



School district administrators try to find ways to fund art

Office of Education holds free workshop in partnership with the California Alliance for Arts Education

TULARE COUNTY — Local school district administrators love arts education so much they'll be spending their Valentine's Day learning how to pay for it.

The Tulare County Office of Education is holding a free workshop on funding the arts from 11:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. on Wednesday, Feb. 14 at the Tulare County Office of Education, located at 7000 W. Doe Ave. in Visalia. The event is not open to the public.

This workshop is part of the Tulare County Office of Education's ongoing local arts education renaissance. Currently, the organization is partnering with the California Alliance for Arts Education, and the William F. and Flora Hewlett Foundation to develop the county's first strategic arts education plan, Arts Learning in Action. This landmark project is aimed at uniting schools, families, and community stakeholders such as business and industry partners, in support of a high-quality arts education for every student, every day. The objective of the Arts Learning in Action campaign is to raise awareness among state, county and local elected officials about the essential value of arts education in our schools.

Administrators in attendance will build knowledge about how their state and federal funding streams can be utilized in support of arts education. Dr. Laura Smyth, director of the California Alliance for Arts Education's Title I Initiative will be the guest facilitator for this training. In addition, representatives from the California Department of Education will share valuable resources and updates.

Research shows that the arts are a critical link in student success. Arts education is linked to higher test scores across all subjects, as well as lower dropout rates. It fosters creativity and imagination, hallmarks of careers in the 21st century. Beyond the classroom, the arts are shown to nurture collaboration and civic engagement in young people.

Our community believes we can demonstrate the value of arts education for our children by inviting decision-makers and elected officials into our classrooms to experience learning in the arts first-hand. Spearheaded by the California Alliance for Arts Education, the project is part of a grassroots effort to bring back the arts to California's students.

The California Alliance for Arts Education is in its fourth decade of building a brighter future for the state by making the arts a core part of every child's education. Representing a coalition of educators, art-smart parents, administrators, policymakers, business leaders and arts and community organizations, the alliance advocates for quality arts education for all students in California K-12 public schools. To read about how arts education contributes to higher test scores and reduces truancy and dropout rates, visit the alliance's web site: www.artsed411.org. Read about the alliance's Title I policy work at www.title1arts.org.