



Grantmakers in the Arts: Racial Equity and Arts Education: 2018

Grantmakers in the Arts (GIA) is a national community of practice of arts grantmakers. GIA holds racial equity as a core value. GIA identifies philanthropic practices that may be ineffective or even harmful to artists and arts organizations from African, Latinx, Asian, Arab, and Native American (ALAANA) communities/communities of color. GIA engages in critical analysis of and education about these practices with our members. GIA challenges myths that have informed these practices. GIA shares alternative practices from and with our members.

Arts in Education:

The philanthropic practices that may be ineffective or even harmful to artists and arts organizations, particularly those from ALAANA communities are:

- A race-silent approach to supporting arts in education
- Support for arts in education that does not also engage advocacy for public sector support for arts in education

The critical analysis of and education about these practices with our members that GIA engages in includes:

The U.S. Census:

- GIA shares the belief with so many of our colleagues that among the greatest threats to ALAANA communities is this federal administration's attempted divestment from the U.S. Census and their attempted inclusion in the Census of a question about citizenship status.
 - These efforts would lead to an undercount of families of color, resulting in less resources in ALAANA communities and legislative districts that are not representative of their residents.

Public investment in education and arts in education:

- GIA makes explicit the long-standing structural disinvestment in public education and arts in education in communities of color.
- Philanthropic efforts to address this disinvestment are positive but marginal absent advocacy for increased municipal investment in education and arts in education as part of public investment in racial justice.
- According to the National Association of Homebuilders, home ownership is the primary driver of wealth in the U.S.
 - Redlining's lasting effects include the undervaluing of homes in communities of color.
 - According to the Lincoln Institute of Land Policy, about 36% of education funding comes from local property taxes.
 - [These two policies and policy legacies result in students of color being concentrated in low-income communities and under-resourced schools.](#)
- Besides the schools' being under-resourced, statistics have shown that the concentration of poverty in schools result in poorer educational and life outcomes for children.
 - Stanford researchers have found that the single-most powerful predictor of racial gaps in educational achievement is the extent to which students attend schools surrounded by other low-income students.
 - Underscoring the breadth of the challenge, the economic segregation of minority students persists across virtually all types of cities.



- According to PolicyLink's [Equity Atlas](#), 40.83% of students of color were in high-poverty schools while only 8.5% of white students were.
- Children of color/ALAANA children represent the majority of students in 83 of the 100 largest U.S. cities.
- In about half of the largest 100 cities, most African Americans and Latinx students attend school where at least 75% of all students qualify as poor or low-income.
- A 2009 report by the Government Accountability Office found that schools designated under No Child Left Behind as needing improvement and schools with higher percentages of students of color were more likely to experience decreases in time spent on arts education.
- Where there are few or no arts courses, the educational picture often includes higher dropout rates, less availability of high-level coursework or effective teachers, and poor academic performance.
- The 2007 research study, "An Unfinished Canvas – Arts Education in California" (SRI) reported that, "in California's more affluent schools, almost twice the percentage of students received instruction in each arts discipline compared with the high-poverty schools," confirming that access to arts education is directly related to the fundamental injustices in the education system.
- In the National Assessment of Education Progress' 2016 Arts Assessment, students from higher-income families, suburban students, private-school students and white students outperformed their peers in visual arts and music – the disciplines addressed in the study.

