

What the California Arts and Music in Schools Act Means for the Arts Teacher Workforce

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In November 2022, California established the Arts and Music in Schools Act to fund arts education programs in TK–12 public schools. With funding from the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation, SRI Education led an inquiry to estimate the number of new arts teachers required to fulfill the promise of the act. This brief presents funding allocations and teacher costs to calculate new teachers needed by region and county. It also provides information on the current state of the arts teacher workforce and arts teacher credentialing programs.

What is the Arts and Music in Schools Act?

[The Arts and Music in Schools—Funding Guarantee and Accountability Act \(AMS Act\)](#) was established to provide annual funding for California TK–12 public schools, including public charter schools, to supplement arts education programs for their students. The basic features of the act are:¹



Statewide increase—All schools serving preschool to 12th grade see an allocation of funds



Additive—Schools need to use the funds for new programs



80/20 rule—80% of the funds must be used for staff in local education agencies (LEAs) with 500 or more students



Local control—School communities decide how to spend the funds

A local educational agency (LEA) is a school district, county office of education, or charter school.

The AMS Act specifies that “local educational agencies with an enrollment of 500 or more pupils ... ensure that at least 80 percent of funds ... will be used to employ certificated or classified employees.” This inquiry focuses on certificated arts teachers.

How are the funds allocated?

The AMS Act funding cycle began in the 2023/24 school year. Allocations are based on total student enrollment in the past school year and on the percentage of students eligible for free or reduced-priced meals.²

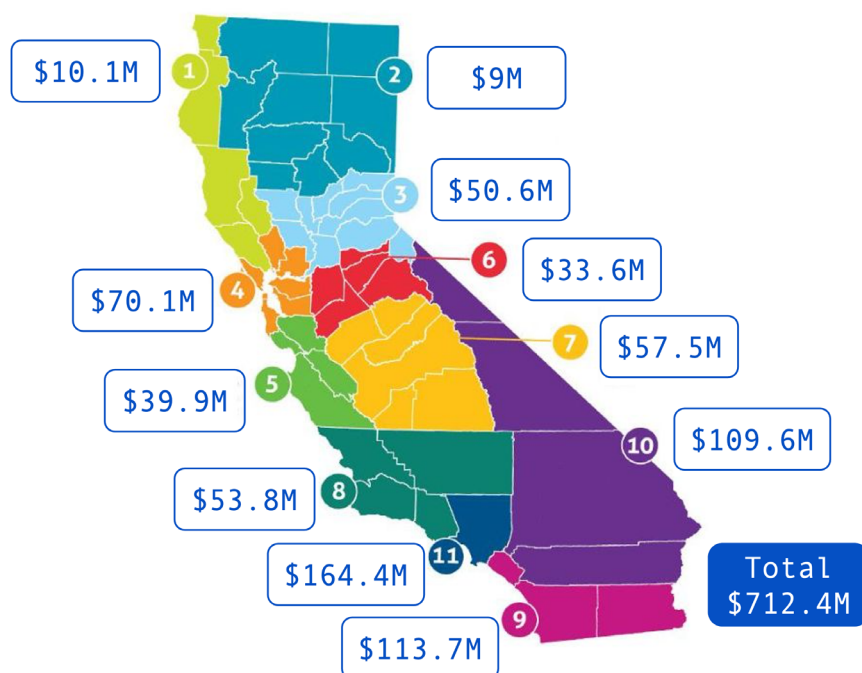
Each LEA receives the sum of funding for each school within its jurisdiction. Schools have 3 years to spend the funds.

How much money is expected to be spent on arts teachers?

In 2023/24, nearly 2,300 LEAs received a total of approximately \$938 million in AMS Act funds.³ Of these LEAs, 1,062 had 500 or more students and were therefore required to use 80% of their allocations on arts teachers. The majority of these larger LEAs were school districts (629), followed by charter schools (410) and county offices of education (23). These LEAs educate the vast majority of California students.

Allocations to the 1,062 LEAs for arts teachers totaled \$712 million and varied by region. The LEAs with 500 or more students received roughly \$890 million in total and are required to spend 80% of those funds—about \$712 million—on teachers. (See Supplemental Data Table 1 for allocations for teachers by county and county correspondence to the 11 regions.)

