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Local

Redwood City fights to keep music education

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By: [Andrea Koskey](#)
Examiner Staff Writer
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When budget cuts threatened the music programs at Redwood City schools, parents banded together to raise funds to save it. In February, parents met with the Redwood City Education Foundation to brainstorm ideas to save the programs.

Georgia Jack, chair of Save the Music for the education foundation, said community drives, a fun run and an all-day concert were determined as ways to help raise money.

“All music teachers were given pink slips,” she said. “We shouldn’t have to lose them. Some of our local kids are great. They will blow you away with their abilities.”

Jack said community drives continue to be held throughout Redwood City and the foundation has so far collected \$26,000 in cash to support music in schools. Jack said she played piano for years and both of her children are enrolled in music programs at their Redwood City schools.

According to the district, 898 students are enrolled in music programs in the fifth through eighth grades in district schools.

On May 29, Groovin’ in the Grove, an all-day benefit concert at Sequoia High School is scheduled as a larger effort to raise the money. The education foundation hopes to raise \$100,000 for music programs.

Jack said the music program was already cut in 1993, but the foundation managed to save part of it by raising money to hire three teachers to cover 900 students at 16 schools.

Kennedy Middle School is the only school that has a designated music teacher.



Music programs at Redwood City schools may be the latest victim of budget cuts if upcoming fundraising events do not raise enough money to save them. (AP file photo)

“The program limped along until Proposition 13 decimated it,” she said of the 1978 legislation that capped the tax rate for real estate. “Since then, we’ve been very creative in coming up with ways to maintain a well-rounded education for students.”

The instrument program at the middle school is the only program in the district in danger. Music in second through fourth grades and the high school programs are not affected by the cuts.

Jack said it costs roughly \$350,000 to fund the music programs.

Redwood City is facing between a \$4.8 million and \$10.6 million budget deficit. The district operates on an \$80 million budget.

District spokeswoman Naomi Hunter said music is not the only program on the chopping block.

“Music is at risk,” she said. “But many programs are being considered. The district will not decide on a final budget until June.”

IF YOU GO

Redwood City Education Foundation Groovin’ in the Grove benefit concert to raise money for school music programs

When: May 29, 1 p.m.

Where: Sequoia High School, 1201 Brewster St., Redwood City

Goal: To raise \$100,000

On the Web: www.rcef.org/groovin/

Source: Redwood City Education Foundation

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