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Fullerton School District to Host First-Ever K-Pop Battle of the Bands Finale at The Source OC



Beechwood School's K-Pop Band strikes a pose for final competition posters.

(Fullerton, CA) - The excitement is building as Fullerton School District (FSD) gears up to host its inaugural K-Pop Battle of the Bands finale on April 9, 2025, at 5 p.m. at The Source OC in Buena Park, 6940 Beach Blvd, Buena Park, CA 90621. This free, family-friendly event will showcase five FSD junior high K-pop teams—each composed of five students—delivering dynamic song and dance performances before a panel of expert judges, all vying for the inaugural championship title.

FSD's K-Pop Battle of the Bands is a Celebration of Music, Culture, and Creativity

"Our K-Pop Battle of the Bands program gives our students a chance to explore their talents, embrace cultural learning, engage in creative teamwork, and build self-confidence beyond the classroom," FSD Superintendent Dr. Bob Pletka said about the overarching goals for this endeavor.

FSD's innovative K-pop program has also attracted interest from major sponsors, including Source Music, home to the popular girl group LE SSERAFIM. Source Music is a branch of HYBE, the powerhouse behind the global phenomenon BTS. Judges will include accomplished vocal artists who have worked with groups like TXT, BTS, and Enhypen. Additional sponsors include renowned FNC

Entertainment and BBcat Afterschool, a K-pop training organization that has guided students through the competition.

Spanning nearly six months, FSD's K-Pop Battle of the Bands has proven to be more than just a competition—it's a celebration of music, culture, and creativity. Throughout this journey, students' passion, perseverance, and cultural exploration are being captured through a [documentary-style series](#). (Fun fact: The series is being filmed by Christian Lomeli, an accomplished FSD alumnus whose talents showcase the district's lasting impact on students' aspirations.)

The Competition Structure

The program consists of four rounds: initial auditions, a trainee phase, selection of the final five band members for each school, and the grand finale.



FSD first hosted hour-long assemblies at each of its five participating schools to introduce students to this unique opportunity. The assemblies outlined the competition structure and expectations.

Initial Auditions

For the first round of auditions, FSD seventh and eighth grade students from Beechwood and Fisler Schools and Ladera Vista, Nicolas, and Parks Junior High Schools took the stage to showcase their singing and dancing skills, having the option to demonstrate one or both talents. A panel of FSD educators, administrators, and professional K-pop instructors judged their performances.

“It was so moving to see our students light up the audition stage with enthusiasm and talent,” FSD Educational Services Director Phil Ling said.



Round one auditions were held at Parks and Nicolas Junior High Schools.

Ling, who oversees the district's arts and performing arts programs, noted that the FSD team was encouraged to see that over 120 entered the audition process.

“With K-pop being such a popular genre of music right now and in conjunction with our efforts to connect with our growing Korean community in Fullerton, we saw this as a fantastic way to foster cultural appreciation while giving students an engaging, high-interest performing arts platform that resonates with them,” Ling added.

A total of 50 students advanced to the next phase as K-pop trainees.

FSD K-Pop Trainee Phase

The trainee phase enabled competitors to take several K-pop singing and dancing master classes over the course of a month to help them hone and acquire additional skills for the final audition round.

During this phase, student K-pop trainees also had the chance to take a Korean cultural dance and instruments class. Their experience included a lunch made with classic Korean fare, including gimbap, glass noodles, Pepero, and Milkis.



FSD K-pop trainees immersed themselves in traditional Korean instruments and dance lessons.

Final Auditions for a Spot in the Band

One month after the initial auditions, it was time to select the final K-pop band members to represent each of the five participating FSD schools. Fifty competitors became 25, as the judging panel had the difficult decision of selecting from a talented pool of performers.



A Nicolas FSD K-Pop Battle of the Bands hopeful gives it her all as program documentarian Christian Lomeli grabs footage for the next episode.

Grand FSD K-Pop Battle of the Bands Finale

Since January, FSD's five K-pop bands have been rigorously preparing for the ultimate showdown, rehearsing once a week each week to dial in their routines. As part of the program's cultural education component, members in this competition stage attended a cultural field trip to the Korean Education Center in Los Angeles, deepening their understanding of Korean history and traditions to enrich and integrate into their performances.

Set at The Source OC, a Southern California Korean cultural hub, the finale promises a night of exhilarating performances, cultural appreciation, and community celebration. In addition to the final five bands showcasing their competition routines, the event will feature professional musicians, dancers, and exciting raffles and giveaways. With ample multi-level viewing space, seating will be first come, first served.

For more details about FSD's K-Pop Battle of the Bands and the grand finale, visit bit.ly/FSDKPOPBattleOfTheBands.

The Fullerton School District (FSD) is located in northern Orange County, California, and serves over 11,400 students in transitional kindergarten (TK) through eighth grade. FSD is home to 15 elementary schools, two TK through eighth-grade schools, three junior high schools, and a distance learning and home school program. FSD features unique programs for students, including a Dual Language Academy for Spanish and Korean languages; a Performance Academy Sports Program that offers a traditional in-person learning experience with time for advanced athletic training integrated into the school day; and robust before, after, and summer school programs. The mission of the Fullerton School District is to work collaboratively with the community to provide an innovative, high-quality educational experience for all students in a safe learning environment. FSD's motto, "Great Schools - Successful Kids," signifies that all FSD students will be given the tools and instruction to achieve academic excellence, hone interpersonal skills, and develop technological expertise to contribute as productive citizens in a democratic society.

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