



THE CENTER FOR ARTS EDUCATION

**For Immediate Release**

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**THE CENTER FOR ARTS EDUCATION RECEIVES  
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION ARTS GRANT  
TO ENRICH SIX NYC MIDDLE SCHOOLS**

***Designed to Improve Educational Opportunities and Enrich the Lives of Students  
in Underfunded, Urban Middle Schools in and Through the Arts***

(August 16, 2010), New York, NY – The Center for Arts Education (CAE) has been awarded a four-year \$1.1-million Arts in Education Model Development and Dissemination Grant (AEMDD) from the U.S. Department of Education to support CAE’s School Arts Support Initiative 2 (SASI 2), which will create a replicable model for middle school reform through the arts.

SASI 2 builds on the SASI pilot program, which was created and launched in 2007, in partnership with The New York Times Company Foundation, to enrich the lives and improve the educational opportunities for students in underfunded, urban middle schools with little to no arts programming. In addition to The New York Times Company Foundation and the U.S. Department of Education, SASI is generously funded by the National Endowment for the Arts, the New York State Council on the Arts, the Lisa and John Pritzker Family Fund, the Pierre and Tana Matisse Foundation, Entergy Nuclear, the William Randolph Hearst Foundation, the Ford Foundation Good Neighbor Committee and numerous additional foundation and individual supporters.

CAE chose to launch this initiative in middle schools as this time is a notoriously difficult period in a child’s life. Fraught with bewildering physical and emotional changes, the middle school years are a time when students may experience disengagement and often take part in negative behaviors that interfere with their academic and social growth. The inclusion of the arts in the middle school curriculum has been shown to positively affect students at this critical period in their development.

Building on success and lessons learned from the SASI pilot – where we are witnessing the positive impact of the arts in four New York City middle schools – CAE will guide six additional middle schools through a four-year process of curriculum development and capacity-building for instruction in and through the arts, with a focus on quality and sustainability. Through extensive professional development, cultural partnership-building, expert coaching and peer exchange, SASI 2 seeks to transform the consortium into “arts-rich” schools that meet or exceed local, New York State and national standards in the arts.

The six SASI 2 New York City middle schools are MS 584 K, MS 534 K, IS 347 K, JHS 291 K, JHS 296 K and PS/IS 224 X.

“CAE's School Arts Support Initiative 2 responds directly to the need for an education that supports student learning in and through the arts,” said Richard Kessler, executive director, The Center for Arts Education. “This generous AEMDD grant will help provide teachers and school leaders with the tools, skills and resources to develop a quality sequential program of arts instruction for any given child which we believe will positively and directly affect student outcomes, teacher performance and the whole-school climate.”

“Our work will support an improved educational experience that will more effectively prepare students for entry into high school and serve as a research-validated and replicable model for transforming urban middle schools nationwide,” Kessler added.

SASI 2 supports the enhancement, expansion, documentation, evaluation and dissemination of innovative, cohesive models that demonstrate effectiveness in:

- Integrating the arts into the core middle school curricula
- Strengthening arts instruction and developing students' skills in creating, performing and responding to the arts
- Enhancing school environment
- Enriching student and educator outcomes

#### **About The Center for Arts Education**

The Center for Arts Education (CAE) 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 a fundamental part of children's overall health and well-being. Visit [www.caenyc.org](http://www.caenyc.org) to learn more about The Center for Arts Education.

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