

PRESIDENTIAL ACADEMIC FITNESS AWARD

The establishment of this award was announced by the President on December 8, 1983, during a speech to the National Forum on Excellence in Education in Indianapolis, Indiana, to recognize outstanding students.

The purpose of the awards program is to recognize excellence, provide a focal point for education, and invoke grass roots support behind education reforms. The concept was modelled after the Presidential Physical Fitness Award. The award is presented to those students at the elementary, middle or junior high school, or high school level who meet the minimum criteria established for the program.

The program is administered by the Department of Education, and the students receive a colored pin and a certificate with printed facsimile signatures of the Secretary of Education and the President.

The President presented the first awards to 60 representatives of the more than 220,000 graduating high school seniors, who were recipients of the first awards, in a ceremony at the White House on May 11, 1984.

PRESIDENTIAL PHYSICAL FITNESS AWARD  
(Boys and Girls)

AND

PRESIDENTIAL SPORTS AWARD  
(Men and Women)

These two awards are sponsored by the President's Council on Physical Fitness and Sports. They were established in 1966 and their continuation has been authorized by subsequent administrations. The award programs are operated on a financially self-sustaining basis in cooperation with various national associations and governing bodies in physical education and sport. The President's Council controls program standards, but the private agencies do the printing and handle the distribution of materials.

Approximately 750,000 boys and girls earn the Presidential Physical Fitness Award each year. Most of them take the qualifying tests at their schools, but also, Jewish Community Centers, Boys' and Girls' Clubs, and some scout troops participate.

Approximately 25,000 men and women qualify for the Presidential Sports Award each year, with this number growing steadily.

In addition to the recipients receiving a citation signed by the President they receive a cloth patch and a decal on which the name of the award appears.



## WHITE HOUSE MILLENNIUM COUNCIL

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TO: Lisel Loy FAX: 62215FROM: Ellen Lovell PHONE: \_\_\_\_\_DATE: 9/29/00Number of Pages (Including Cover): 4

## MESSAGE:

*This is the only paper I have on the  
proposed awards. Thanks for your good advice.  
EML*

WHITE HOUSE MILLENNIUM COUNCIL

708 JACKSON PLACE, NW

WASHINGTON, DC 20503

The information contained in this facsimile is PRIVATE and intended for the recipient ONLY. Please call if there are any problems with our transmission.

62215



Sarah Howes  
09/29/2000 05:07:04

Record Type: Record

To: Ellen M. Lovell/WHO/EOP@EOP  
CC:  
Subject: President's Challenge for Music Achievement

Andy's message from July

----- Forwarded by Sarah Howes/WHO/EOP on 09/29/2000 05:06 PM -----



"Finch, Andy" <Andy\_Finch@ed.gov>  
07/03/2000 11:12:52 AM

Record Type: Record

To: Ellen M. Lovell/WHO/EOP, Sarah Howes/WHO/EOP  
CC:  
Subject: President's Challenge for Music Achievement

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On June 30, Secretary Riley, Terry Peterson and I met with John Mahlmann, executive director and Mike Blakeslee, associate executive director for MENC, the National Association for Music Education, along with their lobbyist.

MENC proposes a "President's Challenge for Music Achievement" award similar to the President's Challenge Youth Physical Fitness Program. Depending on the level of achievement, participants would be eligible for a certificate or a patch. Achievement would be determined by tests administered at least twice each school year by music teachers. MENC would administer the program without cost to the Department.

MENC requests that the Department of Education endorse the idea and work with the White House to make it happen.

The Department feels that the proposed award would promote recognition of music as an academic subject, motivate individual achievement, and help to get music testing into schools.

MENC also proposed an advisory President's Council for Music Achievement. The Secretary questioned the expense and difficulty of establishing such a body, and MENC agreed that it was of secondary importance to the award

itself.

The Secretary told MENC that we would work with the White House on the award proposal and, if necessary, set up another meeting.

**Palumbo & Cerrell, Inc.**

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**From:** Michael Blakeslee <MikeB@MENC.org>  
**To:** <pnc@clark.net>  
**Sent:** Thursday, July 06, 2000 9:34 AM  
**Attach:** challenge.rtf  
**Subject:** President's challenge document

Here is the document, both in this e-mail and as an attachment.

## **President's Challenge for Music Achievement**

### ***The Need***

Decision makers and the American public currently acknowledge the importance of music education. Our nation needs a system by which schoolchildren around the nation can receive recognition for their musical accomplishments and encouragement to achieve their full potential.

Every student can sing, play instruments, and learn about music if given the opportunities. With this program, MENC proposes the creation of a rich educational opportunity for our country's children. The President's Challenge for Music Achievement will be a major effort to recognize children and schools with a motivating awards program contributing to the quality of growth and development for its participants. And ultimately, the quality of our children's lives.

### ***The Method***

The best way to accomplish this is to institute a President's Challenge for Music Achievement, similar to the President's Challenge Youth Physical Fitness Program. Four levels of awards are available to those who participate: Music Participation Award; Music Achievement Award (Basic); National Music Achievement Award (Proficient); Presidential Music Achievement Award (Advanced). Depending on the level of achievement, participants will be eligible for an awards certificate or a patch. Children's progress and accomplishments through this program earn recognition not only from peers and teachers, but from parents and members of the community, too.

