



**ALBUQUERQUE
PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

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**NEWS RELEASE
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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Students with Autism Go to the Symphony

A father's love for his daughter is the impetus for this magical concert to be held at Popejoy Hall at 10 a.m. Wednesday, May 14.

[Albuquerque, NM] – Inspired by 10-year old Sophia Trujillo and after countless hours of planning, Sophia's father Anthony and invited guests will soon be part of an unprecedented audience in Popejoy Hall to experience an event that is the direct result of her father's dedication and love.

At 10 a.m. on Wednesday May 14 – due to donations from Trujillo's organization, Holman's USA, LLC as well as Real Time Solutions, the Albuquerque Public Schools Education Foundation, and other generous sponsors – 175 APS elementary students with Autism Spectrum Disorder will attend a special performance of *Peter and the Wolf* by the New Mexico Philharmonic. A dance troupe will perform alongside the orchestra.

The benefits of a musical performance for children with autism can be transforming. Music can reduce anxiety, improve communication, and encourage social interaction. Most of all, the event will be a chance for these families to have some fun in a place they might otherwise avoid. For parents of children with autism, this type of musical experience in a non-judgmental setting is a blessing.

Sophia is the inspiration for Trujillo's 501c3 charity, Holman's Technology for Autism Foundation as well as the upcoming symphony. His commitment to her and her challenges as a child with autism have led to countless hours working with APS autism specific teachers and the Autism Research Team. The APS Autism Research Team and the organizers have provided the training musicians and dancers will need to perform for this unique audience.

Trujillo is grateful to Dr. Anne Tafoya and the APS Special Education team for all their hard work. "They have been fantastic in providing detailed planning and training," he said. "This event would not be possible without their help and cooperation." Trujillo said the plan includes a team of nurses, special education professionals and administrators that will be on hand to guarantee not a moment of the magic is lost. Trujillo is also thankful to Marian Tanau and the NM Philharmonic for agreeing to add this performance to their busy calendar.

Many parents of children with autism avoid taking their families to live performances due to the challenges they face in obeying the social rules of these venues, and Trujillo was determined to get these students and their families to an event they would not normally attend. Parents and teachers will not have to worry about the children being too loud during the Symphony for Autism performance.