

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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The Beat Goes On for Students in Accent Pontiac

Bloomfield Hills, MI, March 17, 2017 – Accent Pontiac is a new, El Sistema-inspired program sponsored by Kirk in the Hills, committed to providing robust, accessible music education for students in Pontiac. Accent Pontiac is part of a network of El Sistema-inspired programs sweeping the United States and other parts of the world, dedicated to using music as a vehicle for social change.

El Sistema is known as a tested model of a program that creates great musicians, while “dramatically changing the life trajectory of hundreds of thousands of a nation’s neediest kids.” <http://www.elsistemausa.org/about-el-sistema.htm> “We are excited to be a part of such a groundswell,” says Dr. Linda Ayres, one of Accent Pontiac’s founding members at Kirk in the Hills. “With a research base to demonstrate the effectiveness of El Sistema-inspired programs, we are eager to involve as many children as possible from the Pontiac School District.”

Beginning in January of 2017, Accent Pontiac has provided consistent programming for 2nd grade students at Whitman Elementary both during and after school. Their instruction includes percussion lessons using drumsticks and buckets. These “bucket bands” learn rhythmic skills and percussion techniques. More importantly, they experience what it is like to be part of an ensemble, sharing responsibility and pride with each other.

Brass instruction is another part of Accent Pontiac. Each of the program’s 30 brass students is given a trumpet or baritone at no cost. Twice a week in their after-school Brass class, these children are learning to make music together.

Accent Pontiac will present a live student performance on Friday, March 17 at 12:30 p.m. in the Walt Whitman Elementary School gym. The performance is preceded by a week-long immersive intersession workshop with Whitman Elementary students in grades 1 through 6. The culminating performance will showcase three separate musical groups: choral, percussion, and brass.

Accent Pontiac: Strengthening Pontiac's youth and community through equitable access to intensive and consistent music making. Sponsored by Kirk in the Hills, Accent Pontiac is located at 1340 W. Long Lake Rd. in Bloomfield Hills, Michigan. For more information, please call (734) 846-2159.

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