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The Impact of California's Local Control Funding Formula on
Two Los Angeles County School District Arts Education Programs: A Multi-Site Case Study

A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction of the
requirements for the degree Doctor of Education

by

Mariana Astorga-Almanza

2016

ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

The Impact of California's Local Control Funding Formula on
Two Los Angeles County School District Arts Education Programs: A Multi-site Case Study

by

Mariana Astorga-Almanza

Doctor of Education

University of California, Los Angeles, 2016

Professor Mark Kevin Eagan, Co-Chair

Professor Eugene Tucker, Co-Chair

The purpose of this qualitative, multi-site case study was to examine how the introduction of California's Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF) contributed to a change in arts education at the district level at two Los Angeles County school districts that included arts education in their Local Control and Accountability Plans (LCAP). In addition, this study sought to understand the factors that contributed to the inclusion of arts education in the districts' LCAP as well as understanding how arts education teachers experienced changes to their work.

The findings of this study are based on document analysis, 150 arts education teacher questionnaire responses, and interviews with six district-level decision-makers and 24 arts education teachers. This study found that arts education teachers at both research sites, California Redwood School District and Golden Poppy School District, believed that LCFF implementation had positively impact arts education at the district level and that their respective

districts had increased their support of arts education as a result of LCFF. Arts education teachers largely credited district leadership and LCFF for increased support in the form of additional arts education teachers and funding available for supplies and resources. However, the school-level findings varied greatly between the two sites. Arts education teachers at California Redwood perceived less of an impact on arts education programs at the school-level when compared to the district-level, whereas Golden Poppy arts education teachers maintained a positive perception of LCFF. In particular, arts education teachers within California Redwood expressed strong skepticism about the level of support for arts education among school site instructional leaders, whereas Golden Poppy teachers did not share this sentiment. The findings suggest a need to improve communication between district-level personnel and arts education teachers so that each district can clearly communicate LCFF goals to all stakeholders within each district and positively impact arts education access for their students.

The dissertation of Mariana Astorga-Almanza is approved.

Frank Heuser

Wellford W. Wilms

Mark Kevin Eagan, Co-Chair

Eugene Tucker, Co-Chair

University of California, Los Angeles

2016

DEDICATION

I dedicate this manuscript to my husband, whose unconditional love and support has proven invaluable during this challenging journey. I also dedicate this to my mother and father, who sacrificed everything and came to this country in search of a better life for their children.

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VITA

- 2006 Bachelor of Music, Music Education
University of Southern California
Los Angeles, California
- 2007 Instrumental Music Teacher, Joseph Le Conte Middle School
Los Angeles Unified School District
- 2013 Master of Arts, Education
California State University, Los Angeles
Los Angeles, California
- 2014 Instrumental Music Teacher, John Burroughs Middle School
Los Angeles Unified School District
- 2014 National Board for Professional Teaching Standards Certification
Early Adolescence through Young Adulthood, Music
- 2016 California Practitioners Advisory Group Member
California Department of Education

Chapter One

Statement of the Problem

Public support for the arts is widespread, as demonstrated in a 2005 Harris Poll in which 93% of Americans agreed that the arts were vital to providing a well-rounded education for children (Americans for the Arts, 2005). In a 2011 report on arts education, former U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan said that in order “to succeed today and in the future, America’s children will need to be inventive, resourceful, and imaginative. The best way to foster that creativity is through arts education” (PCAH, 2011, p. 1). Involvement in arts education programs has been positively associated with higher academic achievement, students’ self-concepts, and lower dropout rates of at-risk students, such as minority and low socioeconomic status students (Catterall, 1998; Catterall, Dumais, & Hampden-Thomson, 2012).

Despite this moral support for the arts, many students across the country have little to no access to arts education, especially those who are designated as low-income, racial or ethnic minorities, or of limited English proficiency (Baker, 2012; Parsad & Spiegelman, 2012). In other words, students who could benefit the most from arts education are not receiving that instruction (Americans for the Arts, 2014). Duncan called this discrepancy in arts education access as the “arts opportunity gap” and said it was “absolutely an equity and a civil rights issue” (Duncan, 2012, p. 2).

Evidence of this arts opportunity gap is readily apparent in California, where all of its public school students are entitled to equal rights and opportunities in the educational institutions of the state (California Education Code §§200), with an adopted course of study that includes English, social sciences, foreign language, physical education, science, mathematics, and the visual and performing arts (California Education Code §§51210 and §§51220). Despite the

inclusion of arts education (dance, drama, music, and visual arts) as part of the course of study in the Education Code, not all California students are receiving the arts education they are entitled to receive.

According to 2013-2014 California Basic Educational Data Systems (now CALPADS), only 27% of students who qualified for free or reduced-price meals (a common indicator of poverty) were enrolled in any visual and performing arts courses (CREATE CA, 2015). In that same year, California had 6.2 million enrolled students, 61% of which qualified for free or reduced-price meals (FRPM) (www.cde.ca.gov). Of these 3.8 million socioeconomically disadvantaged students, 1 million received arts education instruction, while 2.7 million students were left without arts instruction. To further compound the issue, 71% of the socioeconomically disadvantaged students in California are Hispanic/Latino (www.cde.ca.gov). In other words, socioeconomically disadvantaged students, in particular, Hispanic/Latino students are less likely to be enrolled in visual and performing arts courses than those from more privileged backgrounds.

In Los Angeles County, a look at the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) provides a more local perspective on the arts education opportunity gap. In the 2012-2013 school year, LAUSD had 655,494 enrolled students, with 71% socioeconomically disadvantaged and 74% Hispanic/Latino population. In this same school year, LAUSD reported that approximately 53% of its 272,000 students in kindergarten through fifth grades would not receive any arts instruction in elementary school and that 75% of its 129,000 sixth through eighth-grade students would not receive any arts instruction in middle school (Abdollah, 2012a).

According to LAUSD, the primary reason for the lack of arts education instruction for its students stemmed from three years of financial cuts, with a decrease of approximately \$1.5

billion from its annual operation budget (Abdollah, 2012a). This decrease in overall district funding made arts education “one of the most impacted components of LAUSD instruction” (Abdollah, 2012a, p. 1). It is clear from these figures that arts education access is limited throughout the district, but what demonstrates greater evidence of an arts opportunity gap is that the majority of LAUSD serves primarily low-income and ethnic minority students. This LAUSD example helps to reveal how the national problem of arts access equity is exacerbated in California and in Los Angeles County, where socioeconomically disadvantaged students are not being provided with the same rights and opportunities to a public education as are students with a higher socioeconomic status (Baker, 2012; Woodworth, Gallagher, & Guha, 2007).

California’s Local Control Funding Formula

In order to address the overall issue of inequity in educational access for California’s students, the State implemented a new type of educational funding entitled the Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF). Announced as “a historic reform” to the State’s educational funding system, LCFF seeks to address the issue of educational equity by providing base, supplemental and concentration grants for students who are low-income, English Language Learners, and/or foster youth (Torlakson & Kirst, 2013). Prior to the implementation of LCFF, California’s finance system of categorical funds was more markedly more complex (Torlakson & Kirst, 2013) and considered fundamentally flawed (Loeb, Bryk, & Hanushek, 2008) with over 80 state categorical aid programs, each with its own set of stipulations for a designated use (Bersin, Kirst, & Liu, 2008). Now with LCFF, school districts receive increased flexibility in their spending in exchange for increased accountability. The LCFF is a weighted funding system that recognizes that students with greater needs, such as low-income, English Language Learners, and foster

youth, require more resources in order to receive a more equitable educational opportunity (Affeldt, 2015; www.cde.ca.gov).

In order for the LCFF funds to be disbursed to a school district, every local educational agency must create a Local Control Accountability Plan (LCAP) that identifies the specific activities the local educational agency will complete annually to address the State's eight priority areas (www.cde.ca.gov). The eight priority areas "encompass the key ingredients of high-quality educational programs" (Taylor, 2013, p.10) and include student achievement, student engagement, school climate, parental involvement, basic services, implementation of Common Core State Standards, course access, and other student outcomes (www.cde.ca.gov). The LCAP is valid for three years and must include a description of the anticipated annual goals for each student group under each of the eight state priorities (www.cde.ca.gov). The current LCAP is valid from July 1, 2014, through June 30, 2017.

Arts advocacy organizations throughout California viewed the creation of the LCFF and the initial LCAP development process as an opportunity to address the arts education equity gap. For example, Arts for LA, which helps community members advocate for greater investment in the arts, called the Local Control Funding Formula an "unprecedented opportunity for California education" and proposed arts education as a "powerful tool" to fulfill the goals of all eight priority areas (artsforla.org, 2015). The California Alliance for Arts Education agreed with the position of Arts for LA, stating that arts education was aligned with the LCFF goals and contributed to a "set of unique skills and outcomes... shown to help students succeed in school and life" (artsed411.org, 2015). To date, there is no systematic method for identifying which of the states' 1,000+ school districts incorporated arts education into their LCAP. However, local research was conducted recently in Los Angeles County, providing one of the first looks at how

districts have included arts education into their LCAPs under LCFF (Arts for LA, Arts for All, & Los Angeles County Arts Commission, 2015). Arts for LA et al. (2015) found that 77% of 81 Los Angeles County districts included arts education in the LCAP, with 32% of all districts demonstrating an increase in actions and/or services in arts education programs or practices.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to examine how the introduction of LCFF contributed to a change in arts education at the district level by conducting case studies at two Los Angeles County districts that included arts education in their districts' LCAP. In addition, this study sought to understand the factors that contributed to the inclusion of arts education in the districts' LCAP as well as understanding how arts education teachers experienced changes to their work. For this study, arts education is defined as in-school/instruction in visual arts, dance, drama, and/or music courses that occur within students' daily or weekly class schedule.

Research Questions

In order to examine the changes and impact of the LCFF on arts education, this study addressed the following research questions:

1. Within each of the two school districts, to what extent did the introduction of the LCFF contribute to a change in arts education?
 - a. What changes, if any, did each district make with respect to arts education: funding, staffing, student access, curriculum, teacher support, and supplies and resources?
2. According to district leaders, what factors contributed to decisions regarding changes in arts education funding/inclusion of arts education in the LCAP?
3. How have arts education teachers experienced changes, if any, in their work and support since the introduction of arts education into their districts' LCAP as a result of the LCFF?

Research Sites

This multi-site case study focused on two Los Angeles County school districts that included arts education in their districts' LCAP in at least five out of eight state priority areas and reflected the Los Angeles County demographics of at least a 65% Hispanic/Latino student population and a 68% socioeconomically disadvantaged student population (www.cde.ca.gov). For this study, school districts were categorized by grades offered: elementary (K-6 or K-8); high school (9-12), and unified (K-12); as well as by enrollment size: small (up to 9,999 students); medium (10,000 to 19,999 students); and large (20,000+ students).

California Redwood School District is a large unified school district with a 74% Hispanic/Latino student population and a 78% socioeconomically disadvantaged student population. California Redwood included arts education in five out of eight State priority areas in their LCAP. Golden Poppy School District is a medium unified school district with a 94% Hispanic/Latino student population, with 97% of all students designated as socioeconomically disadvantaged. Golden Poppy addressed arts education in all eight State priority areas in their LCAP.

Research Design and Methods

In order to answer the research questions, I utilized a qualitative multi-site case study design. A qualitative study focuses on process, understanding, and meaning (Merriam, 2009) and allowed for the inquiry of why and how each district interpreted LCFF through their LCAP creation process. A case study is a qualitative design in which the researcher deeply explores a program, process, or one or more individuals using a variety of data collection methods over a sustained period of time (Creswell, 2014). Case studies are also a preferred strategy to utilize when attempting to conduct an extensive and in-depth description of a social phenomenon (Yin,

2014). It was my intent to investigate, in-depth, the social phenomenon of these two districts' LCAP creation process as well as their rationale for including arts education in their respective LCAP.

The three primary data collection methods for this study were document analysis, interviews, and surveys. I conducted a document content analysis on district budgets, service records, meeting agendas and minutes, district bulletins, as well as newspaper articles to better understand the process and changes that occurred in arts education within each district. I then conducted interviews with the people who had primary responsibility for authoring their district's LCAP (called decision-makers for the purpose of this study) to better understand their rationale for including arts education in their LCAP. To better understand teachers' perceptions about arts education changes I utilized online questionnaires, followed by interviews with 20 arts education teachers within California Redwood School District and four arts education teachers in Golden Poppy School District. I integrated the three data collection methods of document analysis, questionnaires, and interviews to uncover and interpret the recurring themes that emerged from this study (Merriam, 2009).

Significance of Research

California presented LCFF as a way to address the issue of educational equity for K-12 students across all subject areas. By examining the impact of LCFF on arts education programs and investigating district rationales for including arts education in their LCAP, I sought to provide other districts that did not incorporate arts education in their LCAPs with insight as to how the process evolved at these two school districts. I will first share the findings and recommendations with district-leaders at each of the research sites in an executive summary to inform their LCAP revision process. After presenting to district-leaders, I will share the same

information with all arts education teachers within each district. Once I present the findings to each district, I plan on presenting my results to the California All-State Music Education Conference in San Jose, CA on February 16-19, 2017 and to the California Practitioners Advisory Group, an advisory group for the California State Board of Education that gives recommendations for LCFF-related rubrics and accountability decisions.

Chapter Two

Review of the Literature

Former U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan advocated that all children should have access to arts instruction and arts-rich schools but acknowledged that, after years of budget crises and recent data on arts education access, our nation’s “public schools have a long way to go before they are providing a rich and rigorous arts education to all students” (Duncan, 2012, p. 1). Some of the primary challenges to providing arts education for all students at the national level have been the decreased state and local funding as a result of the Great Recession as well as competing demands on instructional time due to the accountability movement as manifested by No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (Government Accountability Office, 2009; NAMM Foundation & Grunwald Associates LLC, 2015).

The Great Recession had a deep impact on school funding in California (Picus, Goertz, & Odden, 2015). As a result of reduced spending (Picus et al., 2015) state funding for education dropped by about 20% from \$9,261 per pupil down in 2007-2008 to \$7,401 per pupil in 2011-2012 (Kaplan, 2014). The drastic decline in overall education funding led to reduced funding for arts education programs. The reduction in funding for arts forced some arts education programs to become reliant on funding sources outside of State and federal funding, such as donations, parent groups and educational foundations, in order to keep their programs operational (CREATE CA, 2015; NAMM Foundation & Grunwald Associates LLC, 2015; Woodworth, Gallagher, & Guha, 2007). The implementation of California’s LCFF provided school districts with the opportunity to address the issue of educational equity by restoring programs and positively impacting arts education programs (CREATE CA, 2015).

This chapter begins with an overview of the history of arts education in the United States through the lens of education legislation, focusing on music education because it is the most commonly taught arts discipline in the United States (Parsad & Spiegelman, 2012). Next, the chapter will briefly discuss the California Education Code as it relates to the four disciplines of dance, music, theater, and visual arts. The chapter will then present the intrinsic and extrinsic rationales for arts education, including the various carryover effects onto cognitive and non-cognitive domains, before discussing the problems with access to arts education based on race, socioeconomic status, and financial concerns. An overview of educational finance in the United States follows, including reform litigation and legislation and the concept of weighted student funding. The chapter concludes with a description of California's Local Control Funding Formula and how school districts can utilize it to address the arts education equity gap in California.

History of Arts Education in the United States and Related Educational Legislation:

The Struggle for Core Status

Arts education has been valued for centuries, dating back to the ancient Greeks, who held dramatic productions and music in high regard (Grout & Palisca, 2001). Music was believed to be a gift from the gods, imitating the passion of the soul, yet also disciplining the mind (Aristotle, trans. 1920). The Greek philosopher Aristotle said, "Music has a power of forming the character, and should, therefore, be introduced into the education of the young" (Aristotle, trans. 1920). Formal music education emerged in the United States in the 1830's when composer Lowell Mason introduced singing lessons as part of the public school curriculum in Boston, Massachusetts (Grout & Palisca, 2001). In addition to vocal music instruction, orchestras began to emerge at the high school level around 1900 (Battisti, 2002). Wind band instruction was also

added to the music education course offerings around 1913 when public schools districts in California, Michigan, Pennsylvania, and Ohio began incorporating both orchestra and band into their curriculum (Battisti, 2002). Although orchestras outnumbered bands in 1920, band contests became critical to the development of school music programs throughout the country (Battisti, 2002). These music programs became a source of community spirit and pride. For example, the town of Hobart, Indiana pooled its financial resources, in the midst of the Great Recession, to ensure that the Hobart High School Band could compete in the National Band Contest in 1930 (Battisti, 2002). The community's efforts paid off when the band won the National Band Contest that year.

In 1927, the National School High School Orchestra's performance at the national convention of school superintendents in Dallas, Texas prompted a resolution that stated: "We are rightly coming to regard music, art, and other similar subjects as fundamental in the education of American children. We recommend that they be given everywhere equal consideration and support with other basic subjects" (National Education Association, 1927, as cited in Hash, 2009). With such an endorsement from superintendents at the national level, the number of school music programs soared to about 50,000 by 1941 (Battisti, 2002).

The Launch of Sputnik

The arts-supportive atmosphere in the country shifted when the Russians launched the first artificial satellite *Sputnik* in 1957, which served as a "trumpet call to the U.S. educational system" (Wissehr, Concannon, & Barrow, 2011, p. 368), and sparked an "educational war" between the United States and Russia (Fletcher, 1958, p. 113). The subsequent National Defense Education (NDE) Act of 1958, whose purpose was to "strengthen the national defense through educational programs," aimed federal dollars towards science, mathematics, modern foreign

languages, and technology education (USDOE, 1958, p. 2). This Act did not mention arts education as a focus area.

In the years following the NDE Act of 1958, secondary school enrollment in music courses, including band, orchestra, choir, general music, music appreciation and music theory courses, dropped from 42% of the overall student population in 1961 to 32.9% of the overall student population in 1973. This drop in music enrollment occurred despite a 58.34% increase in overall secondary student enrollment from 11,732,742 in 1961 to 18,577,234 students in 1973 (Hoffer, 1980). Music went from being the first most common “elective” to the second most common “elective” course area behind business courses (Hoffer, 1980). During this period, music educators heavily promoted the intrinsic value of a musical education, or arts for arts’ sake, to justify their place amongst the core curriculum (Richerme, 2012).

Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965

Recognizing that children of low socioeconomic backgrounds were not achieving at the same academic level as their more socioeconomically advantaged peers, President Johnson signed the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) of 1965 on April 9, 1965. Influenced by the concepts of civil rights and equity (Kirst, 2010), the ESEA of 1965 was created to improve the academic achievement of the socioeconomically disadvantaged by ensuring that all children had a “fair, equal, and significant opportunity to obtain a high-quality education” through academic assessments, accountability systems, and teacher preparation and training (USDOE, 1965, p. 14). The Act established the guidelines for the Title I federal grant program that provides assistance to local educational agencies (LEAs) and schools with high concentrations of students from low-income backgrounds (www2.ed.gov). Although the ESEA

of 1965 did not specifically address the arts, it established the concept of Title I, which is a common measure of poverty and is widely used in educational equity studies.

A Nation at Risk

Music education encountered another struggle after the publication of the landmark document *A Nation at Risk: The Imperative for Education Reform* (1983), which claimed the Educational foundations of our society are presently being eroded by a rising tide in mediocrity that threatens our very future as a Nation and a people. What was unimaginable a generation ago has begun to occur – others are matching and surpassing our educational attainments. (National Commission on Excellence in Education 1983, p. 1).

In this document, the National Commission on Excellence in Education (NCEE) acknowledged the positive efforts towards improvement in mathematics and science education since the NDEA of 1958, but stated that there was a need to improve teaching and learning in fields such as English, history, geography, economics, and foreign languages (NCEE, 1983). The NCEE proposed that the “Five New Basics” should be at the core of every child’s curriculum. The Five New Basics included English, mathematics, science, social studies, and computer science. In addition, the NCEE recommended that a high school curriculum should provide students with programs such as vocational education and the fine and performing arts. These subjects were to “complement the New Basics, and they should demand the same level of performance as the Basics” (NCEE, 1983).

Music educators did not take the exclusion of arts education from the “New Basics” lightly. In 1991, the National Commission for Music Education (NCME) published their response to *A Nation at Risk: The Imperative for Education Reform* (1983) and called it *Growing*

Up Complete: The Imperative for Music Education (NCME, 1991). In it, the NCME expressed its displeasure with being excluded from the New Basics, calling the omission “near-sighted...leaving our students only half educated” (NCME, 1991, p. ix as cited in Branscome, 2012, p. 114).

Goals 2000: Educate America Act of 1994

Arts education was not added as a core subject in federal legislation until the introduction of the Goals 2000: Educate America Act of 1994. President Clinton signed the Goals 2000 Act into law on March 31, 1994, with the intent of improving teaching and learning by providing a national framework for education reform (USDOE, 1994). The Goals 2000 Act also provided funding for the “development and adoption of a voluntary national system of skill standards and certifications,” which included the arts (USDOE, 1994; Elpus, 2013b). The Voluntary National Standards for Arts Education were also released in 1994 with the purpose of “describing what a child with a complete, sequential education in the arts should know and be able to do” in each discipline of dance, music, theatre, and visual arts (artsedge.kennedy-center.org, 2015). As a result of the inclusion of the arts as a core subject in the Goals 2000 Act, all states eventually adopted standards for the arts (Elpus, 2013b).

