

# Arts Abstract 2012-2015: The Chicago Public Schools Arts Education Plan

**Bringing the Arts to Every Child in Every School**



DEPARTMENT of | **ARTS** | EDUCATION



OFFICE OF THE MAYOR  
CITY OF CHICAGO

RAHM EMANUEL  
MAYOR

October 15, 2012

Fellow Chicagoans:

The City of Chicago, together with principals, teachers and parents, has made great strides toward improving the quality of education for children in every school across our great city. Today, we take another strong step forward.

We are proud to introduce the first Chicago Public Schools Arts Education Plan. This multi-year initiative (2012-2015) will provide our principals and teachers with a foundation for expanding arts education into our classrooms across the city.

We know that integrating the arts into the school day with math, science, reading and writing enhances student outcomes and academic achievement. We also know the arts contribute to essential 21<sup>st</sup> century skills like innovation, creativity, and critical thinking and cognitive development skills that will prepare them for life-long learning.

With the new full school day, our children are now guaranteed more time in the classroom. And with this rigorous and ambitious district-based Arts Education Plan, students and teachers can turn quality time into quality instruction. We thank the hundreds of educators that contributed to this plan and the thousands of teachers whose vision, creativity and support will make this quality education possible.

Each child has only one chance at a good education, and every single one of our students deserves the very best we can provide. It is up to all of us to make this plan a reality—district leaders, principals, teachers, parents, and cultural partners. By working together we can make sure our students attend the most innovative and creative school district in the nation.

Sincerely,

Mayor Rahm Emanuel  
City of Chicago

David J. Vitale  
President, Chicago Board of Education

# The CPS Arts Education Plan

Today marks the beginning of an important new era in Chicago Public Schools (CPS), one in which the arts is fully recognized as central to the education of the city's children. This work will be guided by a new policy, the **Chicago Public Schools Arts Education Plan**, designed to bring the arts to every child, in every grade, in every school across the city.

This new Plan is grounded in research that reveals the importance of the arts in education, and provides data that clearly establishes the starting point—the current state of the arts in Chicago's public schools. The first-ever Chicago Public Schools Arts Education Plan provides specific recommendations to improve, expand, and strategically coordinate arts education across the District.

As this work is carried out, Chicago will establish itself as a national leader in the work of bringing the arts to education—and what city could be a more appropriate home for this initiative than Chicago, with its vibrant arts community and one of the deepest and richest pools of cultural assets and resources in the nation.

The **Arts Abstract 2012–2015** summarizes this culminating achievement brought about through dedicated and inspired work over the past two decades by countless civic and neighborhood leaders, along with numerous cultural institutions and community organizations. All have been united by their unwavering commitment to providing Chicago's children with a strong public education.

## Seizing a Moment When Change is Possible

The City of Chicago and CPS enjoy a unique window of opportunity to take advantage of all that arts education offers. The new Full School Day offers the opportunity to improve what is taught and how it is taught, and gives the time needed to provide students with a higher quality education than ever before, including a robust arts education.

This is a moment when city and CPS leadership, teachers and parents are eager for a better education for our young people. The work that made the CPS Arts Education Plan possible represents the collective will of the CPS Department of Arts Education; the Chicago Department of Cultural Affairs and Special Events; Ingenuity Incorporated; parents, teachers, principals and local foundations and corporations.

**Every student  
receives a  
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**The research also makes clear that the benefits of arts education are particularly strong for low-income students.**

## **The Research Base and the Starting Point for Expanding Arts in Education**

The arts are a vital element of a 21st century education. Research conducted over the past decade shows that exposure to and education in the arts significantly decreases dropout rates, improves the likelihood of entering college, increases civic engagement, and ultimately promotes financial success throughout a person's lifetime.

The research also makes clear that the benefits of arts education are particularly strong for low-income students. Low-income youth who have had a substantial arts education are more likely to complete college, hold good jobs, and be active in their community as young adults.

The role of the arts in securing these results lies largely in the way it stimulates innovation, creativity, and critical thinking, all essential skills in our world today.

In order to expand and improve arts education for CPS students, we must first recognize the starting point. Our existing resources show much promise. In the 2012-2013 school year, there are more than 1,100 dedicated arts teachers providing leadership in CPS schools.

But quality and access to arts education varies widely across the district. Research and mapping by Ingenuity Incorporated reveals oases and deserts in arts programming; some schools are rich in the arts but there are too many others with little to no arts learning opportunities for students.

