

EDUCATION THROUGH MUSIC-LOS ANGELES

ANNUAL REPORT

SEPT 2024 - AUG 2025



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Education Through Music-Los Angeles (ETM-LA) partners with under-resourced schools with the mission to provide and promote music as a part of the core educational curriculum for every child in order to foster academic excellence, creativity, and overall development and well-being.

ETM-LA endlessly extends our gratitude to you and to our students, partners, supporters, and community members. We are resolute in ensuring quality, sequential music education for all students, especially those in under-resourced schools.

All children deserve to be nourished by music's inherent benefits of joy, motivation, growth, and connectedness.

We remain consistently responsive to the needs of our community and strive towards achieving equity and social justice through music. Learning music encourages personal, social, cultural, physiological, intellectual, and emotional transformation, enabling the discovery of one's own voice and unique journey.



STUDENT SPOTLIGHT STORIES



Choir students and sisters **Anabel and Isabel** have grown into confident leaders. Anabel shares, **"Music helps me let go of my shyness. I got the opportunity to be the emcee at a school concert and I was nervous, but music class helped me prepare for and enjoy it."** Isabel adds, **"Since I've been singing, I feel more confident in myself."**

Isabel and Anabel's mother, Ana expresses, **"Music class has given the girls an opportunity to be leaders. They share experiences, offer help and support to classmates, and at the same time ask for help when needed."**



Annika, an Orchestra Student, is discovering her purpose and sense of self. Annika shares, **"I really like playing the cello because it makes me feel like me. Learning music makes me feel really good and it tells me that I need to relax...it makes me feel better. Everyone has something to give to the world, and for me, it's music."**

Annika's music teacher, Mrs. Cahuantzi shares, **"As a leader in the orchestra, Annika is thoughtful, intelligent, and a role model. I see her dedication, consistency, and attention to detail in music transfer to her life beyond the classroom."**



Harmony's connection with music is more than notes on a page. **"Without music, others and I wouldn't be able to express our emotions and feelings,"** she explains. This sense of expression, along with the fun and creativity she finds in music, has transformed her school experience. **"Music has changed my life,"** she confides.

Her father, José shares, **"She's constantly stretching her brain by memorizing songs and choreography, which is great for building memory and focus. Plus, music class fosters teamwork and communication with her classmates—skills that will benefit her in all aspects of life. The school concerts are a highlight. It's fantastic to see her perform with her classmates and witness the joy in everyone's faces."**

PARTNER & CONSULTING SCHOOLS

44 SCHOOLS

19,000 STUDENTS

We form partnerships with under-resourced elementary and middle schools to provide music instruction on a weekly basis as a core subject in its own right and as a means of supporting learning in other areas.



Consulting Schools

Fenton Avenue Charter School (Since '24)
New Horizon School (Since '24)
Rio Vista Elementary (Since '20)
Roosevelt Elementary (Since '13)
Valley View Elementary (Since '24)

Partner Schools

Aldama Elementary School
Aragon Elementary School
Ascot Elementary School
Aspire Gateway Elementary School
Aspire Junior Collegiate Academy
Aspire Titan Academy
Bursch Elementary School
Cantara Elementary School
Carlos Santana Elementary School
Carver Elementary School
Castelar Street Elementary School
Centinela Elementary School
Craig Williams Elementary School
Dickison Elementary School
Dolores Mission School
Dorris Place Elementary School
El Dorado Avenue Elementary School
Ernie Pyle Elementary School
Fenton Primary Center
Gil Garcetti Learning Academy
Hazeltine Elementary School
Hooper Ave. Elementary School
Kelso Tk-6 School
LA Leadership Academy (Middle)
LA Leadership Academy (Primary)
McKinley Elementary School (Burbank)
McKinley Integrated Arts School
Norwood Elementary School
Oak Street TK-8 School
Payne P-8 STEAM Academy
Providencia Elementary School
Ramona Elementary School
Toluca Lake Elementary School
Washington Elementary School (Bellflower)
Washington Elementary School (Compton)
Frank E. Woodruff Elementary
Woodworth-Monroe TK-8 Academy

COMMUNITY & PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT



Throughout the school year, our devoted teaching staff and guests worked tirelessly to refine and develop their roles as music educators. ETM-LA provided **over 100 hours of training**, which included our intensive week-long Summer Training Academy, October Training Academy, Winter Training Academy, Spring Training Academy, and other workshops and seminars to support our educators in their professional journey.

The goal of empowering under-served children never left sight as our teachers explored strategies on how to be culturally responsive, nurture under-resourced communities, engage all students, and embrace creativity in their music classroom and lessons.

