

## **Four more schools slated for ‘Strings Attached!’ orchestra program**

An orchestra program established last year by Chino Valley Unified School District Committee for the Arts will be expanded this school year to Hidden Trails, Litel and Rolling Ridge elementary schools, and Canyon Hills Junior High School, all in Chino Hills, according to an annual report presented by committee members at the July 16 CVUSD Board of Education meeting.

The “Strings Attached!” orchestra program was offered for the first time in 2014 to 45 students at Country Springs and Eagle Canyon elementary schools in Chino Hills, and Dickson Elementary School in Chino. The orchestra students, who often practiced after school, performed at their school’s winter concert, at a school board meeting in April, and at the annual CVUSD Band Showcase in May. With help from CVUSD Superintendent Wayne M. Joseph, the students also attended a concert in January by the Claremont Symphony Orchestra. Eagle Canyon’s “Strings Attached!” Orchestra also participated in that school’s 25th anniversary celebration.

Canyon Hills’ music teacher and band director Jeff Wiley will be in charge of the orchestra class to be offered this fall at that campus, according to Committee for the Arts members.

Musicians in the orchestra program will present a District Orchestra Concert in March or May, committee members said.

The committee has acquired a matching grant from The Classics for Kids Foundation to purchase musical instruments for the new elementary orchestras. The district has also allocated \$100,000 this school year for visual and performing arts program projects through the 2015-2016 Local Control and Accountability Program (LCAP). Some of that money has already been approved to purchase instruments for the Canyon Hills orchestra class, committee members said.

Since the committee organized in early 2013, it has been able to purchase 18 violins, four violas, and eight cellos with initial funding. Those instruments have been loaned to students who could not provide their own instruments, committee members said.

In addition to the new orchestra classes, the committee has other big plans for the future.

Through a grant provided by the San Manuel Band of Mission Indians, the Committee plans to purchase The Great Artists Program for elementary schools. The program includes lessons taught on a famous masterpiece. It includes videos, curriculum, and training for parents to run the program on a volunteer basis. The committee hopes to pilot the program for a three-year period at Briggs Fundamental School in Chino.

The committee would also like to establish an art museum to display student artwork. In the meantime, Committee members are asking the district for space to showcase student work at the beginning of the new school year. Committee members suggested temporary displays in the board room on Riverside Drive in Chino, the hallway just west of the district board room, and in the district’s Media Center on Ramona Avenue. A future museum could be used to hold art shows, gallery walks, and provide opportunities for students’ art work to be purchased, committee members said.

Other goals of the Committee for the Arts include highlighting CVUSD arts with a float in the annual Chino Youth Christmas Parade in early December, and hosting a “Chino Valley’s Got Talent Show” featuring choral students in its pilot year.

“This annual event could also become a fundraiser for our students by providing tickets to attend and concession stands,” Committee for the Arts member Lisa Laufer told the school board.

In the last year, committee members surveyed high school drama teachers and discovered that most of the schools need props and equipment. One high school needs a stage, they said.

The committee hopes to raise money for those needs and other planned arts programs through a collaboration with Swipe4TheKids and Quipley, two programs that have businesses, in partnership with consumers, donating a portion of their sales to educational programs that need money. The school board had previously approved Swipe4TheKids’ connection to the Committee for the Arts, and approved Quipley at the July 16 board meeting.

The committee also plans to work this school year with the Ayala High Theater Booster Club to build up Ayala’s drama program, and then expand that assistance to other high school drama programs.

During the annual report, Committee members thanked Superintendent Joseph for providing support to “Strings Attached!” and to former CVUSD music teacher Kevin Bryant for his “investment” in the program. Committee members also praised Claremont School of Music Director Matthew Keating and his staff for holding student assemblies to promote “Strings Attached!,” and Cal Poly Pomona music teacher Janine Riverie for offering a strings workshop to CVUSD music teachers.

Committee for the Arts members include chairperson Carol Sweat, co-chairperson Kerry Lewis, Cassie Bacon, Manuela Echeverria, Anthony Kim, Lisa Laufer, Jamie Sweat, and Dyana Wilson.

For information about the Committee for the Arts, email Carol Sweat at [carol\\_sweat@chino.k12.ca.us](mailto:carol_sweat@chino.k12.ca.us) or visit <http://www.chino.k12.ca.us/domain/3387>. For information about the "Strings Attached!" program, contact a school offering the program after staff members return in early August.