

COMING
ATTRACTIONS!

RHODE ISLAND RAMPS UP ARTS INVESTMENT IN SCHOOLS

ARTS

ART RE-ENGAGES TALENT IN ALL STUDENTS

The Rhode Island Department of Education (RIDE) is launching an innovative, \$5 million art education support effort. Under the new **ARTS Initiative**, funding is based on the number of students, and **each district or charter school will receive a grant of at least \$10,000** to support the arts in their schools *as they see fit*. Schools and districts will also be eligible to receive additional grants for the arts.

Research demonstrates that the link between involvement in the arts and engagement in school is strong and persistent. Coming out of the pandemic, RIDE is dedicated to supporting local schools as they rebuild and strengthen their arts programs. This is an opportunity for schools to connect with local artists and programs – and for students to re-connect with their schools.



“Imagination is more important than knowledge. For knowledge is limited, whereas imagination embraces the entire world, stimulating progress, giving birth to evolution.” – ALBERT EINSTEIN



RIDE Rhode Island
Department
of Education

Visit www.ride.ri.gov/ARTS or email Ashley.Cullinane@ride.ri.gov to learn more about how your schools can put their ARTS funds to work.

MORE ARTS = MORE ENGAGEMENT + MORE STUDENT SUCCESS

During **Act 1** of the ARTS Initiative, RIDE will provide funding that touches every public school in Rhode Island, while leaving final decisions on how to use the funds in the hands of local education leaders. The funds will be allotted on a per-student basis, with each LEA receiving at least \$10,000.

TOP RECIPIENTS

Providence	\$694,225
Cranston	\$328,840
Warwick	\$261,841
Pawtucket	\$260,527
Woonsocket	\$181,571
East Providence	\$161,984
Cumberland	\$151,437

Grants can be used to purchase items such as musical instruments, art supplies and audio/visual or culinary equipment. They can also be used to create murals, add art installations, support performing arts or even an artist in residence. **Schools choose the most impactful use of funds.**



DOUBLE FEATURE: MORE INVESTMENTS IN THE ARTS – FALL 2022

During **Act 2** of the ARTS Initiative, RIDE will leverage an incentive-based fund of at least \$500,000 to further support the arts in schools. Starting in the fall, additional funds will be awarded to schools or districts based on the following factors:

- Number of students impacted by the arts programming
- Student & community engagement
- Local artist utilization
- Minority-owned business usage
- Most creative uses of funding

RIDE will share more information on this program as it becomes available in coming months.

Stepping Up: RIDE is working with the philanthropic community with a goal of **doubling the \$500,000 prize pool** to support even more arts programs across the Ocean State. If you are interested in learning more or donating, please contact Ashley Cullinane at Ashley.Cullinane@ride.ri.gov.





ARTS INITIATIVE FAQ



Why is art being prioritized?

The ARTS Initiative is an excellent opportunity for schools to strengthen and re-energize their arts programming – which has been proven to promote and improve mental health, while also increasing academic performance. The benefits are also two-fold: districts will make decisions through community engagement and make new, important connections to arts organizations and individuals that could benefit students for years to come. Schools have a responsibility to offer and invest in a well-rounded education, and this initiative will supplement those efforts.

Where is the money coming from?

Through the School Building Authority Capital Fund, The Rhode Island Department of Education is providing \$5M to improve art education and help connect students to their school facilities, pursuant to RIGL 16-105-1(a) and (b). These initial resources will be leveraged with additional private and non-profit funds.

When and how will funding be distributed?

Act I will begin in May 2022 after funding is approved by the Council on Elementary and Secondary Education. There will later be a kickoff ARTS gala at Lincoln High School. Every local education agency (LEA) will receive funding proportional to the number of students, with a minimum award of \$10,000 that can be used up to June 30, 2023. The School Building Authority will distribute memorandums of agreements to each LEA after the gala. Act II will follow later this summer as the pool of funding is leveraged with additional resources. Act II is incentives based and interested LEAs will receive an application form by July 1, 2022.

What can LEAs spend funding on?

Funding can be used in any art-related field such as culinary, visual and media arts, performing arts, and design. Investments could include, but are not limited to, the purchase of musical instruments, auditorium upgrades, artists in residence, murals, sculptures, professional development, individual sponsorships and other expenditures that help provide high-quality educational opportunities for all public school students. These funds should supplement schools' arts programming and not remove arts-related expenses from operational budgets. These funds can also be used to leverage other funding sources, including federal funding.



