



In the photo above, front row from left: Maria Walton, Mary Lou Bonnell, Brooke Hartpence and Libby Brozik. Back row from left: Robert Humphrey, Kate Flock, Cindy Briggs, Rebekah Valerio and Mike Ciranni.

NCS D Music Department Recognized A **Sixth Time**

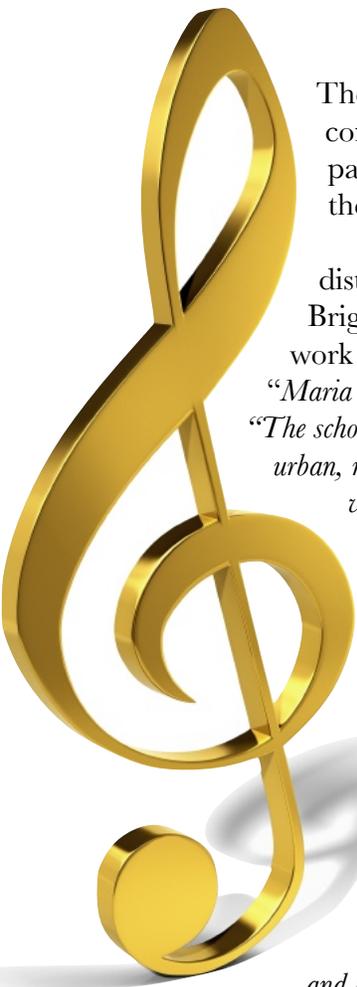
For the sixth year in a row, the Newark Central School District has been designated as one of 583 Best Communities for Music Education in the United States by the NAMM Foundation.

The BCME program of the NAMM Foundation recognizes and celebrates schools and districts for their support and commitment to music education.

The NAMM (National Association of Music Merchants) Foundation is a nonprofit organization with the mission of advancing active participation in music making across the lifespan by supporting scientific research, philanthropic giving and public service programs from the international music products industry.

Now in its 19th year, BCME program recognizes outstanding efforts by teachers, administrators, parents, students and community leaders who work together to ensure access to music learning for all students as part of the school curriculum.

“We are so fortunate here in the Newark Central School District to be able to provide such an amazing musical education to our students,” said Cindy Briggs, K-12 Music Department Leader. “From Pre-K all the way through the secondary grades, it is such an important, creative learning outlet for our students. But it would not be possible without the support of our District administration, Board of Education, colleagues and community who recognize the value of the arts in education and the difference music it makes students’ lives. The NCS D Music Department is very grateful for this recognition.”



The NCSD received this prestigious designation again after the NCSD music department completed a detailed questionnaire about funding, graduation requirements, music class participation, instruction time, facilities, support for the music program and other factors in the community that affect access to music education for all students.

The Music Research Institute at the University of Kansas verifies responses with district officials and advisory organizations review the data.

Briggs credited Perkins School Music teacher Maria Walton with doing the lion's share of work to prepare the application.

"Maria did all the leg work again this year and it is very time consuming," she said.

"The schools and districts we recognize this year – both new and repeat honorees – represent a diverse group of urban, rural and suburban districts and demographics," said Mary Luehrsen of The NAMM Foundation. "Along with a strong commitment to music education, there are two common traits that each program shares: consistent funding that anchors music education as part of the core curriculum and music programs that are located in communities where music education is viewed as a jewel of the school system. Parents, administrators and community members are proud of these local music programs and attend them regularly."

Research studies continue to demonstrate the physical, cognitive and social benefits of music making. Students who are involved in a school-based music program are not only more likely to graduate high school and attend college; also, only a few years of musical training early in life improves how the brain processes sound, even later in life. Social benefits include conflict resolution, teamwork skills and learning how to give and receive constructive criticism.

