

Introduction to The California Arts Standards

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Tulare County
Office of Education
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Introduction to the California Arts Standards

Dance, Media Arts, Music, Theatre, Visual Arts

“A bird doesn’t sing because it has an answer, it sings because it has a song.”
-Maya Angelou (1928–2014), American author, poet, singer, Civil Rights advocate, and recipient of the Presidential Medal of Freedom

The California Arts Standards provide guidance toward a common goal: for all California students to fully participate in a rich and well-rounded arts education. An arts education helps children and youth make sense of the world, communicate their unique ideas across boundaries, and discover who they are as individuals and as members of various groups. Students who experience a quality arts education, one that seeks to honor the aesthetic and enduring over the efficient, have an opportunity to engage in complex and nuanced thinking around meaningful work¹.

Because a sequential arts education, as core subject matter, is essential for every California student from the earliest years through high school graduation and beyond. California *Education Code* requires arts courses of study to be offered to all California students.

Figure 1: California Education Code and Arts Education

Education Code Section 51210

(a) The adopted course of study for grades 1 to 6, inclusive, shall include instruction, beginning in grade 1 and continuing through grade 6, in the following areas of study... (5) Visual and performing arts, including instruction in the subjects of dance, music, theatre, and visual arts, aimed at the development of aesthetic appreciation and the skills of creative expression.

Education Code Section 51220

The adopted course of study for grades 7 to 12, inclusive, shall offer courses in the following areas of study: ... (g) Visual and performing arts, including dance, music, theatre, and visual arts, with emphasis upon development of aesthetic appreciation and the skills of creative expression.

Creating and experiencing art is central to the human experience; art allows people to feel and express the range of human emotions and connects people to one another and to their local and global communities. For many, an arts education is only the beginning of a lifelong appreciation of the arts and an enduring sensitivity to the way the arts enrich lives.

In addition to acknowledging arts education as crucial in and of itself, many researchers and educators extol the virtues of arts education as extending beyond creativity and artistic literacy to have a beneficial effect in other areas. Arts education boosts school attendance, academic achievement, and college going rates; improves school climate; and promotes higher self-esteem, connectedness to school, and social–emotional development².

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The benefits to students of an arts education extend well beyond school into every post-secondary endeavor: vocational, avocational, and personal. The arts also have a robust economic grounding in California. With over \$400 billion in economic output, the impacts of the creative economy are substantial³. Quality arts programs are built on arts standards, which guide the design of curriculum, instruction, and assessment. This guidance promotes student development of the creative capacities necessary for college, careers, and life in the 21st century. Quality, standards-based arts programs in California's public schools are essential for ensuring that all students have opportunities to fulfill their potential, including as successful artists and/or creative leaders in the creative economy locally, nationally and internationally.

Purposes and Development of the Standards

The central purposes of the California Arts Standards are to foster students' artistic competencies; cultivate their appreciation and understanding of the arts in ways that are enjoyable, fulfilling, and transferable to personal, academic, and professional endeavors; and support them to fully engage in lifelong arts learning. The standards are:

- Process-oriented, grade-appropriate indicators of what students need to know and be able to do.
- Student-centered and rooted in backward design, the process of defining intended outcomes prior to designing educational experiences to ensure students attain those outcomes.
- Outcomes-based, communicating high and achievable goals.

The standards are based on the National Core Arts Standards (NCAS)⁴ and were tailored for the California context through a collaborative and public state-wide process. The California Arts Standards Advisory Committee, comprised of arts education teachers and experts from across the state, reviewed the NCAS using guidelines established by the California State Board of Education⁵ and came to consensus on recommended revisions or additions. During this process, ensuring inclusivity, accessibility, and cultural relevance for the diverse learners of California was prioritized. Draft standards documents were posted publicly, and input from individuals and representatives from arts education organizations and the general public was collected through the process of public comment and review and used to inform the crafting of the final standards documents.

While the new standards inform teaching and learning in the artistic disciplines of dance, music, theatre, and visual arts, they also reflect the significance of new standards for media arts. Media arts standards are intended to address the diverse forms and categories of media arts as a distinct, stand-alone discipline, including photography, digital imaging, video, animation, sound production, web design, graphic design, virtual design, interactive design, multimedia, virtual reality, and emerging forms. Media arts standards are also intended to be used in other disciplines.

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The California Arts Standards are comprehensive for all students in prekindergarten through grade twelve. The standards build from grade to grade and embody grade- and age-appropriate key concepts, processes, and traditions of study in each of the five artistic disciplines: dance, media arts, music, theatre, and visual arts. They provide important guidance for schools to design and organize teaching and learning; understand and evaluate student learning; and prepare, adopt, or adapt instructional resources. The standards identify the learning outcomes for all students, and they guide teachers to provide a unified quality arts education so that these outcomes are achieved.

The standards also provide administrators and district decision-makers with critical information for developing and expanding standards-based arts programs. A commitment to a comprehensive education, equitable opportunities, and high expectations are embedded within the standards.

Philosophical Foundations and Lifelong Goals of the Standards

The standards are grounded in the NCAS vision of artistic literacy—the knowledge and understanding required to participate authentically in the arts—which is further articulated in the philosophical foundations and life-long goals in Figure 2. Fluency in the language(s) of the arts is the ability to create, perform/produce/present, respond, and connect through symbolic and metaphoric forms that are unique to the arts. An artistically literate person is able to transfer arts knowledge, skills, and capacities to other subjects, settings, and contexts (NCAS, p. 17).