Allocations to the 11 California County Superintendents service regions for arts teachers (2023/24)



Source: SRI analysis of Funding Results data (CDE, 2024).

What is the estimated demand for new arts teachers in California?

For this inquiry, SRI researchers estimated the demand for new arts teachers by county and by region. To estimate county-level teacher demand, we first calculated the average cost of a teacher for the county, considering actual average salaries, costs of health and other benefits, and employer contributions to the state's teacher retirement system and other statutory benefits (see appendix for method and sources). Results from this initial calculation are displayed below.⁴

Cost of a teacher



Teacher salaries varied by county: Average 2022/23 salaries ranged from \$66,403 to \$111,148



Cost of benefits varied by county: Average 2022/23 benefits ranged from \$7,321 to \$22,074



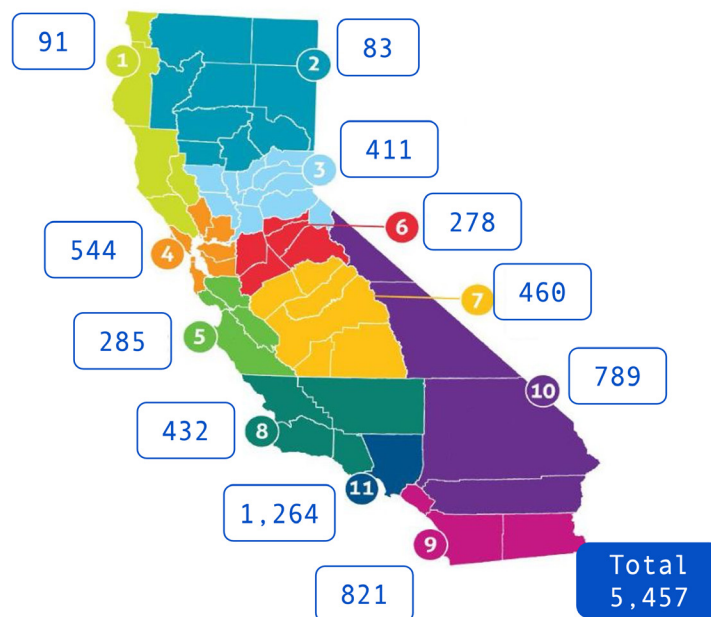
Employer contribution to **retirement and other statutory benefits** in 2023/24 was 21.98% of the teacher salary

Based on these data, we found that the **average total cost of a teacher** varies by county and ranges from **\$94,056** (Trinity) to **\$155,281** (Santa Clara). (See Supplemental Data Table 1 for average cost of a teacher by county.)

Demand for new teachers

Next, we divided the AMS allocation for a county by the average teacher cost to find the expected demand for teachers in the county. We then calculated statewide demand as the sum of teacher demand across all California counties. We also calculated regional demand as the sum of teacher demand for each county in the region.

Based on these calculations, we estimate that **California will need to increase the arts teacher workforce by 5,457 teachers and demand will vary by region**. Results for regional demand are displayed to the right. (See Supplemental Data Table 1 for expected teacher demand by county.)



5,457 arts teachers represent an increase of nearly 50% from the 2022/23 baseline.

In 2022/23, California schools employed 11,113 full-time-equivalent (FTE) arts teachers, primarily teaching visual arts and music.⁵ Of the current workforce, 8% are teaching “out-of-field,” meaning they are credentialed teachers but not in the specific arts discipline they are teaching. (See Supplemental Data Table 2 for expected demand for new arts teachers, existing FTE arts teachers, and estimated percent increase, by region.)

Arts discipline	FTE Teacher
Dance	305
Media arts	177
Music	4,100
Theater	828
Visual arts	4,019
CTE-AME estimate ⁶	1,685
Total	11,113

Source: SRI analysis of Teaching Assignment Monitoring Outcome data (CDE, 2024).

