



## Why is Performing Arts Workshop Engaging in Advocacy?

Arts programs are an essential part of every child's education: They make youth more innovative, creative, and better critical thinkers – vitally important skills for the 21st Century. No teacher should be forced to choose between math, reading, physical education, music, language and art.

But today, that's just what's happening. Too many kids are missing arts programs as a core part of their education because of ever-growing barriers like limited instructional time or re-allocation of funding due to severe budget cuts. And it's the kids most at risk who bear the brunt of this: Schools with a wealthier student body are in a better position to raise their own money to pay for programming or send kids to out-of-school programs for arts education.

**School districts, local, state and federal governments need to be held accountable for providing instruction in the arts to every child in our school system.** And Performing Arts Workshop has an important role to play.

Since 1965, Performing Arts Workshop has proven that teaching and engaging youth in the creative process is more than just a nicety; it is a necessity that positions kids for success in school, work and life. Performing Arts Workshop collaborates with educators to develop programs through which students experience the arts hands-on over a period of time. In our decades of service, the Workshop has expanded programming to reach over 9,000 young people per year and to provide vital professional development and support for artists and teachers.

It is clear that Performing Arts Workshop can have a profoundly bigger impact if we successfully advocate to eliminate the barriers to ensuring that the creative process is a core part of every child's education.

Without jeopardizing our core commitment to facilitating arts programs of great educational value, Performing Arts Workshop is dedicated to demanding educational excellence that includes art for every student. We seek this through two avenues:

- Resources: the policies, funding and instructional time necessary for effective arts education in the classroom and during out-of-school time.
- Promising practices: changing how teaching happens through improved systems, accountability and quality practices that deliver on the transformative promise of effective arts education.

We are strongly positioned to advocate for solutions that will level the playing field. We have deep subject matter expertise informed by our direct service programs. We are well respected among decision-makers and appointed or elected officials. We are strongly connected to key influencers including students and their families, teachers, arts advocates and funders. And we have strong partnerships through alliances, coalitions and membership organizations committed to ensuring arts education for all.

It's time for our public schools to deliver excellence for all students – an education that offers the full spectrum of core learning they'll need. This must include the arts, through which students develop critical thinking, creative expression, and basic learning skills in order to succeed in school, work and life.

**For more information about the Workshop's advocacy efforts, visit [www.performingartsworkshop.org/pages/take\\_action.html](http://www.performingartsworkshop.org/pages/take_action.html) or contact [Advocacy@PerformingArtsWorkshop.org](mailto:Advocacy@PerformingArtsWorkshop.org).**