



A shared vision for a high quality education for every child, in every school, every day.

Alliance for Arts Learning Leadership
ALAMEDA COUNTY OFFICE OF EDUCATION
SHEILA JORDAN, SUPERINTENDENT
313 WEST WINTON AVE. • HAYWARD, CA 94544-1136
www.acoe.org
www.artiseducation.org



Name: Meuy Lio Saechao
Grade: 12th Grade, Skyline High
District: Oakland

ARTIST STATEMENT

Dance has changed me mentally, physically, and emotionally into a new person. It has inspired me to live. The potential for improvement drives me to stay on track and focused. The satisfaction of finishing a piece of work with so much patience and determination put into is it indescribable. It's an experience of pure joy. It's like I've finally gathered my feelings, my trauma, my achievement, myself and put all the pieces together. When I perform my dances I'm sharing myself with the world. All my fears disappear and I dance. Everyone should have the opportunity to express themselves as who they are and let their spirits be free.

Studio One Art Center

CITY OF OAKLAND

OFFICE OF PARKS & RECREATION



Name: Addison Thibodeau
Age: 10 years

Class: Studio One Painting & Drawing

ARTIST STATEMENT

I'm writing about my artwork for plenty of reasons. I think my being an artist is good for me. I think this because most of my friends don't draw, and their grades aren't as good as they should be because they don't calm down. I think art calms you down because it's fun and a good way to learn how to express yourself. I like Studio One because it's mostly where I learn; otherwise I developed to nearly master art with my mom. She works at Mama's Royal Café, and they have an art contest every year. I've won every year since 1999.



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Name: Kathy Crow
Position: Emery MAP District Team Leader and Secondary Visual Art Teacher
District: Emeryville



The deep concentration of the creative process is, for me, rejuvenating and stimulating. I want my students to know what it feels like to concentrate deeply when they are engaged in art making. I want my students to know what it feels like to work on a piece of art until it is finished. Artists synthesize information in unpredictable and unique ways that are not about following rules or recipes for success.

I want my students to feel their own creative power, to push themselves to take creative risks, and to not be easily satisfied. This will help them become more creative and productive adults.

The arts for me are a way to make sense of the world, and I believe that young people need the same opportunity to make sense of their world. As a teenager, I remember visiting the Oakland Museum when it first opened with an exhibit that decried the negative impact of humans on the California ecology. I can still see a sculpture of a seagull covered in oil. The artist probably wanted to shock the viewer into political action, but I was much more impressed by the elegance of the sculpture. I remember beautiful paintings of smog and have since seen the poignant drawings of children about the horrors of war that are also powerful expressions of the human experience. These art works are not about right answers but are testimonials of truth, distillations of ideas and emotions expressed in personal and profound ways. The artists are trying to make sense of our world.

It has been tremendously gratifying to work as an art educator. I feel a sense of community with artists and teachers, as we continue to find new ways to advance the arts learning of young people. The arts are as vital to our survival as breathing.



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**Louise Music
Project Director
Alameda County Alliance for
Arts Learning Leadership**

The Alliance for Arts Learning Leadership's (Alliance for ALL) belief statement states that the purpose of education is to create a healthy and equitable society.

Art /S Education! The arts—music, drama, dance, and the visual, literary, and media arts—cultivate skills, dispositions, and habits of mind that are uniquely developed in the arts and that are applicable in all academic content areas.

The mission of the Alliance for ALL is to create equitable classrooms through arts learning for every child in every school, every day.

As artists, parents, and educators, we have had multiple and reinforcing experiences that inform our understanding and reify our conviction that learning in, through, and about the arts is necessary to help young people grow the potential of the self, develop empathy and connection with others, and leverage meaning-making between personal experience and engagement with the community and the world we live in.

At our Arts Learning Anchor Schools in Oakland, you will see every child engaged where teachers of special needs students are teaching vocabulary and word building through visual art experiences. You will see smiles on every child's face in a classroom where teachers are reinforcing and assessing vocabulary and language arts comprehension through movement and dance. You will see gratitude in the eyes of parents whose special needs children have an opportunity each day to show what they know through multiple instructional practices.

Public education is *the* most critical social justice issue before us today if we are to assure the future of a working democracy. The Alliance for ALL builds partnership and capacity in our community. We know how to create great classrooms through arts learning and arts integration with other academic content areas. We invite every citizen to join the Alliance for ALL so we can accomplish something of worth and value in our lifetimes to create confidence in our youth as they encounter challenges of today and the opportunities of tomorrow.



