

## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

### **Andrew Lloyd Webber Foundation Donates £100,000 to National Non-Profit Little Kids Rock to Support Music Education in Chicago Public Schools (CPS)**

- *Grant to expand Little Kids Rock's "Music Expanded" multi-year partnership with CPS to bring innovative "Modern Band" music education programs to 100,000 underserved Chicago students, provide instruments and training for 300 teachers*

**VERONA, NJ – June XX, 2018** – In 2010, the U.K.-based Andrew Lloyd Webber Foundation started a grant program with the objective of supporting the arts, culture and heritage with a focus on projects that increase diversity and break down barriers to participation in the arts. U.S.-based non-profit Little Kids Rock is pleased to announce it was recently awarded its second grant from the foundation in support of "Music Expanded," the organization's multi-year partnership with Chicago Public Schools, to bring the non-profit's highly inclusive, culturally responsive and student-centered Modern Band program to over 100,000 students in the third largest public school district in the country.

As the leading provider of donated instruments, culturally relevant music curriculum and music teacher professional development in the country, Little Kids Rock has served over 650,000 at-risk students across the U.S. Since 2008, Little Kids Rock has worked with CPS and trained CPS teachers to run innovative, youth-centered popular music programs that teach children to play the music they know and love. The Music Expanded Initiative was announced in 2017 and pledged that by 2021, the number of Modern Band Programs in Chicago Public Schools would double, reaching hundreds of thousands of additional students. The Andrew Lloyd Webber Foundation's two-year grant will distribute thousands of brand new instruments, provide weekly lessons and performance opportunities to more than 100,000 Chicago Public School students, as well as provide training for 300 CPS teachers.

"This latest round of grants reflects my passion for the importance of arts education, increasing diversity on and off stage and ensuring that the next generation is equipped to champion and preserve our heritage," said Andrew Lloyd Webber.

Graduates of Little Kids Rock include CPS student Vincent Molden, who recently landed the leading role in the U.S. touring production of *School of Rock*. In fact, it is because of composer Andrew Lloyd Webber that *School of Rock* has moved from the screen to the stage on Broadway and is now touring the nation, sharing our common musical message with audiences and supporting the work of school teachers and the importance of music programs in our schools.

"Little Kids Rock is grateful to receive the Andrew Lloyd Webber Foundation's support and commitment to help school districts build music programs as diverse as the children they serve," said David Wish, CEO and Founder of Little Kids Rock. "By supporting Modern Band in Chicago

Public Schools, the Foundation is ensuring that thousands more students in the city will have access to a first-rate and entirely new type of music program.”

Countless studies show that kids who have access to music education in schools do better academically and socially. Little Kids Rock’s “Modern Band” leads music education into the 21<sup>st</sup> century and teaches kids the popular musical styles of the past 60 years, from Rock and Hip Hop, to Country and R&B, among other genres, and focuses on improvisation, composition, and getting kids to make music immediately. The program is part of a burgeoning national movement to put students at the center of their learning experience and keep arts and music programs thriving, and complements existing music electives such as jazz band, choral ensembles, marching band, and orchestra. Kids are given immediate access to the music that inspires them, from Beyonce to Taylor Swift, Blink 182, Drake and AC/DC, helping to keep them inspired in school and better equipped to reach their academic goals.

“We want our students to be able to have education - not just arts education, but across all disciplines - that represents who they are,” said LaTanya McDade, Chicago Public Schools Chief of Teaching and Learning. “Students see themselves and their culture reflected in the Little Kids Rock Modern Band curriculum, which we have seen inspires them to reach their highest potential and stay in school. We are thrilled to receive this generous grant in support of our students from the Andrew Lloyd Webber Foundation.”

#### **ABOUT LITTLE KIDS ROCK**

Little Kids Rock is a national nonprofit dedicated to transforming kids’ lives by restoring, expanding, and innovating music education in our schools. As the leader in culturally-responsive, inclusive music education, the organization partners with public school districts to build music programs as diverse as the students being served. Little Kids Rock trains teachers to run its innovative Modern Band curriculum, and donates accompanying instruments and resources as necessary to teach popular music in a way that empowers students to experience instant achievement. What began as a single after-school guitar class has since exploded into a national movement that brings free, weekly music lessons to over 400,000 public school children annually through the efforts of more than 2,500 teachers in 375 school districts nationwide. To date, Little Kids Rock has served more than 650,000 students. More info at [www.littlekidsrock.org](http://www.littlekidsrock.org).

#### **ABOUT THE ANDREW LLOYD WEBBER FOUNDATION**

The Andrew Lloyd Webber Foundation was set up by Andrew in 1992 to promote the arts, culture and heritage for the public benefit; since inception Andrew has been the principal provider of funding for all its charitable activities. In 2010, the Foundation embarked on an active grant-giving program and has now awarded grants of £19m to support high quality training and personal development as well as other projects that make a real difference to enrich the quality of life both for individuals and within local communities.

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