

NORWOOD NEWS

Arts Grants Work to Get Parents Involved

by **KATIE ROGERS**
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In an effort to help involve parents in their child's arts education, the Center for Arts Education, a New York City nonprofit, recently awarded a handful of local schools with grants for the spring semester.

The grants, called Parents as Arts Partners grants (PAAP), totaled nearly \$450,000 and were given to 150 city schools. The grants are to be used to implement original arts programs for families and should be designed to meet each school's individual needs.

For instance, PS 205's fourth grade students and their parents will use their grant to create a permanent large-scale landscape mural for the school, which is located across from the Bronx Zoo. This is one of several grants the school has received from the Center for Arts Education (CAE) over the years, Principal Maria Pietrosanti said.

"PAAP is innovative because it brings in parents to learn alongside their kids," Pietrosanti said. "Hopefully the parents will continue to educate their children and take it one step further."

Norwood school MS 80 will use its grant money for the Arte Vida program for sixth grade students. Miriam Alejandro, MS 80's parent coordinator who is actively recruiting parents to volunteer at the school, said the grant will help tremendously.

"Getting the parents to partake and having them entertain the children is what I found so intriguing about the program," Alejandro said. "Our program will target the sixth grade because they will be new coming in to the middle school. It will have a positive and strong impact on them to start this off with their parents."

The MS 80 program will investigate Latin American and Caribbean visual art traditions and is aimed to celebrate the school's predominantly Latino population.

Among other honored Bronx schools were PS 46 in North Fordham; Jonas Bronck Academy on the Manhattan College campus; the Marie Curie High School for Nursing, Medicine and Allied Health Professions in Kingsbridge, and DeWitt Clinton High School in Bedford Park.

"Parents who are directly involved with school arts programs often become advocates for arts education," said CAE Board Chair Jill Braufman in a statement. "Through these rewarding arts experiences with their children, schools and cultural partners, parents see firsthand the important role the arts play in their children's learning."

The Parents as Arts Partners grant program was created in response to research that demonstrated the positive impact of parental involvement on a child's success in school and the effectiveness of the arts as a means of cultivating that involvement. Since its creation in 1998, CAE has awarded some \$4 million in PAAP grants to more than 500 schools in New York City.