





# MEASURING A DECADE OF IMPACT



After ten years of developing arts-rich public elementary and middle schools to increase educational equity, Turnaround Arts: California commissioned Moxie Research to conduct an evaluation of our impact to date and key drivers of success. Their research included interviews with 45 educators, artists, arts organizations, and staff, 700 student responses in drawing and writing, and data from six years of Turnaround Arts teacher surveys.

Previously relying on standardized test scores and attendance data as proxy measures of our work, this evaluation paints a fuller picture by capturing the direct outcomes of school-wide use of the arts. The evaluation found that Turnaround Arts: California's innovative whole-school model has had significant impacts throughout partner school communities on students, staff, and families.

As the pandemic wanes, issues of educational equity, student wellbeing, and teacher burnout are as urgent as ever. This evaluation shows the power and potential of the arts in addressing our education system's most pressing challenges.

# WHAT STUDENTS SAY

Moxie Research asked 700 K-8th grade students at Turnaround Arts partner schools to share what they like about having the arts at their school and what participating in the arts has helped them learn about themselves and others.

**Student responses focused on...**

## SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL LEARNING AND WELLBEING:

Engaging in the arts promoted relaxation, patience, self-expression, helped students build confidence, and learn more about themselves.

*"What I learned about myself doing the arts is that mistakes are just a way of growth."*

- Zamboni Middle School 8th grader

## LEARNING:

Students reported learning new arts skills, and learning by doing.

*"I learned that I can do amazing things, that I am great at art."*

- 6th grade student

## CULTURE AND CLIMATE:

The arts allowed students to learn about their peers, build community, and connect with their teachers.

*"I like having the arts at this school because I feel like the arts bring us together."*

- Zamboni Middle School 6th grader



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**was in 6th grade when Turnaround Arts was first implemented at my school.**

I remember before that Fremont was a fairly rough school, the attendance wasn't so great. But I found that through the arts, kids started showing up more. It was an incentive to want to do better in school.

What Turnaround Arts means to me is that every kid has the opportunity to discover themselves through the arts. Sometimes when you can't figure out stuff through words, you can do that through music or dance. It's easier. Every kid has an opportunity to find themselves.

*Without the arts,  
I wouldn't have the  
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me who I am today.*

Without the arts, I wouldn't have the experiences that made me who I am today. Even though I don't want to major in music when I go to college - I want to go into the medical field - music and the arts have made me a better person and better prepared for that. It has made me learn how to have patience with myself and others, it's made me better in math, and have better control and responsibility over myself. I am just better prepared to go into whatever field I choose.

*Sarah Burke Baker is a former student at Turnaround Arts Partner School, Fremont Lopez Elementary in Stockton. She is currently attending University of the Pacific to be a Speech and Language Pathologist.*



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# WHAT MAKES TURNAROUND ARTS DISTINCT

Turnaround Arts: California focuses on the adults in public elementary and middle schools - providing coaching, training, retreats, strategic arts planning, artistic residencies, and financial resources to help teachers and principals use the arts to create stronger schools. **The Turnaround Arts program is distinct from other arts education programs in four key ways:**



**Responsive to each school's context and community.**



**Leverages statewide network of artists and arts educators**



**Engages principals and teachers as learners themselves**



**Inspires changes in mindsets on the important role of the arts for equity**

***"Public schools can be so standardized that the individual is lost. The arts are the antidote to standardization."***

- Malissa Shriver, Co-founder  
Turnaround Arts: California



# DEVELOPING CREATIVE SCHOOL LEADERS

Through customized coaching and training, the Turnaround Arts program helps principals develop as school leaders who use the arts to address key priorities for their school community and students.

