Educational Programs
2021-2022 School Year

Program Overview
Bronx Children’s Museum’s educational and arts programs:

- Are developed, tailored and created in the Bronx community with the child and the caregiver in mind
- Inform the development of exhibits in our new building, opening by summer 2022
- Promote stewardship of the planet, the arts and healthful living
- Use the Bronx as our museum and laboratory
- Inspire children and caregivers to dream, create and physically extend their experiences within the Museum building or programs to the outside and into their neighborhoods in the Bronx
- Are educationally based, culturally inclusive, gender neutral and encourage creativity and self-determination
- Provide educational and resource materials to children in our programs and to teachers and other caregivers
- Are staffed by a team of approximately 15 part-time Museum Guides and Teaching Artists, most of whom have a college degree and at least three years of experience working with children
- Are in high demand, with a waiting list of 30 schools and a 100% school renewal request rate
- Are funded through both public and private monies
- Have been reimagined and redesigned to accommodate our existing partners during COVID-19 as they determine how best to educate and support Bronx children during the 2020-21 school year and the 2021-22 school year

Our Pedagogical Approach
Bronx Children’s Museum (BxCM or Museum) relies on children’s natural curiosity and facilitates each child’s learning through The Inquiry Method, an interactive “hands-on” process in which materials are made available to manipulate and explore, and which allows children to discover for themselves the answers to questions they may have. BxCM focuses on STEAM-based curriculums, geared to children from pre-K through 3rd grade, while also providing participatory opportunities for English Language Learners and children with developmental challenges as part of our universal design for learning along this continuum. All educational objectives are aligned with Common Core State Standards and Next Generation Science Standards. Art programs align with the Blueprint for Teaching and Learning in the Arts.

Methods of Outreach
As we look forward to the opening of our permanent facility in mid-2022, BxCM continues to concentrate on bringing arts and science programs to Bronx children in their own neighborhoods. BxCM provides both in-school and afterschool programs, field trips and arts-centered activities at public events, including fairs, festivals and parades. BxCM also offers Continuing Teacher & Leader Education (CTLE) accredited professional development sessions to teachers, childcare professionals and caregivers.
**STEAM PROGRAMS - 2021-2022 SCHOOL YEAR**

1. **NATURE OF THE BRONX (NOB) - Available to 15 Existing Partners**

With the transition to hybrid learning in the schools in Fall 2020, Bronx Children's Museum quickly pivoted and created a new initiative titled “Nature of the Bronx,” which is a holistic compilation of all the programs we have conducted in the past but in a format that is user-friendly and adapted for COVID.

Our past selection of programs (Little Friends of High Bridge, Little Friends of Orchard Beach, Waters On the Go!, Little Friends of the River and Little STEAMers, which collectively engaged 7,862 children and 43 schools from 2011-2020) will now fall under this new hybrid initiative (with options of remote and live instruction), with additional programs/offerings as we develop them such as the All-In Book Initiative and Spark Professional Development.

BxCM plans to continue this initiative in the coming school year with fifteen schools and approximately 850 children. Depending on the Department of Education regulations in place this fall, in-school classroom visits may return to in-person starting in January 2022.

The Bronx is bursting with art, culture and nature everywhere you look. It is, in fact, the very Nature of the Bronx! The Museum will now offer a unique menu of educational natural science, arts and culture and literacy programs, some of which include video lessons through which children can become explorers of the Bronx and discover what makes them and their borough so special. Working with students in pre-K through 3rd grade, the “Nature of the Bronx” menu offers grade-based lessons weaving science and art together reflecting the rich culture of our borough.

