



# CALIFORNIA AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT

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Superintendent

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The Honorable Bud Cook  
10 Main Street  
Belle Vernon, PA 15012

Dear Representative Cook,

It is with great enthusiasm that I write this letter of support for the Rural Arts Collaborative (RAC). As a previous assistant superintendent at McGuffey School District, I was able to experience firsthand the positive impact of RAC with our students. RAC visiting artists provided Japanese art and three-dimensional installation instruction to hundreds of our students. These experiences are opportunities our students would not typically have access to, nor would the District have the resources to provide.

The California Area School District would benefit from a partnership with the Rural Arts Collaborative. We are in the process of rebuilding our art program at our school district. The opportunity to work with visiting artists and programs would significantly positively impact our program. Residencies result in public art pieces created by the students in collaboration with the visiting artist and the art teachers. Students are also able to create their own works of art in various media under the guidance of the visiting artists. The collaboration between RAC, the District, and the visiting artists provides students with lifelong opportunities to explore and appreciate the arts locally and globally.

The planning, scheduling and creative coordinating of these residencies has been handled by Ms. Carmelle Nickens, founder and manager of the Rural Arts Collaborative. Ms. Nickens has worked tirelessly to ensure that our residencies are successful. All aspects of the processes have been clear and well organized. I highly recommend the Rural Arts Collaborative, and ask that you continue to support its' effort to expand access to arts programming for students in Southwestern Pennsylvania.

Sincerely,

Laura Jacob, Ed.D.  
Superintendent