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November 15, 2013

Pajaro Valley Unified School District

Office of Superintendent

294 Green Valley Road

Watsonville, CA 95076

Dear Members of the Pajaro Valley Unified School District Board of Trustees,

I'm writing on behalf of the Santa Cruz County Alliance for Arts Education in support of updating the 2008 the Pajaro Valley Unified School District Arts Plan. Three members of the Alliance, Sonia Deetz, Susan Freeman, and Mary McLaughlin, were involved in the initial development of the 2008 Arts Plan, and all strongly recommend it be updated, as well.

The Alliance is a local advocacy network, working under the auspices of the California Alliance for Arts Education and Arts Council Santa Cruz County. We are a passionate group of volunteer parents, community members, arts professionals, and school administrators with the mission to advocate for arts education for all students in every school community in Santa Cruz County.

We know that arts education teaches skills students need to be prepared for the 21st century work force, and that all students should receive a holistic education that includes activities that reinforce academics, develop skills, capture student interest, and support student engagement.

In the current economic climate, with limited federal, state, and local resources available, and challenges to prioritize district expenses, it is absolutely critical to have a clearly defined arts plan in order to work toward meeting state mandates for sequential, standards-based arts education for every student K-12 during the school day.

An updated plan will address current trends affecting arts programming such as the connections between the arts and new Common Core State Standards, and shifts in funding. It will outline goals, resources, and challenges, and clearly define what funding opportunities are available to support arts education.

We encourage you to develop and implement an updated Arts Plan for your district. An updated plan will strengthen support for arts education and build a sustainable district-wide commitment to sequential standards-based arts education programming for all of your students.

Sincerely,

Sarah Brothers

Arts Education Manager, Arts Council Santa Cruz County

Chair, Santa Cruz county Alliance for Arts Education

Arts Council Santa Cruz County

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