PUBLIC REQUEST TO ADDRESS
THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA

Correspondence Received

MEMBERS OF THE BOARD

HILDA L. SOLIS
HOLLY J. MITCHELL
LINDSEY P. HORVATH
JANICE HAHN
KATHRYN BARGER

			The following individuals submitted comments on agenda item:	
Agenda #	**Relate To**	**Position**	**Name**	**Comments**
27.	82	**Other**	Lindsey Eichenberger	
		Item Total	**1**	
Grand Total			**1**	

As of: 9/29/2026 3:00:06 PM

Monday, September 28th, 2026

Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors
500 West Temple Street
Los Angeles, CA 90012

RE: Protect Los Angeles County's Investment in Community-Based Arts and Youth Development

Dear Chair Solis and Members of the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors:

We, the undersigned community-based arts, youth development, and cultural organizations, are writing to urge the Board of Supervisors to protect Los Angeles County's investment in the community-based organizations that have spent years building trusted, effective programs for young people.

Recent reductions to the Los Angeles County Department of Arts and Culture allocation from Juvenile Justice Crime Prevention Act (JJCPA) and Juvenile Justice Realignment Block Grant (JJRBF) dollars are destabilizing this infrastructure. For Arts for Healing and Justice Network (AHJN), our *Arts Instruction and Professional Development Services for Youth in Institutions* contract has been reduced by 44%, which translates to 16 less workshops in camps and halls, and approximately 90 youth no longer receiving access to arts programming. Other organizations signing this letter have experienced similarly significant reductions.

This is not a small or emerging network. In FY2024–25, under the Department of Arts and Culture, 20 community-based arts partners provided programming across Los Angeles County's juvenile justice detention facilities, providing diverse arts programming to nearly 20,000 (duplicated) youth across juvenile detention facilities including Secure Youth Treatment Facilities. These organizations have built the relationships, expertise, curricula, and infrastructure (i.e., streamlining contract deliverables and clearance process, data collection, and data sharing) necessary to provide consistent, culturally responsive programming in some of the County's most complex youth-serving environments.

These cuts are not simply reductions to arts programming. They threaten an established network of community-based organizations that the County has invested in to provide young people with opportunities for healing, creative expression, leadership, skill-building, and connection.

The County Should Not Recreate What It Has Already Built

The organizations signing this letter have spent years developing the expertise, relationships, curricula, staffing, and systems necessary to serve young people effectively—including youth involved in or impacted by the juvenile justice system. Based on Probation's Juvenile Justice Data Dashboard we know the majority of the

youth currently incarcerated come from South Los Angeles (District 2), youth who already struggle to access consistent resources in their community are now facing the loss of programming and connection to caring adults. This shift in funding is also affecting Teaching Artists' livelihood; for smaller/grassroot organizations a reduction in programming means potentially letting go of staff. These reductions create ripples beyond just the loss of programming but impact Los Angeles County's creative economy at large.

Effective youth development does not happen simply by contracting for a service. When established programs are forced to reduce their services, it undoes years of hard work and disrupts the trust teaching artists have built with young people sometimes over years.

The County's Youth Justice Investments Present an Opportunity

At the same time that Arts & Culture-funded programs are facing reductions, Los Angeles County is making significant investments in youth development and implementing its vision for a more care-centered youth justice system.

The County's FY2026–27 Juvenile Justice Realignment Block Grant (JJRBG) funding recommendations make the need for coordination particularly clear. The recommendations include $4 million in new funding for Arts in Institutions (SYTF), along with $4.654 million in unspent funds recommended for reallocation to arts programming.

The recommendations also identify substantial resources for the Department of Youth Development's (DYD) Care-First Continuum of Youth Justice Supports and Services, including $18.721 million identified in the FY2026–27 recommendations and $18.27 million in available prior-year funding. The stated purpose of this investment is to promote healthy adolescent development.

These investments present an important opportunity—and a clear responsibility.

As DYD takes on an increasingly central role in youth development and programming, we strongly urge the Board and DYD to use these resources to sustain and strengthen effective programs and partnerships that already exist.

The County should not spend public dollars recreating programs, relationships, and infrastructure that it has already funded and that community-based organizations have already built.

If an organization is already providing effective, culturally responsive, trauma-informed programming to young people, the question should be: *How do we sustain and strengthen what is working?* Rather than, *how do we build it again somewhere else?*

Coordinate County Investments Instead of Creating Unintended Gaps

We recognize that the Department of Arts and Culture and DYD have different mandates and funding structures. But young people experience County services as a continuum—not as individual departmental budgets.

A young person participating in an arts program may simultaneously be receiving education, mental health, workforce, reentry, or other youth development services. Arts programming can be a critical component of that broader continuum by creating opportunities for healing, belonging, leadership, and positive development.

The County should therefore look across funding streams and departments to ensure that reductions in one area do not inadvertently eliminate programs that are aligned with and could be supported through another. This is not an argument for duplicative funding. It is an argument for strategic coordination and responsible stewardship of public investment. The County has already identified significant JJCPA/JJRBG resources for youth development and arts programming. We urge the County to leverage those investments to preserve effective community-based infrastructure rather than allowing established programs to disappear and then attempting to recreate them.

We Are Asking the Board to Act

We respectfully urge the Board of Supervisors to:

1. Protect and restore funding for community-based art organizations.
Prevent further reductions that destabilize established community-based arts organizations and the youth and community programs they provide.

2. Direct DYD to prioritize existing, effective community-based programs when allocating youth development and JJCPA/JJRBG programming resources.
Where programs are already serving young people successfully, use available resources to sustain and strengthen those programs rather than recreate them or allocate them somewhere else.

3. Coordinate funding across Arts & Culture, DYD, and other relevant County departments.
Identify programs affected by Arts & Culture reductions that align with youth development and youth justice priorities and explore appropriate opportunities to sustain them through available JJCPA/JJRBG and other County resources.

4. Protect continuity for young people.
Avoid unnecessary disruption to established programs and trusted relationships, particularly for young people who are already engaged with community-based providers.

5. Include community-based organizations in planning and implementation.
Organizations with years of experience serving youth should have a meaningful role in determining how new investments are deployed and how existing infrastructure can be preserved.

Protect the Infrastructure. Build on What Works.

Los Angeles County has made a significant commitment to reimagining youth justice and investing in youth development. Community-based organizations have been essential to making that vision possible.

We urge the County to recognize that these organizations—and the relationships they have built—are part of the infrastructure of that transformation. We ask the Board of Supervisors to align its investments, protect established community-based programs, and ensure that young people do not lose access to services simply because funding has shifted between County departments.

Preserving what works is not only better for young people—it is responsible stewardship of public resources.

We look forward to working with the Board, DYD, the Department of Arts and Culture, and other County partners to identify solutions that protect continuity, maximize existing investments, and strengthen the network of organizations serving Los Angeles County's young people.

Sincerely,

Arts for Healing and Justice Network

Organizations signing on:

4C LAB
The Armory Center for the Arts
Fostering Dreams Project
Give a Beat
Inside Out Writers
No Easy Props
Project Knucklehead
Spirit Awakening Foundation
Street Poets, Inc.
Upward Together
Versa-Style Street Dance Company
WriteGirl

iOW
InsideOUT
WRITERS

No Easy Props

PROJECT
KNUCKLEHEAD

SPIRIT AWAKENING
FOUNDATION

STREET POETS
ROOTS + REACH

UPWARD
TOGETHER

VERSA-STYLE
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writegirl
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