Additionally, 88 percent of schools in the District have at least one community arts partner providing programs and curricula support, resources such as art supplies or musical instruments, and/or professional development to assist the school's arts education program. Arts partners also supplement the classroom experience by offering in-school performances, exhibits, classroom residencies or demonstrations, and they coordinate class visits to cultural institutions, museums, or other arts facilities.

Outside of the classroom, a vibrant arts and cultural landscape is a defining quality of the City of Chicago, generating more than \$2 billion annually and employing more than 150,000 people. The city boasts more than 200 museums, cultural institutions and arts organizations that provide services to students in CPS schools every year.



# **Quality arts education**

Students can experience visual art, music, dance or drama on any day in a variety of venues extending to every corner of the city. The city's history of diversity in its culture and arts expands its ability to teach students about their history and their current and future place in the world.

## A Citywide Planning Process

In one of his first acts as Mayor, Rahm Emanuel directed the Department of Cultural Affairs and Special Events (DCASE) to create a new vision and Cultural Plan for the city, its first in 25 years. The resulting Chicago Cultural Plan 2012 has been created from the input of cultural, civic and community groups and from thousands of Chicago citizens representing every city neighborhood. Through this public engagement, Chicagoans made it clear that a reinvigorated arts education in CPS is one of their highest priorities. In response:

**In May 2012 the CPS Department of Arts Education, with the support of Ingenuity Incorporated and DCASE, launched the process leading to the first district-wide CPS Arts Education Plan. Over the next four months, 20 public sessions were held to gather input from all stakeholders: teachers, principals, parents, students, arts partners and the community at large.**

**Thought leaders representing each of these groups formed a larger Advisory Committee that included civic and education leadership to review the source materials and the copious input from the public sessions. The Advisory Committee's assignment was to analyze the data, identifying best practices and strategies, and ultimately to draft the Plan's goals and recommendations.**

**A Steering Committee with members representing the Mayor's Office, the CPS Board of Education, the Chicago Teachers Union, district and cultural leadership and the philanthropy community advised on the Plan's final recommendations.**

A new mayor with a commitment to the arts; new school leadership and the Full School Day; a greater number of talented arts teachers; ongoing research on the importance of the arts in education; data revealing the current state of the arts in the schools; and a citywide arts community with experience in the schools and a willingness to do more all came together to make change possible.



**Never before  
have so many  
individuals and  
organizations  
dedicated time,  
energy and  
resources to  
improve the arts  
education of our  
children.**



**increases student success.**



## Recommendations to Expand the Arts in Education throughout Chicago Public Schools

The Arts Abstract 2012–2015 presents a set of recommendations at the heart of the new policy shaping arts education in CPS schools:

**The Plan's guiding principle is that every student will receive a quality arts education—meaning that every student receives a comprehensive and sequential study of every art form, including visual art, music, dance, and drama, from pre-K through 12th grade.**

**Every school must have a certified, dedicated art instructor providing students with hands-on art making experiences. The Arts Education Plan honors and promotes the critical role of certified arts instructors in providing quality arts education. Teachers are the anchors for building robust art programs and creating strong arts partnerships in schools.**

**The arts will be integrated in the classroom to connect to other subjects.**

**Quality arts education includes partnerships with museums, cultural institutions and community arts organizations to enrich the classroom experience and to provide arts programs and arts encounters outside of the school walls.**

Fulfilling these recommendations will require the continued, collective will of all those invested in the education of CPS students, starting with the district leadership. Chiefs of Schools, principals and

art teachers will be active participants, working to expand and improve arts curricula in their schools. They must also work closely with the District to facilitate understanding of best practices and to ensure that arts programming and funding is distributed equitably across the district. Parents, arts partners and all Chicagoans must continue to demand and advocate for quality arts education.



# Quite simply, the arts are essential.



## Goals and Recommendations

### Goal 1 – District Arts Policy:

Create district-level policies that support the arts in every child's PreK-12 education experience and create conditions throughout the district that utilize the arts to support student success.

- a) Make arts a core subject by dedicating 120 minutes of arts instruction per week for elementary schools.
- b) Expand the number of art forms offered to include visual art, music, dance, and drama at all grade levels.
- c) Expand high school graduation requirements to include all four Illinois recognized art forms.
- d) Set minimum staffing requirements in the arts at one certified full-time employee per school, or an improved ratio such as one teacher for every 350 students.
- e) Identify and activate an "Arts Liaison" in every school and network for improved coordination and communication in the arts.

