

## Pasadena Educational Foundation - Rock 4 PEF

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"Every child should have the opportunity to explore their musical horizons. I am excited to help the Pasadena Educational Foundation's campaign to enhance music education in our schools. These community events are a powerful way to bring the music community and the community at large together to further this important work."

-Art Alexakis, Everclear

The Pasadena Unified Schools District (PUSD) has embarked up a new music initiative. In response to their needs the Pasadena Educational Foundation (PEF) created a series of community concerts to build awareness and raise funds for music education programs in our 28 district schools throughout the communities of Pasadena, Altadena, and Sierra Madre.

Drawing on our vibrant arts and music community and with the support of the PUSD, the Metro, the City of Pasadena, the County of Los Angeles, the Hollywood Bowl, music schools, local businesses, and our community of artists and musicians we launched Rock 4 PEF in 2014. Rock 4 PEF features a youth Battle of the Bands competition and concert followed a few weeks later by a benefit music festival.

Our goal was to use music to reach beyond our public school community base and create engagement opportunities that involve our entire community in the educational priorities of our districts schools.

Rock 4 PEF began with a youth Battle of the Bands competition that launched in August with an online voting competition that received over 4,000 individual votes. Youth bands, with at least one member residing in or going to school in our district) uploaded a recorded song and created band profiles including bios, and photos. More than 50 students representing 13 bands (from 22 different schools) participated. Band members ranged in age from 7-18. One band had an average age of 10. 5 finalists were chosen in the online competition but all of the bands were invited to perform on Sept. 20 at the Levitt Pavilion in front of 600 friends, neighbors, family members, and music fans. The 5 finalists were judged by a panel of music professionals including a college music professor, the Hollywood Bowl talent booker, a well-known local musician, and an Emmy-award winning composer. Our Battle of the Bands winners moved on to play at our Rock 4 PEF Benefit Concert.

The Rock 4 PEF concert, on Oct. 4 at the Farnsworth Park Amphitheater featured both Battle of the Bands winners, America's Got Talent's Taylor Mathews, Jacob Davich, and Art Alexakis of Everclear. 700 people, from throughout our community, attended the event and enjoyed great music, food trucks, and a fun family atmosphere.

Not only was our campaign successful in engaging the community, raising awareness of the importance of music programs, and generating good will for our schools but proceeds from the event helped PEF

provide instruments to our elementary schools who were in need of 300 more instruments toward the goal of providing instruments to every 3rd grade student.

Working with dedicated parents, teachers, community volunteers, and members of our musician community the PEF staff developed our campaign and an outreach plan that began in January. Since a big part of Rock 4 PEF is the youth Battle of the Bands we needed to develop awareness well in advance of the contest so that bands could organically form amongst our community's children and they would have enough time to practice and record their submission.

Together with our team, we researched best practices and the legal requirements for student entries and developed fair and balanced competition. The competition relied on a combination of both online voting and outside judges to ensure that it did not simply become a popularity contest.

We reached out to our all our PUSD schools, private schools, music schools, music stores, PTA's, parent organizations, neighborhood associations, community groups, city governments, business and community partners, and our influencer lists via flyers, postcards, banners, email, print advertising, web, social media, collateral, and influencer marketing.

Here is a Dropbox folder of all the collateral materials created to produce and promote the two separate events to the different audience segments.

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Integral to our planning was the online voting portion of the competition and broad use of social media to share the band profiles and encourage our band members and families to solicit votes. Once the online voting portion of the competition was live our bands did a significant amount of marketing their individual bands. This was crucial to the social media and viral component of our campaign and raised our Facebook likes by 20% over the course of the campaign.

Additionally, we engaged one of our performers to perform free concerts at our Middle and High Schools and at a few local community festivals such as the Sierra Madre 3rd of July Community picnic.

In our second year of producing these events we have learned that the most complicated part of the planning is in securing the headliner for the Rock 4 PEF concert. Larger acts often wait until the final weeks to confirm for "charity type" events therefore straining your marketing efforts. To deal with this we did very short runs of all print materials and collateral to be flexible with adding our performers. All promotional signage was designed with a component structure so we could quickly add the headline act once it was secured.

Our main target audience for attendance was families within the communities of Pasadena, Altadena, and Sierra Madre. Because PUSD is an economically diverse district many of our community's students attend private or parochial schools. A great emphasis was placed on trying to involve all the families of the district whether they attended the public schools or not.

Secondary audiences consisted of:

- Families from adjoining communities
- Fans of the performers
- Community businesses and supporters
- Local music community

Additionally, we had to spend a significant amount of our energies focused on our local teen communities to get submissions for Battle of the Bands. Once the online voting portion of the competition was live our bands did a significant amount of marketing their bands to get votes. This was crucial to the social media component of our campaign.

The following are the measurable goals set for both concerts:

- Attendance: Min. 500 at each event
- Battle of the Bands Participants: 10 bands. 15 schools participating.
- Viral marketing goal: get 2,000 online votes and 200 email addresses
- Sponsors/Partners: 25
- Facebook: Increase by 10%
- Website: Increase page-views and visitors by 20%

Rock 4 PEF 2015 was a huge success in our community and will continue our "Music Counts" rallying cry into 2016.

For Rock 4 PEF 2015 we had:

- Attendance: Min. 600 at Battle of the Bands. 700 Rock 4 PEF.
- Battle of the Bands Participants: 13 bands. 53 students. 22 different public and private schools represented.
- Viral marketing goal: 4,000+ online votes and 500 email addresses
- Sponsors/Partners: 22
- Facebook: Increase by 20%
- Website: Increase page-views and visitors by 40%

Rock 4 PEF helped us to engage our community and solidify the PUSD commitment to music education programs. The entire campaign was a testimony to the power of music and unbridled creative expression and to the power of an engaged and supportive community.

We were inspired by the stories we heard from our community:

"It truly was the biggest thing in music most of the kids have participated in and it was top notch. It gave

them a whole new sense of themselves as musicians and as members of their bands. You made them feel legitimized and valued with the importance, professionalism and respect that you all put into yesterday's concert."

"Thank you so much for putting on such a wonderful event!! So much fun, your group did an amazing job and I can see this event growing in size year after year. All the kids that came to perform and all of their friends that came to support and cheer them on was inspiring! I can see the word of mouth expanding the excitement and kids forming bands now so that they can participate next year!"

"The concert was amazingly well organized and run yesterday. I was super impressed and learned so much about music programs at Pasadena's public schools. I understand Marshall H.S. has a great music programs and I was wondering if the middle school does as well? ... it appears that Marshall maybe it."