



Turnaround Arts

The Kennedy Center

Quality Music Education Access Contributes to Overall Improvements in School Climate

A study on music education investments in Turnaround Arts schools shows significant increase to music education access and expanded learning opportunities

Washington, D.C. (May 20, 2019)--A new study from the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts reveals that even a modest investment in music education, paired with a commitment from the school to include music as part of a well-rounded education, often in conjunction with other initiatives, returns a number of benefits. Researchers explored music education instruction, specialists and curriculum at [Turnaround Arts](#) schools, finding a relationship between higher quality music education and improvements in school climate, lower levels of suspensions, and higher student achievement.

Upon joining the Turnaround Arts program, schools received many benefits including access to a grant of \$6,000-10,000 from The NAMM Foundation earmarked for music education. Access to music education at these schools increased from 27.8% to 75%, and the average number of minutes of music instruction per week increased from 17 to 33, nearing the national average of 40 minutes per week.

“Our results indicate that with a relatively small investment, Turnaround Arts schools were able to leverage the investment to make statistically significant gains in access to music education,” said Dr. Charles Beekman, Research Analysis Manager at the Kennedy Center. “Turnaround Arts schools are facing some of the toughest challenges in the country, yet we saw robust and statistically significant correlations between scores on an evidence-based Quality Music Education index with overall school climate and reductions in levels of suspensions, suggesting additional research is warranted.”

When schools’ Quality Music Education (QME) index, which is made up of curriculum, scheduling, and staffing guidelines, went up, schools reported not only that student achievement, specifically in English Language Arts proficiency, was higher, but also that staff’s dedication to student learning went up. Moreover, as schools’ QME rose, levels of suspensions dropped.

Turnaround Arts is a program of the Kennedy Center that implements arts education as a strategy to bolster school reform efforts in 79 focus and priority elementary and middle schools across the U.S. Since Turnaround Arts’ creation in 2011, The NAMM Foundation has contributed \$565,000 in music education expansion grants to Turnaround Arts schools nationwide. The grants are designated to support the development of music programming in Turnaround Arts schools with professional development, instruments, instrument storage and/or

maintenance, music-based artist residencies, performance space improvements, or some combination thereof.

"I know firsthand that having music in school helps to keep kids in school and inspired to learn; it did that for me as a kid when I started playing drums at my local public school," said Chad Smith, Turnaround Artist mentor and drummer for Red Hot Chili Peppers. "Working with Turnaround Arts, I've had the opportunity to see schools come to life as they join the program and their hallways fill with music and arts. All kids deserve to have access to quality music education in their schools."

Music education grants from The NAMM Foundation are one of the many benefits that schools receive as part of the Turnaround Arts program, which also includes professional development for arts-based learning across the curricula, mentoring from both high-profile artists, like Smith, and local artists, art supplies, licenses to produce musicals, and much more. Turnaround Arts is part of a portfolio of outcomes-based arts education programs that the Kennedy Center offers, contributing to a growing body of evidence that the arts can help to create positive social and academic impact.

This research project was designed to characterize The NAMM Foundation's support of Turnaround Arts schools and the impact on the schools' music education programs and whether the impact was associated with adaptive changes in student adjustment or school climate. Dr. Muna Shami and Dr. Charles Beekman served as co-principal investigators—from the Research and Evaluation department of the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts' Education division.

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About Education at the Kennedy Center

The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts sets a national standard for arts learning. Working through model programs and a nationwide network of partners, the nation's cultural center harnesses the power of the arts to address education challenges, accelerate best practices, and uplift citizen artists. Across all its programs, the Kennedy Center is committed to increasing accessible, inclusive opportunities for people of all ages and backgrounds to participate in, learn about, and learn through the arts.

Highlights of the 2018-2019 season include the 50th anniversary of the Kennedy Center American College Theater Festival, which impacts thousands of college-aged theater students across the country; the expansion of Ensuring the Arts for Any Given Child into two new communities; and Long Way Down, a Kennedy Center-commissioned work based on the young adult novel of the same name. On September 7, 2019, the Kennedy Center will open the REACH, an immersive arts and learning center with significant space and programming for arts education.

As an essential component of the living memorial to President Kennedy, the Center's Education programs utilize the arts to embrace President Kennedy's ideals of service, justice, freedom, courage, and gratitude. By cultivating the citizen artist in everyone, the Kennedy Center brings the arts and creativity to the center of our lives. For more information, please visit [kennedy-center.org/education/](https://www.kennedy-center.org/education/).

About The NAMM Foundation

The NAMM Foundation is a non-profit supported in part by the National Association of Music Merchants and its 10,400 members around the world. The NAMM Foundation works to advance active participation in music making across the lifespan by supporting scientific research, philanthropic giving and public

service programs. For more information about The NAMM Foundation, please visit www.nammfoundation.org

About Turnaround Arts

Turnaround Arts, a program of the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, bolsters reform efforts at Priority and Focus-designated schools (PK-8) through the strategic use of the arts. Designed to impact every hallway, classroom, staff member, and student in the school, the program fuels whole-school transformation. As part of Turnaround Arts, schools receive an array of arts education services designed to increase chances of success, engage communities, and raise the visibility of their achievements. Turnaround Arts works with 79 schools in 17 states and the District of Columbia.

<http://turnaroundarts.kennedy-center.org>

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