



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACTS: **Christina Perrino**, [San Rafael City Schools](mailto:cperrino@srcs.org)
cperrino@srcs.org, 415-492-3576
Morgan Schaufler, [Youth in Arts](mailto:morgan@youthinarts.org)
morgan@youthinarts.org, 415-457-4878 x160
Micheline Moayed, [HeadsUp](mailto:micheline@headsupsr.org)
micheline@headsupsr.org, 415-902-8841

Local Partners Unite to Provide Enriching Arts Programs for all San Rafael Elementary Students

Sept. 14, 2022, San Rafael, Calif. – San Rafael City Schools, HeadsUp and Youth in Arts have embarked on a collective impact approach to arts education partnership. The *Youth in Arts Education Partnership* in SRCS has created a comprehensive support network that offers creative and enriching opportunities for students and teachers to collaborate, experience joy, communicate, grow and heal together. This week launched the first of three years of multi-disciplinary arts education at all of SRCS’ seven elementary schools, reaching over 3,000 TK-5 students.

HeadsUp, the San Rafael public education foundation, and San Rafael-based nonprofit Youth in Arts are collaborating with SRCS leadership, school PTA/PTOs and principals. Together, they’re building a program with commitment to strategically pool resources and expand high-quality program offerings for years to come. The art enrichment classes are offered weekly for every TK-5 student and are led by Youth in Arts’ teaching artists. The 30 weeks of instruction include two disciplines (visual arts, music or dance) of each school’s choosing, all necessary supplies, fall and spring culminating events and a hands-on family art workshop.

“This is a landmark collaboration that has the potential to change the shape of Youth in Arts as a community-based organization while providing exponential rippling benefits for students and families in San Rafael,” said Youth in Arts Executive Director Kristen Jacobson. “This equity-focused model ensures that every TK-5 student has access to a multidisciplinary arts education for three years, learning from diverse, professional teaching artists. This model of partnership centers students, bolsters family connection to creative expression, supports educators to use arts-based strategies, creates community connections and feeds a healthier local arts ecosystem.”

This innovative program emphasizes an equity-funding model and expands arts access to all elementary students, while prioritizing lessening the direct cost to schools. HeadsUp, Youth in Arts, PTO/PTAs and the District commit funds considering each school’ socio-economics. Each school has an equitable amount to participate in the arts education program and all have emphasized their dedication.

“We are thrilled to be partnering with the District, parent groups and Youth in Arts to bring arts enrichment to every elementary school child,” said HeadsUp Executive Director Michelene Moayed. “HeadsUp is committed to providing equitable opportunities while building community District-wide, and we believe this new approach achieves both.”

The partnership is also designed to address local youth's post-pandemic isolation and stress. Youth in Arts is helping students rebuild after their extended isolation, while bridging access to self-expression - a critical key to the ongoing mental health of our youth as well as the rejuvenation of our schools and communities. Teaching Artists focus on the process of creating art, not only building technique or skill. Instead, they use the arts as the vehicle for youth mentorship, development, and community building; providing programs that address social emotional learning, connectedness, and individual development.

SRCS Superintendent Jim Hogeboom shared, “We could not be more proud to collaborate with our fantastic partners to better serve our students in this way. This partnership truly exemplifies our District values of equity, community and joy. The enhanced art opportunities are welcomed resources for our community, and provide much-needed space for our students to be creative, discover their voices and foster joy.”

###