

SUCCESS STORY

Manteca Unified School District



Manteca Unified School District (MUSD)

LOCATION: Manteca, CA

TEACHERS WITH FLEX + PRO: 17

NUMBER OF STUDENTS IN THE DISTRICT: 25,000

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

The MUSD student population is

- 55.7% Hispanic/Latino
- Over 23% of the student population are English Language Learners
- 62% are socioeconomically disadvantaged

Manteca Teachers Feel Supported By PRO + FLEX

District Arts Coordinator and high school art teacher Erika Chapman faced a number of challenges bringing robust arts programming to high school students at Manteca Unified School District in Manteca, California.

- Students arrived in high school without a background in art.
- Across the five high schools in the district, there was no set curriculum for art electives.
- There were challenges with teacher turnover and remote learning due to the pandemic.

To help address these challenges, Erika worked with The Art of Education University to bring FLEX Curriculum and PRO Learning to Manteca Unified School District. Now, high school art teachers in Manteca have curricula that provide them with a wide range of flexible lessons and creative ideas including materials that help them address the prerequisite skills students need. Art-specific professional development available in PRO Learning helps teachers feel confident and equipped to go outside of their comfort zones and are pushing more rigorous goals in their classrooms. Best of all, Erika knows that FLEX materials are aligned to state and national standards, and PRO is aligned to the K-12 Arts Framework. There's more to come with the possibility of extending FLEX and PRO into younger grades, but for now, Manteca Unified high school students and art teachers are thriving with The Art of Education Curriculum Suite.



With FLEX, the lesson format and materials have made it easy to refresh our curriculum which keeps art teachers engaged. If art teachers are bored, students are bored."

Erika Chapman, District Arts Coordinator, MUSD



Can you think of a particular lesson that was well-received?

During distance learning, I was able to use the one-point perspective project to teach about linear perspective. I didn't know how I would convey the concept of perspective with kids learning from home. Students used materials they found at home that assisted them in understanding one-point perspective. I was really proud and happy with this lesson because kids don't typically grasp this concept if they aren't in person.



PRO Packs have been incredibly helpful in helping teachers feel supported. Veteran teachers and new teachers are able to pick and pull what they want or use all of it. Sometimes, I'm unable to have a 20-30 minute discussion with them. I can direct them to this resource"

CHALLENGES

When Erika started her role as Arts Coordinator, her goal was to bring as much art as possible to students across MUSD. Classes in elementary schools were not getting much exposure to art, so students were arriving in high school with no understanding of the elements and principles of art and design. Their foundational understanding of the arts was very minimal. Each of the five high schools in MUSD has a differently sized art program and faculty. Not all of the teachers felt comfortable teaching the many classes offered at Manteca Unified, and Erika wanted to provide the teachers with the resources needed so that they could confidently offer all courses.

Erika also faced the challenge of teacher turnover. New teachers were daunted by the challenges of setting up a classroom. Veteran teachers stuck close to the lessons and media they felt comfortable with, but that often drained their own interest and enthusiasm.

SOLUTION

In Erika's first year as Arts Coordinator, she came across The Art of Education when searching for an arts curriculum. She was going to be teaching ceramics for the first time and didn't know where to begin a classroom setup for that medium. She also noticed the large turnover of teachers happening in the district. An Art of Education representative met with her in person and opened her eyes to the educational resources available through The Art of Education University.

FLEX made it easy to change lessons and revise plans in no time, all while aligning with national and state standards. FLEX also has the step-by-step process that made it easy to reinforce lessons for students. "For my students that needed extra support, I would cut and clip the PowerPoint of the demos so they had that as an additional resource." Erika found the estimated time frame for lessons pretty spot on and the additional handouts and resources incredibly helpful. FLEX saved her time and effort in preparation.

Erika especially likes how easy it is to refresh and revise an old and stale lesson: "You get stuck in your ways as teachers because you already have the curriculum, you have the rubrics. With FLEX, it's been super easy to pull something out and replace something else because all of the supplies and materials and the structure that I need are already there. It keeps it from getting boring. Because, if I'm bored, they're bored." In fact, Erika switched out so many lessons that her TA remarked, "Mrs. Chapman, this is a totally different class. What happened? I don't recognize any of these projects!"

PRO made it easy for Erika to help new art teachers. She directed them to PRO Packs that addressed challenges they were having. She's used PRO Packs as the basis for mentoring, assigning a pack to a new teacher, then having follow-up conversations about the material. Erika pulled directly from PRO Packs to create in-person training for the MUSD art teachers. She also brought an Art of Education University trainer on-site for presentations and workshops.

“PRO Packs have been incredibly helpful in helping teachers feel supported, but also allowing them to have room for creativity because they don't have to use it. Veteran teachers and new teachers are able to pick and pull what they want or use all of it. Sometimes, I'm unable to have a 20–30 minute discussion with them. I can direct them to this resource”

Veteran teachers resisted FLEX and PRO a little bit at the beginning when they thought they would be forced to implement everything. Once they realized it wasn't being forced, but rather, the materials gave them more flexibility and support, things changed. “The first training that I had,” Erika says, “I had some handouts that universally worked for any of the mediums that we were teaching, or any of the subjects that we were teaching. The veteran teachers started to see the benefits of the materials they could use within their classroom. One of our most veteran teachers in the district pulls from FLEX and PRO. She doesn't necessarily always use the lesson, but she adapts the resources frequently. Once they saw how the platforms worked, it totally changed their willingness to use the materials.”

For new teachers, FLEX and PRO are lifelines. New teachers are relieved and elated that they have so many resources at their fingertips to make their first year of teaching less stressful. The materials offer support with substance and connection to art history, and it all incorporates easily.

RESULTS

As a result of adopting FLEX + PRO, several things changed.

Teachers have more confidence to go outside their comfort zones. They have resources to learn new skills and support to apply them.

Teachers can push the rigor in their classrooms with their students and set and reach higher standards. Erika sees more success stories for student progress.



There's substance to what you guys are doing, and it supports teachers like me, who are passionate about incorporating art history so that kids can learn that there's a reason behind art. It has been so comforting that there is an established curriculum that I can use and make my own.

ERIKA'S TIPS & TRICKS:

Take the time for training with the AOEU success team! Everyone got the most out of the time and effort in having a live training.