

**New York City Council Hearing: Arts Education in NYC Schools**  
**Monday, November 23, 2009 1:00 PM, 250 Broadway, 16th Floor**  
**Testimony from New York City Department of Cultural Affairs**

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Good afternoon. I am Kate Levin, Commissioner of the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs. I am here today to testify with regard to arts education in New York City schools. With me here today from the Department of Education (DoE) are Santiago Taveras, Deputy Chancellor for Teaching and Learning, and Paul King, Executive Director of the Office of the Arts and Special Projects.

Working to ensure that every New York City schoolchild has access to high quality arts instruction is a priority for all of us. DCA is the largest funder of New York City's cultural community, which has done so much to support arts education in our public schools.

Indeed, 42% of our Cultural Development Fund (CDF) grants, and 60% of our CDF dollars, fund organizations that applied for programs which directly serve NYC schoolchildren. In addition, the 33 City-owned institutions, or CIGs, work with more than 800 public schools across the five boroughs. In the first quarter of this fiscal year alone, CIGs welcomed 343,000 visits by schoolchildren.

Through my agency's Materials for the Arts program (MFTA), DCA is the largest provider of arts supplies to the City's public schools. Last year, 631 public schools came to our Long Island City warehouse to get free supplies for art programs. In the first five months of this year alone, (from July through November) we have received 554 visits from 359 NYC schools – that's an increase of 13% in the number of visits over last year. These numbers tell us that MFTA is recognized as an even more valuable partner to our public schools when school budgets are tight.

And, school leaders aren't coming to MFTA for materials alone. The past few years have seen a dramatic expansion in our education offerings, which serve teachers and students at all stages of learning. MFTA hosts professional development P-credit courses for teachers, art-making field trips in our classrooms for K-12 students, warehouse tours for future educators working on their degrees, hands-on art projects for school-based family activities. And all of our classes emphasize the creative value of reuse and recycling in making art. Last month, we cut the ribbon on ten thousand new square feet of warehouse space. This City-funded expansion brings total square footage to 35,000, creating two dedicated classroom spaces along with additional space for donations.

Also last month, we were pleased to join the Department of Education and the Department of Film, Theater and Broadcasting in launching the new Blueprint for Teaching and Learning in the Moving Image. My colleagues at DoE will provide more detail, but it is worth noting that, in the absence of State certification in film, television or media, the City's efforts were inspired by the need of in-school film programs for a

curriculum with clear quality measures. The Blueprint provides school leaders with concrete milestones for every grade level - the first of its kind in the United States. The Moving Image Blueprint joins the Blueprints in Visual Art, Music, Theater and Dance; like them, it was created through a collaboration among the DoE and non-profit cultural organizations.

We have also worked with DoE and its arts education task force to create the Arts Education Reflection Tool, bringing together representatives of the cultural community to develop consensus around the indicators of quality in arts education. The Reflection Tool, which was rolled out this fall and is available on DoE's website, provides a guide for principals, teachers, teaching artists, researchers and cultural partners to assess program quality by arts discipline and grade level.

Finally, I'm delighted to report that we are working with Councilmember Recchia, City Council members and the Department of Youth and Community Development to administer City Council funding for the Cultural After School Adventures program (CASA). Now in its fourth year, CASA builds on and supports the administration's arts education initiatives by providing funding for dedicated cultural partnerships at 255 school sites across the five boroughs. This year, each Councilmember is making five designations to cultural groups partnering with schools in their districts. DCA and the City Council are currently evaluating partnership proposals, and we are looking forward to site visits later this year.

I would like to thank the Council for its leadership on arts education. Councilmember Recchia has been a passionate advocate for extending arts education beyond the school day through the creation of CASA. And Councilmember Jackson has proved an enthusiastic champion for arts education across the five boroughs.

I would also like to thank my colleagues at the Department of Education. They are tireless in working with teachers and school leadership throughout the system to ensure a quality arts education for every student, and relentless in assessing current achievements and pressing for future progress. Paul King and Santiago Taveras will describe in detail some of the key strides that have been made, as well as the challenges that remain.

In closing, let me acknowledge how much work remains to be done. Your partnership is critical to advance arts education for every New York City schoolchild. After my colleagues offer testimony, I'd be delighted to join them in answering any questions you may have.

My name is Deborah Schreier Grinberg. My daughter is a 6<sup>th</sup> grader at PS 334, the Anderson School on the upper west side of Manhattan. I volunteer at her school. I work with the art teacher, Mr. Vahan Nahabedian. I organize parents to help him in and out of the classroom. I work with him in the classroom. We are working together on a school wide art event.

I also work with other parents and the Center for Arts Education. I inform and educate parents about the role that the arts can and should play in their children's education.

I am also a graduate student at Teachers College, Columbia University in the Art and Art Education Program. I am working towards my master's degree with initial certification. I will be looking for a job in three years.

As I parent I want to see PROJECT ARTS line item restored to school budgets. I want to see principals required to spend a certain percentage of their budget on mandated arts education. I am not asking for more money, I am just asking you to restore a successful program.

Why is arts education important to me as a parent? Arts education adds valuable and unique types of learning. It is a place where students learn to make something out of simple materials. For example, in a visual arts class, students have the opportunity to transform materials. They can take a blank piece of paper and a pencil and tell a story with lines. Even with the most basic materials, say recycling, student can experience re-appropriation, taking something created for one purpose and changing it to serve another purpose. This creative act is exciting, invigorating, and empowering.

I was reminded of this while watching the film "Apollo 13". In one scene the scientists need to figure out how to use existing material in the space capsule to improvise an air filter system to keep the astronauts alive on their journey home. The scientists had to see all the possible ways these materials could fit together to work for a new purpose. This kind of creative thinking happens in an art class. These skills are the kinds of skills our children need to participate in the world. We need to give them a place to explore how ideas are found and developed. These skills are as important as reading and math. They need to be nurtured in equal proportion.

Arts education is also an important pathway to reach under performing students. It is a way to expose students to an excitement of learning and discovery, especially if they are struggling with reading and math.

NYC is filled with intellectually rich cultural institutions that are an under utilized educational resource. Partnering with cultural institutions can open students' minds to the world through art. These partnerships can help broaden students' ideas about their futures. They can educate students about the job opportunities in arts-related industries.

We are also talking about job creation. Middle schools and high schools are not meeting their arts education requirements. They need certified arts specialists. These teachers exist and they need jobs. Restore PROJECT ARTS, get the line item back, and get people to work filling our student's educational gaps. With the line item we can hold principal accountable to provide mandated arts education. Please pass Resolution 837 so we can reach this goal.

TESTIMONY OF CAROL A BOYD  
NYC CITY COUNCIL HEARINGS ON ARTS EDUCATION  
November 23, 2009

Good Afternoon, I am Carol Boyd a Parent Fellow with the Center for Arts Education, New York and also a Parent Leader with the NYC Coalition for Educational Justice (CEJ). As a product of the NYC school system I can readily attest to the positive impact a rich arts curriculum had on my life and currently as the parent of two high schoolers I can attest to the impact an arts rich curriculum is having on one of their lives as he attends the Lower Manhattan Arts Academy (LoMA). Like your daughter, Councilman Jackson, he intends to pursue a career as a professional dancer/ choreographer

Unfortunately, for most children in NYC public schools, the State requirements for arts education are not being met and they will not enjoy the opportunities afforded to my child. Currently only 8% of elementary grade students receive instruction in all four arts disciplines while less than half of their middle school counterparts receive the mandated arts coursework. In fact, nearly 30% of all NYC schools have no certified arts teacher on staff this reflects an increase of 10 percentage points from last year.

In the midst of a looming fiscal crisis it appears that despite State mandates Arts Education remains left on the *Titanic* as principals continue to allocate less and less \$\$\$ for the arts in their budgets. In NYC the current level of school spending for arts is < 2.9%. Meanwhile overall spending for art supplies has decreased by 63%. In some schools, this deficit is being supplanted to some degree by family contributions; however many schools have student populations for whom this is just not economically feasible, nor should it have to be. At CEJ we fight to promote educational access and equity for all, the present status of arts instruction in NYC is neither readily accessible nor is it equitable.

Former Mayor Rudy Giuliani and the NY City Council created the Project ARTS (Arts Restoration to the Schools) initiative in 1997 in response to the dire lack of arts education in New York City public schools. Project ARTS was designed to be safety net, to help secure a minimum level of arts education, while being a catalyst for hiring certified arts teachers, purchasing supplies, securing services of arts education providers, and encouraging private contributions to match public dollars. In 2007, categorical funding provided through Project ARTS was folded into a school's overall budget thereby eliminating the safety net. This is why it is crucial that all members of the Council support Resolution #837 and guarantee funding for arts education in all NYC public schools and for all NYC school children.

As a result of the loss of dedicated funding we have begun to see a reduction in arts offerings at schools across the city. Cultural institutions, historically key allies in delivering quality arts education, are reporting a decrease in education partnerships with schools.

Moreover, the ever increasing emphasis on ELA and math test scores has created incentives for school leaders to de-emphasize the role of the arts as a component of a well-rounded education. Unless a minimum level of funding for arts education is guaranteed, we will never be able to ensure that every child receives a quality arts education. We cannot continue to be irresponsible run our schools in violation of the law particularly when we have a greater responsibility to the 1.1 school children of NYC. Once again I urge you support the enactment of Council Resolution #837. Thank you all.



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## Flushing Council on Culture and the Arts at historic *Flushing Town Hall*

Testimony before the New York City Council Education Committee jointly with the Committee on Cultural Affairs, Libraries & International Intergroup Relations  
November 23, 2009

Good afternoon, Chairman Recchia and members of both the committee on Cultural Affairs, Libraries & International and Intergroup Relations and the Education Committee. I am Steven McIntosh, Director of Education, at Flushing Council on Culture and the Arts located at Flushing Town Hall. Thank you for allowing me the opportunity to testify today on the state of arts education in New York City public schools. I would like to thank the members of these two committees for your commitment to the best interests of the city, its citizens, and particularly the students, educators, and artists this dialogue directly impacts today.

I am testifying today as an arts administrator, an arts educator, a parent of two young children and as a representative of one of 33 cultural institutions that together compose the Cultural Institutions Group, the CIGs - a group given the unique responsibility to make some of the most important New York City owned properties centers of the world's best arts and culture programs where individuals and families, community members and tourists, young, old, wealthy and impoverished, can learn, celebrate, and be inspired by and through the arts. Flushing Town Hall certainly stands as one of the small CIGs in terms of organizational size, it stands even smaller than a year ago when operational and programmatic budget cuts reduced our full-time staffing by 50%, but our commitment to significantly contribute to the City's arts and cultural life remains strong, as is our determination to provide the breadth of high quality programs that meet the needs of the exceptionally diverse community of Queens.

At Flushing Town Hall our education programs include in-school and after-school arts workshops, including the Cultural After-School Adventures (CASA) program, and intensive residencies taught by qualified teaching artists that occur either at Flushing Town Hall or the school site. We offer a variety of arts disciplines to schools including cultural arts programs, particularly those of East Asian and African traditions. Flushing Town Hall also offers an engaging matinee season of performances at greatly reduced ticket prices geared specifically for K-12 students by award-winning artists from around the world in storytelling, music, theater, puppetry, and dance that help support student benchmarks for the NYS Learning Standards and the NYC Blueprint for Teaching and Learning in the Arts. Flushing Town Hall's arts-education programming and performance series serves a number of schools across the borough of Queens including student groups from Long Island, Brooklyn, Manhattan, New Jersey and Connecticut.

*Flushing Town Hall (1862) is a New York City landmark and is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.  
In 1996 the facility became an officially designated cultural institution in the City of New York.*

As the Director of Education of Flushing Town Hall I am acutely aware of the incredible impact arts education can have on students, teachers, administrators, and communities. We are fortunate to have a long-standing and growing arts partnership with Daniel Carter Beard School - JHS 189 in Flushing, Queens, jointly funded through the school's budget and by the New York State Council on the Arts, an important funding entity and huge support that too is facing large budget cuts. Flushing Town Hall is in its second year of implementing a school-wide arts integration program at JHS 189, the goal of which is to integrate the arts into every classroom, every subject-area, and every grade. It's a difficult challenge on its own, much harder still with little change in funding from last year, and impossible if that funding was significantly reduced or wiped out. The impact arts education has had on this particular school is visible and measurable.

One of the arts residencies we implemented was a Math/Theater residency last year with 6<sup>th</sup> grade students, a strange pairing for many, but it yielded positive results. Utilizing dramatic processes, activities, and structures students developed theater skills in voice projection, focused attention, and script-writing that incorporated math concepts like fractions and percentages. In evaluations and interviews students felt they could visualize better, particularly math problems during tests. A student also noted that she, and others used to be afraid to raise their hand in class but that the theater residency helped make her, and others, more confident, meaning more hands were going up, and not only in this class but other classes as well. The Arts provides a way of thinking and processing for students that can be used to support academic success and develop their confidence to participate in their learning community. I recently visited the class of this math teacher who continues to incorporate the activities he learned from the teaching artist he worked with. Pasted on the walls of his classroom are dramatic monologues, by students, written from the perspective of a radius, or a circumference. Creative, funny, dramatic, factual with regards to incorporating the math content and obviously using writing skills they've been developing in their English Language Arts.

As the Director of Education of Flushing Town Hall I am also aware of the many of the challenges facing today's public schools, particularly with regards to arts education programming and schools in Queens. Some teachers who are eager to expose their students to high quality artistic work from another culture or a landmarked piece of Queen's history say it is the cost of transporting the students that is prohibitive. The buses are too expensive. Some schools are saying no to any arts programming or performances from April through June to prepare for and implement the new testing schedule. How will a lock-down on the arts impact student learning? How will shutting out the arts promote a holistic educational experience for these students? What are we preparing them for? Flushing Council on Culture and the Arts is also struggling in its current limitations to meet the needs of its education priorities. After lay-offs, cutting public hours, staff pay-cuts, reductions in health insurance benefits, and impending furloughs our tiny organization is struggling to provide the time and resources our program partners deserve from Flushing Town Hall. It's important to add that if further cuts to the CIGs were to occur it would be devastating to our constituents and the school children we serve. We have little else to cut.

Cultural institutions are a key element of New York City's exceptional quality of life. We form the core of the cultural infrastructure that makes NYC the most exciting urban center in the world and we provide invaluable arts education services and programs to the city.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify and for your ongoing support.

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In 1996 the facility became an officially designated cultural institution in the City of New York.*

**Parent testimony for Hearing on CITY COUNCIL RESOLUTION #837**

**November 23, 2009**  
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My son Joshua is in 2<sup>nd</sup> grade at PS 186 in Queens. We are fortunate that his school has multiple art offerings, including weekly visual arts and music classes, and theater and dance programs.

One of the academic areas Josh has struggled the most with is writing. They write by drawing a series of pictures to plan a story, and then writing the words. Although he verbally tells very complex stories, his written stories were always short and undetailed. Or simply unfinished. We didn't know why. But as a result, he had trouble keeping up with the rest of the class.

Toward the end of first grade, last spring, he was drawing at home one evening and said to me, "I bet you're wondering why I'm not drawing stick figures. Mrs. Belfi [the art teacher] taught me how to make people a different way." And he proceeded to show me how to start with a stick figure, expand around it, then erase the sticks. He was very proud of himself.

Now, here we are partway through second grade. His writing this year is totally different. He bangs out the pictures, then writes the text, and he keeps up with his peers. He is on grade level in that area. I'm sure part of it is his confidence at being able to draw stories he wants to tell.

Another mom told me a similar story. Her son started kindergarten not being able to color -- even though half a dozen occupational therapists had unsuccessfully worked with him on it, for years. The public school art teacher, with years of experience with elementary-school students, simply showed him how to section off a picture and color in one little part at a time. That was what he needed. Now he colors and draws with pleasure, much like my son now enjoys writing his stories for class.

What a shame it would have been if these boys hadn't been given the opportunity to learn what they needed outside of the academics. Because what they learned in art class has had a big impact on their academic success.

I am so sad to know that more than 90 percent of NYC public schools don't provide the arts education they're required to offer.

And it's more than art teachers, and art classes. Our schools need basic art supplies, like construction paper, glue, and crayons. I volunteer in the library at my son's school, and each week the librarian has the younger grades do a hands-on art activity related to a book she reads aloud to them. They love it, and I see how it really furthers their understanding of the concepts in the book, whether they're making "vegetables" for a healthy, hearty soup or drawing a situation where they helped someone. And their art



projects show every kid in the school what's in that book, because we put the finished pieces up on bulletin boards.

The librarian has noticed in the past year that it's harder and harder to find colored construction paper to do the projects with. So we've started to conserve by giving each student half sheets instead of whole. We don't mind stretching our resources. Our library still looks great covered with creative projects. No, the sad part is, from the sound of it, we're one of the very few lucky schools that even has construction paper at all. That just shouldn't be.

Every student at my son's school benefits from art.

I strongly urge you to support Resolution 837 and guarantee dedicated arts funding for NYC public schools.

Thank you.

Janice Wright  
Forest Hills, Queens  
718-544-0753

**New York City Council Meeting  
November 23, 2009  
Testimony in support of Resolution 837**

**Kelly Kuwabara, Arts-in-Education Program Director  
Council on the Arts and Humanities for Staten Island  
[Kkuwabara@statenislandarts.org](mailto:Kkuwabara@statenislandarts.org), (718) 447-3329**

I'm Kelly Kuwabara, the arts in education program director for the Council on the Arts and Humanities for Staten Island. Thank you, councilmembers, for having us here today.

I couldn't believe more strongly in Resolution 837. Without it, bringing a high quality education to the city's students – and the equity of opportunity that education represents – is an uphill battle, to say the least.

As cited in the resolution, economically disadvantaged students, and students in need of remedial instruction, experience the most gains in learning from arts education; so equity becomes an issue, especially in a city as diverse as New York. Additionally, the arts play an irreplaceable role for immigrant students and others whose culture may not be represented in the mainstream. I spoke with a woman just yesterday, a Liberian immigrant who teaches dance on Staten Island. She told me in no uncertain terms that when she arrived in this country it was dance that kept her in school, period. Her life in her country of origin had been steeped in dance. And in fact, the dance offered at her school was ballet – yet it was still the most familiar thing at school, and it became a lifeline. She now conducts dance residencies herself at IS 27, seeing similarly increased motivation and better grades in her own students.

My colleague is hardly alone in her experience. It is stories like hers that underlie the reports we read correlating student achievement with instruction in the arts. And this crucial instruction will NOT be provided to all students without something like Project ARTS.

There are schools throughout the city, such as Concord High School in Staten Island, which are utilizing the arts to bring about dramatic improvements in school life and academic achievement; but to follow those examples, other principals must take a leap of faith, and make initial investments of their limited time and money, into the arts. Under extreme pressure to teach to tests in only two subjects, they are de-incentivized to do so without the per student allocation.

In Staten Island, we are a small borough, but our arts funding is even smaller – for example, in 2009 we had only 2.1% of DCA dollars, as compared to nearly 6% of the city's population. Even our more established art organizations have capacity problems, and are not well positioned to make up for a lack of basic art instruction in the schools.

In Staten Island, as in the rest of the city, the proposed resolution is one essential step in bringing a good education to every child. With it, the arts can gain a foothold to play their essential role in education; and their special function in reaching many students who are not reached in other ways. Without this resolution, education in the city will continue to suffer. In Staten Island, as in the rest of the city, our students deserve better.



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To: New York City Council  
Committee on Education and Committee on Cultural Affairs, Libraries and International  
Intergroup Relations  
250 Broadway, 16th Floor Hearing Room, New York, New York  
*Oversight: Reexamining Arts Education in New York City Public Schools*

From: Ella J. Weiss  
President

Date: November 23, 2009

Subject: Testimony

Good afternoon. I'm Ella Weiss, President of Brooklyn Arts Council. Thank you for convening this hearing. I am pleased to add our support for Resolution #837 which would restore a dedicated, minimum level of per capita arts funding to the New York City public schools. As one of the city's largest providers of arts education services, our teaching artists' workshops and assembly programs reach over 22,000 students a year in almost 100 New York City Public Schools during the in school and after school hours. Typically we work in schools and neighborhoods that have limited arts infrastructure and often where there are few or no certified arts teachers on staff. Funding for Project Arts was the one effective way of ensuring that all New York City public school students had arts in the schools. Since it was eliminated, we have seen a direct drop in the number of schools using our arts education services, showing the significant negative impact of this decision. In fact, our arts education programming funded through the Department of Education has declined almost 30%.

One of the most gratifying aspects of my work is to visit the schools and see the benefits of intellectually and aesthetically robust programming as students become more effective communicators, problem solvers and rigorous thinkers and to see kids' eyes light up when one of our teaching artists comes into the room. We have also seen how our programs and those of our arts in education colleagues across the city are helping young people develop life skills, and avoid the temptation of gangs and the streets.

It has been our honor to serve as a trusted partner with the New York City Council by providing arts services as part of the Cultural After School Adventures (CASA) program since its inception in 2006. The support the City Council has provided to this program is making an incredible impact, but more is needed. On behalf of Brooklyn Arts Council, I urge every member of the New York City Council to support reinstatement of dedicated arts funding during the school day. This effort will ensure tomorrow's New Yorkers have the opportunity to receive the benefits that arts education affords. As First Lady Michelle Obama recently noted, "Learning through the arts reinforces critical academic skills in reading, language arts and math and provides students with the skills to creatively solve problems." We believe that having access to such benefits of arts education is the birthright of every child born in our great city. Thank you.

