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Media Contact:

Sarah Brothers Bot
Santa Cruz County Arts Alliance Liaison
Arts Education Director
Arts Council Santa Cruz County
475-9600 x18
sarah@artscouncilsc.org

ARTS EDUCATION CELEBRATION TO BE HELD AT COUNTY BUILDING

SANTA CRUZ, CA — March 15, 2018 — The Santa Cruz County Alliance for Arts Education, in partnership with Arts Council Santa Cruz County and the County Office of Education, will host a first-time arts advocacy event at the Santa Cruz County Government Center from 5-7pm March 26.

Designed to celebrate recent successes bringing arts into the classroom, the event will include performances from Senderos, Santa Cruz Symphony's Link Up and El Sistema and includes a Youth Art Exhibit showcasing more than 450 artworks from public school classrooms across the county.

At 5:50pm County Superintendent Michael Watkins will be reading the Declaration of Student Rights to Equity in Arts Learning, a statewide initiative that is being adopted locally by the County Office of Education.

The family-friendly event is free and open to the public. Parents, teachers, arts education advocates, and everyone passionate about the arts in schools is invited and encouraged to attend.

Research has shown that student involvement in the arts is linked to higher academic performance, increased standardized test scores, and even lower dropout rates. Arts education fosters critical thinking, problem-solving, collaboration and innovation, and is required by the state as part of K-12 education. Due to funding disparities, however, many schools in our county do not meet these requirements.



“Even though creative expression provides incredible entry points into learning and has such tangible benefits, most schools cannot afford to bring art, music, dance, theatre into the classroom. And those that do have funding rarely have the budgets to support ongoing, high-quality arts education for all grades,” said Sarah Brothers, Arts Council Arts Education Director. “That’s where the Santa Cruz County Alliance for Arts Education and Arts Council Santa Cruz County come in.”

Staffed by the Arts Council, the Alliance for Arts Education consists of current and retired teachers, school leaders, and arts advocates. The group works to help districts find creative ways to integrate the arts into their schools. Working with the Alliance in recent years, Pajaro Valley Unified School District adopted an arts plan and received funding from the state to more than double its accredited art teaching staff from 25 to 57 teachers.

For more information about the March 26 Arts Education Celebration visit <https://santacruz.k12oms.org/eventdetail.php?gid=930&id=144709>

About Arts Council Santa Cruz County

The Arts Council generates creativity, vibrancy, and connection in Santa Cruz County. For 39 years, we have been the bedrock of our creative community, supporting individual and collective artistic expression and building bridges and bonds between people throughout our county.

We know that art changes lives. In Santa Cruz the arts are also an economic driver (\$32 million of economic activity annually), contribute to civic pride, and are one of the most powerful vehicles for bringing people together, creating community dialogues, and strengthening relationships.

Through grants to artists and arts organizations, arts education programs that serve more than 17,000 kids across Santa Cruz County, and community initiatives such as Open Studios and Ebb & Flow, we help Santa Cruz County flourish.

This event is open to the public. Formal program begins at 5:30pm See attached agenda for additional details. Photos available upon request.

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Arts Education Celebration

Santa Cruz County Government Center

Monday, March 26, 2018

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| I. | Visual Art Reception Time to mingle, view the Youth Art Exhibit, and eat, drink, and be merry Senderos performance! | 5:00 |
| II. | Welcome Sarah Brothers, Arts Education Director, Arts Council Santa Cruz County Mary Anne James, Associate Superintendent, Educational Services, Santa Cruz County Office of Education Audrey Sirota, VAPA Coordinator, Santa Cruz County Office of Education | 5:30 |
| III. | Student Performance Performance by El Sistema | 5:35 |
| IV. | “Why the Arts?” Michelle Williams, Executive Director, Arts Council Santa Cruz County Michael C. Watkins, Superintendent of Schools, Santa Cruz County, and former president of the California County Superintendents Educational Services Association | 5:40 |
| V. | Adoption of the Declaration of the Rights of All Students to Equity in Arts Learning Michael C. Watkins and the 2018 County Poetry Out Loud student finalists | 5:50 |
| VI. | Student Performances Link Up by Soquel Elementary students with music teacher, Diane Bock Poetry Out Loud Students Dance Around the World Tandy Beal and Company | 6:00 |
| VII. | Closing Remarks John Gaulty, Dean of Arts, Cabrillo College | 6:20 |
| VIII. | Thank you and Goodnight Sarah Brothers and Audrey Sirota | 6:30 |
| IX. | Visual Art Reception Time to mingle, view the Youth Art Exhibit, and eat, drink, and be merry. | 6:35 |
| X. | Event Adjourns | 7:00 |