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(Pasadena, CA) -- The Newport-Mesa School District was recently nominated for the Kennedy Center Alliance for Arts Education Network and the National School Boards Association Award and recognized as a finalist in the national competition. The nomination and commendation from the Kennedy Center reflects the district's outstanding support of high quality arts education.

The California Alliance for Arts Education has the opportunity to submit one nomination annually from California to the Kennedy Center Arts Education Network and the National School Boards Association. Laurie Schell, executive director of the California Alliance for Arts Education, says: *"Newport Mesa Unified School District has made a strong and ongoing commitment to provide quality instructional programs in the visual and performing arts for all 22,000 students in the district. Further, the district has an excellent track record of working closely with community arts organizations. The Board of Education, Newport Mesa Unified School District, is well deserving of national recognition. They have demonstrated an unwavering commitment to standards-based instruction in the visual and performing arts for all students."*

Among their various notable initiatives in support of arts education, Newport Mesa has provided for music instruction during the school day, and ensured quality instruction by requiring that all music teachers earn their CLAD. The district also shows exemplary efforts to reach students with special needs, for example by including providing specialized music courses using violins for hearing impaired students.

The Orange County Performing Arts Center is one of several community organizations that partner with the Newport-Mesa district to deliver educational opportunities for students and professional development for teachers. In recommending Newport-Mesa for recognition, Nancy Warzer-Brady of the Orange County Performing Arts Center said, *"Newport-Mesa Unified School District students are fortunate to receive instruction by talented arts specialists that are valued by the Board of Education. Their arts instruction is further enhanced with performing arts assemblies and in-depth residency experiences at their schools presented by the Orange County Performing Arts Center's roster of professional teaching artists. It is truly an honor to work with such wonderful colleagues to enrich the lives of our community through the performing arts."*

**More about the California Alliance for Arts Education:** *The Alliance is the only statewide organization that brings together all primary constituencies for arts education, including arts organizations, K-12 teachers, professional teacher associations, state and local education departments, professional development providers, parents, PTAs and community leaders. Our shared mission is to promote, support and advocate visual and performing arts education for preschool through post-secondary students in California schools.*