Putting these numbers into perspective

To provide some perspective to the findings above, consider two other jolts to the California teacher workforce—one a contemporary program and the other a cautionary tale from nearly 30 years ago:

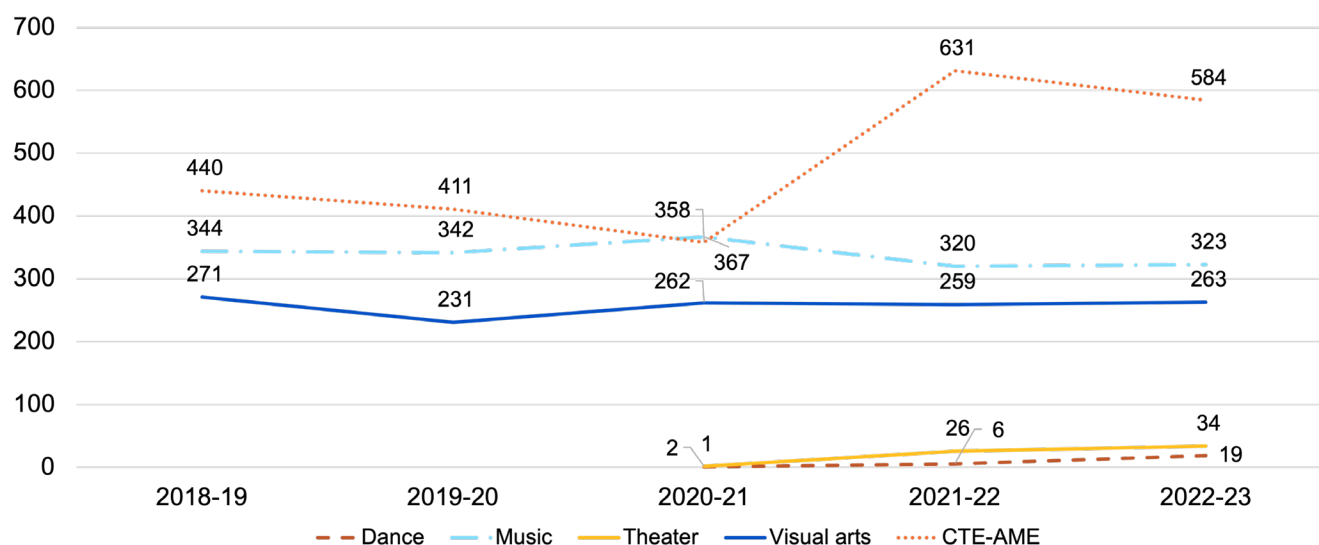
- California’s enactment of universal transitional kindergarten (TK)—a preschool program for 4-year-olds—is being rolled out over 5 years (2021/22 to 2025/26). According to the Learning Policy Institute, the program will require a three- to four-fold growth of the TK teacher workforce: “To meet this demand, districts will need to hire between 11,900 and 15,600 additional lead teachers by 2025/26, above and beyond the approximately 4,100 TK teachers we estimate were needed in 2019/20.”¹³
- In 1996, California passed statewide class size reduction (CSR) legislation, designed to reduce the average class size in kindergarten through third grade from 30 to 20 students. The program aimed to improve student learning, but soon after enactment Public Policy Institute of California (PPIC) researchers found that “CSR created thousands of additional teaching positions but not, of course, thousands of additional teachers.”¹⁴ The researchers noted that CSR “led to a dramatic increase in the percentage of teachers who lacked full certification, who had no postgraduate education, and who were in their first or second year of teaching,” especially in schools with high percentages of nonwhite students eligible for free or reduced-price meals. The researchers suggested that this issue could potentially “offset the direct benefits of smaller classes, particularly for schools in economically disadvantaged communities that had extreme staffing difficulties even before class size reduction.”

Meeting the demand for new arts teachers will require a multi-pronged approach, almost certainly including taking steps to increase the supply of credentialed arts teachers. With this in mind, we draw attention to recent information on the rate at which California was preparing arts teachers before the passage of the AMS Act.

What is the current state of arts teacher credentialing in California?

The state offers preliminary credentials for new arts teachers in five disciplines: dance; music; theater; visual arts; and career technical education – arts, music, and entertainment (CTE-AME).

In the 5 years prior to AMS funding (from 2018/19 to 2022/23), California issued 5,494 preliminary arts credentials.⁷ CTE-AME credentials spiked in recent school years, while music and visual arts credentials have held steady.⁸ The state began offering dance and theater credentials in 2020/21. (See Supplemental Data Table 3 for preliminary credentials by arts discipline and region.)

