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What's Going on with Arts Ed in Chicago? (The 5 Things You Need To Know)

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In the Arts Education world, Chicago has been in the news a lot lately. To best understand what has gone on the past 2 or so years, we have compiled a concise list of events, news stories and reports to tell the tale for all of us non-Chicagoans.

1. Chicago's Cultural Plan

In February 2012, a [celebration](#) (<http://www.chicagoreader.com/chicago/mayor-emanuel-drops-chicago-cultural-plan-2012/Content?oid=7752414>) was held to mark the release of the City of Chicago's [Cultural Plan](#) (http://www.cityofchicago.org/city/en/depts/dca/supp_info/cultural_plan.html). Developed in conjunction with advocates, the Chicago Department of Cultural Affairs and Special Events (DCASE) along with Mayor Rahm Emanuel, the plan called for specific attention on [Arts Education within Chicago Public Schools](#) (<http://www.cpsarts.org/arts-education-plan/>) (CPS). After [one year](#)

in effect (<http://www.chicagoreader.com/chicago/cultural-plan-update-metropolitan-planning-council-dcase/Content?oid=11521792>), the several studies have been completed, data has been compiled and analysis is beginning.

2. Ingenuity, Incorporated

[Ingenuity, Inc. \(http://www.ingenuity-inc.org/\)](http://www.ingenuity-inc.org/) serves the citizens of Chicago as their advocate for a quality arts education for every student. With the release of the [CPS Arts Education Plan \(http://www.ingenuity-inc.org/cps-arts-education-plan\)](http://www.ingenuity-inc.org/cps-arts-education-plan), the organization has become a seminal voice for the arts in schools and communities. With the release of their key publication [The State of the Arts in Chicago Public Schools: Baseline Report 2012-13 \(http://www.ingenuity-inc.org/filebin/Ingenuity_StateoftheArts_BaselineReport.pdf\)](http://www.ingenuity-inc.org/filebin/Ingenuity_StateoftheArts_BaselineReport.pdf), the mayoral administration and board of education has had hard data to respond to and enact change.

3. Mayor Rahm Emanuel's Support

Overall, Chicago Mayor Rahm Emmanuel – former IL Congressman, Obama's White House Chief of Staff, and Senior Advisor to President Clinton – has been [supportive \(http://articles.chicagotribune.com/2012-10-15/entertainment/chi-culture-plan-emphasizes-arts-in-schools-20121015_1_arts-education-chicago-cultural-plan-arts-instruction\)](http://articles.chicagotribune.com/2012-10-15/entertainment/chi-culture-plan-emphasizes-arts-in-schools-20121015_1_arts-education-chicago-cultural-plan-arts-instruction) of the cultural plan and arts education in Chicago's schools and communities. Since the plan's reveal, he has overseen support for arts education by [developing granting opportunities \(http://www.chicagoreader.com/chicago/cultural-plan-update-metropolitan-planning-council-dcase/Content?oid=11521792\)](http://www.chicagoreader.com/chicago/cultural-plan-update-metropolitan-planning-council-dcase/Content?oid=11521792), sought to build [public-private partnerships \(http://medillreports.com/2014/10/21/emanuel-seeks-38-million-in-private-funding-for-cps-arts-education/\)](http://medillreports.com/2014/10/21/emanuel-seeks-38-million-in-private-funding-for-cps-arts-education/), and fought for an additional \$10million for arts education [\(http://www.cityofchicago.org/city/en/depts/mayor/press_room/press_releases/2014/dec/mayor-emanuel-and-chicago-public-schools-announce-10-million-in.html\)](http://www.cityofchicago.org/city/en/depts/mayor/press_room/press_releases/2014/dec/mayor-emanuel-and-chicago-public-schools-announce-10-million-in.html) in FY15.

4. Ingenuity's Follow Up Report

Just last month, after the momentous year for arts education in CPS, Ingenuity, Inc released their [Progress Report \(http://www.ingenuity-inc.org/filebin/IngenuityProgressReport_FINAL.pdf\)](http://www.ingenuity-inc.org/filebin/IngenuityProgressReport_FINAL.pdf) for 2013-14. The report showed [progress \(http://www.ingenuity-inc.org/news-updates/report-shows-close-90-cps-schools-complete-creative-schools-certification-100-schools-receive-1-million-creative-schools-fund/\)](http://www.ingenuity-inc.org/news-updates/report-shows-close-90-cps-schools-complete-creative-schools-certification-100-schools-receive-1-million-creative-schools-fund/) towards the city's goals and commented on the allocation of funds from the Creative Schools Fund.

Since we know this is a hot topic, I encourage you all to learn more about it (and here comes the shameless plug). The fifth point in this list is an invitation to learn more; check it out!

5. Convention

In June 2015, Americans for the Arts' members from across the country will convene in Chicago for the [Americans for the Arts Annual Convention \(More Information on Jan 29\). \(http://convention.artsusa.org/\)](http://convention.artsusa.org/) For arts education

supporters, this convention will have many sessions and events specifically for you. In particular, The Arts Education Program of Americans for the Arts will host a special workshop intensive entitled “Big Ideas in Arts Education for Local arts Leaders.” Be sure to save the date and make the most of being in Chicago for convention, and create your own personal learning lab from the great arts education happening all around you.

With all of this change happening since 2012, it is important to see the common threads that run through, like advocacy, strategy, and reporting.

Props to you, Chicago, Ingenuity, and Mayor Emanuel – you’re doing great work! I cannot wait to see what happens next!

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