



THE CENTER FOR ARTS EDUCATION

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Arts Organization Calls for Policy of “No Net Loss” for Arts and Cluster Spaces in Co-Located Public Schools

Joins Manhattan Borough President Scott Stringer in Issuing Recommendations on Overcrowding and Co-Location

New York, NY—Citing severe space problems at 43% of Manhattan’s elementary and middle schools, and a spate of announcements about the co-location of multiple schools within a school building, The Center for Arts Education joined with Manhattan Borough President Scott Stringer in issuing a call to education officials to implement a “no net loss” policy for spaces used for arts instruction in city schools.

“Arts classrooms in city schools are slowly but surely disappearing” said Doug Israel, Director of Policy at The Center for Arts Education. “It’s time that we put in place common sense policies that place the proper value on arts education in city public schools.”

“Dedicated arts spaces are essential to the delivery of quality arts instruction,” Israel continued, “Unfortunately, due to the forces of school overcrowding and increasing efforts to wedge multiple small schools into one school building, they are being pushed aside and sacrificed. It’s time the city took steps to protect these spaces. If not, the arts education vanishing act will continue.”

“We are pleased that attention is being paid to the importance of preserving dedicated arts spaces in public schools,” said Richard Kessler, executive director, The Center for Arts Education. “We commend Manhattan Borough President Stringer and other dedicated elected officials for their persistence on this critical issue. It is now time to put in place sound policies that value the importance of the arts, and arts spaces, as part of a well-rounded education for our students.”

The organization is calling on school officials to put in place a process to ensure that existing schools would experience no loss of access to arts, or cluster spaces, when co-locations occur. The proposal would require Education Impact Assessments to account for the impact to these spaces, and provide alternative solutions, or describe how the loss of these spaces would be offset with gains of other appropriate space, or otherwise addressed.

According to the Department of Education’s *Annual Arts in Schools Report*, the lack of available in-school arts space was one of the top three challenges to implementing arts education reported by all schools—and there is evidence that this lack of dedicated space is growing. According to a recent survey conducted by Class Size Matters, 25% of principals responding reported losing art, music, dance, drama, or foreign language spaces to general education classrooms during their tenure.

The Center for Arts Education has publicly called for more accurate reporting on the availability and use of cluster room space, specifically calling for a detailed accounting of the current arts spaces that exist, and their particular use, as well an accounting of arts spaces in public schools that have been converted to other uses.

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