



Ballard High School Receives National Recognition 2019 & 2020

Ballard High School has been honored with the SupportMusic Merit Award from The NAMM Foundation for its outstanding commitment to music education.

The SupportMusic Merit Award recognizes individual schools that demonstrate outstanding achievement in efforts to provide music access and education to all students.

To qualify for the SupportMusic Merit Award, Ballard High School answered detailed questions about funding, graduation requirements, music class participation, instruction time, facilities, support for the music-making programs. Responses were verified with school officials and reviewed by The Music Research Institute at the University of Kansas.

“The well rounded music program at Ballard High School provides not only a venue for students to dig deep and express their art; it also sets students up with an experience in entrepreneurship and growth-mindset. Our music department is a place where truly the sky is the limit. The honor of receiving the SMMA designation will lend our program legitimacy and national spotlight—the satisfaction of knowing that we have gone through a rigorous selection process and are found to be eligible is assurance that we are indeed providing a solid music education to our students.”
Elizabeth Fortune (Director of Orchestras)

This award recognizes that **Ballard High School** is leading the way with learning opportunities as outlined in the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). The legislation guides policy 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.

“Ballard music has given me so many amazing experiences and opportunities, a reason to get up early every morning, and a family to grow into throughout high school. I will be forever grateful for my time in the Ballard Performing Arts programs and know it will continue to impact me for the rest of my life.” Ava Lim (Senior Student)

“Ballard High School is fortunate to have an active parent community who support the programs with financial and volunteer assistance to ensure that the students receive the richest arts experience possible. We are a strong, active and collaborative community of like-minded people who believe in equal access and opportunity for all families. Our program is unique in that all the directors work closely together as a team to benefit all the performing arts students and not just their specific groups. Because of this collaborative and supportive approach, it has built a strong community of parents and students who support the greater vision of an excellent performing arts program. Through student and community fundraisers and donations we make it

a priority to provide every interested student with the opportunity to participate through scholarships, coaching support, and loaner instruments. It is a great honor to receive the Support Music Merit Award for the second year in a row because it acknowledges the combined efforts and dedication of our administrators, music directors, parents, students and community members. It spotlights both publicly and nationally, their continued support for excellence in performing arts education here at Ballard High School. This support and commitment continues through both good times and challenging times whether it is a school district fiscal crisis or a global pandemic like we are experiencing now.” Patti Kashiwa (BPA Board member)

Research into music education continues to demonstrate educational/cognitive and social skill benefits for children who make music. After two years of music education, research found that participants showed more substantial improvements in how the brain processes speech and reading scores than their less-involved peers and that students who are involved in music are not only more likely to graduate high school, but also to attend college as well. Everyday listening skills are stronger in musically-trained children than in those without music training. Significantly, listening skills are closely tied to the ability to: perceive speech in a noisy background, pay attention, and keep sounds in memory. Later in life, individuals who took music lessons as children show stronger neural processing of sound; young adults and even older adults who have not played an instrument for up to 50 years show enhanced neural processing compared to their peers. Not to mention, social benefits include conflict resolution, teamwork skills, and how to give and receive constructive criticism.

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.

The Ballard High School Music & Theatre programs are lauded throughout the Northwest and beyond for its high level of musical and performance excellence. Ballard provides one of the most complete high school music programs in Seattle- offering instruction in voice, wind and string instruments spanning jazz to classical.

About The NAMM Foundation

The NAMM Foundation is a nonprofit supported in part by the National Association of Music Merchants and its approximately 10,400 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.

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