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Sheila Jordan
Alameda County
Superintendent of Schools

I have never considered myself an artist nor is artistic a word I identify with personally. Yet, I lead a life full of art. I value my life's aesthetic and creative engagement. And I reflect with wonder and pride on the work we, at ACOE, are involved in as the host, sponsor, and major organizer of the Alameda County Alliance for Arts Learning Leadership.

Not everyone is a wonderful or talented painter, musician, or actor. Although I dutifully studied piano as a child, I never became accomplished, but I did learn to appreciate listening to others.

Every artist needs an audience and there is much to learn in appreciating the inspiration of others. My piano lessons have aided my enjoyment and understanding of all types of music. Today, I regularly attend concerts at Yoshi's, the East Bay Symphony Orchestra, the Berkeley Symphony, and at various Alameda County high school venues because it adds pleasure and meaning to my life and work.

In my early days as a teacher, and then again as a parent, I came to understand that history and literature come alive when a child (or adult) is given a window into the art and culture of the period they are studying. Learning in, through, and about the arts is a strategy to assure that all children have access and multiple entry points to learning across the curriculum. I have learned that participation and practice in the arts for every child—my child, your child—in every school is a strategic initiative to bring rigor into teaching and learning through disciplinary understanding.

As I move through my busy days, my understanding of the world and of the best way to make it a better place is enhanced through all the ways I engage with the arts: in my home, in my work, in my own community, and in communities I explore as a visitor. No, I'm not an artist, but I relish all that art has to offer me and want to make sure that every child gets to enjoy the same right to a richer life through their own arts engagement.



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Felix Elizalde
Alameda County
Board of Education Trustee;
Hispanic Chamber of Commerce

The Alameda County Board of Education and the Hispanic Chamber of Commerce advance the mission of ACOE's Alliance for Arts Learning Leadership through policy and interaction with our local communities. Art IS Education!

My colleagues and I have visited classrooms that integrate music, drama, dance, and literary, media, and visual arts in core academic content areas to facilitate learning and understanding.

These classrooms demonstrate the role of the arts in our children's cognitive development, their confidence, and their motivation.

In classrooms with large populations of immigrant and English Language Learners, the visual and performing arts are processes for building vocabulary and comprehension.

The arts combine with more traditional quality-of-life factors including safe neighborhoods and successful businesses to create more viable, desirable, and livable communities.

The arts are a powerful way to bridge connections between home and school. In many of the Arts Learning Anchor Schools in Alameda County, community artists are bringing the arts from around the world into classrooms as departure points for historical and social inquiry. Parents are bringing their family traditions into schools through music, dance, and storytelling. The cultural gifts of our communities cannot afford to be left at the door of the classroom, but must be leveraged for the rich resources of knowledge, history, wisdom, and pride that they are.

We must all be advocates for the power of art in the lives of our students. The Alameda County Board of Education joins with the Hispanic Chamber of Commerce to realize a shared vision for equitable classrooms through arts learning for every child in every school, every day.



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Yvonne with ASCEND student Jasmin Flores and County Superintendent Shelia Jordan.

Yvonne Cerrato
Alameda County
School Board Trustee

As an educator, a mother and an elected official for education, I reflect on my personal experience and know that having art education in school is important to the development of all children, but it is also essential for those students who are particularly creative. The arts are a medium for communicating our human experience. People have had the need to sing, dance, make music and paint pictures since the dawn of man. If we do not recognize the need for artistic development in education we will repress the human spirit in our students.

When my first son was born, I knew how important a loving, healthy and enriched environment was to his development. So early on I provided him with opportunities to color, draw and paint. He was a bright, creative and sensitive little boy and a delight to be around.

When I sent him to public school he was well prepared and confident. He made lots of friends that first year and was admired by his peers and teachers. As he moved through the grades in school, he became less and less of that gifted child I had known. His teachers seemed to barely know him, and he had only a small group of friends. He lost his sunny glow much too early. Often I tried to talk to him about what was wrong or if something happened, but he never could identify a single problem or incident. By the time he was in high school, walking across the campus on registration day seemed unbearable to him. He walked with his head down and shoulders bent in sharp contrast to his excited brother.

After high school, my son decided to become an art major at SJSU. Since he began taking art classes there, he has blossomed. As his creativity is flourishing, he is becoming much more confident and happy. He enjoys **all** his classes and loves to talk about them and discuss world issues. Since his immersion into the arts, he has become a whole person again. Each day his face is becoming more radiant, and he has much more to offer as a person to our world.