



# BPS Arts Expansion 2026-2027 School Year Grant Guidelines

# About EdVestors



## ***Mission***

Advance equitable, meaningful education that prepares every Boston student to activate their power and shape their future.

EdVestors serves as a:

- Connector that partners with the district, schools, community-based organizations, higher education, and philanthropy to advance efforts in issue areas that are a priority for schools and students.
- Catalyst for systems change in Boston, creating pathways from classroom to career, ensuring access to arts education, improving math teaching and learning, and seeding racial equity efforts in schools.
- Champion that shines a light on the educators and schools that create and continuously improve learning environments where all students thrive.



Since 2002, EdVestors has raised and invested over \$52 million in school improvement efforts.



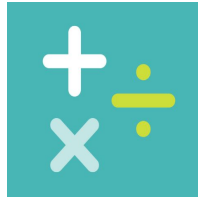
# Overview of EdVestors Programs



We scale and spread efforts to close opportunity and outcome gaps for students



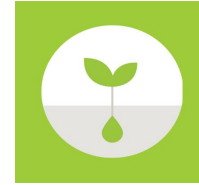
BPS Arts Expansion



Mathematics



Career Pathways



Racial Equity

We spotlight improving schools and document their efforts



School on the Move Prize

# BPS Arts Expansion Goals



*Overarching goal: Increase equitable access to quality arts education for Boston's public school students*

## **LONG-TERM SUSTAINABILITY AND OWNERSHIP**

Protect the increased annual investment by the BPS and highlight the continued role and relevance of arts education for youth and families to sustain quality arts education for all students.

*Communications and Policy  
Activities*

## **EXPAND ARTS INSTRUCTION AND BUILD CAPACITY**

Support policies and practices at the school and district level that further enable BPS to prioritize equitable access and provide high quality arts education.

*Grantmaking and Project  
Implementation Support Activities*

## **STRENGTHEN AND COORDINATE PARTNERSHIPS**

Strengthen partnerships that value cultural responsiveness, center community connections and youth voice, and work in coordination with district leadership, school leadership and arts teachers.

*Stakeholder Engagement Activities*

*BPS Arts Expansion has distributed over \$9.2 million in grants since 2009.*



# Grant Focus Areas



## SCHOOL ARTS INDEX

*Increase access to quality arts education as measured by the BPS [School Arts Index](#).*

- Direct arts instruction
- Sequential learning
- Family and community engagement
- Culturally responsive instruction
- Racial equity
- Returning grantees (funded for 3 years or more with schools in the Expanding or Excelling School Arts Index categories) may apply for a one or two year grant
- Typical grant award: \$3,000-7,000

## CAREER CONNECTED LEARNING

*Increase or enhance access to quality arts career learning opportunities in grades 7-12.*

- Work-based learning
- Collaborative instruction
- Credential preparation
- Returning grantees (funded for 3 years or more with schools in the Expanding or Excelling School Arts Index categories) may apply for a one or two year grant
- Typical grant award: \$7,000-\$10,000

## INDIVIDUAL ARTS EDUCATOR

*Support individual arts teachers and teaching artists.*

- Professional development
- Supplies, materials
- Up to \$600 each

# School Arts Data from 25/26:



## School Arts Data from SY25-26:

- [PreK-8 BPS Arts Data](#)
- [Secondary \(High\) School BPS Arts Data](#)

Applicants should utilize current School Arts Data to support their applications for the following purposes:

- During the grant review process, schools in the *Beginning* and *Developing* categories typically receive priority in alignment with the BPS Arts Expansion goals.
- If applying for a two year School Arts Index or Career Connected Learning grant, returning grantees partnering with a school for 3 or more years must also verify that the school is in the *Expanding* or *Excelling* categories.

# School Arts Index Grant Proposals



*Increase access to quality arts education as measured by the BPS [School Arts Index](#)*

*Proposed project should focus on positively impacting TWO of the following School Arts Index Indicators:*

## DIRECT ARTS INSTRUCTION

- (PreK-8): Increase % of students receiving more than 22.5 hours of instruction
- (HS): Increase # of students meeting MassCore arts graduation requirement of at least 126 hours of arts credit in grades 9-12
- Increase # of arts disciplines being offered

## SEQUENTIAL LEARNING

- Create a sequential arts pathway across 3 consecutive grade levels
- Increase # of consecutive grades offering the same arts discipline (3 or more consecutive grades)

## FAMILY AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

- Provide specific opportunity for families to witness and/or participate in arts learning
- Implement a specific project amplifying student/family/community voice
- Examples: student performances & art shows, volunteer opportunities, festivals, parent arts committee

## CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE INSTRUCTION

- Arts instruction aligned with BPS [culturally and linguistically sustaining practices](#) such as: music repertoire and/or theatre and dance curriculum reflecting genres and artists from multiple cultures and traditions; choice-based visual and media arts that authentically affirm students' cultures and respond to their interests
- Provide arts instruction specifically for students with disabilities, Multilingual Learners, or diverse students who have been marginalized educationally

## RACIAL EQUITY

- Content and curriculum that amplifies BIPOC narratives and voice
- Student-driven projects that use the arts as a medium to advance anti-racism and racial justice (examples: original art pieces reflecting students' personal experiences with racial injustice or student-composed protest songs to combat anti-Asian hate)

# School Arts Index Indicators



## DIRECT ARTS INSTRUCTION

Proposed direct arts instruction provides an *increase* in the dosage and/or frequency of arts.

