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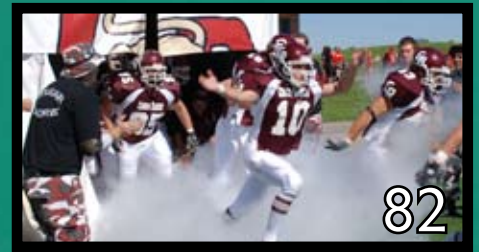
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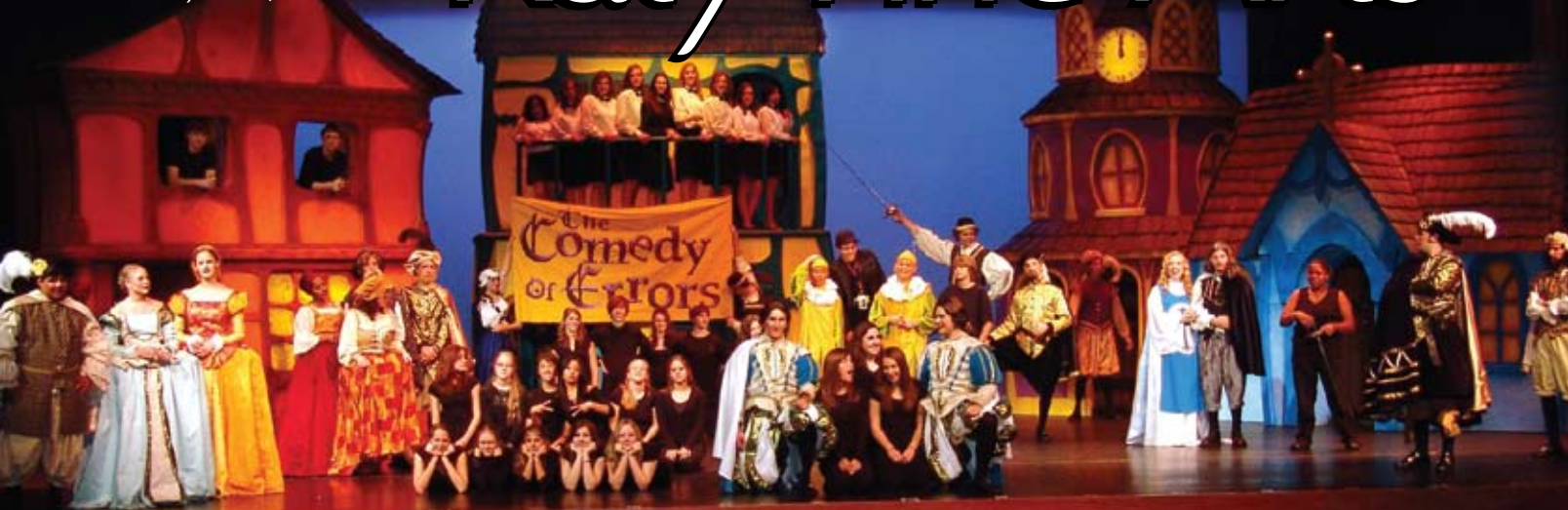


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Katy Fine Arts



Katy Educators Continue to Prioritize Fine Arts Despite National Cutbacks and Tougher State Academic Standards

Despite the national trend toward fine arts and education cutbacks, Katy ISD educators strive to place a high priority on this area of learning and that's good news for Katy area school children. "Katy ISD, the school board, upper level administration, and the patrons understand that there is a definite correlation in fine arts education and the academic development of a child," says Bob Bryant, Katy ISD's Executive Director of Fine Arts. "They just get it." According to Bryant, this past school year, Katy ISD had over 64% of all students in grades 6-12 engaged in fine arts; that is a total of approximately 17,300 students.

The Benefits of Fine Arts

The National Association for Music Education says the arts teach self-discipline, reinforce self worth, and advance the thinking skills and creativity valued in the workplace. They teach the importance of teamwork and cooperation. They demonstrate the direct connection between study, hard work and high levels of achievement. "For example, in a theatre arts curriculum, students not only read and analyze text, but they develop characters, design sets, lighting and costumes based on the text and the author's intent. In order to do this successfully, students need to stretch beyond



Katy ISD has some of the strongest Orchestras in the state.

basic application of concepts and move into higher order thinking skills of analysis and synthesis. In the design and building of sets, lights, and costumes, students are applying what they learn in physics, calculus, geometry and history. In an acting class,



Katy ISD's Elementary Honor Choir consists of 4th and 5th graders selected by audition



Knights' of the Rad Table, a spoof of the original, was put on by McMeans Junior High School students

students are applying what they learn in English, history, social studies, physical education and psychology,” says former Cinco Ranch High School theatre director, Jackie deMontmollin.