**TESTIMONY TO THE NEW YORK CITY COUNCIL COMMITTEE  
ON CULTURAL AFFAIRS, LIBRARIES AND INTERNATIONAL  
INTERGROUP RELATIONS**

**STEVEN TENNEN, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, ARTSCONNECTION**

**November 23, 2009**

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**Good afternoon. My name is Steven Tennen and I am the Executive Director of ArtsConnection, a dedicated arts in education organization which provides instruction in the visual and performing arts reaching over 30,000 students every year in over 100 public schools throughout the five boroughs. We have been doing this for the past 30 years. In January, High 5 Tickets to the Arts will officially merge with ArtsConnection. This merger will strengthen our work afterschool with middle and high school students and will allow us to provide those students with low cost tickets to museums and galleries and music, dance and theatre performances that will allow them to see professionals demonstrate the skills they learn in ArtsConnection programs.**

**Before coming here today, I took a look at testimony I have delivered to this committee over the past several years and thought a lot about how far this field has come in that time.**

**We've spoken in the past about how important the arts are to the development of social, personal and cognitive skills in children and the positive effects an arts rich school has on the entire school community – children, parents, teachers and administrators.**

**We've spoken in the past about the many studies that have come out in the past several years that speak specifically to the benefits of an arts education – most notably the recent Center for Arts Education study on the correlation of arts in high schools with high school graduation rates.**

**We've spoken in the past about the real strides that have been made by the Department of Education over the past seven years: the blueprints, the fully staffed arts office, the strong leaderships provided by Paul King, the rehiring of arts specialists.**

**We've spoken in the past about the important contribution of the arts community to this work – a contribution that started during the fiscal crisis in the 70's and which continues to this day – and the fact that arts organizations more than match the monies schools pay for their work with funds raised from the private sector.**

**What we need to speak about today is Project Arts and dedicated arts funding. Sometimes it takes a special effort to get something done – even when everyone agrees on the importance of that thing. The arts are that thing. When Project Arts was discontinued, the argument was that the money was still in the school budget, the principals know how important the arts are and with the encouragement of the arts office and the Tweed they would continue to spend that money on the arts.**

**They haven't.**

**Yes, there are reasons. The financial meltdown and budget cuts have contributed to this. The infusion of new principals into the system, many of whom are graduates of the Leadership Academy (which does not include the arts in their list of things principals need to know about) and many of whom have had no experience with the arts in their academic or personal lives, have contributed to this. Just “other priorities” have contributed to this.**

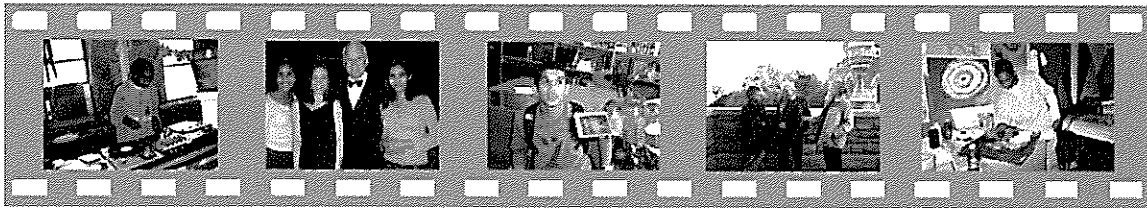
**But it is clear that in the years since Project Arts was discontinued, there has been a diminution of arts services in the public schools. I don't think that was the intention – but it is the fact.**

**I urge the Council to do something about this – to make dedicated funding for the arts in schools a reality again. We need to strengthen the gains of the past seven years and we need dedicated funding to do it. We all agree that the arts are important, that arts education enriches achievement in children and in schools. I was taught years ago that if you think something is important and worth doing, if you believe in it, you put it in your budget.**

**Let's put dedicated funding for the arts back in the budget!**

**Thank you.**

# The Producers' Project



...A New Lens on Learning

## Producers' Project Support for City Council Resolution #837 -- Guaranteeing Dedicated Funding For Arts Education

**The Producers' Project (TPP)** -- a not-for-profit education corporation -- is proud to join our experience and voices to the many that are campaigning in support of **Resolution #837**, which calls upon the **New York City Department of Education (NYC DOE)** to **maintain a minimum and dedicated level of arts funding in New York City public schools.**

Since 2002, **TPP** has helped thousands of K - 12 students and teachers to make and share music, film, television, animation and art that is expressive, authentic and academically aligned.

As an approved **NYC DOE** vendor, we have worked in schools as diverse as **Island Academy of Rikers Island, Concord High School of Staten Island, I.S. 109 of Queens, and City Hall Academy in NYC DOE headquarters.** We have operated summer bootcamps, in school, after-school, weekend and evening programs. All are designed to extend the effectiveness, relevance and reach of teaching and learning by using media and arts production processes to build skills, deepen knowledge and demonstrate results.

The results can be seen and heard in an array of music videos, documentaries, animated shorts and PSAs -- all of which enjoy screenings for school communities and the public, many of which debut at venues like Urban Visionaries and the Tribeca Film Festival, several of which stream at [www.tpp.org](http://www.tpp.org), and most of which air on **TPP-TV's award-winning television series on MNN.**

The schools we work with consistently attribute increased and improved confidence, interest, connectedness and test scores to their work with arts programs such as ours.

In an era when a student drops out of high school every nine seconds (source: [www.ten9eight.com](http://www.ten9eight.com)), significant school budget cuts to the arts, and a lack of dedicated funding for the arts, will have dire consequences for schools, students, and all of society. Our findings concur with a report by the **Arts Education Partnership ([www.aep-arts.org](http://www.aep-arts.org))**, which shows a correlation between arts instruction and student achievement: The arts provide an avenue into improved academic and social functioning for even the most challenged students. And the arts provide a mechanism through which many students learn and express best.

A few case studies follow. More information, including examples from our media archives, is available upon request. Thank you for your consideration. Please do not hesitate to contact us.

**Warmly, Wendy Dubit & Susan Finley, directors and co-founders, The Producers' Project**

Pictured above, from left to right: A student from Concord High School of Staten Island mixes music at Kicked Down Productions; Producers' Project participants with Steve Martin at The National Book Awards; a TPP participant being interviewed for *Media and The Truth*; an interview with Professor Murray Gell-Mann for *The Power of Wow*; a student making art at Island Academy on Rikers Island.

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## Where and When It Matters Most....

### At Island Academy and Towards Artsway Academy

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Among the media that TPP has produced is an orientation video that is seen by every young adult entering Rikers Island, advising them of their right to attend school while there.

In the words of Rademes Ramos, a student at Island Academy, "On the outside, all school got me was here. Here, all I've got is school...."

While lower literacy rates are common among the incarcerated, most of Island Academy's 6,000 students per year are visually and culturally astute. For this population (as for many others), making art and media becomes one of the most effective apertures through which to generate sustained academic interest and achievement and to instill social and emotional skills.

Based on the success of our programs and on the needs of young adults returning from Rikers Island, TPP has been collaborating with NYC DOE to launch **Artsway Academy** -- a new program that will thread media, performance, culinary and visual arts through academic and therapeutic lenses that are designed to help participants attain GEDs and college degrees, career skills and placements, and life and leadership skills.

Currently, an average of **\$200,000 is spent per incarcerated inmate per year**, with an **82% recidivism rate**. The continuance and expansion of arts-based programs for this population is mission-critical to improving upon these numbers. Cuts to and/or the disappearance of such programs -- as is happening throughout New York City with the 2007 elimination of **Project ARTS (Arts Restoration to the Schools)** -- can have disastrous results.

## Time to Shine at 109

### Rap Made Reel: About the Music Videos and Making-Of Documentaries

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Five years ago, **I.S. 109 of Queens, NY** was a school at risk. It is now a success -- having risen from the next-to-last to one of the top middle schools in District 29, as evidenced by improved attendance, decreased violence, an 11.9% increase in reading scores and an 8.5% increase in math scores.

To demonstrate, celebrate and build on that success, **I.S. 109** worked with TPP on **Time to Shine, Tuck That Shirt In, and The Results** -- three music videos and documentaries based on songs written, performed and produced by **I.S. 109 students, staff and parents**.

TPP worked with **I.S. 109** to weave professional production processes, appropriate technologies and NYS performance standards into every aspect of the school day: Math classes learned the music business and projected profit-and-loss from DVD production and sales. English classes were involved with planning and scripting. A marketing class produced and promoted a successful red carpet event showcasing student achievement.

At a premier event planned and promoted by the school and attended by more than 1000 guests, **NYC Schools Chancellor Joel Klein** said of the program: "This is not just glitz. These students are learning the economics of production, the content of production, the discipline of production, the success of production and the hard work that goes into it....They're taking something that's contemporary culture and putting it to use for an old fashioned purpose, which is to say...a great education...."

---

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## Seven Years at Concord

### Totally Transformed

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For seven years, TPP has worked with the administration, students and teachers of **Concord High School of Staten Island** -- using media-making to foster improved attitude within the school and the community, to correct misperceptions among the community and prospective students and families, and to bring into focus the reality and assets of **Concord**.

Students use classes, field trips, club events, parent-sponsored events, interviews with scientists, journalists, local politicians, peers, teachers, parents and their principal as material for their media. Producing films about themselves and their school gives students an opportunity to act as mentors to peers who, like themselves, may have been failing or getting into trouble in larger institutions. One after another, the students speak on camera about how **Concord** has helped them to gain confidence, work harder, and turn their lives around. Glen Ladner, the guidance counselor/film teacher that has been TPP's lead trainee at the school, reports that many incoming students credit viewing the videos with their decision to attend **Concord** and with the success of their studies and activities at **Concord**.

**Concord** will be a key school in the creation, production and promotion of *The Power of Wow*.

### About *The Power of Wow*

*Exploring Inner and Outer Space* through a series of interactive film and web projects

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TPP recently embarked on *The Power of Wow: Exploring Inner Space* -- a 25-minute documentary spotlighting scientific discovery and the processes, plasticity and power of the mind. The program is slated to debut at the **World Science Festival, June 2 - 6, 2010 in NYC**.

Set in schools and against the backdrop of lab tours, experiments, shared meals and more, *The Power of Wow: Exploring Inner Space* employs film, music, art, animation and web tools to bring to life concepts and images ranging from sub-atomic particles to expanses of the cosmos.

For *The Power of Wow*, Nobel prize-winning physicist Murray Gell-Mann shared insights with TPP producers and students about a conference on the creative process: A gathering of noted scientists, composers and artists had shared and compared their processes, and found them to be remarkably similar. He also explained that, while it is important to know your subject and to always "ask why," it is often equally important to think differently, and to ask: "why not?"

All students need to love learning and to be lifelong learners. Learning through the arts helps to inspire passion, sustain interest, and to propel inquiry, creativity, discovery and accomplishment amongst all students. The loss of dedicated **NYC DOE** arts funding would be a loss felt at every stakeholder level; and would be especially ironic in this vibrant city of ours, where so much culture, business and employment opportunities source from the arts.

It is therefore with urgency that we support **Resolution #837**, which calls upon **NYC DOE** to **maintain a minimum and dedicated level of arts funding in New York City public schools**.

We are pleased to share our experiences and to answer any questions you might have.

**Warmly, Wendy Dubit & Susan Finley, directors and co-founders, The Producers' Project**

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*A Report by*

**THE CENTER FOR ARTS EDUCATION**

**OCTOBER 2009**

# STAYING IN SCHOOL

Arts Education and New York City  
High School Graduation Rates



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## **Art Direction & Design**

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*The report can be accessed and downloaded at*  
[www.caenyc.org/Staying-in-School/Arts-and-Graduation-Report](http://www.caenyc.org/Staying-in-School/Arts-and-Graduation-Report)

**About**

The Center for Arts Education is committed to stimulating and sustaining quality arts education as an essential part of every child's education in the New York City public schools. CAE provides tools and resources to deliver quality arts learning for all children. Our innovative teaching and learning programs—fostering collaboration with teachers and school leaders, cultural and community organizations—help build arts-infused school communities. Our advocacy initiatives educate policymakers and the public about the value of arts education as an essential ingredient in a quality education and a fundamental part of children's overall health and well-being.

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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In New York City, the cultural capital of the world, public school students do not enjoy equal access to an arts education. In fact, in schools with the lowest graduation rates—where the arts could have the greatest impact—students have the least opportunity to participate in arts learning.

This report takes the first ever look at the relationship between school-based arts education and high school graduation rates in New York City public schools. The findings, based on data collected by the New York City Department of Education (DOE), strongly suggest that the arts play a key role in keeping students in high school and graduating on time.

*In several national studies over the past decade, students at risk of dropping out cite participation in the arts as their reason for staying in school.*

The failure of public high schools to graduate students in four years has been a persistent problem in New York City and is a central concern for educators and policymakers across the nation. Once the worldwide leader in education, the United States is falling behind other countries in a number of educational categories, none of which is more troubling than high school graduation rates.

In several national studies over the past decade, students at risk of dropping out cite participation in the arts as their reason for staying in school.<sup>1</sup> Research has also shown that arts education has had a measurable impact on at-risk youth in deterring delinquent behavior and truancy problems while also increasing overall academic performance.<sup>2</sup> Despite these known benefits, as the findings of this report confirm, New York City public school students at schools with the lowest graduation rates have the least access to instruction in the arts.

Analyzing data from more than 200 New York City schools over a two-year period, this report shows that schools in the top third in graduation rates offered their students the most access to arts education and the most resources that support arts education.<sup>3</sup> Schools in the bottom third in graduation rates consistently offer the least access and fewest resources. This pattern held true for nine key indicators that convey a school's commitment to arts education. The findings are summarized below.

## Summary of Findings

### *Certified Arts Teachers*

High schools in the top third of graduation rates had almost 40 percent more certified arts teachers per student than schools in the bottom third—or, on average, one additional arts teacher per school.

### *Dedicated Arts Classrooms*

High schools in the top third of graduation rates had 40 percent more physical spaces dedicated to arts learning per student than schools in the bottom third.

### *Appropriately Equipped Arts Classrooms*

High schools in the top third of graduation rates had almost 40 percent more classrooms appropriately equipped for the arts than schools in the bottom third.

### *Arts and Cultural Partnerships*

High schools in the top third of graduation rates had fostered 25 percent more partnerships with arts and cultural organizations than schools in the bottom third.

### ***External Funds to Support the Arts***

High schools in the top third of graduation rates were 45 percent more likely to have raised funds from external sources to support the arts than schools in the bottom third.

### ***Coursework in the Arts***

High schools in the top third of graduation rates had almost 35 percent more graduates completing three or more arts courses than schools in the bottom third.

### ***Access to Multiyear Arts Sequence***

High schools in the top third of graduation rates were almost 10 percent more likely to offer students a multiyear sequence in the arts than schools in the bottom third.

### ***School Sponsorship of Student Arts Participation***

High schools in the top third of graduation rates were more likely to have offered students an opportunity to participate or perform in one or more arts activities than schools in the bottom third.

### ***School Sponsorship of Arts Field Trips***

High schools in the top third of graduation rates were more likely to have offered students an opportunity to attend an arts activity, such as a theater performance, dance recital, or museum exhibit, than schools in the bottom third.

These findings suggest that increasing students' access to arts instruction in schools with low graduation rates can be a successful strategy for lifting graduation rates and turning around struggling schools, not just in New York City, but nationwide.

And while the central focus of the report is arts education at the high school level, the benefits that participating in arts learning imparts to students are just as pronounced in the lower grades. In fact, for students to benefit fully from high school arts instruction, it is critical that they acquire the increased level of knowledge and understanding that comes with coursework in earlier grades.

Thirteen years ago, the New York State Education Department (NYSED) established a set of rigorous learning standards and regulations that confirms the value of instruction in the arts—music, dance, theater, and visual art—for all students, K through 12.

According to data provided in the New York City Department of Education's *Annual Arts in Schools Reports*,<sup>4</sup> however, the great majority of schools in New York City are out of compliance with these state mandates—in fact, only 8 percent of elementary schools and less than half of middle schools make the grade.

This study also points to unequal access to arts education in city high schools based on socioeconomic background, race, or ethnicity. Schools with the lowest graduation rates had a higher percentage of poor, black, and Latino students than schools with the highest graduation rates. This secondary association could be an indication of an inequitable system that sustains educational and income disparities and is worthy of further study.

Our analysis, which associates arts education and graduation rates by school rather than by individuals, buttresses our ongoing argument that arts education is an essential component of K through 12 public school education. The recommendations in this report reflect our vision of quality arts education for all students and the glaring need to address the deficiencies and inequities that exist throughout the system.

In addition to calling on high school principals to expand course offerings in all four arts disciplines so that students can at least meet the minimum graduation requirements, the report urges the New York State Education Department to ensure compliance with the state standards and regulations currently in place.

The recommendations also call for the city to restore Project Arts, a policy initiative created in 1997 that guaranteed a minimum amount of funding for arts education in every school. Restoring this initiative could once again serve to catalyze the hiring of certified arts teachers at schools, the purchasing of instruments and supplies, and the fostering of arts education partnerships with the city's rich array of arts and cultural organizations at all schools.

These and other key arts-friendly policies summarized on the following page and presented in detail in the Recommendations section can help ensure greater access to an arts education for New York City public school students and play a key role in addressing the city's graduation crisis.



## **Summary of Recommendations**

### ***Expand Course Offerings in the Arts***

High school principals should expand course offerings in the four arts disciplines.

The New York State Board of Regents and the State Education Department should review the graduation requirements and examine the benefits of increasing the minimum requirement to three arts courses.

### ***Expand Student Access to the City's Cultural Arts Sector***

The city should implement policies and dedicate resources to ensure that all students have access to the city's cultural arts sector.

### ***Ensure All Schools Have Certified Arts Teachers***

Every school should have at minimum one certified arts teacher on staff.

The city should expand to arts teachers the existing financial incentives to attract and retain certified teachers in high-needs areas.

The city should support and expand approaches for sharing arts teachers and teaching artists among small high schools.

The New York State Education Department should create an expedited certification program for non-arts subject area teachers to attain certification in any the four recognized arts forms.

### ***Require Adequate Classroom Space for Arts Instruction***

The city should require that all schools provide adequate space for arts instruction. The formula used for determining a school's capacity should reflect this requirement.

The city should conduct an inventory of classrooms utilized for arts instruction, including a survey of the number and former use of arts spaces that have been repurposed. These spaces should be reclaimed for arts instruction.

Arts spaces should be incorporated into the design and construction of all future school facilities.

### ***Dedicate Resources to Support Arts Instruction***

Principals should be held accountable for spending funds received through the Project Arts budget line exclusively on arts education.

### ***Ensure School Compliance with Existing State Regulations for Arts Instruction***

The New York State Education Department should conduct a thorough and periodic audit of compliance with the New York State education regulations for the arts and develop a comprehensive intervention program for districts and schools out of compliance.

The New York State Education Department, City Comptroller, or other government entity should conduct an investigation and issue a public report on New York City high school compliance with graduation requirements.

## INTRODUCTION

The national graduation crisis has reached epidemic proportions.<sup>5</sup> More than one million students across the United States drop out of high school each year.<sup>6</sup> Moreover, nearly one third of all high school students, and nearly half of all African Americans, Latinos, and Native Americans, fail to graduate from public high school on time.<sup>7</sup>

The crisis is especially pronounced in New York City, where the four-year graduation rate for the class of 2008 was a dismal 56 percent. Of that class, the graduation rates for Latino and African American students were 49 percent and 51 percent, respectively. In contrast, White and Asian students graduated with rates of 72 percent and 74 percent, respectively.<sup>8</sup>

While students fail to finish high school for myriad reasons—ranging from socioeconomic issues to a lack of interest in the curriculum—in a recent national survey of ethnically diverse high school dropouts, more than half of the respondents said that the major reason for dropping out of high school was that they felt their classes were uninteresting and irrelevant.<sup>9</sup>

It should be noted that some students who do not graduate in four years eventually receive their diploma. On the other hand, more than 20 percent of the class of 2007 were “discharged”—that is, removed from the city’s enrollment rolls without officially dropping out or graduating.<sup>10</sup>

The consequences of the graduation crisis are both painful and sustained. Dropouts are much more likely than graduates to be unemployed or living in poverty, in prison or on death row, unhealthy, divorced, or single parents with children who drop out of high school themselves. These outcomes are particularly evident in New York City, where one in every five young people is out of school and out of work.<sup>11</sup>

Studies attest to the success of strong arts programs as a means to prevent the disengagement that usually predicts dropping out.<sup>12</sup> Arts education has a measurable impact in deterring delinquent behavior and truancy problems, and students at risk of not successfully completing their high school education cite their participation in the arts as a reason for staying in school. The opportunity for students to engage in the arts—through bands and choruses, dance and theater productions, exhibitions of their original art, and publications of original literary and visual work—has always been a strong motivator for students and can play a key role in tackling the graduation crisis.

The findings in this report reinforce the observation that the arts help keep students interested in school and on the path to graduation.

*In a recent national survey of ethnically diverse high school dropouts, more than half of the respondents said that the major reason for dropping out of high school was that they felt their classes were uninteresting and irrelevant.*



### The Economic Benefits of Graduation

By virtually every economic measure, high school graduates are better positioned to lead successful adult lives than those who fail to receive their diploma.<sup>13</sup> According to *Cities in Crisis 2009*, a comprehensive analysis of the economic impact of the graduation crisis, earning a diploma increases the likelihood of steady employment by 30 percent and cuts the chances of experiencing poverty in half. The median income for someone without a high school diploma was slightly more than \$17,000 annually in 2005, compared to the median income for high school graduates of almost \$27,000.<sup>14</sup> Over their lifetimes, graduates earn an estimated \$1 million more than high school dropouts.<sup>15</sup>

High school graduation impacts not only individuals but also the nation and the economy as a whole. Graduates contribute more to the tax base and take less public assistance than students who drop out.<sup>16</sup> The Alliance for Excellent Education, a national policy and advocacy organization that works to increase graduation rates, estimates that if the students from the class of 2009 who dropped out had graduated, the nation's economy would have benefited from nearly \$335 billion in additional income over the course of their lifetimes.<sup>17</sup>

### The Power of Arts Education

According to U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan, "The arts can help students become tenacious, team-oriented problem-solvers who are confident and able to think creatively. These qualities can be especially important in improving learning among students from economically disadvantaged circumstances."<sup>18</sup>

There is growing evidence that the arts contribute to learning across disciplines and to the thought process itself. In March 2008, the Dana Foundation released a series of studies, conducted by leading neuroscientists from six prestigious universities, demonstrating a "tight correlation" between exposure to the arts and improved skills in cognition and attention for learning.<sup>19</sup> At a symposium in May 2008 at Johns Hopkins University, several scientists showed evidence of the "near transfer" from one part of the brain to another of measurable learning and attention abilities attained through arts learning experiences.<sup>20</sup>

These recent findings are reinforced by a body of work that highlights the positive impact of arts learning on student achievement and academic success.<sup>21</sup> In a well-regarded U.S. Department of Education study that

examined data for 25,000 middle and high school students, students who were highly involved in the arts performed better on standardized achievement tests than those with little or no involvement in the arts.<sup>22</sup> Moreover, the students involved in the arts participated in more community service, watched fewer hours of television, and reported less boredom in school.<sup>23</sup> The College Board found that students engaged in arts learning for all four years of high school scored substantially higher on the SAT than students with six months or less training in the arts—58 points higher on verbal and 38 points higher on math.<sup>24</sup>

*"The arts can help students become tenacious, team-oriented problem-solvers who are confident and able to think creatively. These qualities can be especially important in improving learning among students from economically disadvantaged circumstances."*

— Arne Duncan, U.S. Secretary of Education

### Engaging At-Risk Youth

Studies show that access to arts education in school offers distinct benefits to economically disadvantaged youth and students at risk of dropping out.<sup>25</sup> An 11-year national study that examined youth in low-income neighborhoods found that those who participated in arts programs were much more likely to be high academic achievers, be elected to class office, participate in a math or science fair, or win an award for writing an essay or poem.<sup>26</sup>

According to a multicity U.S. Department of Justice study, arts programming not only increased academic performance of those students involved in the project, but also decreased juvenile delinquency and drug use, increased self-esteem, and led to more positive interactions with peers and adults.<sup>27</sup>

Students themselves have attributed many of the benefits realized through arts education to the increased interaction with caring and supportive arts instructors and educators, as well as to an increase in self-esteem and sense of achievement gained through the learning opportunities.<sup>28</sup> Once students experience success in arts classes, they are better able to understand the benefits and the process of the hard work that goes into all learning.