No Child Left Behind Act of 2001

Funding for the Goals 2000 Act ended when the next phase of the accountability movement emerged with the passage of the reauthorization of the ESEA of 1965, most commonly known as the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act of 2001. The NCLB Act of 2001 was signed into law by President George W. Bush with the purpose of closing the achievement gap with “accountability, flexibility, and choice, so that no child is left behind” (USDOE, 2001, Sec 1., Short Title). In addition, the NCLB Act of 2001 aimed to have all students achieve

proficiency in mathematics and English language arts by the 2013-2014 school year (USDOE, 2001). The NCLB Act of 2001 measured student achievement through a metric called Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP). AYP was calculated in large part by student test scores on standardized exams, which were analyzed in subcategories of poverty, race, ethnicity, disability, and limited English proficiency. If any subcategory of students did not demonstrate achievement gains in standardized exam scores, a school did not meet AYP for the year. Schools and districts that failed to meet AYP in mathematics and English language arts proficiency faced improvement measures, corrective action, and restructuring measures (USDOE, 2001).

The risk of such improvement, corrective, and restructuring measures led schools and districts to narrow their curricular focus on mathematics and English language arts, the two subjects that were being scrutinized under the NCLB Act of 2001. Schools that had not met AYP, primarily those with low income, limited English proficient, and/or minority students, reported a reduction in arts instruction time (GAO, 2009). Although the NCLB Act of 2001 was enacted with the intention of improving student achievement, an unintended consequence was limiting students' access to arts education (Baker, 2012; Branscome, 2012; Hourigan, 2011). The NCLB Act of 2001 placed heavy emphasis on testing in mathematics and English language arts, and those subjects subsequently became synonymous with the term "core subjects." However, core subjects under the NCLB Act of 2001 included more than those two subjects. The NCLB Act of 2001 stated that "the term 'core academic subjects' means English, reading or language arts, mathematics, science, foreign languages, civics and government, economics, *arts*, history, *and* geography" (emphasis added) (USDOE, 2001, Title IX, Part A, Section 9101 (1)(D)(11)). Although the arts received core subject designation by the NCLB Act of 2001, Secretary of Education Rod Paige received countless reports of arts education programs that

were reduced or eliminated due to the narrowing of the curriculum (Paige, 2004). As a response, Paige (2004) sent a letter to all state superintendents reminding them of the arts' status as a core subject and their intrinsic and extrinsic values in education. Paige (2004) called the narrow interpretation of the NCLB Act and the subsequent reduction and elimination of arts programs disturbing, adding that there was in fact "much flexibility" under the NCLB Act to support the core subjects (p.1). Despite the letter, arts education programs throughout the nation continued to suffer as a result of the accountability-centric era of the NCLB Act of 2001 (Baker, 2012; Elpus, 2014; Gerrity, 2009).

Race to the Top and the Common Core State Standards

The most recent iteration of the accountability movement is President Obama's \$4.35 billion Race to the Top (RTTT) competitive grant program, which was designed to encourage and reward states for creating conditions that promote innovation and reform in their schools (USDOE, 2009b). RTTT aims to "prepare America's students to graduate ready for college and career, and enable the to out-compete any worker, anywhere in the world" (President Obama in USDOE, 2009a, para. 1). In order to be eligible for funding, states needed to develop and adopt common standards that helped prepare students for success in college, the workplace, and the global economy (USDOE, 2009b). Although the RTTT legislation did not specify which standards a state needed to adopt, the newly developed Common Core State Standards (CCSS) became the de facto standards adopted by 42 states in order to become eligible for desperately needed funding in light of the Great Recession of 2007. Launched in the same year as RTTT, the National Governors Association Center for Best Practices (NGA Center) and the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) developed the CCSS for Mathematics and English Language Arts/Literacy. History, social studies, science, and technical subject standards fall

within the English Language Arts Standards of the CCSS. As with the NCLB Act of 2001, the CCSS narrowed the curricular focus to mathematics and English language arts standards. Arts education subjects were not included RTTT legislation or the CCSS.

In June 2014, the National Coalition for Core Arts Standards responded to the CCSS by releasing the National Core Arts Standards (NCAS). The NCAS are voluntary national standards for music, visual arts, theater, dance, and, for the first time, media arts. The National Coalition for Core Arts Standards designed the NCAS with the Understanding by Design and CCSS frameworks (<http://www.nationalartsstandards.org/>, 2015). At this time, it is too early to determine the impact, if any, these new standards will have on arts education programs.

Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015

On December 10, 2015, President Obama signed the reauthorization of the ESEA of 1965, called the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). The purpose of ESSA is to “provide all children significant opportunity to receive a fair, equitable, and high-quality education and to close educational achievement gaps” (USDOE, 2015, Sec. 1001). The passage of ESSA is significant to arts education for three primary reasons. First, ESSA includes music and the arts as part of a well-rounded education (USDOE, 2015, Sec. 8002). Second, ESSA provides funding specifically for arts education through the Assistance for Arts Education competitive grant program, whose purpose is to promote arts education for students, especially children with disabilities and disadvantaged students (USDOE, 2015, Sec. 4642). The granting of funding through the Assistance for Arts Education program is to be used “only to supplement and not supplant” the assistance or funds from other programs (USDOE, 2015, Sec. 4642). Third, ESSA encourages the integration of the arts into STEM (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics) subject programs to improve the attainment of skills related to STEM subjects, and

to promote well-rounded education (USDOE, 2015, Sec. 4107). Arts organizations at the national and state level, such as Americans for the Arts, the National Association for Music Education, and the California Music Education Association, viewed the inclusion of music and the arts in federal legislation as a momentous event. Because ESSA has been signed into law for only a few months, this study will focus on the accountability-centered atmosphere created by the NCLB Act of 2001, the RTTT, and the CCSS.

Arts Education in the California Education Code

California formally adopted content standards for the visual and performing arts in June 2001 to “provide a framework for programs that a school may offer in the instruction of visual or performing arts” (California Education Code §§ 60605.1 (B)). However, the California Education Code states that “nothing in this section shall be construed to require a school to follow the content standards” nor to “mandate an assessment of pupils in visual or performing arts” (California Education Code §§ 60605.1 (C)). In California, the state legislature recognized the need to incorporate arts into the school curriculum as a way to “improve the quality of education offered in California’s public schools and reinforcing basic skills, knowledge, and understanding” (California Education Code §8810).

California Education Code §§51210 and 51220 include the study of the visual and performing arts for students in all grades. For first- through sixth-grade students, the adopted course of study shall include instruction in the “subjects of dance, music, theater, and visual arts, aimed at the development of aesthetic appreciation and the skills of creative expression” (California Education Code §51210). Special attention should be given to the terms *shall include* as well as *and* because the language demonstrates that arts education in all four disciplines is not optional, but an expectation of the Education Code for elementary school

students. For seventh- through twelfth-grade students, the adopted course of study shall offer courses in the visual and performing arts, including dance, music, theater, and visual arts, with the same aims of aesthetic appreciation and creative expression skills (California Education Code §51220). The language changes from *shall include* all four arts disciplines at the elementary school level to *shall offer* all four arts disciplines at the secondary level. *Shall offer* means that all secondary schools must offer all four arts disciplines although students are not required to enroll in a particular discipline if they do not choose to do so.

The implementation and enforcement of a stipulated course of study is the responsibility of the school's governing board (California Education Code §51050). Neither the California State Board of Education nor the California Department of Education have any authority to enforce the California Education Code, only a school's governing board may do so. In other words, it is the district's responsibility to monitor its own compliance and report deficiencies to the State. Governing boards may apply for an exemption from following a particular course of study if they intend on implementing a planned experimental curriculum project (California Education Code §51057) or for a waiver of any section of the Education Code after a public hearing on the matter (California Education Code §33051). However, the State Board of Education would not grant a waiver if the educational needs of its pupils were not adequately addressed (California Education Code §33051).

In the case of arts education, no exemption or waiver for the visual and performing arts has been granted to date (Schafer, 2013a). Thus, the expectation is that all school districts in California must adhere to the specified course of study, which includes arts instruction in all four disciplines for all students in first- through sixth-grade and offering all four arts disciplines for students in seventh- through twelfth-grades. Before receiving *any* state financial assistance, an

educational institution needs to provide assurance that each program of activity conducted will be done in compliance with the Education Code (CEC §250). Simply stated, a district that is in violation of the California Education Code is technically ineligible to receive State funding.

The governing board of every California school district is responsible for monitoring compliance with the Education Code and reporting deficiencies to the State. However, it is unheard of for a school district to report its deficiencies in arts education compliance to the state. In fact, it was only until Carl Schafer, a veteran California music educator, published an article in 2013 that this obscure education code came to public view (Schafer, 2013b). As a result of the publication, media attention in the Los Angeles area has been focused on the topic (Plummer, 2013a; Plummer, 2013b; Plummer, 2014a). The principal advisor to the State Superintendent of Public Instruction admitted that he did not know about this particular law until he had a meeting with Mr. Schafer (Plummer, 2013a).

Public knowledge about the California Education Code and arts education increased in the State since 2013. In February 2015, the Stand Up 4 Music Coalition (SU4M) included “ensuring access to music education for all California students through compliance with the Education Code” as one of their four 2015 Policy Priorities (<http://www.standup4music.org/>). To assist in this effort, SU4M stated they would create an advocacy campaign to inform the public about the Education Code requirements. The California Music Education Association subsequently created the “Legally Authorized to Jam” advocacy campaign (www.calmusiced.com). The campaign stated, “In California, your kid is entitled to play or sing music at school. Tell your school districts: **it’s the law!**” (www.calmusiced.com).

Also in 2015, CREATE CA, California’s statewide arts education coalition, in a report to State Superintendent of Public Instruction Tom Torlakson, recommended that the State Board of

Education and the Department of Education increase awareness of the California Education Codes that require discrete arts instruction as part of the core curriculum and communicate the existing requirements to school districts throughout the State (CREATE CA, 2015, p. 5). In addition, CREATE CA (2015) recommended that the State restore theater and dance single subject credentials in order to address the “issues of equity, access, and opportunity” that “compromises the preparation needed to provide high-quality dance and theater education programming” (p. 12).

California is currently only one of two states in the country that does not offer separate credentials for dance and theater teachers. Dance teachers in the State must first obtain a physical education credential then a supplementary dance authorization (www.cte.ca.gov). Similarly, theater teachers must obtain an English credential and then a supplementary theater authorization. On January 27, 2016, California Senator Ben Allen introduced Senate Bill 916 to amend the California Education Code to add dance and theater to the list of authorized subjects for teaching credentials allowed by the Commission on Teacher Credentialing (CA SB-916). The committee unanimously (9-0) supported the bill, known as the Theater and Dance Act (TADA!) on April 20, 2016.

The Case for Arts Education

Intrinsic Rationale: Arts for Arts’ Sake

As mentioned earlier, the ancient Greeks recognized the inherent value of the arts including music, art, and drama (Grout & Palisca, 2001). Like the Greeks, arts education scholar Elliot (2002) believed the arts had distinctive contributions to make to the growth of an individual’s mind, such as thinking skills in the context of an art form, expression, and communication. Similarly, Fowler (1989) called the arts a “central force in human existence”

and the “glue that holds society together” (p. 63). Beliefs such as these presented by Eisner and Fowler form the foundation of what is considered the “arts for arts’ sake” argument, in which arts education should be made available to all students because they are intrinsically valuable. Eisner (2002) added that the recent “hoopla about their contributions to academic performance” had not helped the case for arts education, where the arts were regarded as “nice but not necessary” to a student’s education (p. xi). Eisner (2002) argued that these contributions that were outside of the artistic or aesthetic realm, known as “carryover effects” should not be the primary justification for providing arts education in our schools.

Similarly, Hetland and Winner (2004) contend that arts education programs “should never be justified primarily on what the arts can do for other subjects,” (p. 5). The authors add that arts education policy should not be based on instrumental outcomes (their term for carryover effects), “whether or not these outcomes can be demonstrated” (Hetland & Winner, 2004, p. 48). Justifying the arts in this way is “self-destructive” and a “double-edged sword” for the arts, because if an academic improvement does not materialize, the arts will “quickly lose their position” (Hetland & Winner, 2004, p. 48). Hetland and Winner (2004) cautioned educational policy makers that:

If we become swayed by today’s testing mentality and come to believe that the arts are important only (or even primarily) because they buttress abilities considered more basic than the arts, we will unwillingly be writing the arts right out of the curriculum (p. 50).

Despite the compelling arts for arts’ sake argument, education policymakers continue to ascribe to benefits of arts education because of their carryover effects. Education policymakers tend to declare their belief in the fundamental importance of arts education and designate them as core subjects, but when it comes time to make financial decisions during time of financial crisis, their

actions demonstrate otherwise. Arts education is often “targeted as a peripheral subject in a comprehensive education,” despite its core status in federal legislation (Sabol, 2012, p. 34). Although the arts for arts’ sake argument is valid and correct, it is prudent to also acknowledge the extrinsic rationale for arts education and the studies related to that argument until policymakers’ theories of action match their espoused theories about the value of arts education (Anderson, 1997).

Extrinsic Rationale: Carryover Effects of Arts Education

An example of the carryover effects of arts education can be found in Catterall’s (1998) seminal national study of 25,000 secondary public school students and their involvement in the arts. Catterall (1998) found that high involvement in the arts (including band, orchestra, choir, debate, and drama) was associated with higher academic performance, increased standardized test scores, and lower dropout rates when compared to low-arts involved students. These findings held true regardless of a student’s socioeconomic status (SES). Upon further investigation, Catterall (1998) found that there were four times as many low-SES students who fell into the low-arts group when compared to the higher-SES group (Catterall, 1998). Catterall (1998) also found that the academic and social advantages of high-arts involvement for students of low-SES were greater than the low-SES students with low-arts involvement. For example, the high-arts low-SES students were more likely to have higher grades, test scores, self-concepts than the low-arts low-SES students (Catterall, 1998).

Using the same data set as Catterall (1998), Catterall, Chapleau, and Iwanaga (1999) found substantial and significant differences in achievement, attitudes and behaviors among students with high-arts involvement in music and theater arts compared to those without high-arts involvement. Catterall et al. (1999) found a strong relationship between high levels of

involvement in instrumental music and mathematics proficiency, adding that students concentrating in instrumental music did substantially better in mathematics when compared to students without involvement in music. In addition, students who studied theater arts were associated with gains in reading proficiency, gains in self-concept and motivation, and higher levels of empathy and tolerance for others (Catterall et al., 1999). Catterall et al. (1999) concluded with a powerful statement:

The arts do matter – not only as worthwhile experiences in their own right...but as instruments of cognitive growth and development and as agents of motivation for school success. In this light, unfair access to the arts for our children brings consequences of major importance to our society (p. 17).

In other words, all students, regardless of their socioeconomic status should have equitable access to the arts. In 2012, another large-scale national study was conducted on the academic and civic behavior outcomes of teenagers and young adults who had engaged deeply in the arts in or out of school (Catterall, Dumais, & Hampden-Thompson, 2012). Similar to Catterall et al. (1999), Catterall et al. (2012) analyzed the relationship between arts involvement and academic and social behaviors, this time using data from four longitudinal studies: the National Education Longitudinal Study of 1988; the Early Childhood Longitudinal Study, Kindergarten Class of 1998-1999; the Education Longitudinal Study on 2002, and the National Longitudinal Survey of Youth of 1997. Using a scale of arts engagements and SES, students with in-depth/high-arts involvement demonstrated better academic outcomes than those with low-arts involvement regardless of SES (Catterall et al., 2012).

When comparing low-SES students with low-arts involvement to high-arts involvement and academic outcomes, students with high-arts involvement had higher test scores in science

and writing; were more likely to complete a calculus course in high school; had higher overall grade point averages; were more likely to graduate from high school; and were more likely to aspire to and attend college (Catterall et al., 2012). When comparing low-SES students and high-SES students with low-arts involvement to high-arts involvement and civic outcomes, students with high-arts involvement, regardless of their SES, were more likely to read a newspaper on a weekly basis; participate in student government and school service clubs; volunteer; and had voted and/or participated in a political campaign (Catterall et al., 2012).

Additional studies on music, the most common type of arts education instruction provided to public school students across the nation (Parsad & Spiegelman, 2012), provide examples of the positive association between arts education and academic variables that are valued by education policymakers. In a 2014 study focusing on the Los Angeles-based Harmony Project, Kraus et al. (2014) found that more musical training was associated with larger enhancements in neural function. More specifically, students who participated in at least two years of community-based music instruction had improved their neuropsychological distinction of consonants, a skill that leads to improved auditory processing, which is essential for reading and comprehension (Kraus et al., 2014). The findings have pragmatic implications by demonstrating that community music programs may stave off certain language-based challenges faced by at-risk children (Kraus et al., 2014). Although this study focused on an after-school community-based music program, the benefits could also be gained from the daily and consistent study of an in-school music education program.

Tierney et al. (2013) conducted a study of low-SES high school students in Chicago that demonstrate the benefits of in-school arts instruction. Tierney et al. (2013) demonstrated that in-school music education enhanced students' abilities to identify speech presented in noise, known

as speech encoding (Tierney et al., 2013). Because students' SES has been shown to impact language functioning in their encoding of speech, in-school musical training may be able to "ameliorate some of the negative consequences of impoverishment" (Tierney et al., 2013, p. 4). Another carryover effect of arts education on student achievement can be seen in a study by Forgeard, Winner, Norton, and Schlaug (2008), in which they found that practicing a musical instrument for three or more years during childhood was associated with enhanced fine motor skills as well as verbal ability and nonverbal reasoning (p. 5).

The relationship between participation in-school music programs and standardized test scores demonstrate another carryover benefit of arts education (Johnson & Memmott, 2006). In a study of 4,739 third-, fourth-, eighth-, and ninth-grade students from five states representative of regions throughout the United States, Johnson and Memmott (2006) found a strong relationship between participation in a quality music education program and academic performance, as measured by students' test results on standardized tests in English and mathematics. The authors underscore the purpose of a strong music education, which is not to improve English test scores, but to enhance the quality of one's life through the opportunities and unique experiences that the study of music can provide (Johnson & Memmott, 2006).

It is important to note that the majority of these extrinsic rationale studies that focus on the carryover effects from arts education disciplines to cognitive and non-cognitive domains do not imply any causal inferences. Despite the use of such studies as frequently cited rationales for justifying arts education expenditures (Elpus, 2013a), very few of them demonstrate causal relationships between arts education and other subjects (Hetland & Winner, 2004).

In 2004, Hetland and Winner conducted 10 meta-analytic reviews on the cognitive transfer of arts education instruction to non-arts areas. Hetland and Winner (2004) found that of

the 10 relationships investigated, only three held causal relationships – classroom drama and verbal achievement, music listening and spatial reasoning, and music instruction and spatial reasoning. Of these three causal relationships, the two music relationships were not directly tied to classroom learning and therefore had “no direct implications for education” (Hetland & Winner, 2004). In their closing appeal to arts researchers and policymakers, Hetland and Winner (2004) recommended that future research should focus on teaching and learning in the arts (not in non-arts subjects) and improve their methodology so that findings can become “more trustworthy” (p. 46). While the proponents of an intrinsically motivated rationale for arts education disagree with the proponents of an extrinsically motivated rationale for arts education, they both agree that arts education should be a part of every child’s curriculum.

Problems with Access to Arts Education

Although all students should have access to arts education, such access is distributed inequitably throughout the country (Catterall, 1998; Fowler, 1989; Parsad & Spiegelman, 2012). Fowler (1989), a widely-known arts education advocate, ardently argued that arts programs across the country had been systematically dismantled and arts education was distributed inequitably: “depending upon who you are, where you happen to live, where you go to high school, how well off you happen to be, you might or *might not* have access to study the arts” (p. 62). Problems with access to arts education are most readily demonstrated through an analysis of race/ethnicity and SES. The well-documented factors contributing to these discrepancies include the shift in curricular priorities as a result of the NCLB Act of 2001 and the inadequacies of school funding due to recent budget crises.

Race and Socioeconomic Status

Two recent national studies on music student demographics and course enrollment demonstrate that the discrepancy in music course enrollment between White and Hispanic/Latino students as well as between high- and low-SES students was exacerbated by the implementation of the NCLB Act of 2001 (Elpus, 2014; Elpus & Abril, 2011).

In a national study of the senior class of 2004, Elpus and Abril (2011) found that English Language Learners, low-SES students, and Hispanic students were significantly underrepresented in music programs in the United States. For example, White students comprised 62.3% of the overall senior class population and 65.7% of the music population, while Hispanic students made up 15.1% of the overall senior class population, but only 10.2% of the music population (Elpus & Abril, 2011). In addition, Elpus and Abril (2011) found that a student's SES was significantly associated with participation in music ensembles, with the lowest-SES students significantly underrepresented and the highest-SES students significantly overrepresented.

Similarly, Elpus (2014) found that in 2000, one year before the NCLB Act was signed into law, White students constituted 66.43% of the overall public school enrollment and 69.06% of the music student population (+2.63%), while Hispanic/Latino students constituted 13.48% of the overall population and only 10.51% of the music student population (-2.97%). In 2004, three years after the enactment of the NCLB Act, White students made up 58.41% of the overall population and 62.57% of the music population (+4.16%), while Hispanic/Latino students made up 17.23% of the overall population and only 12.78% of the music population (Elpus, 2014). By 2009, the underrepresentation of Hispanic/Latino students was at its greatest, with these students making up 17.74% of the overall population and only 11.93% of the music population (-5.81%),

whereas White students held relatively constant at 59.51% of the overall population and 63.52% (+4.01%) of the music population (Elpus, 2014).