**Arts residency must include evidence of:**

- (PreK-8): Increase % of students receiving more than 22.5 hours of instruction
- (HS): Increase # of students meeting MassCore arts graduation requirement of at least 126 hours of arts credit in grades 9-12
- Increase # of arts disciplines being offered



# School Arts Index Indicators



## SEQUENTIAL LEARNING

Proposed arts instruction provides a sequential arts pathway or an increase of consecutive grades offering the same arts discipline.

**Arts residency must include evidence of:**

- Create a sequential arts pathway across 3 consecutive grade levels
- Increase # of consecutive grades offering the same arts discipline (3 or more consecutive grades)

# School Arts Index Indicators



## FAMILY AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Proposed residency provides opportunities for robust family engagement.

**Arts residency must describe a combination of the following:**

- Provide specific opportunity for families to witness and/or participate in arts learning
- Implement a specific project amplifying student/family/community voice
- Examples: student performances & art shows, volunteer opportunities, festivals, parent arts committee

This indicator should not be used if the residency describes a one-time event or opportunity. The [School Arts Index](#) describes Family Engagement as: *Family and community attend 2+ arts events per year; explicit family input drives portions of curriculum/content.*

# School Arts Index Indicators



## CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE INSTRUCTION

Proposed residency provides thoughtful, intentional culturally responsive instruction specific to the identities and lived experiences of the students being served.

### **Arts residency must include details on:**

- Arts instruction aligned with BPS [culturally and linguistically sustaining practices](#) such as: music repertoire and/or theatre and dance curriculum reflecting genres and artists from multiple cultures and traditions; choice-based visual and media arts that authentically affirm students' cultures and respond to their interests.
- Provide arts instruction specifically for students with disabilities, multilingual learners, and/or students who are from identities and lived experiences that have been marginalized educationally.

This indicator should not be used if the residency describes an isolated or one time curricular unit, recognition, or celebration, but rather exemplifies thoughtful, intentional planning and facilitation.

# School Arts Index Indicators



## RACIAL EQUITY

Proposed residency provides opportunities to advance racial equity through the arts to further anti-racism and racial justice.

**Arts residency must include details on:**

- Content and curriculum that amplifies BIPOC narratives and voice
- Student-driven projects that use the arts as a medium to advance anti-racism and racial justice (examples: original art pieces reflecting students' personal experiences with racial injustice or student-composed protest songs to combat anti-Asian hate)

This indicator should not be used if the residency describes an isolated or one time curricular unit, recognition, or celebration, but rather exemplifies thoughtful, intentional planning and facilitation.

# Creative Ecosystem Definition



The creative ecosystem encompasses occupations that **contribute to both cultural enrichment and economic growth**. It includes a broad range of **technical and artistic skills**, applied in various contexts that can be categorized in one of three ways:

- a. artistic roles at non-creative sites
- b. artistic roles at creative sites
- c. non-artistic roles at creative sites

This definition extends beyond traditional creative roles, recognizing the intersection of creativity with other industries and practices. The purpose of this definition, in part, is to **expand the traditional scope of what is considered creative work**.

The creative ecosystem includes, but is not limited to, the following occupational clusters. The clusters provide a framework for understanding labor market trends:

- + Arts Education
- + Design and Digital Arts
- + Design and Production
- + Fashion and Interiors
- + Fine Arts
- + Lighting & Sound Technology
- + Media Production and Broadcasting
- + Performing Arts
- + Software Solutions



# Career Connected Learning Proposals



***Increase or enhance access to quality arts career learning opportunities in grades 7-12***

*Proposed project should focus on how the project will increase or enhance access to quality arts learning through the following Career Connected Learning Indicators:*

## WORK BASED LEARNING

Enables students to participate in structured career exploration and work readiness activities or skills demonstration projects that foster learning about the world of work in the creative ecosystem. *Examples: arts internships for school credit/pay, audio engineering for a community-based project or event, job shadowing.*

## COLLABORATIVE INSTRUCTION

Enables arts partners to collaborate with arts teacher on deepening or creating career connected learning opportunities for students. *Examples: radio broadcasting, woodworking in visual arts class.*

## CREDENTIAL PREPARATION

Enables students to make progress toward attainment of an arts/creative industry recognized credential or arts college credits. *Examples: Dual enrollment, Adobe Suite certification.*

*Partnerships with arts organizations/teaching artists are strongly encouraged for Career Pathways proposals.*

# Who Can Apply?



## ELIGIBILITY

All Boston Public Schools can apply for School Arts Index or Career Connected Learning grants. Schools must have a completed [2025-26 School Arts Survey](#) on file when submitting their application. To verify if a school has responded to the survey, check [here](#)

Scan QR code to access the 2025-26 School Arts Survey.

