

BUILDING A STRONGER FUTURE FOR NYC STUDENTS STARTS WITH THE ARTS

Arts education in NYC's public schools is a critical investment in the holistic development of every child, fostering social-emotional well-being, increasing parent involvement, enhancing academic achievement, and preparing students for the dynamic demands of the 21st-century workforce. By engaging in dance, music, media, theater, and visual arts, students develop essential life skills, creating a foundation for success and gaining skills necessary to navigate an increasingly complex world.

Yet, the current inequity in access to arts education denies thousands of students these crucial benefits, hindering their potential and perpetuating existing disparities.



DID YOU KNOW...

- **NYC Students are not meeting state learning requirements in the arts.** Just 31% of NYC 8th-grade students met NYSED's learning requirements for arts education (consistent since 2015) — ranging from 2% - 62% of students meeting requirements per school district.
- **Spending on arts education accounts for 3% of NYC Public Schools budget.** When adjusted for inflation, NYCPS is budgeting \$40.8M less money on arts education now than we were back in FY17.
- **Arts & Cultural Organizations invest in our schools.** Cultural organizations are a major source of external funding for arts education in NYC public schools. 29% of all reporting schools reported use of external funding by Cultural Arts Organizations.
- **Arts & Cultural Organizations are critical community partners.** More than 708 arts and cultural organizations partnered with NYCPS in the 2023-2024 school year (increased from 449+ in 2019-2020 school year).
- **9 out of 10 NYC schools** reported that the arts were central to their school's core instructional mission in the 2023-2024 school year.
- **Arts education provides vital learning pathways for multilingual learners and disabled students.** In 2024-2025, only 225 out of 779 applying schools were awarded funding via NYCPS' Arts Partnerships Grant to support inclusive teaching practices for these populations.

HOW WE GET THERE

To secure NYC's position as a premier city for families and to bolster its status as the world's cultural capital, the Mayor, Chancellor, and NYC Public Schools must champion universal access to arts education, ensuring every student receives the rigorous, encouraging, and inspiring education necessary to flourish. To lay the groundwork for universal arts education, our City must:

EQUITABLY FUND ARTS IN NYC SCHOOLS & COMMUNITIES

- **Extend and baseline at-risk arts education funding (\$41M):** Following one-year funding to off-set expiring temporary federal stimulus dollars and city funds, arts education programs are once again at-risk of being eliminated. We stand with the Coalition of Equitable Education Funding and call on the city to shift from a one-year restoration to an annual allocation to sustain arts education and other programs currently on the chopping block.
- **Require DOE arts funding be spent on the arts (\$12.5M):** Boost the per student arts allocation to \$100 from \$86.67 and require that money be spent on arts education.
- **Ensure Every School Has a Certified Arts Teachers (\$39.8M):** Ensure that all schools have at least one certified arts teacher, closing the equity gap for at least 379 schools. This can be done in part by bolstering the pipeline of certified arts teachers via supplemental certification program (\$4M) or funding a PE Works-inspired improvement plan.
- **Restore and Enhance "Support for Arts Instruction" initiative funding (\$6M):** Build on city's down payment and boost allocation from \$4M to \$6M to meet city-wide demand.
- **Center Arts and Culture in Youth Development Programs (\$5M):** Allocate funds to better support arts and cultural education opportunities during Summer Rising 2025 and other DYCD programs to support public safety and continued community-building opportunities via the arts.
- **Restore and Increase Baseline Funding for the Department of Cultural Affairs**

POLICY & REPORTING

- **Improve arts education data transparency** by compelling NYCPS to provide a school-by-school breakdown of the state of arts education in public schools via a Hearing, Legislative Services Request, T&C, and/or Oversight Hearing.
- **Require more school-based arts reporting and goal-setting:** Restore the inclusion of arts programs in all School Quality Snapshots and require arts education to be included in each District Education Plan and each school's Comprehensive Education Plan.
- **Designate arts rooms in the space utilization "blue book" as "separate/special" rooms** to assure school investment in arts spaces and to increase retention of arts teachers in co-located buildings, especially in light of the rollout of the Class Size Mandate.
- **Codify arts education in public education law per Every Student Succeeds Act:** Reintroduce legislation voicing City Council's support for state-wide legislation to codify arts and music education as part of a well-rounded education.