

## Grant Proposal

# Abstract

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- Name: and
- Title of Partnership: Popcorn Movie
- **Background:** Popcorn movie is an after-school program aiming to motivate children with learning disabilities that want a career in film making. Our mission will be to assist middle school students in the Houston Independent School District (HISD) in directing, casting actors, music producing, story writing, and video editing. Therefore, we will create a space where they can feel comfortable and express their creative talents. The program will be extended to all students with learning disabilities that want do more than just watch a movie. Hence, this program will teach students about the importance of team work and leadership while having fun at the same time. We will partner with the Digital media and theater program in the University of Houston to provide training and mentoring. The program will be extended to all middle schools in the HISD and the final projects will be featured at the University of Houston Cullen Performance Hall.
- **Method:** Having the University of Houston theater and digital media programs, we plan to create an after school program to train children with learning disabilities interested in film making to make and direct their own movies. The movies will be no longer than 30 minutes and will be presented at the University of Houston Cullen Performance Hall. We will invite local movie directors to serve as judge for the competition. The best team will win a trip to go to Universal Studios Los Angeles to see the process of movie making. However, every student that participated will receive an award. Our program will consist of volunteers from the theater and digital media programs but will be extended to all who wish to mentor the children. Equipment and software for the projects will be already provided for the students to use.
- **Objective:** No matter the official diagnosis, people with learning disabilities must overcome many hurdles in order to succeed in school and work. There needs to be more programs in school that focused in skill building for kids with learning disabilities.

Furthermore, when it comes to skill building, it is best to start early for kids with learning disabilities. With the help of the CCPH, the Popcorn Movie organization will serve as a program that motivates children with disabilities to prosper and have fulfilling careers.

## *Overview*

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Nowadays, schools more and more often face the issue of learning disabilities. The term itself refers to the different classroom challenges and learning problems children face due to some neurological failures. However, the disability does not necessarily mean that a child is less smart than his or her classmates. It refers to the fact that a child perceives and acquires information in a different way. Therefore, modern schools should develop a number of programs to provide children with learning disabilities with friendly learning environment and consistent studying process. During the last years, science had made great discoveries in understanding the way human's brains work. It enables scientists to come up with new methods to deal with different types of brain disorders and learning disabilities in particular. Therefore, the schools need to introduce and adapt those methods to the needs of students with learning disabilities within the studying process.

## *Learning Disabilities*

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Learning disability refers to the number of neurological conditions that prevent a child from proper storage, processing and production of the information. There are various types of learning disabilities, among which are the following:

- Dyslexia refers to the children with reading-based disability. It means that a child experience difficulties with printed materials decoding and word recognition. The children with dyslexia struggle with spelling and identifying words from books. For that reason, they often lose the meaning of what they have just read.
- Dysgraphia refers to the children with writing disability. Due to the lack of motor and information processing skills, such children are often not able to write their thoughts down or make grammatically correct sentences.

- Dyscalculia refers to the children with math-based learning disability. Such children have problems with numbers recognition, understanding of basic math concepts and reasoning.
- Central auditory process disorder refers to children with auditory-based disabilities. Such children experience major difficulties with processing and interpreting information she or he hears. CAPD condition does not necessarily mean the loss of hearing. CAPD is often due to the brain's disability to interpret the heard information.
- Nonverbal learning disorder is the most difficult one to diagnose. Children with this condition are often doing very well at school. However, they fail to interpret nonverbal communication, lack common social skills and motor coordination, and experience difficulty in dealing with changes.
- Visual processing disorder refers to children that struggle to accurately receive, process, express, and recall information. Such children often misread words and confuse numbers and letters similar in shape, struggle with copying words and spacing letters.

These are some of the learning disabilities that require rapid identification, recognition and hard work from both parents and teachers.

## *Our Community*

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The Houston Independent School District is the seventh-biggest urban school district in the USA and the largest one in Texas. As outlined in HISD literacy plan 2014-2016, the largest part of the district's students is from minority background, 91.8%. Moreover, HISD is characterized by a high concentration of economically disadvantaged students, 79.7%. Also, 29.8% of students are identified as limited English proficient. The term educational failure is to be applied to nearly 57% of HISD students. Almost 8% of HISD students have different disabilities, 50% of these students have learning disability. Furthermore, nearly 1,400 students have dyslexia. As outlined in Review of Special Education in the Houston Independent School District 2011, while in HISD charter schools students with learning disabilities amounted to 1.99% of the total student population of 16,931, in HISD non-charter schools with total student population of 199,735, students with learning disabilities made up 4.12%. The above provided statistics shows that HISD community has to provide additional actions to solve the problems in the sphere of education.

# Programs Offered

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## Video Editor

**Who:** Boys and girls, 6-8 grades, interested in video editing.  
Software (movie maker) will be provided for the use of the movie editing process.

**What:** Taking charged of using video editing software to edit the post production work of a video production.



## Acting

**Who:** Boys and girls, 6-8 grades, interested in theater or acting.  
Customs and props will be provided for the children to use at their disposal.

