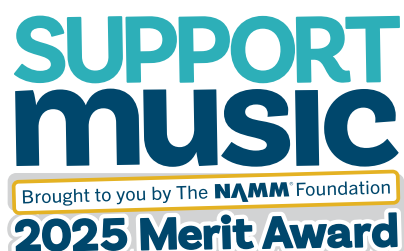
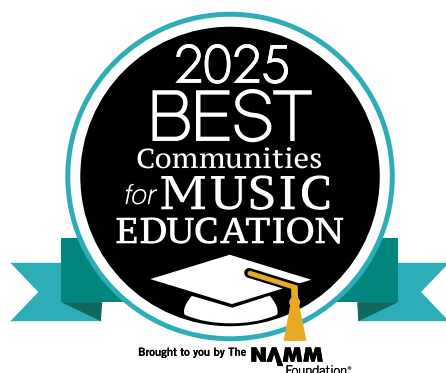




2025

Best Communities for Music Education  
and SupportMusic Merit Award



# 2025 | Best Communities for Music Education and SupportMusic Merit Award

## Promotional Toolkit

**Congratulations!** The NAMM Foundation has recognized your community for its commitment to music education with the Best Communities for Music Education (for school districts) or the SupportMusic Merit Award (for individual school sites).

This toolkit provides ideas and resources to raise the visibility of your music education program and to celebrate this important designation. If your district or school has a communications department, please share this kit with the appropriate contact.

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About the Best Communities for Music Education (BCME) Awards Program

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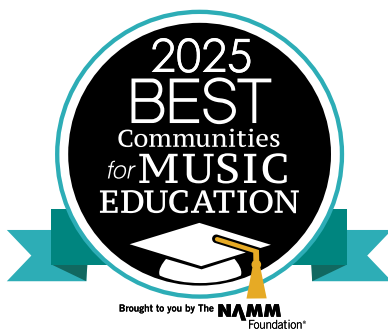
Ways to Increase Visibility

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## Section 1

### About the Best Communities for Music Education (BCME) Program

For the past 26 years, The NAMM Foundation has celebrated communities throughout the country with the Best Communities for Music Education (school districts) and SupportMusic Merit (individual school sites) awards. Throughout the 26 years, this national award has honored schools and districts across the United States for their unwavering commitment to music education as an integral part of a well-rounded education for all students.

This award is a powerful testament to the dedication of schools that prioritize music education. At The NAMM Foundation, we believe that every child deserves access to quality music programs, and we are honored to shine a spotlight on those who are leading the way.”

- Julia Rubio, Executive Director of The NAMM Foundation

### How Was My District or School Selected?

The application, submitted by a representative from your district or school, included details about resources such as funding, staffing, commitment to standards, opportunity, and access to music instruction. The provided data underwent statistical analysis and was confirmed through an audit conducted by researchers from WolfBrown.

### About The NAMM Foundation

The NAMM Foundation is the charitable arm of the National Association of Music Merchants, the global trade association for the music products industry. The foundation works to remove systemic barriers that limit access to music-making and career pathways in the music industry. By investing in bold ideas and innovative solutions, we strive to build inclusive and thriving musical communities. For more information about The NAMM Foundation, please visit [nammfoundation.org](https://nammfoundation.org).

## Section 2

### Ways to Increase Visibility

The Best Communities for Music Education or SupportMusic Merit Award designation provides an important opportunity to promote your school or district's commitment to music education and raise awareness about your music programs.



#### 1. Spread the Word. Engage the Media.

Media coverage helps boost local awareness of music education in your community, potentially increasing support for and appreciation for your music program.



**Reach Out:** Send the press release to local newspapers, TV and radio stations, blogs, and community websites. Also, consider sending it to your elected officials and other stakeholders.



**Tell a Story:** Include a quote from a student or teacher about the impact of music in their lives. Also, consider alumni who were deeply impacted by music. Remember that people are drawn to human interest stories.



**Add Visuals:** Include the best photo(s) or a link to video(s) of your music program and participants.



#### 2. Create Connections.

Host a celebration during a school board meeting, performance or at your local music store.



**Make the Media Part of Your Community:** Invite local media to attend and photograph a student musical performance or your music program's certificate presentation.



**Enlist Someone to Tell the Story:** Ensure your spokesperson is prepared to answer questions. Also, consider having a student speak to the media about why music education is important to them.



#### 3. Maximize Your Social Media Outreach.

Social media is a powerful way to increase visibility and shine the spotlight on your music program. Use social media to communicate your program's unique aspects and promote local events and celebrations to your local community and beyond.

