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IDEAS FOR SOCIALLY DISTANT, SAFE ARTS EDUCATION

Arts education is especially important during this time of uncertainty and distance learning. Not only do the arts benefit children academically, but can be an excellent outlet for the stress and uncertainty that they may be experiencing right now.

When the Chino Hills High School Chamber Singers' concert was cancelled due to COVID-19 school closures, they didn't let that stop them. This dedicated group of students decided that the show must go on, even if it was from each of their individual living rooms, bedrooms and kitchens. Click the image below to watch the beautiful "simulcast" concert they staged through the magic of technology. What a great reminder of the role arts can play in our lives – a role that brings healing, connection and social engagement.

If your children are not getting in-person or online arts instruction, they can still be creative at home or outdoors in a million ways. Here are some things you can pledge to do at home, in your local community, and in your school community to keep the arts front and center.

At home:

- I will do art at home once a week (or every day!) Need some inspiration? There are some great ideas below, and more on [this page](#) on the California State PTA website.
I will talk about the costumes, lighting, and set of the TV show or movie that we are watching.
I will tell my children about creative careers they can have.

Within your school community:

- I will create a PTA art event virtually or at my school.
- I will share the PTA Visual and Performing Arts Guide with staff and teachers at our school.
- I will create a schoolwide art program or project, like Reflections!
- I will invite a School Board official to an art event or performance that is virtual or at our school.
- I will thank my child’s teacher every time I see a piece of work my child has created at school.
- I will thank the music, art, dance, drama teacher at the end of every performance/art show.
- I will talk to parents at my school about the importance of arts education.
- I will post photos of arts education at my school and tag the Board of Education, local government, and #CreateCA on social media

In your wider community:

- I will attend local arts events virtually and in person. My community needs to see that residents value the arts so that they will put more funding into the arts.
- I will follow local arts organizations on social media.
- I will follow California State PTA and Create CA on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter so I stay up-to-date on any arts legislation or full funding initiatives which will help get more arts education into our schools.
- I will look at the Arts Education Data Project dashboard for schools near me to see what they are doing well. I will then encourage my principal to talk to them to find out how they were able to bring those programs onto their campus.
- I will share the Creative Connection newsletter on my social media and encourage my friends to subscribe. I want everyone to get this information in their inbox!

ARTS EDUCATION IN A TIME OF BUDGET SHORTFALLS

Need some ideas for how to be creative at home?

- Make a place card for each person at your dinner table.
- Have a dance party with your family. Make sure everyone gets to choose a song!
- Learn a dance and film it.
- Use a filter on your phone when you take a photo of something beautiful: a flower, a sunset, a puppy.
- Read a book out loud and act it out. You can even make costumes and props!
Arts education is especially important right now, but budgets are being cut. With the coronavirus looming over everything, some school districts are already slimming down arts programs for this current year.

However, even in this new world of distance learning and reduced academic offerings, schools are still legally obligated to provide students with a full curriculum — one that includes all five arts disciplines: dance, drama and theatre, music, visual and media arts.

Create CA has produced this two minute video which details how the arts are unique in relation to all other subjects and should be available to all students, especially during this critical time. Click the image below to watch!

It can be hard to stand up for arts education during these tough times, but YOU can help make sure that all students are getting it!

Click here for ideas from Kim Hoj, Co-President of the California Dance Education Association, on how to ask for arts education during coronavirus budget shortfalls.

And last but not least, watch this inspirational video from Guy Myers, 2020 California Teacher of the Year, where he talks about how he successfully guided his drama students through the transition to online learning, and the creative ways they adapted their projects to a virtual environment.

TAKE ACTION!

Check Out TOTEM's New U/C/D Lookup Feature  Tell Us Your Arts Success Story  October 1 Deadline For Scholarships and Grants!
The TOTEM electronic membership system recently rolled out a new directory feature that lets you easily look up any district, council or unit, anywhere in the state.

**TRY IT NOW**

Whether you started an arts club at your school, raised funds for arts programs, or voiced concerns about arts education to your school board, we want to hear your story.

**SHARE NOW**

Did you know you can apply for a continuing education scholarship for yourself, or a program grant for your PTA? Don't wait – the October 1st deadline is fast approaching!

**LEARN MORE**

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