From schools to prisons:

- Whether and how a child is punished for acting up in school could depend on his race, a 2018 report by the Government Accountability Office (GAO) found.
- The report found that black students in K-12 schools are far more likely to be disciplined — whether through suspension or referral to law enforcement — than their counterparts of other races.
- When a student is suspended or expelled, there is a significant increase in his or her likelihood of being involved in the juvenile justice system the subsequent year.
- [Minority youth are overrepresented within—and treated differently by—the juvenile justice system compared to their white peers.](#)
- Minority youth are more likely to be detained and committed than non-Hispanic whites.
- African American youth have the highest rates of involvement compared to other racial groups.
- African American children make up 16% of all youth in the general population,
 - but make up 30% of juvenile court referrals,
 - make up 38% of youth in residential placement, and
 - make up 58% of youth admitted to state adult prison.
- Many youth who come into contact with the juvenile justice system have experienced academic failure, disengagement from school, and/or school disciplinary problems. Academic outcomes for these youth are generally less positive than those of youth who do not come into contact with the system.
 - Nearly half of all students who enter residential juvenile justice facilities have an academic achievement level that is below the grade equivalent for their age.
 - Youth in the juvenile justice system are identified as eligible for special education services at three to seven times the rate of youth outside the system.



- Many incarcerated youth are marginally literate or illiterate and have already experienced school failure.
- GIA believes in the benefits of the arts to students' educational experiences and outcomes.
 - While we do believe in the benefits of the arts to people's engagement with one another, we do not offer the arts as the solution to the systemic criminalization of students of color.

The benefits of the arts to low-income students:

- [Longitudinal studies indicate that arts education increases literacy, advances math achievement, engages students in school, and motivates them to learn.](#)
- Research by Social Impact of the Arts Project (SIAP) at University of Pennsylvania revealed that cultural assets' contribution to other positive social outcomes is greater in low-income, urban communities.
- SIAP's findings have found that the presence of cultural assets (arts organizations, arts-related businesses such as for-profit music clubs, artists and arts participants) in low-income urban communities are correlated with improved outcomes in the realms of education, health and safety.
- Cultural assets matter more in low-income communities for community health.
- A recent study by the Brookings Institution studied a Houston program, which infuses arts in schools.
 - The study utilized a randomized, control trial and found statistically significant effects on school climate, well-being, compassion, and writing performance
- The National Endowment for the Arts' 2012 report *The Arts and Achievement in At-Risk Youth* found that socially and economically disadvantaged students outperformed their peers when engaged in arts-rich experiences.
 - This extended to higher test scores, better grades, higher graduation rates, and increased college enrollment.
 - When engaged with the arts, kids living in the deepest levels of poverty actually outperformed the general population in a number of areas, including math grades and high school graduation rates.
- In 2018, the President's Committee on the Arts and the Humanities issued a report on their Turnaround Arts Initiative, which integrates arts into the curricula of some of the lowest-performing schools in the nation.
 - As a result, these Turnaround Arts schools improved, on average, 22.55% in math proficiency rates and 12.62% in reading proficiency.
 - Half of the schools observed increased attendance rates and five out of eight schools saw dramatic reductions in disciplinary actions.

GIA challenges myths that have informed these practices with our members by sharing that:

- We have disinvested in public education and arts in education in communities of color
- This disinvestment is by design
- Low levels of educational attainment, the over-policing and criminalization of communities of color result in the over-representation of children and adults of color in the criminal justice system

GIA shares alternative practices from and with our members, such as:



- A significant body of evidence showing the positive impacts of the arts on the social and academic development of high-needs and at-risk students reinforces the idea of investing in arts education for this purpose.
 - The arts can connect marginalized students to their school experience, activate parental involvement, and promote student success.
- GIA's advocacy consultants Penn Hill Group has prepared [informational guidelines for states with approved Every Student Succeeds Act \(ESSA\) plans](#) that GIA members can share with grantees, so they can advocate for new or expanded arts programs at their local schools
 - This tool is useful for GIA members, the arts education field, and organizers on the ground to leverage support and increase resources going toward quality arts and arts education at the state, district, and even individual school level.

