

Wayne DeStefano Encourages Arts to Continue to be an Integral Part of Public Education

Wayne DeStefano, a popular middle school teacher, recently gained attention for his views on keeping arts as an integral part of public education. Wayne DeStefano is a 6th grade music teacher who is passionate about educating children.

May 21, 2010 (FPRC) -- Wayne DeStefano, a popular 6th grade music teacher at Jackson Middle School, recently gained attention from parents and media alike for his fight to keep arts as an integral part of the school's curriculum. Like many schools across the country, Jackson Middle School is facing decreasing budgets for the upcoming 2010-2011 school year. One solution school officials are considering is eliminating the arts programs currently being offered, which includes music, art and drama classes to sixth, seventh and eighth grade students.

Furthermore, with the school's proposed budget being directly related to students' scores on math and reading exams, the school feels that it cannot make any budget cuts that would reduce staff in these departments. By eliminating what they consider 'non essential' departments, such as the arts, the school can continue to concentrate on increasing student exam scores, and thus increasing school budgets for future years.

"Although the arts classes are not necessarily ones that the students' scores are evaluated on, it doesn't mean they are any less important. Through music, art and theater, kids learn so many life lessons and unique ways to express themselves. I would never consider arts a 'non essential' part of public education curriculum," states Wayne DeStefano.

Wayne DeStefano is not alone in his fight. Many parents selected Jackson Middle School for their children specifically because of its wide range of arts and music classes offered. These same parents are rallying alongside DeStefano to keep the arts program intact as part of the school's 2010-2011 curriculum.

DeStefano is actively working with the school board to review the budget and make alternative suggestions for cuts. One option is a 10 percent reduction of pay for all existing staff for the next school year. Although this is not a popular choice among some teachers and administrative employees, this nominal pay cut would guarantee that no staff would be eliminated. DeStefano is also looking at additional fundraising opportunities to cover budget expenses for new computers and other school supplies.

"If we can offset some budget line items through fundraising, we can not only save the arts programs, but also get the community as a whole more involved with our school. We currently have minimal fundraisers throughout the year, and we have a community full of people willing to donate time and money to help," concludes DeStefano.

About Wayne DeStefano:

Wayne DeStefano is a 6th grade music teacher who is passionate about his career. For more than a decade, Wayne has been committed to enlightening children's lives through the gift of music. Wayne DeStefano is dedicated to keeping arts as a fundamental part of public education.

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