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Local star shines brightly on music's biggest stage

By: Jennifer Joseph

Performing has always been enough for Beyonce Knowles. Her fourth grade choir teacher at HISD's Parker Elementary School can attest to that.

"She had a winning combination, because this is something she wanted to do. This was something her parents were fully supportive of her doing," Cindy Pack says.

At nine years old, Beyonce graced the stage at Parker Elementary School, and no matter whether the stage is big or small she continues to bring down the house.

Even as queen of the charts, a little of that 9-year-old can still be seen.

"She's very down-to-earth and her parents were very genuine and kind and gracious, and I think you see that in the way that she and her family are helping to support music in the schools," Pack says.

Honorary chairs of the non-profit group Texas Music Project, Beyonce's parents are working to promote music in Texas public schools.

Parker Elementary is one of few that has worked with the community to maintain their award-winning program.

Beyonce isn't the only Grammy winner.

"Parker Elementary was selected in 2002 as the National Grammy Signature Elementary School by the Grammy Foundation," Pack says.

With the help of 29-year veteran and now magnet coordinator Pack, Parker beat out 6,900 other applicants for the Grammy. Beyonce followed suit by beating out all of her peers to win five Grammy Awards for her first solo album.

Pack says Beyonce was a polished performer even at age nine.

She says Beyonce stepped into the national spotlight when she performed on Star Search as a child.