MEDIA ARTS EDUCATION: An Introduction

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"Media Arts Education" is now recognized at the national level by all national arts organizations and their associates (NCCAS) as a discrete PK-12 arts content discipline in addition to Dance, Music, Theatre and Visual Arts. New National Media Arts Standards have been adopted, or are in the process of adoption by approximately 20 states since their publication in 2014.

We live in a "media arts" centered world. We know and learn about, and create our contemporary world through media arts communications and design formats. Our global culture has moved from text-dominant to multimedia-based modes of perceiving, knowing and communicating, and students should become versed in these processes and literacies for 21st C competence and as participating and media savvy citizens. Furthermore, these tools and methods foster a powerful form of learning that is complex, connective, project-based and real world. Media arts students can apply core academic content in creating cultural products that are meaningful to students and purposeful to their communities.

Media Arts Education encompasses digital arts + interconnectivity across all aesthetic, artistic and academic elements, forms, contents, disciplines and domains, for the purposes of learning and creating. Media arts is intrinsically interdisciplinary, integrative, and student centered around their own culture and interests. Media arts products include: photography, graphics, music, video, animation, motion graphics, web design, interactive apps and game design; 3D products, architecture and environments; radio, TV, internet broadcasting; virtual and augmented reality and virtual worlds, etc.

With this broad range of tools, design processes and production forms, the media arts classroom can form a creative hub within the school; The media arts laboratory is a virtual "makerspace", where students can produce any communication or expression or design they can imagine, from web sites, movies and sound productions, to 3D designs and games. With advents in interactivity, virtual design and augmented reality, students can produce entire interactive worlds. This form alone can inherently and seamlessly incorporate the highest levels of all mathematics, programming and engineering skills in their authentic application. This is the full realization of the STEAM model.

In media production, students are supported in the investigation of issues that are important to them, and then in creative responses in original communications and designs. In one recent example, the California Alliance for Arts Education has supported students to present their vision for the expenditure of Local Control Funding Formula monies in their local school districts http://studentvoicescampaign.org/. All subject area teachers are encouraged to facilitate student video projects that are then presented to their local school boards. Last year's pilot model already showed tremendous work and actual results in school board motions. Media Arts Standards guide this challenging process, which integrates writing, media literacy, civic engagement, advocacy, video production and school governance. This supports students in engaging with their local communities and global environment, thereby "dissolving the walls" of the classroom and forming an expanding culture of learning and creative adaptation.

Media Arts Education fosters self-directed learning and ultimately, learning about learning and the full range of 21st C skills. While engaged in these multi-modalities they acquire critical new literacies in media, technology, and digital culture. All Media Arts students are prepared to be effective communicators, creative problem-solvers, collaborators and lifelong learners, as well as for college and career.

Media Arts Education
- Media Arts Education consists of a unique range of categories including imaging, moving image, sound, interactive and virtual, and their combinations
- Media Arts Education has unique aesthetics, principles, tools, processes and pedagogy
- Media Arts Education is relevant to young people, as it reflects the multimedia world they commonly experience
- Media Arts Education intrinsically incorporates 21st Century skills and knowledge
- Media Arts Literacies (e.g. media, technology, digital culture, aesthetic) are a vital necessity for all young people
- Media Arts Education fosters interaction with local and global communities, integration of arts and academics, inquiry into contemporary issues, and the ability to determine effective solutions in multimedia productions and virtual designs
- Media Arts Education, as a standards-based arts and design practice for learning and creating, is beneficial for all students and educational institutions

Benefits/Advocacy
Students
- Engaging and relevant
- Project and Design-based Learning
- Arts /Aesthetic /Culturally-centered and Integrated (Holistic)
- 21st Century skills and understandings
- Student empowering – students as cultural participants and engaged citizens
- Adaptive to student interests, pacing, and abilities
- "Student-Sourced" – self-generated and directed forms of learning
- Multi-literacies (media, tech, aesthetic, digital culture) prepare students think critically in increasingly prevalent, powerful and immersive media environments

Academics
- Robust, seamless trans-disciplinary integration across all arts and subject areas
- Real world, project-based content application

Schools
- Vitalizing school culture (e.g. Digital Yearbook, News Production, Radio and Web Broadcasts, Academic Websites, DJ/VJ Events, Multimedia Theatre)
- School to community and global connections and interactions
- Integrates and actualizes measurable, high-order, 21st C. learning outcomes - Creativity, Communication, Collaboration, Critical Thinking

Communities
- Comprehensive academic and workforce competencies
- Civic participation and engagement
- 21st C. workforce development

MEDIA ARTS STANDARDS-BASED COMPETENCIES

- Meaning Making
- Intermodal Orchestration
- Expressive Communication
- Intentionality/Refinement
- Aesthetic Literacy
- Critical Analysis
- Contextual Awareness
- Synthesis/Metacognition
- Systems/Digital Culture
- Creativity/Imagination
- Inquiry/Research
- Planning/Organization
- Project Management
- Design Thinking
- Complex Problem Solving
- Innovation and Adaptation
- Collaboration
- Construction/Production
- Learning to Learn
- Self-Directedness

21st Century Industry Skills

- Creative thinking (valued over knowledge)
- Innovation - iterative processes that embrace failure and change (play)
- Design thinking
- Synthesis - integration of multi-disciplines and perspectives
- Systems thinking - interconnections
- Handle complexity
- Can think sequentially and holistically
- Flexible - adapt to and analogize for new situations
- People who know how to learn
- Experience learning for its sake
- Breadth of knowledge and interests
- Depth of content knowledge
- Deep analytical thinking - question everything, including "success"
- Problem solving
- Effective communications
- Integrity, honesty and courage - willing to question convention
- Interpersonal skills & teamwork
- Professional & technical excellence
- Action & results oriented
- Ethical reasoning
- Entrepreneurial
- Fiscally responsible
- Project management skills

Contributors:
   LAUSD Media Arts Advisory Committee
   Pixar Animation
   AutoDesk - 2D and 3D Design Software
   ESRI – Geographic Information Systems