



## **Conexion. San Antonio Express Feature**

**Project: 'Don't Mess With La Musica de Tejas'**  
*by Rudy Arispe* SPECIAL TO CONEXION

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The Texas Music Project has cleverly borrowed the Texas Department of Transportation's trademark slogan, "Don't Mess With Texas," and given it a distinct Latin twist by adding the pulsating rhythms of cumbia, flamenco guitar, Tejano, rock and salsa.

The result is a new CD, "Don't Mess With La Musica de Tejas" to benefit music education for Latino students in Texas public schools. TMP is a statewide initiative founded by the Social Marketing and Resource Center to strengthen and restore music education throughout the state.

"Don't Mess With La Musica de Tejas" is the second in a series of music compilations that brings together Texas music legends along with up-and-coming artists who contributed to the recording to show their support of music education in the state.

The CD features the music of Grammy Award-winner Flaco Jimenez, Ruben Ramos, Los Lonely Boys, Jay Perez, Del Castillo,

Havana NRG, Michelle, Los Desperadoz, Elida Reyna, Grupo Fantasma, Patricia Vonne, Latin Breed, Grupo Vida, Randy Garibay, Sisters Morales, Michael Salgado and Henry Brun.

Volume II goes on sale July 1 and can be purchased for \$12.98 at select Starbucks Coffee and H-E-B locations and music stores. The CD also can be ordered online at [texasmusicproject.org](http://texasmusicproject.org).

"I was surprised at how giving all of the artists have been, and willing to share their music and to forego royalties so that proceeds can benefit music education in our schools," said **Bruce Orr**, TMP co-founder and president. "Many had stories of how important music was to their families and how they learned of music from their teachers at school."

According to statistics released by the Department of Education and the Texas Cultural Trust, Texas' investment in the arts is roughly 18 cents per student, placing it near the bottom of all 56 states and territories. The national average is \$1.44 per student. Nearly one in five schools fails to offer music or art classes even once a week.

"There is a need for music education for all students in Texas public schools," **Orr** said. "In the last three years, music education gradually has been squeezed out of the budget as the number of students have increased.

"Don't Mess With La Musica de Tejas' is our rallying cry we created for state legislators, teachers and parents to believe how important music education is to our schools, and we can't let it slip away."

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