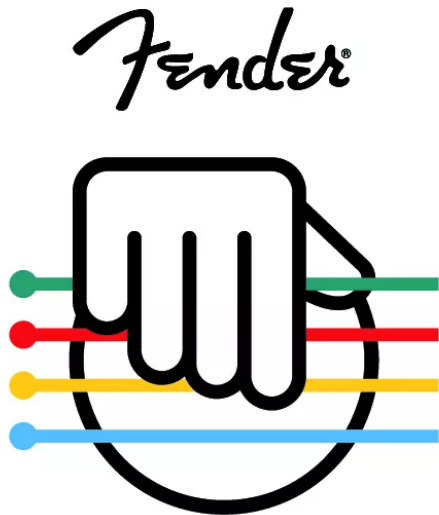




PLAY FOUNDATION

EQUIP • EDUCATE • INSPIRE

BILLIE EILISH AND FINNEAS PARTNER WITH FENDER PLAY FOUNDATION™ AND LOS ANGELES UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT TO EXTEND YOUTH MUSIC EDUCATION PROGRAM TO SCHOOL COMMUNITY IN HIGHLAND PARK

**PROGRAM EXPANSION WILL EQUIP 2,500+ STUDENTS WITH
INSTRUMENTS AND DEDICATED LEARNING CURRICULUM TO
EMPOWER THE NEXT GENERATION OF PLAYERS**

HOLLYWOOD, CALIF. (August 16, 2021) — The Fender Play Foundation™ (FPF) today announced, alongside seven-time Grammy winner Billie Eilish and eight-time Grammy winner FINNEAS, it will expand the reach of its youth music education program with Los Angeles Unified schools to hundreds of elementary school students in their hometown of Highland Park.

Through contributions provided by Eilish, and supporting partners FINNEAS, Interscope Films, Best Friends Music, and Darkroom Records -- the Fender Play Foundation™ and Los Angeles Unified will provide instruments and weekly in person music instruction to nearly 2,500 3rd, 4th, and 5th grade students across 10 Highland Park community elementary schools over the course of the next three years. The expansion will add two music teachers in years one and two, and reach middle school in year three, with the goal of creating a robust 3rd-8th grade music pathway for all students in Highland Park. The new program expansion supports the Fender Play Foundation™ on the path to meet its goal of raising \$6M over the next 3 years to expand the program to more than 35,000 students and Los Angeles Unified teaching staff, as they work to expand access to music education through the Foundation.

Launching August 16, in the historic northeast Los Angeles neighborhood where Eilish famously wrote and recorded her genre-bending hits on ukulele in her childhood home, this program will act as a pilot for future Fender Play Foundation™ programs for elementary schools throughout Los Angeles Unified. The collaboration lays the continued groundwork for a sustainable and impactful music education program and marks Fender Musical Instruments Corporation's (FMIC) advancement toward broadening the scope of the Fender Play Foundation™ to school districts nationwide.

"Music changed my life, and it's an incredible feeling to be able to give back to my hometown and provide other kids with the very instrument that made me fall in love with songwriting in the first place," said Billie Eilish. "Through this program, I hope we can help inspire the next generation of creatives. I'm beyond honored to be part of this partnership with Fender and Los Angeles Unified and can't wait to watch these kids flourish."

The new program, influenced by Eilish and FINNEAS' roots in their childhood neighborhood, will ensure students and their teachers receive comprehensive music education through a sustainable program built on weekly in person instruction. This new, scalable program will focus on bringing in and educating 50 Los Angeles Unified teachers to play ukulele alongside the kids in their classrooms - a true shift from preexisting FPF summer and after-school enrichment programs to an in-day classroom experience. In addition all students will be equipped with brand-new Seaside Soprano Ukulele Packs and

classroom teachers will receive Billie Eilish Signature Ukuleles all donated by Fender and delivered directly to their schools.

“Playing music has been shown to strengthen social bonds by helping students find friends and cultivate a sense of community and creative expression,” Interim Los Angeles Unified Superintendent Megan K. Reilly said. “We’re grateful to Billie Eilish, FINNEAS and our partners at Fender for their support of students in our schools.”

With the addition of the Highland Park new program, the Fender Play Foundation™ is on track to expand the Los Angeles Unified program serving 10,000 by the end of this year and hopes to further solidify a model for music education that can eventually be extended nationally. “Aligned with our mission, we’re continuously looking for partners to help us to create new programs and uplift the next generation of players who often don’t have access to music education,” said Evan Jones, Fender CMO and Fender Play Foundation™ Co-President. “Through this Highland Park expansion, we’re well on our way to accomplish our goal of putting instruments into the hands of as many students as possible while demonstrating the benefits that come with learning a new instrument.”

In Summer 2020, the Fender Play Foundation™ worked with Los Angeles Unified to pilot an innovative teacher-led model for music education, providing students with access to an all-encompassing curriculum. This personalized learning path developed by Los Angeles Unified and Fender Play®’s team includes continuous access to its online learning app, and is breaking new ground as a sustainable, scalable and innovative model for music education.

Since launching in June 2020, the Los Angeles Unified program has expanded to 5,000 students, with 77% of them coming in as first-time players, and 87% planning to continue playing their instruments. To date, the program has donated over \$1 million in resources and equipment, with a goal of giving more than 35,000 students the opportunity to learn a new instrument by the end of 2023.