In one of the largest national studies of arts education in public schools, Parsad and Spiegelman (2012) found that arts education instruction varied greatly depending on a school's concentration of poverty, as measured by the percentage of students eligible for free or reduced-price lunch. At the elementary school level, music was offered at 94% of schools; visual arts was offered at 83% of schools while 4% offered drama and 3% offered dance. However, music was offered at 96% of schools with the highest-quartile-SES but only offered at 87% of the lowest-quartile-SES schools (Parsad & Spiegelman, 2012, Table 128). Results were similar at the secondary school level. Music was again the most common arts discipline offered, with 91% of all schools offering music instruction, 89% offered visual arts instruction, 45% offered drama instruction, and 12% offered dance instruction (Parsad & Spiegelman, 2012, p. 9). Music was offered at 96% of schools with the highest-quartile-SES but only offered at 81% of the lowest-quartile-SES schools (Parsad & Spiegelman, 2012, Table 70). The discrepancies between the lowest-quartile-SES schools and highest-quartile-SES schools remained when comparing visual arts, theater, and dance instruction (Parsad & Spiegelman, 2012).

The inequities in access to arts education along racial and SES lines at the national level are also evident in California. In the 2013-14 school year, 3.8 million (61%) of the State's 6.2 million students qualified for free or reduced-priced meals, a measure of poverty (www.cde.ca.gov). Of these 3.8 million students, 71% of them were Hispanic/Latino (www.cde.ca.gov). During the 2013-2014 school year, only 27% of California's K-12 students that qualified for free and reduced-price meals were enrolled in any visual and performing arts course (CREATE CA, 2015).

Financial Concerns

Financial concerns have influence students' access to arts education in the United States. As the economy declines and school budgets shrink, state and district leaders must evaluate their priorities when deciding what programs to keep or cut (Major, 2013). The NCLB Act of 2001 shifted state and district priorities to curricular subjects that were scrutinized through standardized test scores (Baker, 2012; Major, 2013). In addition to this narrowing of the curriculum under the NCLB era (2001-2014), arts education was greatly impacted by the Great Recession of 2007.

The Great Recession, which began in December 2007 and ended in June 2009, caused great financial stress for the country (U.S. Bureau of Labor and Statistics (USBLS), 2012). A recession is defined as a general slowdown in economic activity, typically indicated by higher unemployment rates and lower productivity rates (USBLS, 2012, p. 1). Unemployment rates doubled from a normal 5% in 2007 to 10% in 2009. In the months following the official end of the recession, unemployment rates remained at 10% in states such as California, Nevada, and Michigan (USBLS, 2012). This loss of taxable income, coupled with the collapse of the housing market, led to losses in state general fund revenues (Baker, 2014).

In California, one of the most impacted states during the Great Recession, the State's education budget was projected to have a deficit of \$19.9 billion primarily as a result of "greater than anticipated decline in General Fund revenues" in the 2010-2011 fiscal year (O'Connell, 2010, p. 1). In addition, State funding for education dropped by about 20% from \$9,261 per pupil down in 2007-2008 to \$7,401 per pupil 2011-2012 (Kaplan, 2014). The State ranked 23rd in per-pupil spending in the country in 2007-2008 and dropped to 34th place during the 2011-2012 school year (www2.census.gov).

This well-documented budget crisis in California is frequently cited as one of the major causes for the decline of arts education program in the State, music programs in particular (CREATE CA, 2015; Music for All, 2004). The impact of the Great Recession in California can be demonstrated by looking briefly at LAUSD. In the 2007-2008 school year, just before the effects of Great Recession were felt, LAUSD's arts education budget was \$32.8 million. By 2011-2012, the arts education budget had decreased by 42% to \$18.8 million (www.achieve.lausd.net, 2015). The decrease in arts education funding paralleled overall district budget trends, however, arts education was one of the most impacted components of district instruction (Abdollah, 2012a). As a result of these budget cuts, the number of elementary arts specialist teachers decreased from 345 in 2008 to 204 in 2012, which led to 53% of the district's elementary school students left without any arts instruction (Abdollah, 2012a). This example of inequitable arts education access as a result of the financial crisis is troubling on its own, yet it is intensified when we recall that LAUSD serves primarily low-income (71%) and Hispanic/Latino (74%) students.

While all school districts in the State experienced budget reductions in light of the Great Recession, not all districts felt the impact at the same magnitude. High-SES districts, such as the La Cañada Unified School District (LCUSD) and South Pasadena Unified School District (SPUSD), turned to educational foundations to provide the financial resources for arts instruction programs. In 2014, the LCUSD Superintendent said that the district had an "exceptional [arts] program" that provided all four arts disciplines to all of its first- through twelfth-grade students due to the "funding efforts" of the La Cañada Flintridge Educational Foundation (Plummer, 2014a, p. 1). The Superintendent added that without the foundation, their programs would be

limited due to funding. LCUSD is made up of primarily White (53%) and Asian (26%) students and serves only a 1.5% low-SES population (www.cde.ca.gov).

In SPUSD, where the population is made up of White (30%), Asian (34%) and Latino/Hispanic (24%) students and 15% low SES students (www.cde.ca.gov), “in the midst of cutbacks in education” the district “chose to keep” its arts education programs in place (Anonymous, 2014, p. 1). SPUSD was able to keep their programs in place as well as expand upon their “already strong arts programs” (Anonymous, 2014) with the financial assistance of the South Pasadena Education Foundation (SPEF) and through local measure revenue. The SPEF states that “while most districts are cutting services,” they “help [their] schools give kids more” (SPEF, 2013, p. 2). As these two examples demonstrate, the impact of budget constraints did not impact arts education programs at high-SES districts when compared to lower-SES districts, especially because of the high-SES districts’ abilities to raise funds through educational foundations and local tax measures. A closer look at school funding will help to reveal how such inequities in school funding exacerbate the inequities in education access (Baker & Corcoran, 2012).

Overview of Educational Finance

Baker and Corcoran (2012) define a state school finance system as a “set of rules, regulations, and policies, which combines state aid with local resources to fund school so they can meet given educational goal” (p. 3). Within an equity framework, an equitable finance system is one that reduces the disparity in per-pupil spending across a state’s districts by providing sufficient resources to all public schools such that students, regardless of their educational settings or personal backgrounds, have equal opportunity to achieve common outcome goals (Baker & Corcoran, 2012; Baker & Green, 2015; Downes & Stiefel, 2015). An

equitable educational finance system is necessary in order to address the racial, ethnic, and socioeconomic disparities in academic achievement and educational access in our country.

In the educational finance literature, the concept of equity can be defined in terms of inputs or outputs (Ladd, 2008). Educational equity in terms of input would mean that all schools would receive equal amounts of educational input, regardless of student or school characteristics (Ladd, 2008). This concept of horizontal equity, or equal treatment of equals, was introduced from public finance to educational finance by Berne and Stiefel (1984). In contrast, educational equity in terms of output would mean that schools would receive varying amounts of resources depending on student characteristics in order to achieve similar educational outcomes (Ladd, 2008); in other words, an “equality of outcomes requires differentiation of inputs” (Baker & Green, 2015, p. 236). This concept of vertical equity, or unequal treatment of unequals, is central to the current discussion of equitable education finance (Berne & Stiefel, 1984).

Reform Litigation and Legislation

Educational finance policy has been greatly influenced by reform litigation over the past 40 years, with school finance lawsuits filed in 45 out of 50 states (Koski & Hahnel, 2015). Reform litigation first emphasized the concept of horizontal equity before vertical equity, both utilizing the Equal Protection Clause of the 14th Amendment of the U.S. Constitution, which protects all citizens within a state’s jurisdiction with the equal protection of the law (Koski & Hahnel, 2015; U.S. Const. amend. XIV).

The Equal Protection Clause was utilized in the landmark 1971 California Supreme Court case, *Serrano v. Priest (Serrano I)*, when the plaintiffs argued that children who lived in school district areas with low property values were receiving unequal treatment because their education funding was a function of community wealth (Glenn & Picus, 2007; Springer, Houck, & Guthrie,

2015). The Court ruled in favor of the plaintiffs and determined that school district wealth was a suspect class and that education was a fundamental right under the State and U.S. Constitution (*Serrano v. Priest*, 1971). Prior to the lawsuit, California schools primarily received their funding from local property taxes, which varied greatly across the State (Bersin, Kirst, & Liu, 2015). As the *Serrano I* ruling mentioned, in 1968-1969 the Baldwin Park school district spent \$577.49 per pupil, while the Beverly Hills school district spend \$1,231.72 per pupil (*Serrano v. Priest*, 1971). In 1972, as a response to the *Serrano I* ruling, California passed Senate Bill 90 to impose a revenue limit that each school district could receive from taxes (SB 90, 1972). SB 90 locked each district's revenue limit to their 1972-1973 spending level, which also locked the pre-existing funding disparities in place (Glenn & Picus, 2007).

The Equal Protection Clause argument that was successful in *Serrano I* was not supported in a U.S. Supreme Court ruling in *San Antonio Independent School District v. Rodriguez* in 1973. This case was similar to *Serrano I*, in which Texas's educational finance system relied heavily on local property taxes that created a large discrepancy between district funding levels (Koski & Hahnel, 2015). However, the U.S. Supreme Court did not find that poor children in poor school districts were a suspect class and that education was not a fundamental interest under the U.S. Constitution (Koski & Hahnel, 2015). The unequal funding system in Texas was left intact as a result of the ruling in *San Antonio Independent School District v. Rodriguez*.

Back in California, the California Supreme Court overturned the *Serrano I* ruling in 1976 with their decision in *Serrano v. Priest II (Serrano II)*. In their ruling, the court found that the disparities in funding that remained despite SB 90's efforts "constituted a violation of the state's equal protection clause" and subsequently rendered the California school finance system

unconstitutional (Glenn & Picus, 2007, p. 384). In addition, the court ruled that the per-pupil expenditures (called the revenue limit) needed to be equalized so that the difference between the district revenue limits would be less than \$100 (*Serrano v. Priest*, 1976). This focus on reducing revenue limits to an equal amount demonstrated the emphasis on horizontal equity in early education reform litigation and legislation. As a result of the *Serrano II* ruling, California passed Assembly Bill 65 in 1977, called the Guaranteed Tax Yield. Under AB 65, each district was guaranteed a certain revenue limit if the district followed a state property tax guideline. The state promised to make up the difference between the revenue limit and the amount each district brought in from the revised property taxes, with the intention of redistributing tax revenues from wealthy districts to poor districts (Glenn & Picus, 2007).

However, Californians instead voted in favor of Proposition 13 in 1978, which limited property tax rates to 1% and capped future increases at 2% per year (CA Const. article XIII A). Proposition 13 resulted in “dramatically slower increases in education spending in California compared with most other states” (Glenn & Picus, 2007, p. 382) because it “drastically reduced” the amount of money that the schools could raise (Glenn & Picus, 2007, p. 385). Glenn and Picus (2007) argued that Proposition 13 demonstrated that Californians “preferred low-quality public schools” to a “drastic redistribution of resources” (p. 393). This thought was reinforced as the passage of Proposition 13 saw the rise of educational foundations, which sought to provide their local communities with the funds they were no longer able to provide through higher property taxes. For example, the Beverly Hills Education Foundation (named in the *Serrano I* and *Serrano II* cases) was started in 1978 (www.bhef.org), the South Pasadena Educational Foundation in 1979 (www.spef4kids.org), and San Marino Schools Foundation in 1980 (www.smsf.org). Despite efforts to reduce the disparity in educational funding, property taxes

currently continue to play a “disproportionate role in inequality” in per-pupil expenditures in California and throughout the country (Baker & Corcoran, 2012, p. 85), primarily because higher-poverty districts are not able to raise as many funds through property taxes than low-poverty districts (Baker & Corcoran, 2012).

As educational funding disparities continued, educational funding reformers instead chose to address funding inequities through a vertical equity lens rather than the previous unsuccessful horizontal equity lens. On May 17, 2000 (the 46th anniversary of the *Brown v. Board of Education* ruling), the class-action lawsuit *Williams v. California* was filed. The lawsuit alleged that the State was failing to provide its public school students with “equal access to instructional materials, safe and decent school facilities, and qualified teachers” (www.cde.ca.gov). The case was not settled until 2004, which resulted in the subsequent Williams Act. The Williams Act sought to “remedy the inequities” in California public schools (Glenn & Picus, 2007, p. 386) by providing students with “equal access to instructional materials, safe schools, and quality teachers” (www.cde.ca.gov). The *Williams* case is significant to the development of reform litigation in that it shifted the focus from monetary equality to providing the non-monetary resources for California students to attain high educational standards (Glenn & Picus, 2007; Oakes, 2004).

Weighted Student Funding

Despite the shifting focus in litigation and legislation from horizontal to vertical equity, scholars believed that the inequities in educational funding would persist unless California did something drastic (Bersin, Kirst, & Liu, 2008; Chambers, Levin, & Shambaugh, 2009; Oakes, 2004; Slater & Scott, 2011). The concept of a weighted student funding (WSF) formula was proposed in California in 2008 as a way to promote equity through the distribution of money for

schools according to need-based student weights, such as low-income, special education, or English Language Learners (ELL) status (Chambers et al., 2009; Ladd, 2008). This acknowledgment that students with “greater need require more resources to have the same opportunities to receive meaningful outcomes” (Affeldt, 2015, p. 3) is the central belief of vertical equity. In addition to improving vertical equity by distributing funding based on student needs, a WSF also increases the autonomy of the school to determine how to best apply those funds (Chambers et al., 2009). Bersin, Kirst, and Liu (2008) proposed a new system for education funding in California that was “more rational, more equitable, and...more politically feasible” (p. 1). Their five-component plan included base funding for all districts in order to fulfill the Williams Act mandates as well as targeted funding for low-income students and ELLs (Bersin et al., 2008). In addition, Bersin et al. (2008) recognized that high concentrations of students that are low-income and ELLs have a negative impact on student achievement and subsequently proposed that such targeting funding should also apply to higher concentrations of these particular students.

Other states such as Texas, have utilized WSF, but only as a result of litigation requiring the state to do so (Slater & Scott, 2011). Although California experienced budget shortfalls as a result of the Great Recession, the State needed to reform their approach to education funding before any litigation pressured the state to respond too quickly (Slater & Scott, 2011) or an improvement in the economy led lawmakers to postpone changes to education funding (Bersin, Kirst, & Liu, 2008).

California’s Local Control Funding Formula

In 2013, California underwent a significant change to its educational finance system by adopting the Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF). Prior to the implementation of LCFF,

California's school finance system involved a markedly more complex system of general funds and over 80 categorical funds, each with its own set of stipulations for a designated use (Bersin, Kirst, & Liu, 2008; Torlakson & Kirst, 2013). LCFF seeks to address the issue of educational equity by adopting a WSF formula that utilizes the concept of vertical equity. LCFF minimizes the State's reliance on categorical funds and instead provides a base grant for each local educational agency (LEA) per unit of average daily attendance in the amount of \$7,643 per student, with slightly additional amounts depending on the grade span (K-3, 4-6, 7-8, 9-12) (www.cde.ca.gov). Beyond the base grant, LCFF provides a supplemental grant that is equal to 20% of the base grant (adjusted for grade span) for students that are ELLs, eligible for free-and reduced-price meals, foster youth, or any combination of these factors that reflect increased costs associated with educating those students (Brown, 2015; www.cde.ca.gov). These student populations are referred to as "targeted disadvantaged students" by the LCFF. If an LEA has a concentration of these targeted disadvantaged students that exceeds 55% of their enrollment, the State will provide the LEA with a concentration grant that is equal to 50% of the adjusted base grant amount (www.cde.ca.gov). Lastly, LCFF aims to provide each LEA with an Economic Recovery Target to ensure each LEA receives at least their pre-recession funding level, adjusted for inflation, by the 2020-2021 school year, the first full implementation year of the LCFF (Brown, 2015).

In order for the LCFF funds to be disbursed, every LEA in the state is required to "develop, adopt, and annually update" their three-year Local Control Accountability Plan (LCAP) that identifies the specific activities the local educational agency will complete annually to address the state's eight priority areas (www.cde.ca.gov). The eight priority areas "encompass the key ingredients of high-quality educational programs" (Taylor, 2013, p.10) and include

student achievement, student engagement, school climate, parental involvement, basic services, implementation of Common Core State Standards, course access, and other student outcomes (<http://www.cde.ca.gov>). The LCAP is valid for three years, beginning July 1, 2014, through June 30, 2017, and requires annual updates using a state-adopted template.

LCFF and Arts Education

The primary intent of LCFF is intended to address the issues in students' overall educational access and equity. Various arts education organizations throughout California, such as the California Alliance for Arts Education, California Arts Council, CREATE CA, Arts for LA, and the Los Angeles County Arts Commission/Arts for All, viewed the creation of the LCFF and the initial LCAP development process as an opportunity to address the arts education equity gap as mentioned by Duncan (2012). CREATE CA viewed this particular time period in the state as the "window of opportunity" to ensure that California students have equitable access to a high-quality arts education (CREATE CA, 2015, p. 18).

These arts education organizations believed that arts education could contribute to each of the State's eight priority areas under the LCFF. In their recent report to Tom Torlakson, the California State Superintendent of Public Instruction, CREATE CA (2015) provided seven recommendations to build and sustain a more creative education for California children, one of which included arts education funding. By providing specific LCFF funding for arts education in district LCAPs, traditionally underserved students in general education settings could also be supported through arts education programs at their schools.

Conclusion

This chapter provided an overview of the history of arts education in the United States, describing the struggles that arts education has encountered from the launch on Sputnik in 1957

up to Race to the Top and the implementation of the Common Core State Standards. The recent passage of the Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015 provides an opportunity to improve the status of the arts after years of marginalization due to an accountability-centric climate. The chapter then provided a brief description of the intrinsic (arts for arts' sake) and extrinsic (carryover effects of arts education) rationales for arts education. Next, the chapter discussed the national problem of access to arts education through race and socioeconomic status as well as financial concerns brought about by the Great Recession of 2007. The overview of educational finance introduced the concepts of an equitable education finance system, as well as horizontal and vertical equity, before outlining key litigation and legislation, such as the *Serrano* cases and Proposition 13 in California. The chapter then briefly discussed the concept of weighted student funding as the basis of California's Local Control Funding Formula. Lastly, the chapter examined the opportunity for California students to have equitable access to high-quality arts education programs as a result of LCFF.

The purpose of this study was to examine how the introduction of LCFF contributed to a change in arts education programs at the district level and how LCFF impacted the work of arts education teachers at two Los Angeles County school districts that included arts education in their LCAPs. By focusing on these two school districts, we can better understand how the LCFF implementation process unfolded and how it impacted arts education within each site. Providing a robust arts education is vital to providing a well-rounded education for students (Americans for the Arts, 2005; Duncan, 2012), but too many children, especially minority and students of low socioeconomic backgrounds, do not have equal access to them (Baker, 2012; Catterall, 1998; Catterall, Chapleau, & Iwanaga, 1999; Parsad & Spiegelman, 2012). The recent implementation of the LCFF is an opportunity to address the issue of the arts opportunity gap and educational

equity by restoring programs and positively impacting arts education programs (CREATE CA, 2015; Duncan, 2012).

Chapter Three

Methodology

The national problem of inequitable access to arts education is magnified in California, where years of budget cuts have significantly impacted arts education access for minority students and students of low socioeconomic status (Baker, 2012; Catterall, 1998; Catterall, Chapleau, & Iwanaga, 1999; Parsad & Spiegelman, 2012; CREATE CA, 2015). California's LCFF provides school districts with funding opportunities to address issues of educational equity, which can include arts education (CREATE CA, 2015). The purpose of this multi-site case study was to examine how the introduction of LCFF contributed to a change in arts education by focusing on two school districts in Los Angeles County - California Redwood School District and Golden Poppy School District. I investigated each district's rationales for including arts education in their LCAP and explored each district's arts education teachers' perceptions of how LCFF impacted their work. In order to best examine the changes and impact of LCFF on arts education in these school districts, my study addressed the following research questions:

1. Within each of the two school districts, to what extent did the introduction of LCFF contribute to a change in arts education?
 - a. What changes, if any, did each district make with respect to arts education: funding, staffing, student access, curriculum, teacher support, and supplies and resources?
2. According to district leaders, what factors contributed to decisions regarding changes in arts education funding/inclusion of arts education in the LCAP?
3. How have arts education teachers experienced changes, if any, in their work and support since the introduction of arts education into their districts' LCAP as a result of the LCFF?

Research Design

This investigation utilized a qualitative, multi-site case study design, focusing on each of the two district's LCAP development process in order to better understand their rationale for including arts education in their LCAP. Studies that focus primarily on process, understanding and meaning are the key characteristics of qualitative studies (Merriam, 2009). There are 1,028 school districts in California and 81 school districts in Los Angeles County. However, this study focused on two Los Angeles County school districts so that I could deeply explore each district's program and the LCAP creation process. Such is the focus of a case study design, a type of qualitative design in which the researcher explores, in-depth, a program, process, or one or more individuals using a variety of data collection methods over a sustained period of time (Creswell, 2014). A case study approach is also a desirable strategy when attempting to conduct an extensive and in-depth description of a social phenomenon (Yin, 2014). Because it was my intent to investigate the social phenomenon of each district's LCAP creation process, a qualitative multi-site case study approach was best suited for this study.

Research Population

Each of California's 1,028 school districts is required to submit an LCAP to their local educational agency. However, my population of reference includes only those school districts in California that included arts education in their initial LCAP (2014-2017), excluding any revisions or updates for LCAPs in subsequent years. This population of school districts in California that included arts education in their LCAP was then narrowed down Los Angeles County school districts, due to the availability of data on arts education in County LCAPs (Arts for LA, Arts for All, & Los Angeles County Arts Commission, 2015). Of the 81 school districts in Los Angeles County, 62 districts (77%) included arts education in their LCAP in at least one of eight LCFF State priority areas. The population was narrowed further to include only the

school districts that included arts education in at least five of eight LCFF State priority areas, which resulted in 22 school districts.

