

ARCHIVES > 2008 > NOVEMBER SPOTLIGHT

Art Every Day



by Megan Talbert

Art is an integral part of educating children at Francis Scott Key Elementary School. Starting in kindergarten, we have various opportunities for students to explore their artistic nature. Aside from the art projects and performances that students do with their classroom teachers, many artists are brought into the school to share their talents with the students.

Each year, every grade level chooses an artist-in-residence to share their artistic expertise with the students. These artists come into the classroom during the school year and work directly with the students. Some types of residencies in the past have been music and movement, puppetry, storytelling, poetry, and dance.

“The arts are fundamental resources through which the world is viewed, meaning is created, and the mind developed.”

—Elliot W. Eisner, Professor of Education and Art, Stanford University

Starting again at FSK this year is a wonderful non-profit art program called SPEAK Art (Sunset-Parkside Education and Action Committee). Through this generous program students in grades 2-5 will have a ten week art class specializing in visual art. Our new SPEAK Art teacher Louisa Koplitz has already started working with the 3rd and 5th grades.

In addition to visual art, the 4th and 5th graders continue to learn flute, violin, clarinet or trumpet in the instrumental music program. They are able to share their new musical talents at the end of the year when they perform for the school and parents. New this year, is a music teacher for the kindergarten through 3rd grades. In our weekly music classes, students are learning new songs and musical concepts.

In the spring, all SFUSD schools come together to display and share art with the city of San Francisco. In May, the de Young Museum hosts Young at Art, a week long appreciation of students' art. This includes visual and performing art from students in kindergarten through high school.

In the words of SFUSD's Arts Education Master Plan, art should be in every school, for every student, every day!

“The arts must be at the heart of every child's learning experience if...they are to have a chance to dream and to create, to have beliefs, to carry a sense of cultural identity.”

—James D Wolfensohn, former chairman of The Kennedy Center

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