Based on participation level, each program may include a selection of 3-6 of the following:

- “LaunchBox” – Materials and supplies for each child and teacher to fully participate in all activities
- “All-In” books for the classroom library and for children
- In person or Virtual Classroom Sessions led by Museum Guides
- Teacher Training and regular check-ins
- Teacher & Caregiver Resource Guides
- Student Worksheets
- Access to pre-recorded lessons
- A COVID-safe field trip to a cultural/natural destination, if feasible

**A. NOB: Little Friends of the High Bridge (LFHB)**

As mentioned above, Little Friends of the High Bridge is now under the Nature of the Bronx umbrella. It was originally inspired by the restoration and reopening of the High Bridge, the city’s oldest standing bridge, which was built in 1848 as an aqueduct. Incorporating STEAM and history elements into the program, LFHB uses suitcase exhibits to educate children about
Educational Programs: 2021-2022 School Year
Continued

the ecosystem of the Harlem River. It also makes use of a book written and published expressly for the program, The Lowdown on the High Bridge: The Story of How New York City Got Its Water, by Sonia Manzano (also known as “Maria” from Sesame Street). The target audience for this program is pre-K through 3rd grade students living in the Highbridge neighborhood, and their caregivers and teachers. In 2019-2020, we offered monthly school visits to six schools and 387 children and customized arts experiences and tours of the High Bridge.

Total participants to date: 4,297 children, 217 teachers.
In the school year 2021-22, under the umbrella program of Nature of the Bronx, we anticipate working with six schools in the Highbridge neighborhood for a total of 279 children and 24 teachers.

B. NOB: Little Friends of Orchard Beach (LFOB)
As mentioned above, Little Friends of Orchard Beach is now under the Nature of the Bronx umbrella. This STEAM and history program highlights the flora, fauna and Native American history of Pelham Bay Park and Orchard Beach. Students in the LFOB program receive monthly classroom visits led by Museum guides and participate in a variety of activities, including readings of Lenape folktales. Total participants to date: 952 children, 58 teachers.

In school year 2021-22, under the umbrella program of Nature of the Bronx, we anticipate working with four schools in the Orchard Beach neighborhood for a total of 167 children and 12 teachers.

C. NOB: Waters On the Go! (WOTG)
As mentioned above, WOTG is under Nature of the Bronx now. It educates children about the ecology and natural history of Bronx waterways, and about the historical significance of the Native American Siwanoy, who can be referred to as the first Bronx natives and environmentalists. WOTG is also offered as an on-going, multi-session in-school experience to partner schools.

As noted above, the WOTG bus will not be able to attend public festivals as planned because the bus is no longer safe.

Total participants to date: 66,250 children and 32,297 caregivers
In the school year 2021-22, BxCM will participate in approximately 10 in-person festivals throughout the fall with an additional 20 events in the spring.

D. NOB: Little STEAMers
(Awaiting funding for School Year 2021-22)

Little STEAMers engages 2- and 3-year-old children in early childhood centers with their caregivers in exploring the natural animals, plants and waterways of the Bronx through a series of consecutive classroom visits, where children and their caregivers are guided through
Educational Programs: 2021-2022 School Year
Continued

a hands-on discovery of their neighborhood using sensory play, books, songs, movement, props and local walking field trips. Launched in 2020.

Participants to date: 59 children, 10 teachers.
In the school year 2021-22, under the umbrella program of Nature of the Bronx, we anticipate working with four early childhood centers for a total of 55 children and 10 teachers.

E. NOB: Little Friends of the River
(Awaiting funding for School Year 2021-2022)

Little Friends of the River connects pre-K and K children with the nationwide organization Trout in the Classroom. Over the course of a school year, children raise trout from eggs to fry before releasing the mature fish back into the NYC watershed system. Museum Guides supplement the experience with songs, read-alouds, field trips and hands-on art and science activities.

Participants to date: 994 children, 62 teachers.
In the school year 2021-22, under the umbrella program of Nature of the Bronx, we anticipate working with two early childhood centers and 57 children who were previous partners in LFR.

2. ALL-IN BOOK PROJECT
(Awaiting funding for School Year 2021-22)

Educators have the option to participate in the All-In Book Project, which features specially curated book collections, with accompanying resource materials, related to the topics of Black Lives Matter and Social-Emotional Learning. For Fall 2021, two additional books will be added to each grade-specific book collection. The All-In Book Project will eventually focus on the inclusion of ALL types of visitors to the Museum’s permanent facility.