Of these 22 school districts, potential research sites needed to reflect at a minimum the Los Angeles County demographics of at least 65% Hispanic/Latino student population and a 68% socioeconomically disadvantaged student population according to the 2014-2015 enrollment figures provided by the State (www.cde.ca.gov). This eligibility threshold resulted in eight Los Angeles County school districts that met the criteria. Next, each of the eight qualifying school districts was categorized by enrollment size: small (up to 9,999 students); medium (10,000 to 19,999 students); and large (20,000+ students), which resulted in three small, two medium, and three large school districts. I then selected two convenience samples from the eight possible cases - a medium school district and a large school district.

Research Sites

This qualitative, multi-site case study focused on two Los Angeles County school districts that included arts education in varying degrees in their LCAP and represented the demographics and socioeconomic backgrounds of Los Angeles County's students – California Redwood School and District, Golden Poppy School District. The California Redwood School District is a large school district that serves a 74% Hispanic/Latino student population and a 78% socio-economically disadvantaged student population. The California Redwood School District included arts education in five of eight LCFF State priority areas in their LCAP. The Golden Poppy School District, a medium school district, included arts education in all eight LCFF State priority areas, one of only five school districts in the County to do so. The Golden Poppy School District serves a 94% Hispanic/Latino student population, with 97% of its students designated as socioeconomically disadvantaged.

Data Collection Methods

The three primary data collection methods for this study were document analysis, questionnaires, and interviews.

Document Analysis

In order to best answer the first research question regarding changes in arts education in each district's LCAP related to funding, discrete arts education staff, curriculum, teacher support, supplies and resources, and student access to arts education, I conducted a content analysis of district documents. Document analysis is best described as a systematic procedure for describing the content of communications (Merriam, 2009, p. 152). More specifically, I conducted a content analysis of documentary information such as the emails, school board meeting agendas, bulletins, and newspaper articles pertaining to arts education within each of the research sites. I also conducted a content analysis of archival records such as the district LCAP, service records, and district budgets (Appendix A). Documentation and archival records are considered stable, unobtrusive, and can contain specific information related to the case study (Merriam, 2009; Yin, 2014). Yin (2014) notes that perhaps the most important use of documents is to corroborate and augment evidence from other sources (p. 107). Thus, content analysis of district documents can serve to triangulate data from other sources used in this study such as interview and questionnaire data.

Although document analysis has clear benefits, it also has its limitations. For example, the documents might be difficult to retrieve; there is a possibility of researcher bias in selecting the documents; and the documents themselves might have a reporting bias the researcher is unaware of (Yin, 2014). Reporting bias is possible because the document was written for a specific purpose unrelated to the researcher's questions or intentions (Merriam, 2009; Yin,

2014). Despite these limitations, content analysis of district documents was best suited to discover the changes in arts education as a result of LCFF implementation.

Questionnaires

In order to address the third research question regarding arts education teacher perceptions of the impact of LCFF, I utilized an online questionnaire (Appendix D) to provide a general overview of trends, attitudes, and opinions of a sample from each district (Creswell, 2014). Arts education teachers were defined as full-time equivalent K-12 teachers of any one or more of the four arts disciplines of dance, drama/theater, music (instrumental or vocal), and visual arts.

| District | District Size | Total # of Arts Ed Teachers | Completed Questionnaires | Questionnaire Response Rate | # Arts Ed Teacher Interviews | # District Interviews |
|--------------------|---------------|-----------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------------|-----------------------|
| California Redwood | 20,000+ | n= 1,664 | n=139 | 8.35% | 20 | 3 |
| Golden Poppy | 10,000-19,999 | n=17 | n=11 | 64.7% | 4 | 3 |

TABLE 1. INTERVIEW AND QUESTIONNAIRE RESPONSES.

In the California Redwood School District, the Arts Education Department personnel sent an email on my behalf explaining the study to all arts education teachers (n=1,664) within the District on January 29, 2016. The email included a link for the Qualtrics questionnaire, which was available to teachers for approximately six weeks. The Arts Education Department sent two follow-up emails to encourage teachers to participate in the study. In total, 139 of California Redwood arts education teachers completed the online questionnaire. This low response rate of 8.35% can most likely be attributed to not having access to the email addresses of arts education teachers within California Redwood. Email address access would have allowed me to send personalized email reminders through the Qualtrics platform to improve response rates,

especially to those participants who might have opened their email and clicked on the questionnaire link but did not begin or complete the questionnaire. Another factor that might have affected the response rate is the lack of an incentive for questionnaire completion.

In the Golden Poppy School District, the District's Visual and Performing Arts Coordinator sent an email on my behalf with the online questionnaire link to the District's 17 arts education teachers on January 27, 2016. The Golden Poppy School District allowed me to have access to the arts education teachers' email addresses, and I sent two personalized follow-up emails to encourage arts education teachers to participate in the study. The online questionnaire was available for approximately 10 weeks. In total, 11 Golden Poppy School District arts education teachers completed the online questionnaire.

Arts education teachers were able to complete the questionnaire confidentially; teachers only shared their contact information if they were interested in participating in an interview. The online questionnaire served two purposes; the first was to collect demographic information about the arts education teachers within each district, and the second purpose was to obtain general information using Likert scale items on arts teachers' perceptions of change in arts education as a result of LCFF within their district. Arts education teachers were asked about the level of arts education taught, the specific arts discipline taught, their number of years as an arts education teacher overall and within their district, as well as the number of arts disciplines offered at their school and number of full-time equivalent arts education teachers at their site. After these general demographic questions, arts education teachers were asked to answer scaled items to compare the number of arts education teachers, courses offered, students enrolled, professional development opportunities, and the amount of funds available for supplies and resources for the current academic year to the previous academic year to determine if any changes occurred at

their school. Next, arts education teachers were asked to rate statements about arts education support within their school and district, as well as statements about the perceived impact of LCFF within their school and district. Arts education teachers had the opportunity to comment on the impact of arts education on their district (if any) and share additional comments. The final questionnaire item asked participants to share their contact information if they were willing to participate in an interview to further discuss their views about arts education and LCFF in their school and district.

Interviews

I utilized interviews in order to address the second and third research questions concerning district-level perceptions and arts education teacher perception of the impact of LCFF. For this study, the term decision-maker refers to a district-level person primarily responsible for authoring their district's LCAP, or who played a role in the development of the LCAP. Titles for decision-makers varied greatly between districts, from arts adviser to the assistant superintendent of curriculum and instruction.

The semi-structured interview protocols were designed to elicit open-ended responses about decision-makers' (Appendix B) and arts education teachers' (Appendix C) views and opinions about arts education in their district's LCAP (Creswell, 2014). Interviews were ideal for this multi-site case study because they produced more detailed and insightful information about the LCAP creation process within each of the two districts than document content analysis or surveys (Yin, 2014). In addition to providing insightful information, the interviews provided an opportunity for network sampling that expanded the list of potential interview participants. Weaknesses of utilizing interviews included response bias; poor recall inaccuracies, and reflexivity in which the interviewee provided the interviewer with the information they believed

the interviewer wanted to hear (Yin, 2014). Although interviews can be influenced by the presence of the researcher, interviews provided important contextual information about the LCAP creation process as well as participants' personal experiences with the process and implementation of LCFF (Creswell, 2014).

I conducted the interviews in the mode (in-person or over the phone) and location of the participant's preference. In the decision-makers' interviews, I asked participants about their level of involvement in the LCAP creation process, their perceptions about arts education, as well as their rationale for including arts education in their district's LCAP. In their interviews, I asked the arts education teachers about their perceptions of change in arts education programs at the school and district-level.

In the California Redwood School District, I conducted interviews with three district-level decision-makers (two in-person and one over the phone) over the course of three weeks from February 4, 2016, to February 29, 2016. The decision-maker interviews ranged in length from 34 to 90 minutes. I also conducted interviews with 20 California Redwood arts education teachers (two in-person and 18 over the phone) over the course of five weeks, from February 2, 2016, to March 9, 2016. The teacher interviews ranged in length from 20 to 60 minutes.

In the Golden Poppy School District, I conducted in-person interviews with three district-level decision-makers over the course of two weeks, from February 10, 2016, to February 22, 2016. The decision-maker interviews ranged in length from 27 to 43 minutes. I also conducted interviews with four Golden Poppy arts education teachers (one in-person and three over the phone) over the course of four weeks from February 6, 2016, to March 8, 2016. The teacher interview length ranged from 30 to 45 minutes.

Data Analysis Methods

The following sections outline the specific approaches that I utilized to analyze data collected for this multi-site case study.

Document analysis

In the California Redwood School District, I conducted a content analysis of their initial LCAP (2014-2017) and revised LCAP (2015-2018), the 2014-2015 and 2015-2016 District budget, and the 2014-2015 and 2015-2016 Arts Education Department budget. In the Golden Poppy School District, I analyzed the initial LCAP (2014-2017) and revised LCAP (2015-2018), the 2014-2015 budget, and the school board agendas and minutes.

In order to have a systematic content analysis process (Merriam, 2009), I conducted keyword searches for the following terms on each of the documents in both districts: art, arts, band, dance, drama, music, orchestra, STEAM, theater, theatre, visual art, and VAPA (visual and performing arts). Results from this keyword search were then descriptively coded (Miles, Huberman, & Saldaña, 2014) according to the six categories from the first research question, which were funding, staffing, student access, curriculum, teacher support, and supplies and resources. These six categories were adapted from a 2015 study on arts education in Los Angeles County school district LCAPs (Arts for LA, Arts for All, & Los Angeles County Arts Commission, 2015). These categories served as provisional codes, which I could revise, modify, delete or expand to include new codes as I analyzed the data (Miles et al., 2014, p.77). Although I utilized these deductive codes, I also allowed for data to be coded inductively into emergent categories (Miles et al., 2014). I followed the two major stages of coding as described by Saldaña (2013) (as cited in Miles et al., 2014), which involves a First Cycle of chunking data into the provisional codes, and then develops into a Second Cycle of narrowing the data into a

smaller number of categories. Data found in documents can be treated in the same manner as data from interviews or observations (Merriam, 2009), therefore I used the data gathered from this document analysis to triangulate data from the decision-maker and arts education teacher interviews as well as the arts education teacher questionnaires.

Questionnaires

I utilized the online questionnaire data to investigate arts education teacher perceptions about the impact of LCFF on arts education in their school and district. At the close of the administration, questionnaire data were exported into SPSS for analysis. The descriptive statistics of each scaled response are reported for Golden Poppy School District by respondent. In California Redwood, the descriptive statistics are reported by respondent for district-level questions and across sites for school-level responses, because unlike the Golden Poppy School District, the California Redwood School District had elementary arts education teachers that taught at multiple sites. These California Redwood arts education teachers had the opportunity to answer questions on the questionnaire about each of the sites they worked at (up to five sites). Thus, the data reported as California Redwood site data reflect the teachers' responses across all of their school sites, rather than at the individual teacher level. The participants' open-ended responses were coded along the same six categories as with the document analysis, along with emergent categories. Questionnaire data were organized by overall district perceptions and subdivided by grade level taught (elementary or secondary) in California Redwood School District. Because of the small sample size in the Golden Poppy School District, grade level (middle or high school) and arts education discipline taught was omitted in order to protect each respondent's identity.

Interviews

Interviews with district decision-makers and arts education teachers were also used to investigate the impact of LCFF on arts education within each school district. I audio-recorded each interview using a digital voice recorder while also taking notes to add comments and develop follow-up questions as they arose. After each interview, I sent the audio recording to a rev.com, a secure, online transcription service provider. Once I received the transcription file from the service provider, I listened to the audio recording while reading the transcription to review it for accuracy. After this accuracy check, I emailed the transcription to each participant for member checking, a respondent validation process in which a participant reviews the transcription to determine whether the interpretation was accurate or if there were any areas that were misunderstood (Creswell, 2014; Maxwell, 2013; Merriam, 2009). After the transcript was member-checked, I coded the transcripts for emerging categories as well as matching to the six existing categories utilized for the document analysis and questionnaires. This process of pattern matching is considered one of the most desirable techniques for case study data analysis (Yin, 2015).

Ethical Issues

The primary ethical issue surrounding this multi-site case study revolves around my employment within one of the research sites, California Redwood School District. As a current arts education teacher within the district, other arts education teachers might be wary of sharing information with me. At both research sites, I was clear about my role as a student researcher and emphasized that this study was being conducted as part of my doctoral studies and was not solicited by either district to conduct this research. I provided the study information sheet (Appendix E) to all participants. Teachers completed the online questionnaire anonymously; I

only received personal identifying information if a teacher provided it because they were interested in participating in an interview. The names of each district, its decision-makers and arts education teacher interview participants were given a pseudonym to protect their identities. In addition, interviews with decision-makers and arts education teachers were conducted at a location of the participant's choosing. Any documents containing individual identifiers were stored separately and securely as a password protected file on an external hard drive.

Overall findings from each district will only be shared with that specific site and without individual identifiers. When presenting my findings to each district, I will emphasize that it is my primary purpose to understand and describe their LCAP creation process, not to criticize it. The possibility of undesirable findings emerging from the study might make districts wary, and I will remind districts that all findings will be reported using pseudonyms, and every precaution necessary will be taken to preserve their anonymity.

Credibility, Validity, and Reliability

As with any case study approach, the primary threat to the credibility of this study is a lack of generalizability due to small sample size. Research sites were selected because they included at least five out of eight state priority areas in their district's LCAP and reflected the demographics and socioeconomic status of Los Angeles County students. While other districts not included in this study might be similar in size, student population, or socioeconomic status, they are not completely the same and findings from this study are not intended to represent Los Angeles County or its 78 other school districts as a whole. The findings from this study are also not intended to dictate or prescribe how to include arts education in a district's LCAP either in Los Angeles County or any other district in the state. This multi-site case study intended to provide an in-depth description of the process of implementing LCFF in each school district and

how that implementation impacted arts education programs within each district. Another threat to credibility is the low response rate of 8.35% from the arts education teacher questionnaires in California Redwood. As mentioned previously, this low response rate is most likely a result of not having access to the email addresses of the arts education teachers within that District.

To strengthen the credibility of this study, data from document analysis, arts education teacher questionnaires, and decision-makers and arts education teacher interviews were triangulated to determine common themes within each school district. Triangulation of such data is particularly important in order to validate findings that deal predominantly with participant perceptions and recollection of the past process of the LCAP creation. To address potential researcher bias, I utilized standardized protocols and coding procedures. For example, the document content analysis was conducted in a detailed and uniform manner across documents within each school district (Appendix A). The interview protocols (Appendices B and C) provided a consistent format for each of the 30 interviews I conducted, and my data analysis process also utilized a reliable method.

Summary

This qualitative, multi-site case study utilized document analysis, questionnaires, and interviews to investigate the process of implementing LCFF within the California Redwood School District and Golden Poppy School District and how that implementation impacted arts education programs within each of these sites. Although the results from this study are not generalizable, each District's process, with its strengths and weaknesses, can serve as a broad example for other school districts and counties across the State as to how they could incorporate arts education into their LCAPs or how to improve their existing arts education services to positively impact the students they serve.

CHAPTER FOUR

Findings

This study investigated how the introduction of California's Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF) contributed to changes in arts education at the district level and how arts education teachers experienced those changes at their individual work sites. I conducted this multi-site case study at two Los Angeles County school districts - California Redwood School District and Golden Poppy School District. I sought to answer the following research questions:

1. Within each of the two school districts, to what extent did the introduction of the LCFF contribute to a change in arts education?
 - a. What changes, if any, did each district make with respect to arts education: funding, staffing, student access, curriculum, teacher support, and supplies and resources?
2. According to district leaders, what factors contributed to decisions regarding changes in arts education funding/inclusion of arts education in the Local Control and Accountability Plan (LCAP)?
3. How have arts education teachers experienced changes in their work and support since the introduction of arts education into their districts' LCAP as a result of the LCFF?

The findings in this chapter are based on my analysis of the following data within the California Redwood School District: district documents, including the initial and revised LCAPs, the 2014-2015 and 2015-2016 budget, and the arts education department budget for 2014-2015 and 2015-2016; interviews with three district-level decision-makers; questionnaire results from 139 arts education teachers; and interviews with 20 arts education teachers. The Golden Poppy findings are based on my analysis of the following data: the initial LCAP (2014-2017) and the revised LCAP (2015-2018); the 2014-2015 budget; school board agendas and minutes;

interviews with three district-level decision-makers; questionnaire results from 11 arts education teachers; and interviews with four arts education teachers.

This chapter first describes the case study of California Redwood School District, focusing first on the district perspective through data from the analyses of the 2014-2015 and 2015-2016 school year documents and three decision-maker interviews. The chapter then focuses on the California Redwood arts education teacher perspective through data from 139 questionnaires and 20 teacher interviews. The chapter then describes the case study of Golden Poppy School District. Similar to the California Redwood case study, this section first focuses on the district perspective with data from document analyses from the 2014-2015 and 2015-2016 school years as well as from the three decision-maker interviews. The chapter concludes with an investigation of the Golden Poppy arts education teacher perspective by analyzing data from 11 questionnaires and four teacher interviews.

Case Study One: California Redwood School District

The District Perspective: New Resources and a Renewed Commitment

Funding for new initiatives and Targeted Student Populations. The introduction of LCFF contributed to an increase in funding for the arts through new investments such as the Elementary Administrators, Libraries, and Arts Plan and the availability of arts allocation to every school site. LCFF also contributed to a change in the way the Arts Education Department hired and distributed teachers and by shifting the primary budgetary decision-making power to the school site principal.

The District increased the amount of general funding available for arts education. Pre-LCAP (2013-2014), the Arts Education Department's budget was \$19.9 million; in the first year of the LCAP (2014-2015) the Department's budget increased to \$22.7 million (\$18.6 million of

which came from LCFF base funds), and in the second year of the LCAP (2015-2016), resources grew even more to \$27.5 million (\$4.6 million from LCFF base funds).

From these funds, the Arts Education Department made arts allocations available for every school site in the district, which constitutes a new investment in the arts as a result of LCFF. Pre-LCFF (2013-2014), there was no money available for arts allocations. In the first year of the LCAP (2014-2015), the Arts Education Department made \$1 million available for these arts allocations. In the second year of the LCAP (2015-2016), the Department provided \$800,000 for arts allocations. According to the Arts Education Department Update #4 (November 19, 2015), the arts allocations could be utilized by the schools to support arts programming, to purchase arts materials, equipment, textbooks, and arts partnerships, or for teacher professional development or arts field trips. The amount of the allocation varied at each of the school sites and ranged from \$1,000 to \$10,000 depending on the school's level of need.

In the 2014-2015 LCAP and 2014-2015 Budget, California Redwood made a new investment for arts education with LCFF supplemental funds for its Elementary Administrators, Libraries, and Arts Plan in the amount of \$2.5 million. This plan sought to provide administrative and library services “supported by a Common Core-aligned arts plan that would be integrated into the elementary curriculum to support literacy and numeracy basic services” for the District’s Targeted Student Populations (TSP) of English Learners, low-income and/or foster youth (California Redwood 2014-2015 LCAP). The District determined which schools were in need of an arts education teacher based on the results of their Arts Equity Assessment (AEA). The AEA identified schools sites that had low offerings of arts education curriculum and courses and subsequently began realigning its K-12 program so that it could better serve the schools with arts program deficits and TSP. According to the 2015-2016 LCAP and 2015-2016 Budget, the

District increased its arts investment in the Elementary Administrators, Libraries, and Arts Plan to \$26.4 million using LCFF supplemental funds.

The introduction of LCFF in California Redwood also impacted the way the Arts Education Department hired and distributed teachers throughout the district through its use of the Arts Equity Assessment, which identified school sites that had low offerings of arts education curriculum and courses. Schools that were considered arts deficient and/or had high populations of the Targeted Student Populations of English Learners, low-income and/or foster youth were given priority to ensure they had at least one arts education teacher at their school site. This study was unable to determine if LCFF contributed to changes in student access to arts education courses or teacher support beyond professional development.

Enthusiastic Support for Arts Education among District Leaders

Description of district-level participants. The California Redwood Arts Education Department has 10 people on staff to service the arts education needs of all K-12 students in the District. There is an Executive Director, a K-12 Arts Coordinator, four K-12 Arts Specialists and four K-12 Advisers in each of the four disciplines. I conducted interviews with John, the Executive Director; Paul, the K-12 Arts Coordinator; and George, one of the K-12 Advisers. The interview participants' years of experience within California Redwood ranged from two to 28 years, with the average years of experience within California Redwood of 15.3 years.

According to these district leaders in California Redwood, the primary factor that contributed to the decision to include arts education in the LCAP was the District's prior commitment to arts education as stated in a Board of Education resolution. The introduction of LCFF provided the District with an opportunity to begin to address their goals for arts education programs within California Redwood.

John had a year and a half of experience within California Redwood; his arrival coincided with the implementation of the District's initial LCAP that was effective beginning July 1, 2014. John was not involved in the District's LCAP development process, as he was not yet an employee of California Redwood during the LCAP planning phase (early 2014). He had heard from his colleagues that the LCAP development process in California Redwood involved a variety of stakeholders, including parents, school and district administrators, as well as young community arts advocates. John believed the District's previous Superintendent had been a champion of the arts who advocated for the inclusion of the arts in any core curriculum.

