



ARTS IN SCHOOLS COLLABORATIVE/DANCING CLASSROOMS PHILLY  
DANCING CLASSROOMS PHILLY IS AN AFFILIATE PROGRAM OF MUSICOPIA

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## **Dancing Classrooms Philly Receives Grant to establish The Virginia and Harvey Kimmel Dance for the Future Program**

***Dancing Classrooms Philly will partner with the School District of Philadelphia to offer programming in some of the city's most impoverished neighborhoods***

September 25, 2018...Dancing Classrooms Philly has established ***The Virginia and Harvey Kimmel Dance for the Future Program***, made possible by a grant from The Virginia and Harvey Kimmel Family Foundation. The Foundation has generously pledged to support the work of Dancing Classrooms Philly (DCP) in schools within the School District of Philadelphia's "Acceleration Network" over the next three years. In partnership with the School District of Philadelphia's Office of Arts and Academic Enrichment, the goal of the Dance for the Future program is to harness the increased focus and resources in the Acceleration Network schools and create real and lasting change in the lives of underserved students through the learning and performing of social dance.

The Acceleration Network (previously called The Turnaround Network), established by the School District in 2016, aims to significantly improve school academics and learning environments through adding resources such as frequent reviews of student progress, technology to support students in personalized learning, and positive behavior support systems--such as Dancing Classrooms Philly programming.

"As a founder of Dancing Classrooms Philly, I have had the opportunity to see the wonderful impact this program has on the children, their families and the school," said Harvey Kimmel. "This program is not about dancing, but about civility. It is an agent that effects change in so many parts of a student's life. This new/old program that we are about to embark on is a next step in creating positive impact in the school and family community. Will it be a challenge? Of course. Will it create positive change? Yes. We are so proud of everyone at Dancing Classrooms Philly and their willingness to take on this next step in their impact."

Dancing Classrooms Philly is a not for profit organization, whose mission is to foster self-esteem, social awareness and joy in children by providing the opportunity to learn and perform ballroom dance, which in turn promotes a culture of mutual respect and well-being.

Since its founding in 2007, DCP has served more than 25,000 fifth and eighth grade students in public, charter and parochial schools, focusing on students in some of the most underserved and distressed neighborhoods in the region. A DCP in-school residency takes place over 10 weeks with 45-minute classes taking place twice weekly. All fifth or eighth grade students are required to participate, and professional teaching artists provide instruction in a variety of ballroom dances, including competition social dances (rumba, swing, tango, waltz, and merengue), and non-competitive dances (heel-toe polka, the stomp, and the electric slide). Each residency also

includes a video lesson, a guest artist “buddy” visit, and curriculum connection assignments. The residency concludes with a culminating public event where all students demonstrate the dances they learned.

Frank Machos, Executive Director of the Office of The Arts & Academic Enrichment for the School District of Philadelphia, supported bringing Dancing Classrooms Philly residencies to the District’s Acceleration Network schools. “We are excited to expand our partnership with Dancing Classrooms and for the incredible opportunity our students will have to not only explore a new art form, but to grow through collaboration while developing respect and compassion for one another,” said Mr. Machos. “Having seen the benefits this program has on students for over a decade, we know that a Dancing Classrooms program in our schools provides a positive impact that transcends the dance floor, extending to the greater school community and resulting in social and academic growth for students.”

In Dance for the Future, DCP will offer its 10-week residency program to ten Acceleration Network fifth grade classrooms in the 2018-19 school year. Additional classrooms will receive the program in the following two years, ultimately giving 1,500 students from some of the city’s most impoverished neighborhoods the opportunity to receive the social and emotional benefits of a Dancing Classrooms Philly residency. In addition to The Virginia and Harvey Kimmel Family Foundation grant, Individual Donors have also made gifts towards the first year launch of the program, and DCP continues to seek additional Individual Donors for years 2 and 3.

“We are so grateful to Harvey and Virginia Kimmel for their generous support of Dancing Classrooms Philly so that we can reach even more children in some of the most underserved Philadelphia neighborhoods,” said Denise Kinney, DCP’s Executive Director. “We are honored to have a role in helping some of the District’s underperforming schools, and helping to teach students life skills such as focus, perseverance, and team building.”

***This program was made possible by funding from the Virginia and Harvey Kimmel Family Foundation.***

For more information on Dancing Classrooms Philly, please visit [www.dancingclassroomspilly.org](http://www.dancingclassroomspilly.org) or visit our social media channels: [www.facebook.com/DancingClassroomsPhilly](https://www.facebook.com/DancingClassroomsPhilly) | @dancingdcp on Instagram and Twitter