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September 12, 2011

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Arts-Rich Learning Helps Students Succeed Experts Convene in San Francisco for National Forum on *“Transforming Urban School Systems Through the Arts.”*

***Editor’s Note:** The Arts Education Partnership’s National Forum in San Francisco brings together thought-leaders from across the country to advance best practices, emerging research and policy imperatives around arts-rich learning – an essential tool in student achievement and whole school reform. The Forum offers strong visuals and human interest stories through daily student performances and strong case studies, expert commentary for interview opportunities during this back to school season.*

(Washington, DC) Arts Education Partnership (AEP), a national coalition dedicated to securing a high quality arts education for every young person in America, convenes in San Francisco, CA this week for its Fall National Forum, *Transforming Urban School Systems Through the Arts*, at the Sir Francis Drake Hotel Sept. 15-16. Based on an ever-growing body of research linking arts-rich learning to academic achievement and overall work-life success in students, AEP’s Fall Forum will showcase some of the nation’s boldest arts-based models of whole school reform.

Respected experts include Milton Chen, Senior Fellow and Former Executive Director of The George Lucas Educational Foundation in the San Francisco Bay Area, Gigi Antoni, President/CEO of Dallas’s Big Thought; and Malissa Feruzzi Shriver, Chair of the California Arts Council. These and many other thought leaders join educators, prominent arts organizations, civic leaders and corporate partners for two days of interactive breakout sessions focused on innovation and equity in arts education, parental involvement, education policy reform and emerging research. ([Forum Overview and Schedule](#))

“The arts research AEP has analyzed over the last decade emphatically supports a new model for school systems in how they engage, inspire and prepare students for success in the 21st century,” says Sandra Ruppert, Arts Education Partnership Director. “We envision that our Forum will spur national action – action that places arts education at the top of the country’s education agenda for its essential role in enhancing student success and making our schools a dynamic, vibrant hub of community engagement.”

The Forum opens with a plenary session on California's statewide approach to fund and sustain innovative arts programs through public engagement, public policy and economic development. Closing out the Forum is keynote speaker Milton Chen, who will share details of his new book *Education Nation: Six Leading Edges of Innovation in Our Schools*. Chen's book, selected as one of the 10 best education books of 2010 by the *American School Boards Journal*, explores the places where K-12 has already seen revolutionary changes through innovative reform and technology.

AEP's National Forum coincides with National Arts in Education Week (September 11-17), designated by Congress in July 2010 to promote and showcase the immense role arts education has in producing engaged, successful, and college and career-ready students. In celebration of National Arts in Education Week, outstanding student artists from the Bay Area will perform at the opening of each day of AEP's National Forum. AEP will also present its *Young Artist Award* to Zoe Scholz, a recent graduate of the Arts and Humanities Academy at Berkeley High School, whose artwork was selected as the National Forum cover design. This year's National Forum is funded in part by the U. S. Department of Education, National Endowment for the Arts, Walter and Elise Haas Fund, William and Flora Hewlett Foundation, San Francisco Ballet, San Francisco Symphony, American Conservatory Theatre, San Francisco Opera, and San Francisco Performances. National Forum registration is now closed to the general public and press must be credentialed to attend. Visit aep-arts.org for more information, or call 202.326.8693 | 410.300.6468.

About Arts Education Partnership

A national coalition of more than 100 education, arts, cultural, business, government, and philanthropic organizations, AEP gathers and analyzes relevant research and policy information, fosters dialogue about what works in arts education, and supports advocacy for improved education policy and practice. AEP's twice-yearly National Forums have featured major education, arts, and cutting edge thinkers such as U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan, National Endowment of the Arts Chairman Rocco Landesman, author Jonah Lehrer and many other prominent figures. AEP was established in 1995 and is supported by the National Endowment for the Arts and the U.S. Department of Education in cooperation with the Council of Chief State School Officers and the National Assembly of State Arts Agencies.

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