



News Release

For Immediate Release

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Martin Luther King Elementary School Celebrates JAZZ and BOOKS
October 17th 6:00 – 7:30pm, 960 W. 10th St, Oakland, 94607
Oakland Elementary School Hosts Oakland Raiderettes, Children's Author Karen Ehrhardt and Oakland Jazz icon, Ed Reed, to Support Literacy Programs for Oakland Children and Youth.

(Oakland, October 12, 2007) Oakland's Martin Luther King Elementary will host a night of jazz and literacy for MLK students, families and community members. The event celebrates MLK Elementary School's collaborations to benefit children's literacy. Award-winning children's author Karen Ehrhardt, local jazz legend Ed Reed and the Oakland Raiderettes will headline the night's event to raise awareness for literacy building in the East Bay community.

The event begins with a dinner for students and families provided by the Berkeley Alumni chapter of Kappa Alpha Psi, an African American fraternity of professionals committed to community empowerment to MLK and children in surrounding communities. Families will be treated to a performance by jazz vocalist Ed Reed, a Bay Area native committed to inspiring children to succeed through music. Reed's performance will be followed by a reading from award winning children's author Karen Ehrhardt. Ehrhardt will read her widely acclaimed book, "This Jazz Man", named one of the top children's books of 2006 by the New York Public Library, NPR and Nickelodeon Jr magazine. The event concludes with a presentation by a small group of MLK students of their own literary works produced through an ongoing writing workshop with Ehrhardt.

The literacy awareness event is a collaborative effort between several Bay Area organizations uniting to establishing community-based literacy efforts for children, adults and families. Both Ehrhardt and Reed were brought into the event through *KatzConnects*, a pioneering Bay Area based agency connects over 60 children's author's, illustrators and musicians with local schools, libraries and literacy events, inspiring

children to become lifelong readers, writers and artists. The *Bring Me A Book Foundation*, a Mountain View based children's literacy non profit, sponsoring the educational writing workshops led by Ehrhardt with the students of MLK and providing ongoing efforts to supply schools throughout the Oakland Unified School District with the highest quality books and literacy tools. The Berkeley Alumni Chapter of Kappa Alpha Psi, providing continual support and mentorship to the students of MLK and surrounding communities. Kappa Alpha Psi has been instrumental in raising literacy awareness in MLK through the donation of libraries, mentorship and weekly volunteer services to encourage children to excel in academia and life.

In addition, the event is also supported by local Oakland organizations with established programs in MLK including HEROES (Helper's Engaged in Reaching Oakland's Excelling Schools) who serve as the volunteer program for Oakland Unified School District to increase the presence of onsite volunteers; Oakland Parents Literacy Project (www.oplp.org) sponsors 50 "Family Reading Nights" in the lowest performing elementary schools throughout the Oakland Unified Schools every school year and have been working in MLK for the past five years ; and Oakland Ready to Learn, focusing on children ages zero to eight, working in underserved neighborhoods with a focus on increasing access to quality books, information and educational and cultural activities

The gathering is a school event but members of the community and media are welcome to attend. Mrs. Patricia Washington, Principal of Martin Luther King Elementary School will provide overall coordination and inspiration for the celebration.

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