

## Open Doors Background Information

Open Doors is an educational and community outreach program created by the Kauffman Center for the Performing Arts. The Kauffman Center is dedicated to creating unprecedented access to arts experiences for young people and underserved audiences in the Kansas City metropolitan area. The Kauffman Center's Open Doors programs contain many avenues that connect local youth and families to high quality arts experiences.

The Open Doors program connects young people to the arts through three major components:

- The Open Doors *Transportation Fund* helps schools offer high quality performing arts experiences to students by eliminating or defraying the costs of bus transportation.
- The Open Doors *Community Tickets* program offers free and reduced-price performance tickets to underserved audiences through local social service agencies and schools.
- The Open Doors *Spotlight on Youth* initiative offers year-round programs and engagement opportunities that connect young people with the Kauffman Center.

The Open Doors *Transportation Fund* helps minimize barriers to participation by providing bus transportation allowances for students each year. More than 40,000 students attend a performance at the Kauffman Center every year, and the Open Doors *Transportation Fund* assists in transporting approximately 20,000 students from the Kansas City metropolitan area. Eliminating or reducing this common cost barrier for most schools allows more students to attend school matinee performances at the Kauffman Center every year.

Through the Open Doors *Community Tickets* program, reduced or even free tickets are offered to partner organizations to connect youth and families to live performances at the Kauffman Center. The performance opportunities available through the *Community Tickets* program vary throughout the year and include special school matinees as well as seats at regularly scheduled performances. Since the Kauffman Center's opening in 2011, the program provides approximately 750 free tickets and hundreds of discounted tickets to underserved audiences every year.

The Open Doors *Spotlight on Youth* initiative contains several programs that provide students and young artists with access to the Kauffman Center's stages, staff and resources. The Kauffman Center engages students through a wide range of tailored experiences, including internships, tours, backstage workshops and discussions with Kauffman Center staff. We invite teachers and community organizations to bring small student groups to learn about the facility's architecture, arts administration, and our daily operations. The Kauffman Center's annual Future Stages Festival celebrates youth performers and diverse performance styles from across the Greater Kansas City area. Since beginning in June 2014, the festival has featured more than 700 youth performers from 25 community arts organizations on the Kauffman Center stages annually. The Kauffman Center's Live in the Lobby series invites community groups and individual artists to perform and display their talents in the Kauffman Center lobby prior to select performances throughout the year.

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Updated April 29, 2019  
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