# THE STATUS OF ARTS EDUCATION IN NEW YORK CITY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

At the beginning of the 2007–08 school year, the New York City Department of Education introduced *ArtsCount*, an initiative aimed at enhancing arts education in New York City public schools. A centerpiece of this initiative was the development of a series of metrics on the arts education taking place in city schools. As part of this effort, in spring 2007, the DOE released the first ever citywide *Annual Arts in Schools Report* for the 2006–07 school year,<sup>29</sup> along with individual reports for each school. That was followed by a second *Annual Arts in Schools Report* for the 2007–08 school year several months later.<sup>30</sup>

The reports, based on surveys completed by principals toward the end of the school year, have provided the most comprehensive reporting on arts education in New York City public schools in recent memory. They make clear that access to arts education in public schools is far from universal. While some schools offer enviable arts programs, many have little to no arts education whatsoever—no art teachers on staff, no classrooms dedicated to the arts, no partnerships with arts or cultural organizations, and minimal student participation in any of the four required art forms.

The DOE's Office of the Arts and Special Projects has been actively providing information and resources to help schools that are underserved in the arts. While many schools have made great strides, comparing data from the two *Annual Arts in Schools Reports* reveals year-over-year declines in several key arts education areas:

Nearly 30 percent of schools had no certified arts teacher on staff in 2007–08—up from 20 percent the previous year.

Principals allocated a smaller percentage of their budgets to arts education in 2007–08—shrinking to less than 2.9 percent on average.

Principals spent more than half a million dollars less on services provided by art and cultural partners in 2007–08 compared to the previous year.

There was a 63 percent decline in spending on arts supplies and equipment in 2007–08 over the previous year—a reduction of nearly \$7 million.

These year-over-year declines correspond to a decision by the current administration to all but eliminate a successful program that ensured that a minimum level of arts funding was being allocated at all schools on a per-pupil basis. The program, Project Arts, created in 1997, was a catalyst for hiring certified arts teachers, purchasing supplies, securing services of arts education providers, and encouraging private contributions to match public dollars. In 2007, categorical funding provided through Project Arts was folded into a school's overall budget and principals were no longer required to spend these funds on the arts.

Perhaps most troubling, the *Annual Arts in Schools Reports* revealed that the great majority of the city's public schools were failing to meet the minimum state requirements for arts education as set by the New York State Education Department and outlined in Part 100 of the Regulations of the Commissioner of Education.<sup>31</sup>

The regulations require that all elementary schools offer instruction in four arts disciplines (visual arts, music, theater, dance) to every student; that middle school and high school students complete a least one full unit of study (two courses/credits) in the arts; and that each public school district provide high school students the opportunity to complete a three- or five-unit arts sequence.

These requirements are complemented by recommended guidelines, developed by NYSED to ensure that students receive a balanced curriculum,<sup>32</sup> and *New York State Learning Standards* for the arts that express the educational goals for dance, music, theater, and the visual arts.<sup>33</sup>

The state requirements for arts instruction have the **effect and power of law**, yet lack of compliance with these educational mandates is widespread throughout the New York City public school system. According to the *Annual Arts in Schools Reports*, at the elementary and middle school levels, for example:

Only 8 percent of elementary schools reported providing annual arts instruction in all four arts disciplines as per state requirements, an improvement from 4 percent the previous year (2007–08 report).

Only 29 percent of middle school students met the state arts education requirement (completion of two half-unit arts courses) (2006–07 report).

Less than half of middle schools reported that all students had met state education requirements for the arts (2007–08 report).

The lack of compliance reported by the DOE was confirmed by the New York City Public Advocate's office through a 2008 survey of 100 randomly selected public elementary and 50 randomly selected public middle schools.<sup>34</sup> The Public Advocate's survey results show that:

Only 7 percent of elementary schools surveyed offered instruction in all four arts disciplines as required by state regulations.

Sixty-eight percent of elementary schools and 47 percent of middle schools surveyed offered only one or two arts disciplines.

Seven percent of elementary schools and 9 percent of middle schools surveyed had no arts education at all.

*The state requirements for arts instruction have the effect and power of law, yet lack of compliance with these educational mandates is widespread throughout the New York City public school system.*

### **Arts in New York City High Schools**

The NYSED high school graduation requirements are minimal for the arts: the completion of one unit (two credits) in the arts over the course of a student's high school career. In New York City, one unit is defined as 180 minutes per week throughout the school year, or the equivalent. It is recommended that the instruction be provided by a teacher certified to teach the particular subject area.

State regulations also require that each school district offer the opportunity to complete a three- or five-unit sequence in the arts. As of 2009, students who complete five units in a single art form and successfully complete the exit exam in that art form are eligible to receive a Regents Diploma with Advanced Designation in the Arts.<sup>35</sup>

While providing New York City students with the minimum of two courses over four years should not be onerous, neither the 2006–07 nor the 2007–08 *Annual Arts in Schools Report* states explicitly whether or not schools were meeting the requirements. The two reports do, however, provide the following information, which tracks the regulations most closely:

Seventy-nine percent of high schools offered instruction in two arts disciplines, 38 percent in three art forms, and 27 percent in all four arts disciplines (2007–08 report).

Twenty-nine percent of high schools offered at least one three- or five-year sequence in the arts (2006–07 report).

Forty-six percent of students in 2006–07 and 32 percent in 2007–08 exceeded the state requirements by completing three or more arts courses (2006–07; 2007–08 reports).

Eighty-two percent of high schools had at least one certified arts teacher on staff (2006–07 report).

The following section takes a more in-depth look at the data for high schools in the two *Annual Arts in Schools Reports* issued to date. Specifically, it looks at the relationship between the data provided on the arts in schools and graduation rates at city high schools.

Review of the reports and data presented above raised additional questions pertaining to city high schools that fall outside the scope of this report but are worthy of further study. Specifically, how are schools without certified arts teachers on staff ensuring that the *New York State Learning Standards*, requirements, and guidelines are being met? To what degree are students meeting the requirements through the “credit recovery” process, whereby students are given credits that count toward graduation for special projects or work done in lieu of coursework? Also worth examining is the steep decline (33 percent year-over-year) in the number of graduates who completed three or more arts courses.

# OUR STUDY: ARTS EDUCATION AND NEW YORK CITY GRADUATION RATES

This section examines the relationship between graduation rates at more than 200 New York City public high schools and the arts education provided at those schools.<sup>36</sup> It is based on an independent analysis of data compiled by the New York City Department of Education for the *Annual Arts in Schools Reports* for the 2006–07 and 2007–08 school years and graduation rate data provided separately by the DOE as part of the reporting on school *Progress Reports*.

The schools in the analysis are those for which data were available from both the arts reports as well as on graduation rates. The schools were not identical for both school years, as data for some schools were not available for both periods.<sup>37</sup> The analysis included a total of 189 New York City high schools from the 2006–07 school year and 239 from the 2007–08 school year. Because the *Annual Arts in Schools Reports* do not report on after-school, weekend, or summer arts education, all data are based on arts instruction offered during the school day.

Each year's set of schools was grouped into three tiers according to graduation rates—low, middle, and high—with roughly equal numbers of schools in each tier.<sup>38</sup> We then looked at the relationship between graduation rates and the nine arts education indicators described below. Due to the wide variation in the size of high schools in New York City, we present the data for several of the indicators as a ratio of the indicator per 1,000 students, a number that roughly corresponds to the average student population of 1,152 at the schools analyzed in this report.<sup>39</sup>

## Arts Indicators

The following nine arts education indicators are key components of the DOE's *Annual Arts in Schools Reports* and were selected for analysis in this report because they are fundamental measures of a school's ability and inclination to deliver arts education to its students.<sup>40</sup>

We report the indicators—divided into two categories, Resources and Access—as follows:

### Resource Indicators

- Certified Arts Teachers (reported as full-time certified teachers per 1,000 students)
- Dedicated Arts Classrooms (reported as dedicated arts rooms per 1,000 students)
- Appropriately Equipped Arts Classrooms (reported as appropriately equipped arts rooms per 1,000 students)
- Arts and Cultural Partnerships (reported as average number of partnerships per school)
- External Funds to Support the Arts (reported as percentage of schools raising any outside funds to support the arts)

### Access Indicators

- Coursework in the Arts (reported as percentage of graduates per school who completed three or more arts courses)
- Access to Multiyear Arts Sequence (reported as percentage of schools where any arts sequences were offered)
- School Sponsorship of Student Arts Participation (reported as percentage of schools that offered an opportunity for students to participate in one of the reported activities)
- School Sponsorship of Arts Field Trips (reported as percentage of schools that offered an opportunity for students to attend one of the reported activities)

## Results and Discussion

The findings for all nine indicators analyzed here are summarized in Table 1. For each indicator, schools in the high graduation tier showed a greater commitment to arts education than schools in the low graduation tier. Schools in the middle tier also provided greater access and more resources to support arts education than schools in the low graduation tier across all indicators.

For two indicators (school sponsorship of arts participation and sequential arts offering), schools in the middle tier were slightly more arts-friendly than schools in the high tier.

Following is a more in-depth look at the data and results for each of the nine indicators, with a brief discussion of the findings as well as the significance of the measure. Results are reported for both the 2006–07 and 2007–08 school years, and also a two-year average.

An expanded table with additional information (e.g., average school size, attendance rates, demographic information, etc.) can be found in the Appendix.

### Resource Indicators

#### Certified Arts Teachers

The presence of certified arts teachers on a school's staff is a key indicator of a high school's commitment to arts education. Arts teachers provide students and the school with the expertise necessary to provide quality instruction in the arts and create a school community that values arts education.

In addition to traditional classroom arts learning, many schools deliver arts instruction through interdisciplinary, or integrated, learning opportunities that utilize the talents of a wider array of school staff. While this approach has great value and has long been supported by The Center for Arts Education, the hiring of certified arts teachers signals a school's engagement with arts education, and the arts teachers are often the locus of interdisciplinary teaching in school.

Many small high schools do not have the resources, space, or size of student population to support a full-time certified arts teacher on staff, or an adequate array of faculty in general. This is a continuing challenge faced by the city's small schools. To a limited degree there already exists a sharing of staff amongst schools, and artist

Table 1

### ARTS EDUCATION INDICATORS AND HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION RATE COMPARISON

(Two Year Average: 2006–07 and 2007–08)

Arts Indicator	Graduation Tier		
	Low	Middle	High
Full-time Certified Arts Teachers/ 1,000 Students	2.9	3.9	4.0
Dedicated Arts Classrooms/ 1,000 Students	3.5	4.6	4.9
Appropriately Equipped Arts Classrooms/1,000 Students	4.2	5.4	5.8
Average Number of Arts and Cultural Partnerships	2.0	2.3	2.5
Schools that Raised External Funds to Support the Arts (%)	38.5	53.0	56.0
Graduates Who Completed Three or More Arts Classes (%)	38.0	47.5	51.0
Schools Offering Multiyear Arts Sequence (%)	39.0	44.0	42.5
School Sponsorship of Student Arts Participation (%)	92.0	96.5	96.0
School Sponsorship of Arts Field Trips (%)	92.5	94.0	95.5

residencies have been used in many schools to great effect. However, the development of flexible staffing structures to further address these challenges is necessary and should be encouraged.

High schools and middle schools are required to provide students with arts instruction by a certified teacher, and NYSED recommends that those teachers be certified in the art form they are teaching. As reported by the DOE, in 2006–07 only 82 percent of New York City high schools had certified arts teachers on staff.<sup>41</sup> Additionally, according to NYSED arts is considered to be a shortage area for teachers statewide, with New York City being the area with the highest needs in the state.<sup>42</sup>

Due to the variation in high school size in New York City, for this report we looked at the number of full-time certified arts teachers at each school for every 1,000 students. A higher ratio of teachers to students can enhance learning in the arts, as in other subject areas, by allowing for more focused efforts by the teacher and one-on-one interaction between teachers and students. The city's larger high schools require multiple certified art teachers, perhaps one in each art form, to provide the requisite instruction to all their students. While part-time certified teachers are also an important part of a school's arts program, the DOE provided school-level data related to part-time instruction for only one of the two school years, so this measure was not included in our analysis.

As illustrated in Figure 1, schools in the high graduation tier had more full-time certified arts teachers on staff per student than schools in the low graduation tier. This holds true across both school years surveyed. The high tier had four certified arts teachers for every 1,000 students and the low tier had fewer than three certified arts teachers for every 1,000 students. According to the two-year average, schools in the high tier had 38 percent more arts teachers than those in the low tier—or one additional arts teacher for every 1,000 students.

### *Dedicated Arts Classrooms*

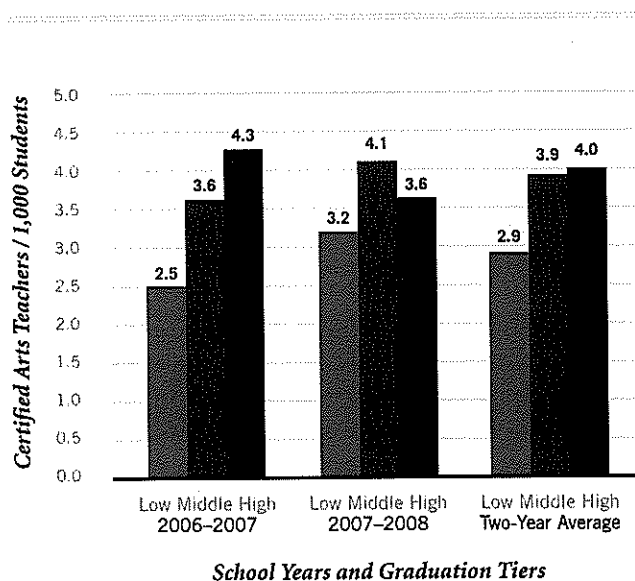
High-quality equipment in arts classrooms, as in libraries, gyms, and science labs, supports quality teaching and learning. It is nearly impossible for an arts teacher to deliver quality arts programming if required to move from room to room with supplies in a cart, which is the reality in many schools across the city. Likewise, inadequate facilities hamper quality teaching and learning and lead to substandard student learning.

Based on the 1997 test results of the National Assessment of Education Progress (NAEP), widely considered the “gold standard of educational assessment,” the U.S. Department of Education found that students performed better in the arts when they were taught in proper arts spaces.<sup>43</sup>

The size, configuration, specialized equipment, and features required for art classrooms are unique for each art form. Dance requires open space for movement. Visual arts require space for students to create, view, and store projects, as well as access to sinks and water. Music and theater require rehearsal and performance space, as well as proper storage space for instruments, sheet music, lights, and props. These particular needs

Figure 1.

### CERTIFIED ARTS TEACHERS AND GRADUATION RATES



make it essential to design and furnish appropriate facilities during school construction and renovation. Leaders in the field of arts education, as well as school design experts, have recommended that each school have at least one dedicated arts space for every 400 to 500 students.<sup>44</sup>

*“The spaces and facilities available in schools to teach the arts are good indicators of the level of commitment to arts education.”*

—U.S. Department of Education,  
1997 NAEP Arts Report Card

A dedicated arts classroom is a classroom used solely for arts instruction or performance. The DOE recognizes that “the ideal physical environment for arts learning is one that is dedicated to the arts discipline and appropriately and comfortably equipped with the specific equipment and supplies needed to optimize students' experience.” According to the 2007–08 *Annual Arts in Schools Report*, however, 59 percent of school leaders reported the lack of available in-school arts space as a challenge to providing arts education—the most frequently cited challenge after funding (75 percent).<sup>45</sup>

As illustrated in Figure 2, students in the schools with the lowest graduation rates had the fewest rooms dedicated to arts learning. More specifically, according to the two-year average, schools in the high tier had one and a half more dedicated arts rooms per 1,000 students than schools in the low tier, or 40 percent more classrooms dedicated to the arts.

While our data-reporting method is not designed to compare different school years, from Figure 2 it appears that schools reported having more dedicated arts spaces in 2007–08 than they did in 2006–07. The anomaly could be due to the slightly larger sample size in 2007–08, which could have included schools with more arts classrooms, or a data or reporting inconsistency between the two years. With principals reporting the need to convert dedicated spaces for the arts and other subjects to general classroom use due to school overcrowding,<sup>46</sup> it is unlikely, although not impossible, that the data reflect an actual growth in the number of spaces dedicated to the arts.

### *Appropriately Equipped Arts Classrooms*

In the absence of dedicated spaces, rooms equipped to serve the art form but shared with other subject areas can be effective uses of space and resources, and if tailored appropriately, can be adequate substitutes for many, but not all, arts classes. The DOE classifies classrooms that have the materials and equipment needed to teach the art form as appropriately equipped classrooms, whether or not they are used for this purpose or are shared with non-arts subject areas. According to the DOE, dedicated and appropriately equipped spaces are not mutually exclusive; the *Annual Arts in Schools Reports* survey advised school leaders that rooms can be both dedicated and appropriately equipped.

As demonstrated in Figure 3, schools in the high tier of graduation rates had 38 percent more appropriately equipped classrooms than those in the low tier. There were 4.2 appropriately equipped classrooms for every 1,000 students in schools in the low graduation tier compared to 5.8 for every 1,000 students in schools in the high tier, according to the two-year average.

Figure 2.

### DEDICATED ARTS CLASSROOMS AND GRADUATION RATES

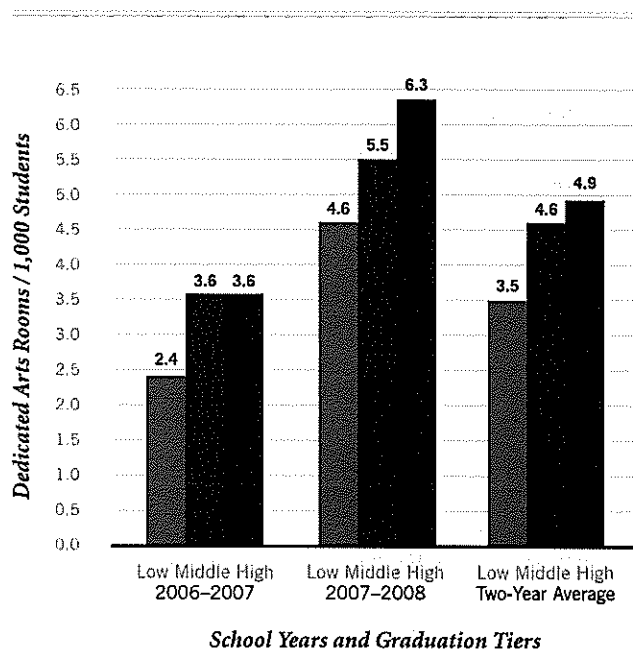
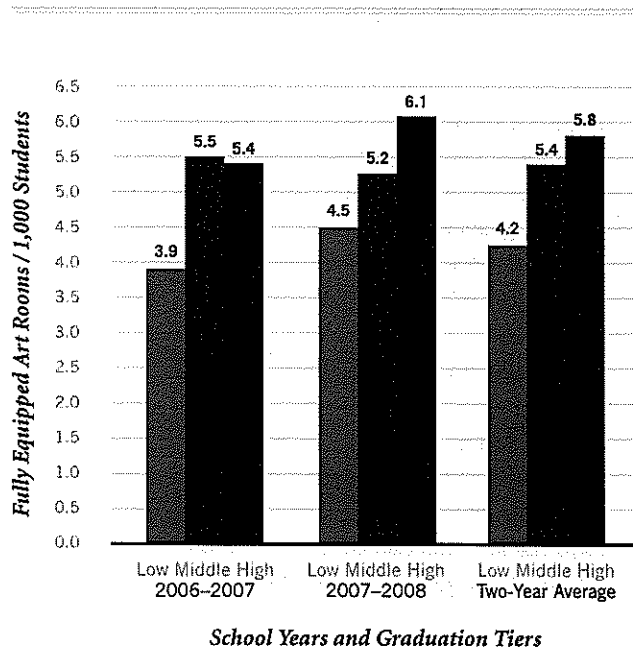


Figure 3.

### APPROPRIATELY EQUIPPED ARTS CLASSROOMS AND GRADUATION RATES





### Arts and Cultural Partnerships

One of the benefits of living and attending school in New York City is access to its vibrant arts and cultural sector. In addition to having opportunities to see live performances and visit museums, many students attend schools that partner with arts or cultural organizations.

Partnerships between schools and outside arts and cultural organizations deepen not only arts learning opportunities for participating students but also learning across curriculums. Often the school and cultural partner collaborate to design and implement programs where the partner comes into the classroom to lead sequential sessions around a particular theme that enhance and enrich the classroom curriculum.

When such partnerships become an integral part of a school's vision, learning through experiences with arts and cultural institutions becomes an energizing force in the school community. Successful partnerships also echo beyond the school walls as students and staff are connected to community resources in new and engaging ways. Unfortunately, not all students have equal access to these partnerships.

