

Title:

Top Artists Join Music Project To Benefit The California Schools

Word Count:

450

Summary:

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. Mus...

Keywords:

california schools, schools, california

Article Body:

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 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, Warrne 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.