

CREATIVITY EMPATHY
RESPONSIVE COLLABORATION EQUITY
STUDENT-CENTERED DIVERSITY
COMMUNITY INNOVATION
COLLECTIVE IMPACT INCLUSIVITY EMPOWERED

ARTS CONNECT

H O U S T O N

2018-2019 ANNUAL REPORT

EXPRESSION ADVOCACY SUPPORT
ENGAGEMENT RESEARCH IMAGINATION




The Houston Independent School District is committed to providing every student, in every classroom, in every school with equitable access to a well-rounded education that includes the arts.

- Dr. Grenita Lathan, Interim Superintendent, HISD



CHAIR *and* DIRECTOR LETTER

Dear Friends,

Arts Connect exists to activate Houston's robust, committed arts and education community with a precise focus: to ensure that all young people in our city have a chance to engage with high quality arts experiences as a key part of their complete education. This is no small task, because Houston's students do not currently have equitable access to arts education across schools in our city. But we look forward with prevailing optimism because we believe our strength and success are rooted in collective action.

Arts Connect is a collective impact effort, drawing on the knowledge and insights of arts and culture leaders, neighbors, teachers, and civic representatives to create solutions and drive change that no one of us could achieve alone. Last year, our partners invested over 3,000 volunteer hours, helping Arts Connect establish its mission, vision, values, and guiding principles. Partners also engaged the broader community to develop a five-year strategic plan for arts education equity in Houston. We know that our ability to achieve these ambitious goals will rest in our continued commitment to work as a unified collective.

Arts Connect is also excited to represent our Houston stakeholders and supporters in the national arts education equity conversation. We are a member of the Any Given Child program at the Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, a membership that allows us to work collectively with cities across the country to advance the role of the arts within the national education landscape.

Looking ahead, there are already concrete examples of change. Thanks to the vision of Houston ISD Interim Superintendent Dr. Grenita Lathan, the district committed to adding fine arts teachers to 37 campuses across the district for the 2019-2020 school year. For the first time in 30 years, every elementary student in HISD will receive weekly classes from a certified fine arts teacher, an investment to truly celebrate.

With the Arts Connect collective united to advance arts education equity on behalf of Houston students, our future is bright. We are deeply grateful for the dedicated partners, educators, and community members who make this work possible, who join us in our unwavering commitment to advancing the arts for the sake of our students. Arts Connect believes that the arts are integral, not incidental, to an excellent education. This is our driving mission and our first priority, because we know that when students prosper, our community thrives.

Onward,



Caroline Goeser
Leadership Committee Chair



Deborah Lugo
Arts Connect Director

Houston Endowment Support

In June, Arts Connect received a \$2 million grant to be utilized over the next three years from Houston Endowment. This funding will play a critical role in helping us fulfill our collective mission. Arts Connect would like to extend our sincere gratitude to Houston Endowment for their support.

Any Given Child Community

Arts Connect partners with the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts through the Ensuring the Arts for Any Given Child program. The goal of the program is to assist communities in developing and implementing a plan for expanded arts education and equity for all students.

The arts connect communities

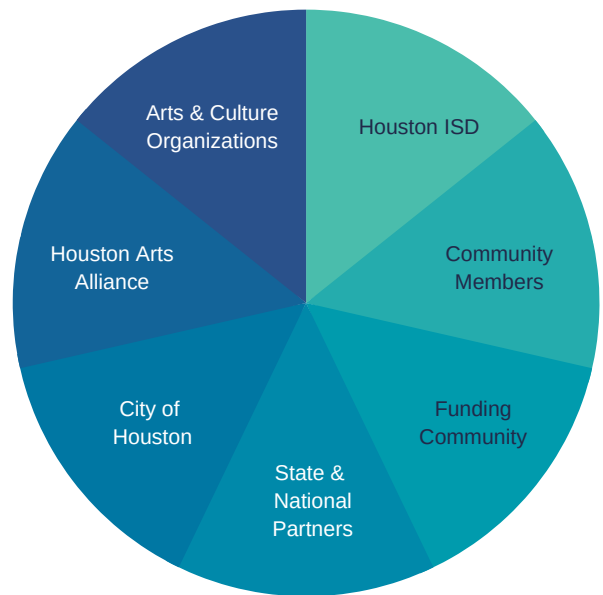
OUR VISION

Arts Connect's vision is to realize the tremendous potential of every student by ensuring the arts as essential to a complete education, recognizing that when students prosper, our community thrives.

