UKIAH, CA -- The Mendocino County Alliance for Arts Education has partnered with the Arts Council of Mendocino County (ACMC) to help ensure that student art programs and professional training for teachers becomes an important component of every school's curriculum throughout the county.

Hosts for this kick-off meeting in downtown Ukiah on Friday, Nov. 30 will include: Trudy McCreaor, Director of Mendocino Ballet and ACMC board member; Megan Barber-Allende, Community Foundation of Mendocino County Director of Grants and Programs; and Paul Tichinin, County Superintendent of Schools. North State Café will provide a warm welcome to at least 40 people at this morning meeting scheduled from 8:30-10:30 a.m.

Key people who have been invited to attend this meeting to lend their voices in support of arts education for children are: musician and songwriter Spencer Brewer; Sherrie Smith-Ferri Grace Hudson Museum Director; Assembly Member Wesley Chesbro; local business owner Jim Mayfield; Willow Anderson and Cathy McKeon parent volunteers at Pomolita School; and Alyssum Wier Executive Director of the Arts Council of Mendocino County.

Paul Tichinin will present an expanded report about the status of arts education in Mendocino County schools. He will define efforts teachers make to provide quality art programs with little money available for supplies, and highlight areas for improvement which will give students a chance to reach their full creative potential.

This discussion will revolve around how arts education can play a role in addressing community issues and help to improve conditions that negatively impact youth. Like many other school districts around the state, Mendocino County schools have been forced to make budget cuts as a result of the current fiscal crisis in California.

Paul states, “Arts education is crucial at every level - classroom, school district and countywide. We know that involvement in the arts helps students increase test scores and promotes academic achievement.”

Attendees will also learn more about the ACMC’s GASP program (Get Arts in School), which provides grants to professional artists to bring arts enrichment to schools throughout Mendocino County. Expansion of GASP, its satellite professional development program, and related advocacy efforts are made possible by a three-year grant from the Community Foundation of Mendocino County.

It is hoped that a core group of inspired advocates will 

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