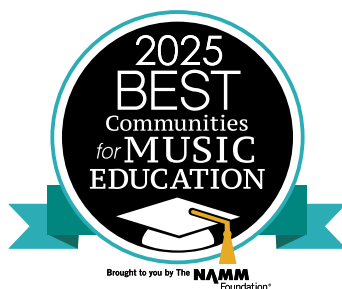
- Announce the award designation
- Post compelling photos and videos of the program
- Share personal stories and testimonials from your students, music teachers, administrators and/or parents about your music program's impact
- Use the following hashtags, including the official hashtag:  
**#BestCommunitiesforMusicEducation, #SupportMusic**
- For more ideas, please visit: [educator-resources/bcmetoolkit](https://educator-resources/bcmetoolkit)





**Press Release Template for Best Communities for Music Education Award Recipient—School Districts Only**

[Contact Name]  
[Contact School]  
[Phone]  
[Email]



**[District] Receives National Recognition for Music Education Support**  
**[If your district has won this award multiple times, please note it in the title of the release]**

[City, State] — [Date] — [District] has been honored with the Best Communities for Music Education designation from The NAMM Foundation for its outstanding commitment to music education. Now in its 26th year, the Best Communities for Music Education designation is awarded to school districts that demonstrate outstanding achievement to provide music access and education to all students.

Two awards are given each year: Best Communities for Music Education (BCME) for school districts and the SupportMusic Merit Award (SMMA) for individual school sites. Both reach K-12 schools and districts throughout the U.S. and offer opportunities to increase awareness and support for music programs. Over 1,000 districts and individual school sites (public, private, charter, parochial) were recognized for having the highest commitment to producing exceptional music programs.

**["Insert quote from a school official on how music education is important to this district and its students," said District Official. "Insert quote on the impact that receiving this designation will have on the district's music education program."]**

**["Optional student/teacher quote about WHY music education is important."]**

To qualify for the Best Communities designation, [District] answered detailed questions about funding, graduation requirements, music class participation, instruction time, facilities, and support for the music program and community music-making programs. Responses were verified by school officials and reviewed by the leading arts educational research firm, WolfBrown.

**[About District]**

## About The NAMM Foundation

The NAMM Foundation is the charitable arm of the National Association of Music Merchants, the global trade association for the music products industry. The foundation works to remove systemic barriers that limit access to music-making and career pathways in the music industry. By investing in bold ideas and innovative solutions, we strive to build inclusive and thriving musical communities. For more information about The NAMM Foundation, please visit [nammfoundation.org](https://nammfoundation.org).

## Press Release template for SupportMusic Merit Award – For Individual Schools Only

[Contact Name]  
[Contact School]  
[Phone]  
[Email]



[School Name] Receives National Recognition for Music Education Program

[City, State] – [Date] – [City/Town]’s [School] has been honored with the SupportMusic Merit Award from The NAMM Foundation for its outstanding commitment to music education. The SupportMusic Merit Award recognizes individual schools that demonstrate outstanding achievement to provide music access and education to all students.

Two awards are given each year: Best Communities for Music Education (BCME) for school districts and the SupportMusic Merit Award (SMMA) for individual school sites. Both reach K-12 schools and districts throughout the U.S. and offer opportunities to increase awareness and support for music programs. Over 1,000 districts and individual school sites (public, private, charter, parochial) were recognized for having the highest commitment to producing exceptional music programs.

["Insert quote from a school official on WHY music education is important to this school and students," said the School Official. "Insert quote on the impact that receiving this designation will have on the school's music education program."]

To qualify for the SupportMusic Merit Award, [School] answered detailed questions about funding, graduation requirements, music class participation, instruction time, facilities, and support for the music program and community music-making programs. Responses were verified by school officials and reviewed by the leading national arts education research firm, WolfBrown

["Optional student/teacher quote about WHY music education is important."]

[About School]

## About The NAMM Foundation

The NAMM Foundation is the charitable arm of the National Association of Music Merchants, the global trade association for the music products industry. The foundation works to remove systemic barriers that limit access to music-making and career pathways in the music industry. By investing in bold ideas and innovative solutions, we strive to build inclusive and thriving musical communities. For more information about The NAMM Foundation, please visit [nammfoundation.org](https://nammfoundation.org).



## Section 3

### Fact Sheet: Benefits of Music Education

[www.nammfoundation.org/projects/music-research](http://www.nammfoundation.org/projects/music-research)

Everyday listening skills are stronger in musically trained children than those without music training. Significantly, listening skills are closely tied to perceiving speech in a noisy background, paying attention, and keeping sounds in memory.

*Strait, D.L. and N. Kraus, Biological impact of auditory expertise across the life span: musicians as a model of auditory learning. Hearing Research, 2013.*

Researchers found that after two years, children who not only regularly attended music classes but also actively participated in the class showed larger improvements in how the brain processes speech and reading scores than their less-involved peers.