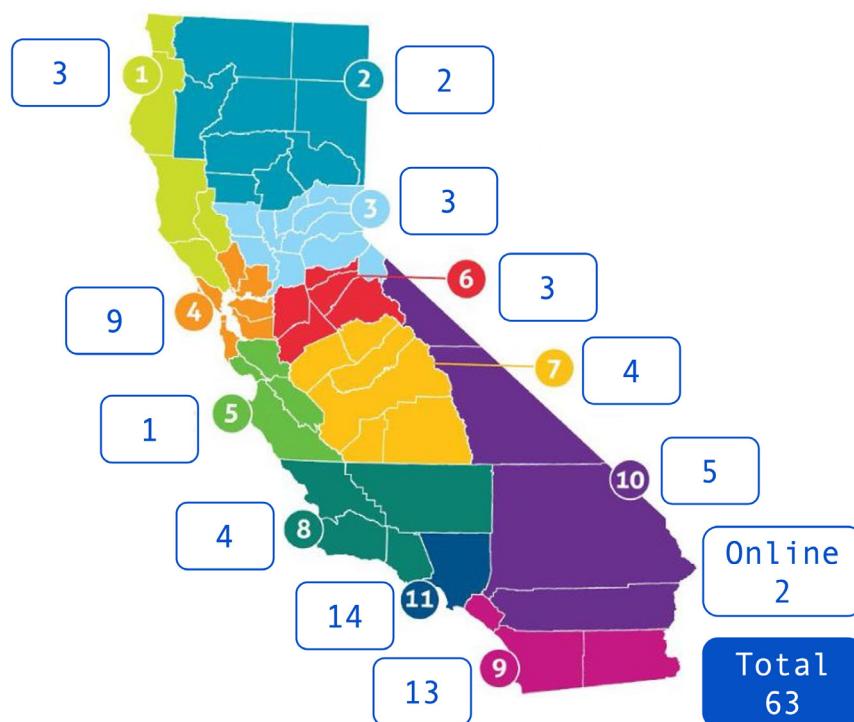


Source: SRI analysis of California Educator Supply data (CTC, 2024).

Moreover, the current state of teacher credentialing points to an existing shortage of arts teachers that predates the AMS Act. **In 2022/23, California authorized 618 people to teach without a full credential, relying instead on intern credentials, provisional permits, and waivers.**⁹ While use of these permits varied by region, most of these individuals taught either visual arts (271) or dance (267). (See Supplemental Data Table 4 for use of intern credentials, provisional permits, and waivers by region and arts discipline.)

Given the need to produce more arts teachers to meet the demand of the AMS Act, we next investigated arts teacher preparation programs. Currently, there are 63 institutions that prepare arts teachers in California, although access to these institutions varies considerable across the state, with 36 of the programs located in just 3 of California's 11 regions. (Some of these institutions host credential programs in more than one arts discipline. See Supplemental Data Table 5 for teacher preparation programs by arts discipline and region.)

Number of institutions preparing arts teachers (2022/23)



Source: SRI analysis of California Educator Supply data (CTC, 2024).

The landscape for dance and theater preparation is changing

In 2022/23, only one institution hosted a dance credential program and only two hosted theater credential programs.

As of summer 2024, there are seven dance programs:¹⁰

- California State University (CSU) East Bay
- CSU Long Beach
- CSU Northridge
- Fresno State University
- University of La Verne
- University of San Francisco
- United States University

And four theater programs:¹¹

- CSU East Bay
- CSU San Bernadino
- CSU Stanislaus
- San Diego State University

Early innovations aimed at addressing the arts teacher shortage

In fall 2024, CSU San Marcos in San Diego County launched a new program to prepare arts teachers. The CSUSM Art Credential Pathway program supports undergraduate arts majors to prepare for a supplementary subject matter authorization in the arts (dance, music, theater, and visual arts) as they pursue their multiple subject teaching credential, allowing these new teachers to teach arts courses in grades K to 8. Each student, in addition to having cooperating teachers with arts backgrounds, will have teaching artist mentors from the community. Moreover, participating students are supported by a Residency Grant from the Department of Education Foundation and, as a result, receive a significant stipend for their participation.

What do these findings mean for the success of the AMS Act?

