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FAMILY ARTS NIGHTS COME TO SCHOOLS IN MARCH

Bringing visual art, music, dance and theatre to students and their families

SANTA CRUZ, CA — March 1, 2018 — This month at 11 schools across Santa Cruz County, parents, grandparents, and children will spend an evening together dancing, singing, storytelling and creating visual artworks under the guidance of professional teaching artists at a Family Arts Night.

Family Arts Nights represent one strategy deployed by Arts Council Santa Cruz County toward a goal to every student in every school in Santa Cruz County having access to arts education. Combined, Arts Council's arts education programming is reaching more than 17,000 students in 38 schools across 7 districts in Santa Cruz County.

According to one parent, "This is a way to spend time with our children and to teach them that art is something that will take them to better places."

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

"We work with schools, administrators and teachers to create options for integrating arts in ways that work with the classroom, culture and budget of each school," said Arts Council's Arts Education Director Sarah Brothers. "[SPECTRA](#) brings professional artists into schools and [Mariposa's Art](#) provides leadership development to high school students hired to teach



art to elementary school students. Family Arts Nights provide an additional avenue for families to experience art, music and dance together.”

The event includes a free dinner which makes the logistics a bit easier for participating families.

“The Arts Council’s collaborative approach is working.” said Audrey Sirota, County Office of Education Visual and Performing Arts Coordinator. “Just in the last couple of years, Pajaro Valley Unified School District — working with the Santa Cruz County Alliance for Arts Education — adopted an arts plan which brought in new funding from the state to more than double their credentialed art teaching staff from 25 to 57.”

About Arts Council Santa Cruz County

Arts Council Santa Cruz County 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.

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