



Press Release

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

March 27, 2017

**The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts  
announces**

**Lexington County School District One  
Board of Trustees  
of Lexington, South Carolina  
Receives \$10,000 Kennedy Center and NSBA Award**

**National Award Recognizes Outstanding School Board Support of the Arts**

(WASHINGTON)—The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts today announced the Lexington County School District One Board of Trustees in Lexington, South Carolina, has received the 29th annual Kennedy Center and National School Boards Association (NSBA) Award. The award, which includes a \$10,000 prize, was presented on Saturday, March 25, at the NSBA's Annual Conference in Denver, Colorado. Since 1989, this prestigious national award has recognized individual school boards for their outstanding support of arts education. The Lexington district was chosen from nominees around the country for its support of high-quality arts education.

“Through our work in schools across the country we see that arts learning is a crucial component of every child’s educational journey with proven results in increased student engagement and academic success,” said Mario R. Rossero, Senior Vice President of Education at the Kennedy Center. “We are pleased to recognize the Lexington County School District One Board of Trustees for its commitment to providing a quality arts education for all students.”

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The award honors the work of the 2016 school board, led by Board Chair Debra L. Knight, Vice Chair G. Edwin Harmon, Secretary Cynthia S. Smith, Sandra Backman, Jean N. Haggard, Dr. Bradley R. Pitts, and Dr. Brent M. Powers. The Lexington County School District One Board of Trustees has shown a strong commitment to the endurance of the arts by allocating a significant percentage of the district budget to the arts, as well as moving the part-time Fine Arts Coordinator position to a full-time position. The district has also assembled a District Leadership STEAM team; launched a Center for Media Arts, Design, and Production; expanded arts opportunities with summer music, theater, and dance camps at no cost to participating students; and lengthened instructional time for band and strings programs.

The Board cultivates strong partnerships within its community and at the state level that continue to help enrich its own arts programming. The Columbia Museum of Art, for example, provides free professional development for the district's teachers and facilitates field trips for students. The board also works with the district and the Lexington Medical Center to exhibit student art in the *Art of Healing* exhibit. Additionally, the Town of Lexington consistently partners with the district to provide opportunities to showcase the artistic talents of students. The Lexington County School District One Board of Trustees intends to use its award to continue funding and enhancing arts education opportunities districtwide.

Each year, a national review panel selects the recipient school board from a pool of nominees from across the country. School boards selected for this national honor must demonstrate support for four of the five core disciplines in arts education programs: visual arts, music, theater, dance, and media arts. Instruction and programming must be available for all students throughout the district. The ways in which the school board develops collaborative partnerships with the cultural resources available in the community are also an important consideration in reviewing nominations.

### **About Education at the Kennedy Center**

The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts is the national champion for arts learning and creativity. Committed to increasing opportunities for all people to participate in, learn about, and understand the arts, [Education at the Kennedy Center](#) offers programs and events that strive to reflect the nation and communities and that are accessible and inclusive for all. From performances and exhibits on the Center's stages and in the community, to

classroom and community partnerships, including the recent addition of the President’s Committee on the Arts and Humanities Turnaround Arts initiative, to online resources accessible nearly anywhere, the Center serves the burgeoning artist, the exploring student of any age, the teacher and teaching artist, and even the local and national infrastructure—any person interested in arts learning and utilizing the arts for positive change. As an essential component of the living memorial to President Kennedy, the Center’s Education utilizes the arts to embrace the ideals of service, justice, freedom, courage, and gratitude, and to activate and support the Citizen Artists in all our audiences. For more information, please visit [kennedy-center.org/education/](http://kennedy-center.org/education/).

**About Lexington County School District One**

Lexington County School District One serves more than 25,600 students from Pre-Kindergarten to Grade 12 with more than 3,700 employees and 30 schools.

For more information about the Kennedy Center visit [www.kennedy-center.org](http://www.kennedy-center.org).

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