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Mayor Kevin Johnson Celebrates Accomplishments of 'Any Given Child' program
Regional arts education plan reached over 37,000 students in in 2010-11

SACRAMENTO, CA — Today, Mayor Kevin Johnson celebrated the first year accomplishments of 'Any Given Child,' a program created by the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts to provide arts education and arts experiences for schools.

Designed for students in grades K-8, Sacramento was chosen as the inaugural partner city for 'Any Given Child' in October 2009.

In 2010-11, 'Any Given Child' completed its first program year, reaching over 37,000 students in 89 elementary schools in the Sacramento City and Twin Rivers Unified School Districts, the first school districts chosen to launch the program.

The results of the first year were impressive. Not only did a broad cross section of school participate, but 95% of teachers reported that the activities increased student understanding of arts subject matter, with 85% of teachers noting that students demonstrated increased understanding of the subject area selected for artist residencies. As one of the teachers explained, "Some of my students who are less vocal, found their "voice" in a new way."

The program is housed under Mayor Johnson's 'For Arts' Sake' initiative and uses resources from Sacramento's school system, along with those of local artists, local arts organizations, and the Kennedy Center to create a long-range plan for arts education specific to the Sacramento community.

"'Any Given Child' has provided students in Sacramento a tremendous opportunity to access arts and experience arts education like never before. This year's progress has proved this program has been a success in Sacramento. We look forward to expanding our efforts and continuing our partnership with the Kennedy Center to help provide arts education to students for years to come," Johnson said.

"Sacramento has been a model launch city for this initiative," stated Darrell M. Ayers, Vice President of Education at the Kennedy Center. "Working with Sacramento's Any Given Child Governing Council has helped us further shape this program. It's been wonderful to see the unyielding support for the arts and for arts education in the Sacramento region, both through the Mayor's commitment and through local arts organizations and individuals. We have now expanded the program to Springfield, Missouri, Portland, Oregon and Las Vegas, Nevada with additional cities to come."

By partnering with local arts organizations and using existing resources, the program aims to create little administrative overhead, remaining affordable.

A review of the community and the school system revealed that 93% of area teachers believe integrating more arts into education will help them meet some of their classroom challenges. 71% of schools surveyed through 'Any Given Child' do not provide arts education programs. Based on this information, a plan was created that built arts education back into the school day, through providing professional development for teachers and connecting community arts educators with classrooms and schools.

A total of 36 classrooms are working with 7 residency artists from the Sacramento community. Students in these classes are receiving hands-on arts education experiences in many different arts genres. Classroom teachers have been able to take advantage of supplemental lessons with online interactive learning modules and videos developed by the Kennedy Center such as those available on www.artsedge.org. The goal is to provide a tapestry of arts education, weaving together existing arts classes with available outside resources.

As part of the 'Any Given Child' initiative, Sacramento has had access to Kennedy Center arts education resources, including professional development opportunities in the arts and arts integration for teachers and artists; resources on the Internet including lesson plans, interactive modules, and videos; and other arts education programs from the Kennedy Center.

Mayor Johnson launched his arts initiative, 'For Arts' Sake' in 2009 to bring the arts community together, find ways the City of Sacramento can support the arts, and develop a strategy that will enable the arts community to withstand challenging economic times.

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