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Assembly
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KANSEN CHU

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PRESS RELEASE

April 7, 2017

Kansen Chu bill to provide elementary arts education data passes Assembly Education Committee

AB 385 would encourage school districts to report K-5 arts data for the first time

Sacramento: Legislation authored by Assemblyman Kansen Chu (D-San Jose) passed out of the Assembly Education Committee by a unanimous vote, paving the way for the collection of elementary arts education data in the state of California for the first time.

“I recognize the important role that arts education plays in the education of every child and strongly support efforts that will advance access to arts education throughout the state, including the collection of relevant data,” said Assemblyman Chu.

The legislation responds to a gap in data that has surfaced since the unveiling of the California Arts Education Data Project, created in partnership between the California Department of Education and CREATE California, a coalition of arts advocates. Currently, only data from grades 6-12 is being collected, leaving arts education for elementary school students unaccounted for.

Sponsored by the California Alliance for Arts Education, the legislation takes an important step toward providing a complete picture of arts education in California’s schools. “The Alliance commends Assemblyman Chu for introducing AB 385 and taking a role of leadership in drawing attention to the current system of arts education accountability,” said Joe Landon, the Alliance’s Executive Director.

Testifying in support of the bill was Bob Morrison, founder of Quadrant Research and creator of the Data Project, which was first launched in New Jersey and directly led to a 90% increase in access to arts education courses. Morrison stated, “This was a big step forward toward ensuring parents and community members have the data they need to make informed decisions about access to, and participation in, arts education for all elementary students.”

Also testifying in support was Jeannine Flores, Visual and Performing Arts Coordinator at the Santa Clara County Office of Education and leader of the Artspiration Initiative, who stated, “AB 385 will help parents, teachers, school leaders, and districts to make informed decisions in their schools.”

Assemblyman Chu is Chair of the Assembly Committee on Arts, Entertainment, Sports, Tourism, and Internet Media. AB 385 now moves to the Assembly Appropriations Committee, where it will be heard in the coming weeks.