Figure 2: Philosophical Foundations and Lifelong Goals⁶

The Arts as Communication	
Philosophical Foundations	Lifelong Goals
In today’s multimedia society, the arts are the media, and therefore provide powerful and essential means of communication. The arts provide unique symbol systems and metaphors that convey and inform life experience (i.e., the arts are ways of knowing).	Artistically literate citizens use a variety of artistic media, symbols, and metaphors to independently create and perform work that expresses and communicates their own ideas and are able to respond by analyzing and interpreting the artistic communications of others.
The Arts as Creative Personal Realization	
Philosophical Foundations	Lifelong Goals
Participation in each of the arts as creators, performers, and audience members (responders) enables individuals to discover and develop their own creative capacity, thereby providing a source of lifelong satisfaction.	Artistically literate citizens find at least one arts discipline in which they develop sufficient competence to continue active involvement in creating, performing, and responding to art as an adult.

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The Arts as Culture, History, and Connectors

Philosophical Foundations	Lifelong Goals
Throughout history the arts have provided essential means for individuals and communities to express their ideas, experiences, feelings, and deepest beliefs. Each discipline shares common goals but approaches them through distinct media and techniques. Understanding artwork provides insights into individuals’ own and others’ cultures and societies, while also providing opportunities to access, express, and integrate meaning across a variety of content areas.	Artistically literate citizens know and understand artwork from varied historical periods and cultures, and actively seek and appreciate diverse forms and genres of artwork of enduring quality/significance. They also seek to understand relationships among the arts, and cultivate habits of searching for and identifying patterns, relationships between the arts and other knowledge.

The Arts as Means to Wellbeing

Philosophical Foundations	Lifelong Goals
Participation in the arts as creators, performers, and audience members (responders) enhances mental, physical, and emotional wellbeing.	Artistically literate citizens find joy, inspiration, peace, intellectual stimulation, meaning, and other life-enhancing qualities through participation in all of the arts.

The Arts as Community Engagement

Philosophical Foundations	Lifelong Goals
The arts provide means for individuals to collaborate and connect with others in an enjoyable inclusive environment as they create, prepare, and share artwork that bring communities together.	Artistically literate citizens seek artistic experiences and support the arts in their local, state, national, and global communities.

The Arts as Profession

Philosophical Foundations	Lifelong Goals
Professional artists weave the cultural and aesthetic fabric of communities and cultivate beauty, enjoyment, curiosity, awareness, activism, and personal, social, and cultural connection and reflection. This fabric strengthens communities as a whole, enhances the lives of individuals, and inspires the global community.	Artistically literate citizens appreciate the value of supporting the arts as a profession by engaging with the arts and by supporting the funding of the arts. Some artistically literate individuals will pursue a career in the arts, thereby enriching local, state, national, and global communities and economies.

Organization of the Standards

The California Arts Standards are organized by the **five artistic disciplines of dance, media arts, music, theatre, and visual arts**. For each of the five disciplines, there are four artistic processes, eleven anchor standards with aligned enduring understandings and essential questions, and

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individual PK–12 student performance standards that are articulated as measurable and attainable learning targets.

Elements of the California Arts Standards

Figure 3 provides a unified view of the California Arts Standards for the five artistic disciplines. The figure shows the relationship among the elements of the standards. These elements, considered together, will assist local education agencies and individual schools in writing, adapting, or adopting curriculum and in addressing comprehensive assessment in arts education.

Figure 3: Elements of the California Arts Standards⁷

Four Artistic Processes	Eleven Anchor Standards	Enduring Understandings and Process Components	Discipline-Specific Performance Standards
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creating • Performing (for Dance, Music, and Theatre), Presenting (for Visual Arts), or Producing (for Media Arts) • Responding • Connecting 	11 anchor standards: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describe expectations for general behaviors, artistic skills, and habits of mind • Parallel across the artistic disciplines 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enduring understandings with related essential questions to guide student inquiry • Process components that operationalize the standards 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PK–Grade 8 • High School <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Proficient ○ Accomplished ○ Advanced

Implementation of the standards is driven by the philosophical foundations and lifelong goals that together demonstrate artistic literacy (see Figure 2.) They are made actionable through the artistic processes that are common across disciplines. Anchor and performance standards in each artistic discipline are driven by enduring understandings and essential questions. A more detailed description of each of these elements and how they connect to one another follows.

Artistic Processes and Anchor Standards⁸

The standards are based on the **artistic processes of creating; performing/producing/presenting; responding; and connecting**. These artistic processes are the cognitive and physical actions by which arts learning and making are realized. Each of the arts disciplines incorporates the artistic processes which define and organize the link between the art and the learner.

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Each artistic process branches into either two or three **anchor standards**. Anchor standards describe the general behaviors, artistic skills and habits of mind that teachers expect students to demonstrate throughout their education in the arts. These anchor standards are parallel across arts disciplines and grade levels and serve as the tangible educational expression of artistic literacy. The performance standards, which describe student learning outcomes in each of the specific arts disciplines, align with anchor standards.

Collectively, the design reflects a cohesive system that allows for commonality across the disciplines and specificity within each discipline, therefore establishing the appropriate level of breadth and depth required for state standards⁹. The relationship between the artistic processes and anchor standards is shown in Figure 4.