MENC: the National Association for Music Education is eager to work with the Secretary of Education to develop and administer such a program. We are ready to lend our expertise in the initial and ongoing organizational challenges presented by such an undertaking and to mobilize both our 25,000 student members and our 60,000 music-teacher members in every state in the nation. In practice, of course, it is those teachers who will carry out instruction and testing in their own classrooms.

### ***Administration***

The Music Achievement tests should be administered at least twice each school year, in the fall and spring. Before testing, all students should be taught the age-appropriate level of music standards. There is no limit to the number of attempts students may have on each test item. State Achievement Awards are given to the schools with the highest percentage of students earning the Presidential Music Achievement Awards.

07/06/2000

All nine National Standards for Music Education are incorporated into three areas of testing: Performing Music, Creating Music, and Responding to Music. As the organization that wrote the National Standards, MENC has already developed a set of "Performance Standards for Music" on which simple, easy-to-administer tests could be based. The tests will include explicit directions for the musical activity or skill required, time limits, whether it is for a group or individual, and success indicators.

<<challenge.rtf>>

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*Ellen will  
need to discuss  
with you.*

*Thx  
Beth*

October 2, 2000

Ms. Ellen Lovell  
Deputy Assistant to the President and  
Advisor to the First Lady on the Millenium  
White House Millennium Council

VIA FAX: (202) 395-7376

Dear Ellen:

Thanks for the time the other day. It's always a pleasure to chat with you, and my regret is that you have so much to do that we didn't get a chance to talk longer about other matters of mutual interest.

I wanted to set forth answers to some of the specifics you raised at our meeting. I hope the information I am imparting with this letter will help lead to a speedy establishment of an entity of the type we discussed.

One of the questions you raised was would it be possible to fold this into the President's Education Awards Program. After discussion with MENC, I think this is not the way to go. The reason is that the PEAP program exists to recognize individual students for general academic achievements based on measures such as GPA and test scores. It has nothing to do with specific curricular achievements. It would involve an entirely new direction which runs counter to the PEAP's reason for being.

In our discussion about the cost of an entity similar to the President's Challenge for Physical Fitness and Sport you rightly pointed out that funding would be a question needing an answer. I believe the answer lies in the fact that the existing President's Challenge on Physical Fitness and Sport is administered not by a federal agency but by the University of Indiana. MENC is ready and willing to assume the kind of role for a "President's Challenge for Music Achievement" that Indiana University now plays. In other words, it would cost the Government nothing unless it wishes to add some kind of committee or commission with a travel budget or staff time to be involved with the Program.

Another question you raised was about the inclusion of other arts. Undoubtedly the other arts could become part of this President's Challenge. As we agreed, MENC is

the largest and strongest of the various arts organizations and is in a position to move more swiftly and comprehensively as a result. It might make sense, therefore, to begin with music and then expand to the other arts, but this by no means indicates that if there was a desire to start with all the arts that it couldn't be done. It would be more complicated, but it could be done.

You had questions about the benefits of this; we believe they are as follows:

- 1) It will raise the public awareness of the benefits of music education by public and visible nationwide involvement of teachers, parents and students in rewarding achievement in this area.
- 2) It will help build critically needed support for music and arts education; think of the Meryl Streep movie *Music of the Heart*.
- 3) It will assist teachers in assessing and rewarding musical achievements of children.
- 4) By expanding the support for music education, and thereby the numbers of students involved in music education, it will have a positive impact on achievement in other academic disciplines as many studies already have shown is the case.

Would the President's Challenge for Music Achievements (and other arts if it is agreed) as proposed by MENC run counter to the manner in which other programs are run? The answer is no. PEAP is administered by private sector association experts (NAESP, NASSP) and, as noted, the President's Challenge for Physical Fitness is administered by the University of Indiana. MENC should be given the role of administering this program because it took the lead in the development of national standards and has developed a number of standard related materials for teachers thereby being in the unique position to administer such a program. Moreover, MENC can raise the necessary funds for the challenge. Finally, they are capable of following up each year's effort with appropriate teacher training through an expansion of their "strategies for teaching" materials they already have developed.

In summary, Ellen, because of MENC's national, state, and local organizational infrastructure, its involvement in the creation of standards, its ability to both fund and administer a President's Challenge, there is a terrific opportunity here for the President to announce an initiative similar to that which involves physical fitness and to which the President has favorably compared music on many occasions in the past. This is an initiative in education in which everybody would be a winner.

Best wishes.

Sincerely,



Benjamin L. Palumbo

mike Blakeslee  
bhn Muhlmann



Ellen M. Lovell  
11/01/2000 06:46:35 PM

Record Type: Record

To: Lisel Loy/WHO/EOP@EOP, Michele Ballantyne/WHO/EOP@EOP  
cc: Sarah Howes/WHO/EOP@EOP, andy\_finch@ed.gov @ inet  
Subject: music awards

Two top level meetings between the Music Educators and the Dept of Education were postponed because of the appropriations negotiations. I hope they will now be on track for next week. In the meantime you should be aware that a bill by Senator Cochran, S.2789, passed both houses. It creates a Congressional Award for the arts that goes to schools and covers all the arts, not only music. There is no national test; schools apply through the principal, a school board member, superintendent or district arts coordinator. If you need to know more while I am away, call Andy Finch at the Dept at 401-3292.

Senator Boxer wrote the President 10/19 that states - in error -- that Sec. Riley wrote to POTUS about the MENC proposal.