



## TURNAROUND ARTS

creating success in schools

A PROGRAM OF THE KENNEDY CENTER

**EMBARGO:**

May 8, 2017, 1 p.m. ET

### THREE RICHMOND PUBLIC SCHOOLS RECEIVE AN INFUSION OF THE ARTS AS PART OF NATIONAL TURNAROUND ARTS PROGRAM

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***Turnaround Arts, a program of the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, infuses struggling schools with the arts as strategy to help close the opportunity gap and provide equitable access to arts and music education***

**Richmond, Va.** (May 8, 2017) — On Monday, May 8, Richmond Public Schools, Dr. Dana T. Bedden, Mayor Levar Stoney, First Lady Dorothy McAuliffe along with Grammy-Award winning Dan Zanes and the John F. Kennedy Center for the Arts will announce that three Richmond Public schools, will join Turnaround Arts at the start of next school year. Turnaround Arts is a national program, created by the President's Committee on the Arts and the Humanities, proven to close the opportunity gap and provide equitable access to the arts in schools from Hawai'i to Rhode Island. These Richmond schools will be three of the 73 schools in 17 states and D.C. receiving Turnaround Arts' intensive arts education resources and integration as a strategy to turn around struggling schools.

"The Arts have been an integral part of Richmond Public Schools and has continued to grow and flourish. Our schools are amongst a handful of school divisions in the Commonwealth that offers the breadth of art programs including visual arts, chorus, band, orchestra, strings, harp, dance & theater," said Superintendent Dr. Dana T. Bedden. "We are excited to welcome the Turnaround Arts Program from the President's Committee on Arts and Humanities to our schools."

Turnaround Arts, empowers struggling 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 turn them around.

Turnaround Arts started in 2012 as a pilot program in eight schools to test the findings of a President's Committee on the Arts and Humanities report titled *Reinvesting in Arts Education: Winning America's Future Through Creative Schools*. [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.

"At Turnaround Arts schools nationwide, we've seen that equitable access to arts education is a powerful tool in turning around struggling schools," said Kennedy Center President Deborah F.



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Rutter. "Today, announce that

Turnaround Arts continuing through a partnership with the Kennedy Center, but also that the program will expand to schools in Richmond and Providence at the start of next school year. I look forward to seeing the progress that these schools make and the joy that these students will find in learning through the arts."

we are happy to not only is

Turnaround Artist Mentor will each adopt a Richmond school, as Turnaround Artist mentors providing students with a motivational morning greeting, guidance in their artistic endeavors, annual visits to check on progress, and special arts integration projects:

### **Binford Middle School – Artist: Jason Mraz**

*"I am thrilled to serve and support a new Turnaround Arts school in the very community where I grew up, Richmond, VA. The arts, a study and nurturing of imagination and creativity, are the key to a happy and successful life. I've seen the Turnaround Arts program open doors to life, love, creativity and endless imagination at my first Turnaround Arts school in San Diego. I'm looking forward to joining the kids at Binford Middle on their journey, and support their growth with the benefit of a vibrant arts education program." – Jason Mraz*

### **Martin Luther King Jr. Middle School – Artists: Black Violin (Kev Marcus, Wil B)**

*"We are incredibly excited to become Turnaround Artist because this perfectly aligns with our career goal...to educate, entertain, and inspire a new generation of creative innovators and forward thinkers." - Kev Marcus and Wil B of Black Violin*

### **Woodville Elementary School – Artist: Dan Zanes**

*"I am very grateful to have the chance to connect with some young people through the work of Turnaround Arts. I truly believe in the power of the arts to change lives. It's a pleasure to have the chance to share the story of how this happened for me and to hear what's going on with the students I'll be in contact with over the next few years!" - Dan Zanes*

Nationally, Turnaround Arts is made possible through a collaboration of government agencies, non-profit partners, and generous corporate and private [donations](#). Locally, Richmond Public Schools is fortunate to have a wide range of incredibly active partners in the arts community that provide great opportunities for our students.

Participating schools were competitively selected by program partners according to national guidelines. Selection criteria included demonstrated need and opportunity, strong school leadership with district support, and a commitment to arts education. Turnaround Arts schools represent elementary and middle schools from across the country and encompass a diversity of student demographics in urban and rural settings.

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