



PRESS RELEASE

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Paramount Unified Elementary Students Learn Joys of Music through Harmony Project

Paramount, CA – An extracurricular enrichment program is music to the ears of nearly 200 Paramount Unified School District elementary school students participating in the Harmony Project, where they are learning that their ABCs do more than create words, but also comprise the notes and chords that are the building blocks of music.

Harmony Project students from 10 PUSD elementary schools are learning how to care for and maintain a brass or woodwind instrument, the fundamentals of reading music, and the proper placement and technique needed to produce musical effects.

The Harmony Project is a Los Angeles-based non-profit serving 2,500 students across L.A. County. Participating Paramount Unified students meet twice a week, and are allowed to take their instruments home to practice. In February, the students will come together for a Districtwide orchestral recital.

“Arts and music education is greatly beneficial in the early stages of a child’s development, strengthening their cognitive skills and problem-solving abilities,” PUSD Superintendent Dr. Ruth Pérez said. “The District is fully committed to providing every student the opportunity to engage in extracurricular activities that allow them to expand their creative horizons.”

In September, Harmony Project teachers visited each of the Paramount campuses to introduce students to the four instruments included in its lessons – saxophone, trombone, clarinet and flute – performing a short music piece so that students could make an informed choice on what instrument they preferred.

“I like music, I want to learn how to play the piano someday,” Tanner Elementary School fifth-grader Luis Vargas said. “So far, I have learned what whole notes and a treble clef are. I would recommend the class to anybody who is interested in playing music.”

During a recent lesson at Tanner, Harmony Project teacher Hiezer Montez stressed to students

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the importance of assembling their instruments the correct way, while emphasizing that flutes and clarinets are fragile and easily damaged.

Behind Montez, on a white board, were musical notations indicating the notes and tempo for a song played in a 4/4 time signature – four beats per measure. Montez advised his students that the key to success is discipline and practice, and to not get discouraged if they are not progressing as fast as their classmates.

“The Harmony Project brings professional musicians to our schools to ultimately let our children know that hard work and determination go a long way towards achieving their goals, in music and beyond,” PUSD Board President Linda Garcia said.

PHOTO CAPTIONS:

112717_PARAMOUNT_HARMONY1: Tanner Elementary School students learn instruments through the Harmony Project, a districtwide program that teaches students the building blocks of music.

112717_PARAMOUNT_HARMONY2: Students of the Harmony Project meet twice per week and are introduced to the saxophone, trombone, clarinet and flute.

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