

MAC Hip Hop Project **Engaging** **High School Students and Hip Hop Artists**

REQUEST:

The City of Madison Arts Commission is requesting \$20,000 from the City of Madison's 2014 Budget to fund extra-curricular Hip Hop (stand alone and fusion) art initiatives for high school students.

GOALS/OUTCOMES

The primary goals of this project are:

- 1) to expand arts education opportunities for low-income students outside the classroom,
- 2) to give Madison artists residency/workshop opportunities with high school students, especially low-income students and students of color,
- 3) to support access to K-12 arts education, and
- 4) to improve the public image of hip hop as a positive and relevant art form.

BACKGROUND

Currently, the Madison Metropolitan School District funds an extracurricular arts education project with an emphasis on access and equity for low-income students in Grades K-8. The City of Madison's funds would extend extra-curricular arts initiatives to high school students with an emphasis on low-income students and those students who are challenged in a traditional academic setting.

Hip-hop provides a way of tapping into the creativity and intelligence of students through culturally relevant pedagogy. Scholars and teachers involved with culturally relevant pedagogy have demonstrated that employing artistic forms students are already engaged in can yield impressive and long-lasting results. The basic elements of hip-hop culture combine different modes of intelligence--verbal, musical, kinesthetic, visual--in ways that foster connection and collaboration among youth whose promise and talents have not been otherwise tapped into. One major advantage of hip-hop based educational projects is that it places the emphasis on the types of constructive hip-hop that are ignored by the commercial rap industry.

This initiative would bring Madison Hip Hop Artists together with high school students in a variety of resident settings/workshops to learn about and to perform in a number of hip hop art forms (rap, spoken word, break dancing, graffiti art, history of hip hop) in neighborhood centers, schools. There is a significant positive, historical contribution hip makes to today's culture. However, the negative images and words of commercial rap often prevents the richness of the hip culture from coming through to the broader community.

We are proposing this idea as a positive way for high school students to build upon their knowledge of and to engage in one of the most popular art forms among young people. Music, and other art forms, is already known to have positive impacts on a student's academic learning. We see this project expanding those positive attributes in high school students' neighborhoods as well as schools.

Importantly, we also anticipate:

- supporting public school efforts to reduce the achievement gap through culturally relevant arts education curriculum,
- promoting the positive impact local artists are making,
- demonstrating the cultural relevancy of hip hop in the arts, and
- improving the image of hip hop in the public eye.

Examples of venues of interest for the artist residencies/workshops would be neighborhood centers and/or schools in the City's Neighborhood Resource Team (NRT) areas.

Examples of Hip Hop Artists MMSD who have developed co-curricular and extra-curricular programs include:

Kevin Andrews, LLC	Hip Hop
Peter Olsen	Hip Hop
Rob Franklin (Rob Dz)	Hip Hop

TIMELINE

This project would be administered through the existing grant process of the Madison Arts Commission and would start with the 2014 grant process. As part of the grant application, applicants would be required to coordinate with the MMSD Fine Arts Coordinator. Grants would be awarded through the Commission's grant process with a specific category for Hip Hop projects for high school students. The Commission would reach out to MMSD and to the larger City of Madison community. Approved projects would take place during the 2014-2015 school year.