



THE CENTER FOR ARTS EDUCATION

## FACT SHEET: Guaranteeing Dedicated Funding for Arts Education

**The city's public schools are failing to meet state requirements for arts education.** With an increased focus on testing and testing preparation, we are seeing today in the city's public schools a profound shift away from the arts and the other elements of a well-rounded education. According to data provided by the New York City Department of Education and a recent survey conducted by the Office of the Public Advocate, the city's public schools are falling woefully short of providing public school students with the minimum state requirements in the arts.

- In the elementary grades: Only 8% of elementary schools offer the four arts forms (visual arts, music, dance, theater) each year to every child as required by law.
- In middle school: Less than half of middle schools are ensuring that every child receives the State Education Department's arts requirements for grades 7 and 8.
- Nearly 30% of schools have no certified arts teacher on staff—up from 20% the previous year.
- Last year, principals allocated a smaller percentage of their budgets to arts education than the previous year—shrinking to less than 2.9% on average.
- There was also 63% decline in spending on arts supplies and equipment over the previous year—a reduction of nearly \$7 million.

### **A Successful Program that Ensured a Minimum Level of Arts Funding Was Eliminated in 2007.**

Project ARTS (Arts Restoration Throughout the Schools) was developed in 1997 by The New York City Council and Mayor Rudolph Giuliani in response to the dire lack of arts education in New York City public schools. Project ARTS was designed as a safety net, helping to 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—an initiative that many attributed to being a prime catalyst in restoring arts education to public schools—was folded into a school's overall budget.

### **Eliminating Minimum Funding Levels for Arts Education Is Hurting Our Kids.**

With the loss of dedicated funding we have begun to see a reduction in arts offerings at schools across the city. Cultural institutions, key allies in delivering quality arts education, are reporting a decrease in education partnerships with schools; principals facing budget and time constraints are reducing or eliminating classroom time dedicated to the arts and scarce art materials and supplies are becoming even scarcer.

### **Guaranteeing Dedicated Funding Is Essential to Ensuring Every Child Receive a Quality Arts Education.**

The new emphasis on high-stakes reading and math tests has created incentives for school leaders to de-emphasize the role of the arts in a well-rounded education. Arts classroom space and arts educators are in short supply while arts class time gets lost in the mix. Unless a minimum level of funding for arts education is guaranteed, we will never be able to ensure that every child in every school receives a quality arts education.

**PLEASE SUPPORT CITY COUNCIL RESOLUTION #837  
TO GUARANTEE DEDICATED FUNDING FOR ARTS EDUCATION**