Katy Students Poised for Success

In addition, “students involved in Fine Arts score higher on standardized tests, have a lower dropout rate and have better self esteem and time management skills,” says Bryant. “They also understand the whole team concept and how task assignment works in a group.” Every year, the district’s graduate students move on and pursue related careers.

“We have a lot of students from Katy who are in professional venues; we have students who are at the top in Julliard, students who perform at the Alley in downtown, and in professional theatres in Chicago and Virginia, and we have students who are performing in service bands in DC. We have students all over, some are even performing in Europe,” says Bryant. “By and large, a lot of these students are going to go into Engineering or become a doctor or a lawyer. The arts are just a way they get through that.”

A Growing Commitment to Fine Arts

The district has also shown its commitment through adequate funding of fine arts programs. “During my tenure here, the district has come from doing performances in the cafeteria to performing in Performing Arts Centers, which have exceptional acoustics,” says Bryant. Fine Arts connects students to their community through the many performances and programs they participate in

“...We have students who are at the top in Julliard, students who perform at the Alley in downtown, and in professional theatres in Chicago and Virginia...”

—Bob Bryant
KISD Executive Director of Fine Arts



Memorial Parkway Junior High Band members recently formed their own drumline with the help of clinicians, N8Rhythm. The group will continue to perform at school events, starting with the upcoming Spring pep rally.

Fine Arts Courses in Katy ISD

ELEMENTARY

Art, Dance (taught within P.E. curriculum), Music, Theatre (taught within language arts curriculum)

JUNIOR HIGH

Art, Band, Choir, Orchestra, Theatre

HIGH SCHOOL LEVEL

Applied Music, Art (Ceramics, Drawing, Painting, Sculpture, 2D Design), Art History, Band, Color Guard, Choir, Dance, Dance Team (Drill Team), Jazz Band, Music Theory, Orchestra, Theatre, Technical Theatre, Theatre Production, Vocal Ensemble



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for the public. The district also provides students with the opportunities to study with specialists. It serves approximately 2000 music students with weekly individual music lessons. And to help keep instructors on their game, the district offers over 100 training sessions for its fine arts teachers.



“For the fifth year in a row, Katy ISD was selected as one of the Best 100 Communities for Music Education for 2007 by the American Music Conference.”
 —Bob Bryant
 KISD Executive Director of Fine Arts

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Seven Lakes High School Choir



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I'm a Katy Cutie!



Bailey has a beautiful up-do.

District Takes Top Honors

“A lot of people move to Katy for the schools, and I can say confidently that there are quality programs at all of the high schools,” says Bryant. “It’s one of those situations where a rising tide raises all ships.” Many students in the area also compete and win top honors in their respective artistic fields. And for the fifth year in a row, Katy ISD was selected as one of the Best 100 Communities for Music Education for 2007 by the American Music Conference. “Talking to other orchestras and people who evaluate orchestras, we have some of the strongest orchestra programs in the state and that’s just happened in the last 20 years,” says Bryant. Madelene Buzan, art teacher at McMeans Junior High agrees. “Our district wins numerous honors, not only in local art exhibits, but in major regional, statewide and national competitions. These include Culture Shapers, Scholastic, Vase, Jr. Vase, YAM (Youth Art Month) Capitol Show, Region VI YAM Exhibit and the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo, just to name a few.”

Training for the Real World

“Still,” says Buzan, “something parents don’t always realize is that the arts complete the whole child.” And Mandaville has occasionally seen that parents don’t always see the “real” world significance. “The connections of the visual fine arts to the real world are vast,” he says. “Industrial design, packaging design, video game development, interior design, landscape design, advertisement, film, architecture, fashion design – all are very real-world and available entities that require fine art skills, training, and experience.”

And as deMontmollin sees it, “theatre is a ‘Slice of Life,’ so everything we are dealing with in the script has a real world connection of human characters living with challenges and learning about themselves and their relationships. Every script has something to teach us about what it is to be human.”

