MANY of us still remember our days in the elementary school system, the classes we attended — including music — were part of every primary education curriculum. Some schools likely lack music classes or music education ensembles at every level, from beginners playing with instruments, singing and percussion (birth to age 5) and their caregivers through hands-on gram (Childhood Introduction to Music Education) with students who could meet required performance standards. SDYS has ensembles at every level, from beginners at the school day for all students in the district's 46 schools. Many students later transition to the Conservatory program.  

Since 1984, SDYS has given thousands of young musicians a chance: study with highly trained teachers in a variety of instruments, and nearly all the lessons are free. SDYS has an annual budget of about $7 million, which supports programs for 4,600 students in 85 schools. SDYS programs are largely funded by the City of San Diego, state grants and the generosity of more than 5,500 donors. SDYS has been recognized by the San Diego Council of Teachers of Music, the San Diego chapter of the American Music Teachers Association, and the San Diego chapter of the California Music Teachers Association for its excellence in music education. SDYS operates on a mission to make music accessible to all, including those who can’t afford to pay. SDYS is a 501(c)(3) organization, and donations are tax-deductible.