



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

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Brighton, Hilton School Districts Among "Best Communities for Music Education"

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National Association of Music Merchants Foundation Honors School Districts Nationwide with Strong Dedication to Music Programs

The NAMM Foundation today announced the results of its tenth annual "Best Communities for Music Education" survey, which acknowledges schools and districts across the U.S. for their commitment and support of music education in schools. As the economy challenges

state and local school budgets to adequately support education, the 124 school districts named by the NAMM Foundation demonstrate the unwavering commitment to provide music education for their students. The NAMM Foundation's mission is to ensure that all children have access to quality music education programs that encourage lifelong participation in music making.

This year's roster of musical schools represents 21 states with a record amount of communities from New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania and Texas. A total of 29 communities are new to the roster. The complete list of "Best Communities" is appended below.

"The potential of music to help children reach their full development is understood by the school districts represented in this year's survey results," said Mary Luehrsen, executive director, NAMM Foundation. "We celebrate these communities that are committed to providing access to music education programs and bettering the lives of their students."

The 2009 survey, which opened on Thursday January 15, and ended Friday, March 13, was available to all districts nationwide. This year, teachers and school district administrators, representing communities across the country, participated in the Web-based survey. The districts were measured across curricular and programmatic criteria as well as public support of their music programs. The survey was developed and administered by The Institute for Educational Research and Public Service, an affiliate of the University of Kansas.

Participants in the survey answered detailed questions about funding, graduation requirements, music class participation, instruction time, facilities, support for the music program, and other relevant factors in their communities' music education programs. The responses were verified with district officials, and advisory organizations reviewed the data.

Throughout the survey's ten years, many districts have reported that making the "Best Communities" list has had a positive effect on their ability to preserve music for their students amid budget cuts in arts programs.

In conducting the annual survey, the NAMM Foundation is joined by advisory organizations in the fields of music and education including, Americans for the Arts (www.americansforthearts.org), League of American Orchestras (www.americanorchestras.org), The Mr. Holland's Opus Foundation (www.mhopus.org), The Metropolitan Opera Guild (www.operaed.org), Music for All (www.musicforall.org), Music Teachers National Association (www.mtna.org), National Guild of Community Schools of the Arts (www.nationalguild.org), National PTA (www.pta.org), Yamaha Corporation of America and VH1 Save The Music Foundation (www.vh1savethemusic.com). The survey was conducted by The Institute for Educational Research and Public Service of Lawrence, KS, an affiliate of the University of Kansas.