It is commonly understood that such partnerships vary widely, from a single workshop serving a single class to a yearlong, multifaceted design that serves multiple classes in multiple grades. While the DOE provided information to help describe the nature of these partnerships on an individual school basis, the information was either not suitable for the type of analysis conducted in this report or the data provided were not consistent over the two years.

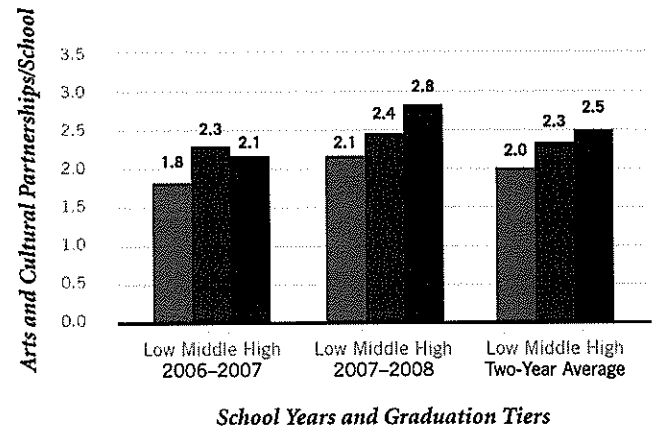
Figure 4 displays the results of the analysis of the number of cultural partnerships into which each school has entered. As the figure illustrates, schools with the highest graduation rates on average forged 25 percent more partnerships with cultural organizations per school than those with the lowest graduation rates.

### External Funds to Support the Arts

School expenditures for arts education are often augmented by contributions from external sources, such as parents, local businesses, government agencies, or corporate or private foundations.<sup>47</sup> The funds raised from external sources can be spent in many ways, including hiring additional part- or full-time teachers and teacher's

Figure 4.

### ARTS AND CULTURAL PARTNERSHIPS AND GRADUATION RATES



aides, creation of school-based after-school programs, financing school trips to museums and other cultural centers, or helping to subsidize partnerships with arts organizations, to name a few. While the ability of schools to raise outside funds is partly dependent on the ability of parents to contribute, it also reflects the resourcefulness and determination of school leadership to engage outside entities to support the arts in school.

According to the *Annual Arts in Schools Report* for 2006-07, on average schools raised \$12,650 from external funding sources, with the highest percentage coming from Parent-Teacher Associations (20 percent). As there were significant flaws in the school-by-school reporting of the dollar amount raised, this analysis focuses solely on whether or not any funds were raised from outside sources.

As illustrated in Figure 5, schools in the high graduation tier were 45 percent more likely to have raised funds from external sources to support the arts than schools in the bottom tier. According to the two-year average, only 38.5 percent of schools in the low tier raised any outside arts funding, while 56 percent of schools in the high tier raised outside funds during that time frame.

As mentioned above, the level of money raised from outside sources in many ways reflects parental engagement and wherewithal to make financial contributions. Schools with students from wealthier backgrounds generally raise more money and have more resources at their disposal to supplement their budgets. In poorer communities, parents generally raise less. This disparity in what schools can offer students ultimately translates into more limited in-school and after-school programming and instruction for low-income students—pointing to the importance of minimum requirements and funding mechanisms to ensure that the mandates are met *during the school day*.

Some view such minimums as unwarranted bureaucratic hurdles or restrictions on principal autonomy. The inequities evident throughout the city testify to the critical necessity of minimum requirements and dedicated funding lines, because they establish an equitable floor for minimum student participation in the arts and ensure the accountability of school leaders for providing balanced, standards-based arts education for all students.

*One third more students took three or more arts classes at schools with high graduation rates than did students in schools with low graduation rates.*

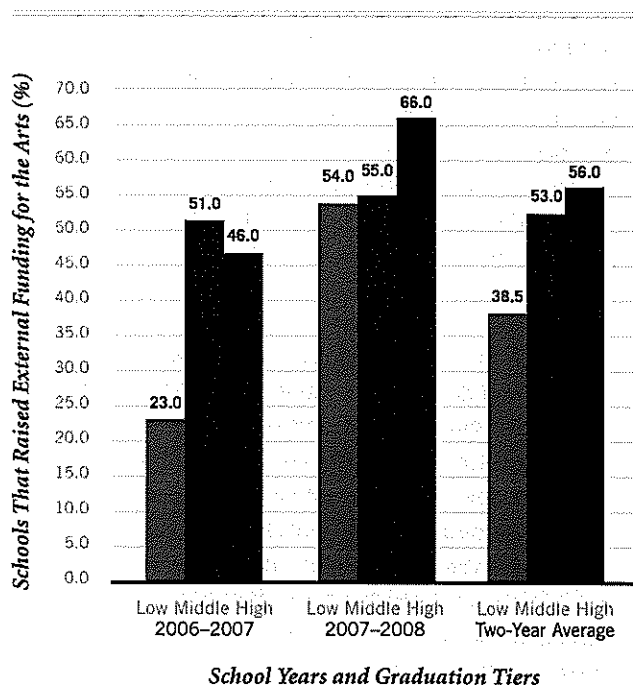
**Access Indicators**  
**Coursework in the Arts**

A variety of arts courses signals a robust high school arts program. While smaller schools face limitations, the city's larger high schools are expected to offer students multiple classes in most disciplines. New York State regulations require one unit of credit, the equivalent of two classes (108 total instructional hours), in the arts in order to graduate, but many students choose to exceed those requirements when, and where, offered the opportunity.

As illustrated in Figure 6, on the following page, students in schools in the low graduation tier are significantly less likely to have taken three or more arts classes before they graduated than their peers in schools in the high tier. Specifically, over the two-year average, one third more students (34 percent) took three or more arts classes at schools with high graduation rates than did students in schools with low graduation rates.

Figure 5.

**EXTERNAL FUNDS TO SUPPORT THE ARTS AND GRADUATION RATES**



This gap in the number of arts courses being taken by graduates is significant in that it ties directly to individual students' coursework over their high school years and is perhaps the most unambiguous sign of the disparity in student participation in the arts for the schools analyzed.

It could be argued that students in the low tier are choosing not to take coursework in the arts; however, based on the overall findings in this report, it more likely signals a lack of opportunity at schools in the low graduation tier. While the DOE provided no data on the number of arts courses offered at individual schools, it is commonly recognized that many schools offer only the bare minimum, so their students have no opportunity to exceed the requirement. In fact, the 2007-08 data revealed that 21 percent of high schools were offering coursework in only one arts discipline or less—limiting student course options.

Given the national studies in which at-risk students cite arts participation as their reason for staying in school, increasing course offerings in the arts in the low-graduation schools is likely to be an effective way to improve student engagement at those schools.

### Access to Multiyear Arts Sequence

An arts sequence is a set of sequential courses that build upon each other in any of the four main artistic disciplines (dance, theater, music, visual art). Sequential coursework allows interested students to pursue advanced learning in the offered arts disciplines and provides students with a pre-professional and/or academic track in the arts.

New York State education regulations require that each school district offer students the opportunity to complete a three- or five-unit sequence in any of the four recognized arts disciplines beginning in grade nine. Because New York City is considered a single school district, the state requirement is technically satisfied. In light of the size of the district, however, the DOE has made a commitment to ensure that every community school district, of which there are 32, offers a sequence in each of the four arts disciplines.

Beginning with the class of 2009, students are now able to earn a Regents Diploma with Advanced Designation in the Arts by completing five units in a single art form and successfully completing the exit exam in that art form. This is a welcome development, yet a student's opportunity to earn this advanced designation will be largely dependent on whether or not their school offers a multiyear sequence.

According to the two-year average in Figure 7, schools in the high graduation tier were nine percent more likely to offer an arts sequence than those in the low tier. For the 2007–08 school year, however, a greater percentage of schools in the low tier offered an arts sequence, the reverse of the results from the previous school year. This is the one data point in the analysis that was inconsistent with all others. While it is possible that the schools in the low tier increased their offerings in relation to those in the high tier, it is more likely that reporting inconsistencies were at play, as is likely with a system of self-reporting.

Figure 6.

### COURSEWORK IN THE ARTS AND GRADUATION RATES

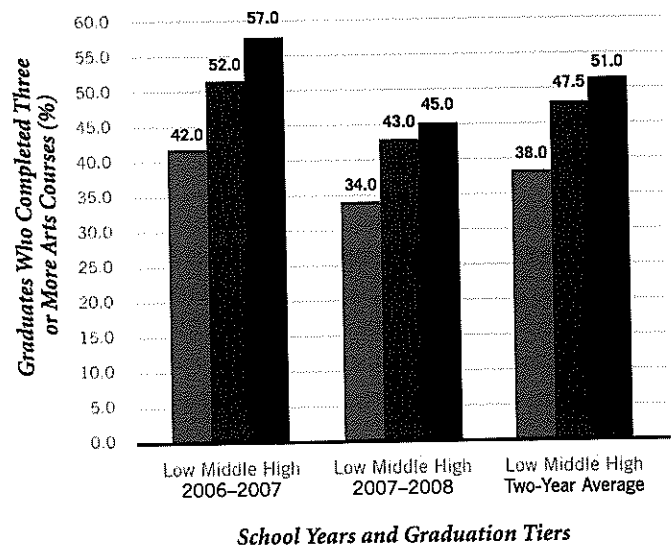
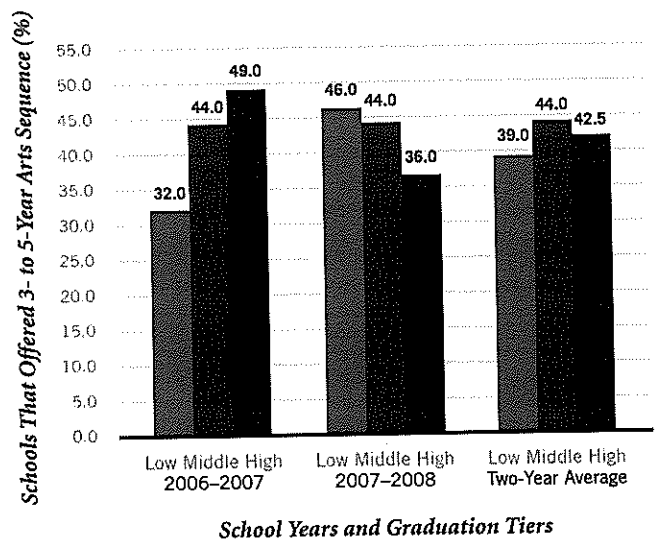


Figure 7.

### ACCESS TO MULTIYEAR ARTS SEQUENCE AND GRADUATION RATES



### School Sponsorship of Student Arts Participation

Whether performing in a school play, singing in the choir, or contributing work to an exhibit, the active engagement of students in the processes that constitute creation and performance in the arts is invaluable to student learning in the art form.

To measure student participation for the two *Annual Arts in Schools Reports*, principals were asked to indicate with a “yes” or “no” the types of arts activities that the school sponsored from a list of activities provided by the DOE on the *Arts in Education Survey*.<sup>48</sup>

As the survey did not request actual student participation rates, this indicator is not an accurate measure of true student participation; it should be refined by the DOE in the future to more accurately capture this critical information.

For the purposes of this analysis, we grouped together all the activities reported by the DOE and distinguished solely between schools that had any student participation in an arts activity and schools that had none.

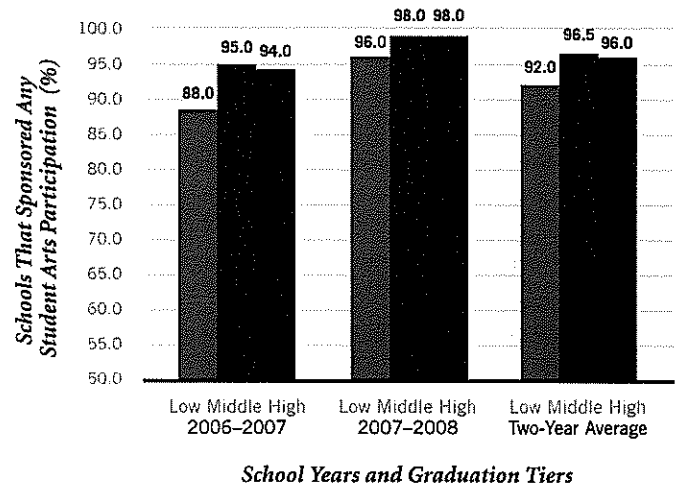
*Student attendance at arts activities is not only a way to build an appreciation of the arts, it can also give high school students new ideas about future career paths and reasons to stay in school.*

As illustrated in Figure 8, a high percentage of schools in every tier had some student participation in an arts activity. Despite a slight difference between schools in the high and low tiers, the graph would imply that even those schools with low graduation rates were providing students with ample opportunity to participate in an arts activity. As mentioned above, the reporting on this measure is misleading, because the DOE gave schools credit for student participation irrespective of how many students actually participated.

Also worthy of note is that the data for the 2007–08 school year included additional categories of student participation (participated in concert performance, showed student-made film) that were not reported in the previous year, which most likely explains the increased level of participation for that

Figure 8.

### SCHOOL SPONSORSHIP OF STUDENT ARTS PARTICIPATION AND GRADUATION RATES



school year over the previous one.

### School Sponsorship of Arts Field Trips

Taking students to concerts, theater performances, or museum exhibits is a long-standing tradition in public schools. These school trips are often students' first introduction to the unique cultural resources of New York City. Sets, lights, a live orchestra, the Egyptian wing of the Met—all these can provide inspiration to schoolchildren.

Student attendance at arts activities is not only a way to build an appreciation of the arts, it can also give high school students new ideas about future career paths and reasons to stay in school.

The visual display of the arts is made possible by the support of vast numbers of industry employees, from stagehands to box office personnel to marketing specialists to graphic designers to arts conservators to advertising writers, and more. Estimated to have an economic impact of \$21 billion per year,<sup>49</sup> and providing over 309,000 jobs in New York City alone (8.1 percent of all city workers),<sup>50</sup> the creative sector is vital to New York City's economy.

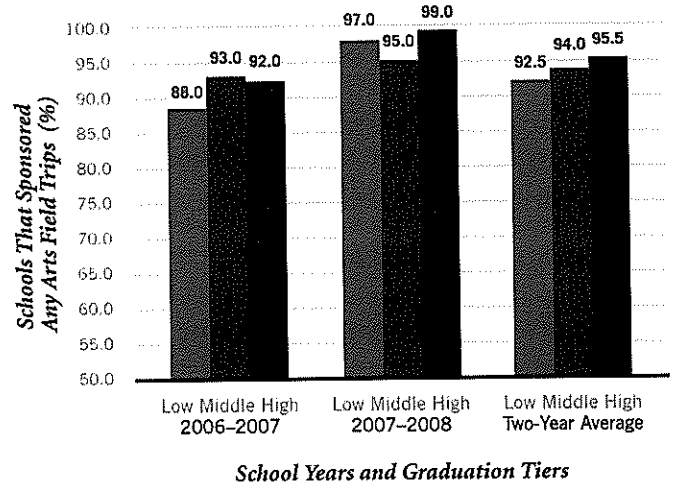
For this measure as well as the previous indicator, the DOE asked principals to indicate with a “yes” or “no” the types of events or activities that the school sponsored.<sup>51</sup> Schools received full credit for sponsoring an activity regardless of the number of students who participated.

As illustrated in Figure 9, a high percentage of schools across all tiers reported student attendance at an art activity. Nonetheless, schools in the low tier were noticeably less likely than schools in the high tier to have offered students an opportunity to attend an arts activity. Given the generous definition of sponsorship, it is reasonable to assume that an even greater discrepancy exists in the percentage of students at these schools who had the opportunity to attend one of the activities sponsored.

It is worth noting that data provided for 2007–08 included an additional category of activity (viewed film/media), which can explain the increased level of participation of 2007–08 over the previous school year.

Figure 9.

**SCHOOL SPONSORSHIP OF ARTS FIELD TRIPS AND GRADUATION RATES**



## CONCLUSION

Our analysis finds that the New York City high schools that are struggling most to keep their students on track to graduate are offering the least in the way of music, theater, dance, and visual arts—all subject areas that have well-documented success in motivating students to stay in school. The struggling schools have fewer arts teachers, fewer arts classrooms, and fewer cultural partnerships, among a host of other disparities. The analysis further shows that schools offering students the most access to arts education have the highest graduation rates.

Beyond the traditional benefits that an arts education provides—the opportunity to learn to play an instrument, to express oneself through dance and movement, to develop creative and critical thinking skills and the ability to work collaboratively with peers—the arts cut across learning styles and language barriers and engage students who might otherwise be uninterested in school and on a path to dropping out. The arts give students something to look forward to, and in New York City, a school system with one of the lowest graduation rates in the country, engagement is critical.

The findings suggest that both locally and nationally, we need to take into account the benefits of arts education when addressing the graduation crisis and improving struggling high schools. Strategies that rely on intervention only when students are on the verge of dropping out are insufficient. Relying on a credit recovery process or “discharging” the habitually truant to mask a portion of systemic failure does not contribute to school improvement.

Curriculum and instruction do matter—and participation in the arts has been shown to produce positive outcomes for students. School and education leaders would be well advised to expand their approach to school reform by providing a greater array of course offerings and resources to support learning in and through the arts.

This is true not only for high schools. Students at all grade levels benefit from a robust arts education. Indeed, for students to fully reap the benefits of high school arts instruction, it is critical that they build on a solid foundation of knowledge and understanding that comes with coursework in earlier grades.

New York State has some of the most rigorous and well-developed learning standards for arts instruction in the nation. Adhering to the state’s standards and requirements would be a valuable first step toward ensuring that every student receive a minimum level of instruction in the arts, regardless of socioeconomic background, their school leadership, or the uncertainties of the budget process. To that end, the State Education Department should develop a protocol to ensure compliance with existing mandates at public schools in New York City and across the state.

The section that follows outlines several other policy recommendations that would improve schools through a renewed emphasis on providing quality arts education at all grade levels. Implementing these recommendations would ensure that all of New York City’s 1.1 million public school students would gain greater access to the benefits that an arts education has to offer.

# POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations are designed to ensure greater access to arts education in city high schools, particularly schools currently underserved in the arts. These recommendations can further be expanded to apply to schools at all levels.

## *Expand Course Offerings in the Arts*

As demonstrated in this report, one third more graduates exceeded the minimum course requirements in the arts at schools with high graduation rates compared with their peers in schools with low graduation rates. Providing students with a wider array of course offerings in the arts should be a priority of principals at schools with low graduation rates.

High school principals should expand course offerings in the four arts disciplines and provide all students with an opportunity to exceed the minimum graduation requirement of successful completion of two courses (one unit of credit) in the arts.

The New York State Board of Regents and the State Education Department should review the graduation requirements and examine the benefits of increasing the minimum requirement to three courses in the arts.

## *Expand Student Access to the City's Cultural Arts Sector*

New York City's array of arts and cultural resources can enrich the education and lives of its schoolchildren. While many schools take advantage of these opportunities, the findings in this report suggest that access to these resources—through attendance at events or exhibits and cultural partnerships—is not equitable across schools. Providing greater access for all students should be a goal for school leaders, policymakers, cultural institutions, and other relevant stakeholders.

The city should implement policies and dedicate resources to ensure that all students have access to the city's vibrant and diverse cultural arts sector.

## *Ensure All Schools Have Certified Arts Teachers*

With approximately 20 percent of high schools and 30 percent of schools overall lacking a certified arts teacher on staff, the city is falling short in the effort to provide students with instruction by a teacher certified in the subject area they teach. Education leaders should ensure that all schools have an adequate number of certified arts teachers on staff to meet the state requirements, especially at high schools struggling to graduate students on time. These teachers should work in tandem with teaching artists and non-arts subject area teachers at each school and be provided ample opportunity to participate in professional development in the arts.

Every school should have at minimum one certified arts teacher on staff in one of the four required art forms, with larger schools hiring a sufficient number to ensure that instructional requirements are met.

The city should expand to arts teachers the financial incentives already in use to attract and retain certified teachers in other high-needs areas to address the current recognized shortage of arts teachers that exists in the city public school system.

The city should support and expand approaches for sharing arts teachers and teaching artists among small high schools.

The New York State Education Department, in partnership with the state's institutions of higher learning, should create an expedited certification program (extension certificate) for non-arts subject area teachers who have an arts background to attain certification in any of the four recognized arts forms.

### ***Require Adequate Classroom Space for Arts Instruction***

The disparities in access to dedicated and appropriately equipped arts classrooms described in this report, coupled with official recognition, from both the New York City Department of Education and the U.S. Department of Education, about the importance of arts spaces to quality arts instruction, should lead the city to ensure that all schools are adequately equipped to support instruction in the arts.

The city should require that all schools provide adequate space for arts instruction. The formula used for determining a school's capacity should reflect this requirement.

The city should conduct an inventory of spaces dedicated to and used for arts instruction in each of its public schools, including a survey of the number and former use of arts spaces that have been repurposed and are no longer used for arts instruction. These spaces should be reclaimed for arts instruction where the need exists.

Arts spaces should be incorporated into the design and construction of all future school facilities.

### ***Dedicate Resources to Support Arts Instruction***

Project Arts was a catalyst in restoring arts education to city public schools after a sharp decline in the 1970s. Since the city lifted the requirement that principals spend Project Arts funds directly on the arts at the beginning of the 2007–08 school year, there has been an overall decline in the percentage of a school's budget spent on the arts, including a decrease in school spending on the hiring of arts teachers, the purchase of supplies and instruments, and the contracting of services from arts and cultural organizations to deliver arts education directly to students. Restoring this mandated per-pupil allocation for all schools would spur investment in these core elements of a vibrant arts education program.

Principals should once again be held accountable for spending funds they receive through the Project Arts budget line exclusively on arts education.

### ***Ensure School Compliance with Existing State Regulations for Arts Instruction***

Ensuring compliance with laws already in place would be an important step in reducing educational inequities and providing students with the arts instruction outlined by the State Education Department from kindergarten through graduation. At the high school level this would ensure that schools offer students the requisite credits and coursework, taught by certified teachers, and the opportunity to take a multiyear arts sequence in at least one of the four arts forms.

The New York State Education Department should conduct a thorough and periodic audit of compliance with the New York State education regulations for arts instruction throughout the state and develop a comprehensive intervention program for districts and schools found to be out of compliance.

