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San Francisco Gets Serious About Arts Education

By Stacy Andell

The Arts Education Master Plan

September 28 was the beginning of a new era for arts education in San Francisco schools. The San Francisco Unified School district and the City are partnering on a historic effort to bring back the arts for all students. The Arts Education Master Plan will revitalize the education of San Francisco's young citizens by capturing the diverse cultural and artistic energy of a city that is internationally renowned for its love of the arts.

At 10:30 a.m. at the San Francisco Performing Arts Library and Museum, Mayor Gavin Newsom, SFUSD's Interim Superintendent Gwen Chan, and SF Arts Commission President P.J. Johnston joined members of the Board of Supervisors and SFUSD Board of Education, arts providers from across the city and students from Lowell High School, Claire Lilienthal and George Washington Carver Academic Elementary Schools in celebration of the Arts Education Master Plan.

"This master plan is a living document that exemplifies the partnership between the City and the school district on arts education," said Mayor Newsom. "San Francisco's efforts are unprecedented – and over the next few months, we will witness 'order of magnitude' changes in the arts education that children receive," continued the Mayor.

The Arts Education Master Plan is San Francisco Unified School District's blueprint for integrating the arts into each student's daily curriculum. The Plan calls for a sequential, comprehensive arts education program that reflects the high quality of San Francisco's artistic landscape in the areas of dance, drama, music, visual arts and literary arts. The guiding principle of this plan is that all students deserve both access to and equity in arts education and each school community, no matter the neighborhood or academic emphasis, will be called upon to embrace the notion that every student must be provided with the arts as an integral part of the academic day.

Interim Superintendent Gwen Chan said "In San Francisco, we are committed to providing every student with a well-rounded education. For too many years, some students have not had opportunities to develop artistic literacy. Every school and every student will benefit from this plan."

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Community Involvement

The Master Plan reflects the views of more than 1,500 students, parents, teachers, administrators, arts providers, and civic and business leaders. Proposition H approved by San Francisco voters in 2004, became the catalyst, making the Arts Education Master Plan, completed in August 2006, a funded mandate. The extensive increase in arts education spending, programming, support and resources that the Plan recommends will be funded largely by Prop H funds. Additional funding, such as the new State funding for the arts, will be aligned to the Arts Education Master Plan.

The new plan will hopefully keep San Francisco school students in touch with the vibrant artistic community around them and help them to take advantage of the many enriching opportunities for art in the classroom and beyond. San Francisco schools are ready to implement the new curriculum program at all levels to ensure a consistent and fulfilling learning experience for all students. Students,

parents, and teachers at San Francisco schools are confident that the Arts Education Master Plan will mark their community as one committed to continued arts education.

Stacy Andell is a staff writer for Schools K–12, providing free, in–depth reports on all U.S. public and private K–12 schools. For more information on San Francisco schools visit

<http://www.schoolsk–12.com/california/san–francisco/index.html>

Luxurious Lifestyle At The San Francisco Bay Area

By John Nazareno

The San Francisco Bay Area, popularly known as the 'Bay Area' to local residents, is a diverse and thriving metropolitan region that encompasses San Francisco Bay in the northern part of California. San Francisco, North Bay, East Bay, South Bay, Peninsula and Santa Cruz make up the Bay Area regions. They are divided into nine counties: San Francisco, San Benito, San Mateo, Santa Clara, Santa Cruz, Alameda, Napa, Solano and Sonoma.

Although San Francisco City is identified as the cultural and traditional center of the Bay Area, it is not the largest or most populated city within the area. Historically, the Bay Area traces its roots from Spanish explorers who first set foot in the region and founded a Catholic church in 1776.

Bay Area is distributed over a population of nearly seven million residents (as of the latest count in 2006). People are scattered over a number of suburban and urban centers, hence, the general area name. Its generic name is derived from the various regional natures of the area, with no specific reference to a city.

Studies place the population of San Francisco Bay Area among the best in the country for overall education placement, competing with Washington D.C. and Boston. East Bay is known for being the home of famous seminaries and universities, namely Berkeley or the University of California and

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Stanford University.

Weather is generally agreeable but unpredictable, as bodies of water fence in the land area. Spring casts mild and cloudless days, summer is cool and overcast, and fall weather is warm, hot and sunny, with mild and clear nights, while winter brings in the most humid rainy days, alternating with clear and sunny skies.

The diverse geography is broken up into prime residential and industrial spaces, covering villages, towns and cities, parks in the national, state and regional levels, as well as airports and military bases. All these are connected by a modern and efficient transport system composed mostly of trains (commuter rail and railroads), highways and roads.

Considered as one of the most affluent regions in America, the San Francisco Bay Area boasts having the most median income per household, across the nation. Six out of the 10 best Californian areas that have the most income per capita (Belvedere, Diablo, Atherton, Woodside and Portal Valley) are all in the Bay Area. The popular Alameda, Contra Costa, Marin, San Francisco, San Mateo and Santa Clara counties in Bay Area are also part of the top 100 income per capita counties in the States. As a result, the Bay Area real estate appreciated to the level of the 'most expensive zip code' league. In 2005, Forbes Magazine listed Atherton, Diablo, Ross, Nicasio, Los Altos, Tiburon, Los Gatos, Portal Valley and San Francisco as one of the top 50 most expensive places to live in.

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