



Clarke County
School District
Better Together

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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‘BEST COMMUNITIES FOR MUSIC EDUCATION’; DISTRICT HONORED FOR ITS SUPERIOR ACCESS AND TEACHING

Designation Earned for 9th Consecutive Year!

April 22, 2021

(ATHENS, GA)- The Clarke County School District (CCSD) has again been honored as one of the *Best Communities for Music Education* from [The NAMM Foundation](#) for outstanding commitment to music education. CCSD has received this national recognition every year since 2013.

Over the last 22 years, the *Best Communities for Music Education* designation has been awarded to districts that demonstrate outstanding achievement to provide music access and education to all students. To qualify, CCSD provided detailed information about funding, graduation requirements, music class participation, instruction time, facilities, and support for the music programs.

Dan Smith, CCSD Curriculum Coordinator of Fine Arts, agrees with local rock legends Widespread Panic that art education, and in particular music education, is integral to the overall education and advancement of children. “Art allows for personal expression, appreciation of ideas, celebration of cultural awareness, sharing of emotions, and gives purpose to life. Widespread Panic agrees with research findings that art education supports more traditional academic subjects as well as being a worthy pursuit in its own right,” states Smith.

“There is no question that music education is essential to educating the whole child, and our programs are fortunate to have the support of our community and partners,” Smith said. “We thank AthFest Educates, Widespread Panic’s *Tunes for Tots*, the University of Georgia, HEART Music, and countless others for continuing to value and sustain Arts Education in CCSD.”

The *Best Communities for Music Education Award* also recognized CCSD for its role in leading the way with learning opportunities as outlined in the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), the replacement for the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB). ESSA recommends music and the arts as essential elements of a well-rounded education for all children.

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Our Vision: Building a culture of high expectations and equity in which all students grow academically and socially to improve our community and our world.
Our Mission: The Clarke County School District is an ambitious community of learners in a diverse and culturally rich county. We are committed to equity and excellence through the implementation of rigorous standards in a safe and supportive environment — on every campus, in every classroom, and for every child.