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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Chris Behrens, Beloit Memorial High School Band Director, Named a Quarterfinalist for the 2021 Music Educator Award Presented by the Recording Academy and Grammy Museum

Beloit, Wisconsin, June 10 – The School District of Beloit is happy to share the news the Mr. Chris Behrens, Beloit Memorial High School Band Director, is a quarterfinalist for the National 2021 Music Educator Award presented by the Recording Academy and Grammy Museum.

WHAT: The Music Educator Award was established to recognize current educators (kindergarten through college, public and private schools) who have made a significant and lasting contribution to the field of music education and who demonstrate a commitment to the broader cause of maintaining music education in the schools. A joint partnership and presentation of the Recording Academy and GRAMMY Museum, the recipient will be recognized during GRAMMY® Week 2021.

WHO: A total of 216 music teachers from 199 cities nation-wide have been announced as quarterfinalists for the Music Educator Award™ presented by the Recording Academy® and GRAMMY Museum®. In total, nearly 2,000 initial nominations were submitted.

Mr. Chris Behrens, Beloit Memorial High School Band Director, is one of the quarterfinalists. “This is a remarkable honor for Mr. Behrens. He is so deserving of this recognition,” said School District of Beloit Interim Superintendent Sue Green. “He is so passionate about his work with his students; he sets the bar very high for himself, his students and our District.”

Additional Information: Each year, one recipient is selected from 10 finalists and recognized for their remarkable impact on students' lives. The eighth annual honoree will be flown to Los Angeles to attend the 63rd Annual GRAMMY Awards® and a range of GRAMMY Week events.

The nine additional finalists will receive a \$1,000 honorarium, and the schools of all 10 finalists will receive matching grants. Fifteen semifinalists will receive a \$500 honorarium with matching school grants. The matching grants provided to the schools are made possible by the generosity and support of the GRAMMY Museum’s Education Champion Ford Motor Company Fund. In addition, the American

The School District of Beloit is located in Beloit, Wisconsin. Serving 6,800 students and operating six elementary schools, four intermediate schools, one high school and one alternative school, the School District of Beloit is committed to excellence and diversity. We are preparing and inspiring every student to succeed in life and contribute to an ever-changing world.

Choral Directors Association, National Association for Music Education, NAMM Foundation, and National Education Association support this program through outreach to their constituencies. Semifinalists will be announced in September.

Several of Behrens students were contacted to share their thoughts on his recognition and were happy to respond. "The music program at Beloit Memorial has built a great reputation not only in Beloit, but across the country thanks to Mr. Behrens' dedication," said Kai Wong, sophomore at Beloit Memorial High School. "The music program has and continues to have a positive impact on Beloit. I never really thought I'd get so deeply interested in something like I did with jazz this year. I can't thank Mr. Behrens enough for helping teach me this incredible music."

Beloit Memorial High School senior Piper Mitchell agrees with Wong, "As a member of Beloit Memorial Jazz Orchestra, I can say that we have accomplished and experienced so much as a band under the direction of Mr. Behrens." She continued, "he sacrifices a lot of his personal time, including many times throughout the year when he spends his entire weekend taking us to competitions and festivals that expose us to the talents of our peer musicians, gives us feedback from other musical professionals, and provides us opportunities to play to the next level."

"Mr. Behrens is an inspirational leader for all the musicians he instructs. Leading our band as a national finalist nine out of the last 10 years is an exceptional accomplishment. So, it comes to no surprise that he has received this recognition," shared Beloit Memorial High School senior Jack Johnson. "As a member of the Beloit Memorial Jazz program, I have learned the value of work, the value of friendship and unity, the value of aspiring to goals, and have found a lifelong passion."

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