

PRESS RELEASE 0405-03
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Music, Music, and More Music has Come to Laguna Beach Students!

In 2003, a Kindergarten-12th grade Performing Arts/Music Articulation Committee met over several months. The purpose was to connect the elementary, middle school, and high school performing arts/music teachers to develop a strong program continuum. Out of the several suggestions that came out of the committee's work were three key ideas: expand the elementary program, implement a strings program, and modify the demanding full-time Thurston Middle School and Laguna Beach High School's music teacher's schedule.

In the 2003-2004 school year, the elementary instrumental music program was expanded by 20%. This fall, the Laguna Beach Unified School District will introduce a 4th-8th grade strings program. Also beginning this fall, the full-time music teacher's schedule will be modified to accommodate a part-time high school Jazz teacher.

An inclusive panel of administrators, teachers, a band booster, a university professor, and parents were involved in the interview and selection of Phillip Felix the new, full-time music teacher who will teach Thurston's Junior Jazz Band, Concert Band, and Junior Band; Thurston, El Morro, and Top of the World's 4th-8th grade Strings, and Laguna Beach High School Concert/Marching Band. Roger Shew was selected as the new high school Jazz teacher.

Carol Reynolds, a former Orange County music teacher, a former member of the Arts Commission for eight years, and a longtime arts advocate of Laguna Beach, reflects upon the positive enhancements of the program, "Dr. Steven Keller, Assistant Superintendent of the Laguna Beach Unified School District is a strong believer in the value of a high quality music instructional program both instrumental and vocal and has worked very hard with the community to create a sound curriculum." She continues, "Under Dr. Keller's direction, the elementary instrumental program has developed into an exemplary program; Thurston and Laguna Beach High School will continue their many offerings in performing music. Dr. Keller, Dr. Daem, and the School Board are all strong supporters of performing music and the special role that all the arts play in the education of each and every student in the Laguna Beach Unified School District. The community is grateful to them!"