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## **MINDPOP, CITY OF AUSTIN, AND AUSTIN INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT ANNOUNCE VILLAGE OF THE ARTS**

### ***Artist Residency Program to launch at Cunningham Elementary***

Austin, TX — August 21, 2018—MINDPOP, Austin Independent School District (AISD) and City of Austin Department of Economic Development, Cultural Arts Division, announce *Village of the Arts*, a new initiative that provides local artists and arts organizations with studio space at select public schools in exchange for their service to students and families. The program will be officially launched and celebrated on **September 6 at 5:30PM at Cunningham Elementary** (2200 Berkeley Ave, Austin, TX 78745) in conjunction with the school's *Back to School Night*. The event is free and open to the public.

Cunningham Principal Heather Petruzzini said, "We are thrilled to begin this partnership with MINDPOP, the City and local artists. We feel that we are perfectly situated to develop a meaningful relationship where our entire community benefits from the value of the arts. Cunningham is a diverse community school and we know that this relationship will lead to greater outcomes for students, staff, and family."

Comprised of four annex classrooms on Cunningham's campus, the Village of the Arts hosts **five artists in residence** who pursue their own artistic endeavors while providing unique arts-learning opportunities for area students and their families. Local arts organizations **Bibliographia, Teatro Vivo, Theatre Heroes, Paramount Story Wranglers**, and **Pollyanna Theatre Company** have been selected for the program's inaugural year.

"The Village of the Arts represents the kind of collaborative innovation that is needed to address Austin's affordable creative space crisis," added Meghan Wells, manager of the City of Austin Cultural Arts Division. "We are pleased to partner with MINDPOP and AISD on this program that will certainly enrich the lives of local artists and students alike."

Describing daily life at the Village of the Arts, MINDPOP program director Jackson Knowles said, "A visual artist may spend their morning painting in preparation for a gallery exhibition, and then the afternoon with 3<sup>rd</sup> grade students creating a playground mosaic. Or a 5<sup>th</sup> grade class may come across a reference to the Harlem Renaissance and then have the opportunity to ask a songwriter in residence about the role of music in society. The possibilities are limitless."

In addition to providing much-needed space for local creatives, the Village of the Arts also introduces arts into areas of Austin that present the opportunity for more cultural programming. The program underscores MINDPOP's commitment to providing students across Austin with access to the transformative power of arts and culture.