How can I get involved?

[Submit your offerings to school districts here.](#) You will be asked to provide basic identifying information and descriptions, pricing and dates (if applicable) of your offering(s). For questions about your submission and this initiative, please contact Ashley Cullinane at ashley.cullinane@ride.ri.gov.

Who can schools partner with?

RIDE is coordinating with the Rhode Island State Council on the Arts (RISCA) and the Rhode Island Division of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion to expand outreach into the arts community statewide. Through the outreach, RIDE will create a resource guide of offerings from organizations and individuals in various disciplines.

Will LEAs allocate an equal amount of funding to each of their schools? What if they want to use the funding on one large project?

LEAs are free to allocate resources between schools, if some amount is awarded to each school. The purpose of this funding is to have an impact on as many students as possible, while engaging the school community in the decision-making process.

How will LEAs be monitored? Will they be required to submit plans?

LEAs will receive the funding agreements and guidance from RIDE that includes access to Rhode Island private and non-profit arts-related individuals and entities that can help assist them in planning. Similar to the SBA Capital Fund and PayGo request process, LEAs submit their invoices to RIDE for review and payment.

Who did RIDE include in the planning process for this initiative?

RIDE has spent the last three months engaging with stakeholders such as the Rhode Island State Council on the Arts (RISCA), Rhode Island Division of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion, higher education, and outside organizations to determine a plan for this rollout and ensure we provide LEAs the assistance they need in turning their ideas into reality.

QUESTIONS?

For further questions, please contact **Ashley Cullinane** at Ashley.Cullinane@ride.ri.gov

www.ride.ri.gov



RIDE Arts Initiative Providence, Rhode Island



Summary

Imagine a school where the arts are integral to learning and student success. Where students' academic curiosity is sparked by the creativity of an artist, not just in class but also outside of traditional school hours. A school where students energetically show up every day, expressing their art, their learning and their best, true selves.

Trinity Academy for The Performing Arts is a place where students learn to think like artists, acquire lifelong enthusiasm for learning and develop their personal identities. Tapping into our students' incredible potential, we use the arts to strengthen academic learning, empower youth and families, transform neighborhoods and lay the groundwork for post-secondary success for all.

The arts are a powerful tool for social, emotional and academic success. The RIDE Arts Initiative helps provide opportunities so that all students can participate in the creative process no matter their background or income level!

School Board Members

Dana Borrelli-Murray – President *(joined 2017)*

Larry Kellam – Treasurer *(joined 2015)*

Sandi Connors – Vice President *(joined 2018)*

Lily Chan-Bournes – Secretary and parent of a TAPA graduate *(joined 2018)*

Kalen Almeida – Staff Representative *(joined 2021)*

Mike Gore – Staff Representative *(joined 2020)*

Dr. Ronnesia Gaskins *(joined 2019)*

Christopher Hoyt – Artist *(joined 2018)*

Anjel Newman – Artist and Parent Representative *(joined 2017)*

Richardson Ogidan – Trinity Restoration Inc. *(joined 2010)*

Sarah E. Whiting *(joined 2019)*

Ellen Foley *(joined 2022)*

Leside Torres – Parent Representative *(joined 2021)*

TAPA Founders: Joyce Stevos and Richardson Ogidan

PROJECT TEAM:

Liz Richards-Hegnauer,
Head of School

John Amara, *Facilities
Director*

Rachel Nadeau,
*Director of Performing
Arts Education*

Eliza Bryant, *Guidance
Counselor*

Ammar Zia, *Director of
Teaching and Learning*

ShaLayla Simmons,
*Theatre Artist in
Residence*

Avi David, *Music Artist
in Residence*

Nick Marcoux, *Film
Artist in Residence*

Christa Thomas, *Dance
Instructor*



ARTS at TAPA

Arts for Amplified Student Voice

The 2020s have been an era of burgeoning social justice movements. TAPA students are deeply engaged and naturally drawn to causes that impact their city, community, culture and class. TAPA empowers students to use their artmaking as an outlet to express their desire for cultural growth and change and to encourage cross-cultural understanding.