*Nina Kraus, director of Northwestern's Auditory Neuroscience Laboratory, quoted in Melissa Locker, "This Is How Music Can Change Your Brain," Time, December 16, 2014.*

Music training leads to greater gains in auditory and motor function when begun in young childhood; by adolescence, the plasticity that characterizes childhood has begun to decline. Nevertheless, our results establish that music training impacts the auditory system even when it is begun in adolescence, suggesting that a modest amount of training begun later in life can affect neural function.

*Adam T. Tierney, Jennifer Krizman, Nina Kraus, "Music training alters the course of adolescent auditory development," Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences, 2015.*

Research shows that making music changes the brain and that these brain changes have tangible impacts on listening skills, learning, and cognition.

*(2017). Music, hearing, and education: from the lab to the classroom; quoted in Northwestern University, September/October 2017.*

Individuals who took music lessons as children show stronger neural processing of sound: young adults and even older adults who have not played an instrument for up to 50 years show enhanced neural processing compared to their peers.

*(2017). Music, hearing, and education: from the lab to the classroom; quoted in Northwestern University, September/October 2017.*

Students who take music in middle school score significantly higher on algebra assignments in 9th grade than their non-music counterparts.

*Helmrich. B. H. (2010). Window of opportunity? Adolescence, music, and algebra. Journal of Adolescent Research. 25 (4).*

Musical training is thought to improve nervous system function by focusing attention on meaningful acoustic cues, and these improvements in auditory processing cascade to language and cognitive skills.

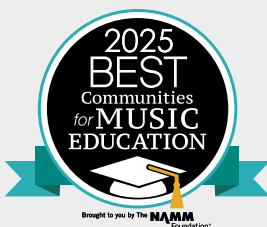
*Nina Kraus, Jessica Slater, Elaine C. Thompson, Jane Hornickel, Dana L. Strait, Trent Nicol, Travis White-Schwoch, "Music Enrichment Programs Improve the Neural Encoding of Speech in At-Risk Children," Journal of Neuroscience, September 3, 2014.*

## Section 4

### Tools & Resources

The following templates can be customized and used to create visibility for your award. All materials can be found on The NAMM Foundation website. If you have questions about the resources, please email [sharonb@namm.org](mailto:sharonb@namm.org).

#### Official 2025 BCME Logo



Provided in various file formats for both print and web.

#### Official 2025 BCME Email Signature



#### Official 2025 BCME Banner 8'x4'(96"x48")



#### Official 2025 BCME Certificate 11"x8.5"



#### Official 2025 BCME Social Media Tiles:



#### 1080 x 1350 pixels

Static JPG & PDF with modifiable field (Export PDF to JPG for social media posts)

#### 1920 x 1080 pixels (16x9)

Static JPG & PDF with modifiable field (Export PDF to JPG for social media posts)



## The NAMM Store

In addition to the complimentary templates, we are offering items for purchase. Please visit The NAMM Store to learn more!

#### STICKERS:

6-Pack & Single

#### BANNERS:

2x3, 3x5, 4x6

#### MUGS

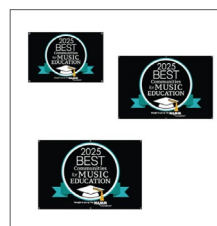
#### STICKERS



#### STICKERS



#### BANNERS



#### MUGS





## Section 4

### Tools & Resources

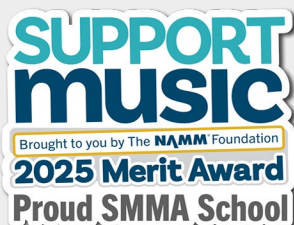
The following templates can be customized and used to create visibility for your award. All materials can be found on The NAMM Foundation website. If you have questions about the resources, please email [sharonb@namm.org](mailto:sharonb@namm.org).

#### 2025 SMMA Logo



Provided in various file formats  
for both print and web.

#### 2025 SMMA Email Signature



#### SMMA Banner 4'x8'(48"x96")



#### 2025 SMMA Certificate 11"x8.5"

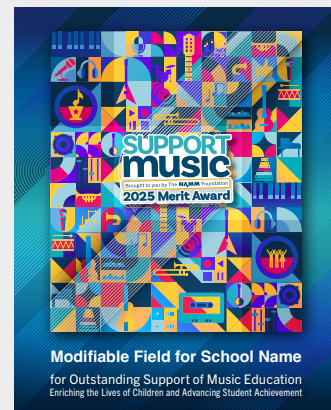


#### 2025 SMMA Social Media Tiles:



Please be sure to tag your posts **#SupportMusic**

#### 2025 SMMA Posters 11"x17" & 22"x28"



Modifiable Field for School Name  
for Outstanding Support of Music Education  
Enriching the Lives of Children and Advancing Student Achievement

#### 1080 x 1350 pixels

Static JPG & PDF with modifiable field  
(Export PDF out to JPG for social media posts)

#### 1920 x 1080 pixels (16x9)

Static JPG & PDF with modifiable field  
(Export PDF out to jpg for social media posts)