

Early Phase Competition -- Absolute Priority 4 (SEL)  
Children First PA fka Public Citizens for Children and Youth  
S411C210133  
**makeSPACE for Agency and Readiness**

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Project Abstract

makeSPACE for Agency and Readiness

**Project Title:** makeSPACE for Agency and Readiness; **Type of Grant:** EIR Early Phase; **Absolute Priorities:** 1, 2, and 4; Competitive Preference Priorities 2 and 3; **Total Number of Students Served:** 3,505 (via 120 teachers); **Grade Levels Served:** Grades 7–8; **High-Needs Student Definition:** High needs students face the chronic challenge of socioeconomic disadvantage due to poverty and other systemic social factors, limited proficiency in English, and learning disabilities or other special needs requiring special education services.

**Project Description:** The proposed *makeSPACE for Agency and Readiness* project aims to design and implement a blended online and face-to-face professional development program for teachers to integrate research-driven, drama-based strategies across the core content areas in Grades 7–8. Following our conceptual framework, teacher implementation will foster classroom environments for mastery and belonging and develop students to be creative, agentic, and academically prepared for the high school transition. **Project Objectives and Expected Outcomes:** To provide more than 240 teachers in high-needs schools with sustained, high quality, and flexible professional development in drama-based arts integration strategies with the aim of reaching more than 3,500 Grade 7 and 8 students with evidence-based strategies. We expect teachers to improve their creative and agentic skills and beliefs in teaching, their teaching knowledge and skills in arts integration, and their well-being in teaching. We expect students to improve their academic agency and achievement, sense of belonging, social-emotional skills, creative problem-solving, and On-Track to Graduate indicators in Grade 9. **Special Features:** This project will produce a cost-effective, efficient, and nationally accessible online system of self-directed professional learning that can be implemented schoolwide.

**Organizations Partnering:** Children First PA (non-profit lead); School District of Philadelphia (LEA); Creative Engagement Lab; Research for Action (external evaluator).