Paul had 28 years of experience within the District, 16 of which he worked with the California Redwood Arts Education Department. Although Paul held a district-level position at the time the California Redwood LCAP development, he was not involved in the planning of the document. However, he did have an opportunity to share his opinion as part of the stakeholder groups. Paul was considered by his colleagues and arts education teachers within the District to be a respected source of institutional knowledge.

George had 16 years of experience within California Redwood, three of which he had spent in his current position as a K-12 arts adviser. George's position at the district office began at the same time LCFF was being implemented in California. He was not directly involved in the development of California Redwood's LCAP. However, George believed that the inclusion of arts education in the District's LCAP would have been through Paul's efforts.

LCFF brightens outlook for California Redwood's arts programs. All three district-level participants described the District arts education program before LCFF implementation as a time of significant cuts to budget and personnel. John said that the economic downturn in 2007 had "dramatically impacted the arts in a negative way." The Arts Education Department budget

went from \$32.8 million in the 2007-2008 school year down to \$18.8 million in 2011-2012. In that same time frame, the Arts Education Department dropped from 31 employees to one employee and was considered a support branch only for the elementary teachers. Paul, who was that one remaining employee, said: "I was a twig at the time, there was no (arts education) branch."

The District also drastically cut arts education teacher positions. Paul described that period as the years of "The Great RIFs," (which stands for the Reduction in Force notices that must legally go out to all teachers by March 15 of the year if a district does not intend to rehire them for the following school year). For multiple years in a row, Paul prepared the paperwork to "lay off every single one of the elementary teachers" and then prepared the paperwork to hire them all back again once the district office confirmed the funding for their positions for the next school year. John said the experiences of those teachers "stayed deeply etched in their minds" and they referred to that time as "the dark ages." Now with LCFF, John admitted that there was still a degree of uneasiness on the part of the teachers, but there was a growing sense of stability, just enough "to make you feel a little bit better."

Although none of the three participants was directly involved in the development of California Redwood's LCAP, they all believed the District included arts education in the plan as a result of a 2012 School Board resolution in which the Board recognized the arts as a core subject within the district. In this resolution, the California Redwood School Board committed to restoring funds to the Arts Education Department to match or exceed the 2007-2008 funding levels (\$32.8 million) to ensure sequential arts education course offerings for all elementary and secondary schools. John said that because of that resolution, it only made sense that the arts were included in the LCFF structure because the arts were part of the core curriculum and the

District had made recent efforts to increase or better sustain the core curriculum efforts. George believed LCFF provided an opportunity to see the School Board's arts plan to fruition. Paul added that because the Board resolution named the arts as a core subject, the District "had to include arts education in the LCAP."

John believed that California Redwood has made the arts a high priority since his arrival in the district. John said the District had "seriously tried to address supporting the arts as was designed in the LCAP." As a result of LCFF funding, the Arts Education Department began recovering in numbers from one employee in 2011 up to 10 in 2016 and began to hire arts teachers again after years of hiring freezes. In the 2015-2016 school year, the Arts Education Department utilized \$4.5 million of LCFF funds to hire 45 arts education teachers, including 20 secondary teachers. Although the hiring of secondary teachers might not appear to be significant, it is helpful to remember that, before LCFF, the Arts Education Department almost exclusively served the needs of elementary arts teachers. Now that the district had begun implementing LCFF, "every initiative the Arts Education Department did, was now a K-12 effort, not just K-5," John said. The hiring of the arts education teachers was aligned with the District LCAP goals and approved budget expenditures.

John also mentioned that the District would be making a "huge investment" in elementary instrumental music because it was the largest arts discipline offered at the elementary school level. About a month after the interview, the District purchased hundreds of instruments for its elementary school music programs. The District utilized about \$350,000 of LCFF Supplemental funds for Targeted Student Populations for this expenditure. The purchase of these musical instruments demonstrated how LCFF funding was facilitating the Arts Education Department's efforts to "begin bolstering programs" the way that John described during his interview.

Even with LCFF, challenges for arts education loom. Despite this increase in funding for arts education programs in California Redwood as a result of LCFF, the district-level participants believed that arts education programs still faced challenges within the district. John felt confident in the School Board's and Superintendent's commitment to support the arts through LCFF but also expressed some doubt; "I hope and pray that the commitment to the arts, as indicated through the LCAP, is maintained and not taken away" due to the budgetary issues the district was still facing. John and Paul also said that, although the arts are part of the core curriculum within the district and LCFF school-based budgets are flexible, school principals might not be choosing to invest their LCFF dollars in the arts. George asked, "The arts now have access to the same money as English Language Arts and mathematics, but how are principals utilizing LCFF for the good of arts education?"

All three participants believed that the biggest impact and challenge for arts education as a result of LCFF was the shift in decision-making from district-level to school-level administrators. John said that with LCFF, the school site principals "really have control over their budget and their dollars" as the instructional leaders of their schools, and Paul highlighted the fact that the District did not give principals specific directives regarding how to spend their funds but instead received "strong recommendations from the District's curriculum and instruction office. Principals have the sole discretion on how they allocate their LCFF dollars, called Targeted Student Population (TSP) Funds. TSP funds, as intended by LCFF, are flexible in that they can be spent on whatever the school principal deems helpful towards the achievement of TSPs at the school. The only requirement for the TSP funds budget is to provide a reasonable justification for how the proposed expenditure will assist in the achievement of the school's TSPs. Principals are required to include a proposed budget for TSP funds in their

school's Single Plan for Student Achievement. However, the budget for TSP funds does not require the approval or recommendations from any of the school's site committees. A school's TSP budget requires review and approval from the California Redwood Local District Director, Superintendent, and Fiscal Department; however, none of these District-level personnel provide input on how a school should utilize its TSP funds. There are currently no accountability measures beyond District review to ensure that funds are spent as stated in the TSP funds budget. Participants generally agreed that principals might prioritize other initiatives over arts education. Paul described that, in some cases, like the 20 secondary schools that did not have an arts education teacher at their sites, principals spend their money in other areas and then say, "Oh no! I have no money for the arts."

Mixed Feelings About LCFF Among Arts Education Teachers

Description of teacher participants. California Redwood has 1,664 arts education teachers that provide arts instruction in all four disciplines of dance, drama, music, and visual arts to its K-12 students. There are 74 dance teachers (4.5%), 256 drama teachers (15.4%), 462 music teachers (27.8%), and 872 visual arts teachers (52.4%). The California Redwood Arts Education Department personnel explained this study via email to all 1,664 arts education teachers on Friday, January 29, 2016. The email included a link to the Qualtrics questionnaire and the Arts Education Department sent two follow-up emails to all teachers reminding them to participate. The online questionnaire was available for approximately six weeks.

At the end of the administration, 139 arts education teachers had completed the Qualtrics questionnaire, which represents 8.35% of the total arts education teachers within California Redwood. Of the 139 respondents, 18 were dance teachers (13%); 41 were drama teachers (29%); 64 were music teachers (46%), and 23 were visual arts teachers (17%) (six teachers

taught two arts disciplines). The questionnaire sample thus includes an overrepresentation of dance, drama, and music teacher and a significant underrepresentation of visual arts teachers, who represent 52.4% of all arts education teachers within the district, but only 17% of the questionnaire sample. The respondents' years of experience within California Redwood ranged from one year to 40 years, with the average years of teaching experience within California Redwood of 12.90 years.

Nearly three-quarters (73%) of respondents taught an arts discipline at one school site; one respondent taught at three school sites (0.9%); four respondents taught at four school sites (3.5%), and 26 respondents taught at five school sites within California Redwood (22.6%). Typically, secondary teachers (middle and high school) teach at one school site, whereas elementary teachers teach at four to five school sites. Nearly one-third (29%) of respondents taught at the elementary school level, another 29% taught at the middle school level, and 47% of respondents taught at the high school level.

Of these 139 respondents, 29.5% indicated that they were interested in an interview to discuss further their thoughts about the impact of LCFF on arts education within California Redwood and provided their contact information. I contacted teachers on a rolling basis via email as they completed the online questionnaire with the goal of interviewing 50% of interested participants in all four disciplines and teaching levels (elementary and secondary). Of the 41 interested teachers, two were dance teachers (4.87%), 14 were drama teachers (34.1%), 20 were music teachers (48.7%), and five were visual arts teachers (12.2%). In total, I contacted 34 interested teachers and received responses from 20 teachers.

The 20 interviews (two in-person and 18 over the phone) with arts education teachers were conducted over the course of five weeks. Interview length ranged from 20 minutes to 60

minutes. I interviewed two dance teachers, six drama teachers, 11 music teachers, and one visual arts teacher. Of these teachers, 11 taught elementary school arts education courses, six taught middle school arts education courses, and three taught high school arts education courses. The interview participants' average years of teaching experience within California Redwood was 15.3 years. Data from the questionnaire are reported across teachers (out of 139 responses) and school sites because the arts education teachers were provided with the opportunity to answer questions about each of the sites they worked at in the Qualtrics questionnaire. Thus, the data reported as site data reflects the teachers' responses across all of their school sites, rather than at the individual teacher level.

Teachers perceived greater support at district, rather than site, level. I gauged the impact of LCFF and arts education support at the district-level through the use of three questions on both the teacher questionnaire and interviews; two questions were Likert items, and one question was a ranking item. Teachers were first asked the extent to which they agreed or disagreed with the following two statements: 1) My district has increased its support of arts education as a result of LCFF and 2) I believe that LCFF has had a positive impact on arts education within my district. Teachers also ranked the highest areas of impact within California Redwood as a result of LCFF across the following six categories: funding for arts education, the number of arts education teachers, curriculum, teacher support, supplies and resources, and student access to arts education. The questionnaire measured the impact of LCFF and school site support through the of seven questions in which teachers reported changes within each of their teaching sites in regards to the number of arts education teachers, the number of arts education course offerings, the number of students enrolled in arts education courses, the number of paid professional developments opportunities, and the amount of money available for supplies and

resources. In addition, teachers reported the extent to which they agreed with the following two statements: 1) My school administration has increased its support of arts education courses and 2) I believe that LCFF has had a positive impact on arts education within my school.

Responses to the four agreement items varied considerably by grade level taught (elementary, middle, and high school), with elementary arts education teachers agreeing with all four statements at lower rates than middle and high school teachers. By contrast, high school arts education teachers agreed with all four statements at higher rates than elementary and middle school teachers. When asked if they believed that California Redwood had increased its support of arts education, 72.7% of the 139 questionnaire respondents agreed; 70.6% of elementary school, 70.3% of middle school, and 73.1% of high school teachers agreed with that statement. When asked if they believed that LCFF had had a positive impact on arts education within California Redwood, 62.7% of 139 participants agreed; 44.1% of elementary, 64.9% of middle, and 70.5% of high school teachers agreed.

| STATEMENT | OVERALL | ELEM SCHOOL | MIDDLE SCHOOL | HIGH SCHOOL |
|---|---------|-------------|---------------|-------------|
| My district has increased its support of arts education. | 72.7% | 70.6% | 70.3% | 73.1% |
| I believe that LCFF has had a positive impact on arts education within my district. | 62.7% | 44.1% | 64.9% | 70.5% |
| My school/s administration has increased its support of arts education. | 60.2% | 56.8% | 61.5% | 64.1% |
| I believe that LCFF has had a positive impact on arts education within my school/s. | 54.9% | 43.2% | 62.2% | 57.1% |

TABLE 2. TEACHER RESPONSES BY GRADE LEVEL TAUGHT (PERCENT OF TEACHERS THAT AGREE).

A smaller proportion of teachers agreed that their school site had increased support for arts education than agreed that their district had increased support for arts education. Overall, 60.2% of teachers agreed that their school site had increased support for arts education compared

to the 72.7% of teachers who agreed that support for arts education had increased at the district level. Lastly, when asked if they believed that LCFF had had a positive impact on arts education within California Redwood, 62.7% of teachers agreed, whereas 54.9% of teachers reported a positive impact at their sites. Less than half (43.2%) of elementary teachers reported a positive impact on arts education support at their sites compared to 62.2% of middle school teachers and 57.1% of high school teachers.

Arts education teachers felt positive about the impact of LCFF and arts education support at the district level because of three reasons: the recent hiring of a new district arts education director, John; the hiring of new arts education teachers; and availability of district funds at each school site for supplies and resources. When asked if they felt that California Redwood had increased its support of arts education since the implementation of LCFF, 72.7% of arts education teachers agreed. When asked whether they believed LCFF had had a positive impact on arts education within California Redwood, 62.7% of teachers surveyed agreed.

The positive impact of the new arts education director. More than 40 teachers provided open-ended comments on the questionnaire. Of these 41 responses, only one teacher surveyed identified John, the arts education executive director for the district, as a positive indicator of arts education support within the district, stating that he has been a great benefit to the districts because of all of his arts education advocacy efforts. Thirteen out of 20 teachers interviewed (65%) attributed the increase in arts education support within California Redwood to the hiring of John. Patricia, an elementary school drama teacher with 13 years of teaching experience, noted that John “is very enthusiastic about the arts.” Lisa, who teaches middle school dance, added that John’s frequent appearances at teacher meetings and professional development opportunities made it seem like “John is involved in supporting the arts.” In addition, with the

hiring of John as the Executive Director, Richard, a middle school music teacher, felt that there was an effort to take a bottom-up approach because John listens to the needs of the teachers.

Hiring of new arts education teachers seen as positive step. Of the 41 teachers who provided open-ended comments on the questionnaire, 10 respondents mentioned (24.4%) the recent hiring of arts education teachers as a positive indicator of arts support within California Redwood, and 12 out of 20 teachers interviewed (60%) mentioned it as well. In the questionnaire, teachers commented that, as a result of these new hires, more students have access to the arts education than in years past. Richard, a middle school music teacher with 10 years of experience within California Redwood, said that the "growing awareness of the inequities in arts education at the district" was increasing, and this awareness was translating into action to remedy the inequities. During her interview, Catherine said that, because the district is hiring more arts teachers, some of her schools are now receiving instruction in more than one art form. Patricia observed that the district had placed a "great emphasis on trying to find teachers for middle schools and high schools" and she was aware that the California Redwood was "going to hire 17 new theater teachers for the elementary program next school year." Barbara added, "Yes, I can see since LCFF has started that the district suddenly has money specifically for the arts." Teresa, an elementary music teacher, felt that the district's investment in "adding all of those positions to the elementary program" was indicative of a positive trend for arts education within the district. After years of hiring freezes, the arts education teachers saw the recent hiring of new arts education teachers as a welcome positive step as a result of LCFF. Importantly, these teachers made the connection between the hiring and new funds attributed to LCFF.

Teachers perceived additional funds for supplies as greatest area of impact. When asked to rank the areas most impacted by LCFF at the district level, 42.4% of teachers ranked

money available for supplies and resources as the highest area of impact. More than half (55%) of the teachers reported that they saw an increase in district funds available for supplies and resources. More than one-quarter (26.8%) of those providing open-ended comments mentioned the availability of funds to purchase supplies and resources. Barbara knew that California Redwood had set aside “a million dollars of extra money for the arts this year,” (referring to the arts allocations as stated in the District’s LCAPs and budgets) which she admitted sounded like “a lot, but when you break it down between all the schools it’s not as grand as it sounds.” She was still grateful for the \$300 or so dollars she received as part of that distribution, which she intended to spend on instructional materials.

Lisa mentioned that, at a recent professional development session, the executive director of arts education had announced that the schools were going to receive money. Lisa appreciated the extra money for instructional materials, which to her “felt like an increase of support.” While all 11 teachers mentioned the small amount of the arts allocation, Patricia said that her \$400 was “huge, because [arts teachers] went through the dark ages where there was no financial support” at all to purchase instructional materials. Patricia appeared to be familiar with the California Redwood’s LCAP, stating arts education was in their (LCAP) plan, and the amount of money for the arts increased every year, which contributed to her sense of district-level support. Several teachers sensed that support for the arts had increased within the past two years, but they were unsure if they could be attributed to the implementation of LCFF. Although arts education teachers were not familiar with the arts allocation term, they generally understood that they were receiving funds from the Arts Education Department. The arts allocations were being distributed by the Arts Education Department as they had stated in the LCAPs and budgets.

Although 72.7% of teachers surveyed and 55% of teachers interviewed felt that California Redwood had increased its support of arts education since the implementation of LCFF, about 25% of teachers participating in the surveys and in the interviews disagreed. Just over one-quarter (27.3%) of teachers surveyed and 25% of teachers interviewed felt support for arts education in California Redwood had not increased since the implementation of LCFF. Alice, along with three other teachers also did not see a connection between LCFF implementation and increased support for arts education, saying she felt “that LCFF has had a negative impact. They are trying to spread us out into underserved areas, but they don’t have enough teachers.” Nancy, an elementary school drama teacher, cautioned that, although the district was providing arts instruction to more students in more schools, the district had to be "careful that, as they reached more schools, that they kept their standards high" for the teachers they are hiring. Although the majority of arts education teachers believed the District had increased its support of arts education as a result of LCFF, some elementary school teachers had reservations about how the District was hiring and distributing its teachers.

Arts educators perceived less direct LCFF benefits at local sites. California Redwood arts education teachers do not feel as positive about the impact of LCFF and arts education support at the school level as they do the district-level. Arts education teachers, both in the questionnaire and interviews, identified lack of communication, lack of funding, and the power shift due to LCFF as the rationales for not feeling the impact of LCFF and arts education support as highly than at the district level.

Roughly 60% of arts education teachers agreed that their school’s administration had increased its support of arts education since the implementation of LCFF at their sites. This percentage of teachers agreeing is lower than the 72.7% who agreed when asked the same

questions about administrative support at the district level. More than half (55%) of arts education teachers agreed that LCFF had had a positive impact on arts education within their school sites, and 30% of teachers interviewed agreed with the statement, less than half of the 62.7% of teachers surveyed who endorsed this perspective when asked the same question about the impact of LCFF at the district level.

Most of the teachers (63.6%) who participated in the survey did not see any change or perceived a reduction in the number of arts education teachers since the implementation of LCFF at 63.6% of their sites. Subsequently, nearly two-thirds (64%) of teachers reported no change or fewer courses in arts education at their school sites while 58% reported no change or fewer students enrolled in arts education courses at their school sites within the past two years. When asked about the change in the number of opportunities available for paid professional development, 60.1% of teachers reported no change or fewer opportunities at their sites.

In the open-ended section of the questionnaire, teachers were asked to explain any other positive indicator of the impact of LCFF on arts education at the school and/or district level and to mention some things not included in the questionnaire that they believed to be salient to the discussion about the impact of LCFF on arts education programs within California Redwood. I classified the teachers' 123 comments into nine categories: staffing; student access; equity; supplies and resources; communication; teacher support; power shift/control; funding; and other. Comments pertaining to lack of communication (31), lack of funding (24), and the power shift as a result of LCFF (18) ranked among the most popular. Comments made by interview participants showed similar patterns: 17 interviewees cited LCFF contributing to power shifts while 15 identified issues about a lack of communication.

Twelve out of 20 teachers interviewed expected that LCFF would have increased support for the arts within their school, but they perceived a lack of change in support for arts education based upon decisions by school administrators at their site. An elementary drama teacher said she felt that “the schools that were supportive before (LCFF) are still supportive, and the ones the weren’t are still not. The climate hasn’t changed; it’s not ‘Yay, arts!’ I mean unless they were “yay, arts” before and then they still are.” Although arts education organizations and teachers felt that the implementation of LCFF would increase school-level support of arts education, the majority of arts education teachers interviewed did not perceive a change in support from their school administrators.

By contrast, one-quarter (25%) of interview participants perceived an increase in overall support of arts education at their sites. Lisa had a positive perception of administrators in her various schools, as she remarked that they "do the best they can to support the arts." Sandra felt that at her middle school, the administration was "definitely" supportive of the arts and "really on it" and "there for us arts education teachers," yet she also acknowledged that she "really did think it was rare that there was so much cooperation with the administration." The level of administrative support experienced by interviewees varied greatly from site to site and seemed to depend primarily on the specific style of the principal.

Poor communication contributed to lack of perceived impact of LCFF. Arts education teachers expressed the need for improved communication in various ways on the questionnaire, with comments such as, “very few people know or understand how LCFF funds are distributed” and the teachers “don’t know how LCFF can help them.” Several teachers indicated a personal lack of awareness about the implementation of LCFF, which speaks to an opportunity for

administrators to more clearly articulate the ways in which implementation of LCFF has enhanced support for arts education.

Arts education teachers at the elementary school level expressed frustration on the questionnaire with the lack of communication they were receiving both from the district and their school sites. One elementary arts teacher believed that if they “had K-12 arts education meetings, it would be a lot easier to figure out what is improving.” Another elementary teacher said that in general, “elementary teachers are not even aware of the different arts disciplines offered at each of their school sites,” primarily due to a “lack of communication.” The different arts disciplines and how teachers are distributed at the elementary school level is “very confusing,” shared another teacher.

Three-quarters of interviewees mentioned the need for improved communication. Maria, who works as an elementary music teacher, said that she was not aware that LCFF funds could be utilized for the arts at her school site until she asked one of her site principals the day before the interview for this study. She added that her other schools “have never said anything to [her] about the money,” and she was assuming, based on the interview, that all of her principals did know about “that pot of money” and neglected to share that information with the teachers at the school. Susan, another elementary music teacher, mentioned the need for improved communication between the district and the school administrators. She felt that principals had not been “educated in what their options are” when it comes to LCFF. The amount of administrative support Susan receives between school sites is “incredibly different, and I believe that the missing link is communication.”