Our principals and district leaders had even more chances for growth at the **15th Annual Principals Leadership Conference**. Every year, leaders are encouraged to share, learn, and thoughtfully plan for ways to successfully

explore and implement music programs across schools, districts, and local communities. One principal shared, **"I want to understand my own voice as an administrator and give a voice to my students and staff."** Other feedback from participants included: **"Speakers were very effective in really making you focus on our music program and how to expand it."**

Annually, ETM-LA's program team attends the **California All-State Music Educators Conference (CASMEC)**, hosted by The California Music Educators Association (CMEA) a unit of the National Association for Music Education (NAfME).

Everlasting learning is essential to the growth and development of every educator, no matter which role you play.



COMMUNITIES REACHED

“Music is the one language that really crosses all language barriers.
I think it brings the world together.”

- Christopher Lennertz, *ETM-LA Board Member*



92%

ARE STUDENTS OF COLOR



84%

FROM LOW-INCOME HOUSEHOLDS



27%

ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS

YEAR IN REVIEW

MULTI-YEAR GENERAL GRANT AWARDS

ETM-LA is honored to be among non-profits chosen as a grant recipient by both the Perenchio Foundation and The Music Man Foundation's Meredith Willson Award to nurture quality music & arts programming.



LACDAC INTERNSHIPS

Thank you to the LA County Department of Arts & Culture for your continued sponsorship!

SEPT

WINTER CONCERTS

Students from ETM-LA Partner Schools all over LA County put on a show for parents and community members for the holidays to showcase their hard work in music class.



OCT

OCTOBER TRAINING

Music teachers gather for intensive training and professional development to stay sharp and relevant in the music classroom.



OCT

WINTER ACADEMY

Despite having to pivot to virtual, we kicked off the New Year strong with professional development and guest clinicians for ETM-LA Music Teachers & Interns.



DEC

19TH BENEFIT GALA

ETM-LA's annual benefit gala honored 2024 Shining Stars and helped raise support to give the gift of music to local under-resourced schools.

See more on pg. 9



DEC

PRINCIPALS LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE

This annual conference encourages leaders in education to plan strategic goals to successfully explore music program growth across local communities.



JAN

ETM-LA PRINCETERNS

Thank you to Princeton University for your continued partnership!



JAN

SPRING ACADEMY

Music teachers wrap up the school year with another training and opportunity for professional development.



FEB

SNACKS & SOUNDS SERIES

Every spring ETM-LA hosts the Snacks & Sound Series - a season of open rehearsals and ensemble presentations across our partner schools.



FEB

FEB

YEAR IN REVIEW

15TH MUSIC UNITES THE WORLD FESTIVAL

ETM-LA's 15th Annual Music Unites the World Festival gathered over 1,200 friends, family, and ETM-LA partner school students.
See more on pg. 12



MAR



MAR

FAMILY HOUR SERIES

ETM-LA brought the enchanting world of Dreamworks' *Abominable & The Invisible City* into the music classroom.
See more on pg. 11



MAR

LA 5K - MOVE 4 MUSIC!

ETM-LA joined the LA 5K Marathon for the first time in our history with over 50 participants and supporters.

BAKE OFF 4 BEATS

ETM-LA held its 2nd annual Bake Off 4 Beats, where supporters enjoyed delicious baked goods while raising dough for ETM-LA's mission.
See more on pg. 10



APR



MAY

SPRING CONCERTS

Students from ETM-LA Partner Schools all over LA County ended their school year with a finale of musical performances!

FAMILY HOUR SERIES

ETM-LA continued its Family Hour Series with the magical Dreamworks' *The Wild Robot*.
See more on pg. 11



MAY



JUN

MUSIC ROCKS CONCERT

Local LA bands gathered to raise support for ETM-LA. Special thanks to Rudy Sarzo, Bernth, Birdhouse, Wiley Bouchard, Sequoyah School, & all the amazing young artists.

STAFF APPRECIATION

Every June, ETM-LA throws a celebration for the music and admin staff of ETM-LA to honor their hard work and commitment to its mission.



JUN



JUN

SUMMER MUSIC PROGRAM

School was out for the summer, but the music kept playing as students brought the beat at this year's two-week Summer Music Program.

19TH ANNUAL BENEFIT GALA



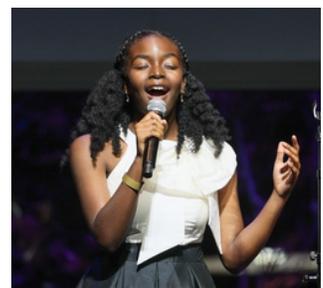
On Friday, December 6, 2024, ETM-LA hosted its **19th Year Benefit Gala** at the Skirball Cultural Center in Los Angeles. The celebration honored Shining Star Awardees **Blake Neely** (ETM-LA Board Member & Emmy-Winning Composer; *Masters of the Air*, *The Flight Attendant*), Music Educator & Award-Winning Composer/Conductor **Zanaida Stewart Robles**, and **GameSoundCon/Brian Schmidt** (Corporate Partner & Leader in Video Game Music/Sound Design).