"Music and the arts are a critical component of the core curriculum, and strong community support and involvement in the arts helps build an even stronger foundation for student success in those areas of study and beyond," said KU researcher and professor Christopher Johnson. "Along with contributing to improved graduation rates and academic success, students in quality music programs are consistently more proficient in other subjects and develop many ancillary life-long skills. We have all noticed how the most involved music students are also exceptional critical thinkers and good listeners, able to persist through all kinds of adversities. The benefits of a strong music program extend far beyond the program itself, though the primary benefit will always be the unparalleled joys that good music brings to peoples' lives."

Palmyra-Macedon Central School District and Wayne Central School District in Wayne County also received the designation, as did the Honeoye Central School District and Honeoye Falls-Lima Central in Ontario County.

Seven Monroe County school districts _ Brighton Central, East Irondequoit Central, Penfield Central, Pittsford Central, Rush-Henrietta, Webster Central and West Irondequoit _ also received NAMM's BCME designation.

Briggs, once again, commended the entire music department staff for its great work. The staff and their responsibilities include:

- **Robert Humphrey:** Also directs Concert Band, Wind Ensemble and Jazz Band. He directs "Downbeat" the Pit Band for the NHS musicals; and gives grades 9-12 instrumental lessons.

- **Kate Flock:** NHS vocal music teacher who also directs Mixed Chorus, Concert Choir and Vocal Jazz. She gives grades 9-12 vocal lessons and is the musical director for the NHS musicals.

- **Mike Ciranni:** NHS television production teacher who also teaches Music In Our Lives, Audio Production and teaches general music at Newark Middle School.

- **Rebekah Valerio:** NMS instrumental music teacher who directs sixth, seventh and eighth grade band and jazz band and gives grades 6-8 instrumental lessons.

- **Brooke Hartpence:** NMS Vocal Music teacher who directs sixth, seventh and eighth grade chorus and teaches grades 6-8 general music.

- **Cindy Briggs:** Kelley School instrumental music teacher who directs Beginning Band, Continuing Band, Bucket Brigade and gives grades 4-5 instrumental lessons.

- **Libby Brozik:** Kelley School vocal music teacher who directs third, fourth and fifth grade chorus; teaches grades 3-5 general music.

• Mary Lou Bonnell: Lincoln School general music teacher who directs the 2nd grade Holiday Performance ;and also provides K-12 music therapy.

• Maria Walton: Perkins School general music teacher.

In addition to music instruction provided daily by music staff and many music performances throughout the school year, Briggs highlighted some of the music-related activities the NCSD Music Department is connected with:

- Homecoming
- Memorial Day Ceremony
- Bucket Brigade participates in Fairville Parade
- Veteran's Day Ceremony
- Eastview Mall holiday performances
- Performances for adjudication at NYSSMA majors
- Participation in junior and senior high-level ensembles at the Hochstein School of Music in downtown Rochester.
- The Rochester Philharmonic Orchestra Holiday performance each December
- The ELENBE awards for the Performing Arts that are presented in May
- Community parades
- The Kelley School Veteran's Day Celebration each November
- The High School Veteran's Day Concert and reception
- Rotary Club performances
- The Newark High School & Newark Middle School musicals each Spring
- The Lincoln School Second Grade Holiday Performance
- The Lincoln School Field Day
- Lincoln School "Farewell Fridays"
- "The Young Americans" outreach tour and group workshops at NCSD
- Cabaret Night and Jazz Fest
- Chamber of Commerce performances
- Newark students participating in the RPO Holiday Pops Festival Chorus
- The Rochester International Jazz Festival performance
- Kelley School RPO field trips to the Eastman Theatre
- St. Michael's Family Festival performances each year
- Representation in All-County
- Representation in Area All-State
- Representation at the state level in Conference All-State
- Representation at the Regional level in All-Eastern
- Participation in local and state sponsored solo festivals
- Evaluation of ensembles at the State level

"Newark Central School District's receiving NAMM's Best Communities for Music Education designation for the sixth year in a row is once again, a truly well deserved honor for everyone in our music department," Superintendent Matt Cook said. "It is also commendable because our talented staff engages hundreds of students, parents and other community members every year who contribute in so many ways to make it a great success."

