

PRESS RELEASE

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MONTEREY COUNTY OFFICE OF EDUCATION LAUNCHES CALIFORNIA ARTS ADVOCACY TOOLKIT

MCOE Encourages Schools to Advocate, Rebuild and Teach Arts in Education

SALINAS, CA – May 20, 2008 – The Monterey County Superintendent of Schools, Dr. Nancy Kotowski, announced today that the Monterey County Office of Education has launched the California Arts Advocacy Toolkit, a resource available for all California schools to advocate, rebuild and teach arts in education.

There is a proven recognition that the 4th R, the arts, along with reading, writing and arithmetic, teach children lifelong skills. Yet, a recent SRI International study called "An Unfinished Canvas" reported that fully 89 percent of K-12 schools fail to offer a standards-based course of study in the four arts disciplines.

The California Arts Advocacy Toolkit is a vehicle for all schools statewide to advocate for a comprehensive and standards-based arts education in dance, music, theatre, and visual arts for California students in kindergarten through high school. Complete with a public service announcement by Dina Ruiz Eastwood (Mrs. Clint Eastwood), background information on the importance of arts in education and sample templates to promote awareness and advocate for the arts, the California Arts Advocacy Toolkit can also be used by district leaders, county offices of education, parents, teachers, state-policy makers, and community members.

"We are excited that we can offer this comprehensive tool for all California schools to advocate for the arts in education," said Hamish Tyler, Coordinator/Administrator for the Visual and Performing Arts at MCOE. "An education in the 4th R, the arts, educates the whole child, giving them the skills necessary to be successful in the 21st century."

The California Arts Advocacy Toolkit was funded through a grant from the California County Superintendents Educational Services Association's Arts Initiative, which is sponsored by the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation. Armanasco Public Relations, Inc. was engaged by the MCOE to create and develop the California Arts Advocacy Toolkit. Under the grant, county superintendents work with the business community and the arts community to begin a systemic state and local approach to bringing the arts into the classroom at every grade level.

For a copy of the California Arts Advocacy Toolkit, visit www.CaliforniaArtsToolkit.com or contact Hamish Tyler at 831.784.4192. For more information about the California County Superintendents Educational Services Association's Arts Initiative, visit www.ccsesaarts.org.

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About Monterey County Office of Education

The Monterey County Office of Education works closely with its 24 school districts, local institutions of higher education, and the many diverse communities of interest around it, by providing service, leadership, and support designed to advance education in Monterey County to world-class standards. MCOE provides K-12 professional development, instructional strategies, assessment tools, arts resources, network meetings, fund raising support and planning support. To learn more about MCOE visit www.monterey.k12.ca.us.

About Armanasco Public Relations, Inc.

Established in 1985 by David Armanasco, APR is an associate of Hill & Knowlton, Inc., one of the world's leading public relations firms. APR has grown to become the largest privately owned public relations firm on California's Central Coast, with offices in downtown Monterey and oldtown Salinas. APR's client roster cuts across a variety of industries, including agriculture, foodservice, education, hospitality, real estate development and utilities. Services include: public affairs, community relations, strategic planning, marketing communications and crisis management. To learn more about Armanasco Public Relations, Inc. visit www.armanasco.com or call 831.372.2259.