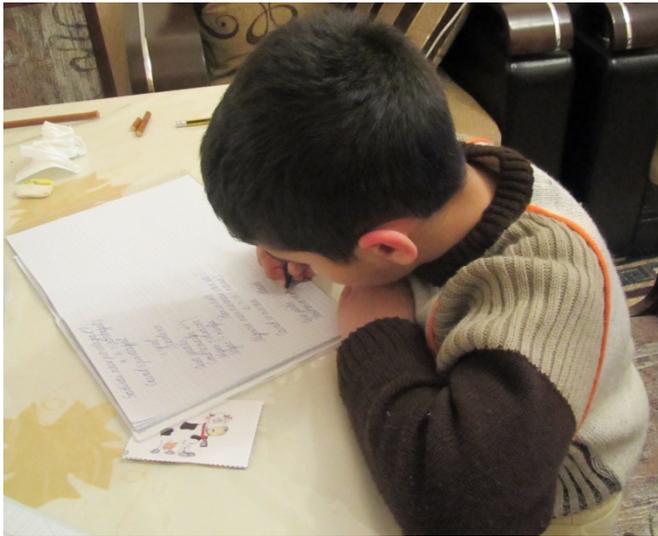
**What:** Play a part of the movie using customs and props provided at the

program. Student will be mentor by theater majors on how to act.

## **Director**

**Who:**Boys and girls, 6-8 grades, interested in directing.

**What:** Taking the charge in directing the making of a movie. This person will take care of handling the camera and finding spots to shoot the video.



## **Story writing**

**Who:**Boys and girls, 6-8 grades, interested in directing. Camera and equipment will be available for the students

**What:**Taking charge of writing the story that is going to be filmed. Mentors will help students for brainstorming ideas for the story.

## **Music Producer**

**Who:** Boys and girls, 6-8 grades, interested in music producing. Software will provided for the students



**What:** Taking charge in choosing sound effects and music for the filming production.

## University of Houston Cullen Performance Hall



Final projects of movie production will be showcased in the Cullen Performance Hall. Parents and everyone involved in the production of the movie will be invited to watch the student final projects.

## *Criteria for Program Eligibility*

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- Middle school student from 6-8 grade
- Must be a student from Houston Independent School District
- Must have learning disability

## *Planning and Scheduling*

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The After school section begin in the second semester of the school year. The details will be post on our website similar to what is below. Due to weather, holidays, etc., the monthly schedule is subject to change.

- Program schedule: Mondays-Thrusdays 3:00-5:00  
Friday- optional (depending on the field)
- A sign-up sheet will be giving to parents and student if they which to enroll their children in the program.
- A sign-up sheet will be posted for people interested in working with kids with learning disabilities. They will need to pass a qualification test that will determine if they can work with children with learning disabilities.
- **2015 calendar:**

January	7	Wednesday	The sign-up sheets are giving to the students to revise with their parents. Also, volunteering sign-up sheets will be posted around the University of Houston.
January	30	Friday	Last day to turn in the sign-up sheets.
February	2	Monday	First day for the program. (orientation and meeting mentors)
March	4	Wednesday	Last day to turn in final project.
March	6	Friday	Final project showcased in the Cullen Performance Hall.
March	9-13	Mon-Fri	Winner trip to LA Universal Studios
<b>March</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>Saturday</b>	<b>arrival</b>

## Location

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- Program will be hosted in the student's respective schools in the HISD.
- The final project will be showcased in the University of Houston Cullen Performance Hall

## Staff

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- **Program Director-** responsible in overseeing all of the programs planning for Popcorn Movie. Also, he is the head mentor for the children that will give the first speech during the orientation. Must be experience in working with kids with learning disabilities.
- **Program Coordinator-** responsible in planning and recruiting mentors for Popcorn Movie. The program coordinator will also implement office procedures, schedule for meetings, and create monthly schedules. Must be experience in organization and project planning.
- **Marketing Coordinator-** responsible in fundraising and marketing for the Popcorn Movie program. Marketing coordinators will help oversee execution of marketing plans

for the organization. Also, will be in charge of creating fundraising for schematic to raise money to buy equipment.

- **Mentors-** this will consist of college students who wish to work with students with learning disabilities. Must be experience in working with kids with learning disabilities and need to mentor student in the project process. They will be working part-time and earning a minimal wage ( those that are in the digital media and theater program)
- **Volunteers-** those college students who wish to work with the mentors to help students on their final projects.

## Budget

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Staff Position	Number of Personnel	Monthly salary
Program Director	2	\$3,000
Program coordinator	2	\$2500
Marketing Coordinator	4	\$20/hour
Mentors	5(for each school)	\$10/hour

### Expenses:

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|---|--|
| ▪ Cullen Performance hall renovation ( One-time only) | 50,000   |
| ▪ Filming equipment                                   | 3,000(per school)                              |
| ▪ Advertising   | 4,000  |
| ▪ Food and Beverage                                   | 10,000(per school)                             |
| ▪ Traveling expenses                                  | 315(per students) and 40,00 for hotel coverage |
| ▪ Customs and props                                   | 1,000(per school)                              |
| ▪ Miscellaneous                                       | 5,000(per school)                              |

## Conclusion

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Popcorn movie is an after-school program for students with learning disabilities of 6-8 grades in HISD. The program provides students with different forms of learning disability to develop professional skills in directing, music producing, story writing, and video writing. We have

chosen to develop the program in film making, as this particular sphere is among the best ones for children with special needs due to its artistic nature. It is well-known fact that children that suffer visual-based disability, for example, might show some outstanding audit skills. For that reason, Pop corn movie program has numerous branches for children with different learning disabilities to perform in the sphere they feel themselves the most comfortable in. The program will not only bring benefits to the general studying process, but also to future careers of students with learning disabilities.