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**SIX SFLS JAZZ HOUSE MUSICIANS MAKE THEIR PUBLIC CONCERT DEBUT IN MONTCLAIR**

*Student-musicians began learning their instruments in January*

\*\*\*Photos attached: See end of release for IDs.\*\*\*

PATERSON – Six Senator Frank Lautenberg School (SFLS) student-musicians who had never played a musical instrument until six months ago made their public concert debut at Montclair’s Wellmont Arts Plaza on Thursday.

The student musicians had all participated in the JAZZ HOUSE Music Scholars Program that launched at their school in January and continued their music education at the Summer at the JAZZ HOUSE Sessions in Montclair. The student musicians who performed at the JAZZ HOUSE Summer Sessions concert on Thursday were trombonist Jhnelle Rodriguez, saxophonists Julissa Crespo, James Martinez, trumpeter Emma Bermudez, clarinetist Ashley Riera, and vocalist Dif’rent Simpson.

The students participated in the summer program with the help of a \$10,000 McDonald’s of Paterson Scholarship established by Angela Adderley and the Adderley Management Company, Inc. Adderley is the owner/operator of several McDonald’s restaurant locations including one on Market Street in Paterson. Her husband, multi-Grammy Award-winning artist Nat Adderley, Jr., led the Funk + Soul Band at the JAZZ HOUSE Summer Sessions. He also worked as musical director for the late Luther Vandross and is the nephew of legendary jazz saxophonist Julian Edwin “Cannonball” Adderley.

“I couldn’t be prouder of our wonderful musicians who gave an outstanding performance today,” said Superintendent of Schools Eileen F. Shafer. “They have made such amazing progress in a short period of time, not only on learning to play their instruments but in developing the confidence to stand before a crowd and perform. I congratulate all of our student-musicians and thank their parents, their school administrators, Melissa Walker and the JAZZ HOUSE instructors for all of their care and support, and Angela Adderley for her kind generosity that benefitted our students.”

Melissa Walker, founder and president of JAZZ HOUSE, and her team launched the Music Scholars Program at SFLS in January with 54 middle school students who received music instruction twice a week after school.

**About Paterson Public Schools**

Paterson Public Schools serves about 25,000 students from pre-K to 12th grade in New Jersey's third largest city. While the Paterson community may be classified as low-income, many of its students are high achieving. More elementary school students are reading at or above grade level, and more high school students are earning college credits through Advanced Placement exams and taking college-level courses before graduation. Paterson Public Schools stands out as one of only 17 districts in New Jersey to offer the competitive International Baccalaureate program, and one of only four districts with a P-TECH high school, a program that, in collaboration with IBM and Passaic County Community College, graduates students with an associate degree in applied science and practical tech sector experience.

### **About JAZZ HOUSE**

Based in Montclair, N.J., the award-winning JAZZ HOUSE KiDS is an instrument for change, providing access, learning, career development, and community development through jazz for close to 20 years. The organization and students have received more than 125 awards and recognition for excellence in jazz and jazz education. Every day of the week through a series of in-school and out-of-school programs, the JAZZ HOUSE helps young people gain an artistic edge through music, mentoring, education and apprenticeship, building thriving communities, and fostering community leaders and global citizens.

### **Photo IDs**

SFLS Jazz House 1: From left, SFLS student musicians Ashley Riera, Emma Bermudez, Jhnelle Rodriguez, Julissa Crespo, and James Martinez.

SFLS Jazz House 2: SFLS student musician Dif'rent Simpson.

SFLS Jazz House 3: From left, PPS Communications Director, Jazz House staffers Brianna Ford and Galo Inge, Jazz house instructor Ed Palermo, SLFS student musicians Julissa Crespo, Jhnelle Rodriguez, James Martinez, Emma Bermudez, Ashley Riera, student from another school district, PPS Superintendent Eileen Shafer, Jazz House instructor Nat Adderley, Jr.

SFLS Jazz House 4: center, SFLS student musician Dif'rent Simpson flanked by her father and Jazz House Founder and President Melissa Walker.

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