

# The Kennedy Center

THE JOHN F. KENNEDY CENTER FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS

Press Release



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

April 12, 2010

## **THE KENNEDY CENTER ANNOUNCES RECIPIENT OF 22<sup>nd</sup> ANNUAL AWARD RECOGNIZING OUTSTANDING SCHOOL BOARD SUPPORT OF THE ARTS**

### **Putnam City Schools Board of Education Oklahoma City, Oklahoma**

WASHINGTON, D.C.—The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts announced today that the Putnam City Schools, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma has been chosen to receive the 22<sup>nd</sup> annual Kennedy Center Alliance for Arts Education Network (KCAAEN) and National School Boards Association (NSBA) Award. The district was singled out from nominees around the country for their outstanding support of high-quality arts education. School boards were nominated by State Alliances for Arts Education and State School Board Associations.

The award, which includes a \$10,000 prize, will be presented on April 12, 2010 at the National School Boards Association's annual conference in Chicago, Illinois. Since 1989, this prestigious national award has recognized a school board for their support of arts education.

“Exposing students to the arts has a remarkable ability to increase academic and social development,” said Darrell M. Ayers, Vice President of Education for the Kennedy Center. “We are impressed with the efforts of Putnam City Schools, and all they do to provide a valuable arts education experience to their students.”

A national review panel is convened to select the winning school district each year. In order to be selected for this national honor, candidates must demonstrate support for all four artistic disciplines in their arts education programs including visual arts, music, theater, and dance. Instruction and programming must be available for all students throughout the district. The ways in which the school district develops collaborative partnerships with the cultural resources available in the community are also an important consideration.

### **PUTNAM CITY SCHOOLS, OKLAHOMA CITY, OKLAHOMA**

The School Board of Putnam City Schools is committed to providing standards-based arts education opportunities for all students. Putnam City Schools is the fifth largest school district in Oklahoma, with a

student population of 18,790 in the elementary, middle, and high schools. There are arts programs in all schools as well as an Alternative A+ Arts Academy at the high school level. The board has consistently proven its support of the arts by making the financial and administrative commitments needed for a strong arts education program throughout all grade levels. They have committed 5.94% of the instructional budget for arts programs and support a fine arts coordinator; music chairs in general music, vocal music, band and orchestra, and 95 full time arts teachers. The School Board has also approved issuing bonds for the maintenance of current arts facilities and construction of new facilities for arts education and presentation.

The school board of Putnam City Schools continually reinforces the arts as core subjects by focusing on standards, assessments, and professional development opportunities for teachers. Although the school district is not required to do so by the State Board of Education, Putnam City Schools carries out assessments in four arts disciplines each year to gain data that helps to improve the arts education opportunities offered. The standards and assessments used by Putnam City Schools were also used to help develop the Oklahoma state standards in the arts. The Board supports professional development by setting aside time and funds for teachers to meet in arts planning teams and professional learning communities at the school and district levels, attend multiple professional development workshops in the arts each year, and participate in local and national arts education associations such as the National Art Education Association and MENC, the national association for music education. These opportunities allow Putnam City Schools' teachers to focus on arts integration and artist residencies.

The School Board of Putnam City Schools created a learning environment where all students experience the arts, regardless of economic status. To help fund these opportunities, the board has eliminated the need for charging fees and rentals in many classes. In those classes where fees and rentals are still necessary, assistance is given to those students who cannot afford them. The school board also works with parent groups and the Putnam City Schools Foundation to raise funds for arts education in the district. To enhance students' arts experiences, the Board supports collaborations with local organizations such as the College of Fine Arts and Design at the University of Central Oklahoma and its Center for Arts Education, the Oklahoma Alliance for Arts Education, the Oklahoma City Philharmonic, the Perpetual Motion Dance Company, the Oklahoma City Art Museum, and numerous businesses in the community that partner with schools.

Each year, the school board of Putnam City Schools presents a theme supporting the arts to help inspire the district. Previous themes have included "The Arts: Planting Seeds of Creativity" and "The Arts: Exercising Mind, Body, and Spirit." School board meetings showcase upcoming student performances and provide updates on student accomplishments in the arts. The School Board actively and enthusiastically encourages state and national Youth Arts Month efforts, serving as advocates for continued strong arts

education in schools.

**THE KENNEDY CENTER EDUCATION DEPARTMENT**

For more than 35 years, the Kennedy Center has provided quality arts educational experiences through performances, residencies, workshops, conferences, career development programs, symposia, and on-line and print resources. In the past year, the Center's education programs have directly impacted more than 16 million people across the nation. The educational mission of the Kennedy Center is to foster understanding of and participation in the arts through exemplary programs and performances for diverse populations of all ages that represent the unique cultural life and heritage of the United States. For more information, visit the Center's Web site at [www.kennedy-center.org/education](http://www.kennedy-center.org/education)

**KENNEDY CENTER ALLIANCE FOR ARTS EDUCATION NETWORK**The Kennedy Center Alliance for Arts Education Network (KCAAEN) is a coalition of statewide, non-profit organizations working in partnership with the Kennedy Center to support policies, practices, and partnerships to ensure that the arts are a critical and essential part of American education. The KCAAEN is a component of the Kennedy Center Education Department.

**NATIONAL SCHOOL BOARDS ASSOCIATION**

Founded in 1940, the National School Boards Association is a not-for-profit organization representing State Associations of school boards and their 14,500+ member districts serving the nation's 50 million public school students. Its mission is to work with and through all its State Association Members to foster excellence and equity in public education through school board leadership. NSBA achieves that mission by representing the school board perspective before federal government agencies and with national organizations that affect education, and by providing vital information and services to state associations of school boards and local school boards.

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**For more information about the Kennedy Center, please visit [www.kennedy-center.org](http://www.kennedy-center.org).**

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