Gala host, Actor/Singer/Songwriter **Karen David** (*The Irrational*, *Call of Duty: Black Ops 6*, *Galavant*), rang in the holiday spirit as awards were presented by Producer, Director & Writer **Greg Berlanti** (presented to Neely), Emmy-Winning TV Host **Suzanna Guzmán** (presented to Dr. Robles), and SVP of

Formosa Group Worldwide Interactive Paul Lipson (presented to Schmidt).

During a video tribute in memoriam of ETM-LA Advisory Board Member and legendary Disney composer **Richard M. Sherman**, the attendees joined in a heartwarming singalong of "It's a Small World."

Performances by **SYML**, **Harvard-Westlake Jazz Singers** (directed by Dr. Robles), and ETM-LA Alum **Krista Sims** rounded out the gala. Later, Robles shared, "Teaching is like you [getting] a gift everyday... I want to thank ETM-LA for their mission, which is so crucial to the landscape of music in this area where there's been a drought of music education for three decades."



2ND ANNUAL BAKE OFF 4 BEATS



On April 27, 2025, ETM-LA held the 2nd Annual **Bake Off 4 Beats** fundraiser supporting music programs in under-resourced LA County schools. Host **Leo Birenberg** (Emmy-Winning Composer, *Weird: The Al Yankovic Story*) led the guests in savoring goodies and performances, all while supporting ETM-LA's mission.

Guests enjoyed treats made by Artist Bakers: **Andres Locsey** (*Cobra Kai*; *Weird: The Al Yankovic Story*), **Becca Shrand** (*Your Friendly Neighborhood Spiderman*), **Fernand Bos** (*Frozen*; *Hawkeye*), **Jesse Carmichael** (*Maroon 5*), **Leo Birenberg**, **Micaela Carballo** (*Norbert*), **Michael Paraskevas** (*Agatha All Along*; *WandaVision*),

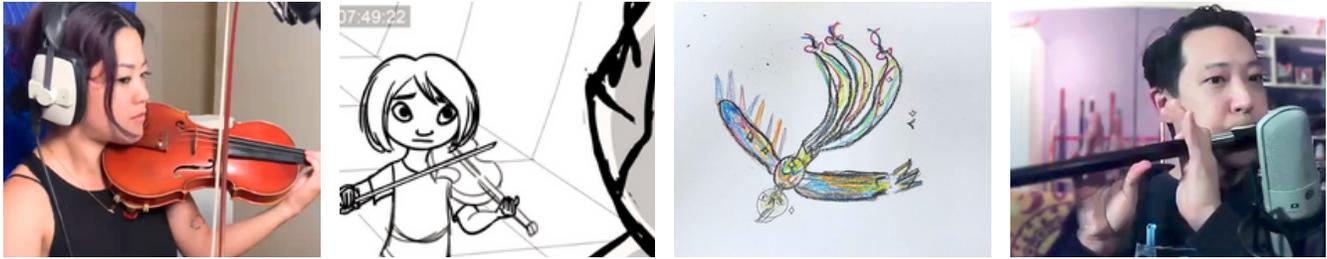
Sherri Chung (*Based on a true story; Gremlins: The Wild Batch*), and **Susie Seiter** (*Encanto*; *Evanescence*; *Inside Out 2*). ETM-LA Student Alumni **Krista Sims** (violin & vocals) and **Renata Raya** (cello) were joined by ETM-LA Executive Director **Victoria Lanier** on violin in a collaborative performance.

Additionally, there was a jazzy sax performance by ETM-LA Student Alum **Diego Sandoval Andrade**, who reflected: "As a kid I was always very hyper... music really helped me calm down and brought me back down to earth. Music was the thing that inspired me to keep going after all these years."



FAMILY HOUR SERIES A SUCCESS

DREAMWORKS ANIMATION'S *ABOMINABLE AND THE INVISIBLE CITY*



On March 6, 2025, ETM-LA continued its Family Hour Series, exploring DreamWorks Animation's *Abominable and The Invisible City* with the classrooms of ETM-LA Partner Schools. ~2,000 students tuned in to enjoy a behind-the-scenes look into the creative process for the film with director **Ruolin Li** (Nickelodeon Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles) and artist **Amelia Kasten** (Nancy Drew), alongside a collaborative demonstration led by

actor **Karen Huie** (Nancy Drew) who voiced the character Nai Nai, while Kasten live animated the reading. Composer **George Shaw** (*Escape the Night, Star Wars Musical*) unpacked his music composition process for the students. Students learned how Shaw incorporated cultural instruments into his composition to blend western and eastern sounds. They also enjoyed seeing video clips of the recording session for the main theme on violin.

