



## **Manatee District Music and Art Classes Continue**

August 11, 2020

The School District of Manatee County is exceptionally proud of its arts programs. In fact, at tonight's School Board meeting – the last meeting before school is scheduled to begin on Monday, August 17, 2020 – the first item on the agenda after the Pledge of Allegiance was a video titled "School District of Manatee County RISE UP."

The video contains a beautiful and moving collaboration involving nearly 70 students and more than 20 teachers and staff who produced an exceptional display of their musical and dance talent over the summer. Students and staff from 12 different schools contributed to the video. You can view the video by clicking on the following link: [https://youtu.be/a\\_jXB8QJEWk](https://youtu.be/a_jXB8QJEWk)

At the same time the district was preparing for the School Board meeting, rumors were circulating on social media and in the community that the district was cutting or eliminating school music and arts programs. Those rumors are absolutely untrue.

When school begins next Monday, all district schools will have music and arts classes available. However, just like everything else related to the COVID-19 global pandemic, those classes will be different for the time being.

During this portion of the pandemic, with the health and safety of our students and employees our foremost priority, we can no longer place 40 students in one room playing and sharing musical instruments. Nor can we have 20 to 30 students in one room standing shoulder-to-shoulder singing, dancing or painting.

We will continue to offer first-rate music and art classes taught by some of the finest art and music teachers in the state of Florida. But, just like in other academic and extracurricular areas, those courses for the time being may have different course names and course codes.

We all look forward to the day when our students and educators can return to what they do best. Until that time arrives, we appreciate your patience and understanding as we work together to give our students the best educational experience possible to help them achieve and advance.