

Press Release for SupportMusic Merit Award Recipient

Richland Center High School Band Program Receives National Recognition Richland Center High School Band school receives the SupportMusic Merit Award for the 4th time

Richland Center, Wisconsin. (March 31, 2016) – Richland Center High School Band has been honored with the SupportMusic Merit Award from the NAMM Foundation for its outstanding commitment to music education. The Richland Center High School Band joins 118 schools across the country in receiving the prestigious award in 2016.

The SupportMusic Merit Award is awarded to individual schools that demonstrate outstanding achievement in efforts to provide music access and education to all students.

Schools that have been recognized by the NAMM Foundation are often held up as models for other educators looking to boost their own music education programs.

To qualify for the SupportMusic Merit Award, Richland Center High School answered detailed questions about funding, graduation requirements, music class participation, instruction time, facilities, support for the music program, and community music-making programs. Responses were verified with school officials and reviewed by The Music Research Institute at the University of Kansas.

This award recognizes that the Richland Center High School Band is leading the way with learning opportunities as outlined in the new federal education legislation, the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). The legislation, signed into law in December 2015, replaces No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB), which was often criticized for an overemphasis on testing —while leaving behind subjects such as music. ESSA recommends music and the arts as important elements of a well-rounded education for all children.

As [school] finalizes its 2016-2017 budget, the NAMM Foundation's SupportMusic Merit Award and the implementation of the federal ESSA law bring attention to the importance of keeping music education part of the school's core education for all students. It also highlights music's vital role in students' overall success in school.

Community music programs have been drawing increased attention because of a [landmark study](#) by Northwestern University brain scientists. These researchers found new links between students in community music programs and academic success in subjects such as reading.

Beyond the Northwestern study, other reports indicate that learning to play music can boost academic and social skills, such as processing math and learning to cooperate in group settings.

A 2015 study, "[Striking A Chord](#)" supported by the NAMM Foundation, also outlines the overwhelming desire by teachers and parents for music education opportunities for all children as part of the school curriculum.

About The NAMM Foundation:

The NAMM Foundation is a nonprofit supported in part by the National Association of Music Merchants and its approximately 10,300 members around the world. The foundation advances active participation in music making across the lifespan by supporting scientific research, philanthropic giving and public service programs. For more information about the NAMM Foundation, please visit www.nammfoundation.org.