Figure 4: California Arts Standards Artistic Processes and Anchor Standards¹⁰

Artistic Processes	Anchor Standards: Students will...
Creating <i>Conceiving and developing new artistic ideas and work.</i>	1. Generate and conceptualize artistic ideas and work. 2. Organize and develop artistic ideas and work. 3. Refine and complete artistic work.
Performing <i>(dance, music, theatre)</i> <i>Realizing artistic ideas and work through interpretation and presentation.</i> Presenting <i>(visual arts)</i> <i>Interpreting and sharing artistic work.</i> Producing <i>(media arts)</i> <i>Realizing and presenting artistic ideas and work.</i>	4. Analyze, interpret, and select artistic work for presentation. 5. Develop and refine artistic work for presentation. 6. Convey meaning through the presentation of artistic work.
Responding <i>Understanding and evaluating how the arts convey meaning.</i>	7. Perceive and analyze artistic work. 8. Interpret intent and meaning in artistic work. 9. Apply criteria to evaluate artistic work.
Connecting <i>Relating artistic ideas and work with personal meaning and external context.</i>	10. Synthesize and relate knowledge and personal experiences to make art. 11. Relate artistic ideas and works with societal, cultural and historical context to deepen understanding.

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Enduring Understandings, Essential Questions, and Process Components¹¹

Enduring understandings and essential questions focus on the big ideas and important understandings in arts education (Wiggins and McTighe, 2005)¹². Essential questions and enduring understandings work together to support an inquiry-based approach to arts education, an approach emphasized in college and career ready standards across all the content areas.

Enduring understandings are statements summarizing important ideas and core processes that are central to a discipline and have lasting value beyond the classroom. They synthesize what students should come to understand as a result of studying a particular content area.

Moreover, they articulate what students should value about the content area over the course of their lifetimes. Enduring understandings also enable students to make connections to other disciplines beyond the arts. A true grasp of an enduring understanding is demonstrated by the student’s ability to explain, interpret, analyze, apply, and evaluate its core elements. Examples of enduring understandings across the arts disciplines for one artistic process and one anchor standard are shown in Figure 5. **Essential questions** guide students’ inquiry into these enduring understandings. Reflecting differences in traditions and instructional practices between the arts, the specific enduring understandings and essential questions addressed by their standards also vary somewhat¹³.

Figure 5: Enduring Understanding Across One Artistic Process and Anchor Standard

Creating—Anchor Standard 1: Generate and conceptualize artistic ideas and work.

Dance	Media Arts	Music	Theatre	Visual Arts
Choreographers use a variety of sources as inspiration and transform concepts and ideas into movement for artistic expression.	Media arts ideas, works, and processes are shaped by the imagination, creative processes, and by experiences, both within and outside of the arts.	The creative ideas, concepts, and feelings that influence musicians’ work emerge from a variety of sources.	Theatre artists rely on intuition, curiosity, and critical inquiry.	Creativity and innovative thinking are essential life skills that can be developed.

Enduring understandings and essential questions work together to communicate a fundamental understanding and path of inquiry of an anchor standard. Students’ inquiry into grade appropriate essential questions and grasp of enduring understandings will, however, necessarily deepen and broaden over the course of their arts education.

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Process components are the actions (expressed through verbs such as imagine, plan and make, evaluate, refine, present) that artists carry out as they complete each artistic process. These process components accompany clusters of performance standards. Students’ ability to carry out these actions empowers them to engage in the artistic process independently¹⁴.

Performance standards are the substantive portion of the California Arts Standards. They are discipline-specific (dance, media arts, music, theatre, visual arts), grade-by-grade articulations of student achievement in the arts PK–8 and at three proficiency levels in high school (Proficient, Accomplished, and Advanced, as described in Figure 6). The performance standards translate the anchor standards, enduring understandings, and essential questions into measurable learning goals by describing more specifically what students should know and be able to do in each arts discipline by the end of a school year or course.

The three high school proficiency levels are flexible enough to accommodate varying degrees of achievement by students during high school, including those who explore a wide range of artistic pursuits and experiences, as well as those who build on their PK–8 foundation by pursuing deeper engagement in one arts discipline.¹⁵ Descriptions of the three high school proficiency levels and what students who achieve those levels are able to do is shown in Figure 6.

Figure 6: High School Performance Standards Proficiency Levels¹⁶

High School Proficient	High School Accomplished	High School Advanced
A level of achievement attainable by most students who complete a high- school level course in the arts (or equivalent) beyond the foundation of quality PK–8 instruction.	A level of achievement attainable by most students who complete a rigorous sequence of high-school level courses (or equivalent) beyond the Proficient level.	A level and scope of achievement that significantly exceeds the Accomplished level. Achievement at this level is indisputably rigorous and substantially expands students’ knowledge, skills, and understandings beyond the expectations articulated for Accomplished achievement.

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High School Proficient	High School Accomplished	High School Advanced
<p>Students at the Proficient level are able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • use foundational technical and expressive skills and understandings in an art form necessary to solve assigned problems or prepare assigned repertoire for presentation; • make appropriate choices with some support; • be prepared for active engagement in their community; • understand the art form to be an important form of personal realization and wellbeing; and • make connections between the art form, history, culture and other learning. 	<p>Students at the Accomplished level are—with minimal assistance—able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • identify or solve arts problems based on their interests or for a particular purpose; • conduct research to inform artistic decisions; • create and refine arts products, performances, or presentations that demonstrate technical proficiency, personal communication and expression; • use the art form for personal realization and wellbeing; and • participate in arts activity beyond the school environment. 	<p>Students at the Advanced level are able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • independently identify challenging arts problems based on their interests or for specific purposes and bring creativity and insight to finding artistic solutions; • use at least one art form as an effective avenue for personal communication, demonstrating a higher level of technical and expressive proficiency characteristic of honors or college level work; • exploit their personal strengths and apply strategies to overcome personal challenges as arts learners; and • take a leadership role in arts activity within and beyond the school environment.

