

# PRESS RELEASE

## **Manhattan Beach Unified School District**

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### **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **MIRA COSTA HIGH SCHOOL HONORED AS A 2014 GRAMMY SIGNATURE SCHOOLS GOLD AWARD RECIPIENT**

**Manhattan Beach, CA, March 21, 2014**

The GRAMMY Foundation announced earlier this week that Mira Costa High School is one of just 12 schools nationwide selected as GRAMMY Signature Schools for 2014. Created in 1998, the GRAMMY Signature Schools program recognizes top U.S. public high schools that are making an outstanding commitment to music education during an academic school year. Each of the 12 GRAMMY Signature Schools for 2014 will receive a custom award and a monetary grant to benefit its music program. As a Gold recipient, Mira Costa is one of the top three Grammy Signature Schools and will receive \$5,000 to benefit the MCHS orchestra, band, and choir programs.

The selection process for GRAMMY Signature Schools begins each year in August when the GRAMMY Foundation notifies more than 20,000 public high schools from districts large and small, urban, suburban, and rural, requesting information about each school's music program. Applications are completed and submitted online in October. After the applications are scored, finalists are identified and asked to submit additional documentation, such as recordings of school concerts and sample concert programs and repertoire, which is then reviewed by an independent blue-ribbon committee of top music educators and professionals to determine the schools that merit GRAMMY Signature School status.

MBUSD Board President Karen Komatinsky stated, "On behalf of the Manhattan Beach Unified School District Board of Trustees, it is my honor to congratulate the incredibly talented young musicians of Mira Costa High School and their outstanding teachers Peter Park, Michael Hayden, Joel Carlson, and Mark McCormick. When exceptional, passionate teachers set and maintain the bar at such a high level, our students will challenge themselves and rise to meet those expectations. We are so very proud of our students and staff."

According to Dr. Michael Matthews, MBUSD Superintendent of Schools, "The GRAMMY Signature Schools Gold Award is an incredible honor for Mira Costa High School and the entire Manhattan Beach Unified School District. It is reflective of a gifted team of high school music educators and their remarkable colleagues who teach band, choir, and strings at our elementary schools and middle school. In addition, the Manhattan Beach Education Foundation, our PTAs, and high school booster organizations provide tremendous support without which this award would not be possible."

When reflecting on the GRAMMY Signature Schools Gold Award, Mira Costa Principal Dr. Ben Dale shared, “I have seen firsthand the countless hours of practice and tremendous dedication on the part of our Mustang musicians and their teachers that have resulted in this prestigious award. The GRAMMY organization recognizes the incredible level of performance of the students in our band, choir, and orchestra programs. Those of us who have been fortunate to hear these students perform are extremely proud of but not surprised by this honor.”

For more information about the GRAMMY Signature Schools program, log on to:  
<http://www.grammyintheschools.com/programs/grammy-signature-schools>.

## **ABOUT THE MANHATTAN BEACH UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT**

Manhattan Beach Unified School District (MBUSD) ranks as the third highest performing unified school district in the State of California with a 2013 Growth Academic Performance Index (API) of 935. MBUSD serves approximately 7,000 students from preschool to twelfth grade at eight school campuses—one preschool, five elementary schools, one middle school, and one high school. Mira Costa High School’s Growth API of 913 places it in the top 1.5% of public, comprehensive high schools in California. Robinson Elementary School was recently recognized as a National Blue Ribbon School in 2013. Four MBUSD schools recently have been honored as California Distinguished Schools: Mira Costa High School (2011), Manhattan Beach Middle School (2009), Grand View Elementary (2010), and Pacific Elementary (2010). In 2012, Grand View Elementary was named a National Green Ribbon School, joining just 77 other schools in the United States to receive this award. In addition to outstanding students and excellent teachers, MBUSD is extremely fortunate to have a high level of parental involvement in the schools and very strong partnerships with community partners such as the Manhattan Beach Education Foundation, MBX—Beyond the Classroom, the City of Manhattan Beach, Chevron, Continental Development, the Manhattan Beach Chamber of Commerce, and other local organizations and businesses. More information about MBUSD is available at [www.mbusd.org](http://www.mbusd.org).