



## **TURNAROUND: ARTS** creating success in schools

### **NEW YORK CITY STUDENTS PERFORM AT WHITE HOUSE TURNAROUND ARTS TALENT SHOW**

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*President's Committee on the Arts and the Humanities program, Turnaround Arts, infuses high-need schools with the arts as strategy to help close the achievement gap and provide equitable access to arts and music education*

**Washington, D.C.** (May 25, 2016) — Today, students from Turnaround Arts schools **East Flatbush Community Research School, Ebbets Field Middle School, P.S. 165 Ida Posner, and P.S. 284 Gregory Jackson** performed for First Lady Michelle Obama, their peers and artist mentors at the White House Turnaround Arts Talent Show. The Talent Show showcased the power of the arts and music in school. Sixteen students presented “You Can’t Stop The Beat” a musical theater performance from *Hairspray* along with one their Turnaround Artist mentors, Paula Abdul, who has worked with her students since 2015.

Turnaround Arts, a signature program of the President’s Committee on the Arts and the Humanities, empowers high-need, low performing schools with innovative arts, dance, theater and music programs, arts integration across subject areas, arts resources, musical instruments, and high-profile artist mentors, as a proven strategy to help address broader school challenges and close the achievement gap. East Flatbush Community Research School, Ebbets Field Middle School, P.S. 165 Ida Posner, and P.S. 284 Gregory Jackson are four of 68 Turnaround Arts schools across the country and four in New York City.

"I congratulate our students on their achievement, and they'll carry this incredible experience of performing at the White House with them forever," said **Schools Chancellor Carmen Fariña**. "The arts are not an extra -- it's an integral part of our students learning to think creatively, becoming more engaged in their schoolwork, and finding productive passions and hobbies. That's why we've invested an additional \$23 million in arts education in New York City schools annually, and we're excited to have the highest number of arts teachers in a decade."

“Since Turnaround Arts came to New York City at the start of this school year, I have been in awe of the talent and commitment of our students, artists, educators, and other partners who have used the arts to inspire and engage,” said **NYC Cultural Affairs Commissioner Tom Finkelpearl**. “Watching our students join others from around the country to perform at the White House was a remarkable experience, and I look forward to seeing the incredible impact of this program for years to come.”

New York City joined this signature program of the **President’s Committee on the Arts and the Humanities** (PCAH) in 2105. Since becoming Turnaround Arts schools, East Flatbush Community Research School, Ebbets Field Middle School, P.S. 165 Ida Posner, and P.S. 284 Gregory Jackson have established dance, theater and music programs, mounted musical productions, painted a community mural, and initiated partnerships with arts organizations to deepen arts-integration instruction,

including ArtsConnection, Brooklyn Historical Society, Ifetayo Cultural Arts Academy, and Materials for the Arts.

During the White House Turnaround Arts Talent Show, the students unveiled a new music [video](#) (hyperlink to video) project featuring thousands of Turnaround Arts students from across the country alongside Turnaround Artists Jack Johnson, Chad Smith, Jason Mraz, Elizabeth Banks, Tim Robbins, Yo-Yo Ma, Keb' Mo', Josh Groban, Bernie Williams, Misty Copeland, Paula Abdul, Trombone Shorty, Alfre Woodard, Citizen Cope, Doc Shaw, Frank Gehry, John Lloyd Young, Carla Dirlikov and more.

In the video, produced by Playing for Change, New York City students and their artist mentors Misty Copeland and Paula Abdul dance to Sly and the Family Stone's "Everyday People." The project makes the case that all people deserve to experience the power of arts and music in school.

Six million children still do not have access to art or music instruction in their schools, and millions more school children have only minimal exposure to the arts. The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), which President Obama signed into law in December 2015, provides more funding and new guidelines for states and districts to invest in arts and music education for all children as part of a well-rounded education.

"The arts are central to who we are as a people, and they are central to the success of our kids. This is not an afterthought," said President Obama. "This is not something you do because it's kind of nice to do. It is necessary for these young people to succeed that we promote the arts."

Research conducted by Booz Allen Hamilton revealed an average 12.6% improvement in reading proficiency and 22.5% improvement in math proficiency, increases in attendance and significant decreases in suspensions following Turnaround Arts' infusion of the arts into struggling schools.

The program's success is leading to another expansion, as the number of Turnaround Arts schools will increase to 68 at the start of next school year. The program launched in 2012 as a pilot program with eight schools. Nationally, Turnaround Arts is made possible through the collaboration of government agencies, non-profit partners, and generous corporate and private donations. Local funders in New York City include the Steven & Alexandra Cohen Foundation and Wasily Family Foundation.

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