

ALAMEDA COUNTY ALLIANCE FOR ARTS LEARNING LEADERSHIP BELIEF STATEMENTS

Values of Education

We believe that the core value and purpose of the educational system is to build a healthy and equitable society. Education endeavors to do this by creating and providing equitable opportunities for students to become healthy, knowledgeable citizens—conscious, informed, respectful, and engaged—prepared to deal with and influence change, and to contribute to a diverse, interdependent community. Schools provide learning environments for students to develop tools and life skills to dispel ignorance, to see what is, and to imagine what's possible. These tools and skills will allow them to realize their potential and that of their community and society.

Values of the Arts

We further believe that access to and practice in the arts for every child, every day, is essential to the accomplishment of this endeavor. Equitable classrooms use artistic disciplines to ensure that every child has the opportunity to practice critical thinking, acquire knowledge in a meaningful way, discover and express their own experiences, investigate creative ideas, make new connections for themselves and others, and learn the value of collaboration, interdependence, and compassion. Students with these tools and life skills are capable of dispelling ignorance, imagining what's possible, and realizing their potential and that of their community and society.

These belief statements were drafted through a consensus process of the Alameda County Alliance for Arts Learning Leadership to engage the broader community in an ongoing conversation about the value of the arts in a complete and meaningful education for every child.

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Belief Statement Development Process

Assumptions about Belief Statements:

The language of belief—of the heart and soul—is elusive and uncomfortable for most of us. If it were easy to articulate our deepest beliefs about the kind of world we want to live and the kind of adults we want our children to grow up to be, we would all have done it already.

There are many personal and social barriers to talking honestly about our beliefs in public. We fear ridicule, argumentation, looking arrogant or being misunderstood, becoming vulnerable or exposed. And yet, when we invite others to join us, we find more commonalities than we expect.

Keeping our belief statements within a frame of our hopes for our education system gives the beliefs strength and makes it more likely to engage others in our shared vision of an equitable future for all our children.

The process of Belief Statements (4 essential steps)

1. Self-reflection: time to think deeply and shape our initial feelings and thoughts
2. Talking it through: time to talk it out with a group of people likely to seek shared values, connections.
3. Testing the talk: Practicing using the vocabulary of shared beliefs with family, friends and non-hostile strangers. Consciously seeking agreement and like-minded networks.
4. Walking the talk: Connecting the beliefs to actions that will move the vision forward. And inviting others to take action with you.

Every Child, Every School, Every Day



Alameda County Office of Education's Alliance for Arts Learning Leadership



