

MEMORANDUM

To: All District and School-Level Administrators and Teachers
From: Dr. Marcia Oglesby, Director, Grants & Partnerships
Through: Mrs. Jennifer Caracciolo, Interim Chief DCEIP
Date: November 14, 2025
Subject: *Funding Focus Friday:* NAMM's Best Communities for Music Education Award 

The [National Association of Music Merchants \(NAMM\)](#) Foundation's [Best Communities for Music Education \(BCME\) Award](#) recognizes schools that prioritize music education for all students. A BCME designation elevates your ensemble's work, strengthens advocacy with families and partners, and helps sustain staffing, schedules, and student access. Beginning in 2026, honorees may also qualify for Opportunity Awards of up to \$5,000 to support underfunded programs. **Applications are due by January 31, 2026**, with winners announced in April 2026.

Reviewers will look for evidence of equitable access, including course offerings and participation among student groups, as well as accurate data on enrollment, staffing, and budgets, along with community support, from a district administrator, fine arts supervisor, or music educator.

Five ready-to-fund ideas:

- *Feeder-Pattern "JumpStart" Bridge:* Summer fundamentals camp offers beginner kits and transportation to help reduce 5th-6th grade drop-off & boost middle school ensemble enrollment.
- *Contemporary Ensembles & Beat making:* Controllers, turntables, loop stations, and arranging software to launch hip-hop, DJ, a cappella, or producer-tracks tied to student voice and culture.
- *Instrument Equity & Repair:* Restore dormant inventory and add high-demand loaners (low-brass, violins, clarinets) to eliminate waitlists at Title I campuses and boost beginner retention.
- *Adaptive & Inclusive Access:* Switch-adapted instruments/stands, accessible notation/ear-training platforms, and targeted PD so students with IEPs/504s can perform and be assessed equitably.
- *Artist-in-Residence & Community Clinicians:* Short residencies with local symphony, jazz, HBCU marching clinicians, and a culminating joint performance.

More information & application links:

- BCME Program overview: <https://www.nammfoundation.org/WHAT-WE-DO/BCME>
- Download the 2026 application (PDF): <https://www.nammfoundation.org/sites/default/files/2026BCMEDistrictApplication.pdf>
- Apply online: https://wolfbrown.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_3vHn3wIIVRf6CF0
- NAMM contact: Bethany Gilbert @ Bethanyg@namm.org

Remember to follow the [DCSD Grant Guidelines](#) and work with [Grants & Partnerships](#) to coordinate the next steps. We are here to support you in shaping your ideas and strengthening your submissions. To begin your application, have questions answered, or get experienced advice, email us at grantsandpartnerships@dekalbschoolsga.org.

[Dr. Marcia Oglesby](#), Director
[Dr. Donald Porter](#), Lead Grant Strategist
[Ms. Tanya Arrington](#), Strategic Partners Manager

[Mrs. Libritta Anderson Griffin](#), Coordinator II
[Ms. Demetric Crittle](#), Coordinator
[Ms. Winona Maolud](#), Administrative Assistant

Need more grant inspiration and options? The complete, searchable Monthly Education Grants Alert (*MEGA*) for November 2025 is now available [HERE](#).

Good luck!