Eilish’s alliance with the Fender Play Foundation™ comes off the heels of the release of the Apple Original Film, titled Billie Eilish: the World’s A Little Blurry, from award-winning filmmaker R.J. Cutler. The film offers a deeply intimate look into the extraordinary teenager’s journey to global fame at just 17 years old. Detailing Eilish’s life on the road, on

stage and at home with her family, the film provides the world with a look behind the scenes of her debut album “WHEN WE ALL FALL ASLEEP, WHERE DO WE GO?” and the inspiration behind her collaboration with the Fender Play Foundation™.

Learn more about #FenderPlayFoundation and hear from Billie on how we're kicking off this exciting partnership here: fenderplayfoundation.org/billieilish. Please contact fenderplayfoundation@fender.com for any inquiries or questions. Press images of Eilish can be found [here](#). Donations can be made [here](#). Join the conversation on social media by following [@Fender](#) and [@FenderPlay](#).

#

ABOUT FENDER PLAY FOUNDATION™:

Established in 2019, the Play™ Foundation, a 501(c)(3) public charitable organization, uses the power of music to inspire and unite humanity across cultural and geographic borders. On a mission to equip, educate and inspire the next generation of players through music, the Fender Play Foundation™ partners with organizations, educators and artists to support communities through equipment donations, personalized instruction and artist experiences. Operating under the belief that music is a universal language that empowers self-expression and community-building everywhere, the Fender Play Foundation™ strives to place instruments in the hands of youth who aspire to play and reap the powerful benefits of music education. Those benefits include: enhanced cognitive function, improved creativity and confidence, better mental health and emotional stability and higher test scores and academic achievement. The centerpiece of the Fender Play Foundation™ is its middle school music program in partnership with Los Angeles Unified, the 2nd largest school district in the U.S which is on its way from 1,000 students to its goal of 10,000 by the end of 2021. This unique program that combines a teacher-led curriculum with access to Fender Play®, their digital platform for learning instruments, and exposure to artists, is breaking new ground as a sustainable, scalable and innovative model for music education.

ABOUT BILLIE EILLISH:

As seven time GRAMMY Award winning Billie Eilish prepares for the July, 30th, 2021 release of her highly anticipated sophomore album ‘Happier Than Ever,’ the 19-year-old Los Angeles native remains one of the biggest stars to emerge in the 21st century. Since the

release of her debut single “ocean eyes” in 2015, Eilish continues to shatter the ceiling of music with her genre-defying sound. Fast forward from her humble breakout, her album WHEN WE ALL FALL ASLEEP, WHERE DO WE GO? debuted at No. 1 on the Billboard 200 in the U.S as well as 17 additional countries around the world upon release in 2019, and was the most streamed album of that year. WHEN WE ALL FALL ASLEEP, WHERE DO WE GO? was written, produced and recorded entirely by Billie Eilish and brother FINNEAS in their childhood home of Los Angeles. Billie Eilish went on to make history as the youngest artist to receive nominations and win in all the major categories at the 62nd GRAMMY® Awards, receiving an award for Best New Artist, Album of the Year, Record of the Year, Song of the Year, and Best Pop Vocal Album. Billie Eilish is also the youngest artist to write and record an official James Bond theme song, ‘No Time To Die.’ Most recently, Billie Eilish was nominated for four additional awards at the 63rd Annual GRAMMY Awards in 2021, and took home both Record of the Year for ‘everything i wanted,’ and Best Song Written For Visual Media for ‘No Time To Die.’ Billie Eilish’s forthcoming album ‘Happier Than Ever’ was written by Billie and her brother FINNEAS, who also produced the album.

FENDER MEDIA CONTACT:

Christina Stejskal

Vice President, Global Communications

Fender Musical Instruments Corp.

CStejskal@Fender.com

Press@Fender.com

BILLIE EILISH MEDIA CONTACT:

Alexandra Baker

High Rise PR

Alexandra@highrisepr.com

FENDER (standard and in stylized form) and FENDER PLAY are trademarks of Fender Musical Instruments Corporation and/or its affiliates, registered in the U.S. and other countries. FENDER PLAY FOUNDATION are trademarks of Fender Musical Instruments Corporation and/or its affiliates.

ABOUT FENDER

Since 1946, Fender has revolutionized music and culture as one of the world's leading musical instrument manufacturers, marketers, and distributors. Fender Musical Instruments Corporation (FMIC)—whose portfolio of owned and licensed brands includes Fender®, Squier®, Gretsch® guitars, Jackson®, EVH®, Charvel®, Bigsby®, and PreSonus® – follows a player-centric approach to crafting the highest-quality instruments and digital experiences across genres. Since 2015, Fender's digital arm has introduced a new ecosystem of products and interactive experiences to accompany players at every stage of their musical journey. This includes innovative apps and learning platforms designed to complement Fender guitars, amplifiers, effects pedals, accessories, and pro-audio gear, and inspire players through an immersive musical experience. FMIC is dedicated to unlocking the power of musical expression for all players, from beginners to history-making legends. In 2026, Fender celebrates 80 years of giving artists “wings to fly,” carrying on the vision of its founder, Leo Fender, and connecting players through a shared love of music.

CONTACT DETAILS

GLOBAL MEDIA INQUIRIES

Fender Musical Instruments Corporation
press@fender.com

COPY LINK

<https://fender.pr.co/271670-billie-eilish-and-finneas-partner-with-fender-play-foundation-and-los-angeles-unified-school-district-to-extend-youth-music-education-/>