Special Considerations for the Music Standards

Unlike the other four artistic disciplines, which provide performance standards for grades PK-12, music provides standards for grades PK–8 plus four distinct “strands” of standards, reflecting the increasing variety of music courses offered in schools:

- Ensembles
- Harmonizing Instruments
- Composition and Theory
- Technology

Two of these strands, Composition and Theory and Music Technology, have three proficiency levels (Proficient, Accomplished, Advanced) and are designed for use in high schools.

The other two strands, Ensembles and Harmonizing Instruments, encompass five proficiency levels and are used by elementary, middle, and high schools. In acknowledgement of the practical reality of music students’ involvement in Ensemble and Harmonizing Instrument

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classes before they enter high school, performance standards are provided for two preparatory levels in these strands. These are attached for convenience to grade levels, but are potentially useful for earlier level experiences:

1. **Novice:** This proficiency level is nominally assigned to the fifth-grade level. Students at the Novice level have started specialization in an art form of their choice. They are beginning to develop the basic artistic understanding and technique necessary to advance their skill level. Their expressive skills may be identified and exploratory work begins. They may participate in presentation and performance opportunities as they are able. Their curiosity in the art form begins their journey toward personal realization and wellbeing.
2. **Intermediate:** This proficiency level is nominally assigned to the eighth-grade level. Students at the Intermediate level are continuing study in a chosen specialized art form. Their development continues in artistic understanding and technical and expressive skills enabling the student to begin to independently and collaboratively create, perform, and respond at their given skill level. Their presentation and performance opportunities in ensembles at school and in the community increase and students actively participate in rehearsals. Through continued study of their art form they continue their journey toward personal realization and wellbeing.

The Five Artistic Disciplines

Each of the artistic disciplines—dance, media arts, music, theatre, and visual arts—is a core subject in its own right. Subject-centered arts instruction focuses on developing discipline-specific skills in each arts discipline. In addition, interdisciplinary approaches connecting the arts disciplines are facilitated by the way these connections are already built into the standards for the five artistic disciplines. Study and practice in two or more of the artistic disciplines is mutually reinforcing and demonstrates the underlying unity of the arts. Interdisciplinary approaches connecting the arts and other content areas enhances learning for students and supports integrated and deeper learning. A comprehensive arts education program has three components:

1. Subject-centered arts instruction in dance, media arts, music, theatre, and visual arts
2. Interdisciplinary approaches connecting the arts disciplines
3. Interdisciplinary approaches connecting the arts and other content areas

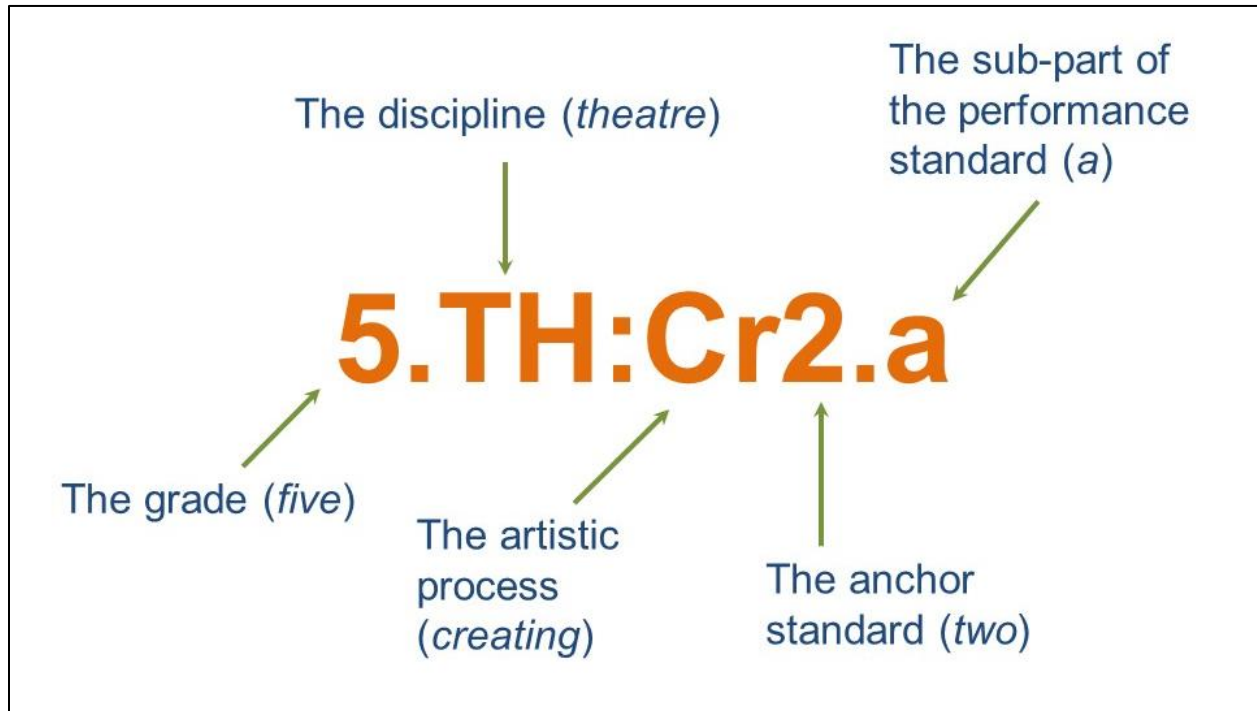
In order to enact a robust and comprehensive approach to arts education, an understanding of each artistic discipline is essential. Brief introductions preceding each set of standards provide an overview that grounds the reading of the standards for each artistic discipline.