3. SPARK PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT
(Awaiting funding for School Year 2021-22)

BxCM will offer CTLE-accredited, immersive professional development (PD) programming for approximately 40-50 classroom teachers and teaching assistants each year. PD workshops provide Bronx teachers, most of whom are our regular program participants, with beginning-of-the-year training and materials to improve their teaching practice using Museum-tested strategies and approaches such as the inquiry method, object-based learning and nature play.

BxCM will offer at least one large-scale virtual professional development training in Spring 2022 to up to 15 teachers, in partnership with Roberto Clemente State Park and P.S. 274. All workshops provide teachers with CTLE accreditation, which will allow participating teachers to use the BxCM trainings toward their required professional development hours as mandated by the Department of Education.
1. Art Builds Community (ABC) with Little Friends of the Museum
   *(Awaiting CASA and State funding for School Year 2021-22)*

In order to ensure that both local artists and Bronx children are integral to the design and creation of the BxCM facility, the Museum recently unveiled the ABC initiative, which partners local Bronx artists with children in the Museum’s arts programs to ensure that the artists are incorporating child input into their installations for the Museum and that the children feel a sense of agency and pride in their contributions to the Museum.

A key component of ABC has been the Little Friends of the Museum (LFM) program, which partners up to 25 Bronx children at a time with two lead Museum teaching artists, ABC-selected fine artists and our exhibit designers, Argyle Design, Inc. and Potion, Inc. Children are given a behind-the-scenes understanding of what a children’s museum is from soup to nuts, and the opportunity to co-create site-specific installations with local artists. It exposes the children to the professional art world, allowing them to deepen their understanding of what artistic expression is, and includes field trips to museums and a studio especially designed for ABC artists to create their work. Importantly, they are able to offer their child-expert input to those prototyping art installations and interactive exhibits, allowing artists and exhibit designers to benefit from a child’s perspective and the children to become active participants in the design of the Museum while strengthening their voice. In the 2020-21 school year, a total of 15 second-grade students participated in LFM virtually via online Zoom classes with Arts Program Manager Chris Gomez. In the 2021-2022 school year, the program will transition to Little Friends of Roberto Clemente State Park and will focus on the intersection of the arts and the natural environment by using the nearby park as inspiration for artwork the children will create. The program resumed in-person classes in October 2021.

This program was offered to 15 students in the 2020-21 school year. Total participants to date: 102 children, 16 ARC members. In addition, BxCM will offer regular, drop-in ABC tours once the building opens in 2022.

2. Dream Big
   *(Awaiting CASA funding for School Year 2021-22; Summer Program funding TBD)*

Dream Big is both an afterschool arts program at P.S. 5 in Port Morris and an intensive arts enrichment program at camps in different South Bronx communities each summer. The purpose of Dream Big is to inspire children to explore and elaborate on their grandest desires for their futures using the arts as a way to express themselves. Local teaching artists provide weekly instruction in the literary, performing or visual arts, designed to impart a sense of cultural pride, two to three days a week for up to thirty-six sessions. Each year, a different Bronx-related theme is chosen for children to explore through the arts. Dream Big Day is the culminating celebration of the summer arts enrichment component, where Bronx-born luminaries in the arts and public life interact with the children at a local college and encourage them to dream big and work hard.
Educational Programs: 2021-2022 School Year
Continued

One of our regular visitors is Associate Justice of the Supreme Court Sonia Sotomayor, who has attended all ten in-person Dream Big Day summer celebrations. In 2021, 20 children participated in the afterschool program and 30 children participated in the summer program, the Museum’s first program to resume in-person sessions since COVID.

This afterschool program was offered to 20 students in the 2020-21 school year.

Total participants to date: 370 children (Afterschool), 1,084 children (Summer).

In school year 2021-22, the Museum will most likely continue this program afterschool with CASA funding from Council Member Diana Ayala.