OUR COLLECTIVE WORK

Arts Connect is a collective impact effort that strives to ensure equitable access to high-quality arts education for every Houston ISD student by driving systems change and establishing the arts as essential to a complete education.

The collective aligns seven primary stakeholder groups including local arts and culture organizations, the Houston Independent School District, the City of Houston, the Houston Arts Alliance, the local philanthropic community, and state and national partners.



OUR MISSION

Arts Connect unites the Greater Houston community to ensure access to high-quality arts education in creative writing, dance, music, theater and the visual arts for every student, beginning with the Houston ISD.

We accomplish our mission through four major areas of work:

- 1) **Collecting Actionable Data** – Arts Connect understands the value and importance of data to maximize system-wide change, guide collective decision making, and guarantee strategic deployment of resources to close the arts education equity gaps.
- 2) **Driving Advocacy** – Arts Connect advocates for the vital role of the arts within the education ecosystem to ensure that all HISD students have access to a high-quality arts education.
- 3) **Building Capacity** – Arts Connect builds capacity by expanding our partner base and our ability to create strategic partnerships with new sectors to form cooperative networks and learning communities that support a vibrant arts education ecosystem.
- 4) **Unlocking New Investments** – Arts Connect investigates untapped public and private funds in Houston and across the country to unlock new capital resources, allowing the collective to achieve systems change, eradicate arts education disparities, support innovation, and amplify capacity building efforts.



Educators explore science through dance at the Kennedy Center SW Arts Integration Conference.

VALUES

Creative Thinking: We honor and nurture artistry—engaging, discovering, and creating—as integral to human nature, a complete education, and the success of our collective work.

Inclusive Spirit: We respect and welcome diverse perspectives, ideas and cultures and celebrate our differences as strengths to our work.

Open Access: We believe in breaking down barriers for equity of opportunity and access and strive to create a community of shared learning for a healthy arts education ecosystem.

Responsive Action: We listen deeply to understand the context of the communities we serve in order to affect change that reflects community needs and aspirations.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Student Centered: We develop and implement collective strategies that benefit and support students.

Collective Decision Making: We maintain transparent and open communication across all stakeholder groups to determine shared strategies and goals to guarantee collective impact.

Stakeholder Led: We encourage cross-sector partners to drive and lead our work, recognizing that together, we are greater than the sum of our parts.

Data Driven: We utilize coordinated systems of shared data to continuously learn, adapt, measure, and improve our impact.

The arts connect futures



Express Children's Theatre performs Ali Baba and the 40 Thieves at Mading Elementary.

A COMPLETE EDUCATION INCLUDES THE ARTS

Arts education is proven to empower young people with the skills they will need in our increasingly complex and globalized 21st century society and economy, bolstering creative learning and preparing students for post-secondary success.

Arts education paves the path for student success in HISD

A study from the Kinder Institute for Urban Research at Rice University published in February 2019 demonstrated that HISD students involved in the arts¹:

1. Achieved higher writing scores;
2. Had decreased disciplinary infractions;
3. Were more compassionate towards others;
4. Demonstrated greater engagement in school; and
5. Showed increased aspirations for higher education.

Arts education prepares students for college and career

The Houston of tomorrow needs a prepared 21st century workforce ready to tackle the new jobs that our global society will bring. In our interconnected world, the skills most valued by employers today include creativity, adaptability and collaboration—all key competencies that are practiced and deepened through arts learning. Now more than ever, it is simply not enough for students to rely solely on proficiency in traditional subjects to obtain post-secondary success. By integrating the arts into a complete education, students thrive in college and careers.

