

---

Copyright 2006 City News Service, Inc.  
All Rights Reserved  
City News Service

No City News Service material may be republished without the express written permission of the City News Service, Inc.

**May 26, 2006 Friday 12:10 PM PST**

**LENGTH:** 430 words

**HEADLINE:** Largest School District in San Gabriel Valley to Restore Arts Education

**DATELINE:** LA PUENTE

**BODY:**

For the first time in nearly 30 years, art classes will be part of the standard curriculum in the **largest school district** in the San Gabriel Valley, the Los Angeles County Arts Commission announced today.

Because of tight funding that began with passage of Proposition 13 in 1978, "art was treated more as an elective," said Ann Bradley of the arts commission. "It was considered outside the core curriculum."

But at last night's Hacienda La Puente Unified School District board meeting, members voted to join Arts for All, a countywide program to restore a comprehensive art curriculum to schools.

Authorized by the County Board of Supervisors in 2002, the program has already helped restore comprehensive arts education programs to 10 other school districts, including Beverly Hills, Burbank, Culver City and Compton.

Administered by the county Arts Commission, the goal of Arts for All is to bring back art classes to all 80 public school districts in the county within the next 10 years.

Hacienda La Puente Unified School District serves serves some 87,000 K-12 students in Hacienda Heights, Pa Puente, Industry and portions of Valinda and West Covina.

Under the program, district schools will have at least one credentialed arts teacher for every 400 students, Bradley said.

"Credentialed arts teachers will be hired who will have access to students," she said. "They're going to have (arts classes) absolutely on a weekly basis, I can absolutely confirm that. The arts will be part of the student experience throughout the kindergarten through 12th grade."

Since passage of Proposition 13, which limited increases in property taxes that fund schools, many art programs have been cut as administrators looked for ways to stretch dollars, Bradley said.

"Since 1978, arts curriculum has not been official at any school district with the exception of L.A. Unified," said Bradley.

Hacienda La Puente's program will be paid for in part by a \$100,000 donation from The Rosalinde and Arthur Gilbert Foundation to Arts for All, which will be matched by the district over the next three years with \$111,282 in funding for arts education.

"This joint effort reflects the tireless commitment and recognition of our community, parents, teachers, support staff and students that the arts are vital to learning," said district Superintendent Edward Lee Vargas.

Other funding for Arts for All comes from the Entertainment Industry Foundation, Creative Artists Agency, The Getty Foundation, The James Irvine Foundation, Jewish Community Foundation, JPMorgan Chase Foundation and Sony Pictures Entertainment.

---