



Endowment for the Arts in Fresno County Schools.

An education enriched with art programs and activities helps children develop motor, language and social-emotional skills, and nurtures creativity, teamwork and decision making – essential skills for success in school and in life. The Foundation @ FCOE has sought funding to support arts education in schools since its inception, with one of the most impactful investments made by Michael and Linda Rogers through the Rogers Endowment for the Arts.

An endowment gift is a permanent investment in the future, and in this case, a future filled with children who through arts education become the critical thinkers that drive innovation and advancement in our communities. A percentage of the endowment's earnings are used every year to benefit the designation to arts education in Fresno County schools. The investment is evaluated every year with Michael and Linda to select a school arts program of exceptional merit to fund.

Both Michael and Linda know firsthand how influential the arts are for young people. Michael who is a retired pastor, and Linda a retired Fresno Unified eighth-grade U.S. History teacher, were inspired to establish an endowment for the arts to ensure every student has access to an arts-rich education. This is a shared vision of the Office of the Fresno County Superintendent of Schools – and together, the access to visual and performing arts is flourishing in schools whose students need it most.

“Some districts have a lot of quality arts programs, but a lot are struggling and sometimes it just takes a little bit of inspiration from an outside source,” said Michael. “It is gratifying for us to be able to invest the earnings of our endowment every year in a different, unique program. Much to our delight, we have found that once we provide funding to initiate a program, the school often finds a way to match, or even exceed our investment to keep the program going for more students.”

After seven years, the Rogers endowment has helped fund school programs in Firebaugh, Riverdale, Sanger, and southwest Fresno. Two of their favorite funded programs include a ukulele program and a violin program at Edison-Bethune Charter School.

Ensuring teachers, instruments and training for arts education programs takes extra funding, which requires fundraising, business partnerships, grants, and support from people like Michael and Linda Rogers – and for them, The Foundation @ FCOE is grateful.

