

A special program helps California students have music lessons again

By San Diego Union-Tribune, adapted by Newsela staff on 06.04.19

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Image 1. Students (from left) Heido Olivo, Deylany Jimenez and Gabriel Vargasin in the after-school violin class at Conway Elementary School watch and listen to instructor Isabel Friedrich. Photo: Charlie Neuman/San Diego Union-Tribune/TNS

Four schools recently began offering music classes in Escondido, California. It is near the city of San Diego.

After school some days, 130 students gather to play the violin. All of them are in third, fourth or fifth grade. They also can learn to play the cello, another string instrument. The students will later have a chance to join a youth orchestra.

The class is part of what is called the Allegro program.

Donated Money Helped To Get Instruments And Teachers

These music classes are part of a trend. For years, many music programs were being cut from schools. Now, they are slowly coming back.

The Allegro program began with help from Jean and Bob Will. They donated money to start the program. Schools used the money to buy instruments and pay teachers.

From the start, many families were interested. Program leaders scheduled a meeting to give out more information. More than 200 parents packed the room.

Kids Do Better In School When They Have Music

They had planned to start with 50 to 60 students. The program now has 130 students, Leila Sackfield said. She is an official for the school district.

Classes began in February 2019. They take place twice a week.

At Rock Springs Elementary last week, children practiced the cello. They carefully watched their instructor Mary Alice Hendricks. She is a professional cello player.

D'Anne Kiley said she was thrilled when her daughter Grace was admitted to the program. She said it has already helped her musical skills. It has also helped her do better in school.

Schools Welcome The Arts Again

Music and art programs have been cut in many schools around the country. Officials say they do not have the money for it. However, the arts are now coming back. Escondido Union is working to expand its music programs. So are other schools nearby.

School music instruction was considered to be too costly for many students in schools around San Diego. About 4 out of 5 students in Escondido Union are from families with little money.

Music lessons can be expensive. A beginner violin costs several hundred dollars. Private lessons cost \$30 to \$40 per half hour.

Parents said the program is a good opportunity for children. They can explore an interest in music without a high cost.

Kids Say Music Lessons Are Calming

Vanessa Le's daughter, Analise Ly is 8-years-old. She is learning violin. Le's children are not interested in playing sports. Music is a good alternative, she said.

For students, the lessons are not just a way to learn music. It is also a way to relax.

Kendra Sichareun is a fourth-grader at Rock Springs. The classes calm her a little when she is stressed, she said.



Quiz

- 1 Read the introduction [paragraphs 1-3].
Select the sentence from the section that explains what kids are doing in the Allegro program.

- (A) It is near the city of San Diego.
- (B) After school some days, 130 students gather to play the violin.
- (C) All of them are in third, fourth or fifth grade.
- (D) The class is part of what is called the Allegro program.

- 2 Read the paragraph from the section "Schools Welcome The Arts Again."

Music and art programs have been cut in many schools around the country. Officials say they do not have the money for it. However, the arts are now coming back. Escondido Union is working to expand its music programs. So are other schools nearby.

Which sentence from this paragraph explains why music and art programs were being taken out of schools?

- (A) Music and art programs have been cut in many schools around the country.
- (B) Officials say they do not have the money for it.
- (C) However, the arts are now coming back.
- (D) Escondido Union is working to expand its music programs.

- 3 Which sentence from the article states a main idea of the entire article?

- (A) Four schools recently began offering music classes in Escondido, California.
- (B) For years, many music programs were being cut from schools.
- (C) At Rock Springs Elementary last week, children practiced the cello.
- (D) D'Anne Kiley said she was thrilled when her daughter Grace was admitted to the program.

- 4 Read the following paragraph from the section "Donated Money Helped To Get Instruments And Teachers."

From the start, many families were interested. Program leaders scheduled a meeting to give out more information. More than 200 parents packed the room.

What is the main idea of this paragraph?

- (A) The new music program is helping kids in school.
- (B) The new music program is for elementary students.
- (C) Many parents go to meetings at school for their kids.
- (D) Many parents wanted their kids to do the Allegro program.