Arts education supports students' social-emotional learning

Studies show that active participation in arts education can boost the development in artistic and social-emotional competencies including self-management, self-discipline, interpersonal skills, and self-expression, all critical tools for success in education and beyond.²



Mercury Chamber Orchestra performs "What's on Ben Franklin's iPod?" at Valley West Elementary.



HISD Fine Arts Extravaganza at Miller Outdoor Theatre.

Despite these benefits, as of today, not all public school students in Houston have equal access to an arts-rich education.

1. Daniel H. Bowen & Brian Kisida, "Investigating Causal Effects of Arts Education Experiences: Experimental Evidence from Houston's Arts Access Initiative," *Research Report for the Houston Independent School District 7*, no.4 (2019).

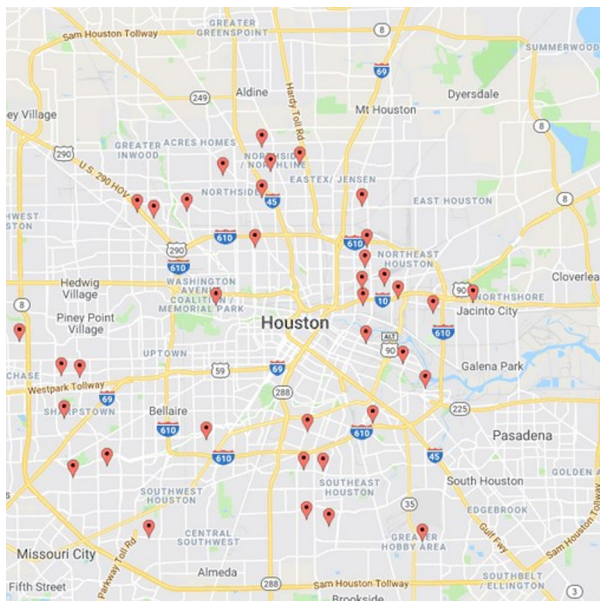
2. Camille A. Farrington et al. "Arts Education and Social-Emotional Learning Outcomes Among K-12 Students: Developing a Theory of Action," *Ingenuity*, 2019. https://www.ingenuity-inc.org/filebin/images/slideshow_images/Spencer_Report_final_June_2019.pdf

The arts connect partners

THE ARTS CONNECT FUND

The Arts Connect Fund supports the creation of an arts ecosystem in which selected schools partner with arts and culture organizations to facilitate arts learning for students and teachers alike. This fund is helping to close gaps in arts equity through the following goals:

- Amplifying the work of fine arts teachers and programs at each campus
- Connecting schools and arts partners to build sustainable relationships
- Increasing the time and resources dedicated to the arts during the school day
- Building capacity of schools and arts partners to provide arts education opportunities
- Supporting professional development and arts integration training for teachers
- Demonstrating that the city of Houston is committed to inspiring bright minds through the arts



CAMPUSES SERVED

- | | | |
|---------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------|
| Atherton ES | Fleming MS | Memorial ES |
| Attucks MS | Fondren ES | Mitchell ES |
| Bastian ES | Foster ES | Neff ES |
| Benbrook ES | Gallegos ES | Ninfa Lorenzo ECC |
| Brookline ES | Hamilton MS | Northline ES |
| Codwell ES | JR Harris ES | Piney Point ES |
| Cornelius ES | NQ Henderson ES | Pleasantville ES |
| Deady MS | Highland Heights ES | Pugh ES |
| DeAnda ES | Hilliard ES | Scarborough ES |
| Dogan ES | Kashmere Gardens ES | Stevens ES |
| Durkee ES | Longfellow ES | Valley West ES |
| Eliot ES | Lyons ES | Wainwright ES |
| Elrod ES | Mading ES | Walnut Bend ES |
| Emerson ES | R. Martinez ES | Whittier ES |

ARTS IMMERSION

The Arts Connect Fund deepens arts learning within campuses through arts immersion. In the 2018-19 academic year, campuses and arts organizations partnered to create customized arts immersion plans which included principal and administrative leadership support, deep arts integration professional development, and diverse arts experiences for students. Each campus' immersion program resulted in increased capacity for teachers to offer arts integrated instruction and reported increases in student engagement and knowledge retention.