Robert explained that he had many unanswered questions when it came to LCFF implementation at his middle school. For example, "How do we (as arts teacher) get access to

the money for our students? Who makes the decisions? There should be a way that we can get a step-by-step process on how to access the money." Robert said that he was "always going to be on the skeptical side" until he could "see the numbers and understand how LCFF operates" for himself, adding that "a little clarity would go a long way" on his administration's part. As evidenced by these comments and several others, arts education teachers felt largely in the dark with respect to how LCFF operated and the ways in which it improved funding for their programs.

Teachers tie perceived funding deficits to lack of local administrative support for arts education. As mentioned earlier, 42.4% of teachers surveyed ranked money available for supplies and resources as the highest area impacted by LCFF at the district level. However, teachers recognized that this funding came from a district source, not from the school itself, "except with a supportive principal." In the questionnaire, teachers reported that there was no change in funds or fewer funds available for supplies and resources at 45% of their school sites. All 12 out of 20 teachers interviewed who, on the questionnaire, had disagreed with the statement about school administrative support also mentioned a lack of funding for their program in their rationale, demonstrating that the interviewed teachers equated school administrative support with financial support.

The connection between funding and perceived administrative support became apparent in Teresa's experience. Teresa said that school administrative support at four out of five of her sites had not changed at all because she "had not received any additional funding." As suggested by her statement, Teresa saw a clear connection between the level of funding for her program and the extent to which the administration at her site supported her program. Similarly, Linda did not feel that "LCFF had changed anything," because the school site's money was "still

allocated as it was before” LCFF. Arts education teachers seemed to expect immediate results with the introduction of LCFF and, when they did not see those results materialize in the form of increased financial support, they interpreted it as a lack of administrative support.

Seven out of the 12 teachers who had disagreed with statements about school site support and impact of LCFF on the questionnaire revealed in their interviews that their school site administrators expected their arts programs to be self-funded. One respondent to the questionnaire acknowledged that, “despite this specialized funding for the arts from the district, we are still expected to fundraise to meet our needs.” Another respondent to the questionnaire more explicitly blamed lack of increased funding for arts education at the local level on site administrators, noting that the reason that arts education programs “continued to face hoops and walls to get funding for our arts programs” was because “the school administration did not believe the arts were a core subject.”

For some teachers, the idea of self-funding arts education programs goes beyond fundraising to also include teachers writing grants and buying materials with their own money. When asked if she felt if her school’s administration had increased its support of arts education since the implementation of LCFF, Barbara said, “No. Definitely not, our school particularly expects the arts to be self-funded.” She explained that her high school's arts programs, including dance, theater, and music, needed to hold events and charge admission for survival and that “those admissions become the budget for the year.” However, with high school visual arts, “nobody is paying to go to a gallery show,” so Barbara spends much of her time writing grants and self-funding saying, “I pay for a lot of the stuff myself.”

Michael also had a negative response when asked if he felt that his school’s administration had increased its support of arts education since the implementation of LCFF.

According to Michael, the previous success of the music program's ability to fundraise contributed to a lack of new financial support after the introduction of LCFF. When asked whether he felt the administration had increased financial support for arts education, Michael said, "No. Absolutely not, our music program is still self-sufficient. We raise our own money, and we do our own things. They see we are self-supported and that we don't need help. They see it as you're helping us out by not having us help you." Michelle shared a similar experience, saying that, although she had received money from the district for supplies and resources, she had not received additional financial support from her principal as a result of LCFF. Michelle was still "expected to raise funds for instructional materials such as reeds and sheet music for [her] music performances for the student body." Generally speaking, teachers expressed frustration over a perceived stagnation in financial support from site administration, as many felt as though they continued to have to rely on their fundraising efforts to keep their programs operational.

Although many interview participants criticized the implementation of LCFF, nearly one-third expressed positive perceptions of the ways in which LCFF had affected arts education at the school site level. Elizabeth shared that at one of her four schools, LCFF had a positive impact because the school chose to prioritize their additional funds to pay for an additional day of music instruction. Alice also saw the positive impact of LCFF at her school in the form of more students having access to arts education because of an increase in the number of arts education teachers coming to her elementary sites. Sandra shared that, before LCFF, her middle school drama students had one field trip and one play. Now after LCFF implementation, they have "three field trips and three different plays. It's really good."

Teachers expressed skepticism in the shift of power from the district office to the school

site. In addition to a lack of funding from the school sites, arts education teachers felt that the shift in power from the district to the school contributed to their less-than-positive view of LCFF at the school level. In the open-ended section of the questionnaire, 18 teachers shared comments about the power shift as a result of LCFF. One teacher shared that the shift in power to the local school site presented a risk, especially when "administrators do not believe in the value of arts education." Teachers worried about how new funding for LCFF would pass through to their arts programs if the school site had an administrator who lacked enthusiasm for arts education. Another teacher felt that there was "no accountability for schools to support arts education under LCFF." Another teacher believed that if the school leaders "are not committed to an arts program, any potential for a robust arts program will be squashed." Most administrators, wrote another teacher, are "insufficiently prepared to create a sustainable and wholesome arts program," so they end up doing "very little to support the arts."

One teacher suggested that, "along with local control should come some basic rules mandated by the district" as to "what support of a program means" at the school site level. Seventeen out of 20 teachers interviewed identified the shift in power to the school sites as one of the consequences of LCFF. Teachers identified several concerns about the power shift associated with LCFF implementation. Participants believed that LCFF gave principals too much power, and, compounding this issue, principals lacked the knowledge on how to run successful arts education programs. Furthermore, teachers believed that the California Redwood Arts Education Department needed to have greater oversight of local sites to provide guidelines for a quality arts education program and monitor program implementation.

Richard felt that principals had too much power as a result of LCFF primarily because the school site has no checks and balances. Richard said that principals create individual policies at their school and then become the sole adjudicators of those policies. Because of this, Richard felt that there are no protections for arts programs at the school level, saying that the autonomy brought about by LCFF can lead to the “death of a program.” Robert also expressed distrust of principals saying, “I don’t trust anybody with that kind of power...there are no checks and balances.” Teachers repeatedly expressed concerns about unilateral decision-making with respect to funding arts education programs by poorly informed principals. A number of respondents emphasized the need for transparency in terms of how principals allocated funds. Margaret perhaps best summed up teachers’ collective apprehension regarding the power shift created by LCFF when she quipped that the Local Control Funding Formula should be renamed to “Principal Control Funding Formula,” because “it’s still principal control. It’s still the principal making those determinations about how the money will be spent.”

Nine out of 20 teachers interviewed feared that their principal could stop offering their arts discipline from their school if they wanted to do so. Nancy said the feeling that she was at the “whim of the schools” had “100% intensified within the past two to three years.” Nancy perceived that she had “been kicked out of [her] classroom space multiple times for an external, non-standards based, non-credentialed program. Why? Because the principals can spend their money any way that they want.” Similarly, Patricia felt that “no matter what the quality of my teaching,” if she and the principal had personality differences, the principal could just say, “well, we’re not going to offer drama anymore” which effectively would remove her from that school the following year.

Nine out of 20 teachers interviewed also perceived a lack of basic knowledge among principals in how to run an effective arts education program. Alice felt that principals' decision-making with the allocation of funds worked well when she had a principal who understood arts education but felt that it did not work well when principals did not understand arts education or did not even know that the arts were a core subject. Teresa also felt that principals needed to be educated on how to support arts programs at their schools, because "principals just don't understand how a good arts program should run. Principal knowledge in this area is seriously lacking." The principals "all say they want an arts program at their school, but when it comes to the teacher requesting supplies, they are denied," Teresa said. Alice had an experience with such a principal last school year. Her principal had said she wanted an orchestra program but refused to buy music stands, method books, or supplies when Alice arrived. After parents had come to Alice's defense, she said the principal begrudgingly purchased the items she requested. Alice described her principal at that school as an obstructionist.

Linda felt that the shift in control at the school site as a result of LCFF had "a lot to do with" her not feeling the impact of LCFF and arts education support as greatly at the school site than at the district level. Linda believed that principals had too much power that was inhibiting her work as a music teacher at her elementary schools. "It's not the funding that matters to us, it's the control," Linda said. Elizabeth acknowledged that, as a result of LCFF, the district had provided more funds to hire new arts education teachers, but she felt that LCFF "didn't really change administrative priorities and initiatives for arts education" within California Redwood. In other words, although funding increased, school site administrators did not necessarily perceive any greater value in arts education programs.

Summarizing the California Redwood Case

This case study on California Redwood, a large unified school district in Los Angeles County, found how the introduction of LCFF contributed, to a certain extent, a change in arts education within the District. The primary change as a result of California's LCFF was an increase of general funding allocated for arts education. LCFF also contributed to changes in the way the District hired and placed teachers throughout the District, in the availability of arts allocation funds for school sites, and changed decision-making power from the district-level to the school-level.

Second, California Redwood District leaders believed arts education was included in their LCAP as a direct result of the District's prior commitment to the arts as stated in a Board of Education resolution. The introduction of LCFF thus provided the District with an opportunity to pursue their arts education goals within California Redwood. Although district leaders expressed enthusiasm for the opportunities associated with LCFF implementation, teachers within school sites remained skeptical due to perceived lack of change in the level of funding at the local site and concerns about the shift in decision-making power from the district office to local sites. Arts education teachers believed that lack of District communication, lack of funding for the arts, and the shift in power to the school level contributed to their negative perception of the impact of LCFF at their school sites.

Case Study Two: Golden Poppy School District

Increased Commitment Among District Leaders

Funding for new initiatives and Targeted Student Populations. Within Golden Poppy School District, the introduction of LCFF contributed greatly to a change in arts education within the District in all categories investigated in this study. The areas impacted by California's LCFF

in Golden Poppy were overall funding, staffing, student access, curriculum, teacher support, and supplies and resources. The introduction of LCFF in Golden Poppy enabled the District to fund a Visual and Performing Arts Coordinator and two middle school band teachers; bring in new music, film, and drama programs, and provided specific funding for materials and supplies.

Golden Poppy's initial LCAP went into effect on July 1, 2014. However, an investigation into their 2011-2016 Strategic Plan is necessary to better understand how the District developed their LCAP. As I discuss later in this chapter, the district-level interview participants described the LCAP development process to be very similar to the process of developing their Strategic Plan. According to the Golden Poppy website, the District gathered about 30 people from a variety of stakeholder groups, including administrators, teachers, parents, and students in April of 2011 to create a new mission statement, district objectives and strategies to "define their work for the next five years." The District described the strategies as bold resolutions that guided their resources and energy towards the achievement of their objectives as expressed in their mission and goals. Golden Poppy's first strategy, in which the District would work to ensure the academic and personal achievement of each student with an emphasis on the whole person, was the one that led to the inclusion of arts education in their LCAP. The Golden Poppy Superintendent shared, "We are a district that values the arts as part of a comprehensive education." The recent investments in arts education as a result of LCFF demonstrate the District's commitment to the arts.

According to Golden Poppy's initial LCAP (2014-2017) and revised LCAP (2015-2018), the District allocated a little under \$400,000 of its LCFF supplemental and concentration grants towards arts education initiatives within the District. The first significant new expenditure went towards the hiring of a Visual and Performing Arts Coordinator who provided support to the

District's arts education teachers. The second significant new expenditure went towards the hiring of two band teachers. As a result of their hiring, the District was able to bring instrumental music back to all three of its middle schools.

The third significant new expenditure went towards bringing new programs and partnerships to the District, such as the BRIDGE Theater Project, artworxLA, Latino International Film Institute Youth Cinema Project, and the Rock and Roll Academy. The BRIDGE Theater Project provided drama instruction to the District's twelve elementary schools. The partnership with artworxLA provided an art program for the Advanced Path Academy high school students. The Latino International Film Institute Youth Cinema Project was piloted at one of the elementary schools, with plans to expand to other sites. While the Rock and Roll Academy program was implemented at the District's alternative high school and each of the three middle schools.

Description of district-level participants. I conducted three in-person interviews with district-level personnel at Golden Poppy. I interviewed the Fernando, the Visual and Performing Arts Coordinator; Eduardo, the Assistant Superintendent of Educational Services; and Gustavo, the Director of Elementary Education. The average years of experience within Golden Poppy ranged from three years to twelve years, with the average of seven years of experience within the District.

Fernando had 12 years of experience within Golden Poppy. However, the 2015-2016 school year was his first in the newly created Visual and Performing Arts (VAPA) Coordinator position. Fernando was not involved in the creation of the District's LCAP but was involved in the development of the strategic plan and served on the student achievement sub-committee. This sub-committee was the one in which the idea of educating the whole child emerged.

Fernando described the LCAP development process as something he “was aware of it going on,” but he did not directly impact its development from an arts point of view. From what he had heard, Fernando described the LCAP process as being very similar to the development of the District’s strategic plan, in which stakeholder groups met to address important questions about the District’s progress. The result of the strategic plan meetings was the development of a new District mission and a new set of belief statements. Fernando explained that the strategic plan played an important role in the development of the LCAP, which explained why the LCAP and strategic plan were so highly aligned.

Eduardo had six years of experience within the District, three of which he served in his current position. Eduardo’s primary role in LCAP-creation was facilitating the conversations with the different stakeholder groups, which totaled about 40 people. He shared that, at the first LCAP committee meeting on February 10, 2014, the stakeholders seemed anxious, perhaps because they felt that they were there to “to advocate for their association and fight over specific dollars.” Eduardo said that instead of focusing on specific dollars, the stakeholders had conversations that were grounded in terms of what they were trying to accomplish as a school district. By the end of the four-day committee meetings, Eduardo said the stakeholders felt “pretty good about it” and had a clear understanding of the district’s goals and how they were all working together to support the same efforts. Eduardo described the development process as collaborative and honest. However, he said the LCAP committee members attended the Golden Poppy School Board meeting in which the results from the committee meetings would be presented to make sure that what he said matched their discussion. He said that, once the committee members saw that his presentation aligned with their discussion, they “felt their voices were heard” and trusted the district with the process.

Gustavo had three years of experience within Golden Poppy in various roles. His primary role as the then-Director of Instructional Services was writing Golden Poppy's LCAP, which he described as labor-intensive. Gustavo also met with the various stakeholder groups, developed a district-wide survey, and obtained all of the information necessary for the various LCAP document components. He estimated the entire process, from LCAP committee meetings to official Los Angeles County Office of Education approval, took about eight months. Like Eduardo, Gustavo also mentioned the importance of establishing trust with the stakeholders. Gustavo said that to build trust with the stakeholders, they needed to see how the LCAP and strategic plan were aligned. He said this alignment led to transparency, which developed trust between the stakeholders and the District.

Recession of 2008 restricted access to arts education. When asked to describe arts education within Golden Poppy before the implementation of LCFF, all three participants (100%) mentioned limited access to the arts as a result of the recession in 2008. Eduardo explained that the District, on the verge of bankruptcy and state takeover, decided to cut back on expenditures by reducing arts courses and eliminating the secondary music programs. In a time of increased accountability pressure from standardized exams, the District determined that students who were below level in their standardized test scores needed additional English and mathematics courses, not arts courses. By reducing arts access in a high-minority, low-income community, Eduardo felt that the decision had greatly impacted the Golden Poppy students in a negative way. He added that if the same thing had occurred in higher-income communities, families would still have been able to provide their children with arts opportunities outside of school. However, the situation in Golden Poppy was very different:

We don't have music companies, and we don't have an art studio. Even if you had the money, you couldn't do it here in Golden Poppy; you'd have to go to another community that has private art, dance, and theater teachers. We don't have that here.

Although visual arts courses remained at the high school level, there was no music at the secondary levels for about three years. Gustavo added that, in 2011, the same year the Golden Poppy administration underwent a major overhaul, the District hired a band teacher for one of its two traditional high schools and added another band teacher for the other traditional high school the following school year. However, the District did not hire band teachers for the middle school music programs. Eduardo felt that LCFF provided Golden Poppy with an excellent opportunity to build up the middle school music programs.

Collaborative effort and strategic plan alignment facilitated arts education's inclusion in LCAP. District-level participants believed the District included arts education in Golden Poppy's LCAP because of the stakeholder feedback, district-level administrative support, and because they believed arts education was well aligned with the District's existing strategic plan.

Stakeholder feedback. As mentioned previously, Golden Poppy sought stakeholder feedback about what the District was doing well and what it needed to improve upon in order to prepare its first LCAP in 2014. All three participants (100%) said the stakeholders felt the District was not doing an adequate job with respect to arts education. Gustavo said that the Golden Poppy community, including students and parents, valued the arts and thus voiced their opinion "loud and clear" that they wanted increased arts access for its students. Fernando shared that stakeholders felt the District needed to move away from the focus on English and mathematics as a result of No Child Left Behind towards educating the whole child. Eduardo

said the message for the arts was reiterated and emphasized by the parents who were at the LCAP committee meetings in February of 2014. He also said that the District had to make a big investment in the arts initially because there was such a big gap in arts access for its students. LCFF, Eduardo said, was a good opportunity for the District to build up the foundation in the arts.

Administrative support. All three district-level participants shared that district-level administrative support and advocacy had influenced the District's decision to include arts education in the Golden Poppy LCAP. Eduardo felt that the arts had been championed by the then-Assistant Superintendent, who was now the Superintendent in Golden Poppy. He said that the Superintendent's voice was one that was "coming out pretty clearly" during the strategic plan development. The District's students, parents, and teachers echoed the Superintendent's feelings about the arts. Gustavo also identified the then-Assistant Superintendent as a source of arts education advocacy during the strategic plan development, saying the new administration that entered the district about five years ago was responsible for revamping the instructional program within the District. Once the District felt that they had a solid instructional program in place, they began to bring back instructional components such as music and the other arts disciplines.

Fernando described a situation in which district-level administrators supported arts education. He said the District identified \$40,000 in the LCAP for middle school instruments, but once they saw the cost of instruments, he and the middle school band teachers realized that \$40,000 was "not nearly enough" to adequately equip three schools. Rather than stop ordering instruments, Fernando said he spoke with Eduardo about the middle school band needs, so he "knew we needed it," and Eduardo was able to find more money to supplement the amounts the District had already allocated for the instruments. Fernando believed that building the arts

programs at Golden Poppy were a priority for the district, and much of that support for the arts came from the District's strategic plan.

Alignment with strategic plan. District-level participants agreed that the LCAP and strategic plan were aligned. Fernando described, the process of developing the District's strategic plan was similar to the LCAP in that a variety of stakeholders were invited to participate in the discussion on how to improve their district. Fernando explained that the district's work was rooted in the strategic plan and was what kept the district moving forward. He added that the LCAP and strategic plan were designed to overlap and support each other. Eduardo and Gustavo's responses supported Fernando's statement. Eduardo said that the LCAP committee's work was grounded in the District's strategic plan. Gustavo said that district's LCAP goals were highly aligned with the five goal areas of the strategic plan.

Golden Poppy had eight priorities in its strategic plan, the first of which aimed to "ensure the academic and personal achievement of each student with an emphasis on the whole person." Fernando explained that this first strategy was the key to the District including the arts in the LCAP. All district-level participants described arts education moving in a positive direction as a result of LCFF implementation within Golden Poppy because the funds allowed the District to expand arts programs and services for its students. In addition, all three participants identified the same four positive aspects of included arts education within the District's LCAP. First, LCAP funding for the arts provided the funding to establish the VAPA Coordinator position in the 2015-2016 school year. Fernando described his position as observing the various arts programs within the District to conduct a needs-assessment, supporting current programs, and researching and planning for future District arts endeavors. Second, LCAP funding for the arts allowed the District to hire two band teachers to restart the music programs

at the three middle schools and begin the music program at the District's alternative high school in the 2015-2016 school year. One band teacher taught at two middle schools while the other band teacher taught at the third middle school and the high school.

Third, LCAP funding for the arts enabled the District to connect with an external arts partner, the Latino Film Institute, to provide services to a fourth-grade class at one of its elementary school students. The Latino Film Institute aims to support, augment and magnify the work of educators through the art of filmmaking (www.facebook.com/LatinoFilmInstituteYouthCinemaProject). The District was piloting the program during the 2015-2016 school year with plans to expand to other elementary schools in the upcoming years. The three participants also identified its partnership with the Rock and Roll Academy at the three middle schools and the alternative high school as the fourth positive aspect of including arts education in the District's LCAP. Initially, the Rock and Roll Academy was only going to be at one school, but, upon further investigation, the District realized it could implement the program at four schools. Fernando described the Rock and Roll Academy as a way to engage students who were not previously engaged by the school system. By adding music to the alternative high school, Fernando said the District was "giving the most to students who have perhaps been given the least, historically." Eduardo added that the Rock and Roll Academy would help students connect with their school, build positive relationships and increase their self-esteem.

Fernando and Eduardo added that the District was also able to purchase band equipment for the middle school teachers and supplies for all secondary arts education programs. Both Fernando and Eduardo felt that the District was achieving its goals for arts education as outlined in the LCAP, but they still had more to accomplish, such as hiring more band teachers so that each school had its own instructor and hiring choral teachers for the elementary schools.

Gustavo felt “really proud that the District had music in the middle schools,” and he was glad that the LCAP had helped the District achieve that. Fernando added that the LCAP funding for the arts had also allowed Golden Poppy to hold a district-wide winter concert and a district-wide arts festival in the spring. Eduardo also mentioned that the LCAP funding for the arts provided money for transportation, for high school band coaches, to purchase camera equipment for the Latino Film Institute, and to purchase mirrors for the high school dance programs.

Arts Education Teachers Perceived Many District-Level Benefits, Fewer Site-Level Benefits from LCFF Implementation

Characteristics of teacher participants. There are 17 full-time arts education teachers within Golden Poppy School District that provide instruction in all four disciplines to its K-12 students. Of those 17 teachers, two teach dance, two teach drama, four teach music, and nine teach visual arts. Fernando, the VAPA Coordinator, emailed the study information and Qualtrics questionnaire link to all 17 teachers, and I subsequently sent two personalized follow-up emails to all participants. The window to respond ran from late January through early April. .