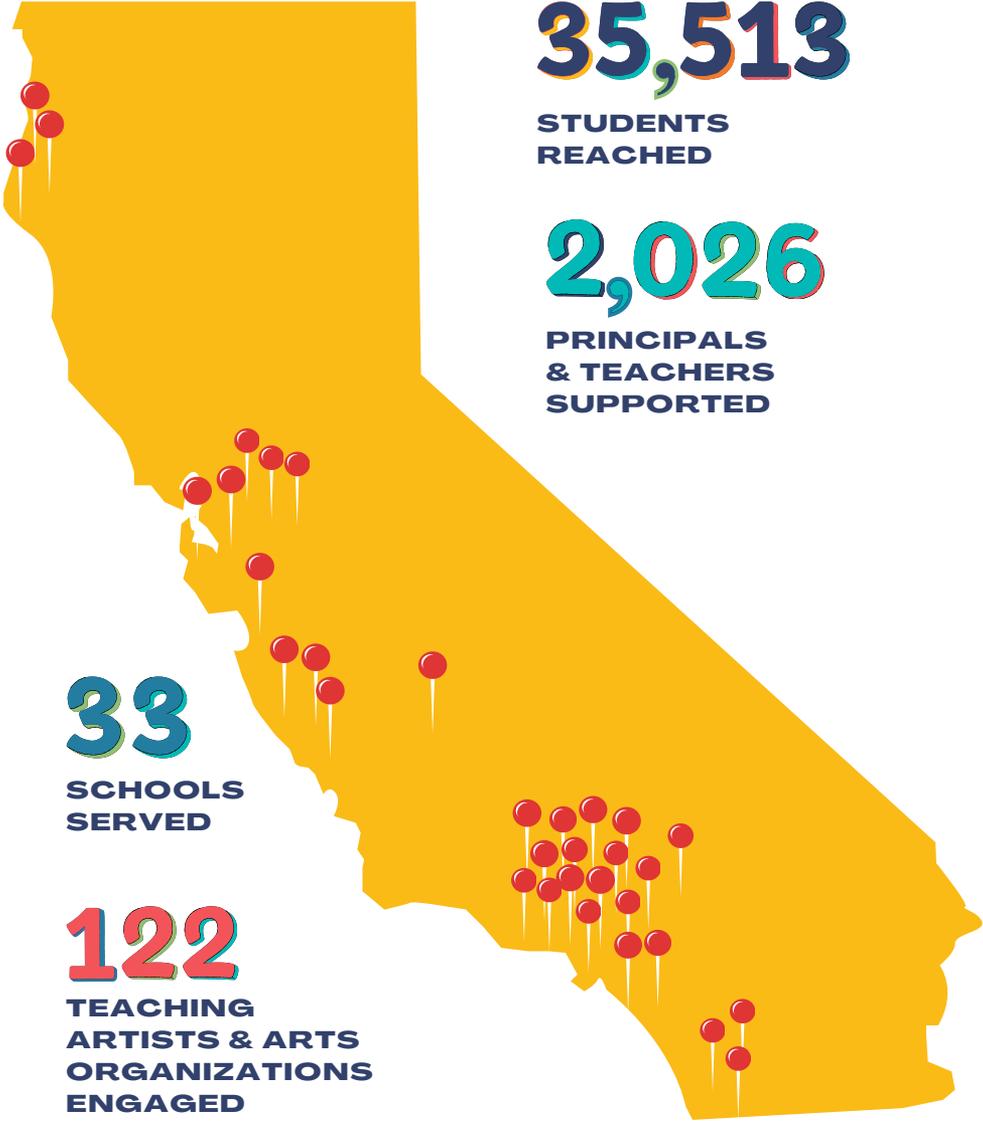
Moxie Research's findings align with research that points to the exponential impact of principals, especially in underserved public schools. By demonstrating their belief in the arts, ensuring their district support, and allocating the time and resources it takes to engage in this work, the principal is critical to the long-term impact and sustainability of their school's investment in the arts.

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*A conversation with my Turnaround Arts coach, Dr. Long, made me realize that I am an artist and have something to offer in the arts. I learned that art primes the brain, improves concentration, develops communication skills, and engages students.*  
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- Turnaround Arts School Principal



# OUR IMPACT BY THE NUMBERS



# THE WAYS TURNAROUND ARTS PARTNER SCHOOLS HAVE CHANGED

## 1 TEACHER COLLABORATION INCREASED

Turnaround Arts helped teachers and principals work together to develop a shared vision for school success. Evaluation data found that educators at Turnaround Arts schools successfully collaborated across grade levels to create actionable plans for school-wide use of the arts that were responsive to school needs and student demographics, backgrounds, and interests.