THE ARTS CONNECT FUND BY THE NUMBERS



Total Arts Connect Fund Support
\$278,202

Creative Campuses Support

\$150,930

Support for Achieve 180 Schools

\$9,135

Capacity Building for Arts Partners and Educators

\$12,062

Arts Immersion/Arts Integration Professional Development

\$74,575

Arts Liaison Stipends

\$18,500

Arts Immersion Conference Stipends for Teachers

\$13,000

FUND OVERVIEW

During the 2018-2019 academic year, the Arts Connect Fund awarded **\$278,202** across **42** Houston ISD campuses to provide students with access to meaningful arts opportunities, teachers with arts integration professional development, and arts organizations with capacity building resources. In its inaugural year, the Arts Connect Fund reached **20,499** students, helping to facilitate **137** programs offered by community arts organizations, representing nearly all artistic disciplines. In addition to in-school programming, the Arts Connect Fund successfully offered **\$9,135** in end-of-year programming at many of the district's Achieve 180 campuses.

\$234,640

awarded towards expanding and continuing partnerships at campuses

20,499

students impacted directly through partnerships

137

new and continuing partnerships supported

42

campuses receiving direct Arts Connect Fund support

24

teachers receiving arts integration professional development provided by arts organizations

Through the Arts Immersion strategy, Arts Connect partners provided professional development to **24** teachers, who then impacted approximately **2,589** students.

2018-2019 Partnerships:

- Alley Theatre at Stevens ES
- Foto Fest at Longfellow ES
- Main Street Theater at Neff ES
- Writers in the Schools at JR Harris ES



Writers in the Schools doing Arts Immersion work at JR Harris Elementary.

The arts connect voices

Celebrating the Expansion of the Arts in HISD

Beginning in the 2019-2020 academic year, almost 20,000 elementary school students on 37 campuses in HISD will get to attend fine arts classes for the very first time. Interim Superintendent Dr. Grenita Lathan called for increased arts access in this year's strategic priorities, and thanks to this vision, every K-5th grade student in HISD will be involved in weekly classes taught by a certified fine arts teacher where they will engage, discover, create and learn through the arts. This marks the end of a 30 year drought in arts provisions for these campuses and is a major step towards arts education equity in the district.



Dr. Grenita Lathan, Interim Superintendent, and Wenden Sanders, Fine Arts Director, celebrate the expansion of fine arts in HISD.

Community Conversations on Arts Education

A core goal of our collective work is to unite diverse voices around the table to better understand our community and, together, find solutions to the problem of arts education inequity in Houston. During the month of February, Arts Connect hosted six Community Conversations to discuss the goal of equitable arts education for HISD students, the partnerships and support structures needed to achieve this goal, and how to most effectively distribute resources along the way. Over 100 community members, including educators, artists, nonprofit leaders, and parents participated, offering invaluable input to transform arts access for students.



Rebecca Hopp, TUTS, helps to facilitate a community conversation.

Fostering Shared Learning

Through our capacity building efforts, twenty-one educators from Houston attended the 2019 Kennedy Center Southwest Arts Integration Conference in Austin, co-presented by MINDPOP. This conference offered a range of professional development opportunities, allowing attendees to learn new and innovative practices regarding how to integrate the arts into science, math, social studies and literacy. It is inspiring to see so many HISD teachers excited to engage with the arts. Their passion to utilize the arts as a tool to inspire their students will translate to student growth academically, socially, and emotionally for years to come.

Our Work Moving Forward

In order to grow a robust engine for arts education equity in Houston over the next five years, Arts Connect has adopted a strategic plan with specific results and benefits for the people of greater Houston. These goals were developed by a partner task force and drew on the Community Conversations on Arts Education.

Goals

Collecting actionable data will result in arts partners, schools, HISD, funders, and government officials using data to inform the allocation of resources for arts education in Houston.

Defining quality in arts education will result in shared quality standards across our partner organizations, benefiting HISD students.

Building capacity and stakeholder engagement will result in a healthy community of shared learning among school leaders and teachers, arts partners, and HISD Fine Arts administrators.

