



CITY OF NEWPORT BEACH CITY ARTS COMMISSION STAFF REPORT

May 14, 2026
Agenda Item No. 9

TO: CITY ARTS COMMISSION

FROM: Library Services Department
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PREPARED BY: Rebecca Lightfoot, Library Services Manager

TITLE: 2026 Student Art Exhibition Timeline and Program Changes

RECOMMENDATION:

The Student Art Exhibition Ad Hoc Subcommittee recommends that the City Arts Commission review and approve the timeline and program changes for the 2026 Student Art Exhibition.

DISCUSSION:

The first Student Art Exhibition, held in 2021, provided an opportunity for young artists, students in pre-K through 12th grades, to submit an original, two-dimensional work of art. Submitted artwork is displayed at the Central Library and the City Arts Commission awards prizes in grade level categories. The exhibition provides an opportunity for the City Arts Commission to present a program centered specifically around children and teens.

The previous exhibitions took place in the summer, fall, and winter, with the highest participation resulting when the call for entries was open during the fall. Based on previous participation numbers, the Student Art Exhibition Ad Hoc Subcommittee recommends that the City Arts Commission approve the following timeline for the 2026 Student Art Exhibition.

Timeline:

- Call for Entries: October 1 – November 30, 2026
- Subcommittee Review of Artwork: December 2026
- Selection of Winners: January 14, 2027 (City Arts Commission Regular Meeting)
- Opening Night: January 4, 2027
- Display of Artwork: January 4 – February 24, 2027
- Award Presentation: February 11, 2027 (City Arts Commission Regular Meeting)

In addition to the timeline, the Ad Hoc Subcommittee is also recommending the following changes to the Exhibition:

- Incorporating a theme: “Newport Beach: Welcome 120 Years”
- Having four student categories for the Awards instead of three: Grades PK-1st; 2nd – 4th; 5th – 8th; and 9th – 12th
- Selecting an outside juror from the local arts community to judge the Exhibition
- Renaming the awards to 1st, 2nd, 3rd, and Honorable Mention for each Student Category

- Adding an Opening Night for all participants and their families to be held at the Central Library

FUNDING REQUIREMENTS:

Adding a fourth student category will come at an additional cost of \$175 for the gift cards. The Ad Hoc Subcommittee is also asking for an additional \$325 to fund the Opening Night celebration. Total estimated costs of the Student Art Exhibition is \$1,500. If approved, the funds for supplies displaying the exhibit will be expensed from the Fiscal Year 2025-26 Programming Budget with the remaining costs expensed from the Fiscal Year 2026-27 Programming Budget.

NOTICING:

This agenda item has been noticed according to the Brown Act (72 hours in advance of the meeting at which the City Arts Commission considers the item).