



Press Release

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The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts

Announces

Butte County, California,

as Partner Community for

Any Given Child

Program Creates a Long-Range Arts Education Plan for Students Grades K–8 in Oroville Area Schools

(WASHINGTON)—The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts has chosen Butte County, California, as the 28th site for *Ensuring the Arts for Any Given Child*, a catalyst program that improves student outcomes and creates community change by leveraging the power of strategic, coordinated arts education. In Butte County, *Any Given Child* will comprise: Oroville City Elementary School District, Palermo Union Elementary School District, and Thermalito Union Elementary School District.

Now in its twelfth year, *Any Given Child* is based on the premise that 1) arts education is an essential component of a student’s education; 2) any given child, regardless of circumstance, deserves equitable access to quality arts education; and that 3) community stakeholders must work in concert to create long-range plans that benefit students and improve communities. With the addition of Butte County, the program has 28 sites in 20 states and Puerto Rico. Within the 2020–2021 school year, *Any Given Child* has impacted 659,034 students (K–8) across 27 communities.

“The arts are a vital part of our culture and our society. It is important to remember that the arts help us develop emotional intelligence and provide a positive outlet for stress, trauma, and positive self-expression.” stated Mary Sakuma, Butte County Superintendent of Schools. “After surviving years of trauma due to various local disasters (the Oroville Dam disaster, several major fires that have destroyed schools and entire communities, dangerous floods) and now a worldwide pandemic, our small, rural school districts understand the importance of working

together to maximize their efforts and the use of resources. The school districts chosen for the *Any Given Child* program regularly work together and consult with one another. I am honored and excited that BCOE will be the coordinating agency for the Kennedy Center's *Any Given Child* Program; this is a wonderful opportunity for these three school districts to come together to ensure access and equity for arts education for Oroville area/ Butte County students."

[Numerous studies](#) point to the value of arts education in improving student outcomes, yet equity in, and access to, a strong, consistent arts education remains an issue for many students across the United States. *Any Given Child* seeks to help fill that gap by bringing together community stakeholders to create and implement a customized, unified, long-term plan for arts education.

"The arts engage the whole child in creative thinking, collaboration, cross-cultural understanding, and communication. It inspires and transforms students, supporting them in becoming life-long learners as well as future citizens," said Jeanette McCune, Director of School and Community Programs at the Kennedy Center. "The Kennedy Center is delighted to develop a relationship with Butte County, California. The commitment of the Butte County Office of Education to provide leadership for the collective efforts supporting arts education for all children in its three school districts is inspiring. *Any Given Child* generates a measurable impact in students' lives both in and out of the classroom and we are looking forward to seeing the students reap the benefits of increased arts opportunities."

In Butte County, *Any Given Child* will incorporate existing resources of Oroville City Elementary School District, Palermo Union Elementary School District, and Thermalito Union Elementary School District, Butte County Office of Education, local arts and community organizations, and the Kennedy Center. Local educators and philanthropic and for-profit stakeholders will provide additional resources. Butte County Office of Education will also serve as the lead organization for *Any Given Child* Butte County with funding support towards the first four years provided primarily by the National Endowment for the Arts.

With expert consultation services provided by Kennedy Center staff, community leaders develop a strategy for arts education that is tailor-made for the school district and community. Since the program's inception, *Any Given Child* sites have reported numerous [successes](#): a number of schools have hired additional teachers or added staff positions; new sources of funding for arts education have been established; communities have expanded arts offerings for students; and sites have provided professional learning for classroom teachers, arts specialists, and local arts organizations to build their capacity to deliver high quality arts education to students.

These successes extend further into the community as renewed and new partnerships develop among school districts, community arts organizations, universities, communications, business, and philanthropy, bringing a new spirit of collaboration, greater coordination, and alignment of services, to their efforts and a broader vision of what is possible. Organizations that once were working alone, and sometimes at cross-purposes, are seeing how their collaboration and partnerships are achieving a powerful collective impact to reach every child in their educational journey.

By bringing together community stakeholders to envision their arts education goals and coordinate resources, *Any Given Child* is a sustainable, customized approach to community building. [Three phases](#) make up the program: strategic planning (year 1), which includes the community's comprehensive audit of existing arts education resources and needs assessment facilitated by Kennedy Center staff; implementation (years 2, 3, and 4), where guided by an Implementation Committee, the community puts the strategic plan into action; and sustaining (year 5 and beyond), with the goal that the community sustains and expands arts education offerings and continues to ensure funding and staffing for program initiatives, communications, and marketing.

For further information about Education at the Kennedy Center, please visit the Center's [website](#).

ABOUT BUTTE COUNTY ELEMENTARY SCHOOL DISTRICTS

The three K-8 elementary school districts are located in and adjacent to the town of Oroville. Located on the Sacramento Valley floor at the foot of the Feather River it was established in the 1840s as the home base to supply gold miners located up river in the Sierra Nevada foothills. With a rough population of 19,000 in the city limits, the surrounding metro area in the unincorporated county is about 48,000. All three school districts are defined as rural. Oroville City Elementary School District is located in the town limits and comprises seven schools serving 1,900 students with 129 teachers. Thermalito Union Elementary School District is located in an unincorporated area of Butte County adjacent to Oroville and comprises four schools serving 1,500 students with 68 teachers. Palermo Union Elementary School District, is also in an unincorporated area adjacent to Oroville and serves 1,200 students in three schools with 59 teachers. Each of these districts is dedicated to ensuring safe, stimulating, and equitable environments for quality learning that leads their students to become successful life-long learners and citizens.

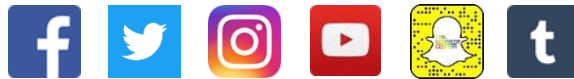
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