

PRESS RELEASE

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EDUHSD Virtual Academy Student To Boston's Berklee College of Music



Virtual Academy senior, Jesse Valdez-Personeni, Accepted to Boston's prestigious BERKLEE COLLEGE OF MUSIC for the 2018-2019 school year.

At age 18, Jesse is already an accomplished multi-instrumentalist. Recipient of the 2018 Northern California Bluegrass Societies Banjo player of the year and 2017 Fiddletown Fiddle Contest Youth Champion, Jesse regularly performs all over the western states with his band The Blue J's, as well as numerous other groups. Banjo is his primary focus; however, Jesse also plays guitar, mandolin, fiddle and upright bass. In 2017, Jesse was invited to perform with youth from all over the United States at the International Bluegrass Music Association's World of Bluegrass in Raleigh NC.

Jesse, a soon to be 4th generation graduate of the El Dorado Union High School District, is thrilled with this honor. "Acceptance into Berklee is a dream come true, payoff for all the years of studying music instead of watching TV or playing video games" says Valdez-Personeni.

Jesse will graduate in May from El Dorado High School District's Virtual Academy. Jesse loves the format at Virtual Academy saying, "It has given me the freedom to study and perform music while completing my high school course work and getting ahead in college". Jesse will graduate having completed more than 26 units of Junior College course work, along with his high school studies, all while holding down a part time job, vigorous performance schedule and maintaining a 3.7 GPA.

While acceptance into Berklee is an accomplishment in itself, his attendance is still uncertain. Berklee scholarships are insufficient to cover the costs.