

City Connections FY22 Report

City of Houston - Council District H

The Center for Afterschool, Summer, and Enrichment for Kids (CASE for Kids), a division of Harris County Department of Education (HCDE), collaborated with the office of Council Member Karla Cisneros to fund ten (10) out-of-school time (OST) programs through the **City Connections** grant program. Diverse services were provided to 723 students in kindergarten through twelfth grade (ranging in ages from 4 to 18 years) from November 1, 2021, to April 29, 2022. The programs provided engaging academic and enrichment activities in a safe and inclusive learning environment afterschool.

Some of the activities offered to youth during **City Connections** project term included literacy and reading skill building, STEM activities, physical fitness, fine art programming and social skills training. Grantees overcame challenges of delivering lessons virtually and provided many opportunities for students to gain social and emotional learning skills. Overall, nonprofit organizations were successful in providing safe and inspiring learning after school for youth in District H.

Summary of Funded Projects for City Connections District H

Organization	Project Sites	Awarded Amount	Students Served
American Festival for the Arts (AFA)	Garza Studios	\$5,000	51
BakerRipley	Ripley House Community Center	\$5,000	17
FotoFest	Boys and Girls Club – Havard Yale Village Apartments	\$5,000	30
Greater Emmanuel Family Worship Center	Our Lady of Guadalupe Catholic School	\$5,000	54
Houston Youth Symphony	Jefferson Elementary School Looscan Elementary School Clemente Martinez Elementary School Sherman Elementary School	\$5,000	77
Multicultural Education and Counseling through the Arts (MECA)	MECA at Dow School	\$5,000	141
Neighbors in Action	Port Houston Elementary School Neighbors in Action Community Center	\$5,000	37

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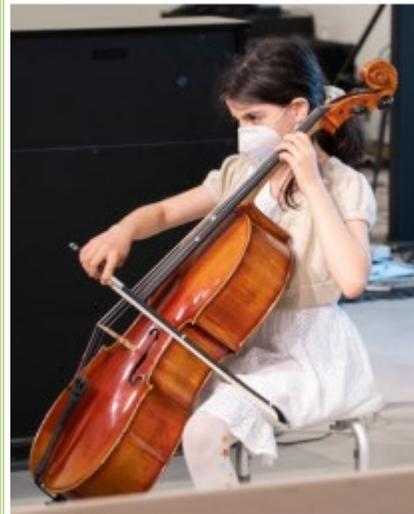
STEM Urban Perspective	Booker T. Washington High School	\$5,000	14
Wesley Community Center	Wesley Community Center	\$5,000	58
Young Audiences of Houston	Moreno Elementary School Barrick Elementary School	\$5,000	244
Fiscal Year 2021 District H Total		\$50,000	
Actual Amount Spent by Grantees	STEM Urban Perspective did not provide required proof of expenditures for \$1,000 final payment.	\$49,000	723

Program Success Stories

CASE for Kids requires **City Connections** grantees to submit a final report on funded out-of-school time project activities. The information below highlights some youth experiences and program successes.

American Festival for the Arts (AFA)

Lucas, a high achieving student in a high-performing private school with limited musical outlets through school. CMA has provided him with a flexible and challenging musical environment where he has had the opportunity to be a leader in his group, arrange music for his group, and even have an informal assessment of his music theory skills. Bella is a shy girl in 9th grade who used to enjoy singing in choir before COVID protocols cut that short. She has felt kind of lost ever since, knowing she was missing out on something that was an important part of her identity. She joined the Songwriting lessons this fall and has completely blossomed. Last Saturday, at the comp reading session, she got up in front of a room full of her fellow composers and their parents, and talked in detail about her creative process and the very personal lyrics she had written, and (especially important for this) talked about how the songwriting session had really helped her reconnect with part of herself that had felt lost. Razele, a very young cellist who is homeschooled and takes private cello lessons, is very motivated to play music with others but not old enough to join other programs. Playing in groups with other students has energized her both musically and socially, even inviting her new friends from her group to her birthday party. Playing in chamber music at such a young age will no doubt have a huge impact on her playing going forward, and she will join an orchestra for the first time this summer.



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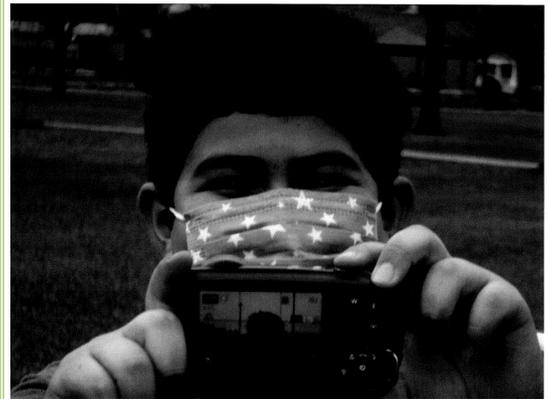
BakerRipley

BakerRipley, Ripley House Afterschool Program has been a great success providing interactive STEM activities. Students have learned to engineer bridges using marshmallows and toothpicks. Students were very excited engineering a rocket ship with magnetiles and many more STEM activities. Homework help has been a great success, students are now excited to start homework time. The program is a great benefit to parent providing a safe and supervised environment. Ripley House after-school parents did not hesitate to enroll their children in our summer program and have stated they will be back next school year for the Afterschool Program.



FotoFest

Our favorite success story to share is the interpretation of student work through our student exhibition, FotoFinish. This exhibition allows the students to present their experiences and ideas to their friends, families, and the public in a participatory gallery experience, bringing audiences into their world through their creative works. We also host a youth and family opening to celebrate the students, educators, and families participating in the Learning Program residencies.