Driving advocacy with the HISD board, school leaders, parents, the City of Houston, higher education, community members and businesses will result in the prioritization of arts education across sectors.

Unlocking new investments will secure new income streams from public and private resources, allowing the sustainability of this collective effort and expanded arts education for students.

Honoring our foundational statements and support structures will ensure that shared language and values drive the work of the collective.

Together, our work will move the needle in establishing the arts as essential to a complete education for HISD students.

LEADERSHIP COMMITTEE

Caroline Goeser, Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, **Chair**

John Abodeely, Houston Arts Alliance

Sara Brunow, Theatre Under The Stars

Bao-Long Chu, Houston Endowment

Craig Hauschildt, Houston ISD

Deborah Lugo, Arts Connect

Debbie McNulty, City of Houston

Dr. Michael K. Remson, AFA

Wenden Sanders, Houston ISD

Michelle Smith, Houston METdance

ARTS CONNECT STAFF

Deborah Lugo, Director

Kara Cothorn, Operations Manager

Courtney Tee, Data and Advocacy Manager

PARTNERS

District

Houston ISD

City of Houston

Mayor's Office of Cultural Affairs

Arts & Culture Agency

Houston Arts Alliance

Funders

Houston Endowment
The Powell Foundation

Arts Organizations

AFA	FotoFest Inc.	MECA
Alley Theatre	The Hobby Center for the Performing Arts	Mercury Chamber Orchestra
Aperio, Music of the Americas	Houston Ballet	Museum of Fine Arts, Houston
Ars Lyrica	Houston Center for Photography	Musiqqa
Art League Houston	Houston Chamber Choir	Nameless Sound
Arte Publico Press	Houston Children's Chorus	Prelude Music Foundation
City ArtWorks	Houston Grand Opera	Society for the Performing Arts
Contemporary Arts Museum Houston	Houston METdance	Take the Stage
Da Camera of Houston	Houston Symphony	Texan French Alliance for the Arts
The Ensemble Theatre	Houston Youth Symphony	Theatre Under The Stars
Express Children's Theatre	Main Street Theater	Writers in the Schools

State & National Organizations

Ingenuity, Inc.
Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts
Texas Cultural Trust

Supporting Organization

Greater Houston Community Foundation

Thank you to all our partners.

COLLECTIVE IMPACT

Arts Connect Fund Task Force

Brandon Bell, Da Camera
Cathy Bencivenga, Alley Theatre
Eepi Chaad, Art League
Allison Conlan, Houston Symphony
Shannon Crider, Society for the Performing Arts
Rachel Dickson, Ensemble Theatre
David Dove, Nameless Sound
Tim Fried-Fiori, Express Children's Theatre
Jonathan Gonzalez, Main Street Theater
Craig Hauschildt, Houston ISD
Amanda Heathco, AFA
Rebecca Hopp, Theatre Under The Stars
Jack McBride, Writers in the Schools
Nicole Rajkumar, Houston METdance
Michelle Smith, Houston METdance
Jennifer Sommers, Houston Ballet
Claire Williamson, Society for the Performing Arts

Partnership & Collaboration Task Force

Jennifer Sommers, Houston Ballet, *Facilitator*
Brandon Bell, Da Camera
Pam Blaine, Houston Symphony
Shannon Crider, Society for the Performing Arts
Juan Sebastian Cruz, Theatre Under The Stars
Anissa Dwiggin, Arts Alive
Zachary Gresham, MD Anderson
Rebecca Hopp, Theatre Under The Stars
Jack McBride, Writers in the Schools
Sixto Wagan, University of Houston
Jane Weiner, Hope Stone

HAA/AC Relationship Task Force

John Abodeely, Houston Arts Alliance
Bao-Long Chu, Houston Endowment
Rachel Dickson, Ensemble Theatre
Caroline Goeser, Museum of Fine Arts, Houston
Grant Patterson, Houston Endowment
Mary Sutton, Alley Theatre
Jeff Stys, Consultant

