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HEADLINE: **Art IS Education Day** on March 26 at PHS

BODY:

Students in all six of Piedmont's schools are putting the final touches on their artistic creations that will be on exhibit as part of Art IS Education month, which began March 1.

Piedmont's schools invite parents and community members to a series of events during the month, including visual arts exhibits, live performances of theater, music and dance, classroom demonstrations and walking tours.

The seventh annual Art IS Education month mobilizes individuals, schools and communities to celebrate and showcase the important role of arts in education. The essential skills acquired when the arts are used as a pathway for learning are given special emphasis in the classrooms this month. The skills of critical thinking, problem-solving, investigation, curiosity and expression can be used in English, math, science and social studies to enhance learning.

Art IS Education Day will take place from 1-5 p.m. on March 26 at Piedmont High School and 801 Magnolia Ave. Visual arts and performing arts, including dance and music, will be on display. Art created by students at all grade levels will be shown. In addition, art activities will be offered. The public is encouraged to attend this free community event.

Lisa Scimens, president of Promote Arts in the Schools and a past Meet the Masters parent volunteer at Beach Elementary School, said: "We are encouraging parents to contact their legislators to support the governor's proposed \$100 million for arts education. It is essential that parents raise their voices and get involved in promoting arts education."

"To Beach School teachers, the incorporation of art activities into daily lessons is crucial," said Beach Elementary School Principal Nancy McHugh. "Artistic exploration helps develop neurological pathways and offers opportunities to expand development of the right side of the brain. Art is fun. Students find they can communicate feelings and information without using words. We support art education throughout the year and welcome the month of March to focus attention on the important role art has in the classroom."

Art IS Education is a project of the Alameda County Office of Education and its Alliance for ALL (Arts Learning Leadership), a countywide group that works to bring the arts into the classroom. This annual exhibition is made possible through partnerships with the Alameda County Art Commission and the California Alliance for Arts Education.

"The arts are a way for all children to succeed because they affect each part of the learning process and can connect to life in a very real way," said Pat Macias, Piedmont High School art teacher. "For so many children, the arts provide an outlet that creates new ways to solve problems and expands opportunities to work as team members."

Go to www.acoe-artiseducation.org for a listing of events countywide.

-- Lisa Scimens