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## NEWS RELEASE FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### **Kimberly Area School District Named One of the Nation's Best Communities for Music Education**

Kimberly is one of only 20 Wisconsin school districts to receive distinction

**Kimberly, Wis. – May 8, 2018** – The [Kimberly Area School District](http://www.kimberly.k12.wi.us) (KASD) has been honored with the Best Communities for Music Education designation from [The National Association of Music Merchants \(NAMM\) Foundation](http://www.namm.org) for its outstanding commitment to music education. [KASD is one of only 583](#) of districts across the nation to receive this prestigious award in 2018.

The Best Communities for Music Education designation is awarded to districts that demonstrate outstanding achievement in efforts to provide music access and education to all students. To qualify for the Best Communities designation, the Kimberly Area School District 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.

“One of our music department's primary goals is to provide high-quality music experiences for our students,” said Craig Hietpas, band teacher at [J.R. Gerritts Middle School](#). “Our Board of Education and administration understand the arts are an important component of a quality school district and provide the support necessary for a thriving music program.”

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This award recognizes that the Kimberly Area School District is leading the way with learning opportunities as outlined in the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). The legislation guides implementation in the states and replaces the 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.

“The arts are a priority in our District and I am proud of our vocal and instrumental teachers who are committed to providing opportunities for our students to reach their potential,” said Dr. Robert Mayfield, Superintendent of the Kimberly Area School District. “This award belongs to our entire community for providing music education opportunities for students of all ages.”

Research into music education continues to demonstrate educational/cognitive and social skill benefits for children who make music. A series of landmark studies by scientists and researchers at Northwestern University found a link between students in community music programs and life-long academic success, including higher high school graduation rates and college attendance. Another study from the University discovered that early exposure to music education improves how the brain processes and assimilates sounds, a trait that lasts well into adulthood.

Beyond the Northwestern research, other studies have indicated that music education lays the foundation for individual excellence in group settings, creative problem solving and flexibility in work situations, as well as learning how to give and receive constructive criticism in order to excel.

A 2015 study supported by The NAMM Foundation, [“Striking A Chord,”](#) 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](http://www.nammfoundation.org).

### **About the Kimberly Area School District**

The Kimberly Area School District is a progressive public school district committed to providing the best possible education available to students. Its responsibility is to help lead the way in developing well-rounded students and future citizens. The District wants every student to be given the opportunity to reach their potential through academics, the arts and co-curricular activities. It encompasses approximately 17 square miles and serves over 5,100 students in one 4K center, four elementary schools (5K-4), two intermediate schools (5-6), one middle school (7-8) and one high school (9-12). To learn more about the Kimberly Area School District, call (920)788-7900 or visit [www.kimberly.k12.wi.us](http://www.kimberly.k12.wi.us).