DREAMWORKS ANIMATION'S *THE WILD ROBOT*



ETM-LA developed its Family Hour Series even further on May 15th, 2025, with DreamWorks Animation's *The Wild Robot* and ~2,500 student attendees from across LA County. Participants explored the film's collaborative storyboard, musical, and animation process with Academy Award-Winning Composer **Kris Bowers** (*The Last Repair Shop, Bridgerton*), Score Coordinator **Sahil Jindal** (*Haunted*

Mansion, Bob Marley: One Love) and Head of Story **Heidi Jo Gilbert** (*Puss in Boots: The Last Wish, Turbo*) to illuminate art's ability to communicate emotions. Bowers provided a look into the music of *The Wild Robot*, sharing clips from the film to show how music amplified messages of community, motherhood, & kindness. Students then enjoyed an interactive drawing lesson guided by Gilbert.

15TH ANNUAL MUSIC UNITES THE WORLD FESTIVAL

On March 12-13, 2025, ETM-LA hosted the **15th Annual Music Unites the World Festival**, at the Saban Theater in Beverly Hills, where students received training from renowned artists and educators. The culminating concert brought together over 1,200 friends, family, and ETM-LA partner school students.

On Day 1, instrumental ensembles from **ETM-LA's partner schools** performed with guidance from **Claudio Alcantar** (Music Director & Music Teacher), **Anthony White** (Award-Winning Band Director), **Angel Velez** (Conductor & Orchestrator), **Brooke DeRosa** (Award-Winning Composer & Conductor), and **Rachael Denny** (Dept. Chair, Pasadena Conservatory of Music). **John Dennis** (Executive Creative Director, Music, Disney Imagineering) shared a reassuring message with attendees about encouraging music education and helping children find and follow their passion.

Festival Day 2 welcomed student choirs, rock bands, and Orff ensembles, who diligently

prepared culturally diverse songs for their respective concerts. Ensembles on the second day received training from **Baraka May** (Vocalist & Choral Conductor), **Jenny Tisi** (Choral Director), **Misha Shtangrud** (Choral Director), **Richard Lawton** (Music Professor), and **Tony Sauza** (ETM-LA Instructional Supervisor).

Angel Velez (Conductor & Orchestrator) gave a speech to students about how music is a catalyst for exploring the world and sharing positivity. In a grand finale, **Masanga Marimba** led the festival goers in a joyful dance party celebrating music from Africa and Latin America.

ETM-LA also publicly awarded two student essay contest winners, **Amy Alonso** and **Chris Angel**, who both shined in articulating how music allows us to work hard, express ourselves, and unlock our potential.



SUMMER MUSIC PROGRAM



Though school was officially out for the summer, the music kept playing as students from across ETM-LA partner schools attended this year's two-week **Summer Music Program**. Students eagerly took part in string ensemble, band, singing, and general music with a diverse mix of musical genres including blues, classical, film, pop, and rock.

Led on-site by Music Teacher Mentor **Lucy Cahuantzi**, students loved working with ETM-LA Music Teachers **Ariel Ortega**, **Ricardo Rodriguez**, and **Ryan Fogal**, who had added support from ETM-LA volunteers and student alumni. Each day was filled with musical warm-ups, fun games, and ensemble rehearsals.

Mrs. Cahuantzi shared, "I am very proud of how students supported each other and found joy in making music together. It was more than just learning notes; it was about connection, expression, and community."

On the last day, families joined together to perform music from the Blues, **The Beach Boys**, **Justin Timberlake**, and **Julie London**, to **John Williams' Star Wars** and **Jurassic Park**, concluding in a combined choir and instrumental piece, "Mr. Blue Sky" by **The Electric Light Orchestra**. A parent noted, "My child loved the summer program and got to explore music theory, learn fun, challenging songs, and make new friends! He's excited to come back next summer!"



THANK YOU, ETM-LA FAMILY

Thank you to our donors, staff, volunteers, partner schools, academic leaders, communities, and parents for helping to provide our children with a comprehensive education and establish music as part of the core curriculum.

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THANK YOU, ETM-LA FAMILY

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* = Music Teacher Intern





#MUSICMAKESMYLIFEBETTER

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