Nearly two-thirds of arts education teachers (64.7%) in Golden Poppy completed the Qualtrics questionnaire. Eight teachers (72.7%) taught at the high school level and three teachers (27.2%) taught at the middle school level. Eight teachers (72.7%) taught at one school site and three teachers (27.2%) taught at two school sites. Of the 11 teachers who completed the questionnaire, six taught visual arts (54.5%), three taught music (27.2%), and one each taught drama (9%) and dance (9%). The questionnaire respondents’ years of experience ranged from one year to 12 years, with the average years of teaching experience within Golden Poppy of 4.55 years. Four out of 11 respondents (36.4%) indicated that they were interested in participating in an interview and provided their contact information. I conducted the four interviews (one in-

person and three over the phone) over the course of four weeks. The interview participants' average years of teaching experience within Golden Poppy was six years, which is slightly higher than the average of questionnaire participants. In order to protect the identities of interview participants, I gave each of them male pseudonyms and omitted the arts discipline they taught. The four arts education teachers I interviewed were Aaron, Ben, Carlos, and David.

Teachers connect expansion of arts education to LCFF implementation. According to three out of four teachers interviewed (75%), Golden Poppy had significantly increased its offerings in arts education within the past two years when compared to earlier years. The three teachers mentioned that around the time of the economic recession (2008 or so), the District made a decision to eliminate all arts education course offerings with the exception of a basic visual arts course. Two out of these three teachers interviewed recognized a positive shift in arts education occurring within the past two years. Aaron stated, "I wouldn't be sitting here if it wasn't for LCFF." Aaron acknowledged that his hiring was made possible through the use of LCFF funds as determined by Golden Poppy's LCAP. Aaron felt that the superintendent led the recent revitalization of the arts within the district, which resulted in the hiring of two music teachers for the middle schools, the purchase of a new music curriculum, and the hiring of the Fernando, Golden Poppy's new VAPA Coordinator. Aaron added that he felt supported every step of the way, through funding for his program, purchasing of resources, and mentorship.

Ben felt that the District had increased its support of the arts because the leadership had personal connections to the arts – "it's been embedded in them." Carlos believed that he would not have been able to afford purchase expensive supplies and fees for activities with his group "if it weren't for the school district's support." Carlos noted that, in the past, funding for arts

education programs was sporadic; however, within the past year and a half, he noticed that the funding was much more consistent.

David felt that the District's support of arts education was demonstrated through an increase in the number of arts events throughout the district, money available for supplies and resources, as well as through the hiring of the VAPA Coordinator. Three out of four teachers (75%) interviewed saw the hiring of the VAPA Coordinator as a positive indicator of the District's support for the arts. Aaron said that if he needed anything for his program, he could ask the VAPA Coordinator, Fernando, and he would do his best to make it happen.

When asked if they believed the implementation of LCFF had had a positive impact on arts education in Golden Poppy, 10 out of 11 teachers (90.9%) surveyed agreed. Two out of four teachers interviewed (50%) also agreed with the statement, while the other two teachers interviewed (50%) felt that they did not know enough about LCFF to answer the question. Four out of seven teachers surveyed (57.1%) felt that general funding for arts education in the District was the area most impacted by the implementation of LCFF. Three out of four (75%) teachers interviewed supported this statement. Aaron said that overall funding for arts education in Golden Poppy had helped the arts "tremendously." Ben and David believed that each of the categories in question (staffing, student access, curriculum, teacher support, and supplies and resources) was positively impacted as a result of increased funding for the arts within the District.

Mixed perceptions of site-level benefits of LCFF implementation. As with California Redwood, the impact of LCFF and school site support within Golden Poppy was measured by seven questions on the questionnaire and two questions in the teacher interviews. In the questionnaire, seven out of 11 teachers (63.6%) reported no change or fewer arts education teachers since the implementation of LCFF at their school site. Although the same percentage of

teachers (63.3%) reported that there was no change or fewer arts education course offerings at their school, six out of 11 respondents (54.5%) reported that they had experienced an increase in the number of students enrolled in their arts education courses at their school. Nine out of 11 participants (81.8%) reported no change or fewer opportunities for paid professional development and eight out of 11 (72.7%) teachers reported no change or fewer funds available for arts education supplies and resources. Although the majority of teachers surveyed reported experiencing either no change or a decrease in each of the five categories, eight out of 10 teachers that completed the Likert-scale items agreed that their school administration had increased its support of arts education within the two previous school years. Two out of four teachers interviewed agreed with the statement as well. Aaron shared that his school administration had provided him with resources, funding, and mentoring. To him, that support had “everything to do with LCFF.” David shared that his principal and assistant principal were “supportive and really helpful. If it’s possible and feasible in time and planning, they are very supportive.”

Eight out of 10 teachers surveyed believed that LCFF had a positive impact on arts education within their school. Three out of four teachers (75%) interviewed also agreed with the statement. The remaining teacher interviewee felt that he did not know enough about LCFF to answer the question about the impact of LCFF at the school-level. Aaron shared that one of the immediate impacts he had experienced was at the alternative high schools, which had purchased a new curriculum that included instruments and mentorships. Aaron said the investment in these students had changed their approach to learning:

They had more of a sense of respect and responsibility. These students don’t have much, so when they walked in and said, ‘Who gets to play with these instruments?’ I said, ‘Just

you.’ They took some pride into it. They are currently the only group that has performed. They were very ecstatic about what they achieved. This music has given them the opportunity to express themselves.

This anecdote illustrates how Aaron experienced a positive impact of LCFF at his school site. Ben also believed that LCFF had a positive impact within his school site because supplies are available to all of the arts teachers and their students. In addition, Ben believed that the implementation of LCFF had created awareness about the arts within the school as a result of an increase in course offerings such as dance, photography, ceramics, 3-D art, filmmaking, and music. However, Ben added that in order to ensure that all students benefited from resources at the school level, the criteria for how the school distributed the funds to different programs needed to be clearly communicated to all arts teachers. Also, Ben believed that funding needed to remain relatively consistent on a yearly basis. Carlos believed the positive impact of LCFF at his school was evident in the increased course offerings available to students, such as dance and multiple levels of drama courses. As a result, students at his school had more opportunities to participate in the arts.

Positive perceptions of LCFF at both district and school levels. Arts education teachers in Golden Poppy felt positive about the impact of LCFF on arts education at the district and school level. In addition, arts education teachers believed that district and school level administrators had increased their support of arts education programs since the implementation of LCFF. The arts education teachers experienced changes in their work primarily with respect to the amount of overall funding available for the arts. The Golden Poppy arts education teachers believed they had experienced positive effects from the implementation of LCFF because the District and school leadership was advocating for the arts. In addition, these

teachers believed that the District began to reinvest in the arts because the District and school leadership believed in it.

Aaron believed LCFF provided the District with an opportunity to restore arts education programs. He believed the superintendent led the effort because he had promised music programs would return to all of the schools under his leadership. In addition, Aaron felt that if the District continued on this path to arts restoration, it would occur faster than at other, larger school districts and that it would have a larger impact because of the socioeconomically disadvantaged students the District serves.

David felt his school's principal supported his arts program because the principal had a personal connection to the arts. He added that LCFF was a positive movement forward within the District because it was advocated by his school administration and the district administration as well. Ben echoed the sentiment by sharing that the Golden Poppy superintendent and his school principal had the arts "embedded in them personally." Ben felt that, because of their personal connection, school and district administrators advocated and built up the arts programs – "they believe in it (the arts) so much."

Summarizing the Golden Poppy Case

This case study on Golden Poppy, a medium unified school district in Los Angeles County investigated how the implementation of LCFF impacted its arts education programs. Based on document reviews, district-level administrator interviews, and arts education teacher questionnaire results and interviews, this study found that the introduction of LCFF contributed greatly to a change in arts education within the District, especially in regards to the amount of overall funding available for the arts. LCFF enabled Golden Poppy to fund a Visual and

Performing Arts Coordinator and two middle school band teachers; bring in new music, film, and drama programs, and provided funding for materials and supplies.

Second, this case study found that district-level participants believed the District included arts education in Golden Poppy's LCAP because of its stakeholder feedback, district-level administrative support, and because arts education was well aligned with the District's existing Strategic Plan. Finally, this case study found that Golden Poppy's arts education teachers felt positive about the impact of LCFF on arts education at both the district and school level with overall funding for the arts as the greatest area of change in their work as arts educators within the District. The arts education teachers also felt that their school and district level administrators had increased their support of arts education since the inception of LCFF within their District because their leaders firmly believed in the arts.

CHAPTER FIVE

Discussion

Despite public support for the arts (Americans for the Arts, 2005) and a recurring theme of positive correlations between arts involvement and academic achievement (Catterall, 1998; Catterall, Chapleau, & Iwanaga, 1999; Catterall, Dumais, & Hampden-Thomson, 2012), access to arts education remains limited for English Learners, low-income and minority students in the United States (Baker, 2012; Parsad & Spiegelman, 2012). The creation and implementation of California's LCFF in 2013 aimed to address inequities in educational opportunities that had been exacerbated by the State's previous complex education funding system. Rooted in an equitable education finance (Baker & Corcoran, 2012; Baker & Green, 2015; Downes & Stiefel, 2015) and vertical equity framework (Berne & Stiefel, 1984), LCFFs weighted funding formula recognized that English Language Learners, foster youth, and low-income students require additional resources so they could have more equitable learning opportunities in California's public schools. Although LCFF was not specifically designed to address the arts education opportunity gap, its flexibility in spending provided school districts with the opportunity to address such issues of educational equity in the arts.

This qualitative, multi-site case study examined how the implementation of California's LCFF impacted arts education programs at the district level and how it impacted the work of arts education teachers in two Los Angeles County school districts - California Redwood School District and Golden Poppy School District. This final chapter reviews each case and its findings, first in California Redwood and then in Golden Poppy, before making recommendations for educational leaders within each research site. The chapter concludes with a discussion of opportunities for future research, the dissemination of the study findings, and limitations of the study.

Review of the Study

This multi-site case study investigated the impact of LCFF implementation on arts education programs within two Los Angeles County school districts. In order to closely examine the impact of LCFF within these two research sites, California Redwood and Golden Poppy, this study addressed the following three research questions:

1. Within each of the two school districts, to what extent did the introduction of the LCFF contribute to a change in arts education?
 - a. What changes, if any, did each district make with respect to arts education: funding, staffing, student access, curriculum, teacher support, and supplies and resources?
2. According to district leaders, what factors contributed to decisions regarding changes in arts education funding/inclusion of arts education in the LCAP?
3. How have arts education teachers experienced changes, if any, in their work and support since the introduction of arts education into their districts' LCAP as a result of the LCFF?

Summary of Key Findings for the California Redwood Case

California Redwood is a large unified school district that serves over 20,000 students with a 74% Hispanic/Latino population and a 78% socioeconomically disadvantaged student population. California Redwood included arts education in its LCAP, which addressed five out of eight State priority areas under LCFF. To address the first research question, concerning the district-level changes that occurred within California Redwood, I conducted a document content analysis on the District's initial LCAP (2014-2017) and revised LCAP (2015-2018), the 2014-2015 and 2015-2016 District budgets, and the Arts Education Department's internal documents, which included their 2014-2015 and 2015-2016 budgets. This document analysis discovered that, as a result of LCFF implementation, California Redwood changed the amount of overall funding

available for its arts education program, adjusted how the District hired and distributed teachers throughout the District to ensure more equitable arts access for its students, and provided arts allocation funding for every school site within the District.

To address the second research question regarding the factors that contributed to the District's decision to include arts education within its LCAP, I interviewed three district-level decision-makers. These district leaders each tied the inclusion of arts education in the District's LCAP to a 2012 Board resolution that named the arts as core subjects in California Redwood. In order to investigate the third research question about whether and how arts education teachers experienced changes in their work as a result of LCFF, I distributed a questionnaire to all arts education teachers within the District and interviewed 20 arts education teachers. Based on analyses of the 139 questionnaire responses and 20 arts education teacher interviews, I found that arts education teachers felt positive about the impact of LCFF and the district-level support they received. The arts education teachers felt positive because they had experienced changes in their work as a result of the hiring of a new arts education director, hiring of new arts education teachers, and because of the availability of arts allocations for supplies and resources.

I also found that, although arts education teachers felt positive about district-level changes as a result of LCFF, they did not feel as positive about school-level changes as a result of LCFF. California Redwood arts education teachers believed their work had been impacted negatively by the implementation of LCFF at the school-level as a result of lack of communication, lack of school-based funding for the arts, and the shift in power from the district-level to the school-level.

Summary of Key Findings for the Golden Poppy Case

Golden Poppy is a medium-sized unified school district that serves between 10,000 and 19,999 students. Golden Poppy has a 94% Hispanic/Latino and 97% socioeconomically disadvantaged student population. The District included arts education in its LCAP and stated that it would address all eight State priority areas. I conducted a document content analysis on Golden Poppy's Strategic Plan, the initial LCAP (2014-2017) and revised LCAP (2015-2018), the 2014-2015 and 2015-2016 budgets, Board agendas for the 2014-2015 and 2015-2016 school years, and Golden Poppy's website in order to address the first research question. Based on my analyses of these documents, I found that the implementation of LCFF contributed greatly to changes in arts education within Golden Poppy. The changes in arts education impacted overall funding available for arts education within the District, hiring of new arts education teachers and a VAPA Coordinator, increased student access to courses and new curriculum, increased the availability of funds for teacher support such as professional development, and increased funding for supplies and resources for the District's arts education teachers.

In order to investigate the second research question, I conducted three interviews with district-level decision-makers in Golden Poppy. I interviewed Fernando, the Visual and Performing Arts Coordinator; Eduardo, the Assistant Superintendent of Educational Services; and Gustavo, the Director of Elementary Education. Through these interviews, I discovered that district-level participants believed Golden Poppy included arts education in their LCAP because of the stakeholder feedback they received from the LCAP input process, because of district-level administrative support and because the Golden Poppy Strategic Plan had already mentioned addressing arts education, so it seemed like a logical progression to do so.

Questionnaires and interviews of arts education teachers provided insight about how educators perceived the impact of LCFF at both the district and school levels. From the 11 questionnaire results and four interviews, arts education teachers believed that LCFF had a positive impact on arts education within their school and district. In addition, Golden Poppy arts education teachers felt an increase in support for the arts as a result of an increase in overall funding for the arts at the district level and because they felt that their school and District leadership was advocating for the arts.

Cross-Site Analysis

Although the purpose of this study primarily sought to understand how LCFF implementation connected with changes in arts education within two distinct differences, comparing the findings between the two district sites provides important insight regarding how communication about the policy and implementation of specific policy goals relate to perceptions about the efficacy of the initiative. California Redwood represented a large-sized school district with over 20,000 students while Golden Poppy represented a medium-sized school district that served between 10,000 and 19,999 students. Despite the difference in district size, arts education teachers in both districts believed that the implementation of LCFF had positively impacted arts education at the district level. Arts education teachers at California Redwood and Golden Poppy also felt that their school district had increased its support of arts education as a result of LCFF, primarily because they had money available to them to purchase supplies and resources. Additionally, arts education teachers within both sites praised district leadership for its visibility and enthusiasm in supporting arts education. The teachers who participated in interviews and who completed the questionnaire tended to credit district leaders for the increase in the number of arts education teachers throughout each of the two districts.

While arts education teachers in both districts largely credited district leadership and LCFF for increased support in the form of additional arts education teachers and funding for supplies, the findings regarding school-level support varied greatly between the two sites. Arts education teachers at California Redwood perceived less of an impact on arts education programs at the school-level when compared to the district-level, whereas Golden Poppy arts education teachers maintained a positive perception of LCFF at the school and district level. In particular, arts education teachers within California Redwood District expressed strong skepticism about the level of support for arts education among school site instructional leaders (i.e., principals); by contrast, this sentiment generally was not shared among interviewees within Golden Poppy District.

Study participants within both districts identified a need for clear communication between the district-level personnel and arts education teachers. California Redwood arts education teachers perceived that a lack of communication prevented them from fully understanding the broader impact on arts education from LCFF. Concerns about communication appeared to be significantly stronger among arts education teachers in California Redwood than in Golden Poppy, where communication between the district and its teachers appeared to be at least adequate. The most likely cause for communication concerns in California Redwood is its large size. Although California Redwood is unable to adjust its size to enhance communication, it can adjust the way it communicates in order to inform its administrators and arts education teachers in a more transparent and timely manner. California Redwood can learn about more effective and efficient communication from Golden Poppy's example.

Golden Poppy utilized LCFF to positively impact arts education in their District primarily because it was able to effectively communicate a shared vision to all of its stakeholders. Golden

Poppy district-level personnel and arts education teachers could name the District's Strategic Plan as the primary reason the District included arts education in their LCAP. The mission and objectives stated in this plan guided the District's work and decision-making. The way that Golden Poppy communicated their goals is reminiscent of the five practices of exemplary leadership (Kouzes & Posner, 2012). Kouzes and Posner (2012) describe the five practices leaders engage in when initiating change within an organization. Leaders model the way, inspire a shared vision, challenge the process, enable others to act, and encourage the heart (p. 15).

In modeling the way, a leader must affirm the shared values of the group and set an example by aligning actions with the shared values (Kouzes & Posner, 2012). Golden Poppy District and school-level interview participants frequently identified the Golden Poppy superintendent as the voice of change within the District. Unlike in California Redwood, where participants felt that the district goals were imposed upon them, the Golden Poppy participants felt that the superintendent's values were reflective of the stakeholders' shared values. The Golden Poppy leadership subsequently shared its values with the stakeholders and worked together to create its Strategic Plan. In developing its Strategic Plan, the Golden Poppy District leaders *inspired a shared vision* for what the district could become. This shared vision became the basis for the development of their initial LCAP and subsequent implementation.

Golden Poppy district leaders *challenged the process* when they decided to make an investment in arts education by included it in their LCAP and allocating LCFF dollars towards rebuilding the arts programs that suffered greatly as a result of the NCLB accountability era and the Great Recession. They also challenged the process when they chose to seek innovative partnerships with external arts organizations, such as the Latino Film Institute and Rock and Roll Academy, to improve their students' access to arts education.

Golden Poppy District leaders *enabled others to act* during the process of developing their Strategic Plan and LCAP, by creating a safe and welcoming space where all stakeholders, from the top-level administrator down to the students, could voice their opinions on how to improve the District. This process fostered collaboration and built trust among the stakeholders (Kouzes & Posner, 2012). Lastly, Golden Poppy District leaders encouraged the heart by publicly recognizing the stakeholders' input and LCFF accomplishments in district newsletters and social media accounts in both English and Spanish so that it was accessible to all stakeholders.

By exhibiting these five practices of exemplary leadership, the Golden Poppy School District was able to utilize LCFF to positively impact arts education programs in their district and motivate their stakeholders to continue making progress. Compared to California Redwood District, Golden Poppy District's smaller size (10,000-19,999 students) and thoughtful, coordinated strategy of LCFF implementation, including the engagement of key stakeholders, may have contributed to more positive perceptions held by study participants.

Recommendations for California Redwood Educational Leaders

Based on the findings from this case study, I recommend California Redwood educational leaders implement the following for its arts education programs.

Improve Communication Between the Arts Education Department and All of its K-12 Arts Education Teachers

It is imperative that the District's and Arts Education Department's vision and mission are aligned and clearly communicated to all stakeholders within the District. If policies change, extra care should be taken so that all school administrators and arts education teachers are informed in a timely manner. For example, all arts education teachers received an arts budget

allocation at their individual sites, but not all of those surveyed and interviewed attributed it to LCFF implementation even though the allocation was identified in the District's LCAP. In addition, arts education teachers, primarily elementary teachers, recognized that a shift in decision-making power from district-level to school-level had occurred, but not all of them were aware of the rationale behind the change. Although California Redwood is a large school district, the intent of LCFF and its corresponding LCAP are about transparency and ease of communication, regardless of a district's size. District leaders have an opportunity to promote the Arts Education Department's current projects and how the arts are being addressed in the District's LCAP while also encouraging arts education teachers to participate in the LCAP input and development process.

Identify Specific, Measurable Goals for Arts Education in the LCAP with Input From the Arts Education Department

Having specific goals will guide the Arts Education Department and the District to move towards the achievement of their stated objectives. In addition, the District should utilize consistent vocabulary and wording of programs from year to year in the LCAP updates. For example, the District included the terms *arts program*, *arts plan*, *integration of the arts*, and *arts integration* frequently in the LCAP, but the terms were used interchangeably and vaguely throughout the document. Specificity and clarity in the language in California Redwood's LCAP will allow the various stakeholders to better understand the document and how the District is addressing its arts education goals as stated in the LCAP.

Clearly Delineate What is Required for Local Sites to Successfully Implement an Arts Education Program

With guidance from the Arts Education Department, the California Redwood Office of Curriculum, Instruction, and School Supports should create a handbook for implementing arts education programs, which should include possible funding sources, including LCFF and Title I funds. It is not the intent for this handbook to stipulate what type of arts education programs a school implement, but rather to provide guidelines to facilitate the establishment of a successful arts education programs, such as the need for a dedicated space, for highly qualified teachers, for scheduling and funding considerations.

