



**THE KENNEDY CENTER ANNOUNCES RECIPIENT OF
24th ANNUAL AWARD RECOGNIZING OUTSTANDING SCHOOL BOARD
SUPPORT OF THE ARTS**

**School Board of Palm Beach County, Florida West Palm Beach, FL
To be Awarded \$10,000 at Annual Conference on April 23, 2012**

(WASHINGTON, D.C.)—The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts announced today that the School Board of Palm Beach County, Florida, from West Palm Beach, FL, has been chosen to receive the 24th 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 Board of Education, Annapolis, MD; Caddo Parish School Board, Shreveport, LA; Durham Public Schools School Board, Durham, NC; Fort Worth Independent School District Board of Education, Fort Worth, TX; Kodiak Island Borough School District Board of Education, Kodiak, AK; Lima City School Board, Lima, OH; and Minnetonka Public Schools District Board of Education, Minnetonka, MN.

The award, which includes a \$10,000 prize, will be presented to the School Board of Palm Beach County, Florida on April 23, 2012 at the National School Boards Association's annual conference in Boston, MA. Since 1989, this prestigious national award has recognized school boards for their support of 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 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.

SCHOOL BOARD OF PALM BEACH COUNTY, FLORIDA

The School Board of Palm Beach County strives to provide a world-class arts education for every student in its district. The district offers an extensive variety of arts courses in all grade levels. Currently, it serves approximately 172,000 students in 187 schools. The School Board provides equal funding for supplies and equipment to all schools. Community partners, grants, individual fundraising, and school board financial support provide opportunities for all students to participate in the arts.

In 2005, the Board established an Arts Education Task Force that developed an arts business plan, which the Board reviews annually for successful implementation. The plan calls for the district to develop solid partnerships with cultural organizations, with a conscious integration of education as the mission of the organizations. To meet this directive, the district has carried out professional development, artist residencies, and curriculum collaborations. The success of the business plan is determined in three categories: leadership and professional development, staffing, and budget. The continued success of meeting their goals has led the Board to call for and endorse increased arts programming, especially with regard to arts integration.

By completion of secondary school, students can communicate at a basic level in four arts disciplines, demonstrate proficiency in at least one art form, and relate various types of arts knowledge and skills across other disciplines. Methods of arts assessment include classroom assignments, rubrics, and tests, which are available for all art disciplines on the district's online lesson plan repository. The Board allocated funding for district fine arts teachers to develop sequential lesson plans based on the new standards in visual arts, theater, dance, and music. Hundreds of these arts-related lesson plans are uploaded to the repository, making them available to all district teachers.

In an environment of a declining economy and an eroding tax base, there has been an increased challenge to maintain a comprehensive arts education program. Despite these and other factors, the school board not only kept all existing arts programs in place, but pushed a tax referendum to add an additional 0.25 mill to the ad valorem tax for the county. This addition ensured the security of all art and music teacher positions in the county. Even with record-breaking cuts in education spending at the state level, the Board maintained all existing fine arts teacher positions, and in fact added additional K-12 arts positions. The Board has decided to use the award money to expand dance education and string education programs across the district.

The School Board of Palm Beach County's belief in and commitment to the arts in education is undeniable. It is clear they will continue to serve as ambassadors for arts advocacy in their state for years to come.

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

The National School Boards Association is a not-for-profit organization representing State Associations of school boards and their member districts across the United States. Its mission is, "working with and through our State Associations, to advocate for equity and excellence in public education through school board leadership." NSBA achieves that mission by representing the school board perspective in working with federal government agencies and national organizations that impact education, and provides vital information and services to State Associations of school boards throughout the nation.

NSBA advocates local school boards as the ultimate expression of grassroots democracy. NSBA supports the capacity of each school board, acting on behalf of and in close concert with the people of its community, to envision the future of education in its community, to establish a structure and environment that allow all students to reach their maximum potential, to provide accountability to the community on performance in the schools, and to serve as the key community advocate for children and youth and their public schools.

Founded in 1940, NSBA represents its State Association members and their more than 90,000 local school board members, virtually all of whom are elected. These local officials govern 13,809 local school districts serving the nation's 50 million public school students. For more information about the National School Boards Association visit their website at <http://www.nsba.org>.

For more information about the Kennedy Center visit www.kennedy-center.org.

Please visit [facebook.com/kennedycenter](https://www.facebook.com/kennedycenter) for behind-the-scenes news, special offers, advance notice of events and other related Kennedy Center Facebook pages.

Follow @kencen on Twitter for up-to-the-minute news, offers and more

###

PRESS CONTACT*:

Amanda Hunter

(202) 416-8441

ahunter@kennedy-center.org

**please do not publish this information*