Blending Academics and Art

With the new 4x4 academic requirements (four years of math, science, English and social studies) imposed by the state for graduation, there is some concern that future students will still be able to pursue fine arts interests for all four years.



Four Mayde Creek HS Choir students were chosen to participate in the National ACDA Honor Choir. (Rebecca Graves, Cecilia Felix, Keith Lathrom, Zachary Bryant.)

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Seven Lakes High School Theater performs Bye Bye Birdie



Taylor High School Winter Guard

“Students who want to be that involved or are involved in multiple activities will usually find a way. They may have to go to summer school, take online courses or correspondence courses to make room in their schedules for the higher level fine arts classes,” says Bryant. “Just in the last five or six years, the district has offered the possibility for those students who are engaged in the GPA race to take upper level fine arts courses as non-GPA courses. We don’t want to lose the straight-A student who has a lot of interest and ability,” says Bryant. One of the missions of Katy ISD is to prepare students to be successful citizens in a diverse and ever changing society. According to Bryant, fine arts programs facilitate that by emphasizing unique individual creativity in the various performance-based curriculums. **KM**



Katy ISD also provides approximately 2000 music students with supplementary weekly lessons. Pictured: Taylor HS choir students

S. Shetye Cypher is a freelance writer who lives with her husband and son. She has lived in Katy intermittently since 1976. She has written for several Houston based publications and is also the Journalism teacher and Publications Advisor at Mayde Creek High School.



Katy All-State Students

(2006/2007 School Year)

ALL-STATE BAND MEMBERS

CRHS - Liz Ambs, Steven Dammer, Andrew Eason, Laura Gold, Amy Luegering, and Chris Ventura

KHS - Sarah Herald, Courtney MacDonald, and Brittany Schreiber

MRHS - John Stroble

SLHS - Andrew Duggan, James Lamey, and Eileen Quinn

THS - Neil Raney

ALL-STATE CHOIR MEMBERS

CRHS - Angela BouKheir, Erin Dahlstrom, William Linthicum, Katelyn Long, and Kevin Wilkinson

MCBS - Cecilia Felix and Emily Heller

SLHS - Caroline Badalamenti

THS - Susannah Bayliss and Laura Smolik

ALL-STATE ORCHESTRA MEMBERS

CRHS - Sean Casey, Jasper Chen, Diana Kim, Elizabeth Lam, Ben Linder, Boying Shui, Ruohan Sun, and Yang Zhou

SLHS - Austin Chen

THS - Jordan Hunn, Michael Kim, Frederick Kuo, Alexander Ouyang, and Daniel Parr

ALL-STATE DANCE TEAM MEMBERS

CRHS - Rachel Cramer

KHS - Danielle "Spunky" Adams

MRHS - Randi Germann

THS - Amanda Thomas

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CINCO RANCH

Outstanding Oboists at CRHS

Chelsea Handley and Amy Luegering, CRHS Oboists, were named Outstanding Performers at the 2007 Texas State Solo-Ensemble Contest, and qualified to compete at TSSEC when they received a one (excellent rating) on their memorized solo at the Region Solo & Ensemble Contest.



Winning Yearbook Designs from MRHS

MRHS yearbook staffers Oscar Tamez, Rico Gardner, Chris Benavides and Chelsi Greene work together on their award winning design ideas at a summer journalism workshop held at Texas A&M University. The Morton Ranch student journalists came home with five Awards of Excellence and a trophy.



Perform With Houston Grand Opera

CRJH 8th grader Morgan MacInnes (left) and THS sophomore Laura Smolik performed with the Houston Grand Opera summer youth production of *The Princess and the Pea* at the Wortham Center in Houston. Both girls are students of KISD vocal coach Jana Ellsworth.



Theater Scholarship for Taylor Student

The Taylor Playmakers Booster Club awarded a scholarship to graduating senior, Taylor Cloyes. Taylor will attend the University of Cincinnati's College Conservatory of Music where she will be working toward a BFA in Dramatic Performance.

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SLHS 2007-08 Color Guard Officers

The Seven Lakes High School Color Guard has begun preparations for the new year. Officers are, from left, Kayla McDermott (Lt. Captain), Sarah Ryan (Captain), and Cody Brehm (Lt. Captain).

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