Examples of alternative practices:

- The California Alliance for Arts Education has developed a "policy pathway" to enable Title I schools to use Title I funds to promote arts education strategies.
 - Combating confusion and false perceptions about the allowable uses for this funding, the Alliance has worked with the U.S. Department of Education and the California Department of Education to clarify that Title I funds may be used for arts activities that are designed to help improve academic achievement for at-risk students.
 - Meadow Homes Elementary School, a chronically underperforming school in a high-poverty area of Concord, is using Title I funding to provide each child with 30 minutes of music, 90 minutes of visual art or theater, and 90 minutes of hands-on science learning every week and has seen improvements in almost every facet of her school.
 - San Diego Unified School District, the second largest in California, is investing \$3 million of Title I funds over a two-year period to promote arts integration strategies in 22 schools as an innovative way to increase student success.
 - The Alliance's recently unveiled [website](#) provides school and district leaders with compliance guidance, research resources, and examples of schoolsite strategies to advance this policy pathway.
- In 2014 New York City's State of the Arts report used data made available from the city's Annual Arts Education Survey, indicated a correlation between lack of access to the arts and poverty
 - The City dedicated \$23M in additional arts funding to hire 120 new certified arts teachers for underserved schools, increased funds dedicated to training arts teachers, and increased funding for school-based arts facilities.
- In Boston, a district-wide inventory showed that only one in four Boston public high schools offered arts instructions to more than a quarter of their students.
 - Over time, Boston increased by 80% their full-time arts teachers.
- In Seattle, research revealed the opportunity gap in education was determined by race
 - The Creative Advantage is a city-wide initiative to establish equitable access to arts education for each and every student in Seattle Public Schools.
 - The program consists of funding programs, professional development – including culturally-relevant pedagogy, cultural partnerships, public education initiatives, and arts and cultural learning and events for the city's young people.



- The Creative Advantage is a city-wide initiative to establish equitable access to arts education for each and every student in Seattle Public Schools.
- The Creative Advantage is made possible through a public-private partnership with Seattle Public Schools, the City of Seattle Office of Arts & Culture, Seattle Foundation, and community arts partners.
- Arts Partner Professional Development: The Creative Advantage invests in teaching artists and educators through workshops that deepen qualities of practice and foster community. This includes an annual School Arts Partner Summer Institute, Teaching Artist Meet-Ups, and Professional Learning Workshops. Emerging to established teaching artists, teachers, administrators, and youth development workers are invited to participate in these trainings presented in partnership with Seattle Art Museum.
- Among the criteria to select teaching artists is experience with culturally-relevant pedagogy.
- Career Days for Teens and Young Adults: Career Days invite young people to discover and explore careers within Seattle's diverse creative sectors, including Literary Arts, Visual Arts, Film, and Music. These free-to-attend, one-day events provide young people ages 16 - 24 direct access to industry professionals through networking, experiential learning, engaging conversations, and performances.
- Media Arts Skill Centers: The Creative Advantage supports Seattle Public Schools Media Arts Skill Centers. The Skills Center is a pathway to creative industry jobs for 16-20 year old Seattle Public Schools students. The Seattle Skills Center's new Media Arts course offers creative, technical and professional training for students interested in pursuing a career in Media Arts. Visit Seattle Public Schools to learn more about more about Media Arts Skills Center Course offerings for students
- Creative Careers Cohort: The 2019 Creative Careers Cohort includes six organizations from The Creative Advantage roster, dedicated to arts education programming that supports career exploration in the arts and creative industries. This is a pilot funding initiative in support of existing programs that provide leadership development with teens in the Seattle area. Participants are part of a cohort designed to foster learning amongst peers in the field, and to inventory creative youth development best practices for career connected learning and 21st Century Skills acquisition.
- The Creative Advantage: The arts partner roster is a vetted list of teaching artists and community arts and culture organizations that have been approved to work in Seattle Public Schools through The Creative Advantage.
- Youth Arts grant: Making a difference in the lives of Seattle middle and high school youth by providing arts education beyond the regular school day in neighborhoods throughout the city.
- smART ventures grant: Encouraging innovation and widening cultural participation, particularly by individuals, organizations and communities that may not qualify for other grant programs.