



# NORWALK-LA MIRADA UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

## PRESS RELEASE

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### *All 17 schools to incorporate music classes in curriculum*

## Music Program Reaches All District Elementary Schools

All students in the Norwalk-La Mirada Unified School District's 17 elementary schools now have access to music education as part of a new program made possible by the Local Control and Accountability Plan (LCAP).

The music program, which started this academic year, allows all elementary school students to attend one music class a week, said Visual and Performing Arts Coordinator Karen Calhoun. The music classes are led by interns who are currently in the process of receiving their teaching credential, but the class teachers are also involved in the process.

"The visual and performing arts program is a successful and important component of the overall programs in our District," said NLMUSD Interim Superintendent Ginger Shattuck. "The expansion of the music program to all of our elementary schools instills the appreciation of the arts at a very young age. Ms. Calhoun is a master at creating opportunities for our students."

The expansion of music programs within the District was one of the goals outlined in the LCAP, which is the District's prioritization plan to utilize Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF) funds. Under the LCFF, which shifts spending decisions from the state to school districts, the District received a base budget augmented by additional funds that were generated by the number of English learners, low-income students and foster youth.

The goal of the LCAP is to funnel money into programs that improve education for all students within the District.

"Music is a great tool for helping kids acquire skills they need to learn: listening skills, focus skills and increasing their attention spans," Calhoun said. "If they can do it in music, they can use those same skills in academics as well."

Currently, there are two terms of music classes: the first term is taught to third- through fifth-grade students; and the second term is for students in kindergarten through second grade.

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In kindergarten and first grade, students learn elementary percussion and singing, Calhoun said. In second grade, students start learning to read music and play the hand bells, as well as continue their elementary percussion education.

In grades 3 and 4, students graduate to world percussion and play the recorder, and in fifth grade they read music, study the ukulele and sing. Some schools also offer world percussion and the xylophone.

“Norwalk-La Mirada Unified has a very rich Visual and Performing Arts Program, and a lot of our schools are looking at ways to make it even stronger. Exposing students to music education at a young age is a great way to do that,” said NLMUSD Board of Education President Margarita Rios. “Music helps teach the whole child and that’s what we want in our District.”

### **Photo caption**

Students at Morrison Elementary School play the recorder at their Flag Day celebration in February. The recorder is one of several musical instruments students are learning in the 2014-15 academic year due to an effort to increase music education at all 17 elementary schools.

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