

STEVE VENZ

Visual and Performing Arts Coordinator for the Orange County Department of Education

As the Visual and Performing Arts Coordinator for the Orange County Department of Education, Steve Venz supports the increased access and implementation of arts education for over 650,000 students in Orange County, CA. He serves as project lead for the Arts + STEM Collaborative, a member of the Americans for the Arts State Policy Pilot CA Team, and as a faculty member for the Longy School Of Music of Bard College's *Master of Arts in Teaching Program* in Los Angeles. Steve was the co-architect/principal of the award-winning Quincy Jones Elementary School, a jazz music and arts-focused Title I school in South Los Angeles.

Within three years of being established, "Q Elementary" received awards and accolades recognizing it as a successful model for urban elementary schools, exemplified by significant increases in student achievement, positive behavior, attendance, and parent involvement. Sharing the same campus with Synergy Charter Academy (SCA), Q Elementary and SCA have become a national model for working collaboratively to serve all children as co-located schools. Before Q Elementary, Steve was the music administrator for the Los Angeles Unified School District. In addition, he was a member of the US Department of Education's grant review team, participated on the GRAMMY's Music Educator Award Blue Ribbon Panel and served as an advisor for the Mr. Holland's Opus Foundation. During the 2008 launch of the Los Angeles Philharmonic's Youth Orchestra Los Angeles (YOLA), an El Sistema-inspired music program, he served as the musical director and conductor for the pilot orchestra. As a bassist, Steve continues to perform with artists including Ariana Savalas and the Edmund Velasco Quintet.