Please note that the survey should be completed by schools.



# Who Can Apply?



## ELIGIBILITY

Proposals must include a **school cash contribution** as part of the Total Project Budget equaling at least 10% of the Total Grant Request (Line L). The required school cash contribution increases to 20% for applicants who have received BPS Arts Expansion support for 3 or more years.

### Number of Applications:

- Schools can be connected with no more than **2 proposals**.
- Arts partners can apply for support to work with no more than **4 schools**.

If an arts partner is planning to apply with more than 4 schools, please e-mail [artsfund@edvestors.org](mailto:artsfund@edvestors.org) to schedule a conversation with EdVestors staff.



# Grant Guidelines



## RESTRICTIONS

**Grant Funds are not intended to support the following:**

- One-time field trips or performances, short-term workshops, or other arts exposure activities.
- Equipment purchases or bus transportation as the primary focus of the grant request. Some modest equipment or transportation costs may be considered as part of a larger proposed project. *\*Please note that any equipment or unused supplies and materials purchased utilizing grant funds become property of Boston Public Schools after the project is complete.*
- Arts instruction that takes place exclusively during out-of-school time without an explicit connection to in school curriculum or activities.
- Grant Funds may not be used to pay for teacher salaries but a portion may be used for teacher stipends.
- Grant funds should not be used to replace line items in existing school or district budgets. Funds are intended to extend or complement existing resources.

# Individual Arts Educator Grant Proposals



***Support BPS certified arts teachers and teaching artists by building their artistic practice***

## PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Professional development (PD) for arts educators to further develop their artistic practice or teaching methods. Examples: enrollment in a class; attendance at a conference or summer institute; participation in a webinar series.

*\*Please note that grantees may be asked to provide PD related documentation or work samples after completion*

## ARTS SUPPLIES

Supplies, materials or equipment needed for a specific project or curriculum unit. Examples: purchase of specific materials needed for a clay sculpture unit or costumes needed for a specific theatre or dance project.

*\*Any equipment or unused supplies and materials purchased utilizing grant funds become property of Boston Public Schools after project completion*

Teaching artists must be teaching a long term (min. 30 hours) in-school arts residency at a BPS school during the 2025-26 school year to be eligible. **Applications for Individual Arts Educator support of up to \$600 must be completed electronically via the following link: [https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/IAESY26\\_27](https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/IAESY26_27).** For accessibility and reference purposes, questions can be accessed [here](#).

# Timeline and How to Apply



January 8, 2026, 3-4:30 pm

February 26, 2026

Early June

June 11, 2026, 4-5:30 pm

September 2026-June 2027

[Virtual Information session](#)

Grant Applications due by 4:00pm

Grant Awards Announced

Virtual Grantee Orientation meeting

Grant Period

*You may be asked to have a follow-up conversation with EdVestors during the grant decision period.*

## APPLICATION LINKS

**School Arts Index and Career Connected Learning:** <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/BPSAE2627>

*For accessibility and reference purposes, questions can be accessed [here](#).*

**Individual Arts Educator:** [https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/IAESY26\\_27](https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/IAESY26_27)

*For accessibility and reference purposes, questions can be accessed [here](#).*

# Questions



Grant Application Deadline: Thursday, February 26, 2026, 4pm



*Questions?* E-mail [artsfund@edvestors.org](mailto:artsfund@edvestors.org)

*BPS Arts Expansion Grant Information Session:*

Thursday, January 8, 2026, 3-4:30 pm

[Register here.](#)

*Office Hours:*

Applicants can schedule meeting with Nikki Olusanya, BPS Arts Expansion Director, to discuss their proposal ideas and ask specific questions regarding their application.

Schedule your appointment by email: [olusanya@edvestors.org](mailto:olusanya@edvestors.org)

Or call 617-585-5746

*For more information on BPS Arts Expansion, [click here.](#)*



## Upcoming BPS Arts Public Events

- MLK Jr. Celebration (January 15)
- Youth Arts Month Celebration (March 14, Boston City Hall)
- Citywide Arts Festival (May 18-22)

*Please note all dates are subject to change.*