3. GreenArts
(Awaiting CASA funding for School Year 2021-22)

The GreenArts Afterschool Program combines arts, literacy, environmental education and science as an afterschool program for 2nd and 3rd graders at P.S. 55. In 2021, twelve children from Morrisania worked with Teaching Artist Luss Nigaglioni in a multimedia exploration involving songwriting and music to discover how they could activate their voices as artists to inspire people to care about their health and community.

Total participants to date: 244 children.

In the school year 2021-22, the Museum will most likely continue this afterschool program with CASA funding.

4. NEW: Music Matters

Thanks to City Council Member Diana Ayala, this spring we were able to introduce Music Matters, a new program for families featuring live musical performances from Bronx artists celebrating the rich cultural diversity of the Bronx, and the contemporary forms of music that have been created as a result. The first concert featured the local musical group Retumba!, was bilingual, and included a Music Bag giveaway, full of musical instruments and a book, to 150 families at East Side Settlement House and Masa. Due to COVID safety concerns, the concert was pre-recorded at BronxNet television studios and broadcast both on the television network and on the Museum’s social media channels and posted to the website on June 9, 2021.

In 2022, if it is safe to do so, we look forward to offering a series of three Music Matters concerts in-person in Mill Pond Park.

5. ArtSpot (Now available through Nature of the Bronx as Artist Spotlights)

ArtSpot is a summer weekend pop-up arts program originally designed especially for the children from the NYC Housing Authority’s Mitchel Houses in Mott Haven, in cooperation with the Mitchel Housing Tenants Association.
Educational Programs: 2021-2022 School Year

Continued

This year’s theme was aimed at highlighting ABC artists in anticipation of the opening of our new building, now scheduled for Spring 2022. With the restrictions on public gatherings and the need for social distancing in New York City due to COVID-19, the Museum moved the program to a virtual format in 2020. Instead of the planned four in-person sessions, Bronx Children’s Museum staff and exhibit artists (who have been contracted to create art installations in our building) produced a series of three pre-recorded videos for use and distribution through the local television station, BronxNet, and up to 15 local partner schools. In Summer 2021, ArtSpot was offered to three BronxWorks summer camp sites.

Take-away art bags featuring activities connected to ABC artists were distributed to 150 children over four different weekends from July to October.

Total participants to date: 1,749 children, 873 caregivers.
In 2022, BxCM anticipates offering ArtSpot once again as a drop-in arts festival in Mill Pond Park over four Saturdays from July-October.

6. Studio Saturdays
Teaching Artist and BxCM Arts Program Manager Christopher Gomez led a virtual drop-in arts course for forty families at P.S. 47 over a total of four consecutive weeks in Spring 2021. This class made use of our Artist Spotlight series of videos, which shared the work and practices of a variety of Bronx-born artists, while providing context and an activity for the children to participate in. These were used as a launching pad to explore a number of mediums, including drawing, painting, portraiture, photography and illustration. Over four Saturdays in May and June, families met for one hour online to watch a short video about a Bronx artist, receive instruction on how to complete a related art activity, and then create their own artwork in response to the video. Each family was given an Art Bag full of materials in order to participate.

A total of 79 children and caregivers participated in 2021.
In 2022, BxCM plans to offer a series of 10 drop-in Studio Saturdays experiences in and around the Museum building from May-September 2022.

Each Saturday, a different Bronx artist will be highlighted through art-making experiences throughout the building and in Mill Pond Park. For example, during a Studio Saturday session, families will explore the infinite possibilities of design and fashion by exploring the artwork of Jerome LaMaar in the Museum’s Arts Build Community Collection.

Activities could include:

1. Experiencing the Museum’s multimedia interactive in “The Cloud” with local teaching artists to explore music and movement while learning about local dance movements such as salsa, hip-hop and electronic;

2. A reading of The Word Collector by Peter H. Reynolds highlighting Jerome LaMaar as a young child;
3. Studio Classroom: Design of the Future – Children and families will create garments using recycled materials;

4. Animal Encounter: Families meet the Museum’s hognose snake, explore the adaptations of the turtle and how designers and “makers” can learn from animal adaptations.