Throughout the 2021-2022 school year, TAPA students engaged in the writing, creation and production of numerous shows and concerts that allowed them to tell their stories and put their voices at the forefront. This work culminated in March 2022 with their Black History Month show “Holler if You Hear Me.” This production – written, directed, cast, costumed, choreographed and teched by students – placed student voices front-and-center by blending spoken word with poetry, music and dance to teach about Black history, the Civil Rights movement and Women’s Rights. In creating this original work, students studied numerous Black writers, thinkers, educators and artists and explored the history of Black America from being enslaved, to Emmett Til, to the recent Black Lives Matter protests. This interdisciplinary approach, grounded in civic learning, resulted in a truly meaningful show that gave students the opportunity to place their voices and tell their stories in the context of greater historical events. Evidence of this was present in the most-recent RIDE SurveyWorks data, which reported that Race-related topics are discussed openly at TAPA at rates exceeding the state average. Eighty-four percent of students responded favorably that teachers encourage them to learn about people from different races, ethnicities and cultures.





Arts as a Vehicle for Improved Attendance

Throughout the COVID Pandemic, when the percentage of chronically absent students increased statewide, TAPA maintained consistently high student attendance. (At TAPA, our chronic absenteeism was only 4%.) This was partly due to the strong sense of The TAPA Ensemble: the idea that all members of the TAPA community are as important to the whole as each instrument in an orchestra or dancer in a company. Students recently reported to an outside observer that “at least 30” adults knew them well in school. The observer reported that, “At TAPA, students are comfortable and safe” and that they could see and feel this in every space at TAPA. This sense of comfort and community contributes to TAPA’s consistently high attendance numbers. Additionally, the Arts serve as the “hook” that gets kids through the door (or log on to the computer during Virtual Learning) every day. As one TAPA parent recently said: “My son rarely wants to leave [school], he wants to be here almost all the time, and he has received support from different teachers because they’re all committed to the big goal, which is college preparation, and helping [kids] do the things that they need to do to reach their goals. The arts are instrumental in doing that.”

Arts for Diversity Equity and Inclusion

At TAPA, it’s not only the students who are artists. The entire TAPA staff – the IT Director, the Front Desk Receptionist and the Head of School – are also practicing artists in different disciplines. By recruiting educators and employees who are also artists, TAPA has used the arts to optimize human capital and development. People with a passion for the arts already share an affinity with our students. We used this to develop recruitment and hiring practices to achieve the ambitious goal of building a school staff that reflects the students’ backgrounds, experiences and identities. Three years into this initiative, we have recruited and retained an incredibly diverse teaching staff, who are 50% BIPOC, 50% first-generation college students, 40% English/Spanish Bilingual and 30% LGBTQ+. As our students strive for success at and beyond TAPA, they spend every day with people who share their identities and thrive in their professional capacity as educators and artists.

Arts Pathway Endorsements for All Students

At TAPA, students take core academic courses in Math, Science, History and ELA and audition for and are accepted into a Major in a designated art form. The Art Major allows students to learn about the professional world of their chosen art form and gain valuable skills in leadership and collaboration. This opportunity comes with guest lectures, local artists, integration with academics and a final adjudication, where students can showcase their skills and demonstrate how they will be able to transfer those talents into other areas of the world. The work done to complete a TAPA Arts Major results in the Arts Pathway Seal earned by each student on their high school diploma.

Pathway Endorsements, given annually by The RI Council On Elementary and Secondary Education, recognize engagement and deep learning in a given discipline. To earn an Arts Pathway Endorsement on their diploma, each TAPA student engages in significant academic study in their given arts discipline, as well as arts, work-based learning and demonstrating the application of their art skills through a substantive performance-based diploma assessment. **One-hundred percent of TAPA students receive the Arts Pathway seal on their diploma**, making TAPA the only school in the state where all students complete this rigorous course of study and application.

Arts for College and Career Readiness and Accessibility

TAPA has discovered that the same persistence, passion and drive that leads our students to excel at the arts also leads them to success getting to and through college. In addition to being a way for students to express themselves creatively, the arts help develop valuable skills necessary for professional success, including leadership, teamwork, communication and critical thinking. At TAPA, we provide a college-readiness program specifically designed to support our students, the vast majority of whom are BIPOC, first-generation college applicants who require full financial aid in order to attend college. There is no “one size fits all” approach for students planning for their future, but there are effective equity-promoting practices that ensure that all TAPA graduates have the skills and preparation they need to succeed in college and beyond. This is borne out in our Alumni data; 75% of graduates enroll in college directly after high school, with 80% persisting beyond their first year. Nationally, 89% of low-income first-generation college students leave without a degree. TAPA alumni are beating the numbers!

