

Putting the "A" Back in Bay - A is for the Arts

This week, as we continue to focus on the five pillars of putting the "A" back in Bay, I'm thrilled to highlight one of the most powerful and unifying forces within our community: the Arts. The arts knit us together, connecting students, families, and community members in ways that transcend words. They inspire, heal, and remind us of the beauty and depth of human expression.

We are incredibly fortunate that Bay District Schools has outstanding facilities like the Gretchen Nelson Scott Fine Arts Center at A. Crawford Mosley High School and the Barbara W. Nelson Fine Arts Center on the campus of Bay High School. These centers are not just buildings—they're places where creativity thrives and where our students and the community come together to celebrate talent, dedication, and passion. Our deepest gratitude goes to the Nelson family for their support and vision, allowing these spaces to be the heartbeat of the arts in Bay County.

Our students bring these stages to life, whether they're performing in high school theater productions, showcasing their talents in district-wide concerts, or performing in ensembles of all kinds. And we love opening these centers to the entire community, sharing the brilliance and creativity of our young people with friends, families, and neighbors. From the beginner musician to the accomplished high school performer, our students pour their hearts into their art, developing confidence, resilience, and a lifelong appreciation for creative expression.

Among the many who inspire us is Kenny Kirkland, our 2023-2024 Bay District Schools Teacher of the Year. Kenny, from Patronis Elementary, has dedicated his entire career to sharing his love for music, guiding students to discover their own voices and appreciate the beauty of song. He is a shining example of what "right" looks like in the arts—a teacher whose passion and commitment ignite the joy of learning in every student he teaches. Kenny's work reminds us of the profound impact the arts can have on a young person's life and the incredible dedication of our teachers who make it all possible.

In Bay District Schools, the arts are more than just programs; they are a vital part of who we are. They teach our students to communicate, empathize, and connect with others. They open doors to creativity and foster a spirit of collaboration, joy, and understanding. And this wouldn't be possible without our community's unwavering support. Your enthusiasm and presence in our audiences, your encouragement, and your dedication help our students shine brighter and reach higher.

Thank you for being an essential part of our arts community here in Bay. Together, we are putting the "A" back in Bay, building a district where the arts continue to inspire and bring us closer. Your support fuels our students' dreams and makes their achievements possible. We are deeply grateful for your role in shaping a future where the arts are celebrated, cherished, and passed down to the next generation.

Runs 12/12/24

S: 11/5/24

Together, we are making Bay District Schools a place where creativity flourishes and where students grow into well-rounded, expressive, and connected members of our community. Thank you for standing with us and for sharing in the joy of the arts.