Greater Emmanuel Family Worship Center

The success story related to the academic enrichment programming at Our Lady of Guadalupe Catholic School was that the students ELA and Math needs were met through customizable learning experiences. Participating students were also offered the opportunity to attend Space Day at Rice University for completion of the program. The students learned essential skills while their teachers had the flexibility to meet their students' academic needs. College readiness skills are becoming more prevalent through the afterschool programming. Thank you for the opportunity.



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Houston Youth Symphony

The year-end concert with WindSync at the Hobby Center on April 29th was the first in-person collaborative concert held since 2019 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. For all students, even returning students, it was their first time performing in a major concert hall to a packed audience. Leading up to the performance, teachers reported that the motivation, stamina, and excitement from students in preparing for this event was at an all-time high. A true demonstration of resilience and dedication to their instrument and to our program, was Gladys, a second-year violinist at Looscan Elementary. Suffering from a major accident, she was not able to play her instrument for more than two months. After recovering and with careful help of our teachers and interns, she was able to return to play her instrument, learn all the music and perform in the final concert in just four weeks. Comments from parents and students after the concert included: “I love that we can be a part of the Coda Program. My daughter can learn from talented individuals and it’s truly a blessing to get the opportunity to be a part of it. I wouldn’t be able to give her this opportunity and I’m grateful she can have it along with so many other children;” “This concert was amazing, I had so much fun! Can we do it again?”



Multicultural Education and Counseling through the Arts (MECA)

Carolina Salazar is a MECA parent who has experienced MECA in different roles, and strongly believes that our name, Multicultural Education and Counseling through the Arts, is an understatement. She exclaims, “Education and Counseling are just a portion of the contributions the organization makes to the community. The impact it has on individuals really is life-long.” She continues about her children, “My kids developed their own interests, and even though the struggle to make it to class is very real; full of meltdowns at times, the kids have their tantrums as well, they always leave class smiling. It is difficult enough to find arts classes at such low cost, let alone counseling sessions! Being in class is helping them develop a positive coping mechanism for dealing with stress, and it has helped build self- confidence and self-discipline. Developing abilities, you have and discovering abilities you didn’t know you had, helps fortify the soul...all of these things are difficult for a working parent to instill, and many times it is self- developed if they have the right experiences to fuel it. MECA’s instructors have provided that fuel My youngest was diagnosed with



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dyslexia this past year and academically it has been a struggle for her- she would tear up in frustration. Having these classes has helped build her confidence; being able to perform is an accomplishment and watching her smile and her whole-body language just change lets me know it's a positive influence”

Neighbors in Action

This school year we had a student with dyslexia attend tutoring. She was falling behind in classes due to lack of one-on-one attention at school. While she was great with numbers, she struggled with letters and understanding what she read. She attended tutoring on a regular basis and always came ready to work. By the end of the school year, not only did her grades improve and was passing all her classes, there was a noticeable increase in her self-confidence.



STEM Urban Perspective

Due to our successful implementation of the City Connection grant throughout COVID, we have been successful in moving forward to support students and receiving additional funding and perfecting our systems. Our goal is to meet the needs of At-Risk students and receiving this funding year after year has allowed us to capture success in areas that we cannot even imagine. Our students have even been able to advance and receive awards in the area of Robotics at Harris County's Department of Education EcoBot competition and we are extremely grateful for the chance to advance year after year with this great Organization.

(Picture not available)

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Wesley Community Center

A mom that has her younger child enrolled in Wesley’s Early Head Start program fell on hard times and was in a domestic violence situation. She had three other children that are enrolled in public school. Mom was referred to Wesley’s case management for rental assistance, but mom also told the case manager that she had her children enrolled in the after-school program at the school, but it wasn’t open long enough for her to get a job. Mom was then referred to the after-school program at Wesley and she was really interested because of the extended hours. We were able to enroll the three kids into the program here. Mom quickly found a job and she knows that her children are in a safe place and are having fun. She also knows that she will be able to keep her job during the summer because the kids will be able to stay at Wesley. We were also able to reduce the fee to help her get back on her feet. The kids are doing great here and it makes it easy for mom to pick all her kids up at one location.



Young Audiences of Houston

After school programming in District H with Young Audiences of Houston focused on social and emotional learning, arts enrichment, health and wellness/environmental arts-based programming in safe and inclusive environments for students. Programming included living mural projects, student showcases, arts enrichment after school, family engagement activities on Saturdays, arts and culture assembly performances, and bilingual instruction across two Title 1 campuses in District H. We are thankful to our Council Member, Karla Cisneros, for supporting this initiative and ensuring that students after school continue learning in a positive environment through partnerships with community organizations.



Other programs funded by CASE for Kids in District H:

Project/Program	Campus/Site/Organization
Partnership	Burnet Elementary School (Houston ISD)
Partnership	Lyons Elementary School (Houston ISD)
21 st Century	George I Sanchez North

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About CASE for Kids: *As an afterschool intermediary, the Center for Afterschool, Summer and Enrichment for Kids, or CASE for Kids, provides resources, training, and funding for students in grades pre-k through 12 in afterschool programs in schools, childcare facilities, and community centers. Services benefit approximately 12,000 kids in greater Harris County. CASE for Kids programs happens before and after school, on weekends and during the summer. As a branch of Harris County Department of Education, the division was founded in 1999 to keep kids safe, help working families, and improve academic achievement. For more information, visit www.afterschoolzone.org. For additional information about HCDE services, please visit our website at www.hcde-texas.org.*