The New York State Education Department, City Comptroller, or other government entity should investigate and issue a public report on New York City high school compliance with graduation requirements, including an examination of how students at schools without certified arts teachers are meeting the graduation requirements, how prevalent the credit recovery process is for arts instruction, and how schools ensure that the state's rigorous learning standards and requirements are being met through the credit recovery process. ■



# APPENDIX: DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION, ARTS INDICATORS, AND GRADUATION RATES FOR SCHOOLS ANALYZED IN REPORT

DEMOGRAPHIC INFO	2006–2007 Graduation Tiers			2007–2008 Graduation Tiers		
	Low	Middle	High	Low	Middle	High
Total Number of Schools	65	61	63	79	80	80
Total Number of Students	103,594	66,446	73,283	103,230	74,800	71,682
Average Students Per School	1,594	1,089	1,163	1,307	935	896
% Student Attendance	79%	86%	91%	79%	87%	93%
% Students English Language Learners	15%	8%	5%	16%	11%	6%
% Students Special Education	13%	12%	7%	16%	13%	7%
% Students Free Lunch	58%	51%	36%	57%	51%	40%
% Students Hispanic	45%	35%	26%	46%	36%	28%
% Students Black	35%	37%	23%	36%	38%	24%
% Students White	7%	15%	26%	7%	13%	23%
% Students Asian/Pacific Islander	11%	11%	25%	10%	13%	26%
% Students American Indian	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Average School Graduation %	48%	65%	85%	49%	69%	88%

## ARTS INDICATORS

FT Certified Arts Teachers/1,000 Students	2.52	3.61	4.30	3.20	4.08	3.61
Dedicated Arts Rooms/1,000 Students	2.41	3.61	3.56	4.59	5.48	6.28
Appropriately Equipped Classrooms/1,000 Students	3.85	5.48	5.35	4.47	5.25	6.14
Average Number of Arts and Cultural Partnerships	1.80	2.25	2.11	2.14	2.35	2.78
Schools That Raised External Funds for the Arts (%)	23%	51%	46%	54%	55%	66%
Graduates with Three or More Arts Courses (%)	42%	52%	57%	34%	43%	45%
Schools That Offered Multiyear Arts Sequence (%)	32%	44%	49%	46%	44%	36%
Schools That Sponsored Arts Participation (%)	88%	95%	94%	96%	98%	98%
Schools That Sponsored Arts Field Trips (%)	88%	93%	92%	97%	95%	99%

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3. For the purposes of this analysis, schools were divided into three roughly equal tiers (low, middle, high) corresponding to school graduation rates. For the 2006–07 school year the low tier was defined as schools with a 58 percent or below graduation rate; the middle tier was defined as schools with a graduation rate greater than 59 percent but less than or equal to 73 percent; the high tier was defined as having greater than a 73 percent graduation rate. There were 65 schools in the low graduation rate tier; 61 in the middle graduation rate tier; and 63 in the high graduation rate tier. For the 2007–08 school year the low tier was defined as 60 percent or below; the middle tier as greater than 60 percent but less than or equal to 77 percent; and the high tier as greater than 77 percent. There were 79 schools in the low tier; 80 in the middle tier; and 80 in the high tier for 2007–08.
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35. The New York State Education Department considers the New York City school system one school district.
36. The schools in the analysis include high schools, middle school/high schools, and 6–12 schools, where appropriate data were available.

37. As this is not a comparative analysis between the two school years, the fact that the analysis does not include all of the same schools for each school year does not present sampling issues.
38. See note 3.
39. This average is based on all schools over the two years. The 2006–07 average student population size was 1,287 and the 2007–08 average student population size was 1,044.
40. It is important to note that other categories reported in the *Annual Arts in Schools Reports* would be beneficial to analyze in such a manner; not all of the data collected by the DOE, however, were reported out on a school-by-school basis as were the indicators analyzed in this report. Most notable is the omission of school-by-school reporting on the funds budgeted by schools for arts education.
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Joel I Klein, Chancellor

**Testimony of the New York City Department of Education  
on Arts Education in Public Schools**

**Before the New York City Council  
Committees on Education and Cultural Affairs**

November 23, 2009

*Paul King, Executive Director for the Office of Arts and Special Projects*

Good morning Chair Jackson, Chair Recchia, members of the Education Committee, and members of the Committee on Cultural Affairs. My name is Paul King, and I am Executive Director for the Office of Arts and Special Projects. I am joined today by Santiago Taveras, Deputy Chancellor for the Division of Teaching and Learning at the New York City Department of Education. Thank you for the opportunity to provide you with an update on arts education in our schools.

Under the leadership of Mayor Bloomberg, New York City has made an unprecedented commitment to providing all students with an excellent education that prepares them to succeed in school and beyond. We believe firmly that arts learning is fundamental to an outstanding education. Arts programs engage students while cultivating critical thinking and innovation—qualities that are in demand across a range of career paths. Our students deserve a world class arts education that takes full advantage of the incredible cultural resources this City offers, and we've taken strong steps to ensure that they are getting just that.

When it comes to arts education, New York City has set the bar very high. Arts instruction must be aligned with the rigorous performance indicators established in our *Blueprints for Teaching and Learning in the Arts*. These *Blueprints* define what students should know, understand, and be able to do in the arts at every benchmark grade. They are widely recognized as a model for high-quality arts instruction, adopted by school districts across the country and even internationally. This year, we introduced a new *Blueprint* for the Moving Image that is the first curriculum guide of its kind issued by a United States public school system. This document was developed in conjunction with the Mayor's Office of Film, Theater, and Broadcasting and the Tribeca Film Institute and is supported by the J.P. Morgan Chase Foundation. We are confident

that this latest *Blueprint*, like the existing *Blueprints* for Dance, Theater, Music, and the Visual Arts, will set the pace for teaching and learning in the increasingly influential field of media arts.

As you may recall, the Mayor and Chancellor launched ArtsCount in July 2007. Under that initiative, we introduced a series of measures to hold schools accountable for providing students with the arts education they deserve. Beginning during 2007-08, arts education was added as an evaluation criterion for school quality reviews and principals' annual performance evaluations. Arts education also factors into schools' annual progress report grades.

Perhaps most notably, we began producing the *Annual Arts in Schools Report*, which collects and synthesizes data on arts participation, spending, staffing, and instructional programming in New York City schools. Every year, we publish these reports for individual schools and for the City-as-a-whole. This level of information is not available for any other academic discipline in our schools. No other district in New York State monitors arts participation as comprehensively as we do, and very few districts in the country approach this level of attention to arts education. Now in its third year, the *Annual Arts in Schools Report* demonstrates the Department's clear and steady progress in expanding access to arts education while also identifying areas where further improvement is needed.

It is worth mentioning that the New York State instructional guidelines and requirements for the arts provide the baseline for our ArtsCount measurements. At the elementary school level, the State mandates that every student in every grade receive annual instruction in all four major arts forms – music, theater, dance, and visual arts. They also recommend that 20% of instructional time be devoted to the arts in grades 1-3, and 10% in grades 4-6. While we fully support these recommendations, we also recognize that they are exceptionally rigorous. It is unsurprising that many elementary schools find these requirements to be challenging so we have deepened our efforts to help more schools meet them. For example, since elementary students spend most of their day with a single teacher in their home classroom, we offer professional development to train those teachers to deliver *Blueprint*-aligned arts instruction as part of their daily lessons. As I will discuss shortly, these efforts are bearing fruit, but much more work is needed and we welcome the opportunity to work with City Council members to help more elementary schools meet this high standard.

At the middle school level, the State requires one semester each of music and visual arts instruction provided by a licensed arts teacher over the course of seventh- and eighth-grades combined, but the State does not currently recognize theater and dance instruction as fulfilling those requirements.

For high school students, the State requires completion of two semesters of study in any art form. This year, nearly one-third of graduating seniors exceeded that requirement.

Having outlined the State's requirements for arts education, I want to preview some key findings that will be included in the forthcoming 2008-09 *Annual Arts in Schools Report*, which we expect to be released in December.

- Last year, 100% of elementary schools provided arts instruction in at least one discipline, and 96% of schools provided instruction in at least two. Roughly 12% of elementary schools are now in compliance with the State arts requirement to provide elementary students with annual instruction in all four art forms. This last number is still far, far too low, but demonstrates steady progress with compliance up from 4% in 2006-07 and 8% in 2007-08. While that data illustrates a continued positive trend, it also only tells part of the story. This year, for the first time, we also captured data about arts instruction provided by regular elementary classroom teachers as State law allows. When this additional instruction is accounted for, 39% of elementary schools comply with the State's requirement for delivering all four art forms in every elementary grade.
- In 2008-09, 63% of responding middle schools reported that all of their eighth-grade graduates met the requirement to complete at least one half-unit in two arts disciplines. In 2006-07, only 29% of middle schools reported meeting that standard.
- In our high schools, we continue to see increased access to arts programs as well. Eighty-two percent of our high schools offer instruction in at least two disciplines, half offer instruction in three, and nearly a quarter offer all four art forms – representing a steady increase in all those categories. In June 2009, the first Chancellor's Endorsed Arts Diplomas were awarded to 653 high school students who demonstrated a high degree of proficiency in the arts by completing a 10-credit sequence of study in dance, music, theater, or visual arts as well as earning a passing grade on a rigorous exit exam in that discipline of study.

While the forthcoming citywide *Arts in Schools Report* reveals gaps that we must continue to address going forward, it also provides clear evidence that our approach to improving arts education in New York City is working. Whether you consider access to arts programs, the number of certified arts teachers working in our schools, per capita spending on the arts, or opportunities for students to pursue advanced learning in the arts, we are seeing positive trends even as overall school budgets have been shrinking. When this year's aggregate report is released, we will have a three-year profile of arts education data as a foundation for renewed collaboration with our partners in this work: parents, the arts and higher education communities, school leaders, teachers, and elected officials.

A key component of those efforts involves review and analysis of the individual school arts report. Those reports provide critical information enabling the Department to identify schools with inadequate arts access so we can provide targeted assistance where it is needed most. They

are also posted on each school's website so families and community leaders can learn about the diverse arts offerings available in their local schools. For your convenience, I have today provided each City Council member with a CD-ROM containing the 2008-09 arts reports for schools sited within your district. We hope that this information will be useful to you in your own efforts to support arts education. We welcome any feedback about the reports or recommendations about how we might jointly support your community's schools.

While I have already shared some key arts participation data from the forthcoming citywide arts report, I now want to share some additional findings and to discuss specific strategies the Department has adopted to support increased access to arts education.

As you are obviously aware, the past several years have presented tremendous fiscal challenges for our City, and our schools have not been immune to those challenges. Moreover, at the conclusion of the 2006-07 school year, the Department announced that it would unrestrict "Project Arts" funding that had previously been earmarked for the sole purpose of funding arts programs. Schools still received a per capita allocation equivalent to past Project Arts funding, but they had flexibility over how to spend those dollars. Both of these conditions prompted concern that schools would slash spending on arts instruction. I am happy to report that those fears have proven entirely unfounded. Over the past three years, schools have not significantly or disproportionately cut back spending on arts instruction. In fact, average per capita spending on the arts increased slightly from \$311 per student in 2007-08 to \$316 in 2008-09. The amount of money schools spend on arts education today represents five times the value of the Project Arts allocation. Project Arts funding was essential when the program was launched, but it outlived its usefulness. Our principals and our teachers understand the value of arts education and they have continued to make robust arts programs available to their students even in tough times. Moreover, our accountability measures have proven effective in spurring expanded access to arts education even in this challenging economic climate.

As budgets have tightened, we have seen schools shift a greater portion of their arts spending toward hiring certified arts teachers, with a commensurate decrease in spending on materials, supplies, and outside partnerships. We believe strongly that this focused investment on hiring certified arts teachers is a positive development. Full-time, certified arts teachers possess tremendous expertise and serve as the anchor of a school's arts program. They coordinate partnerships with outside arts organizations and support their colleagues across a range of academic disciplines. The total number of certified arts teachers increased by 14.5% from 2004-05 to 2007-08, and grew by an additional 3.2% from 2007-08 to 2008-09. We were particularly gratified to see a 36.6% increase in the number of certified arts teachers working in our elementary schools during that period because arts instruction is not required to be delivered by certified arts specialists in those grades. We were concerned to see a decrease in the number of

certified music teachers working in our middle schools, and are in the process of identifying concrete strategies and resources to help our schools reverse that trend.

Over the past three years, we continued making strides in providing central support for arts education, including extensive professional development opportunities. Over 1,200 school leaders have appointed arts education liaisons as the “point person” to collaborate with my office and to lead the administration of arts education programs at their schools. My staff provided over fifteen training workshops to these liaisons last year alone, helping them evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of their existing arts offerings so they could build and improve their programs. The Office of the Arts and Special Projects also continued providing rigorous *Blueprint*-aligned professional development workshops to both arts and non-arts teachers, with over 600 educators participating in training workshops during the 2008-09 school year.

While my office provides support and training opportunities open to every New York City public school, we also analyze data from the individual *Arts in Schools Reports* to identify schools where arts access is particularly limited. Using data from the 2007-08 school year, we identified 57 “arts-needy” schools. Each of the four top arts directors from my office provided direct support to those schools, including site visits where they consulted with school leaders and teachers to improve and expand arts access. Additionally, leaders from those 57 schools – along with other principals from across the five boroughs – were invited to participate in the Shubert Arts Leadership Institute, a three-day workshop series to help them envision, implement, and support quality arts programs at their schools. Going forward, we will continue to track low-performing arts schools and provide them with direct support and opportunities for arts leadership training, including specific guidance in addressing budget and scheduling challenges.

We believe that the progress achieved over the last three-years is a direct result of ArtsCount and the accountability measures implemented under that initiative. School leaders are keenly aware that arts education is essential to a rich, well-rounded education. The challenges that our schools face in providing arts access are related to resources, time during the school day, and space constraints. While much work remains ahead, we now have a wealth of information to prioritize our efforts, identify the particular needs at our individual schools, and direct support to our schools accordingly. We ask the City Council to partner with us in our continued efforts to ensure that all New York City students obtain the rigorous arts education they need and deserve.

I would be happy to address any questions that you have at this time.

# TESTIMONY

## *Oversight: Re-examining Arts Education in New York City Public Schools*

Presented to:

New York City Council  
Committee on Education  
Hon. Robert Jackson, Chair

&

Committee on Cultural Affairs, Libraries and International  
Intergroup Relations  
Hon. Domenic Recchia, Chair

Monday, November 23, 2009



The Council of School Supervisors & Administrators  
(CSA)

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Good afternoon, Chairmen Jackson and Recchia, and distinguished members of the New York City Council's Committees on Education and on Cultural Affairs, Libraries and International Intergroup Relations. My name is Ernest Logan, and I am the President of the Council of School Supervisors and Administrators (CSA).

I would like to thank you for this opportunity to submit testimony for this oversight hearing regarding, "Re-examining Arts Education in New York City Public Schools." CSA is the collective bargaining unit for 6,100 Principals, Assistant Principals, Supervisors and Education Administrators who work in the NYC public schools. I applaud you for recognizing the critical importance of quality school leadership in our public schools and thank each of you for your continued advocacy and support for public education.

## **SUMMARY**

The arts are essential to every child's education and yet we continue to see budget cuts in arts education at every turn. With each fiscal crisis, there comes a new threat, as if the arts are mere frills rather than essential ingredients in elevating the human condition. Indeed, arts education is essential to the intellectual and emotional development and survival of our children. Research points to the strong relationship between learning in the arts and fundamental cognitive skills. For instance, a recent analysis of data provided by the DoE's Annual Arts in Schools Report points to a significant correlation between high school graduation rates and arts participation and instruction.

If we acknowledge the research that tells us that the arts prepare students for success in school, work and life, then arts education must remain a vital component of a complete, high-quality core curriculum. We must continue to ensure that the funds needed for arts in education remain available to our children.

Yet even in the best of fiscal times, arts education has been treated as whimsical and unessential. Despite its proven value, art education has not become institutionalized systemically in New York City schools. In recent years, it has been significantly reduced, with the elimination of the Project ARTS initiative, a dedicated funding stream from the New York City Department of Education (DoE) introduced in the late 90s under the leadership of Chancellor Rudy Crew.

With budget decisions now made at the school level, the mid-year budget cuts and deeper cuts planned for next year will back most school leaders against the wall once again: they are likely to feel forced to scale back arts programs even further in order to focus on mandated subjects, particularly reading and math. Considering the elimination of Project ARTS and the additional looming cuts to school budgets, we may be looking at a perfect storm brewing for arts education.

While CSA believes that Principals need a large measure of autonomy over the way they run their schools, we believe that the DoE must restore mandated funding for arts

education for all NYC schools, in much the same way as it was mandated in the Project ARTS initiative.

Arts education needs to be incentivized through dedicated funding. Because the NYC public school system is not meeting even the most minimal standard requirements for arts education, the arts should be treated as a “protected class” of studies. When it comes to arts education, we need all of our schools to be winners. It is critical that the DoE create a dedicated funding line with budget allocations for schools to prevent more declines in arts education and capitalize on the benefits of arts education for children.

## **CURRENT STATISTICS ON ARTS EDUCATION**

### **Key Indicators:**

In reviewing data from the DoE’s recent Annual Arts in Schools Reports, which provide the most comprehensive analysis of arts education in NYC schools, we clearly see that there have been major declines in key arts education areas in recent years.

- There was a 63 percent decline in spending on art supplies and equipment in 2007–08 over the previous year, which is a reduction of nearly \$7 million.
- Nearly 30 percent of schools had no certified arts teacher on staff in 2007–08, compared to 20 percent in 2006-2007.
- There has been a sharp decline in the number of graduates completing three or more arts courses, as forty-six percent of students did in 2006–07 compared with only 32 percent in 2007–08.

### **Disparities**

On top of these statistics about the overall declines in arts educations, even more troubling is the present inequity of funding in arts education that clearly show the disparity between the "haves" and the "have-nots" in the school system.

- A recent report by the Center for Arts Education indicated that schools in the top third in graduation rates offered their students the most access to arts education and the most resources that support arts education.
- Conversely, schools in the bottom third in graduation rates consistently offer the least access and fewest resources.
  - High schools in the top third of graduation rates had almost 40 percent more certified arts teachers per student than schools in the bottom third or, on average, one additional arts teacher per school.
  - High schools in the top third of graduation rates were 45 percent more likely to have raised funds from external sources to support the arts than schools in the bottom third.

These significant reductions and disparities in arts education in NYC schools are closely tied to the elimination of a dedicated funding stream from DoE.



## **PAST HISTORY OF FUNDING FOR ARTS EDUCATION**

From 1998 to 2007, there was an institutionalized funding stream to promote arts education from the DoE: Project ARTS (“Arts Restoration Throughout the Schools”). Project ARTS funds could be used only for direct instructional services in visual art, music, dance, writing and theater; allocations for related equipment, resource materials and supplies; and partnerships with arts and cultural services that would allow schools to effectively attract additional resources from outside their own budget. Funds allocated for arts education in public schools through Project ARTS peaked at \$75 million in FY 2000 and 2001 (approximately \$63 per student).

At the beginning of the 2006-2007 school year, the DoE announced that in order to give Principals more control over their budgets, there would no longer be dedicated Project ARTS funding. Instead of earmarking roughly \$67.5 million for arts programs, the funds would be folded into schools’ general budgets and Principals could decide to continue to fund arts programs or shift money according to their own priorities, which usually were the priorities on which their schools’ success and their own accountability were measured.

Since this change, Principals have been put in the untenable position of having to choose whether to spend funds on more programs that are generally recognized as academic over programs that are generally recognized as cultural. They have felt forced to do so in their effort to raise test scores to meet accountability standards. In many cases, Principals in struggling schools have already decreased arts programs to devote more money to basic reading and math programs. Furthermore, due to the continuing fiscal downturn, there are looming mid-year budget cuts that have created an environment in which many more Principals are likely to spend funds previously dedicated to arts programs on other priorities for which they are held directly accountable. Consequently, non-profit art education organizations have been reporting that their rosters of partnerships with schools have declined as Principals have reluctantly diverted Project ARTS funding to other needs. It is likely that in the current environment, these sorry decisions will soar and will have a particularly chilling effect on economically disadvantaged schools.

## **CURRENT DOE PROGRAMS FOR ARTS EDUCATION**

In 2007, Mayor Bloomberg and Chancellor Klein announced the creation of new quality improvement and accountability initiatives for the Office of the Arts and Special Projects (OASP). The mission of the Office of Arts and Special Projects is to provide students, teachers, school leaders and parents with information and resources that will enable every student to achieve a complete and comprehensive education in the arts, based on New York State requirements and standards for arts learning

Under the ArtsCount initiative of OASP, the DOE has taken the following actions: incorporated the results of schools’ Learning Environment Surveys into the School Progress Report grades; added arts education to the criteria for schools’ Quality Reviews;

and included compliance with state requirements for arts education in Principals' annual performance evaluations and eligibility for financial bonuses.

To encourage arts education, OASP now offers quality professional development workshops and other services, at reasonable costs, in dance, music, theater, and visual arts throughout the school year. Principals are able to spend a portion of their funds on the services (including professional development for arts education) that they believe will best serve their school's educational objectives.

## **CONCERNS ABOUT DOE PROGRAMS FOR ARTS EDUCATION**

Unfortunately, OASP does not currently provide any funding except in rare and special circumstances. Previously, they oversaw funding for Project ARTS and other centrally funded DoE arts initiatives, which numbered in the hundreds of millions of dollars. In many respects, OASP functions as would any external organization, in that it has to charge for its materials and services.

In the case of ArtsCount, although this initiative is working fairly well in terms of improving transparency on basic data about providing arts education, it does not offer any financial assistance or incentives to schools to hire more arts teachers, for example, helping to subsidize the cost of teacher salaries.

