

# **BOSTON ARTS ACADEMY**

## **MISSION AND VISION**

### **Values and Habits of Mind**

#### **Mission**

Boston Arts Academy, a pilot school within the Boston Public Schools, is charged with being a laboratory and a beacon for artistic and academic innovation. Boston Arts Academy prepares a diverse community of aspiring artist-scholars to be successful in their college or professional careers and to be engaged members of a democratic society.

#### **BAA Vision Statement**

By 2014, the Boston Arts Academy will be a recognized leader and advocate for the arts and their integration with academics in the national education reform movement. Viewed as the “Center for the Arts” within the Boston Public Schools, the BAA will be known nationally and internationally for successfully educating a diverse array of Boston public school learners in all aspects of the arts.

We envision a Boston Arts Academy that continues to be small, student-centered and reflective of the diversity of Boston’s neighborhoods and public schools becoming a school that:

- Graduates holistic thinkers who demonstrate interdisciplinary understanding when they integrate knowledge and different modes of thinking from two or more disciplines as they create products, solve problems and offer explanations of the world around them\*
- Enhances the strength of its faculty with a vibrant artists-in-residence program and the continuation of master classes across artistic disciplines
- Offers a healthy environment, and a more fully resourced array of student supports that enable students to effectively balance their student and family lives
- Imbeds advancements in technology into its program so that students have all the tools necessary to succeed artistically and academically
- Provides a highly effective mentoring and advising program that utilizes the diverse talents and networks of faculty, parents, alumni and friends from across the community
- Engenders a sense of community and traditions among its students
- Ensures the creation of an arts program at the middle school level, either directly or in collaboration with another Boston public school, to provide younger students with the experience needed to successfully enter and thrive at the high school level
- Continues to innovate with new programs such as new media and creative writing, as well as expanded summer arts and academics.

Our students will become desired, disciplined, well-trained creative artists and scholars who are aware of the world and of their responsibility to engage in it. In ten years time, we expect to see a strong and active alumni program that involves graduates as donors, mentors recruiters, board members and active participants in exhibitions and performances.

The Academy’s faculty, reflective of the student body, will be comprised of leaders, scholars and practicing artists, a mix of both generalists and specialists. It will be guided by continued strong leadership, inspired by a shared vision of artistic and academic excellence and sustained by thoughtful and well-developed systems of support. Adjuncts of distinction and visiting scholars will regularly extend the school’s offering to its students.

A visionary and diverse group of Trustees who are passionate about the arts, public education, and our students will contribute their professional expertise, wisdom, and broad ranging connections to help secure the human and financial resources to fully sustain the enterprise and make this vision a reality. The board will be inclusive of parents, who will be engaged, informed and connected to one another, as well as of our emerging young alumni. The school’s important connections to its founding institutions, the ProArts Consortium, will be maintained through the board as well as through programmatic and placement opportunities for Academy students and graduates.

The school community will be nourished and enhanced by multiple, vibrant connections to the community beyond our walls. Boston's diverse cultural community will embrace our students providing both learning and performance opportunities outside of school. Partnerships with a range of community organizations will offer an array of supports to meet student's needs.

By 2014, this vision will be carried out in expanded and improved instructional space that includes the capacity to serve a middle school as well as a high school population that continues to be located in close proximity to the city's cultural institutions and arts colleges. A well-planned performance space that seats 500 and appropriate amenities such as physical fitness facilities and parking will be available to the school.

## VALUES AND HABITS OF MIND

As an arts high school within the Coalition of Essential Schools, Boston Arts Academy promotes and engenders:

- Passion with balance
- Vision with integrity
- Diversity with respect
- Community with social responsibility

These values are encapsulated in the BAA Habits of the Graduate: **Refine, Invent, Connect, and Own** or **RICO**.

In all of BAA's arts and academic classes, students are asked to be mindful of the BAA Habits of the Graduate. These habits are akin to the "Habits of Mind" described by the educational philosopher John Dewey — the orientation towards learning that we want our graduates to demonstrate. These habits also form an intellectual framework that our students and staff use in every classroom, arts and academic. They represent the best aspects of both the artistic and academic processes.

- **Refine:** Have I conveyed my message? What are my strengths and weaknesses?
- **Invent:** What makes this work inventive? Do I take risks and push myself?
- **Connect:** Who is the audience and how does the work connect? What is the context?
- **Own:** Am I proud of the work I am doing? What do I need to be successful?