

THE ARTS AND ARTS EDUCATION

KNOW THAT YOUR VOICE MATTERS

One of the first steps to advocacy is embracing the idea that you have the power to change the world around you. Your voice is important. It matters. Get out there and use it!

PLEASE NOTE: The following information is meant to inspire ways in which students can advocate for the arts. In light of the COVID-19 pandemic, it is imperative that you follow health safety guidelines and adapt any in-person experiences to accommodate social distancing or virtual experiences, when possible.

FIGURE OUT WHAT YOU ARE PASSIONATE ABOUT AND WHY

Ask yourself, “why do I love the arts and why do I want them to stay in your schools?” How do you feel when you practice your favorite piano sequence? What makes your weekly art classes fun? What’s your favorite song to sing in choir? How does dancing make you feel? What do you learn about yourself and others through your theatre practice? Think about why you love the arts and write it down. It is important to be clear about your passions so that you can communicate your feelings and ideas effectively.

BE INFORMED AND KNOW YOUR FACTS

- The arts are proven to support students in school, but they also foster skills that make you successful in your career. Consider this: “A key and often overlooked benefit of exposure to the arts is that it fosters out-of-the-box thinking skills. These skills, such as creativity, innovation, critical thinking, problem-solving, communication and collaboration, are precisely what we need to build a stronger workforce, a report from the Partnership for 21st Century Learning found.” (Source: Matthews, C. “The best, most creative leaders in any field have a background in the arts” *The Dallas Morning News* (retrieved January 10, 2020).
 - What do you think about Charles Matthews’ statement that the best, most creative leaders in any field have a background in the arts?
 - What might he mean by that?
 - What did he mean when he talked about out-of-the-box thinking skills?
 - Why might he feel these skills build a stronger workforce?
- Learn how the arts support culture, economy, education, and health in Texas by reading the State of the Arts Report. Understanding how your arts education can support you in school, career, and in life, helps to broaden your perspective. Through your arts studies, you are preparing more than arts skills, you are preparing a road for success in life!
- Share these facts with others to grow awareness for the power of the arts.
 - Post on social media and link to the data. Use the hashtag #ArtCanTexas.
 - Educate your parents and teachers, so they are also equipped with the facts, too

TALK TO YOUR PARENTS ABOUT YOUR ARTISTIC AND CREATIVE INTERESTS

Sometimes we assume that our parents know everything about us, but some of our interests may fly under their radar. Is there a particular instrument you’d like to try? Do you wish your school had an art or anime club? Let them know! Our parents can be great supporters in communicating our needs to those in charge of making decisions.

ENCOURAGE YOUR PARENTS TO JOIN YOUR PTA AND BOOSTER CLUBS

- Parents and teachers are important allies. Communication and collaboration are key to impacting change.
- PTA meetings are for parents and teachers to gather together and discuss important issues and events at school. Having your parent there could be a great way to get other parents and teachers more interested in your concerns.

- Booster clubs are dedicated to supporting arts programs in your school. Encourage your parents to be involved and offer support when they are able.
- Ask your parents if you can give a speech or presentation at their PTA Meetings. You will have some of your most important allies in one room. Use that to your advantage. Let them know what you think of the school's arts programs and facilities.

START A STUDENT-LED NEWSLETTER AND ASK THE SCHOOL NEWSPAPER TO INCLUDE AN ARTS AND CULTURE SECTION IN THEIR EDITORIALS

Chances are that you're not the only student around who loves the arts. Get some friends together to start a newsletter for your school. Ask your teachers for permission to print a weekly/monthly/semesterly update on important art projects your school is working on, upcoming art and music events, or spotlight new clubs on campus.

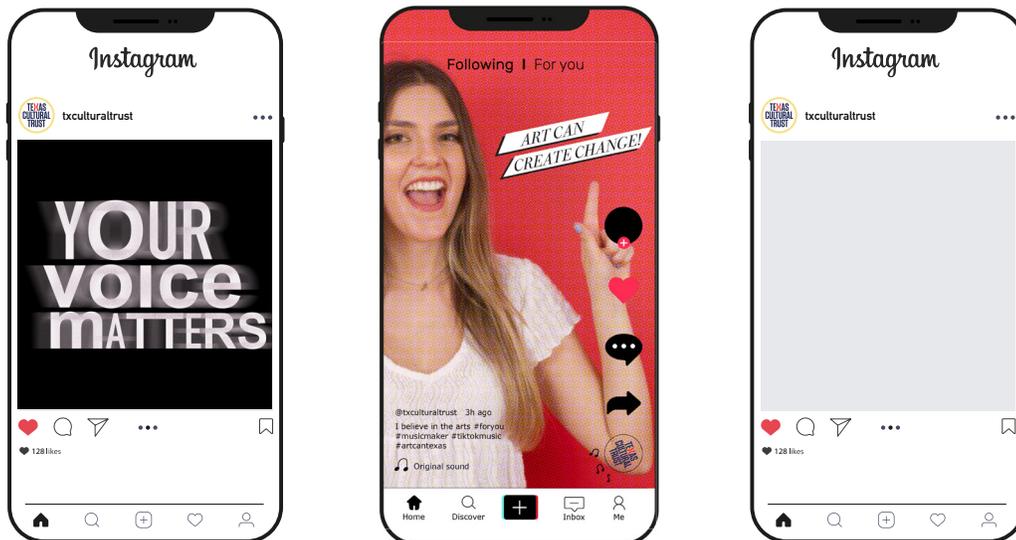
START A NEIGHBORHOOD-WIDE CHALK DAY

Invite other kids from your neighborhood to come and add their artistic touch to the concrete.

START A CAMPUS ARTS ADVOCACY GROUP

- Ask your arts teachers to sponsor the group, grab some friends, and pin down a location to host regular meetings. Get together and brainstorm ways to improve the arts in your schools.
- We are better when we work together. Seek out existing arts advocacy groups and get involved in the collective work of advocating for the arts. By letting other groups know about your group and its mission, you can gain valuable support and allies for future advocacy.
- Volunteer. Your group should volunteer to perform or showcase your art at local nursing homes, district events, community centers, or churches. Spread your gift around and show the world how much the arts can brighten their day.

BUILD A SOCIAL MEDIA CAMPAIGN



SUPPORT THE ARTS SUPPORT TEXAS

While there are many areas of opportunity for Texas, there are also many areas for needed improvement in arts access. Help ensure equitable access to the arts for all Texans by joining the Texas Cultural Trust as a Partner in the Arts and invite your family and friends to do the same.

Together we are shaping the future of our state through increased access to the arts for all Texans, including our children!

Learn more about how to promote and support the arts in Texas by visiting ArtCanTexas.org or contacting the Texas Cultural Trust directly.

-  facebook.com/txculturaltrust
-  twitter.com/txculturaltrust
-  instagram.com/txculturaltrust



TEXAS CULTURAL TRUST

The Texas Cultural Trust is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization whose mission is to be the leading voice for the arts in education, advocacy, and economic impact in Texas, while spotlighting the artistic excellence of our state. Programs of the Texas Cultural Trust include the Texas Medal of Arts Awards, Art Can, Texas Young Masters, Texas Women for the Arts, Partners in the Arts, and Arts Access. Together with our partners we are shaping the cultural, educational, and economic future of Texas.