The NYC schools have been historically weak in terms of providing professional development and information on arts education for its Principals and Assistant Principals. Through a grant from the Shubert Foundation, OASP has begun professional development specifically for Principals, but their work here is relatively recent. In addition, although Principals can attend current professional development workshops offered by OASP, the workshops are largely designed for arts teachers and teaching artists and are a stretch for school leaders. Arts leaders need appropriate opportunities for learning, dialogue, and sharing strategies with colleagues.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS TO IMPROVE ARTS EDUCATION**

To provide all New York City students with universal access to a high quality arts education, we believe these few basic recommendations can help us achieve this goal:

### **Mandated Funding**

With the eradication of Project ARTS, the DoE did away with a critical safety net for arts education that ensured that at least a minimal amount of funding for the arts went into a school's budget. The DoE must once again create minimum mandated funding for the arts in every public school. While discretionary money is certainly important for Principals to budget, they should not be put in a position in which they must choose one essential funding stream over another. Instead, arts education must have its own "untouchable" stream of money. During challenging fiscal times, the arts should not have to take a back seat to other subjects. Students must not be stripped of the cultural knowledge and opportunities that humanize them, educate them, lead them to future careers in the arts,

and, in fact, often give them the incentive to attend school every day and graduate. In order to build on the funding gains achieved under Project ARTS and in order to move all New York City public schools toward compliance with state regulations, all schools should receive a per-pupil allocation specifically designated for the hiring the of arts teachers; the purchase of arts resources, materials, and instruments; and the creation of partnerships with cultural organizations.

### **Financial Assistance and Incentives for ArtsCount**

In many ways, ArtsCount is an unfunded mandate, as it reinforces the State Standards without doing anything financially to assist and incentivize schools to provide more arts education. The DoE should expand arts education by providing school leaders with financial assistance to attract and retain certified art teachers particularly in high-needs areas in which families do not have the time or wherewithal to raise private funds for arts education. In addition, the DoE should provide some financial incentives for schools that do well in providing arts education. No school should be left out.

### **Increased Professional Development for School Leaders**

Through OASP, the DoE should provide greater professional development opportunities to Principals and other supervisors. Many school leaders may lack a background in the arts and would benefit from more DOE-sponsored workshops. DoE should develop a series of workshops offered throughout the academic year to help support Principals in developing and sustaining arts education programs. Topics covered in the sessions could include infusing the arts into all aspects of learning, arts budgeting, and leadership opportunities in and around the arts. For example, under this administration, former Deputy Chancellor for Teaching and Learning, Carmen Farina, created a partnership with museums and other cultural arts providers when she established a “Cultural Arts Pass,” which enabled Principals to visit exhibits in order to gain first-hand knowledge of cultural offerings throughout the city and bring that knowledge back to their schools. Since there are so few arts teachers today, there should also be greater professional development opportunities in arts education for the pedagogical staff of a school.

Of note, apart from what the DoE has planned, CSA has joined in collaboration with The Center for Arts Education to provide professional development to Principals to do arts budgeting for their schools. In this way, arts can be taught across the curriculum. In this way, arts can be taught across the curriculum.

## **CONCLUSION**

Most New Yorkers are deeply proud that their city is considered by many to be the arts capital of the world. However, unless we consciously and systemically create more opportunities for our students to be educated in the arts, future generations of New Yorkers will be far less able to develop their cultural knowledge and, in many instances, their inherent artistic talent and future livelihood. The humanizing value of the arts will not be sustained and innate genius will rarely flourish. Our children and our city will be diminished. Most tragically, young lives that would have been saved by the arts will be lost.

The DoE must redouble its efforts to provide a dedicated funding stream to ensure that all New York City public schools offer a high quality, well-rounded education to every child in the city. It must pay special attention to those schools in which parents do not have the economic advantage and entrepreneurial know-how to raise the funds to hire their own visual arts, dance, drama, writing and music teachers, and give their children the opportunities which they deserve and for which they yearn.

CSA would like to publicly recognize The Center for Arts Education, as it has been instrumental in working with school leaders to ensure the delivery of a vibrant arts education to students all city public schools. CSA also applauds the Council's Committees on Education and on Cultural Affairs, Libraries and International Intergroup Relations for understanding the importance of public input on this critical issue, by inviting our testimony at today's oversight hearing. We are grateful for the opportunity to submit testimony today, and would be pleased to provide whatever additional information you may require.

Respectfully submitted,

Ernest Logan  
President, CSA

**New York City Council Hearing: Arts Education in NYC Schools**  
**Monday, November 23, 2009 1:00 PM, 250 Broadway, 16th Floor**  
**Testimony from New York City Department of Cultural Affairs**

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Good afternoon. I am Kate Levin, Commissioner of the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs. I am here today to testify with regard to arts education in New York City schools. With me here today from the Department of Education (DoE) are Santiago Taveras, Deputy Chancellor for Teaching and Learning, and Paul King, Executive Director of the Office of the Arts and Special Projects.

Working to ensure that every New York City schoolchild has access to high quality arts instruction is a priority for all of us. DCA is the largest funder of New York City's cultural community, which has done so much to support arts education in our public schools.

Indeed, 42% of our Cultural Development Fund (CDF) grants, and 60% of our CDF dollars, fund organizations that applied for programs which directly serve NYC schoolchildren. In addition, the 33 City-owned institutions, or CIGs, work with more than 800 public schools across the five boroughs. In the first quarter of this fiscal year alone, CIGs welcomed 343,000 visits by schoolchildren.

Through my agency's Materials for the Arts program (MFTA), DCA is the largest provider of arts supplies to the City's public schools. Last year, 631 public schools came to our Long Island City warehouse to get free supplies for art programs. In the first five months of this year alone, (from July through November) we have received 554 visits from 359 NYC schools – that's an increase of 13% in the number of visits over last year. These numbers tell us that MFTA is recognized as an even more valuable partner to our public schools when school budgets are tight.

And, school leaders aren't coming to MFTA for materials alone. The past few years have seen a dramatic expansion in our education offerings, which serve teachers and students at all stages of learning. MFTA hosts professional development P-credit courses for teachers, art-making field trips in our classrooms for K-12 students, warehouse tours for future educators working on their degrees, hands-on art projects for school-based family activities. And all of our classes emphasize the creative value of reuse and recycling in making art. Last month, we cut the ribbon on ten thousand new square feet of warehouse space. This City-funded expansion brings total square footage to 35,000, creating two dedicated classroom spaces along with additional space for donations.

Also last month, we were pleased to join the Department of Education and the Department of Film, Theater and Broadcasting in launching the new Blueprint for Teaching and Learning in the Moving Image. My colleagues at DoE will provide more detail, but it is worth noting that, in the absence of State certification in film, television or media, the City's efforts were inspired by the need of in-school film programs for a

curriculum with clear quality measures. The Blueprint provides school leaders with concrete milestones for every grade level - the first of its kind in the United States. The Moving Image Blueprint joins the Blueprints in Visual Art, Music, Theater and Dance; like them, it was created through a collaboration among the DoE and non-profit cultural organizations.

We have also worked with DoE and its arts education task force to create the Arts Education Reflection Tool, bringing together representatives of the cultural community to develop consensus around the indicators of quality in arts education. The Reflection Tool, which was rolled out this fall and is available on DoE's website, provides a guide for principals, teachers, teaching artists, researchers and cultural partners to assess program quality by arts discipline and grade level.

Finally, I'm delighted to report that we are working with Councilmember Recchia, City Council members and the Department of Youth and Community Development to administer City Council funding for the Cultural After School Adventures program (CASA). Now in its fourth year, CASA builds on and supports the administration's arts education initiatives by providing funding for dedicated cultural partnerships at 255 school sites across the five boroughs. This year, each Councilmember is making five designations to cultural groups partnering with schools in their districts. DCA and the City Council are currently evaluating partnership proposals, and we are looking forward to site visits later this year.

I would like to thank the Council for its leadership on arts education. Councilmember Recchia has been a passionate advocate for extending arts education beyond the school day through the creation of CASA. And Councilmember Jackson has proved an enthusiastic champion for arts education across the five boroughs.

I would also like to thank my colleagues at the Department of Education. They are tireless in working with teachers and school leadership throughout the system to ensure a quality arts education for every student, and relentless in assessing current achievements and pressing for future progress. Paul King and Santiago Taveras will describe in detail some of the key strides that have been made, as well as the challenges that remain.

In closing, let me acknowledge how much work remains to be done. Your partnership is critical to advance arts education for every New York City schoolchild. After my colleagues offer testimony, I'd be delighted to join them in answering any questions you may have.

READ INTO  
RECORD

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION AND COMMITTEE ON  
CULTURAL AFFAIRS, LIBRARIES AND INTERNATIONAL INTERGROUP RELATIONS  
MONDAY, NOVEMBER 23, 2009

I'd like to thank the respective Chairs and members of these Committees for this opportunity to speak. I am Ethan Fein, musician and Executive Board Member of the American Federation of Musicians, Local 802.

I'm here to urge the City Council to pass Resolution 837.

The Department of Education's recent "Arts in Schools Report" revealed that 92 percent of city elementary schools don't offer instruction in all four components of the arts education curriculum annually. And less than half of the city's middle schools provide the level of arts education required by state law.

While considering this alarming statistic, we must ask, "How did the cultural capital of the world come to fail our school children in such a monumental fashion?"

A study commissioned by the Wallace Foundation demonstrated the cognitive, attitudinal and behavioral benefits for school children who participate in arts programs. These include, but are not limited to:

- Improved academic performance.
- Improved attitudes and skills that promote the learning process.
- Improved general life skills, such as critical thinking, and self-discipline.
- Improved understanding that one's behavior has consequences.
- Improved pro-social attitudes and behaviors among at-risk youth.

Of equal importance is the Center for Arts Education's most recent report that revealed that city "schools in the top third in graduation rates offered their students the most access to arts education and the most resources that support arts education."

Support for this resolution would seem like a no-brainer. The arts education gap is long known. However, even though 65% of our City Council members put their names on this two-year-old Resolution, it has yet to be brought to the floor for a vote.

Of equal concern, last December at an event in Queens, Chancellor Klein remarked that he didn't think the City's school children needed all four components of the Arts curriculum. I find this statement remarkably cavalier and irresponsible. It's like telling school children they don't need to know all 26 letters of the alphabet.

As the number of New York City school children denied their right to the State required Arts curriculum goes up, their appreciation of Art, Music, Dance and

Theatre goes down. In other words, the city whose Arts Industry generated over \$21 billion in economic activity, supported over 160,000 jobs, created over \$8 billion in wages and \$900 million in City taxes in '05 will start losing its future artists and its future audiences.

Equality means sameness of distribution. Currently, the City's Department of Education is nowhere near providing the equal resources to ensure equal access to a robust, fully funded Arts education curriculum for the city's 1.1 million school children. And this is intrinsically unfair.

Therefore, the City Council must pass and the mayor must sign Resolution 837 to ensure that our children—our future leaders, innovators, artists and arts patrons get the education they so richly deserve.

Thank you.





THE CENTER FOR ARTS EDUCATION

**Testimony to the New York City Council**  
**Joint Hearing of the Committee on Education and the**  
**Committee of Cultural Affairs, Libraries and International Intergroup Relations**  
**Delivered by Doug Israel, The Center for Arts Education**  
**Re: Oversight: Reexamining Arts Education in New York City Public Schools**  
**November 23, 2009**

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Good afternoon Chair Jackson, Chair Recchia and members of the City Council Committees on Education and Cultural Affairs, Libraries and International Intergroup Relations. I am Richard Kessler, Executive Director of The Center for Arts Education. I appreciate the opportunity to testify in front of the council on an issue that is vital to the city's 1.1 million school children.

The Center for Arts Education is dedicated to ensuring that New York City public school students have quality arts learning as an essential part of their K-12 education. In addition to providing over \$40 million in funding directly schools to support the creation of quality arts education programs, we have a roster of teaching and learning programs that are helping to raise the quality of arts education in public schools, and we campaign for resources and policies that will help restore a quality arts education for every child in every school in New York City.

We are here today to share the results of a two-year study we conducted that looked at the relationship between arts education and New York City graduation rates, as well as other relevant arts education data, and to express our support for the passage of Resolution # 837 calling on the New York City Department of Education to ensure a minimum amount of funding for arts education at schools across the city.

***The Center for Arts Education Report on Graduation Rates and Arts Education***

As you might be aware, this October The Center for Arts Education released a report, *Staying in School: Arts Education and New York City High School Graduation Rates*, that took an independent look at the data provided by the New York City Department of Education (NYCDOE) through the two *Annual Arts in Schools Reports* released to date. We looked at the relationship between nine key arts indicators and the graduation rates at New York City high schools.

What our research shows is that schools in the top third of graduation rates were offering students the most access to, and resources for, arts instruction. Those in the bottom third, the schools that are struggling the most to graduate its students, are offering students the least

opportunities to participate in arts learning. These findings were consistent across all nine of the indicators we looked at, from the presence of certified arts teachers, to the number of classrooms dedicated to arts instruction, to the partnerships that are forged between schools and cultural arts institutions. For instance:

- High schools in the top third of graduation rates had almost 40 percent more certified arts teachers per student than schools in the bottom third—or, on average, one additional arts teacher per school;
- They also had 40 percent more physical spaces dedicated to arts learning per student than schools in the bottom third;
- And they had fostered 25 percent more partnerships with arts and cultural organizations than schools in the bottom third.

This research builds on work in the field that shows the benefits of arts education, not only on academic success, but on the power of the arts to keep students engaged in school and on a path to graduation. In a recent national survey of ethnically diverse high school dropouts, more than half of the respondents said that the major reason for dropping out of high school was that they felt their classes were uninteresting and irrelevant.

Students at risk of not successfully completing their high school education cite their participation in the arts as a reason for staying in school. The opportunity for students to engage in the arts—through bands and choruses, dance and theater productions, exhibitions of their original art, and publications of original literary and visual work—has always been a strong motivator for students and can play a key role in tackling the graduation crisis. Our research supports these findings, and makes a compelling case for the power of arts education to turn around struggling schools. These findings are particularly relevant as New York City struggles with some of the lowest graduation rates in the country.

### ***Current Data on Arts Education in New York City Public Schools***

Unfortunately, what we are witnessing in the city's public schools today does not bode well for a great number of students who do not have equal access to an arts education. A pronounced narrowing of the school curriculum, coupled with budget cuts and virtual elimination of Project ARTS, is taking a toll on arts instruction at schools throughout the five boroughs.

Reports of bands and choruses being eliminated, less money for instruments and arts materials, the loss of classrooms dedicated to the arts, are but a few of the symptoms of what is turning out to be a perfect storm for arts education. This comes on top of system that was falling short of providing students with equal access to a well-rounded education that includes the arts in the first place.

In addition to our research and the anecdotal stories the we are hearing from the schools, data collected by the NYCDOE, as part of the two previously released *Annual Arts in School Report*, clearly shows that there is a widespread lack of compliance with the state educational mandates for arts instruction—despite the fact that they have the effect and power of law. According to the reports:

- Only 8 percent of elementary schools in 2007-08 reported providing annual arts instruction in all four arts disciplines as per state requirements, an improvement from 4 percent the previous year;
- Less than half of middle schools reported that all students had met state education requirements for the arts according to the 2007–08 report;

The NYCDOE reports also made clear that the arts have suffered since the minimum funding line for the arts, provided through Project ARTS, was all but eliminated in 2007. Project ARTS was designed as a safety net for the arts after devastating cuts in the 1970's. The initiative helped secure a minimum level of arts education at schools across the system, while being a catalyst for hiring certified arts teachers, purchasing supplies, securing services of arts education providers, and encouraging private contributions to match public dollars. While Project ARTS still exists as an allocation in a school's budget, principals are no longer required to spend this money on arts education. According to the NYCDOE data, since the elimination of Project ARTS in 2007:

- Citywide, schools spent a smaller percentage of their budgets on arts education in 2007–08 compared to 2006-07—shrinking to less than 2.9 percent on average;
- Schools spent more than half a million dollars less on services provided by art and cultural partners in 2007–08 compared to the previous year;
- There was a 63 percent decline in spending on arts supplies and equipment in 2007–08 over the previous year—a reduction of nearly \$7 million;
- Nearly 30 percent of schools had no certified arts teacher on staff in 2007–08—up from 20 percent the previous year;
- There has been a sharp decline in the number of graduates completing three or more arts courses—forty-six percent of students did in 2006–07 compared with only 32 percent in 2007–08;

Furthermore, according to an ongoing survey being conducted by The New York City Arts in Education Roundtable, nearly 50% of the arts service providers in the City are experiencing a reduction in demand for their services in the schools this year; some are experiencing reductions of 25% or more. Many survey respondents have identified the elimination of dedicated arts funding in school budgets as a factor contributing to this reduction. [The Roundtable has submitted a copy of their survey results as their testimony at this hearing.]

### ***Recommendations***

Unfortunately, here in New York City principals' hands are tied in many ways. They are being forced to eliminate the arts due to the budget restraints and the rewards and consequences system of accountability that is overwhelmingly tied to test results on the State Math and English Language Arts exams.

It is for these reasons that it is essential that we make the commitment to adequately invest in the arts in our city's public schools and hold schools accountable for providing the curriculum and standards that are mandated by the state. In the age of high stakes testing as the primary means of evaluation of our educational system, there is a need to put in place mechanisms with which to hold principals and districts accountable for meeting the state's learning standards and education requirements, and ensuring that all students have access to a well-rounded education, that includes the arts.

As a first step to improving access to arts education, we submit the following recommendations:

- ***The City Should Ensure Minimum Funding for Arts Education and the Council Should Pass Resolution #837-*** We are urging the city to once again provide all schools with a minimum per pupil funding allocation to be spent directly on the arts. Currently, schools still receive Project ARTS funding in name only. We believe school leaders should once again be held accountable for spending these dollars targeted for arts education on arts education. The dedicated funding serves as a minimum, a floor, to give all students, regardless of socioeconomic background, neighborhood or race, an equal opportunity to participate in arts learning. This is what the state law promises for our school children and this is what New York City should deliver.

As a precursor to restoring this initiative we are urging the City Council to pass Resolution #837 to ensure that all schools are dedicated a minimum amount of funding for arts education. The passage of this resolution would be a symbolic, but meaningful gesture, that the members of the City Council feel strongly, as do many of the groups and individuals who are here to testify today, that the arts are an essential part of a child's education and should be provided to every child, every year, at every school. We urge the City Council after this hearing to bring this Resolution to the floor for a vote.

- ***The City and State Should Ensure Compliance with State Requirements for Arts Instruction*** - We have worked with State Senator José Serrano and State Assemblymember Steven Englebright to introduce legislation in the State Legislature that would lead to greater compliance with state arts mandates. We believe the city should take immediate steps to ensure that all schools are in compliance with the state requirements.
- ***Ensure All Schools Have Certified Arts Teachers*** - Every school should have at minimum one certified arts teacher on staff in one of the four required art forms, with larger schools hiring a sufficient number to ensure that instructional requirements are met.
- ***Require Adequate Classroom Space for Arts Instruction*** -The city should require that all schools provide adequate space for arts instruction. To this end, the formula used for determining a school's capacity should reflect this requirement. Additionally, the city should conduct an inventory of spaces dedicated to and used for arts instruction in each of its public schools, including a survey of the number and former use of arts spaces that have been repurposed and are no longer used for arts instruction. These spaces should be reclaimed for arts instruction where the need exists.
- ***Expand Course Offerings in the Arts*** - High school principals should expand course offerings in the four arts disciplines and provide all students with an opportunity to exceed the minimum graduation requirement of successful completion of two courses (one unit of credit) in the arts.
- ***Expand Student Access to the City's Cultural Arts Sector*** - The city should implement policies and dedicate resources to ensure that all students have access to the city's vibrant and diverse cultural arts sector.

Thank you for your time and consideration of our testimony and these recommendations.

## FOR THE RECORD

**Testimony by Senator José M. Serrano**  
**Chair, Cultural Affairs, Tourism, Parks & Recreation**  
**Submitted on November 23, 2009 to the New York City Council**  
**Hearing on Oversight: Reexamining Arts Education in New York City**  
**Public Schools**

Good afternoon everyone. I would like to thank the New York City Council, the Center for Arts Education, and everyone here today for allowing me to testify at this very important hearing on arts education.

I am proud to stand here today as the former chair of the New York City Council's Cultural Affairs Committee, and the current Chair of the New York State Senate's Committee on Cultural Affairs, Tourism, Parks & Recreation.

I am a staunch advocate for arts education, and I am well aware that the arts play a vital role in ensuring that our youth receive a well-balanced education that will provide them real opportunities in life.

While it cannot be denied that courses such as reading and math are critical to a child's education, I, like many here today, know that Arts courses are equally important. We cannot make the mistake of thinking that the only critical courses are the ones linked to statewide testing standards. It has been proven time and time again, with study after study that children who are taught music and art are much more successful in courses like reading and math. For instance, The Staying in School Report, recently released by the Center for Arts Education, shows the correlations between school-based arts education and high school graduation rates in New York City public schools. It also shows a significant relationship between a robust arts curriculum and high graduation rates. Such data should not be ignored.

The Arts open doors for improved cognitive thinking, and awaken passions for self expression and individual thought – attributes that will foster our next generation of great thinkers and leaders. Furthermore, the arts provide a positive outlet for our youth and empower communities. By ensuring our children receive proper instruction in the arts we will ensure, not only that our next generation of artists is nurtured and enriched, but also that the minds of our future innovators and creative

thinkers are properly cultivated.

It is well documented that arts education provides students with the ability to develop a number of critical skills--skills like self-discipline, teamwork, problem-solving---- the list goes on and on. Such skills are critical, not only to academic success, but also to future workforce success. Today's youth can expect to hold jobs in multiple fields in their lifetime, and will work in an increasingly global environment in which these skills are essential. We cannot sit back and assume our kids will pick up these skills somewhere along the way. Today's eighth graders are our next generation of business and civic leaders; we must give them access to the skills they need to succeed in today's world.

It's widely known that there are state laws on the books in New York which require arts education in the classroom. But, we also know that compliance is low. Unfortunately, we don't have the figures for how low it really is across the state--- --but New York City data might provide some insight. In New York City, in the 2007-2008 school year (according to the Department of Education) only 8% of elementary schools were in a position to meet the minimum requirements established by the State by offering all four art forms in each grade; and less than half of middle schools met these state requirements. As one might expect, these compliance statistics are especially appalling in communities with a high concentration of low-income families ---many of which fall within my own district in East Harlem and the South Bronx.

Our children need and deserve more than this. Every child is entitled to a well-rounded education. That is why Senator Valesky and I have been voices for arts education in Albany. I have introduced several pieces of arts education legislation that will help to really move arts education forward.

