

The Kennedy Center Adds San Antonio's Tobin Center for the Performing Arts and NEISD to its Partners in Education Program

The New Year brings exciting news for the Tobin Center. In partnership with Northeast Independent School District (NEISD), the Tobin Center has been selected as one of only 10 arts institutions nationwide to take part in the Kennedy Center Partners in Education Program at The Kennedy Center in Washington D.C. for 2016. The program is designed to partner arts organizations with school districts to provide arts-based professional development training for teachers. Representatives from both the Tobin Center and NEISD will attend the Partners in Education Institute this April to work alongside Kennedy Center artists and national education leaders to create a detailed plan for arts integrated professional development trainings for NEISD teachers in K-5th grades for the 2016-2017 academic year. There are currently 95 other partnerships across 41 states already participating in the program, now in its 25th year.

This partnership and program is part of the Tobin Center's newly launched *Generation Next* Education Initiative with a mission centered on the following goals:

- Introducing youth to all genres of the performing arts
- Providing access to the performing arts to those who could not otherwise attend
- Supporting arts education that leads to creating the arts audiences and practitioners of tomorrow
- Strengthening arts education in schools with programs that have measurable outcomes

"The Tobin Center's education mission extends far beyond our venue walls. It is our goal to find the gaps in arts education in San Antonio, wherever they are, and help to fill those gaps with much needed arts experiences. We are so pleased to have found alignment with NEISD who is exploring innovative practices that include arts integration in the core curriculum." says Kendall Purpura, Tobin Center Vice President of Development and Education. *Generation Next* programs include the Tobin Kids Series, Access the Arts Fund (subsidized ticketing, open rehearsals, and master classes), and free Community Simulcasts. The Tobin has presented more than 75 student/family events with over 50,000 participants since opening in September 2014.

NEISD Superintendent, Brian Gottardy, stated that the partnership supports the District's *Transforming the Future* strategic plan that encourages the design of "authentic, engaging learning experiences, incorporation of real world scenarios in instruction and student ownership in learning." The Kennedy Center program will allow the district to develop new programs for elementary teachers that empowers them to create arts-based activities into their core curriculum lessons that will create a pathway for academic and social success. It is NEISD and the Tobin Center leadership's collective hope that this pilot program can be replicated in school districts across the region. NEISD is the second largest school district in San Antonio and tenth largest in the nation. It serves a diverse population of almost 68,000 students at 68 schools and 13 magnet programs.

Michael Fresher, Tobin Center President and CEO, said” It is a great honor for the Tobin Center and NEISD to be selected as a Partnership Team aligned with the Kennedy Center. This is indeed a nod of recognition for our burgeoning program from the leading arts education institution in the country. We look forward to capitalizing on this opportunity in pursuit of results that are nothing short of transformational.”

The Board of Directors and the Tobin Center staff are committed to the creation of a robust offering of educational programs, like the Kennedy Center partnership. As the only performing arts center in San Antonio, and home to ten resident arts groups, the Tobin Center is poised to be the leader of this initiative to fill a professional development void for the San Antonio educational community.

If you would like more information about the partnership or the *Generation Next* Education Initiative please contact Sarah Saenz, Education Coordinator, at sarah.saenz@tobinecenter.org.