Arts are Here to Help [Your Community’s] Students

The effects of COVID-19 reverberate through all of our lives, as communities across our state, and nation, suffer devastating consequences. Our students are at the center of this crisis – facing everything from obstacles to learning, increased homelessness, food shortages and increased mental health challenges. **Our students and community need to heal, and arts education is necessary to the solution.**

We know the economic devastation caused by COVID-19 is translating to hard decisions for our schools. Whether through virtual or physical classrooms, providing a comprehensive arts education is required by the California Education Code and integral to both the academic and overall success of our students.

Multiple studies show **arts education not only decreases feelings of anxiety, depression, and isolation, but also positively impacts all-around academic performance**. The arts are essential to our students as they process their present and futures.

**[We suggest you personalize a section based on the threat level to your community]**

* **If you know that the arts are threatened by cuts, communicate cuts and actionable items so community members can join you**
* **If you don’t know yet what the cuts are, make it clear that arts are critical and should not be cut disproportionally**
* **Include examples of students/teachers/community members using the arts during Safer at Home order**
* **Include photos and/or images (with appropriate permissions)**

Decisions about how to ensure all students receive the arts education they need and deserve happens at the local level and you, the voter, have the power to make your voice heard. I encourage you to join me in expressing support for our students’ learning at our local school board meetings. The California Alliance for Arts Education is providing a toolkit with helpful resources for getting involved and it is free on their website: artsed411.org. Now is the time for our community to make our values clear and make sure the next generation is not left behind.

\*Refer to Alliance’s Talking Points for additional content