

Providing Personalized Musical Support



Elementary students participate in Border CrosSing's educational program.

Based in St. Paul, MN, Border CrosSing is a choral organization dedicated to creating an environment where singers, music, and audiences more closely reflect the diversity of the area they are in. Chorus America funding allowed Border CrosSing to partner with four local schools to provide a range of musical support for the students and teachers based on their specific needs, including curricula and extra training and support for the teachers that will enable them to continue teaching this material after the funding period ends.

Teaching artists at Border CrosSing worked with teachers at each of the four schools to understand what they most needed, and with each of the schools this was something different. For example, one teacher asked for direct support leading the choir, another asked Border CrosSing to work with all students in a particular grade, and another wanted help in filling a gap in her knowledge of certain musical styles. The teaching artists helped the schoolteachers select repertoire, wrote curricula for them based on the specific questions they had, and provided extra support in the form of backing tracks

and ideas of how to adapt the music for different configurations of singers.

An important part of the program includes learning Spanish or bilingual songs. At Richfield, the dual-language school, Ahmed Anzaldúa, the Founder and Artistic Director of Border CrosSing, led the instruction and performance in Spanish which was very well received by the students. Matthew Valverde, Border CrosSing's Director of Development and Operations said of this dual-language part of the program "it's bringing together languages, cultures, and traditions in a way that I think represents Border CrosSing and its mission really well."

"Everything we're doing is based on asking the teachers, how can we help you? What do you need? How can we be a part of your program? What can we bring to your classroom?"

—Ahmed Anzaldúa, Founder and Artistic Director, Border CrosSing