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Coding of the Standards

An agreed-upon system for coding allows educators to reference the performance standards more efficiently when planning lessons and units of study. The coding system of the performance standards is illustrated in Figure 7 and described below. The full code is located at the top of each column of the performance standards.

Figure 7: Coding of the California Arts Standards



The order of coding for the standards is provided below with the codes indicated in parentheses:

- (1) The **grade level** appears first and is divided into these categories: Pre–K (PK); Kindergarten (K); grades 1-8 (1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8); and the three proficiency levels for high school, which are Proficient (Prof), Accomplished (Acc) and Advanced (Adv).
- (2) The **artistic disciplines** appear second: Dance (DA), Media Arts (MA), Music (MU), Theatre (TH) and Visual Arts (VA)
- (3) The **artistic processes** appear third: Creating (Cr); Performing/ Producing/Presenting (Pr); Responding (Re); and Connecting Cn). Each of the arts disciplines incorporates these processes in some manner. These processes, the cognitive and physical actions by which arts learning and making are realized, define and organize the link between the art and the learner.
- (4) The **anchor standards** appear fourth. The eleven anchor standards, which describe the general knowledge and skills that teachers expect students to demonstrate throughout their education in the arts, are parallel across arts disciplines and grade levels. They serve as

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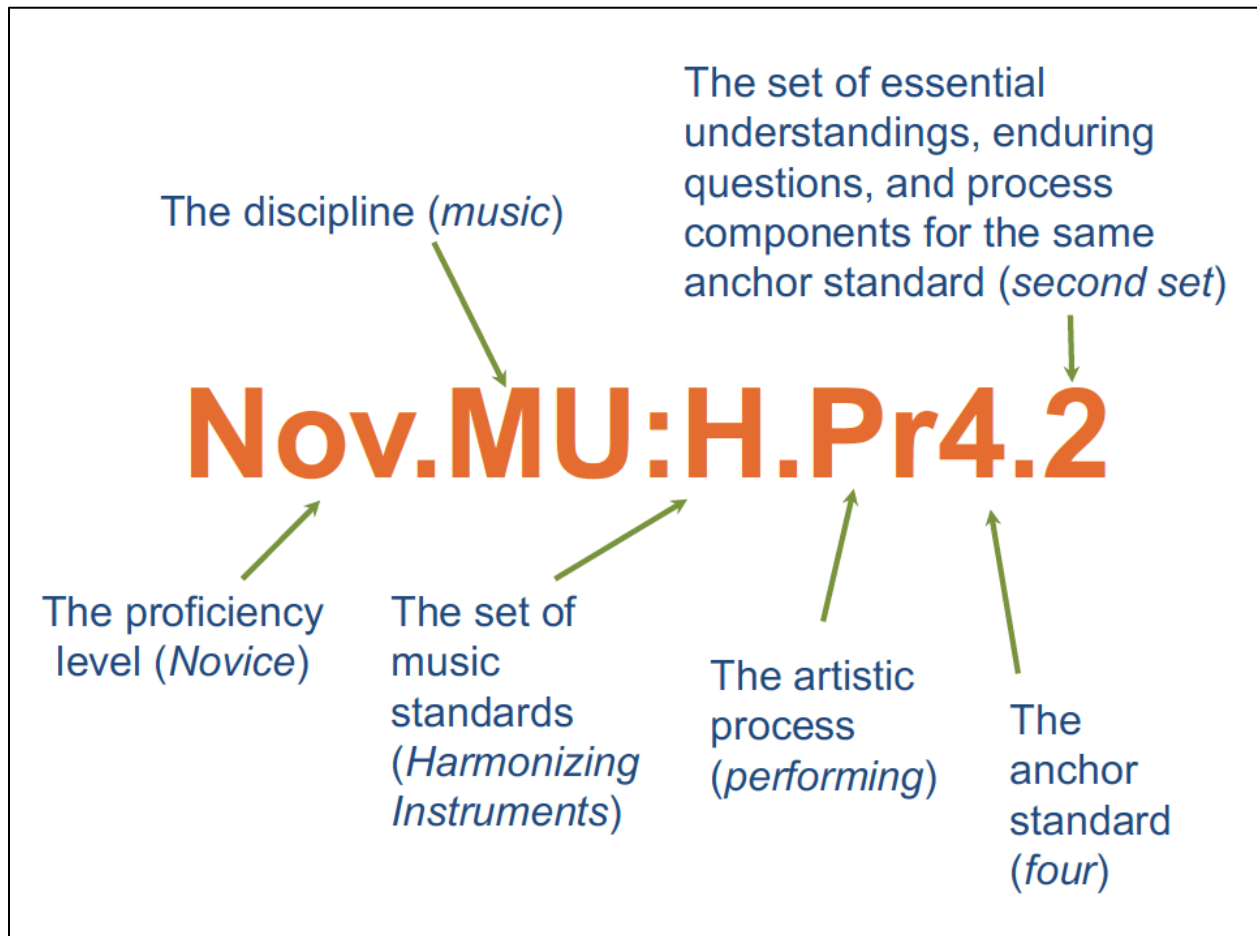
the tangible educational expression of artistic literacy. When an anchor standard has more than one set of enduring understandings, essential questions, and process components, numbers directly after the anchor standard indicate which set is provided (e.g., 1, 2, 3).

(5) The **sub-part of the performance standard** appears last. These sub-parts describe different aspects of the same standard.

Additional Codes for Music Standards

An example of the coding system for Music—Harmonizing Instruments is provided below.

Figure 8: Music Standards Coding Example



Unlike the other arts disciplines, there are five sets of performance standards for music. A one-letter code is added after the artistic discipline code for all but one set of the performance standards (PK-8) as follows: Harmonizing Instruments (H), Ensembles (E); Composition and Theory (C), Technology (T).

