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Top Artists Join Music Project To Benefit The California Schools

By Patricia Hawke

Over the past decade, music has been severely declining within the California schools. A recent study showed that within the past five years there has been a 50 percent decline in student participation in music programs. Additionally, it showed that one third of all music teachers have lost their jobs within that same time frame. The study predicts that music education will be eliminated from the California schools within the next ten years, unless dramatic changes occur. Music within the California schools system is at a critical juncture.

Singer Bonnie Raitt said, "It's a shame we are depriving so many California children of the benefits of music in schools." She stated that every child deserves the chance to develop their fullest with a well-rounded education, including the arts.

To that end, the California Arts Council spearheaded the California Music Project (CMP), a 401(c)(3) nonprofit, long-term initiative. The California schools, music industry executives, and the council will work together through the CMP to bring much needed revenues and music programs back into the California schools. The goals of the CMP are to:

- Provide grant funding to music teachers, music professionals, and the California schools to bring more music leaning to students;
- Develop joint ventures with universities, businesses, foundations and music-focused organizations to fund, pilot and expand music programs within the California schools; and
- Serve as an advocate to both the public and private sectors to further music as a core discipline, so that every California schools students has equal access.

Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger proposed and approved a state budget with the California schools slated to receive an estimated \$105 million in ongoing funding for arts education. That is an estimated \$17-18 per student. Included is a one-time allocation of \$500 million for arts, music and physical education equipment. Yet, it will not be enough to reverse the tremendous, almost ten-year decline of music education within the California schools. The California schools remain underfunded and

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understaffed in music education.

The CMP plans to heighten awareness and raise funds through all–star music CDs with top California performers, special events, and concerts around the state.

The first CD is scheduled for release in late October. Artists, publishers and labels donate all the songs and performances, with proceeds going to the CMP. It features a variety of genres from 18 California singers, musicians and bands. Included are: Los Lobos, Leela James, Beck, Dwight Yoakam, Warren Zevon, Ben Harper, Jack Johnson, Jackson Browne, Bonnie Raitt, the Red Hot Chili Peppers, and others.

The artists are very passionate about their work and want to see California schools students get some of the same attention they received while growing up around music. Working with the CMP, the artists may get their wish.

Patricia Hawke 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 California schools visit

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

San Jose Schools Has A Rewarding Summer

By Stacy Andell

San Jose Schools Win Awards and Honors This Summer

This summer several San Jose Schools won some kind of award or honor for their continued achievements in education. Three schools in the San Jose Schools system have won awards for successfully competing in the California Student Media and Multimedia Festival. River Glenn Middle School and Almaden Elementary entered a multimedia technology and science project into the competition. This project entitled "Environmental Concerns in the Community" won the Multi–Grades & Schools Collaboration for Grades 4–8 category. In this project three San Jose Schools interacted with each other electronically to collaborate on a scientific investigation of the impact of precautionary measures designed to protect area wetlands. The students participating in the project came from a fourth grade class at Almaden Elementary, a fifth grade class at Zanker Elementary and a class from River Glenn. The two main coordinating teachers Mary Howland, Special Education Teacher of River Glen Middle School, and Beth Fensterwald, TSG of Almaden Elementary were also honored.

Two San Jose Elementary Schools received 2006 California Distinguished Schools honors this year. Willow Glen Elementary and Terrell Elementary were called by State Superintendent of Public Instruction Jack O'Connell to announce their selection as 2006 California Distinguished Schools. This honor is given to schools that have shown themselves to improve over the school year. The California School Recognition Program is designed to aid and publicize the success of the California Board of Education and the school district, like San Jose Schools. The California School Recognition Program

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honors California's best and inspiring schools with the California Distinguished School Award. Participation in the program is completely voluntary and decided by the school district. However, the award is very respect and many schools in the state strive to attain it. About 5% of the schools in California receive the California Distinguished School Award. Usually participation in the program includes about 40 school districts from across the state. San Jose Schools has participated for many years and plans to continue in the future.

California's Model Schools Project

Recently, two San Jose Schools have been selected to participate in the California Model Schools Project. The exhaustive application process narrowed the selection down to eight schools in Santa Clara County of which two are members of the San Jose Schools system. The two schools selected to participate in the California Model Schools Project were Gardner Academy and Willow Glen Middle School. These two schools will work closely with and be supported by other schools across Santa Clara County. They will also collaborate with the Successful Practices Network at the International Center for Leadership in Education. The main goals of the California Model Schools Project is to increase state testing scores, improve the quality of the schools instructional and leadership practices, and raise community involvement in the schools.

San Jose Schools' Schallenberger School Wins Excellence Awards

Schallenberger School has received the State of California's Excellence Award for their performance in last school year. This award recognizes those schools that have raised its overall academic achievement scores and have closed the achievement gap among its students. The State of

California's Excellence Award was presented in Costa Mesa. Schallenberger School has also been given an award from the California Business for Education Excellence Foundation at a ceremony.

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 Jose schools visit

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