



For Immediate Release
January 18, 2019

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Media Release

Wando Band Wins National Advocacy Awards

Wando High School

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Mount Pleasant, SC – Wando High School's Marching Band is known for winning awards for their performances on the field; they recently scored a program-best sixth place finish in the 2018 Bands of America Grand Nationals. However, the students, staff, and community members that make up the Wando Band have also built a reputation for serving the community, and that "performance" off the field has led to more awards.

The Warriors learned this week they received two Advocacy in Action awards from [Music for All](#), a not-for-profit national music education organization. This first-year initiative by Music for All honors programs from around the nation in the areas of fundraising and sponsorship, recruitment and retention, marketing and promotion, parent involvement, community engagement, and decision-maker interaction. Wando won Gold Awards in the categories of community service project (tie for first place) and decision-maker interaction (first place).

The Warriors picked up the Gold Award in the community service category for their project, "[School Supply Drive for Lowcountry Orphan Relief](#)." During the band's camp in August, the student leadership team decided to create a project that would benefit other students in Charleston County. The students decided that a school supply drive for the Lowcountry Orphan Relief (LOR) would have biggest impact. For the entire week of band camp, students set up bins around the band field to collect supplies. Students even collected supplies from their neighbors as well as asked for donations on Instagram and Twitter. By the end of the week, the bins were filled with hundreds of notebooks, glue, pencils, pens, backpacks, school clothing, monetary donations, and other supplies for LOR.

The students and parent volunteers sorted and delivered the bins of supplies to the LOR the next week, enabling the organization to provide much-needed items for children in the area. Band members explained they were thrilled to give back to the community that has supported them.

"With all the community has done for the Wando bands, it just felt right to give back a little," stated Austin Setser, a senior at Wando High School.

Wando's honor in the decision-maker interaction category came from "March to P.E. in South Carolina." Sponsors and parents of the band, including Dr. Don Johnson, started reaching out to state senators and representatives in 2016 to ask that they consider marching band count as a physical education credit for high school diplomas. Through conversations with Senator Vincent Sheheen (D-Kershaw), the Wando band community learned there was a 2016 bill that passed in the State Senate that could award P.E. credit for band, but did not make it through the State House of Representatives. Over the course of the next two years, advocates worked with lawmakers to revive the bill. With help and support from South Carolina Band Directors' Association President Leah Corde and Vice President Joe Gullede, the bill was signed into law on May 18, 2018.

The Bands of Wando are under the direction of Bobby Lambert, Lanie Radecke, and Jeff Handel. Michael Gray is the Program Coordinator for the Wando Marching Band. The Bands of Wando continue to thank the community for their support, along with the Charleston County School District, the Town of Mount Pleasant, its Harmony Sponsors, the Bands of Wando Foundation, parents, and alumni. For more information visit WandoBands.org.

For more information on how you can support the Wando Band, please visit www.crowdrise.com/wandoband.

For more about the Warriors' performance, contact E.C. Setser, the Wando Band's publicity representative, at (843) 345-1374 or ecsetser@yahoo.com.

Photo Captions

School Supply Drive Photo #1

(L to R) A.J. Johnston, Savannah Mellichamp, and Alexis Clark

School Supply Drive Photo #2

(L to R) Austin Setser, Alaina Honig, Jordan Harder, and Katie Bezanson

School Supply Drive Photo #3

(L to R) Allison Fister, Rayshard Cash, Charlie Worrall, and Anna Rae Hammes

P.E. Bill Photos #1 and #2

Band parents and advocates at the South Carolina State House to speak to the General Assembly

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About the Charleston County School District

Charleston County School District (CCSD) is the second largest school system in South Carolina representing a unique blend of urban, suburban, and rural schools that span 1,000 square miles along the coast. CCSD serves more than 50,000 students in 86 schools and specialized programs. With approximately 6,100 employees district-wide, CCSD is the fourth largest employer in the region.

CCSD offers a diverse, expanding portfolio of options and specialized programs, delivered through neighborhood, charter, magnet, IB (international baccalaureate), and Montessori schools, and is divided into three Learning Communities. Options include specialized programs in science, engineering and mathematics; liberal arts; music and other creative and performing arts; career and technical preparation programs; and military and other public service enterprises.