

**ARTS COMMISSION AGENDA TOPIC**

Bellevue School Board Letter

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*Community Development*

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY****INFORMATION  
ONLY**

Staff will present a process for the Arts Commission to draft a letter to the Bellevue School Board encouraging public access to performing arts facilities. This agenda item aligns with previous Arts Commission discussions, informed by public comment and partner presentations.

**RECOMMENDATION**

N/A

**BACKGROUND/ANALYSIS****Background**

In 2025, the Arts Commission began a program of more regular partner presentations during Commission meetings. Arts and Culture organizations that had received funding from the Arts Commission through one of our Granting Programs were invited to give the Arts Commission presentations on their programs and to provide insights and feedback on their experiences producing arts and culture events and programs on the Eastside. By the end of 2025, the Arts Commission heard from 17 organizations.

During those partner presentations, a singular issue stood out as the most pressing concern for arts and cultural providers: the lack of cultural spaces on the Eastside. Some organizations sought affordable spaces, while others struggled to find available market-rate performance spaces even when they had the resources. Regardless of the organization's financial capacity, the presentation and performance space was lacking.

Several organizations noted the performance space available in the Bellevue School District, which was once open to the public for rentals, but has become more difficult to rent or use in recent years.

In discussion at the end of year roundtable, the Arts Commission expressed desire to share these findings with the Bellevue School Board in hopes of encouraging a re-consideration around public facility rentals of the School District's performing arts facilities.

**Next Steps**

The Community Partnerships committee would convene in March to draft a letter.

**POLICY & FISCAL IMPACTS**

### **Arts Commission City Code and Bylaw Support**

This item is presented to the Commission as it is supported by City Code 3.56.070 item B “Serve as the central commission to whom individuals and groups take their concerns and ideas with regard to the arts.”

### **Policy Impact**

This work directly advances several policy items in the Comprehensive Plan:

UD-52. Provide for a wide array of arts and cultural facilities that serve the city and the Eastside.

UD-56. Provide for affordable space for artists and arts groups to practice, create, teach, perform and present their art.

UD-60. Support partnerships and spaces for cross-cultural programming that contribute to intercultural engagement, learning and exchange.

### **Fiscal Impact**

There is no fiscal impact associated with this item.

### **OPTIONS**

1. N/A

### **ATTACHMENTS**

- A. N/A