

May 8, 2026

Dear ChiArts Community,

As you know, for more than two decades, philanthropic investment has fueled the pre-professional arts conservatories that make ChiArts a jewel of Chicago's cultural landscape. Children First Fund honors the extraordinary work of the ChiArts Foundation and its donors, whose dedicated partnership and support have made this model possible.

As the school transitions to its next chapter, the Children First Fund (CFF) is proud to serve as the philanthropic partner for ChiArts as a CPS-managed school. I want to communicate our full commitment to meaningful partnership with the ChiArts community, along with empathy for the change and uncertainty the school community and its supporters have faced during this transition.

We are dedicated to ensuring that there are ongoing philanthropic opportunities to support the school's vision, through support for productions and arts education programming that defines the scholar-artist experience. We will host a dedicated ChiArts Fund to ensure that donations directly support the arts programming our scholar-artists deserve.

We invite longtime donors and families to join us in this new chapter, and respect that during the transition period many long-time supporters will need to better understand how the school will implement the conservatory model before considering ongoing support.

Please consider signing up for communication about philanthropic opportunities at ChiArts going forward [here](#). We are committed to listening to your perspectives and working alongside Dr. Fuess and District leadership to champion the future of arts education at ChiArts.

Sincerely,



Rebecca Clarkin
Executive Director, Children First Fund



Children First Fund

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