### Goal 2 – Arts Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment:

Ensure district arts curriculum, instruction, and assessment is consistent, supports arts learning pathways from PreK-12 and utilizes both direct arts instruction and arts integration strategies.

- a) Map and align arts curriculum to the Common Core State Standards in order to support high school graduation, college entry, college graduation, and career readiness.
- b) Align the "Chicago Guide for Teaching and Learning in the Arts" to the forthcoming *Core Arts Standards*.
- c) Add additional art forms (i.e. media arts) to the curriculum in the "Chicago Guide".
- d) Require that the arts be represented on each school's Continuous Improvement Work Plan (CIWP).

### Goal 3 – Capacity Building:

Provide relevant professional development for all stakeholders to build their capacity for improving student learning in and through the arts; and develop strategies to address the district's challenges to arts education.

- a) Create a system for identifying professional development needs and growth areas in the arts.
- b) Offer consistent and relevant professional development to all CPS stakeholders, including teachers, principals, chiefs of schools, parents, and arts partners.



**Chicagoans  
called for richer  
arts education  
in our schools to  
serve students.**



## Source Documents:

- Master arts education plans from other major U.S. cities
- The VIVA Project report entitled "Time, Teachers and Tomorrow's Schools," which provides 49 ideas to use the longer school day to better serve the needs of teachers and students
- *Collaborating for Change*, a report produced by the Chicago Arts Learning Initiative (CALI)
- The CPS *Chicago Guide for Teaching and Learning in the Arts*
- The *Teaching Artist Research Project* conducted by the University of Chicago
- ArtLook Map
- The Chicago Community Trust Arts Convenings
- Ingenuity Incorporated Mapping and Data of Arts Education across CPS
- *Arts at the Core* by the Arts Alliance Illinois

- c) Develop "ArtSmart School designation" to provide school- and network-level guidelines and structures that will support principals planning for and implementing the arts both in and out of their school day.
- d) Identify opportunities to tie arts education to college and career readiness as well as workforce standards.
- e) Write and disseminate "School Leadership Guide in the Arts" to establish a common vocabulary and understanding in the arts.

## Goal 4 – Partnership:

**Facilitate and support strategic partnerships and collaborations in the arts, built upon quality indicators, to enhance student learning at all levels and celebrate and honor student voice, culture, and traditions.**

- a) Design and implement an RFP process that supports and elevates the quality of programs provided by arts partners and independent teaching artists.
- b) Match at least one arts partner to every school in collaboration with an arts teacher, classroom teacher, or other content area teacher.
- c) Design and implement a coordinated public/private strategy that will improve delivery of resources, opportunities, and partnerships at the school level through the new Arts Liaisons.

## Goal 5 – Data-Driven Decisions:

**Build sustainable system infrastructure to track, analyze, and disseminate standardized data on arts instruction and programming.**

- a) Create a system to track elementary school-level arts data.
- b) Include the arts on measures of school success (i.e. principal evaluations) and in internal tracking mechanisms (i.e. staffing, courses, and additional benchmarks).
- c) Measure reach, implementation, and effectiveness outcomes of arts partnerships so that schools can determine "quality" partnerships.
- d) Integrate the arts into the school scorecard with multiple indicators, FAQs, an information portal, and a summary of data.
- e) Create an assessment system that qualitatively and quantitatively captures, measures, and communicates arts learning outcomes that recognizes the uniqueness of art and student learning.

**We are eager for a better**



## Across all priorities:

**Ensure adequate and sustainable Arts Education funding is equitably distributed across the district and additional funds are available to support arts innovation and school action plans.**

- a) Require each school to maintain a budget for the arts set at a minimum of percent of each school's overall budget or a per pupil/per art form formula.
- b) Establish a district fund to provide all schools with adequate materials and resources.
- c) Create an external Arts Expansion & Alignment Fund to support schools directly for external partnerships that are in addition to certified arts staff.
- d) Develop and maintain external funding streams via previously untapped sources such as corporate giving, and public donation.



## Looking to the Future

This Plan offers a forceful vision for improving education that all Chicagoans can embrace. Students will have a dedicated art teacher and increased length of art instruction. They will experience the arts, learn from the arts, and create more art than ever before. And they will make connections between the arts and other core subjects like math, reading and science.

**This is a defining moment for arts education in Chicago.** This is the moment to embrace creativity and global citizenship, to instill in our children the self-confidence and effective communication skills that will be absolutely essential to their success in the 21st century. This is the moment when we start transforming Chicago Public Schools into one of the most creative and innovative school districts in the nation – one that brings the arts to every child, in every grade, in every school.

