



NEWS RELEASE

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Basalt Band Director Reaches Quarterfinals for National Grammy in the Schools Music Educator Award

Basalt, Colo... The 2016-17 school year has been a big one for the Basalt band program, and it just got even bigger with the announcement that band director Nick Lenio has made the quarterfinals cut for the nationwide Grammy in the Schools Music Educator of the Year Award.

Lenio, who is one of 290 music teachers from 264 cities across 41 states, is one of only two middle/high school band directors chosen from the state of Colorado. The Music Educator Award is presented by The Recording Academy and the GRAMMY Foundation. In total, more than 3,300 initial nominations were submitted from all 50 states. The award recognizes educators who have made a significant and lasting contribution to the field of music education and who demonstrate a commitment to maintaining music education in the schools.

This announcement caps an exciting year for the Basalt band program, which at the middle school has a student participation level of over 50%. Most school bands average around 20% participation rates or less. Recently twelve BMS students were selected for the regional honor band, four of whom received first place honors as the most advanced student on their instrument in Northwestern Colorado. Even at the high school level the band program is gaining recognition. The new BHS StreetHorns group, which performs with no sheet music at community events like First Fridays in Carbondale, was recently invited to perform at Jazz Aspen Snowmass' 2016 Labor Day Festival.

"Nick has worked so hard and brings his passion and enthusiasm for music into the classroom," says BMS principal Jennifer Ellsperman. "When you talk to kids and parents about the band program, you hear about how fun band is and how much they're learning. It's amazing how many students are even trying multiple instruments because of Nick's encouragement and work. His new "Play it Forward" program allows students to challenge themselves at an even higher level by learning music from the grade level above. We've always known he's a world-class instructor and it's great to see him honored."

Mr. Lenio now will submit a series of videos highlighting his work at Basalt Middle School and Basalt High School. Semi-finalists will be announced in September, and the overall winner will get to attend the 2017 Grammy Awards.

For the Grammy in the Schools press release, visit:

<http://www.grammyintheschools.com/features/290-quarterfinalists-selected-2017-music-educator-award>

For more information or a photograph of the Basalt band or Nick Lenio, contact: Allison Johnson, Basalt Middle School Communications Liaison, at (970) 309-5485 or ajohnson@rfschools.com.

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