Recommendations for Golden Poppy Educational Leaders

Maintain Clear and Consistent Communication Between the District Office and Arts Education Teachers

In order to maintain the positive forward momentum in arts education within the District, Golden Poppy should focus on maintaining clear and consistent communication between district-level personnel and arts education teachers at the school level. It is especially important for the District's new VAPA Coordinator to maintain clear communication with the District's 17 arts education teachers. In addition to the VAPA Coordinator's current efforts of meeting individually with arts teachers, he should consider holding district-wide meetings with all arts education teachers so that the District goals and teacher concerns are clearly communicated to all teachers in a consistent manner.

Ensure That all Four Arts Disciplines are Receiving Adequate Support from the Stated LCAP Goals

Although the District did provide a reasonable rationale for its larger investment in rebuilding music programs, it is important that the remaining three arts disciplines at each of the schools receive support as well. Based on the initial and revised LCAPs, it appears that the

District provided financial support for the music, visual arts, and theater programs, but did not allocate any funds specifically for its two dance programs at each of its traditional high schools.

Promote LCAP-Related Arts Education Progress and Best Practices with Other School Districts

Although LCFF implementation is in its early stages, Golden Poppy experienced positive progress in arts education within the first two years. Golden Poppy District personnel should share their best practices as well as challenges with other school districts within Los Angeles County on how to incorporate arts education into a district's LCAP. Golden Poppy's LCAP development and implementation could serve as a positive example of arts education for other school districts throughout the County and the State. The California Alliance for Arts Education, along with Arts for LA and Arts for All, have featured examples of arts education in the LCAPs of various school districts throughout California on their websites and presentations. I recommend that Golden Poppy reach out to one of these organizations to be a featured school district so that others may learn about their process, including best practices and challenges for establishing and achieving arts education goals in district LCAPs.

Opportunities for Future Research

This study investigated the impact of LCFF on arts education programs at the district-level and teacher level. In both the district-level and arts education teacher interviews, the participants frequently mentioned the school principal as either an advocate for the arts or an impediment for the arts. Future research should focus on the school principal's perspective as to how they support arts education programs utilizing LCFF resources within their school. As the instructional leaders of their schools, principals could share their goals and priorities for their school and discuss how the arts play a role, if any, in fulfilling those goals. A further look into principals' daily work and decision-making could illuminate the complexities of their position so

that district-level administrators and arts education teachers could better understand the context for their decision-making as it relates to LCFF expenditures and the arts.

Another possibility for future research should focus on the long-term impact of LCFF implementation on arts education programs. Future research should investigate the impact of LCFF within a district over the course of, at minimum, three years, which is the length of one LCAP cycle. Such research could examine how initial investments in the arts might have impacted student access to arts education courses beyond the length of a school year.

Dissemination of Study Findings

It is my intent to share the results of this study with each of the research sites in the form of an executive summary, which will include a study overview, findings, and recommendations. In California Redwood, I will first present my findings and recommendations to the Art Education Department, before distributing the executive summary to all 1,664 arts education teachers within the district. In Golden Poppy, I will present my findings and recommendations to the Eduardo, the Assistant Superintendent of Instructional Services and Fernando, the Visual and Performing Arts Coordinator. I will then distribute the executive summary to all 17 arts education teachers within Golden Poppy.

In order to share my findings with a wider audience, I plan on presenting my study results at the California All-State Music Education Conference that will be held in San Jose, CA on February 16-19, 2017. If accepted to present, I will prepare an executive summary of my study and findings and provide recommendations for that arts education teachers, school administrators, and district-level administrators could consider when revising their LCAPs.

On March 10, 2016, the California State Board of Education appointed me to a three-year term as a traditional public school teacher practitioner on the California Practitioners Advisory

Group (CPAG). The purpose of this advisory group is to provide recommendations to the State Board of Education (SBE) in its ongoing efforts to establish a single coherent, local, state, and federal accountability system. The CPAG provides the SBE with input on the design of LCFF evaluation rubrics and other LCFF-related decisions. This committee also reviews State rules and regulations that relate to federal Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, as amended by the recently implement Every Student Success Act, in order to advise the State in carrying out its Title I responsibilities. Members of the committee include education researchers, charter school leaders, teachers, members of local school boards, school principals, and district and county superintendents. As a member of the CPAG, I plan on presenting the findings from my multi-site case study and sharing my recommendations with a statewide audience so that they may consider how they could best positively impact arts education programs within their counties or school districts.

Limitations

The first threat to the validity of this study, as with any other case study, is small sample size. Because I investigated two school districts in Los Angeles County, my findings and recommendations are not generalizable to the wider County or State school district population. A second threat to validity is the low questionnaire response rate (8.35%) from arts education teachers in California Redwood. Because of this low response rate, it is unclear whether the sample is representative of the overall population of arts education teachers within California Redwood. Researcher bias and reactivity are the other two threats to validity that limit this multi-site case study. Maxwell (2013) described researcher bias as the subjectivity of the researcher. Merriam (2009) added that since the researcher is the primary data collection instrument, the data have been filtered through the researcher's biases (p. 233). My bias as a

researcher stemmed from my being a music teacher in one of the two research sites. Thus my data filtering occurred through the lens of an arts education teacher. This position may have also led to increased reactivity within that research site. Maxwell (2013) described reactivity as the influence of the researcher on the setting or individuals studied (p. 124). Complete elimination of reactivity is not possible, but important for the researcher to understand and work to mitigate its existence and use it productively. Reactivity in this study is possibly evident in the response rate of music teachers within California Redwood. Music teachers represented 27.8% of all arts education teachers within California Redwood but represented 46% of the questionnaire respondents and 48.7% of teachers interested in an interview.

Conclusion

In order “to succeed today and in the future, America’s children will need to be inventive, resourceful, and imaginative. The best way to foster that creativity is through arts education” (Duncan in PCAH, 2011, p. 1). Despite public support for the arts, arts education programs across the country have experienced cuts as a result of the accountability-driven era of the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 and the Great Recession of 2008. Years later, many students across the country still have limited access to arts education programs, especially students who are racial or ethnic minorities, low-income, or English Language Learners (Baker, 2012; Parsad & Spiegelman, 2012). This “arts opportunity gap,” said former Secretary of Education Arne Duncan, was “absolutely an equity and civil rights issue” (Duncan, 2012, p. 2).

California’s implementation of its Local Control Funding Formula sought to address the issue of educational parity by focusing on equity, transparency, and performance (Torlakson & Kirst, 2013). When LCFF was first announced in 2013, arts organizations throughout the State viewed LCFF as a window of opportunity to address the arts education gap by providing funding

to restore arts education programs that had been reduced or eliminated in recent years (Arts for LA, Arts for All, & Los Angeles County Arts Commission, 2015; CREATE CA, 2015). A 2015 study on Los Angeles County school district LCAPs found that 77% of the County's 81 school districts had mentioned arts education to some extent in their LCAP (Arts for LA et al., 2015). By including the arts in their respective LCAPs, school districts demonstrated they valued the arts and were willing to be held accountable for progress on their arts-related goals as stated in the LCAP. Although it is still too early to determine the long-term impacts of LCFF implementation on arts education programs in the State and Los Angeles County, it is exciting to see that school districts are including arts education in their LCAPs. LCFF has provided California's students with an opportunity to receive more equitable educational opportunities than in the past. It is my hope that school districts will maximize this opportunity to provide all of California's public school students with the access to the arts education programs they are entitled to and deserve to have.

Appendix A

LCAP Document Analysis Protocol

1. District name
2. Document year (2014-2015, 2015-2016)
3. Number of state priority areas that arts education fulfills in LCAP
4. What are the specific state priority areas that the arts fulfill in LCAP? (Select all that apply)
 - Basic
 - Implementation of State Standards
 - Course Access/Broad Course of Study
 - Pupil Achievement
 - Other Pupil Outcomes
 - Parent Involvement
 - Pupil Engagement
 - School Climate
5. What are the terms used for arts education in the LCAP?
 - Art, arts, band, dance, drama, music, orchestra, STEAM, theater, theatre, visual art, and VAPA (visual and performing arts).
6. What arts-related actions or services are mentioned in the LCAP? (Select all that apply)
 - Staffing (Full or part-time)
 - Student access
 - Curriculum development/purchase (instructional supplies, course materials)
 - Teacher support (professional development, release time, training, PD supplies)
 - Supplies and resources (instructional materials, musical instruments, etc.)
 - No specific action or service
 - Other
7. Do any of these actions or services constitute an increase in arts education programs or practices within the district when compared to pre-LCFF district plans?
 - Yes
 - No
 - Unclear
8. If yes, which of these arts-related actions or services are new? (Select all that apply)
 - Staffing (Full or part-time)

- Student access
- Curriculum development/purchase (instructional supplies, course materials)
- Teacher support (professional development, release time, training, PD supplies)
- Supplies and resources (instructional materials, musical instruments, etc.)
- No specific action or service
- Other

9. How will these arts-related actions or services be funded? (Select all that apply)

- LCFF Base Funds
- LCFF Supplemental Funds
- LCFF Concentration Funds

10. Does the LCAP mention exact dollar amounts that will be allocated for the **overall** arts-related actions or services?

- Yes
- No
- If yes, what is the amount?

11. Does the LCAP mention exact dollar amounts that will be allocated for the **specific** arts-related actions or services?

- Yes
- No
- If yes, what is the amount?

12. Does the LCAP describe a three-year plan of the arts-related actions or services?

- Yes
- No

13. Are the arts paired with other actions and services to achieve a specific goal?

- Yes
- No
- If yes, what are the arts paired with?

14. Does the revised LCAP (effective July 1, 2015) include any changes to arts-related actions or services when compared to initial LCAP (July 1, 2014)?

- Yes
- No
- If yes, what were the changes?

15. Other pertinent information found in LCAP that pertains to arts-related actions or services

Appendix B

District-Level Decision-Maker Interview Protocol

1. Please state your name, position, and years of service within the district. Please describe your role in the creation of your districts' LCAP.
2. How would you describe the overall process of creating your districts' LCAP?
3. How would you describe the process of including arts education in your district's LCAP?
4. Why do you believe arts education was included in your district's LCAP?
 - a. Do you recall who the primary person was who mentioned arts education?
5. Please describe arts education in your district before the implementation of the LCFF (before the 2013-2014 school year)?
6. How would you describe arts education in your district now after the implementation of the LCFF (starting with the 2013-2014 school year)?
7. How would you describe your district's progress towards the arts education goals stated in the revised LCAP?
8. So you came here today to discuss the LCFF and its impact on arts education within your district. What are some things that I have not included that you believe are salient to this discussion?
9. Do you have any other people that you recommend I speak with concerning arts education in your district's LCAP?

Appendix C

Arts Education Teacher Interview Protocol

1. Please state your name, position, and years of service within the district. Please tell me about your experiences as an arts education teacher within the district before the implementation of LCFF (before the 2013-2014 school year).
2. What changes have occurred in arts education at the district level that you are aware of as a result of the implementation of the LCFF (starting with the 2013-2014 school year)?
3. How do you feel about the following statement: “My **district** has increased its support of arts education since the implementation of LCFF”?
4. How do you feel about the following statement: “My **school** administration has increased its support of arts education since the implementation of LCFF”?
5. How do you feel about the following statement: “I believe that the implementation of LCFF has had a positive impact in arts education within my **district**”?
6. How do you feel about the following statement: “I believe that the implementation of LCFF has had a positive impact in arts education within my **school**”?
7. Please describe the area of arts education that you believe has been most impacted by the implementation of LCFF within your district?
8. So you came here today to discuss the LCFF and its impact on arts education within your **district**. What are some things that I have not included that you believe are salient to this discussion?
9. Do you have any other people that you recommend I speak with concerning arts education in your district’s LCAP?

Appendix D

Arts Education Teacher Questionnaire

Local Control Funding Formula and Arts Education in Your School District

Informed Consent Form

Introduction

The purpose of this questionnaire is to gather arts education teachers' perspectives about the impact of Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF) on arts education within their school and school district. You were invited to participate because you have been identified as an arts education teacher within your school district.

Participation

Participation in this research consists of completing the following questionnaire during non-work hours, which takes an estimated 10 to 15 minutes to complete. An executive summary of the study, including an overall report of these questionnaire results, will be provided to your district at the conclusion of this study. Your responses, including your position and worksite, will remain confidential. Your participation in this research is voluntary. You may choose not to participate or withdraw at any time without penalty.

Researcher

Mariana Astorga-Almanza, from the Graduate School of Education and Information Studies at the University of California, Los Angeles, is conducting a study on the impact of the Local Control Funding Formula on arts education within Los Angeles County school districts. Mariana Astorga-Almanza is also a secondary instrumental music teacher in the Los Angeles Unified School District.

Questions About This Study

If you have questions about this study, please contact:

Mariana Astorga-Almanza, Principal Investigator (951) 452-4655 mastorga@g.ucla.edu

Dr. Kevin Eagan, Faculty Sponsor (310) 206-3448 keagan@ucla.edu

UCLA Office of the Human Research Protection Program (OHRPP):

If you have questions about your rights while taking part in the study, or you have concerns or suggestions and you want to talk to someone other than the researchers about the study, please call the OHRPP at (310) 825-7122 or write to:

UCLA Office of the Human Research Protection Program
11000 Kinross Avenue, Suite 211, Box 951694
Los Angeles, CA 90095-1694

LCFF and Arts Education in Your District

1. What arts discipline do you teach? Check all that apply.
 - a. Dance
 - b. Drama
 - c. Music (Instrumental or Vocal)
 - d. Visual arts

2. What level of arts education do you teach? Check all that apply.
 - a. Elementary School
 - b. Middle School
 - c. High School

3. How many different sites do you teach at?
 - a. 1
 - b. 2
 - c. 3
 - d. 4
 - e. 5 or more

4. How many years have you worked at:
 - a. Site #1 _____
 - b. Site #2 _____
 - c. Site #3 _____
 - d. Site #4 _____
 - e. Site #5 _____

5. How many years of arts education teaching experience do you have within this **district**?

6. How many years of arts education teaching experience do you have **overall**?

7. What art disciplines are taught at your school/s? Please check all that apply.
 - a. Dance
 - b. Drama
 - c. Music (Instrumental or Vocal)
 - d. Visual arts

8. Including yourself, how many full-time arts educators teach at your school site?

Continued on next page.

What is LCFF?

The Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF) is the new finance system for California public schools. Implemented in the 2013-2014 school year, LCFF provides base, supplemental and concentration grants for a local educational agency. In order for funds to be disbursed to a school district, the district must create a Local Control and Accountability Plan (LCAP). Each district's initial LCAP went into effect on July 1, 2014 (for the 2014-2015 school year).

Your district included arts education in at least five out of eight state priority areas in their LCAP, which include: 1) Student Achievement, 2) Student Engagement, 3) School Climate, 4) Parental Involvement, 5) Basic Services, 6) Implementation of Common Core State Standards, 7) Course Access, and 8) Other Student Outcomes.

In the first set of questions, you will be asked about how you perceive the impact of LCFF on arts education at your specific school site when compared to two years ago (pre-LCFF/LCAP)

1. When compared to last year, how many arts education teachers have you gained this year? (For Sites #1 - #5)
 - a. Fewer teachers
 - b. No change in teachers
 - c. 0.5 - 1 more teacher
 - d. 1.5 to 2 more teachers
 - e. 2.5 or more teachers

2. When compared to last year, how would you describe the changes in the number of arts education courses at your school? (For Sites #1 - #5)
 - a. Fewer courses
 - b. No change in courses
 - c. 1 more course
 - d. 2 more courses
 - e. 3 or more courses

3. When compared to last year, how would you describe the changes in the number of students enrolled in arts education courses at your school? (For Sites #1 - #5)
 - a. Fewer students enrolled
 - b. No changes in students enrolled
 - c. 1 - 49 more students enrolled
 - d. 50 - 99 more students enrolled
 - e. 100 or more students enrolled

4. When compared to last year, how would you describe the changes in the number of paid opportunities to attend professional development available to arts education teachers at your school? (For Sites #1 - #5)

- a. Fewer opportunities
 - b. No change in opportunities
 - c. 1 more opportunity
 - d. 2 more opportunities
 - e. 3 or more opportunities
5. When compared to last year, how would you describe the amount of funds available for arts education supplies and resources at your school? (Supplies and resources include textbooks, method books, instructional supplies, musical instruments, etc.) (For Sites #1 - #5)
- a. Fewer funds
 - b. No change in funds
 - c. \$1 - \$999 more
 - d. \$1000 - \$1999 more
 - e. \$2000 or more

In the next set of questions, you will be asked about your perceptions about the impact of LCFF on arts education within your school and district. Please rate the following statements:

| | Disagree | Somewhat Disagree | Somewhat Agree | Agree |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| My school administration has increased its support of arts education. (For Sites #1 - #5) | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| I believe that LCFF has had a positive impact on arts education within my school. (For Sites #1 - #5) | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| My district has increased its support of arts education. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| I believe that LCFF has had a positive impact on arts education within my district. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Which have been the highest areas of impact on arts education within your district as a result of LCFF? Please rank from lowest impact (6) to highest impact (1).

| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Funding for Arts Education in General. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Number of Arts Education Teachers. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Curriculum (Course Offerings) | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Teacher Support (Professional Development) | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Supplies and Resources | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Student Access to Arts Education | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Please explain any other positive indicator of the impact of LCFF on arts education at the school and/or district level:

| |
|--|
| |
|--|

What are some things that I have not included that you believe are salient to this discussion?

| |
|--|
| |
|--|

Would you be interested in participating in a single 45 to 60 minute interview (in-person or over the phone) to further discuss your thoughts about the impact of LCFF on arts education within school district?

Interviews will be conducted individually, during non-work hours at a location of your choosing. Interviews will remain confidential. Your participation in this research is voluntary. You may choose not to participate or withdraw at any time without penalty.

- No, I am not interested. (End of survey)
- Yes, I am interested.

Yes, I am interested in participating in a single 45 to 60 minute interview (in-person or over the phone) to further discuss my thoughts about the impact of LCFF on arts education within my school district.

Interviews will be conducted individually, during non-work hours at a location of your choosing. An executive summary of the study, including an overall report of these interview results, will be provided to your district at the conclusion of this study. Your responses, including your name, position, and worksite, will remain confidential. Your participation in this research is voluntary. You may choose not to participate or withdraw at any time without penalty.

Please provide the following contact information below:

| | |
|-----------------------|------------------------|
| Name: | Position/Title: |
| School: | District: |
| Email address: | Phone Number: |

Appendix E

Study Information Sheet

University of California, Los Angeles

The Impact of California's Local Control Funding Formula On Two Los Angeles County School Districts

Mariana Astorga-Almanza, from the Graduate School of Education and Information Studies at the University of California, Los Angeles, is conducting a study on the impact of the Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF) on arts education within two Los Angeles County school districts.

You were selected as a possible participant in this study because you are either an arts education teacher within your school district or were involved in the development of your district's Local Control and Accountability Plan (LCAP). Your participation in this research study is voluntary.

Why is this study being done?

The purpose of this survey is to gather the arts education teachers' and district-level decision makers' perspectives about the impact of the LCFF on arts education within your school and school district.

What will happen if I take part in this research study?

If you volunteer to participate in this study, the researcher will ask you to do the following:

District-Level Decision Makers:

- Participate in a single 45 to 60 minute interview during non-work hours at your selected site.
 - You will be asked to answer nine open-ended questions regarding your experiences in developing your district's LCAP and how arts education was incorporated into that plan.
 - You will be asked for your permission to have the interview audio recorded.

Arts Education Teachers:

- Participate in a 10 to 15 minute online questionnaire.
 - You will be asked a total of 19 questions: seven demographic questions, five multiple-choice questions, four Likert-scale questions, one ranking question, and two open-ended questions.
- In addition, you can choose to participate in a single 45 to 60 minute interview during non-work hours at your selected site.
 - You will be asked to answer nine open-ended questions regarding your experiences and perceptions about the implementation of LCFF on arts education as an arts education teacher within your district.

- You will be asked for your permission to have the interview audio recorded.

Are there any potential risks or discomforts if I participate?

There are no anticipated risks or discomforts from participating in this study.

Are there any potential benefits if I participate?

You will not directly benefit from your participation in the research. However, the results of this study may lead to other school districts incorporating arts education into their LCAPs for the next LCAP cycle.

Will information about me and my participation be kept confidential?

The information that is obtained in connection with the study and that can identify you will remain confidential. It will be disclosed only with your permission or as required by law.

Confidentiality will be maintained by means of pseudonyms. Your name and work site will not be reported with the data. Transcription files will be stored in a password-protected file on an external hard drive, separate from other study documents.

What are my rights if I take part in this study?

- You can choose whether or not you want to be in the study, and you may withdraw your consent and discontinue participation at any time.
- Whatever decision you make, there will be no penalty to you, and no loss of benefits to which you were otherwise entitled.
- You may refuse to answer any questions that you do not want to answer and still remain in the study.

Who can I contact if I have questions about this study?

- The research team:
If you have any questions, comments or concerns about the research, you can talk to one of the researchers. Please contact:

Mariana Astorga-Almanza, Doctoral Candidate, Principal Investigator
UCLA, Graduate School of Education and Information Studies
Phone: (951) 452-4655 Email: mastorga@g.ucla.edu

Dr. Kevin Eagan, Assistant Professor in Residence, Co-Chair
UCLA, Graduate School of Education and Information Studies
Phone: (310) 206-3448 Email: keagan@ucla.edu

- UCLA Office of the Human Research Protection Program (OHRPP):

You have questions about your rights will taking part in the study, or you have concerns or suggestions and you want to talk to someone other than the researchers about the study, please call the OHRPP at (310) 825-7122 or write to:

UCLA Office of the Human Research Protection Program
11000 Kinross Avenue, Suite 211, Box 951694
Los Angeles, CA 90095-1694

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