These findings have implications for school districts and county offices of education, institutions of higher education and teacher preparation programs, and arts and education funders.¹²

School districts and county offices of education

- Develop an arts plan that includes a workforce development strategy.
- Investigate opportunities for existing teachers to teach the arts
 - PE teachers credentialed prior to 2022 are authorized to teach dance and English teachers are authorized to teach theater.
 - Single subject credential holders can add a second single subject credential or obtain a Specific Supplementary credential in the arts.
 - Multiple-subject credential holders with sufficient arts coursework can add a supplementary subject matter authorization to teach the arts in grade K-8.
- Communicate with institutions of higher education so that the institutions can anticipate demand for new arts teachers; offer to host student teachers or residents.
- Create pathways for high school students to enter the arts teacher workforce in their communities.
- Expand the pool of CTE-AME teachers by becoming CTC-approved sponsors for CTE credentials.

Institutions of higher education and teacher preparation programs

- Establish new single-subject arts teacher preparation programs, particularly in regions with the most limited options for prospective arts teachers and specifically in dance and theater.
- Expand existing arts teacher credentialing programs to meet new demand for preparation.
- Create opportunities for candidates pursuing the multiple-subject credential to add a supplementary subject matter authorization in the arts and gain clinical experience teaching the arts.
- Create pathways for community college students to enter the arts teacher workforce in their communities.

Arts and education funders

- Fund the development of exemplar district arts plans that include a workforce development strategy.
- Underwrite the upfront costs of establishing new or expanding existing TPPs.
- Sponsor a campaign to increase awareness among artists and new college graduates of the demand for arts teachers (e.g., through public service announcements).

Appendix: Method for Calculating Teacher Cost

The SRI research team calculated the cost of a teacher for each county using the following method:

- Average salary was calculated using total salary paid divided by total FTE at each county level.
 - *Source:* California Department of Education, “Salary and Benefits Schedule for the Certificated Bargaining Unit (Form J-90)” (<https://www.cde.ca.gov/ds/fd/cs/index.asp>)
- Average benefits cost was first calculated by benefits type (health, dental, vision, life, and other) using total district contributions divided by total FTE enrolled at each county level. Benefits cost assumes a teacher with a combination of dependents.
 - *Source:* California Department of Education, “Salary and Benefits Schedule for the Certificated Bargaining Unit (Form J-90)” (<https://www.cde.ca.gov/ds/fd/cs/index.asp>)
- Retirement cost was calculated using average salary multiplied by statewide Defined Benefit Program contribution (19.1%).
 - *Source:* California State Teachers’ Retirement System (CalSTRS), “Contributions” (<https://www.calstrs.com/contributions>)
- Other statutory benefits include district contributions to Medicare (1.45%), Workers Compensation (1.38%), and Unemployment Insurance (0.05%). Sources:
 - CalSTRS, “Medicare Premium Payment Program History” (<https://www.calstrs.com/medicare-premium-payment-program-history>)
 - California Employment Development Department, “School Employees Fund” ([https://edd.ca.gov/en/payroll_taxes/school_employees_fund/#:~:text=The%20Unemployment%20Insurance%20\(UI\)%20contribution,2024%20through%20June%2030%2C%202025](https://edd.ca.gov/en/payroll_taxes/school_employees_fund/#:~:text=The%20Unemployment%20Insurance%20(UI)%20contribution,2024%20through%20June%2030%2C%202025))
 - Workers compensation insurance: School districts contract with third-party administrators; the employer contribution estimate is based on personal communication with a district business officer.

Appendix: Supplemental Data

Table 1. AMS funding for arts teachers, cost per teacher, and demand for new teachers, by county

Region	County	AMS funds for new arts teachers	Average cost per FTE teacher	Number of teachers the funds support
1	Del Norte	482,382	105,832	4.6
1	Humboldt	1,440,283	98,983	14.6
1	Lake	1,210,802	103,759	11.7
1	Mendocino	1,238,999	103,486	12
1	Sonoma	5,734,858	119,415	48
2	Butte	3,370,229	115,765	29.1
2	Glenn	694,505	112,476	6.2
2	Lassen	229,907	99,682	2.3
2	Modoc	107,557	94,873	1.1
2	Plumas	225,775	97,772	2.3
2	Shasta	2,711,455	106,393	25.5
2	Siskiyou	346,458	96,220	3.6
2	Tehama	1,226,846	105,206	11.7
2	Trinity	87,075	94,056	0.9
3	Colusa	596,556	106,743	5.6
3	El Dorado	3,130,873	118,741	26.4
3	Nevada	990,232	109,184	9.1
3	Placer	7,521,797	127,478	59
3	Sacramento	30,176,826	127,420	236.8
3	Sutter	2,784,282	109,343	25.5
3	Yolo	3,545,112	107,708	32.9
3	Yuba	1,849,590	115,559	16
4	Alameda	23,537,442	130,666	180.1
4	Contra Costa	18,832,534	128,317	146.8
4	Marin	3,096,246	143,972	21.5
4	Napa	2,381,002	134,436	17.7
4	San Francisco	6,432,506	119,887	53.7
4	San Mateo	8,885,486	141,221	62.9
4	Solano	6,974,449	113,363	61.5
5	Monterey	9,909,218	124,380	79.7
5	San Benito	1,374,156	119,504	11.5

