



VISION FRAMEWORK – June 2010

I. INTRODUCTION

About the California Alliance for Arts Education

The California Alliance for Arts Education is in its fourth decade of working to build a brighter future for our state by making the arts a core part of every child's quality education. A statewide leader and convener, the Alliance galvanizes California's educators and other experts in arts and culture to advocate for quality arts education for all students. By collaborating effectively with the state's leading education and parent organizations and agencies, and by providing an anchor for policy expertise at the state and local levels, the Alliance is the leader in promoting the arts in schools and enriching the lives of children, families and communities.

Purpose of a Vision Framework

The Vision Framework represents the Alliance's vision, its desired outcomes in the classroom, its success indicators, and the broad areas of policy and practice that the Alliance will advocate for and promote. The Alliance's Policy Council, composed of allied partners from education, business, arts and parent organizations, develops the Vision Framework. The Vision Framework informs the annual Strategic Priorities, which are also developed by the Policy Council. By engaging a broad cross section of stakeholders, the Alliance will identify the most pressing issues and concerns facing arts education at the state and local levels.

II. THE VISION FRAMEWORK

The Vision Framework contains the following elements:

- A. The vision of the Alliance
- B. Expected outcomes for students
- C. Success indicators tied to those outcomes

A. The Vision of the Alliance

The California Alliance for Arts Education believes that every student should have access to the benefits of a quality arts education. The visual and performing arts have a unique ability to communicate the ideas and emotions of the human spirit and connect us to our history, democratic traditions, heritage and culture. They foster creativity and imagination, the hallmarks of life in the 21st Century. Integrating the arts throughout the core curricular areas deepens a student's understanding of the subject and promotes critical thinking and collaborative skills. The arts bring moments of joy, of creative self-expression, of an intensely engaging learning

experience - moments that are all too rare in our public schools today. But these moments are essential to a quality education and a purposeful life. Beyond the classroom, the arts engender humanity, citizenship and other qualities, which contribute to the vitality of communities and enrichment of the larger world.

The Alliance believes that every student pre K-12 should have access to a quality education, one that includes the arts. The disciplines that comprise a comprehensive arts education -- dance, music, theatre and visual arts -- are crucial to preparing all children for success. A systematic, substantive and sequential visual and performing arts curriculum taught by well-prepared credentialed teachers addresses and develops ways of thinking, questioning, and learning that complement learning in other core subjects -- but which is unique in what it has to offer.

In pre-school, students need to be immersed in active and playful learning that takes advantage of movement, song, play, paint and drama. In elementary school, students need to gain foundational skills in all the arts. Classroom teachers should also integrate the study of art works, skills, and knowledge to connect, animate, and deepen learning of important concepts and big ideas. In middle school, students should continue to sample deeper learning in several arts disciplines, as they begin to embrace one arts discipline for specialized study. In high school, students should follow a sequence of courses that move towards advanced levels of academic, creative, and technical skills and abilities. Teaching and learning should be enriched by strategic use of community arts resources, such as visits to a local museum or classroom collaborations with visiting teaching artists.

B. Expected Outcomes for Students

In fulfilling this vision, the Alliance expects to see these outcomes for students:

- All pre-K and elementary students learn the fundamentals of dance, music, theatre, and the visual arts, as guided by California's content standards for the visual and performing arts. In middle and high school, students participate in one or more of the art forms for advanced, sequential learning through graduation.
- Students and teachers conduct and engage in arts studies that make authentic and balanced connections to other academic disciplines. Arts instruction draws these connections, just as teachers of other subjects utilize the arts to deepen instruction and learning across the curriculum.

C. Success Indicators

Success in achieving this Vision Framework is measured in the following ways:

- School districts set a clear expectation that an education in the arts is essential to achieve their overall goals for student success.
- Districts support the implementation of the California Academic Content Standards for the Visual and Performing Arts and the Visual and Performing Arts Framework.
- Districts provide the resources that allow arts programs to flourish.
- Arts education is an explicit factor in the evaluation of school-wide and principal performance. The arts are valued as "core" curriculum and not optional electives or enrichment programs.

- Credentialed arts educators and well-prepared classroom teachers are available to all elementary schools to provide discrete instruction in the arts and quality arts integration.
- Graduates from high school shall have mastered a sequence of courses in at least one arts discipline.
- California ensures all school districts have sufficient funding to provide a well-rounded education for all students.
- Teaching and learning are enriched by strategic use of community arts resources, such as visits to a local museum or classroom collaborations with visiting teaching artists.