



COMMUNITY SUPPORT FOR KIDDO! BRIDGES SIGNIFICANT BUDGET GAP IN 2010/2011 SCHOOL YEAR

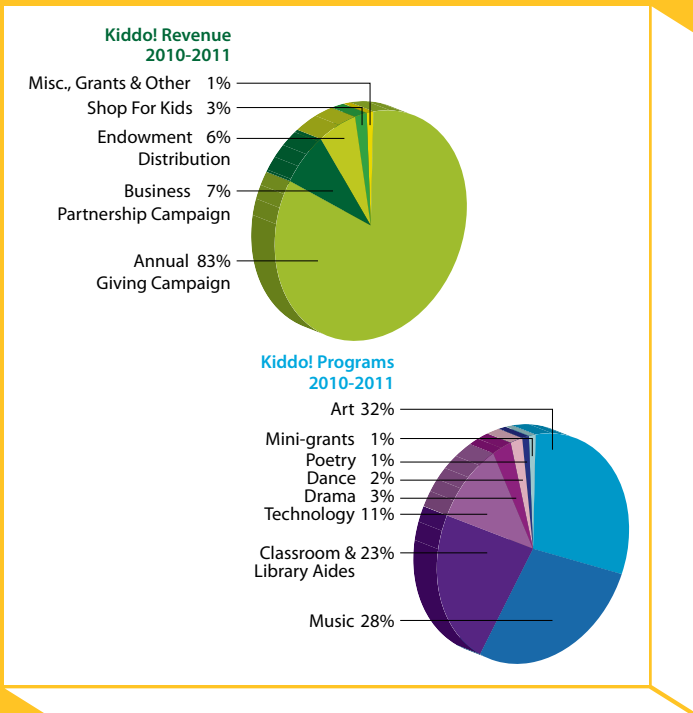
For almost three decades, Kiddo!, the Mill Valley Schools Community Foundation, has provided funding for critical educational programs that faced elimination due to cuts in California's education budget. Thanks to generous contributions from parents, local businesses, and community members, Kiddo! funds award-winning music, art, dance, drama, poetry and technology programs for more than 2,800 students in our K-8 schools.

This year, Kiddo! increased its fundraising efforts to add library and classroom aides to the list of programs fully underwritten by our community. Growing enrollment in our district, along with a sagging economy and unprecedented budget cuts from the state, galvanized our community to pull together and raise the money required to address the increasing budget gap.

With great appreciation, Kiddo! acknowledges our community's extraordinary support for excellent public education in Mill Valley. In the 2010/2011 school year, Kiddo! will raise more than \$2.2 million, which funds salaries and all other expenses for our core arts programs along with technology, library and classroom aides.

Thanks to you, Mill Valley's children attend public schools where they are empowered to reach their full potential. While we thank you for your uncommon generosity this year, it is important to remember that the money we have raised underwrites only one year of expenses for the vital programs our kids enjoy every day. In order to provide our children with inspiring and innovative classes that will help them to succeed in the 21st century, we must work together every year to sustain our excellent local schools.

To hear more about the way your valuable gifts enhance the lives of our children, turn to pages 2-3.



CLASSROOM TEACHERS KNOW... KIDDO! PROGRAMS BUILD ACADEMIC AND LIFE SKILLS

Julie Althoff



The Value of Arts in the Classroom

If you're the parent of a child in Mill Valley's schools, you've seen many of Kiddo!'s programs in action. You've videotaped the plays, concerts and chorus performances, framed the pastel masterpieces and found places of honor for the whimsical ceramic statues. You know firsthand how much joy these programs bring.

But the arts education that Kiddo! provides isn't just about the fun kids have dancing, singing, playing a musical instrument, or painting. An arts education is critical to the academic and personal development of every child. Mill Valley's teachers can tell you this, for they see its benefits in their classrooms each day. Here's what some of them have to say.

Dance Programs: Julie Althoff

A kindergartner's brain is on fire with the new: new information, new friends, new experiences. It's hard for those little bodies to contain it all – to sit with their arms

and legs in the appropriate places. It's good, then, that Alan Scofield's Young Imaginations dance program gives them the opportunity to release that pent-up energy in a creatively controlled flailing of five-year-old limbs every week.



These exuberant classes aren't just a much-needed kinetic release of gross motor energy. According to Old Mill kindergarten teacher Julie Althoff, the Kiddo!-funded dance program also helps students in the classroom. It improves their focus and concentration, and teaches them cooperation, she says. It also develops their longterm memory skills, as Mr. Scofield tells a story in segments over several classes: "The students get excited about the story time and remember the story from week to week."



And, perhaps most importantly, the classes build self-esteem and a sense of accomplishment. "Children can succeed in a dance program when they might not be as successful in other areas," says Ms. Althoff. In the new world of kindergarten, that sort of confidence is foundational, and irreplaceable.