Strategic Planning Task Force

Sara Brunow, Theatre Under The Stars
Eepi Chaad, Art League
Craig Hauschildt, Houston ISD
Caroline Goeser, Museum of Fine Arts, Houston
Debbie McNulty, City of Houston
Wenden Sanders, Houston ISD
Jennifer Sommers, Houston Ballet
Jeff Stys, Consultant

School Capacity Task Force

Chandel Bonner-Hancock, Houston ISD, *Facilitator*
Eden Bass, Houston ISD
Kimberly Boyce, Houston ISD
Rachel Dickson, Ensemble Theatre
Obed Franco, Houston ISD
Cierra Nickerson, Houston ISD
Kristy Rangel, City of Houston
Andrea Seagraves, Harris County Dept. of
Education
Judi Stallings, Hobby Center for the Performing Arts

Shared Language & Support Structures Task Force

Craig Hauschildt, Houston ISD, *Facilitator*
Amy Chung, Houston Youth Symphony
Rick Cruz, Houston ISD
Beckham Dossett, University of Houston
Katherine Fields, Houston Community College
Heather Golden, Parent
Carleen Graham, Houston Grand Opera
Shelene Livas, Houston ISD
Caroline Sabin, Powell Foundation
Dr. Jason Oby, Texas Southern University

Arts Immersion Task Force

Jennifer Beradino, Museum of Fine Arts, Houston
Craig Hauschildt, Houston ISD
Jennifer Sommers, Houston Ballet
Mary Sutton, Alley Theatre

COLLECTIVE IMPACT

Community Conversations on Arts Education

Laura Aguilar, Houston ISD
Ashura Baggau, Student
Jared Berry, Houston ISD
Sonja Bruzauskas, Partnerschools
Amy Chung, Houston Youth Symphony
Felice Cleveland, Contemporary Arts Museum Houston
Simon Coffman, Houston ISD
Juan Sebastian Cruz, Theatre Under The Stars
Erica DeLeon, Houston ISD
Tony Diaz, Nuestra Palabra
Deborah Dunham, Houston Early Music
Anissa Dwiggin, Arts Alive
Kinga Ferguson, Ars Lyrica
Rachael Fernandez, River Oaks Chamber Orchestra
Katherine Fields, Houston Community College
Natalie Fischer, Houston ISD
Heather Golden, Parent
Beatrice Graham, Da Camera
Maryann Gremillion, Writers in the Schools
Zachary Gresham, MD Anderson
Amanda Heathco, AFA
Clair Hopper, Student
Eric Jimenez, Houston ISD
Munirah Jinwricht, Houston ISD
Kellie Karamas, Houston ISD
Andrew Karnavas, Just Add Beats
Sanja Korman, Houston ISD
Julia Kramp, Wesley Community Center
David Lake, Consultant

Leslie Lenert, Theatre Under The Stars
Tracy Lisewsky, Community Volunteer
Sarah Loudermilk, Houston Youth Symphony
Alisa Magallon, Houston Grand Opera
Maricruz Medina Marquis, Houston ISD
Jessica McMahon, Museum of Fine Arts, Houston
Shannon McNichols, Houston ISD
Gerald Murray, Houston ISD
Mila Neal, Musician/Parent
Karine Parker, Texan-French Alliance for the Arts
Grant Patterson, Houston Endowment
Paola Picon, Houston ISD
Annetra Piper, Consultant
Ronda Pohner, Houston ISD
Jennifer Popielarski-Hoover, Houston ISD
Crystal Reppert, Houston ISD
Roger T. Rossi, Houston ISD
Wenden Sanders, Houston ISD
David A. Shephard, Houston ISD
Jamie Simone, Houston ISD
Walter Smith, retired, Houston ISD
Judi Stallings, Hobby Center for the Performing Arts
Patrice Stephenson, Houston ISD
Susanne Theis, Discovery Green
Albert Wei, Pro Unitas
Peyton Welch, Theatre Under The Stars
Amber Williams, Houston ISD
Claire Williamson, Society for the Performing Arts
Andrea Winard, Houston ISD
Kashi K. Woods, Houston ISD

ARTS CONNECT

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