



WEST CONTRA COSTA UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

RESOLUTION ADOPTING THE DECLARATION OF EQUITY IN ARTS LEARNING

Resolution Number: 20-1920

The Declaration of the Rights of All Students to Equity in Arts Learning outlines each student’s right to have access to high-quality public arts education, regardless of their background, culture, language or geographic location.

By signing this Declaration our district commits, over the next five years, to:

- *Prioritize expanding access for ALL students to high-quality public arts education;*
- *Develop a strategic arts plan in collaboration with youth and educators; and*
- *Show progress in overall student participation in the arts, as demonstrated in arts education data.*
- *Develop a yearly evaluation on where we are on the implementation of this declaration.*

Resolution to Adopt the Declaration of the Rights of All Students to Equity in Arts Learning

WHEREAS, the West Contra Costa Unified School District Board of Education acknowledges that arts learning – which includes dance, music, theatre, and visual and media arts – is an essential part of a comprehensive education for all students, pre-K-12, to prepare them for college, career and life.

WHEREAS, arts learning promotes critical thinking and problem-solving skills, it’s a tool for identity exploration and healing, supports overall academic achievement and nurtures skills that help all students in the West Contra Costa Unified School District succeed in school and in life.

WHEREAS, the West Contra Costa Unified School District Board of Education recognizes that particular groups of students experience significant barriers to access and at times system of oppression, participation and success in arts learning and that these barriers are directly linked to historical, persistent and pervasive inequities in our educational system.

WHEREAS, most students in the West Contra Costa Unified School District benefit from art, music, theatre and other enrichment activities as a way to heal and deal with trauma and or other outside issues that might affect their learning.

WHEREAS, we do adopt this declaration as follows:

Declaration of the Rights of All Students to Equity in Arts Learning

1. The right to equitable access to pre-K-12 free, coherent and sequential standards-based arts learning that is part of the core curriculum with feedback from youth and teachers and that provides both integrated and discrete visual and performing arts learning opportunities; and the right to equitable outcomes as a result of this access, without distinction on account of race, culture, language, religion, national origin, geographical location or legal status.

Every student in the West Contra Costa Unified School District has an equal right to participate, enroll and succeed in high-quality courses in all the arts disciplines as part of their basic education, regardless of their background, culture, language or place of residence.

2. The right to special protection for every student's artistic and aesthetic development. The right to protection from policies and practices that exclude or preclude certain students or populations from equitable access to and success in powerful and coherent arts learning pre-K-12.

All students have the same right to fully develop their creative potential at every grade level and to not be excluded for any reason.

3. The right to arts learning that is culturally and linguistically responsive and relevant, with particular attention to those populations that have traditionally been excluded or precluded, such as English Learners, students of color, foster youth, homeless youth, students in poverty, migrant students and special needs students.

It is important to note that systemic barriers exist for student groups mentioned above which will have to be looked into as they appear and the West Contra Costa Unified School District will have to support students overcome them so that they may participate in the same rights to art learning.

All students have the right to engage in arts education that reflects, respects and builds on their culture, language and background.

4. The right to arts learning programs in every school, district and community that are funded and supported with the necessary resources – including qualified administrators, teachers, teaching artists and other staff; adequate materials; **appropriate time allocation within the learning days**; and appropriate facilities, and confidentiality of students – to support powerful culturally and linguistically responsive arts learning.

All students have the right to receive the resources they need to be successful in their arts studies in dance, music, theatre, and media and visual arts, including the right supplies and facilities and especially qualified teachers and curriculum that honors all cultures and languages.

5. The right to educators, leaders and parents/community who are knowledgeable about the intrinsic and extrinsic benefits of arts learning for individual students, families/communities, the nation and global society.

All students have the right to be supported by leaders in their community and school who understand the benefits of an arts education to prepare them for college, career and life.

6. The right to be brought up in school and community environments that value and protect the arts and equity as essential to the full development of every student and that demonstrate those values/beliefs in their public policies, public showcasing and practices.

All students have the right to learn and practice the arts in a positive environment where everyone understands and acts on the knowledge that they are engaging in valuable and important work.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the West Contra Costa Unified School District Board of Education recognizes the powerful impact that an arts curriculum has in the cognitive and social development of students and its role as an essential component of a comprehensive education;

THEREFORE, BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the West Contra Costa Unified School District Board of Education adopts this Declaration and commits to taking the following actions:

- Post the Arts Equity District badge on the district’s website and social media channels.
- Promote arts learning that honors all cultures and languages by developing staff capacities, identifying community resources and creating opportunities for students to contribute to the design of their learning.
- Support growing communication of art programs throughout WCCUSD by the communications department through information sharing to families and students.
- All staff members to encourage students to participate in visual and performing arts courses that will help promote academic achievement, express creativity and support social development.
- Review our district’s secondary-level schools data in [the California Arts Education Data Project](#) to analyze and understand where we currently stand and report the findings at a future board meeting with support/feedback by students, teachers, and staff.
- Use the Data Project findings to update the West Contra Costa Unified School Districts’ strategic arts plan yearly that will help our district achieve and fulfill the Declaration of the Rights of All Students to Equity in Arts Learning.
- Providing support to site administrators and encourage staff to utilize site funds to promote art, music, and other enrichment activities, while collecting data on current programs and needs by all our schools with enrichment classes.
- Dedicate appropriate resources – such as utilizing academic materials that align with state standards including instruments, providing professional development to educators in both primary and secondary settings, take a closer look at the facilities with correct class sizes that allow our students to participate in visual and performing arts learning.
- Utilizing grant incentives offered by philanthropy in order to pursue supplies for teachers and students.
- Provide the Board of Education a yearly report on the progress of implementation of arts in our schools including recognition of the positive things we’re doing and the things we need to improve on.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the West Contra Costa Unified School District Governing Board adopt the Declaration of Equity in Arts Learning.

PASSED AND ADOPTED THIS 7th day of August, 2019 at a regular Board of Education meeting, by the following vote:

AYES: _____ NOES: _____ ABSENT: _____ ABSTAIN: _____

Attest:

President