In addition, there are two additional levels for the Music Harmonizing performance standards, with the codes indicated in the parentheses:

- Novice (Nov), nominally assigned to the fifth grade level
- Intermediate (Int), nominally assigned to the eighth grade level

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How to Read the Standards

The performance standards are designed to be approached in holistic ways to design robust lessons within units of study. They are presented as grade level progressions by individual standard so that teachers can see not only their own grade level, but also the standards for previous grade levels and future ones. They can be read in a variety of ways, two of which are suggested here: grade-to-grade and within-grade.

- **Grade-to-grade Reading.** The standards can be read across grade levels as a progression. Since students have different levels of experience with a given discipline, the standards are organized across grade levels so that teachers can both attend to grade-level standards and also meet the individual needs of students who may be performing at levels above or below grade level.
- **Within-grade Reading.** The standards may also be read to understand the learning outcomes for a subset of standards in a specific grade level or all of the standards for a particular grade level. This reading allows teachers to see what all of the outcomes for their grade level are so that they can integrate standards as appropriate for lesson and unit learning goals.

Standards-Based, Accessible, and Equitable Arts Education

The California Arts Standards are designed to support all California students to develop and achieve the lifelong goals of artistic literacy and to promote access and equity in the arts. However, this can only happen in a context in which arts education is prioritized and standards-based and equitable practices are the norm. Individual schools and districts will need to strategically implement the standards within current allocations of time and resources even as they strive toward a fully inclusive and equitable arts education for all students.

Prioritizing a Standards-Based Arts Education

“I raise up my voice—not so I can shout but so that those without a voice can be heard...we cannot succeed when half of us are held back.”

-Malala Yousafzai (b. 1997), Pakistani activist for girls’ education and Nobel Prize Laureate

The arts are structural building blocks that support, inspire, and empower students to grow continuously. Focusing on the systems that ensure that all students have opportunities to learn in the arts is essential for ensuring equal access to the arts. In order for students to experience the potential benefits of standards-based quality arts learning, opportunity-to-learn conditions that create a rigorous and supportive learning environment must be established. These opportunities include systemic and structural resources, such as access to certified arts educators, expanded course offerings in the five arts disciplines, and adequate time, spaces, and materials for arts learning.

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Opportunities also happen in the daily encounters students have in school, when teachers approach the arts standards in a holistic way and consider their students to be whole artists who deserve everything a quality arts education has to offer and are capable of achieving high standards. Teachers and students must participate fully and jointly in activities in which they can exercise the creative practices of imagining, investigating, constructing, and reflecting as unique beings committed to giving meaning to their experiences. The California Arts Standards offer multiple entry points for these types of learning experiences, and additional guidance can be found in the NCAS “Opportunity to Learn” documents (available online at <http://www.nationalartsstandards.org/content/resources>), as well as the California Arts Education Framework (forthcoming).

Inclusive and Equitable Arts Education

California maintains a strong commitment to ensuring that each student experiences safe, welcoming, enriching, intellectually stimulating, and asset-oriented educational experiences in all disciplines, including the arts. The California Arts Standards reflect the diversity of California’s children and youth, including students who are culturally, ethnically, and linguistically diverse; identify as LGBTQ+¹⁷; have different talents, skills, and interests; have a variety of abilities and disabilities; and come from a range of personal backgrounds, socio-economic circumstances, and types of homes and communities. This diversity provides opportunities for teachers to enrich the arts education experience for all students. Students’ ethnic, cultural, linguistic, and other assets are to be acknowledged, validated, and valued in the arts classroom as rich foundations for arts learning. Students in California schools should encounter, discuss, and create art representing a vast array of cultures, languages, and identities as a means to better understand a wide range of experiences and perspectives and to develop global competence. Figure 8 offers a vision of culturally and linguistically sustaining arts education, one that aims to see all California students thrive in their artistic education.

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Figure 8: Inclusive, Affirming, and Culturally Sustaining Arts Education

An inclusive, affirming, and culturally sustaining arts education is based on a group's assets, rather than on perceptions of deficiencies, prioritizing the following tangible actions:

- “Promote the arts to teach and learn about self-knowledge, respect, self-respect, and empathy, as well as multicultural ways of knowing.
- Include instruction on diversity grounded in the arts and use cultural knowledge to support young people's critical thinking and creative innovation, particularly those students who do not find the curriculum engaging.
- Promote student voice as a primary focus of quality arts education. Adopt culturally and linguistically responsive arts education and arts integrated curricula that focus on positive identity development and ownership of learning as instructional goals. Support the cultural assets students bring to the classroom.
- Build collaboration among classroom teachers, arts specialists, teaching artists (practicing professional artists with the complementary teaching skills), families, and community members. By incorporating local cultural expertise and leadership, the schools become an integral part of the community, which generates more resources for students in and out of school.
- Strengthen communication between home and school cultures and increase family involvement by creating a welcoming school environment. Empower families, regardless of primary language, socioeconomic status, race, ethnicity, or educational background.”

