



## **Impact100 Arts & Culture Finalist 2023 NorCal School of the Arts**

Project Title: Theater Arts & Conflict Resolution Integrated Program

NorCal School of the Arts serves students in Title 1 schools in Sacramento and Yolo Counties. More than 10,000 students and their families and 400 teachers in K-12 public schools are reached by NorCal's programming, making it one of the most comprehensive arts education programs in our region.

The ***Theater Arts & Conflict Resolution Integrated Program*** helps students feel connected to one another and supports self-expression while developing non-violent responses to conflict. The program helps to lower self-destructive risk factors in young people and increases their positive connections to self, peers, and the community.

Post pandemic, students are experiencing isolation, anxiety, depression, and lack of normal connection with peers as well as overuse of technology and social media. Many kids are in crisis. Through theatrical curriculum and rehearsals, students learn to self-reflect, regulate and be intentional in their expressions. Just as performing in front of an audience is stressful, an actor falls back on the many rehearsals and does what has been practiced. When a stressful conflict arises, students have tools and the rehearsal process to guide them in resolving conflict.

Through the artistic process students learn to trust themselves and their decision-making abilities. Through the social emotional learning activities students discover coping mechanisms and strategies to get through feelings of anxiety and build confidence in their abilities to advocate for themselves while remaining respectful of others.

Funding will train 50 classroom teachers and 1,330 students directly. Because lesson plans are provided to the classroom teachers, impact has the potential to last for the rest of a classroom teacher's career, equipping thousands of students. There is a waiting list of schools that want this program. Impact100's funding will grow this program into new districts and schools and make it possible for more students to receive this impactful, much needed program.