Region	County	AMS funds for new arts teachers	Average cost per FTE teacher	Number of teachers the funds support
5	Santa Clara	24,249,240	155,281	156.2
5	Santa Cruz	4,369,416	116,600	37.5
6	Amador*	472,750	108,434	4.4
6	Calaveras	585,497	108,434	5.4
6	San Joaquin	18,469,095	119,371	154.7
6	Stanislaus	13,866,836	124,225	111.6
6	Tuolumne	206,402	94,297	2.2
7	Fresno	27,678,721	124,296	222.7
7	Kings	3,760,278	124,728	30.1
7	Madera	4,342,926	118,206	36.7
7	Mariposa	220,802	100,365	2.2
7	Merced	8,138,858	127,847	63.7
7	Tulare	13,364,330	127,737	104.6
8	Kern	26,575,847	121,994	217.8
8	San Luis Obispo	3,702,533	109,559	33.8
8	Santa Barbara	8,239,549	123,371	66.8
8	Ventura	15,261,778	134,216	113.7
9	Imperial	4,789,742	141,700	33.8
9	Orange	54,019,131	146,584	368.5
9	San Diego	54,879,470	131,187	418.3
10	Inyo	329,361	115,981	2.8
10	Mono	137,672	124,501	1.1
10	Riverside	56,598,404	139,622	405.4
10	San Bernardino	52,566,804	138,604	379.3
11	Los Angeles	164,411,376	130,106	1263.7

Note: No LEA in Alpine and Sierra Counties had 500 or more students.

* Amador County salary and benefits data were missing; as a result, Calaveras County data were used as a proxy.

Table 2. Estimated demand for new arts teachers, existing arts teachers (2022/23), and percent increase, by region

Region	New arts teacher demand	Existing arts teachers	Percent increase
1	91	237	38%
2	83	199	41%
3	411	889	46%
4	544	1,303	42%
5	285	711	40%
6	278	510	55%
7	460	912	50%
8	432	743	58%
9	821	1,803	46%
10	789	1,407	56%
11	1,264	2,399	53%
Total	5,457	11,113	49%

Table 3. Preliminary arts teacher credentials issued, by region and arts discipline (2018/19–2022/23)

Region	Dance	Music	Theater	Visual arts	CTE-AME	Total
1	0	34	0	36	52	122
2	0	13	0	19	31	63
3	0	43	0	34	62	139
4	20	64	21	104	135	344
5	0	28	0	42	0	70
6	0	83	1	41	35	160
7	0	83	1	45	53	182
8	0	38	0	29	275	342
9	0	342	0	206	1,113	1,661
10	0	76	0	54	46	176
11	0	339	0	283	622	1,244
Other*	6	553	39	393	0	991
Total	26	1,696	62	1,286	2,424	5,494

* Includes online, out-of-state, out-of-country, and unknown credentials.¹⁵

Table 4. Teachers authorized by intern, permit, or waiver in 2022/23, by region and arts discipline

Region	Dance	Music	Theater	Visual arts	Total
1	9	0	0	5	14
2	7	0	0	2	9
3	17	5	5	33	60
4	41	6	8	47	102
5	15	2	5	20	42
6	18	0	2	13	33
7	42	5	3	24	74
8	26	1	1	16	44
9	25	3	0	26	54
10	30	2	3	18	53
11	37	19	10	67	133
Total	267	43	37	271	618

Table 5. Number of institutions preparing arts teachers in 2022/23, by region and arts discipline