Source: A Blueprint for Creative Schools (2015)¹⁸

Diversity in the arts classroom is an asset and the more diverse the classroom, the more complex the teacher's role becomes in providing quality learning experiences that are sensitive to the needs of individual students, that leverage their particular strengths, and that ensure equitable opportunity to participate in a quality arts education. Many students experience particular challenges that can affect their arts education. Some students are living in poverty, experiencing homelessness, or change schools or miss school often. Some students are learning English as an additional language while simultaneously learning rigorous academic content.¹⁹ Others face the mental and physical health trauma of racism, homophobia, or religious discrimination. Still others experience the daily challenges that come with mild, moderate, or severe disabilities or mental health issues. These populations are not mutually exclusive; many students' identities intersect with multiple groups. Therefore, it is important that arts education teachers inform themselves about aspects of their students' backgrounds and keep in mind that their identities may overlap, intersect, and interact. In such multifaceted settings, the notion of shared responsibility is critical. Teachers, administrators, specialists, expanded learning leaders, parents, guardians, caretakers, families, and the broader community need the support of one another to best serve all students and ensure that no student is deprived of a quality arts education due to individual circumstances.

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Universal Design for Learning

To succeed at enacting an inclusive, affirming, and culturally sustaining arts program, educators must deliberately design accessible learning experiences. Universal Design for Learning (UDL) is a research-based framework for improving student learning experiences and outcomes through careful instructional planning focused on the varied needs of all students, including students with disabilities, advanced and gifted learners, and English learners. The principles of UDL emphasize providing multiple means of representation, action and expression, and engagement and options for various cognitive, communicative, physical, meta-cognitive, and other means of participating in learning and assessment tasks. Through the UDL framework, and “teaching to the edges” of the arts classroom’s student population, the needs of all learners are identified and planned for at the point of first teaching. This evidence-based planning supports students’ full inclusion in arts learning, prevents the need for follow-up instruction, and reduces the need for alternative instruction. Figure 9 provides an outline of UDL Principles and Guidelines that arts education teachers can use to inform their curriculum, instruction, and assessment planning²⁰.

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Figure 9: Universal Design for Learning²¹

UDL Principles <i>Provide multiple means of...</i>	UDL Guidelines <i>Provide options for...</i>	Instructional Examples
<p>Representation</p> <p>Represent information in multiple formats and media.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Perception 2. Language, mathematical expressions, and symbols 3. Comprehension 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide transcripts, written descriptions, or Braille texts, or use American Sign Language to describe artworks, productions, compositions, or song lyrics. • Use music sign language interpretation or vibrations to facilitate broad experience of music • Provide illustrations, photos, simulations, or interactive graphics to illustrate artistic concepts. • Provide options for students to access information in their primary languages. • Guide information processing, visualization, and manipulation. For example, provide explicit prompts for each step in a sequential process, such as completing a video editing project.
<p>Action and Expression</p> <p>Provide multiple pathways for students' actions and expressions.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Physical action 2. Expression and communication 3. Executive functions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integrate assistive technologies. For example, have touch screens and alternative keyboards accessible for projects. • Provide concept mapping tools to support problem solving around arts education topics. • Provide success criteria for assignments, prompt learners to identify the type of feedback they seek, and provide them with protocols to provide peer feedback.
<p>Engagement</p> <p>Provide multiple ways to engage students' interests and motivation.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Recruiting interest 2. Effort and persistence 3. Self-regulation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Optimize individual choice and autonomy by providing learners choice in topics or the order in which they accomplish tasks. • Vary demands and resources to optimize challenge. For example, provide a range of culturally relevant resources, as well as resources that are of high interest to a range of learners. • Support students to develop self-awareness, assess their progress toward personal to goals, and to reflect on growth or how to improve.

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The Arts and Educating for Global Competency

According to the Asia Society and the Council of Chief State School Officers, and later officially adopted by the U.S. Department of Education, global competence is “the capacity and disposition to understand and act on issues of global significance.”²² Under this definition, the four pillars of global competence include investigating the world, weighing perspectives, communicating ideas, and taking action.²³ The pillars of global competence closely align with the four fundamental creative practices (imagination, investigation, construction, and reflection) which are a foundation for arts education in all of the disciplines, and foster finding innovative, unexpected approaches and solutions²⁴. In developing artistic literacy through a standards-based arts program, students also develop global competence, an outcome that embodies 21st century skills. These skills and other byproducts of arts education including social and emotional skills, and a healthy sense of self and others²⁵, are highly valued in today’s creative and team-based workforce and necessary for engagement in the 21st century world.

Beyond the Standards

Standards are measurable outcomes of aspirational teaching and learning experiences. In order to address the standards effectively and provide world class arts education to all students, teachers and administrators are encouraged to access additional resources, including the following:

- The Glossary of Terms for the California Arts Standards provides definitions which explain the context or point of view regarding the use of terms within the standards. The glossary contains only those terms that are highlighted in red in the standards themselves.
- The California Arts Framework (forthcoming) will provide guidance for how to implement the Standards for teachers and administrators.
- Instructional materials and curricular models (developed after the adoption of the California Arts Standards and Framework) will provide tools and resources for implementing a standards-based arts education.

All California students deserve a world-class arts education provided by well-prepared, caring, and creative teachers working in supportive contexts. The California Arts Standards are a critical component of this vision. Teachers, school and district leaders, families, community members, policy makers, and students themselves are encouraged to embrace the promise these standards hold for California and for a creative and fulfilling future for all. Today, the world needs artists and creative leaders more than ever, those individuals who possess the powers of inquiry and exploration, communication and collaboration, creativity and innovation, and openness and reflection. These standards play a pivotal role in ensuring that all students have an equitable opportunity to enrich the world with their creative capacities.

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Endnotes

¹ Eisner, E. (2002). *The Arts and the Creation of Mind*. New Haven; London: Yale University Press.

