



COMMUNITY MURAL FINISHED AT JAPHET SCHOOL
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COMMUNITY MURAL PAINTED AT JAPHET SCHOOL

Students, teachers, alumni, and community members paint together

** The original release about this project follows. **NEW** photographs are attached. **

Clawson, MI – On Saturday, September 23, Japhet School students in preschool through 8th grade -- with their parents, teachers, school staff, alumni, and other community members -- helped paint a beautiful mural inside Japhet School.

Painting the mural was a weekend project led by Susan Ellithorpe, after-school organization Kids for Peace leader and former Japhet teacher. Japhet School welcomed Alex Cook, renowned muralist who has installed more than 100 murals across the country and overseas.

The mural is painted in bright colors and depicts a park setting with children playing, reading, and drawing. Japhet School has a strong ukulele program, and the mural includes a student singing and playing the instrument.

"It's a very joyous mural," says Sheila Chaps, Japhet School Board Vice-president who joined on Saturday for the community painting day. "What fun it was to have the whole school family engaged in its work!"

See the attached photographs for the Saturday painting event and finished mural.

CAPTIONS:

Japhet School Muralist Teacher: Muralist Alex Cook and Japhet's Kids for Peace teacher Susan Ellithorpe

Japhet School Muralist at Work: Alex Cook puts finishing touches on Japhet School's mural.

Japhet School Mural Finished 1 and 2: The completed mural depicts a colorful, joyful community with children playing, reading, writing, planting, and strumming a ukulele.

Japhet School Annabelle Paints 1 and 2: Annabelle Sitarek, Japhet School 8th-grader from Berkley, paints part of the mural during the school's Community Paint Day on Saturday, September 23.

** Original press release **

Clawson, MI – On Saturday, September 23, Japhet School will welcome Alex Cook to paint an interior mural inside the school, with the help of students, parents, and other adults who are part of the school community. The idea to have a mural at Japhet School was initiated by the school's chapter of Kids for Peace, an international organization devoted to "uplift the world through love and action." The mural will be a colorful representation of the joyful school community set in an outdoor scene.

Japhet School's mission is "to nurture and prepare children for life by integrating character education with a strong academic program." The mural will depict the qualities of peace, joy, and respect for others, and children in the mural will be engaged in scholastic activity such as reading, writing, or playing a musical instrument. The mural is being privately funded by a donor who values Japhet School's mission, the muralist's work and positive message, and art.

Students, parents, teachers, administrators, trustees, and other community members will have paintbrushes in hand this Saturday to help Alex Cook paint. On Sunday, the muralist will apply finishing touches to the mural. The expectation is that the mural will be complete sometime on Monday, when Alex Cook and Kids for Peace leader Susan Ellithorpe will be on hand to explain the mural's message to the school community and give tips on how to protect its longevity.

Founded in 1973, Japhet School is an independent school, serving children in the metropolitan Detroit area in preschool through eighth grade. The school provides small classes of fewer than 18 students in each, which enables teachers to challenge students with academic material that is appropriate for their intellectual readiness. Integrated with strong academics is Japhet School's national award-winning character education curriculum, which builds a peaceful community within the school and creates leaders with integrity. Japhet is a National School of Character: it was the first school in Michigan --

and the first independent school in the country -- to receive this award. Japhet School is located in Clawson, Michigan, at the corner of Crooks and Normandy roads. To learn more about Japhet, visit japhetschool.org.

About Kids for Peace:

Kids for Peace is an international organization based in California. Schools and other organizations launch their own chapters, and Japhet School began its chapter in 2015 as an after-school opportunity for its students. It meshes nicely with the school's mission to integrate character education with academics-- a unique attribute of the school for which it has been nationally recognized.

About Alex Cook:

Alex Cook is a multi-disciplinary artist living in Boston, MA. Since 1997 he has created over 110 murals in the US and abroad. In 2014 he created the YOU ARE LOVED mural project, collaborating with organizations of all types to artfully express that important message. He has written and recorded 6 albums of original songs and performs around the US. Alex is available to paint murals, create works of art, and speak to schools or organizations about community building through art and/or the YOU ARE LOVED mural project. To learn more about Alex Cook and see his murals, visit stonebalancer.com.

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