



PCEF Program Spotlight

Elementary Visual Art Makes Art Education Part of the Whole Child School Day

It was during Melissa Allen's first year as an Art Specialist at Parley's Park Elementary School that she had one of her most memorable teaching experiences. "I had a third-grade student who struggled in the academic classroom. I recall him being very excited as I led his class into the art space, which was the cafeteria at the time. When I asked him why, he grinned from ear to ear and said softly, "Because I'm really good at art," said Melissa.

In addition to helping students hone important skills such as creative thinking, [reading and language development](#) and decision making, art education provides an alternative learning environment where students who may struggle in a normal academic setting can thrive. PCEF donors fund EVA programs for approximately 1,500 students in Parley's Park, McPolin and Trailside elementary schools and played a key role in bringing Parley's robust EVA program to life. EVA was integrated into the specialist curriculum at Parley's last year, which means students have art approximately three times a month.

"I am able to present 2-3 completed pieces of artwork per student, per month to hang in or around the classroom as well as an end of the year portfolio. We have a big spring art festival coming up, too," commented Melissa.

Parley's Park EVA program is embraced by the entire school community – students, teachers, parents and the administration. Teachers often participate in the lessons along with the students. Melissa noted, "I have lots of parents who love to come in to the classroom to create with their child and also get to know some of their kids' friends."

At the center of it all is the student experience and learning. "I love art. I like it because you can be creative and use your imagination," said 3rd grader Niahi Penubothu.

EVA is a collaboration between the Kimball Art Center (KAC) and PCEF, with the KAC providing the curriculum. With the generous support of donors and through fundraising events like [Running With Ed](#) (May 18), PCEF is able to fund over \$150,000 in Arts programs in the this academic year, which reach every one of the District's almost 5,000 students.

[Learn more](#) about the various Arts programs PCEF helps bring to life in Park City schools. Thank you to [Zion Bank](#) for supporting EVA.