² Catterall, J. S. (2009). *“Doing well and doing good by doing art: A 12-year national study of education in the visual and performing arts: Effects on the achievements and values of young adults*. Los Angeles: Imagination Group/I-Group Books. Pepler, K.A., Powell, C. W., Thompson, N. & Catterall, J. S. (2014). “Positive Impact of Arts Integration on Student Academic Achievement in English Language Arts,” *The Educational Forum*, 78(4), 364-377. Park, S., Jong-

Min, L., Baik, Y., Kim, K., Jin Yun, H., Kwon, H., Jung, Y., & Kim, B.(2015). “A Preliminary Study of the Effects of an Arts Education Program on Executive Function, Behavior, and Brain Structure in a Sample of Nonclinical School-Aged Children,” *Journal of Child Neurology* 30(13), 1757–1766. Robinson, A. H. (2013). Arts Integration and the Success of Disadvantaged Students: A Research Evaluation. *Arts Education Policy Review*, 114(4), 191-204.

³ 2018 Otis Report on the Creative Economy. (n.d.). Retrieved June 25, 2018, from

<https://www.otis.edu/creative-economy>

⁴ The NCAS were developed by national experts, including those from California who also participated in the California adaptation of the national standards. To learn more about the national effort and NCAS development process, see the National Core Arts Standards: A Conceptual Framework for Arts Education, at

<http://www.nationalartsstandards.org/sites/default/files/Conceptual%20Framework%2007-21-16.pdf> on which this introduction to the California Arts Standards is based.

⁵ These guidelines were derived from public testimony from three state-wide focus groups.

⁶ Adapted from the NCAS Conceptual Framework, p. 10.

⁷ Adapted from the NCAS Conceptual Framework, p. 9.

⁸ Adapted from the NCAS Conceptual Framework, pp 11–12.

⁹ Because anchor standards are broad and not discipline or grade level/grade band specific, performance standards should be used for detailed instructional design.

¹⁰ From the NCAS Conceptual Framework, p. 13.

¹¹ Adapted from the NCAS Conceptual Framework, p. 14.

¹² Wiggins, Grant and Jay McTighe. 2005. *Understanding by Design*. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development

¹³ Note that because enduring understanding statements are specific to each artistic discipline, the language in the statements is not always parallel across the disciplines.

¹⁴ Adapted from the NCAS Conceptual Framework, p. 16.

¹⁵ Adapted from the NCAS Conceptual Framework, p. 13.

¹⁶ Adapted from the NCAS Conceptual Framework, Appendix A, p. 26.

¹⁷ The California Arts Standards uses LGBTQ+ as an inclusive acronym, as described in the 2018 California Health Education Framework: “The usage of LGBTQ+ throughout this document is intended to represent an inclusive and ever-changing spectrum and understanding of identities. Historically, the acronym included lesbian, gay, and bisexual, but has continued to

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expand to include queer, questioning, intersex, asexual, allies, and alternative identities (LGBTQQIAA), as well as expanding concepts that may fall under this umbrella term in the future.”

¹⁸ *A Blueprint for Creative Schools* (2015), pp. 8–9. This document, available online at <https://www.cde.ca.gov/eo/in/documents/bfcsreport.pdf>, was prepared under the direction of the CREATE CA coalition. This publication was edited by Janice Lowen Agee, WestEd, with the coordination and support of the Superintendent’s Initiatives Office at the California Department of Education. Funding for the report was provided by a generous grant from the California Arts Council.

¹⁹ For classrooms that include students identified as English learners, the California English Language Development (ELD) Standards (2012) should be used in tandem with the California Arts Standards.

²⁰ UDL principles and guidelines, as well as practical suggestions for classroom teaching and learning, can be found at the National Center for UDL (<http://www.udlcenter.org/>) and in the California Arts Education Framework (forthcoming).

²¹ Adapted from Source the CA Health Education Framework (draft, 2018)

²² Monthey, Wanda, Heather Singmaster, Jennifer Manise, and Kate Blosveren Kreamer, *Preparing a Globally Competent Workforce through High-Quality Career and Technical Education*. New York: Asia Society and Washington DC: Longview Foundation, 2016, p. xiii.

²³ Monthey, Wanda, Heather Singmaster, Jennifer Manise, and Kate Blosveren Kreamer, *Preparing a Globally Competent Workforce through High-Quality Career and Technical Education*. New York: Asia Society and Washington DC: Longview Foundation, 2016. Available online at <https://asiasociety.org/sites/default/files/preparing-a-globally-competent-workforce-june-2016.pdf>; Veronica Boix Mansilla and Anthony Jackson, *Educating for Global Competence: Preparing Our Youth to Engage the World* (New York: Asia Society and Washington, DC: CCSSO, 2011), <http://asiasociety.org/files/book-globalcompetence.pdf>; U.S. Department of Education, "Succeeding Globally Through International Education and Engagement: U.S. Department of Education International Strategy 2012-16," November 2012, p. 5, accessed February 1, 2013, <https://www.actfl.org/sites/default/files/reports/international-strategy-2012-16.pdf>.

²⁴ Adapted from the NCAS Conceptual Framework, p. 19.

²⁵ The College Board, *Child Development and Arts Education: A Review of Recent Research and Best Practices*, New York, N.Y., January 2012; Hanna, G. (2011). *The arts and human development: Framing a national research agenda for the arts, lifelong learning, and individual well-being*. Washington DC: National Endowment for the Arts. Retrieved from <https://www.arts.gov/sites/default/files/TheArtsAndHumanDev.pdf>; Israel, D. (2009). *Staying in school: Arts education and New York City high school graduation rates*. New York, NY: Center for Arts Education. Retrieved from http://www.cae-nyc.org/sites/default/files/docs/CAE_Arts_and_Graduation_Report.pdf.