Region	Dance	Music	Theater	Visual arts	CTE-AME	Total
1	0	1	0	2	1	3
2	0	1	0	1	1	2
3	0	1	0	1	2	3
4	1	6	1	4	2	9
5	0	1	0	1	0	1
6	0	3	1	3	1	3
7	0	3	0	3	2	4
8	0	3	0	2	1	4
9	0	8	0	7	2	13
10	0	3	0	2	3	5
11	0	10	0	8	2	14
Online	0	1	0	2	0	2
Total	1	41	2	36	17	63

Endnotes

- ¹ The Arts and Music in Schools—Funding Guarantee and Accountability Act, Cal. Educ. Code § 8820 (2022). https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/codes_displayText.xhtml?division=1&chapter=5.1&part=6&lawCode=EDC&title=1.
- ² “Funding is based on enrollment of preschool, transitional kindergarten, and K–12 pupils in the prior fiscal year. Of the total funding appropriated in the fiscal year, 70 percent is allocated by school site based on the share of statewide K–12 and preschool enrollment in the prior year. The remaining 30 percent is allocated based on the school site's share of statewide enrollment of economically disadvantaged pupils in the prior fiscal year.” California Department of Education. (2023). *Proposition 28: Arts and Music in Schools*. <https://www.cde.ca.gov/fg/fo/profile.asp?id=6156&reclD=6156>.
- ³ California Department of Education. (2024). *Funding results. Proposition 28: Arts and Music in Schools*. <https://www.cde.ca.gov/fg/fo/r14/prop28amresults.asp>.
- ⁴ Results based on SRI analysis of data files from the following source: California Department of Education. (2024). *Certificated salaries & benefits*. <https://www.cde.ca.gov/ds/fd/cs/index.asp>.
- ⁵ California Department of Education. (2024). *Teaching Assignment Monitoring Outcome (AMO) data*. <https://www.cde.ca.gov/ds/ad/filestamo.asp>.
- ⁶ CTE is one aggregated subject in the Teaching AMO data. To estimate the number of CTE-AME teachers, we used a 23.46% multiplier based on the proportion of CTE FTEs associated with AME in CDE's 2018/19 staff assignment data and course data. <https://www.cde.ca.gov/ds/ad/filesassign.asp>
- ⁷ While this number is close to the estimated number of new arts teachers (5,457) needed to meet demand of the AMS Act, it is important to note that the current demand is immediate and schools must use their allocations within 3 years.
- ⁸ Results based on SRI analysis of data from the following source: Commission on Teacher Credentialing. (2024). *California educator supply*. <https://www.ctc.ca.gov/commission/reports/data/edu-supl-landing>.
- ⁹ According to the CTC, “school districts that are unable to fill a teaching position with a fully credentialed teacher may request to employ as the teacher of record an individual who holds a teaching intern credential, permit or waiver.” Commission on Teacher Credentialing. (2024). *Teacher supply: Interns, permits and waivers*. <https://www.ctc.ca.gov/commission/reports/data/edu-supl-ipw>.
- ¹⁰ California Dance Education Association. (n.d.). *Credential*. <https://www.cdeadance.org/credential>.
- ¹¹ California Educational Theatre Association. (n.d.). *Current theatre credential programs*. <https://www.catheatreed.org/current-theatre-credential-programs>.
- ¹² For additional suggestions for meeting the AMS Act workforce demands, see Engdahl, E. (n.d.) *Thanks to Prop 28, School Districts need Arts Teachers*, published by the California County Superintendents Arts Initiative.
- ¹³ Melnick, H., García, E., & Leung-Gagné, M. (2022). *Building a well-qualified transitional kindergarten workforce in California: Needs and opportunities* [Research brief]. Learning Policy Institute. https://learningpolicyinstitute.org/media/3725/download?inline&file=California_Transitional_Kindergarten_Workforce_BRIEF.pdf
- ¹⁴ Public Policy Institute of California. (2002). *Relationships between class size reduction, new teachers, and student achievement* [Research brief]. https://www.ppic.org/wp-content/uploads/content/pubs/rb/RB_602CJRB.pdf
- ¹⁵ Unknown credentials are those with no associated segment. See Commission on Teacher Credentialing. (n.d.). No segment. In *Data terms glossary*. <https://www.ctc.ca.gov/commission/reports/data/data-terms-glossary/no-segment>.

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