



Funding for Arts Education in California

1. Although it has been nearly 30 years since the passage of Proposition 13—which cut local tax revenues for public schools and virtually eliminated arts programs—schools are still struggling to find a place in their budgets for the arts.
2. A 1997 study in Santa Clara County and a 2001 study in Los Angeles County both found that most local school districts allocated less than 2% of their annual budget to arts education.
3. While limited in number, most of the California districts that are working toward standards-based, systemic arts education programs rely heavily upon special initiatives funded by private or federal grants. In 2003, the top 10 foundations in the San Francisco Bay Area invested \$14.3 million in arts education, with 47.4% dedicated to children and youth.
4. From 1999 through 2004, the California Department of Education administered a \$6 million competitive grant program, Arts Work. Over 4 years, this program reached 47 of the 48 counties and 6 million students, and supported planning, implementation, and assessment of standards-based arts education programs. During 2004-06 California had no dedicated source of state funding for arts education.
5. The budget for 2006-07 included \$105 million in Proposition 98 General Funds for an ongoing Arts and Music Block Grant program. These funds were distributed to school districts, charter schools and county offices of education (programs) to support standards aligned instruction in kindergarten through grade twelve. It was the intent of the Governor and Legislature that these funds supplement, and not supplant, existing resources for the visual and performing arts (dance, music, theatre and visual arts).
6. The allocation was based on an equal amount per pupil or school size, with a minimum of \$2,500 for school sites with twenty or fewer students and a minimum of \$4,000 per site with more than twenty students.
7. In 2009 local school districts were granted “flexibility” with this funding, allowing them to spend the categorical funding on whatever priorities were considered essential at the local level.
8. The Alliance advocates that the Art and Music Block Grant program should be protected. For all students to have equitable access to arts education, districts and schools must be held publicly accountable for the quality and scope of arts education provided to their students. Local control must be tied to defined state outcomes for arts education learning.