

The goal of the *Bridges* professional development model (Bridging the Achievement Gap through Puppetry) is to help educators in Grades K, 1 and 2 provide multiple entry points to literacy practices for their students through a sequential puppetry curriculum in collaboration with puppetry artists. *Bridges* will build the educators' capacity to teach for transfer across the puppetry and English Language Arts curricula in order to help students meet the rigorous demands of the National Core Arts Standards (NCAS) and Common Core State Standards in English Language Arts. For this project, we accept the description of "arts integration" from the Kennedy Center: *Arts integration is an approach to teaching in which students construct and demonstrate understanding through an art form. Students engage in a creative process which connects an art form and another subject area and meets evolving objectives in both.* The sequential puppetry curriculum upon which *Bridges* is based was initiated at PS 130 in Brooklyn (PS 130K) as part of an ArtsConnection AEMDD project (2001). Over more than a decade, educators at PS 130K have found that the puppetry curriculum helps children build a foundation for oral language and literacy, particularly those with weak pre-literacy skills.

Bridges will target classroom teachers in Grades K-2, visual arts and theater teachers, and literacy coaches or ESL teachers (total: 70 educators) in 5 high-poverty elementary schools in **CFN 204, Queens** and impact their 1500+ students who are, on average, 73.4% Title 1 eligible, nearly 25% designated English Learners (ELs) and many more who speak a language other than English at home. Educators will participate in up to 50 hours of professional development each year of implementation (Project Years 2, 3 and 4), and up to 30 hours during the planning year. Classroom teachers will learn to help students transfer skills from the puppetry/theater curriculum into their literacy practices; visual art and theater specialists will learn puppet-making and to articulate how their work relates to the NCAS.