. On that day, Governor Jerry Brown corrected a longstanding injustice in California's arts education delivery system and set the course for a brighter future for California's students by signing SB 916 (Allen) into law.

Earlier this year, **Senator Ben Allen** (D-Santa Monica), chair of the Joint Committee on the Arts, introduced Senate Bill 916, the Theatre and Dance Act (TADA!). "I am incredibly proud to be the author of the Theatre and Dance Act and to see it recently signed into law. Today's community dance event is the perfect way to celebrate this victory and highlight the importance of arts education in our schools," said Allen.

Since 1970, when dance and theatre credentials were eliminated by the Ryan Act, teachers could only teach dance after obtaining a credential in physical education. To teach theatre, they

needed an English credential. Twice, legislative efforts to create these credentials were vetoed by the governor at that time. Sponsored by the California Alliance for Arts Education, SB 916 requires the Commission on Teacher Credentialing to issue single-subject credentials in theatre and dance.

Director of the California Arts Council **Craig Watson** was on hand to add support. "All California students deserve the opportunity to benefit from high-quality engagement with the arts and creative expression. The return of theatre and dance credentials will greatly benefit the future success and well-being of California's young people. We are grateful to Senator Allen for his leadership in shepherding this landmark legislation in support of arts education."

SB 916 made it through both houses of the legislature without a negative vote, buoyed by the support of the California Teachers Association, California Federation of Teachers, and a multitude of organizations and individuals across the state.

The bill picked up many vocal allies along the way, including actress **Annette Bening**, who testified on behalf of the bill in the Senate Education Committee. "I would not be where I am without the benefit of the gifted, experienced teachers I encountered along the way who guided and supported my development. Our students deserve no less — that is, to be taught by highly qualified teachers who have been trained in the technique and knowledge that enables students to excel in the classroom, teachers who have earned credentials in their given subject," said Bening in her testimony.

"I'd like to thank all the dedicated arts advocates for their commitment and support for this measure," said **Joe Landon**, Executive Director, California Alliance for Arts Education. "This is a great example of advocacy in action as hundreds responded to our call to reach out to their elected officials."

ADDITIONAL SPEAKER QUOTES

Senator Ben Allen (SD26)

To tell people who have earned a degree in dance or theatre that they can't teach in their respective fields unless they get a credential in PE or English has been a disservice to them as teachers, to their students, and the subject matter.

Mark Slavkin, Director of Education, Wallis Annenberg Center for the Performing Arts

As an organization that celebrates dance and theatre, we know the future of these art forms rests with today's students. We are thrilled to see California take this step to provide essential performing arts instruction in our schools.

Gai Jones, CA Educational Theatre Association (CETA) Director of Membership, EdTA Vice President and President-Elect

The passage of TADA! has been a long journey. It took the foresight of Senator Allen, the diligence of his office, the unwavering professionalism of our Theatre and Dance CTA supporters and educators, and backing by the members of our Arts Associations. The Theatre and Dance CA educators now have the equity of the single-subject credentials, and our future educators can stay in state to become certified in our core subject credentials.

Krista Carson Elhai, CA Educational Theatre Association (CETA), President

The recent passage of TADA! gives theatre and dance students in California the opportunity to learn from credentialed educators. We are all very excited to have these credentials back after a forty-five-year journey. We will be forever grateful to Senator Ben Allen for his sponsorship of this bill.

Jessy Kronenberg, Co-President, CA Dance Education Association (CDEA) & Dance Program Director, El Cerrito High School

CDEA is thrilled at the passage of TADA! No longer will California's prospective dance educators have to spin, twirl, and leap through a convoluted and imperfect certification system to become dance teachers. The passage of SB 916 means that in the near future we will have clarity and confirmation that our state's dance educators have been prepared as experts in their field. The true winners in all of this are the thousands of CA school children who will have access to the best of the best dance teachers around. CDEA stands in ovation to Senator Ben Allen for his great work on this important legislation.

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