Art Programs: Kim Suppes and Amy Faulkner

Second grade is about math facts and punctuation, Junie B. Jones and writing stories. But more than that, second grade is about sparking an intellectual curiosity that will fuel a lifetime of learning. Park School teachers Kim Suppes and Amy Faulkner feel that Kiddo!'s art program helps them do that.

Both teachers believe that, at this age, children learn better when "the emphasis is on getting to explore and not having a 'product' to achieve." Art supports this philosophy because its projects are open-ended, encouraging experimentation and creativity. "There is no right or wrong answer in art," says Ms. Faulkner, "and this flexibility allows children of all learning styles and ability levels to create freely."

When the pens and paints are put aside, the lessons art teaches are not. "Art allows children to solve problems, develop social relationships, and see the world in a fresh new way," Ms. Faulkner says, and these things make learning itself a more creative and rewarding experience.

Drama Programs: Cari Pompanin and "Walk Through the Ancient World"

Each year, Kiddo! funds the nationally renowned interactive program, "Walk Through the Ancient World," in all sixth grade social studies classes. Students bring the ancient world to life by becoming ancient Egyptians, Greeks, and Romans – complete with costumes and



Cari Pompanin



props. Trained presenters then lead them in a friendly competition, awarding points for prepared skits, short speeches, and correct answers to questions. The room crackles with hilarity, good-natured rivalry and, in disguise as elaborate as the students' own, teaching.

Sixth grade teacher Cari Pompanin can't get enough of it. "It really has been a great deal of fun," she says. But it's also a teaching tool whose impact ripples far beyond the program itself. "The students work together to review the information about their civilization, then to synthesize the material into a performance," she notes. "As they grow as individuals, they learn to put their ideas together, and to figure things out together. This requires plenty of rich conversation which again, promotes more learning."

Ms. Pompanin has even adopted some of the program's techniques in her own teaching, including "being the host to healthy competitions, teaching them to use voice and stage presentations, [and] to have a 'signature move,' all of which help her engage her students. At this critical juncture in a child's education, this program, like Kiddo!'s other arts programs, makes an invaluable contribution to how students feel about the process of teaching and learning.

Music Programs: Catherine Patler

Thanks to Kiddo!, Mill Valley's fifth graders have many opportunities to enrich their education through music. Anna Stearns' music program brings the world to their classroom as they learn to sing in the languages of Africa, Asia, and South America, and to play the instruments of those regions' tribal cultures. Elective programs in chorus, band and orchestra also offer them the chance to sing in complicated harmonies or learn an instrument to which they otherwise might never be exposed.

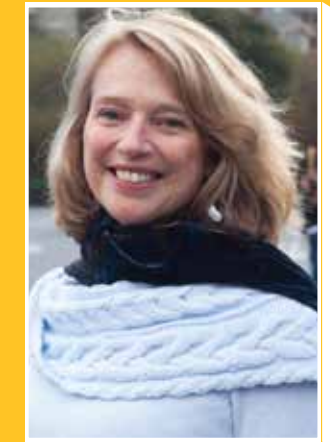
Tam Valley fifth grade teacher Catherine Patler feels she reaps great benefits from these programs in her own teaching. Her students are learning to read music, which is essentially learning another language, and this "helps them order their thinking," she says. Music

students also have to set aside time for practice and arrange to make up class work missed during an elective lesson, which "are great academic skills."

Ms. Patler also sees the joy that music brings her students. "My students love their music experiences at school. They are happy singing, drumming, or playing their instruments." The confidence they gain from learning these skills spills over into the classroom, making them happier, more engaged learners. "The child who participates in music tends to be a more organized student, a more focused student," she says. "I notice a more lively, interested attitude when kids participate in music programs."



Catherine Patler



Amy Faulkner and Kim Suppes



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**PROUDLY HELPING
MILL VALLEY KIDS
REACH THEIR FULL
POTENTIAL
FOR 29 YEARS!**



DONATION DAY • MAY 6, 2011

On May 6, Kiddo! will launch its 2011 Annual Giving Campaign. Please be a part of the community effort to bridge our school district's budget gap. The contributions you make in May will fund arts and technology programs, keep school library doors open, and keep aides in our kids' classroom for the 2011/2012 school year.

By making your contribution for the coming school year in May, you give our school district the gift of time to make critical personnel and program decisions that benefit our children from September through June. Without your support, the programs that empower our children to grow as students and community members would simply not exist.

So don't wait! Giving is easy. Just drop off your donation at school, make your donation online at www.kiddo.org, or mail it into the Kiddo! office at 409 Sycamore Avenue.

For nearly 30 years, Kiddo! has been making Mill Valley schools great. We thank you for continuing this great Mill Valley tradition with your early contribution.

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