



United Arts Council of Raleigh and Wake County
Contact: Karla Heinen
Communications Coordinator
(919) 839-1498, ext. 211
kheinen@unitedarts.org
www.unitedarts.org
@UnitedArtsCounc

United Arts Supports HB 13 to Preserve Funding for Arts Education Teachers

April 20, 2017

Eleanor Oakley, President and CEO of United Arts Council of Raleigh and Wake County, released the following statement:

On behalf of the children of Wake County Public Schools and across the state, we stand in support of [HB 13](#) to preserve funding for arts education teachers. Arts education is critically important for children's development. Visual art, music, theatre, and dance—already constrained under extremely tight budgets—are known to have lasting, positive impacts on the lives of students. The arts build confidence and the ability to work collaboratively, helping students become strong leaders. The arts help students learn math equations and learn about weather systems. The arts keep students interested in school—and [the arts keep students in school](#). The arts are versatile—and they are essential.

When cutting arts classes and laying off teachers is an option, the legislature needs to respond with a solution. Cutting arts classes and laying off teachers should never be an option. Our children's education should not, and need not, suffer because of an unintended consequence to limiting class size—a reasonable objective. We look to state leaders to make sound judgments in the best interest of the children in our state and to seek counsel from the school systems that serve those children.

As the designated arts council in Wake County, we work closely with schools across the county, including a formal partnership with Wake County Public School System. On a daily basis, we are in contact with the PTA volunteers, teachers, and staff who work tirelessly to bring visiting artists to their schools through our Artists in Schools program, a unique opportunity for students to engage with professional artists. We know the arts teachers in Wake County are vital to the success of Artists in Schools; we know they are vital to our children's success. We have the same goals for students in Wake County. These students need teachers of the arts in our schools next year. And the next year. And the next.

For more information, contact Karla Heinen at kheinen@unitedarts.org or (919) 839-1498, ext. 211.

The United Arts Council of Raleigh and Wake County, based in Raleigh, NC, was incorporated in 1990. Our mission is to build better communities through the support and advocacy of the arts. For the 2016/17 school year United Arts is helping bring in teaching artists to 137 schools in Wake County through its Artists in Schools program. The United Arts Council also offers grants to organizations, communities and individual artists and provides services to the community such as advocacy, resource development, professional/leadership development and special projects. The grants, programs and services of United Arts reach over 1.2 million people annually in Wake County.

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