First, I introduced S5878---a bill requiring the State Commissioner of Education to conduct an audit on arts education. This way we can determine the true compliance levels for arts education throughout the state--- and draw more attention to the low numbers as we continue to develop and work on innovative ways to advance arts education.

Additionally, I was proud to pass a piece of legislation (S6105) that sets up an arts advisory panel for the NYC Department of Education. The panel will advise and

make recommendations for how NYC can move arts education forward by improving and enriching the curriculum. It is my hope that this panel will act as a template for the entire state as we make advances in this important cause.

Lastly, I passed a resolution which I wrote and passed the State Senate Unanimously in July. The resolution declares October as Arts Education Month in the State of New York. I will continue to introduce legislation and speak about the importance of arts education. However, the only way to galvanize significant support for arts education is by encouraging advocates to rally around the existing data, such as the data provided by the Center for Arts Education Study.

Before I conclude I would like to address all the Arts and Music teachers, and all the advocates here today. Please keep up the good fight. We must continue to fight and work together to inspire the unconverted.

Thank you all so very much.

## FOR THE RECORD

Testimony on Arts Education  
From the New York City Arts in Education Roundtable  
To the Committees on Education and Cultural Affairs  
Of the New York City Council  
November 23, 2009

Good Afternoon, I'm David Shookhoff, Director of Education at Manhattan Theatre Club and Chair of the New York City Arts in Education Roundtable, a service organization for arts organizations that provide instructional programs and services in New York's schools and communities.

When I last testified before these committees, I reported on the investment that arts groups make in the city's schools. Both the very large cultural institutions and the small community-based arts groups generally subsidize their services and programs, charging the schools on average less than half of their actual cost. A significant number of groups charge nothing at all, relying on grants and donations as well as earned income from the box office and other sources to cover the expense of providing high quality arts instruction to the city's children.

Today I have less cheery news. The Roundtable is in the midst of conducting a survey of the arts community, asking about change in demand for their services from the schools. We don't have complete data yet, but the preliminary indications are that more than half the city's arts groups are experiencing declines in requests for programs and services. Almost forty percent of survey respondents have experienced declines of 10% or more. (A report of the survey results to date is included with my written testimony.) Significantly, these declines are in addition to declines reported in last year's survey. In other words, we are witnessing a steady decrease in services to schools from the arts providers, even though those services represent a high-quality investment by the schools. Of those experiencing these decreases more than half identify the elimination of dedicated arts funding in the schools' budgets as a critical factor.






We are calling your attention to this disturbing trend in the hope and expectation that you and the city's administration will take appropriate remedial steps – including the restoration of dedicated funding lines – so that this generation of the city's children and youth will not be deprived of the robust, rigorous, comprehensive education in and through the arts that they so urgently need and deserve.

Thank you.









## Membership Survey 2009-10: Service Reductions

1. In the time period between September – December, 2009 in comparison with the same time period in 2008, the number of students served by my organization will have:

	Response Percent	Response Count
Increased 	17.5%	10
<b>Stayed roughly the same</b> 	<b>31.6%</b>	<b>18</b>
Decreased by roughly 10% or less 	12.3%	7
Decreased by between 10 and 25% 	19.3%	11
Decreased by more than 25% 	19.3%	11
	<i>answered question</i>	<b>57</b>
	<i>skipped question</i>	<b>0</b>

2. To what do you attribute this decrease? (Check up to three. If no decrease, please skip to the next question.)

	Response Percent	Response Count
<b>Cuts in school budgets</b> 	<b>87.1%</b>	<b>27</b>
Reductions in my organization's budget 	29.0%	9
Elimination of Project Arts as a categorical line item 	54.8%	17
Delay in obtaining a new contract from the DOE 	9.7%	3
Declining interest in the arts by principals/schools due to new emphasis on math/literacy 	32.3%	10
Other (please specify below) 	16.1%	5
	Comments:	6
	<i>answered question</i>	<b>31</b>
	<i>skipped question</i>	<b>26</b>

3. I anticipate that in the spring semester (January - June, 2010) as compared to same time period last year (January – June, 2009) the number of students my organization will serve will:

		Response Percent	Response Count
Increase	<input type="checkbox"/>	20.0%	11
Stay roughly the same	<input type="checkbox"/>	27.3%	15
Decrease by roughly 10% or less	<input type="checkbox"/>	18.2%	10
Decrease by between 10% and 25%	<input type="checkbox"/>	21.8%	12
Decrease by more than 25%	<input type="checkbox"/>	12.7%	7
If the reasons for any anticipated decrease are different from those you checked above, please explain:			4
<i>answered question</i>			55
<i>skipped question</i>			2

## FOR THE RECORD

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION AND COMMITTEE ON  
CULTURAL AFFAIRS, LIBRARIES AND INTERNATIONAL INTERGROUP RELATIONS  
MONDAY, NOVEMBER 23, 2009

I'd like to thank the respective Chairs and members of these Committees for this opportunity to speak. I am Ethan Fein, musician and Executive Board Member of the American Federation of Musicians, Local 802.

I'm here to urge the City Council to pass Resolution 837.

The Department of Education's recent "Arts in Schools Report" revealed that 92 percent of city elementary schools don't offer instruction in all four components of the arts education curriculum annually. And less than half of the city's middle schools provide the level of arts education required by state law.

While considering this alarming statistic, we must ask, "How did the cultural capital of the world come to fail our school children in such a monumental fashion?"

A study commissioned by the Wallace Foundation demonstrated the cognitive, attitudinal and behavioral benefits for school children who participate in arts programs. These include, but are not limited to:

- Improved academic performance.
- Improved attitudes and skills that promote the learning process.
- Improved general life skills, such as critical thinking, and self-discipline.
- Improved understanding that one's behavior has consequences.
- Improved pro-social attitudes and behaviors among at-risk youth.

Of equal importance is the Center for Arts Education's most recent report that revealed that city "schools in the top third in graduation rates offered their students the most access to arts education and the most resources that support arts education."

Support for this resolution would seem like a no-brainer. The arts education gap is long known. However, even though 65% of our City Council members put their names on this two-year-old Resolution, it has yet to be brought to the floor for a vote.

Of equal concern, last December at an event in Queens, Chancellor Klein remarked that he didn't think the City's school children needed all four components of the Arts curriculum. I find this statement remarkably cavalier and irresponsible. It's like telling school children they don't need to know all 26 letters of the alphabet.

As the number of New York City school children denied their right to the State required Arts curriculum goes up, their appreciation of Art, Music, Dance and

Theatre goes down. In other words, the city whose Arts Industry generated over \$21 billion in economic activity, supported over 160,000 jobs, created over \$8 billion in wages and \$900 million in City taxes in '05 will start losing its future artists and its future audiences.

Equality means sameness of distribution. Currently, the City's Department of Education is nowhere near providing the equal resources to ensure equal access to a robust, fully funded Arts education curriculum for the city's 1.1 million school children. And this is intrinsically unfair.

Therefore, the City Council must pass and the mayor must sign Resolution 837 to ensure that our children—our future leaders, innovators, artists and arts patrons get the education they so richly deserve.

Thank you.

Esteemed New York City Council Members,

FOR THE RECORD

I am writing to ask that you support and pass Resolution #837.

I have worked in the field of arts and education for over 35 years. During that time, I have evaluated numerous programs and conducted many needs assessments. As principal investigator of a 2007-2008 study funded by VSA arts – an international arts and education organization and affiliate of the John F. Kennedy Center in Washington, D.C. – I spoke with parents and guardians of special education students in New York City public schools. The majority saw the Arts as a means for their children to understand, make and express meaning, and --- as such – a way of opening the world and their sons' and daughters possibilities in it. For them, the Arts were essential to education.

*Making, understanding and expressing meaning* is not a bad definition of Literacy. Such Literacy – as we know from newspapers, think tank studies and business reports – is very much connected to opportunity and core 21<sup>st</sup> Century skills. Our society and workplace demand increasingly literate workers and citizens who can communicate at higher levels. Those parents were very right – about the value of the Arts for special as well as general education students.

These are hard times financially. Resolution #837 will provide funds specifically earmarked for arts education. Your support and passage of it will help insure that in our understandable desire to tighten our belts we do not inadvertently narrow our vision and the opportunities and possibilities for success for New York City pupils.

Thank you for your time and attention.

Respectfully yours,

Stephen Yaffe, Arts and Education Consultant

## Education In Dance

16 East 11<sup>th</sup> Street  
NYC 10003

Elizabeth Pettit & Jo Frederiksen, Directors  
212.254.3194 or 718.224.0749

FOR THE RECORD

educationindance.org  
eidancejo@verizon.net

Dear Mayor Bloomberg and Members of the New York City Council,

While it has been shown that the arts are essential to learning and support all areas of development, our public schools in NYC are not meeting the mandatory requirements in place in New York State for arts education, and hundreds of thousands of our children in the City do not have access to visual arts, music, dance and theatre education in their classrooms. As a not-for-profit arts organization, providing integrated dance arts residencies in many underserved neighborhoods and with a long-standing partnership with the NYC DOE, we urge you to reinstate the per pupil allocation for arts in our public schools. Further, we encourage and support the restoration of Project ARTS in our schools to assure that all our young citizens have full access to a complete education in the arts and the academics.

As we know, principals are facing budget and time constraints which force difficult and unacceptable cuts in the arts which jeopardize equal and well-rounded education throughout all schools in our City. Every child should have the right to be exposed to quality arts at the earliest possible age. The arts are not frills and extras, belong in every life. They provide us with vast pleasure. They give us a stronger self-image. They open new windows on the world. They teach and enrich all at once and we become engaged and enchanted for a lifetime.

We urge you, Mr. Mayor, and the City Council, to create a permanent, and secure dedicated funding line for arts education to insure that we provide a complete quality education for every child in NYC – one that includes all the arts.

Sincerely,

Elizabeth Bernard Pettit  
Jo A. G. Frederiksen

# A L L I A N C E     f o r     T H E     A R T S

330 West 42nd Street, Suite 1701 New York, NY 10036 212.947.6340 FAX 212.947.6416 [www.allianceforarts.org](http://www.allianceforarts.org)

City Council Hearing  
Committee on Education jointly with the Committee on Cultural Affairs, Libraries and  
International Intergroup Relations

## Reexamining Arts Education in New York City Public Schools

City Hall  
New York, 23 November 2009

By  
Randall Bourscheidt

**FOR THE RECORD**

Thank you for the opportunity to speak to these distinguished committees. I commend you for your longtime interest in and support of arts education and cultural programs for young people.

There is much to be positive about in New York on this subject, since the Mayor and the City Council have joined together to provide increased opportunities for the young to experience the arts and sciences. This happens in many ways: through instruction in the schools, through visits to and programs offered by cultural organizations, and through experiences available online.

Some time ago, the Alliance completed a study indicating that over one million children were served by just over 100 cultural organizations surveyed. It showed that public school students in every school district and at every grade level were served, that two-thirds of the cultural groups surveyed offer their services year-round, and 75 percent offer after-school programs. The Alliance plans to update this data with another survey, which will serve as a supplement to the *Blueprint for Teaching and Learning in the Arts* and the *Annual Arts in Schools Report*.

The Department of Cultural Affairs has long supported arts education programs with direct funding and through its close relationship with the Department of Education. It was a wise step to move the administration of Cultural After School Adventures (CASA) to DCA for greater coordination with other DCA initiatives. Established in 2005, CASA reached students in 22 schools between 2007 and 2008 offering three kinds of programming: after-school arts workshops, after-school assembly programs and free tickets to weekend performances at the Brooklyn Center for the Performing Arts at Brooklyn College. Commissioner Levin has already spoken about the priority her agency gives to this important activity.

We are fortunate to have a diversity of arts education service providers and funders. The *ad hoc* system that grew up after the city's fiscal crisis in the 1970s has now been institutionalized with support from the City. One benefit of this system is that it frequently engages working artists to teach young people. It also provides an opportunity for some students to discover their own talent and take the first steps towards professional careers as artists themselves.

The threat to this system is financial. We must be vigilant in protecting the gains of the past generation, even as we work with the Mayor and the Council to balance the City's budget in these hard times.

I am proud of the contribution that the Alliance for the Arts makes to the field. Our Web site, NYC ARTS, is the most complete online directory to all arts education services in New York. It is intended primarily as a service to teachers and parents, based on the knowledge that they will take the first steps to introduce children to the joys of culture.



THE CENTER FOR ARTS EDUCATION

**Testimony to the New York City Council**  
**Joint Hearing of the Committee on Education and the**  
**Committee of Cultural Affairs, Libraries and International Intergroup Relations**  
**Delivered by Doug Israel, The Center for Arts Education**  
**Re: Oversight: Reexamining Arts Education in New York City Public Schools**

**November 23, 2009**

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Good afternoon Chair Jackson, Chair Recchia and members of the City Council Committees on Education and Cultural Affairs, Libraries and International Intergroup Relations. I am Richard Kessler, Executive Director of The Center for Arts Education. I appreciate the opportunity to testify in front of the council on an issue that is vital to the city's 1.1 million school children.

The Center for Arts Education is dedicated to ensuring that New York City public school students have quality arts learning as an essential part of their K-12 education. In addition to providing over \$40 million in funding directly schools to support the creation of quality arts education programs, we have a roster of teaching and learning programs that are helping to raise the quality of arts education in public schools, and we campaign for resources and policies that will help restore a quality arts education for every child in every school in New York City.

We are here today to share the results of a two-year study we conducted that looked at the relationship between arts education and New York City graduation rates, as well as other relevant arts education data, and to express our support for the passage of Resolution # 837 calling on the New York City Department of Education to ensure a minimum amount of funding for arts education at schools across the city.

***The Center for Arts Education Report on Graduation Rates and Arts Education***

As you might be aware, this October The Center for Arts Education released a report, *Staying in School: Arts Education and New York City High School Graduation Rates*, that took an independent look at the data provided by the New York City Department of Education (NYCDOE) through the two *Annual Arts in Schools Reports* released to date. We looked at the relationship between nine key arts indicators and the graduation rates at New York City high schools.

What our research shows is that schools in the top third of graduation rates were offering students the most access to, and resources for, arts instruction. Those in the bottom third, the schools that are struggling the most to graduate its students, are offering students the least



opportunities to participate in arts learning. These findings were consistent across all nine of the indicators we looked at, from the presence of certified arts teachers, to the number of classrooms dedicated to arts instruction, to the partnerships that are forged between schools and cultural arts institutions. For instance:

- High schools in the top third of graduation rates had almost 40 percent more certified arts teachers per student than schools in the bottom third—or, on average, one additional arts teacher per school;
- They also had 40 percent more physical spaces dedicated to arts learning per student than schools in the bottom third;
- And they had fostered 25 percent more partnerships with arts and cultural organizations than schools in the bottom third.

This research builds on work in the field that shows the benefits of arts education, not only on academic success, but on the power of the arts to keep students engaged in school and on a path to graduation. In a recent national survey of ethnically diverse high school dropouts, more than half of the respondents said that the major reason for dropping out of high school was that they felt their classes were uninteresting and irrelevant.

Students at risk of not successfully completing their high school education cite their participation in the arts as a reason for staying in school. The opportunity for students to engage in the arts—through bands and choruses, dance and theater productions, exhibitions of their original art, and publications of original literary and visual work—has always been a strong motivator for students and can play a key role in tackling the graduation crisis. Our research supports these findings, and makes a compelling case for the power of arts education to turn around struggling schools. These findings are particularly relevant as New York City struggles with some of the lowest graduation rates in the country.

### ***Current Data on Arts Education in New York City Public Schools***

Unfortunately, what we are witnessing in the city's public schools today does not bode well for a great number of students who do not have equal access to an arts education. A pronounced narrowing of the school curriculum, coupled with budget cuts and virtual elimination of Project ARTS, is taking a toll on arts instruction at schools throughout the five boroughs.

Reports of bands and choruses being eliminated, less money for instruments and arts materials, the loss of classrooms dedicated to the arts, are but a few of the symptoms of what is turning out to be a perfect storm for arts education. This comes on top of system that was falling short of providing students with equal access to a well-rounded education that includes the arts in the first place.

In addition to our research and the anecdotal stories the we are hearing from the schools, data collected by the NYCDOE, as part of the two previously released *Annual Arts in School Report*, clearly shows that there is a widespread lack of compliance with the state educational mandates for arts instruction—despite the fact that they have the effect and power of law. According to the reports:

- Only 8 percent of elementary schools in 2007-08 reported providing annual arts instruction in all four arts disciplines as per state requirements, an improvement from 4 percent the previous year;
- Less than half of middle schools reported that all students had met state education requirements for the arts according to the 2007–08 report;

The NYCDOE reports also made clear that the arts have suffered since the minimum funding line for the arts, provided through Project ARTS, was all but eliminated in 2007. Project ARTS was designed as a safety net for the arts after devastating cuts in the 1970's. The initiative helped secure a minimum level of arts education at schools across the system, while being a catalyst for hiring certified arts teachers, purchasing supplies, securing services of arts education providers, and encouraging private contributions to match public dollars. While Project ARTS still exists as an allocation in a school's budget, principals are no longer required to spend this money on arts education. According to the NYCDOE data, since the elimination of Project ARTS in 2007:

- Citywide, schools spent a smaller percentage of their budgets on arts education in 2007–08 compared to 2006–07—shrinking to less than 2.9 percent on average;
- Schools spent more than half a million dollars less on services provided by art and cultural partners in 2007–08 compared to the previous year;
- There was a 63 percent decline in spending on arts supplies and equipment in 2007–08 over the previous year—a reduction of nearly \$7 million;
- Nearly 30 percent of schools had no certified arts teacher on staff in 2007–08—up from 20 percent the previous year;
- There has been a sharp decline in the number of graduates completing three or more arts courses—forty-six percent of students did in 2006–07 compared with only 32 percent in 2007–08;

Furthermore, according to an ongoing survey being conducted by The New York City Arts in Education Roundtable, nearly 50% of the arts service providers in the City are experiencing a reduction in demand for their services in the schools this year; some are experiencing reductions of 25% or more. Many survey respondents have identified the elimination of dedicated arts funding in school budgets as a factor contributing to this reduction. [The Roundtable has submitted a copy of their survey results as their testimony at this hearing.]

### ***Recommendations***

Unfortunately, here in New York City principals' hands are tied in many ways. They are being forced to eliminate the arts due to the budget restraints and the rewards and consequences system of accountability that is overwhelmingly tied to test results on the State Math and English Language Arts exams.

It is for these reasons that it is essential that we make the commitment to adequately invest in the arts in our city's public schools and hold schools accountable for providing the curriculum and standards that are mandated by the state. In the age of high stakes testing as the primary means of evaluation of our educational system, there is a need to put in place mechanisms with which to hold principals and districts accountable for meeting the state's learning standards and education requirements, and ensuring that all students have access to a well-rounded education, that includes the arts.

As a first step to improving access to arts education, we submit the following recommendations:

- ***The City Should Ensure Minimum Funding for Arts Education and the Council Should Pass Resolution #837-*** We are urging the city to once again provide all schools with a minimum per pupil funding allocation to be spent directly on the arts. Currently, schools still receive Project ARTS funding in name only. We believe school leaders should once again be held accountable for spending these dollars targeted for arts education on arts education. The dedicated funding serves as a minimum, a floor, to give all students, regardless of socioeconomic background, neighborhood or race, an equal opportunity to participate in arts learning. This is what the state law promises for our school children and this is what New York City should deliver.

As a precursor to restoring this initiative we are urging the City Council to pass Resolution #837 to ensure that all schools are dedicated a minimum amount of funding for arts education. The passage of this resolution would be a symbolic, but meaningful gesture, that the members of the City Council feel strongly, as do many of the groups and individuals who are here to testify today, that the arts are an essential part of a child's education and should be provided to every child, every year, at every school. We urge the City Council after this hearing to bring this Resolution to the floor for a vote.

- ***The City and State Should Ensure Compliance with State Requirements for Arts Instruction*** - We have worked with State Senator José Serrano and State Assemblymember Steven Englebright to introduce legislation in the State Legislature that would lead to greater compliance with state arts mandates. We believe the city should take immediate steps to ensure that all schools are in compliance with the state requirements.
- ***Ensure All Schools Have Certified Arts Teachers*** - Every school should have at minimum one certified arts teacher on staff in one of the four required art forms, with larger schools hiring a sufficient number to ensure that instructional requirements are met.
- ***Require Adequate Classroom Space for Arts Instruction*** -The city should require that all schools provide adequate space for arts instruction. To this end, the formula used for determining a school's capacity should reflect this requirement. Additionally, the city should conduct an inventory of spaces dedicated to and used for arts instruction in each of its public schools, including a survey of the number and former use of arts spaces that have been repurposed and are no longer used for arts instruction. These spaces should be reclaimed for arts instruction where the need exists.
- ***Expand Course Offerings in the Arts*** - High school principals should expand course offerings in the four arts disciplines and provide all students with an opportunity to exceed the minimum graduation requirement of successful completion of two courses (one unit of credit) in the arts.
- ***Expand Student Access to the City's Cultural Arts Sector*** - The city should implement policies and dedicate resources to ensure that all students have access to the city's vibrant and diverse cultural arts sector.

Thank you for your time and consideration of our testimony and these recommendations.

## **You Can't Spell Smart Without Art**

by Tom Chapin, Michael Mark & Jon Cobert

© 2009 The Last Music Co., HCD Music & Red Wagon Music (ASCAP)

They sorted through the data and found as a rule  
That kids who have The Arts do much better in school.  
In song and in the dance, on the canvas, on the stage,  
Art gives life to the lessons they read on a page.

*You can't spell "smart" without Art. You can't spell "smart" without Art.  
All the testing will tell you, it's there on the chart,  
You can't spell "smart" without Art.*

Imagination's needed in this challenging world  
To nurture the mind of each boy and each girl  
The Arts are an answer to an old paradox:  
How to teach a whole class to think out of the box.

*You can't spell "smart" without Art. You can't spell "smart" without Art.  
Passing 837 would be a good start, oh,  
You can't spell "smart" without Art.*

So let's make kids more likely to start on a path  
To do better in schoolwork, like science and math.  
And help out our teachers, provide them with tools,  
Watch our kids grow and blossom with The Arts in our schools.