***“Our teachers feel more unified. I think our whole school feels more unified. There’s a common vision.”***

**- Principal Jacob Gile,  
Echo Valley Elementary**

## 2

*"The arts are essential to student learning. Not every student learns the same. Arts give them another way."*

- Teacher,  
Fremont Lopez Elementary

## TEACHERS ENGAGED MORE STUDENTS

Providing space for classroom teachers to see themselves as creative and artistic is a critical element of the Turnaround Arts model. Teachers reported that professional development opportunities were encouraging and safe spaces to try new creative teaching strategies, and once teachers learned new skills, they consistently used them in their classrooms with students. After implementing arts strategies, teachers across the network reported greater student engagement, collaboration, and learning.



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**M**any of the students I work with at Zamboni Middle School have a learning disability that impacts their engagement in academics. They often feel like they are not the smartest kid in class or don't have the right answer. The arts change that.

I teach a unit on brain science in which students create a representation of the inside of their brain using visual arts techniques. The results have blown me away. It is often the quietest kid in class, or the one that struggles with writing, that creates the most elaborate, beautiful art piece. Integrating the arts into my teaching gives a different set of students an opportunity to shine.

The professional development I've received through Turnaround Arts has helped teachers like me to engage students in creative ways - all while meeting learning goals. The arts help me make sure that all students can learn.

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*Marianna Saade is a Resource Specialist Teacher at Zamboni Middle in Paramount, CA. She has been working with Turnaround Arts: California for seven years, attending professional development workshops to learn arts strategies to incorporate into her teaching. She also serves on her school's Arts Leadership Team.*

## 3

*"Turnaround Arts helped us make learning fun,  
so that our children are happy to be at school,  
and so are the teachers."*

- Teacher, Mary Chapa Academy

## POSITIVE SCHOOL ENVIRONMENTS WERE CREATED

One of the most significant and frequent changes identified by educators was the evolution of schools into more inclusive learning communities: Students described the arts as a fun way to learn that have revitalized the school day, and created community among their classmates and across the school. Schools' physical environments were transformed through murals, art installations, and gardens. Educators and families took pride in what their students accomplished, and evidence of student arts learning was showcased in new ways.



## 4

*“Community engagement exploded with the arts. Kids perform and you see parents, you see abuelas, abuelitas. The arts have increased engagement exponentially.”*

- Dr. Francisco Escobedo,  
former superintendent of Chula Vista  
Elementary School District

## FAMILY ENGAGEMENT GREW

The Turnaround Arts model builds on research that families and community members play an important role in advancing school change efforts. Turnaround Arts schools committed to engaging parents in and through the arts, offering a variety of events to welcome families on campus including family art nights and annual school musical productions, and volunteer opportunities through the arts.



# THE FUTURE OF THE TURNAROUND ARTS MODEL

The arts offer innovative and sustainable solutions to help address our schools' most pressing challenges - from inequities in "learning loss," to family engagement, teacher retention, chronic absenteeism, and declining budgets. As Moxie Research found, the Turnaround Arts model articulates an effective approach to school transformation to reach all students through the arts and create a brighter, more equitable future.

Turnaround Arts: California is preparing for the next decade of building creativity and opportunity in public elementary and middle schools. As our commitment to equity in education continues to grow, so too does our statewide reach to new schools and arts partners. Together we are advancing a new vision for a creative, joyful, and just public education system in California. Thank you for your support of our journey!



***"Our partnership with Turnaround Arts has catalyzed a positive transformation, creating a vibrant and supportive environment where every member of our school community can thrive."***

**- Dr. Michelle Rodriguez,  
Superintendent of Schools,  
Stockton Unified School District**

*Turnaround Arts: California extends our deepest gratitude to the thousands of educators and students, partner arts organizations and coaches, our board and staff, and our partners at the national Turnaround Arts program at The Kennedy Center who help make this work possible and who contributed their time and insights to this evaluation.*



The logo for Turnaround Arts: CA10 is centered within a white circle on an orange background. It features the text "TURNAROUND" in a dark blue, sans-serif font at the top. Below it is "ARTS:" in a larger, bold, dark blue font. Underneath "ARTS:" is "CA" in orange, followed by "10" in a large, bold, teal font. A teal brushstroke graphic is positioned below the "CA" and "10".

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