**Teachers are the anchors for building robust arts programs and creating strong arts partnerships in schools.**



**education for our young people.**



**The potential for arts education to have a dramatic, positive impact on students cannot be overstated.**



## What This Means For You

### Students and Families

The arts are a critical component of a well-rounded education for all students and CPS recognizes the role arts education play in building better schools, teaching environments, and creating more opportunities for student success both in school and out of school. The arts serve as a pathway to better student outcomes and the CPS Arts Education Plan will support student success by:

- Increasing weekly arts instructional time
- Increasing student exposure to more arts disciplines
- Providing dedicated art teachers and arts leadership in schools
- Ensuring students have the necessary art supplies and materials
- Creating more opportunities for art and cultural experiences

### Teachers

Teachers are the cornerstone of every school and every student's educational experience. Teachers are also the gateway for much of the arts learning that students experience. The CPS Arts Education Plan supports both arts specialists and other content area teachers in a variety of ways by:

- Dedicating minutes of weekly instructional time exclusively for the arts
- Increasing financial resources for supplies and materials
- Providing professional development and training focused on the arts
- Creating professional learning communities among teachers in the arts
- Supporting art learning through an Arts Liaison for improved coordination and communication, from local school sites to city-wide connections

### Principals

The CPS Arts Education Plan lays the foundation for principals to build, sustain and enhance arts learning for their students. The CPS Arts Education Plan sets the standards for arts education and provides principals a road map for increasing quality, access and equity for their communities. To support principals in their quest for increased arts learning, tools and resources will be dedicated to their needs:

- Offering of professional development and training designed specifically for principals that is focused on the arts
- Increasing funding assistance and strategies
- Coordinating support for finding and developing community partnerships

- Showcasing students' artistic talents through exhibition, performances, and curriculum share-outs
- Supporting arts education as a key strategic priority for the school's Continuous Improvement Work Plan
- Utilizing the arts as a tool for whole-school success and increased student engagement

### Community Arts Partners

Chicago's art and cultural resources bring unique learning opportunities to all Chicago Public School students. From world-renowned art museums to community dance and theater groups, Chicago's cultural riches can enhance student learning in numerous ways. Arts partners play a vital role in the education of Chicago's young people and augment the tireless work CPS teachers. The CPS Arts Education Plan holds a place for partners and will support programs by:

- Creating more demand for their arts education programs
- Identifying more fiscal resources to support school partnerships
- Streamlining the process for developing school partnerships
- Assisting in the coordination of partnership growth/expansion
- Defining the range of offerings and co-constructing a measure for quality



## Standards for Schools and Principals

### Standard 1:

High quality instruction in the visual and performing arts is provided to every student at every grade level from PreK-8 by a certified/endorsed arts teacher; and course offerings are available in every art form from 9-12.

### Standard 2:

Instruction and assessment in the arts is based on a common scope and sequence as articulated in the CPS Arts Framework, the Chicago Guide for Teaching and Learning in the Arts.

### Standard 3:

Professional development in the arts is based on identified challenges and opportunities, is relevant to the intended audience, and is offered on a consistent basis to teachers, administrators, and stakeholders.

### Standard 4:

Arts partnerships and collaborations are strategic, built upon quality indicators, and focus on enhancing student learning at all levels.

### Standard 5:

Data on arts instruction and programming is collected, tracked, analyzed, and disseminated on a regular basis.



## CITY OF CHICAGO

**Rahm Emanuel**  
Mayor

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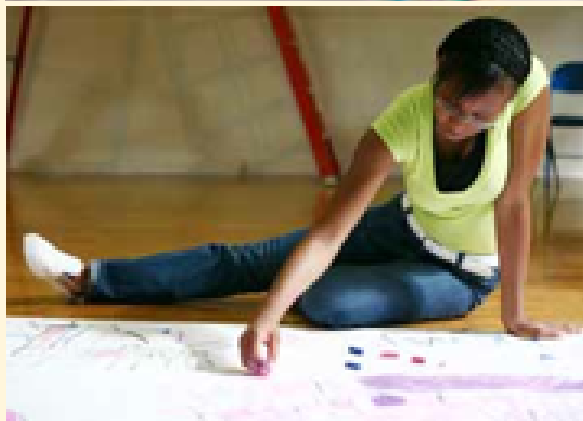
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*Chicago Public Schools  
serves approximately  
402,000 students in 681  
schools. It is the nation's  
third-largest school system.*



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