*You can't spell "smart" without Art. You can't spell "smart" without Art.  
Yes, science and reading and math do their part, but  
You can't spell "smart" without Art.*

*Oh, you can't spell "smart" without Art. You can't spell "smart" without Art.  
All the testing will tell you, it's there on the chart,  
Passing 837 would be a good start,  
Yes, science and reading and math do their part, but  
You can't spell "smart" without Art.*

**Tom Chapin**  
www.tomchapin.com  
tom@tomchapin.com  
office:(914) 674-0247

# You Can't Spell Smart Without Art

by Tom Chapin, Michael Mark & Jon Cobert

♩=160

The musical score is written in treble clef with a key signature of two sharps (F# and C#). The tempo is marked as ♩=160. The score consists of eight staves of music, each with a line of lyrics underneath. Chord symbols (A, D, E, E7) are placed above the notes to indicate the accompaniment. The lyrics are as follows:

They sort - ed through the dat - a and found as a rule  
I - ma - gi - na - tion's need - ed in this chal - len - ging world  
Arts make our kids more like - ly to start on a path

6 that kids who have The Arts do much bet - ter in school.  
to nur do - ture the in mind of each boy and each girl.  
to do bet - ter in school - work, like sci - ence and math.

11 In song and in the dance, on the can - vas, on the stage,  
The Arts can be an an - swer to an old pa - ra - dox,  
So give our best to teach - ers, pro - vide them with the tools.

16 Art gives life to the les - sons they read on a page.  
how to teach a whole class to think out of the box?  
Watch our kids grow and blossom with The Arts in our schools.

21 Oh, you can't spell "smart" with - out Art. You can't spell

27 "smart" with - out Art. All the tes - ting will tell you, it's  
Pas - sing eight thir - ty se - ven would  
Yes, sci - ence and read - ing and

32 there on the chart, oh you can't spell "smart" with - out Art.  
be a good start, oh, you can't spell "smart" with - out  
math do their part, but you can't spell "smart" with - out

TESTIMONY BEFORE MEMBERS OF THE  
NEW YORK CITY COUNCIL

MONDAY, NOVEMBER 23, 2009

JERROLD ROSS  
DEAN  
THE SCHOOL OF EDUCATION  
ST. JOHN'S UNIVERSITY

Re-examining Arts Education  
In the New York City Public Schools

I AM NOT GOING TO TAKE YOUR TIME, ONCE AGAIN, TO SPEAK ABOUT THE IMPORTANCE OF THE ARTS. IT IS ENOUGH TO SAY THAT ARTISTS HAVE BEEN RESPONSIBLE FOR CREATING SOME OF THE GREATEST GOOD IN THE HISTORY OF NATIONS. FOR OUR CHILDREN TO BE DEPRIVED OF THIS KNOWLEDGE...THE VERY MEANING OF CIVILIZED SOCIETIES...IS UNIMAGINABLE. BUT WE ARE WITNESSING THAT EROSION AS EACH YEAR PASSES.

AS GUARDIANS OF THE PUBLIC INTEREST YOU WILL RECALL THAT, ACCORDING TO POLLS (INCLUDING THE HARRIS POLL) AND OTHER DATA MEASURING PUBLIC ATTITUDES, YOUR CONSTITUENTS DECRY ANY ATTEMPT TO REDUCE THE INVOLVEMENT OF CHILDREN IN THE ARTS.

MOREOVER, IF WE ARE TO BELIEVE THOSE WHO DESCRIBE 9-11 AS "A FAILURE OF IMAGINATION" ...A FAILURE TO REALIZE WHAT THE

ALIEN FORCES OF TERRORISM COULD ACHIEVE...TO LESSEN THE RIGHT OF CHILDREN TO PARTICIPATE IN THE DISCIPLINES THAT FOSTER THEIR IMAGINATION WILL HAVE BEEN OUR FAILURE TO LEARN THE LESSON OF THE GREATEST ASSAULT ON OUR DEMOCRATIC VALUES IN HISTORY.

SO I AM JUST GOING TO TAKE THESE FEW MINUTES TO SPEAK TO YOU ABOUT WHAT YOUR RESPONSIBILITIES ARE AND WHAT THEY ARE NOT. IT IS NOT THE CHARGE OF THE CITY COUNCIL TO CREATE CURRICULA OR TO ESTABLISH PRIORITIES IN THE SCHOOLS. BUT IT IS WITHIN YOUR POWER TO SUPPORT IDEAS AND IDEALS THAT SHOULD BE AT THE FOUNDATION OF SCHOOL PROGRAMS. SO I AM SUGGESTING THAT IT SHOULD BE AMONG YOUR PRIORITIES TO RE-ESTABLISH WHAT MAYOR GIULIANI SET IN MOTION DURING HIS ADMINISTRATION, BY FINDING OR RAISING THE FUNDS AND ALLOCATING THEM TO ARTS EDUCATION ON A SEPARATE, DEDICATED LINE BUDGET ITEM TO SUPPLEMENT THE REGULAR BUDGET OF THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION. GIULIANI FORGED A PARTNERSHIP WITH THE ANNENBERG FOUNDATION TO ENABLE THIS SUPPORT TO CONTINUE FOR FIVE YEARS. WHEN THE ANNENBERG GIFT ENDED, A FEW YEARS AGO, DOE MATCHING FUNDS WERE FOLDED INTO THE GENERAL OPERATING BUDGET OF THE SCHOOLS, UNDER THE ASSUMPTION THAT PRINCIPALS WOULD ELECT

TO CONTINUE THE ARTS ACTIVITIES THE ANNENBERG MONEY MADE POSSIBLE. HOWEVER, AN INELUCTABLE SLIPPAGE TOOK PLACE IMMEDIATELY, WHEN PRINCIPALS, CONFRONTED WITH THE FACT THAT THEIR JOBS DEPENDED LARGELY UPON CHILDREN'S TEST SCORES IN READING AND MATH, MANY OF THEM REDIRECTED SOME OR ALL OF THE ONCE INVIOATE DOLLARS FOR ARTS EDUCATION TO LITERACY AND MATHEMATICS INSTRUCTION.

IN THESE TIMES OF BUDGETARY CRISES, THE CITY COUNCIL NEEDS TO HELP RESTORE FUNDING FOR ARTS EDUCATION EITHER THROUGH RELLOCATING A PORTION OF THE FUNDS AVAILABLE TO EACH OF ITS MEMBERS OR BY CHARGING THE EDUCATION COMMITTEE TO ESTABLISH A NEW ANNENBERG TYPE EFFORT, SUFFICIENT TO DISTRIBUTE MEANINGFUL FUNDS DISTRICT BY DISTRICT...A DIRECT APPEAL TO PRIVATE FUNDING AGENCIES AND ORGANIZATIONS HEADED BY RESPECTED, NON-PARTISAN CORPORATE LEADERS OF THE CITY WHOSE PROFITS, NEED I ADD, ARE GENERATED BY THE CITIZENS OF THIS CITY.

IN THIS ADMITTEDLY DIFFICULT ECONOMIC PERIOD IT IS A NOT UNEXPECTED CONSEQUENCE OF BUDGET CUTTING THAT THE DISCIPLINES DEEMED LEAST LIKELY TO MAINTAIN OUR LEADERSHIP AROUND THE GLOBE - THE ARTS - ARE PUSHED ASIDE IN FAVOR OF THE TRADITIONAL THREE "R'S". REGRETTABLY, THIS IS AN



UNIFORMED POSITION OF LEADERS WHO, THEMSELVES, WERE DENIED ACCESS TO ARTS EDUCATION OVER MANY DECADES AND ARE THEREFORE UNIFORMED AS TO THE POWER OF THE ARTS TO CREATE AND SUSTAIN GLOBAL AWARENESS. THIS AWARENESS, RANGING FROM DEFEATING THE NEGATIVE IDEOLOGICAL THREATS WE NOW FACE TO THE POSITIVE, URGENT NEED OF OUR EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM TO LEAD THE NATION INTO THE LATTER HALF OF THE 21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY, WHICH HAS ALREADY BEGUN TO BE DESCRIBED AS POTENTIALLY MARKING THE END OF AMERICAN LEADERSHIP IN THE WORLD. FOR GENERATIONS, CITIZENS OF OTHER NATIONS HAVE BEEN SENDING THEIR CHILDREN HERE TO STUDY. IF OUR EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM BECOMES LITTLE MORE THAN A TECHNOCRACY REPLACING THE DEMOCRACY EXTOLLED BY DE TOQUEVILLE, LITTLE MORE THAN A SERIES OF MECHANISTIC PROGRAMS BEREFT OF CREATIVITY AND IMAGINATION AT THEIR BASE, AND FOUNDED ON THE PRINCIPLES OF A DEMOCRATIC EDUCATION IN WHICH THE ARTS PLAY THEIR KEY ROLE IN LEADING SOCIETIES TOWARD A GREATER GOOD, THEN ALL OF US IN THIS ROOM WILL HAVE BEEN THE CAUSE OF NOTHING LESS THAN THE OUTCOME FEARED BY ABRAHAM LINCOLN WHEN HE PROCLAIMED THAT "...GOVERNMENT OF THE PEOPLE, BY THE PEOPLE, FOR THE PEOPLE, SHALL NOT PERISH FROM THE EARTH." NOR SHOULD WE FORGET THE INSPIRATIONAL WORDS OF JOHN ADAMS,

WHO SAID "I MUST STUDY POLITICS AND WAR THAT MY SONS MAY  
HAVE LIBERTY TO STUDY MATHEMATICS AND PHILOSOPHY. MY SONS  
OUGHT TO STUDY MATHEMATICS AND PHILOSOPHY, GEOGRAPHY,  
NATURAL HISTORY, NAVAL ARCHITECTURE, NAVIGATION,  
COMMERCE, AND AGRICULTURE IN ORDER TO GIVE THEIR CHILDREN A  
RIGHT TO STUDY PAINTING, POETRY, MUSIC, ARCHITECTURE,  
STATUARY, TAPESTRY, AND PORCELAIN."

IT IS WITHIN YOUR POWER TO RISE TO THIS OCCASION AND TO MAKE  
IT POSSIBLE FOR OUR CHILDREN TO RISE TO THE HIGHEST LEVEL OF  
THEIR ASPIRATION AS INFORMED AND SENSITIVE LEADERS OF  
HUMANITY.

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TESTIMONY

UNITED FEDERATION OF TEACHERS  
MICHAEL MULGREW, PRESIDENT

DELIVERED BY KAREN ALFORD  
UFT VICE PRESIDENT FOR ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

BEFORE THE CITY COUNCIL  
COMMITTEES ON EDUCATION AND CULTURAL AFFAIRS,  
LIBRARIES & INTERGROUP RELATIONS

REEXAMINING ARTS EDUCATION IN NEW YORK CITY  
PUBLIC SCHOOLS

NOVEMBER 23, 2009

Good afternoon Chairman Recchia, Chairman Jackson and members of these two distinguished committees. My name is Karen Alford and I am the Vice President for Elementary Schools for the United Federation of Teachers.

We know the arts are essential to a quality learning experience. That goes for all age groups, from pre-K up through high school graduation. Whether we're talking about crayons, fingerpaints and museum trips to classes on photography, dance and band, exposure to and participation in the arts is vital to a child's academic and personal growth. According to state regulations, it's also mandatory. Sadly, however, that's simply not happening, especially in elementary and middle schools, where the majority of students aren't even getting the most minimal state-mandated requirements.

A quality arts education program is more than 'entertainment'. For at-risk students, the arts are entrée to getting them involved and interested in school because it's an area where the struggling reader or level 1 or 2 student can be successful. This focus, sense of self-esteem and positive reinforcement can carry over into other content areas.

Recognizing the importance and the need for arts education, the United Federation of Teachers has partnered with the Center for Arts Education to help develop teachers' skills and integrate the arts into their curriculum.

I am here today to share with you our thoughts and concerns about arts education in our public schools, and I want to begin with probably the biggest obstacle facing us: budget cuts. We know that when budgets get cut -- as they have this year -- the arts are among the first programs to be downsized or eliminated.

Our students, particularly those in elementary school, already get precious little arts education. In a city such as ours, where music, dance, visual arts and theater are part of its very core, that in itself is a shame. The thought of budget cuts forcing schools to further scale back their arts programs is tragic.

It's clear that this legislative body already understands those realities. The Council has been among the city's strongest consistent supporters of the arts in schools. Every year, dozens of programs have been made possible thanks to support and financing from you and your colleagues. As a result, thousands of children have been exposed to music, art and theater who otherwise might not have. For that we at the UFT commend you.

As many of you know, our schools took a \$400 million cutback in September, the latest of several cuts over the last two years. In a survey we did in October, 15 percent of elementary and middle schools reported they had lost art classes, 14 percent had eliminated music classes and 11 percent had cut back on theater or dance classes. In the elementary schools, 13 percent had lost cluster teacher positions, which are very often art teachers. In high schools, 10 percent reported that arts classes were cut and 13 percent said music classes were eliminated. In addition, most schools reported cuts in supplies, after school programs, enrichment activities and special events, virtually all of which are cuts to the arts.

Budget cuts aside, there has been a system-wide decline in arts spending in recent years, largely due to the fact that Project Arts funding, which used to be a special category of money that principals specifically spent on the arts, was folded into schools' overall budgets. Some arts advocates fear that with this funding change, principals have been more inclined to spend funds on more academic programs rather than arts programs in order to raise test scores to meet accountability standards that were put forth in the most recent reforms. Since the funding change, there has been a decline of more than 60% in the purchases of art and music materials, according to the Center for Arts Education.

Along with budgetary restraints and cutbacks, two additional obstacles we face are overcrowding – which has drastically reduced the physical space for arts programs – and the high-stakes test movement, which has forced schools to push the arts out of their curriculums. Many of our school buildings are multi-sited school buildings. Cluster or specialty art rooms are often eliminated to make room for the two or more schools that may share the same school building. Many of our schools have lost much of their

dedicated space for arts learning, and research by the Center for Arts Education shows that 3 in 10 schools don't even have a dedicated arts professional on staff. In addition, time for the arts during the school day has been greatly reduced to accommodate blocks of other instruction.

Moving forward, we have our work cut out for us if we want to save the arts in our schools. First and foremost, we should all be looking at ways to stem the growing tide of budget cuts, and that means taking a long hard look at spending across the board. Classrooms and direct services, including the arts, must be protected, and that means everything else that is not essential to student learning must be on the table.

Secondly, we need to ensure that each and every school has a certified arts teacher as well as physical space and materials for arts instruction. In order to recruit and retain certified arts teachers, schools must provide the appropriate space and materials, not a watered-down curriculum.

Third, schools must be in compliance with state regulations, and the DoE should properly support schools in this regard by restoring arts funding as a stand-alone budget line and giving schools their proper per-pupil allocation for arts education. Passage of Resolution #837, which is designed to ensure a minimum level of arts education funding in our schools, would be an excellent step in the right direction.

We hope the various stakeholders take note of these recommendations and act on them. The UFT is ready to do its part. After all, the arts have the potential to enrich our lives in the most amazing ways. They provide kids with creative and emotional outlets, and help enhance their confidence and interest in learning. We can't keep shortchanging our kids.

###

**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

[ ]

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. \_\_\_\_\_ Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_

in favor  in opposition

Date: 11-23-09

(PLEASE PRINT)  
Name: Frances McVerry

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

I represent: Young Playwright Inc.

Address: PO Box 5134, NY, NY

**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

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[ ]

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. \_\_\_\_\_ Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_

in favor  in opposition

Date: 11.23.09

(PLEASE PRINT)  
Name: PAUL K King

Address: 52 Chambers St. Room 210

I represent: Executive Director Arts & Special

Address: DOE Projects

**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

[ ]

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in favor  in opposition

Date: 11/23/09

(PLEASE PRINT)  
Name: SANTIAGO TAVERAS, Dep. Chancellor

Address: 52 CHAMBERS STREET, NY, NY, 10007

I represent: NYC DOE

Address: 52 CHAMBERS STREET, NY, NY

**THE COUNCIL  
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 in favor  in opposition

Date: 11/23/09

(PLEASE PRINT)  
Name: Deborah Scheier Grinberg

Address: 311 West 24<sup>th</sup> St.

I represent: CAE

Address: 225 West 34<sup>th</sup> St.

**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

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 in favor  in opposition

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

(PLEASE PRINT)  
Name: OLIVIA KOPPELL

Address: 200 West 54<sup>th</sup> St

I represent: Elsistema nyc.org

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

**THE COUNCIL  
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Appearance Card

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 in favor  in opposition

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

(PLEASE PRINT)  
Name: Steven McIntosh

Address: 35-45 81<sup>st</sup> St. E10, Jackson Heights NY

I represent: Flushing Council on Culture and the Arts

Address: 137-35 Northern Blvd, Flushing, NY

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms



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 in favor  in opposition

Date: 11/23/09

(PLEASE PRINT)  
Name: David Shookhoff  
Address: 444 CPW NYC 10025  
I represent: NYC Apts in Education Re-initiative  
Address: PO Box 2094 NYC 10128

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THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

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 in favor  in opposition

Date: 11/23/09

(PLEASE PRINT)  
Name: TOM CHAPIN  
Address: 57 PIERMONT PLACE  
I represent: NARAS / SELF / AFAM local 1000  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_

**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. \_\_\_\_\_ Res. No. 837  
 in favor  in opposition

Date: 11/23/09

(PLEASE PRINT)  
Name: ETHAN FEIN  
Address: 652 W. 163 ST #22  
I represent: LOCAL 802 AFM  
Address: 322 W 48th ST

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**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

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in favor  in opposition

Date: 11-23-2009

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: CAROL BOYD

Address: 1495 Grand Concourse #5A Bronx NY 10452

I represent: Center for Arts Education - NY

Address: 235 W 34th St NY 10042

**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. \_\_\_\_\_ Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_

in favor  in opposition

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Kate D. Levin, Commissioner

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

I represent: DCLA

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. \_\_\_\_\_ Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_

in favor  in opposition

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Math Shokin

Address: 30 E. 9th St

I represent: myself

Address: 666 1st Ave.

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. \_\_\_\_\_ Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_

*artistic affairs*  in favor  in opposition

*arts  
education*

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Steven Tenner

Address: 520 5TH AVE NYC 10018

I represent: Arts Connection

Address: same

**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. \_\_\_\_\_ Res. No. 837

in favor  in opposition

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Ella Weiss

Address: 55 Washington St

I represent: Brooklyn Arts Council

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. \_\_\_\_\_ Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_

in favor  in opposition

Date: 11-23-09.

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Karen Alford

Address: UFT

I represent: 52 Broadway

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

▶ Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms ◀

**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. \_\_\_\_\_ Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_

*ARTS EDUCATION  
CULTURAL  
AFFAIRS*  in favor  in opposition

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: J ERNOLD ROSS

Address: St. John's University

I represent: School of Education

Address: 8000 Utopia Place Queens 11439

**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. \_\_\_\_\_ Res. No. 837

in favor  in opposition

Date: 11/23/09

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: GAIL NATHAN

Address: Bronx River Art Center

I represent: 1087 East Tremont Ave

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. \_\_\_\_\_ Res. No. 837

in favor  in opposition

Date: 11/23/09

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Michael Mao

Address: City Ctr 7th fl. 130 W 56th St

I represent: Michael Mao Dance

Address: 130 W. 56th St. NYC 10019

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. \_\_\_\_\_ Res. No. 837

in favor  in opposition

Date: 11/23/09

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: JANICE WRIGHT

Address: 7666 Austin St. #3I, Forest Hills 11375

I represent: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. \_\_\_\_\_ Res. No. 837

in favor  in opposition

Date: 11/24/09

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: PAUL KATZ

Address: 244 WEST 12TH STREET

I represent: The N.Y. Chapter of the Recording Academy  
(the GRAMMY FOLK)

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. \_\_\_\_\_ Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_

in favor  in opposition

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Karen Alford

Address: VP Elementary Ed.

I represent: UFT

Address: 52 Bway

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**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. 837 Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_

in favor  in opposition

Date: 11/23/09

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: John G. Schultz

Address: One East 53rd St. NYC 10022

I represent: Young Audiences New York

Address: One East 53rd St NYC 10022

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THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. \_\_\_\_\_ Res. No. 837

in favor  in opposition

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Wendy Orbit

Address: 293 CPW, 3E, NY, NY 10024

I represent: The Producers' Project

Address: 293 CPW, 3E, NY, NY 10024

**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

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in favor  in opposition

Date: 11/23/09

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: BRENDA FIELD

Address: 5 Fordham Hill Oval

I represent: 4553

Address: 360 E 168th St Bx NY

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in favor  in opposition

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: CYNTHIA ELLIOTT

Address: SYMPHONY SPACE

I represent: 2537 BROADWAY, NY 10025

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

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in favor  in opposition

Date: 11/23/09

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Michael DeKes

Address: 400 W 43rd St 21D NYC 10036

I represent: The Paper Bag Players

Address: 185 East Broadway NYC 10002

**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

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in favor  in opposition

Date: 11/23/09

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Randall Bourscheidt

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

I represent: Alliance for the Arts

Address: 330 W 42<sup>m</sup> St. 1701

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in favor  in opposition

Date: 11/23/09

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Ben Iwan

Address: 20 First Ave

I represent: Committee For Arts Education

Address: 225 W 34th St, NYC

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THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

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in favor  in opposition

Date: 11/17/09

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Rosemary Stabile

Address: 225 W 34th St

I represent: Seeds for Education

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

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THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

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in favor  in opposition

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: MATTHEW KINIST

Address: 105 E 11th St

I represent: NYC SEATTLE

Address: 105 E 11th St

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Appearance Card

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 in favor     in opposition

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Kelly Kuwabara

Address: 428 10th St. Brooklyn 11215

I represent: Council on the Arts & Humanities in Staten Island

Address: 1000 Richmond Terrace, Staten Island NY 10301

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THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

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 in favor     in opposition

Date: 11/23/09

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Connie Baker-Sabo

Address: 484 W. 43rd St. #42N NYC 10036

I represent: Queens Theatre In The Park

Address: P.O. Box 520069, Flushing, NY 11352

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THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

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in favor     in opposition

Date: 11/23/09

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Deborah Ribeiro

Address: 453 FDR Drive C1401 NY NY 10002

I represent: PS 184 M Shuang Wen School

Address: 327 Cherry St NY NY 10002

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in favor     in opposition

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Monica Harris

Address: 387 Grand St

I represent: parents

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

◆ Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms ◆