

Dear Friends,

Since its inception five years ago, Dancing Classrooms has taught over 7,500 children the joy of dance and the value of civility. The Dancing Classrooms program is a place children can go to escape the bad behavior they're confronted with daily, and experience a more gentle and rewarding way to engage with one other. For thousands of underserved students in inner city Philadelphia their first contact with the arts often comes in the form of school-based programs like Dancing Classrooms.

Each day, we hear about the dwindling resources available to inner-city children. Public school budget cuts have strained an already fractured educational system, leaving thousands of children without even basic skills. Restricted arts funding and declining test scores have led to generations of children with little to no confidence, and diminished self-esteem.

Dancing Classrooms offers hope. It teaches children, at a critical stage in their lives, the value of civility and respect for the opposite sex. Each time a 5th grade boy gently escorts his female partner onto the dance floor, and collaborates with her through one of five ballroom dance routines, it becomes that much more difficult to view her in a disrespectful way. Valuable and lasting behavioral lessons are taught in that moment, through dance.

When the program was formed five years ago, it was funded largely through generous grant from a few foundations. But, as demand for the program has grown steadily, foundation dollars have not.

This year, please consider making a donation of \$5, \$20, or \$50 or whatever you can to protect and sustain Dancing Classrooms Philly. Our city needs and deserves more civility.

Thank you,

Paul Curci
Dancing Classrooms Board Member