

Hello Friend, Silk Road Rising's arts-learning program benefits Chicago Public Schools students! [View Online](#) Or [Forward](#) to a friend.



Building Creativity and Confidence

You can have a hand in fostering the next generation of storytellers. Through [EPIC](#) (Empathic Playwriting Intensive Course), Silk Road Rising's in-school arts-learning program, we annually empower approximately 400 Chicago Public School students. Our intensive approach is focused on depth of learning, and gives students valuable experience in **writing** and **civic engagement** across 20 sessions as they each write 10-minute plays about social issues facing their communities.

This past year, CPS students have had a lot on their minds. You can give students an outlet to voice their ideas in a constructive and creative manner.

"Thank you for brightening our week with your artistic presence and for inspiring and motivating us to write. I know we were a little wild, but that's only because we were having fun."

- Student at Eric Solorio Academy High School

EPIC gives schools a way to infuse their curriculum with the arts through residencies that add depth and breadth to learning. **Help our educators continue to bring theatre and playwriting into students' lives** by supporting Silk Road Rising and EPIC.

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Keeping Art in Schools

When school budgets are being slashed, one of the first subjects to suffer is art. Because of programs like Silk Road Rising's EPIC (Empathic Playwriting Intensive Course), **art remains an integral part of Chicago Public schools.** Championing these artistic outlets for her students is Brenna Reilly, a teacher at Morgan Park High School.

While others were sorting out vacations, Brenna used her summer to plan the new school year. A passionate devotee of original theatre and plays scripts, Brenna was excited to learn that she would be teaching an International Baccalaureate Theatre course this fall.

"In the past, it has been very inspiring to see students develop their play writing skills through Silk Road Rising's EPIC arts learning program. It is nice to see students get creative in a different medium other than the typical essay/paper fashion. EPIC helps students hone



- Brenna Reilly

As another school year begins, along with the stress of new schedules, new students to inspire, and a mountain of homework to grade sets in, we want to take a moment to recognize the teachers dedicated to artistic endeavors. They are not just our classroom partners; they are **champions of creativity in a time**

when the arts are being cut from curriculums all over the country. Still, none of this would be possible without the generous support of our sponsors who underwrite EPIC teaching artist residencies. [Help us bring EPIC to more students by donating today!](#)

Why Playwriting?

The world of theatre is not exclusive to artists. That's the beauty of a play. The person you're sitting next to may be a lawyer, a student, a baker, even the playwright. You just don't know. But for that brief moment, **you are sharing an experience**, despite the many differences you may possess. Sure, you can interpret a theatrical piece in many different ways, you may disagree and even share in a heated discussion long after the play is finished. Still, you shared in that experience. In that beautifully democratic way, the stage can be quite unifying, much like the classroom.

"The future of our nation depends on our ability to create and to be creative. If our nation is to continue to meet the challenges of the future, today's schools need to develop creative leaders."

- The Alliance for Education



By teaching the art of playwriting, students are able to utilize a wider, more diverse set of skills that translate to real-world experience. In creating characters, **students learn to empathize** with those who have a different perspective. Empathy is what keeps us engaged. This critical lesson in empathy allows students to leave the classroom feeling more prepared to take on the world around them.

"Like civic engagement, art can also allow people to become more knowledgeable, skillful, and more motivated. It can help better a community in many ways."

- EPIC student evaluation

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