

Distinctive Schools Awarded Fiscal Agent of \$6.5 Million Dollar Federal Arts Learning Grant

Distinctive Schools, a non-profit, has been appointed to serve as fiscal agent on the \$6.5 million Race, Equity, Arts, and Cultural History (REACH) grant.

CHICAGO, ILLINOIS, UNITED STATES, October 24, 2023 /EINPresswire.com/ -- [Distinctive Schools](#),



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a non-profit organization, has been appointed to serve as fiscal agent on the \$6.5 million Race, Equity, Arts, and Cultural History (REACH) grant awarded by the United States Department of Education. The REACH project seeks to establish a national, replicable model to strengthen arts learning in U.S. schools and harness the effectiveness of arts integration as a catalyst for increasing student engagement and achievement across multiple content areas.

Dr. Denise Davis-Cotton, Director of the University of South

Florida's (USF) [Center for Partnerships in Arts Integrated Teaching](#) (PAInT), serves as the principal investigator of the REACH grant. Distinctive Schools will collaborate closely with the University of South Florida to unite educators—including superintendents, principals, and teachers nationwide—along with artists, in immersive professional development experiences. Grant initiatives include a Think Tank for national superintendents and school leaders, a national summer institute, classroom residencies, immersive professional development opportunities, museum studies, coaching sessions, and continuous evaluation processes.

Dr. Denise Davis-Cotton commented, "I am thrilled to be leading the implementation of programs for this nationwide initiative—it will have a decisively positive impact on hundreds of teachers and thousands of students across our nation. I eagerly anticipate partnering with Distinctive Schools and sharing my leadership experience and passion as we assist educators and teaching artists in advancing their expertise and craft." Dr. Davis-Cotton is recognized as a leading authority in arts integrated-teaching. Notably, Dr. Davis-Cotton founded and served as the first principal of Detroit School of Arts, and has maintained a longstanding collaborative connection with Distinctive Schools; she currently serves on its board. While serving as Director of the USF Center for PAInT (on the Sarasota-Manatee campus), Dr. Davis-Cotton was instrumental in developing evidenced-based and cutting-edge methods to inform effective arts integration teaching practices.

“Sustainable education does not exist in a vacuum separated from the arts; academic growth is wholly enriched by arts integration if we are to achieve meaningful results,” Dr. Kenneth Wong commented, “I am delighted by this development, and confident that this is about to make a substantive, and substantial, difference in American education.” Dr. Wong is the Walter and Leonore Annenberg Chair of Education Policy at Brown University, and serves on the Board of Directors for Distinctive Schools.

“We are deeply honored to be awarded this opportunity and to play a significant role in providing arts-integrated education for students across the U.S.. Longitudinal studies demonstrate that arts-informed instructional practices substantially increase academic performance across all academic content areas,” said Scott Frauenheim, Chief Executive Officer of Distinctive Schools, Scott Frauenheim. “

The mission of Distinctive Schools is to create diverse, joyful, welcoming communities rooted in social justice and rigorous learning in order to support all learners to be engaged, curious and to achieve their full potential. As fiscal agent, Distinctive Schools will provide program management and financial services support that will expedite the application of arts-integrated pedagogy at schools across the U.S., in order to bolster student academic achievement, foster social-emotional growth, nurture empathy and agency, promote heritage and history comprehension, enhance critical and creative thinking skills, and equip educators from under-resourced schools with technical tools and supports. Since its founding, Distinctive Schools has remained committed to deploying evidence-based programs, encouraging innovation in education, and providing effective professional development opportunities proven to enhance student outcomes.

“This is an unprecedented opportunity, to impact the experience for all learners is significant not only for arts education, but for learners across the nation,” Monique Langston, Chief Engagement Officer for Distinctive Schools and REACH Grant Project Director, shared, “We are honored to be serving and leading alongside the artists and educators so committed to this important work.”

About Distinctive Schools

Distinctive Schools is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization dedicated to supporting and accelerating the work of charter schools. The team includes passionate educators and determined leaders who innovate, trailblaze and collaboratively lead a public education transformation, as well as create diverse, joyful, welcoming communities rooted in social justice and rigorous learning. Distinctive Schools supports all learners to be engaged, curious and to achieve their full potential. To learn more, please visit <http://distinctiveschools.org>.

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