

The Kennedy Center

THE JOHN F. KENNEDY CENTER FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS

Press Release



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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THE KENNEDY CENTER ANNOUNCES RECIPIENT OF 23rd ANNUAL AWARD RECOGNIZING OUTSTANDING SCHOOL BOARD SUPPORT OF THE ARTS

**San Diego Unified School District
Board of Education
San Diego, CA**

(WASHINGTON, D.C.)—The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts announced today that the San Diego Unified School District, San Diego, CA has been chosen to receive the 23rd annual Kennedy Center Alliance for Arts Education Network (KCAAEN) and National School Boards Association (NSBA) Award. This district was chosen 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 Boards Associations. Finalists for the award include: Anne Arundel County Public Schools, Annapolis, MD; Appoquinimink School District, Odessa, DE; Cedar Rapids Community School District, Cedar Rapids, IA; Fargo Public School District One, Fargo, ND; Florence Public School District One, Florence, SC; Jackson Public Schools, Jackson, MS; Memphis City Schools, Memphis TN; Nebo School District, Spanish Fork, UT; City School District of New Rochelle, NY; Omaha Public Schools, Omaha, NE; The School District of Palm Beach County, West Palm Beach, FL; and Sioux Falls School District, Sioux Falls, SD.

The award, which includes a \$10,000 prize, will be presented to the San Diego Unified School District on April 11, 2011 at the National School Boards Association’s annual conference in San Francisco, CA. Since 1989, this prestigious national award has recognized a school board for their support of arts education.

“It is important that the arts are part of every child’s education. We must support the development of the whole child. Without the arts, we deprive our young people of opportunities for creativity, imagination, and self expression” said Darrell M. Ayers, Vice President of Education for the Kennedy Center. “We are impressed with the efforts of the San Diego Unified School District, and applaud them for their outstanding contribution to arts education.”

A national review panel is convened to select the school district that receives the honor each year. School districts selected for this national honor must demonstrate support for all four artistic disciplines in 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 in reviewing nominations.

SAN DIEGO UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT, SAN DIEGO, CA

San Diego Unified School District's (SDUSD) mission is for all San Diego students to graduate with the skills, motivation, curiosity, and resilience to succeed in their choice of college and career in order to lead and participate in the society of tomorrow. SDUSD is the second largest urban district in California, and nineteenth largest district in the nation, serving nearly 132,000 students in pre-school through grade 12. There is a wealth of arts programs offered to all students in the district, as well seven arts magnet schools. The SDUSD Board of Education 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 five percent of the instructional budget to arts programs, and they support a Visual and Performing Arts (VAPA) director; music program manager; grants coordinator teacher; curriculum and instruction support teacher; resource teachers in dance, theater, music and visual arts; and 193 full time arts teachers. Despite a drop of one-quarter of school funding in the past four years, the Board continues to maintain VAPA programs that give all students equal access to quality arts instruction in dance, music, theater and visual art at all sites and grade levels.

The School Board continually reinforces the arts as core subjects by focusing on standards, assessments, and professional development opportunities for teachers. Teachers are provided with guides of what VAPA standards look like in the classroom, what should be taught and assessed, and what the proficiency levels are for each standard. These guides assist teachers in planning curriculum, instruction, student assessment, and also support secondary site administrators in evaluating program and instruction. The result is a wealth of courses that are grade-level appropriate, standards-based, sequential, and taught by qualified VAPA teachers. The Board supports professional development by not only providing free teacher training and integration strategies through local cultural venues, but also through a series of professional development grants from the California Postsecondary Education Commission and the U.S. Department of Education. The expected result is 360 trained teachers in arts integration strategies over the course of four years.

The Board has created a learning environment where all students experience the arts, regardless of economic status. The-SDUSD does not allow student fees, rather the School Board works with local arts partners who donate supplies, materials, training, and access to local arts venues. Individual school sites have parent booster organizations, PTA's and PTO's, and foundations to help with assistance. To enhance students' arts experiences, those school sites without support groups receive funding when needed from the Area Superintendent 's budgets, grants, and the VAPA department on a case-by-case basis. The Board has decided to use their award money to support a third grade visual art exploratory program where teaching artists will conduct nine-week residencies at schools throughout the district.

Every member of the SDUSD Board of Education has an active hand in advocating for continued strong arts education in schools. The Board's commitment to the arts has truly made them a model for arts education in California and throughout the country

THE KENNEDY CENTER EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

As the nation's performing arts center, the Kennedy Center's impact and responsibility extends far beyond its doors—it reaches across America and into the future. Nowhere is this goal more truly achieved than in the Center's education programs.

For nearly 40 years, the Kennedy Center Education Department has provided quality arts experiences for students, teachers, families, and the general public throughout the United States. In the past year, the Center's education programs have directly impacted more than 11 million people. The mission of the Education Department is to foster understanding of and participation in the performing arts through exemplary programs and performances for diverse populations of all ages that represent the unique cultural life and heritage of the United States.

The resources of the Department focus on producing, presenting, and touring performances and educational events for young people and their families; school- and community-based residencies and other programs that directly impact teachers, students, administrators, and artists through professional development; systemic and school improvement through the arts and arts integrated curricula; partnerships; creating and providing educational materials via print and the Internet; the development of careers in the arts for young people and aspiring professionals; and strengthening the management of arts organizations.

The programs of the Education Department have become models for communities across the country and have unlocked the door to learning for millions of young people. This has been accomplished by fostering creativity, teaching discipline, improving self-esteem, and challenging students to think in new ways, as well as offering them experiences in the pure enjoyment and excitement of the performing arts. For more information, visit the Center's web site at 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's 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 more than 90,000 local school board members throughout the United States. These local officials govern 13,809 local school districts serving the nation's 50 million public school students. Its mission is working with and through our State Association to advocate for equity and excellence 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 impact education, and provide vital information and services to State Associations of school boards Throughout the nation. For more information about the National School Boards Association visit their website at <http://www.nsba.org>.

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