

# Music for All Students

## Planning Music Education Advocacy

Developed by: MENC: The National Association for Music Education

Updated by: MENC Government Relations Task Force



James T. Perry, Chair  
JoDee Marshall, Assistant Chair  
Sean D. Ambrose  
Christine Fisher  
Sam Gronseth  
Denese Odegaard  
Stuart Rauch  
Cherilyn Smith-Bidstrup  
Joseph Sugar  
Michael White  
Steven M. Zielke

Lynn M. Brinckmeyer, MENC President

MENC The National Association for  
MENC 100 **MUSIC**  
1907 - 2007 **EDUCATION**

Copyright 2007 by MENC: The National  
Association for Music Education

# Contents

---

- Introduction ..... 3
- Supporting the Arts—Lobbying Guidelines ..... 4
- The Advocacy Cycle ..... 5
  - Strategic Planning ..... 6
  - Organize..... 7
  - Analyze ..... 8
  - Seek Partnerships ..... 9
  - Act ..... 10
    - The Legislative Visit ..... 10
    - Testifying in Committee ..... 12
    - Legislative Correspondence..... 12
  - Evaluate..... 14
  - Maintain ..... 15
  - Building Relationships ..... 16
- Resources ..... 17
  - Strategic Planning
  - Organize
  - Analyze
  - Seek Partnerships
  - Act



# Introduction

---

## Our Goal

Every child in every school will receive a well-rounded education that includes a comprehensive, sequential, high-quality program of music taught by a qualified music teacher.

## What We Believe

*The Value and Quality of Arts Education: A Statement of Principles*

- **First**, every student in the nation should have an education in the arts.
- **Second**, to ensure a basic education in the arts for all students, the arts should be recognized as serious, core academic subjects.
- **Third**, as education policymakers make decisions, they should incorporate the multiple lessons of recent research concerning the value and impact of arts education.
- **Fourth**, qualified arts teachers and sequential curriculum must be recognized as the basis and core for substantive arts education for all students.
- **Fifth**, arts education programs should be grounded in rigorous instruction, provide meaningful assessment of academic progress and performance, and take their place within a structure of direct accountability to school officials, parents, and the community.
- **Sixth**, community resources that provide exposure to the arts, enrichment, and entertainment through the arts all offer valuable support and enhancement to an in-school arts education.
- **Seventh**, and finally, we offer our unified support to those programs, policies, and practitioners that reflect these principles.

[This statement of principles was signed in 1999 by ten major education associations: American Association of School Administrators, American Federation of Teachers, Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, Council for Basic Education, Council of Chief State School Officers, National Association of Elementary School Principals, National Association of Secondary School Principals, National Education Association, National Parent Teacher Association, and National School Board Association.]

## About This Guide

With the pressures exerted on the educational system due to high-stakes testing, curricular pressures, and financial issues, maintaining a strong government relations program is a priority for most music education associations around the country. Although MENC works to develop policies that address federal intentions and legislation, effective state legislative efforts are the product of grassroots networks. This guide will assist state organizations in developing those networks to support music education.

# Supporting the Arts: Lobbying Guidelines

---

A question often asked by music advocates is, “Can we lobby?” The Internal Revenue Service (IRS) allows 501(c)(3) organizations, nonprofits, to lobby on issues. However, there are some rules and regulations that must be carefully observed.

The general rule governing all nonprofits described in section 501(c)(3) of the IRS code is that “no substantial part” of an organization’s activities may be directed toward directly influencing legislation. This rule is open to wide interpretation, and nonprofit lobbying efforts can be evaluated according to the organization’s prominence, perceived impact on public opinion, and use of unpaid volunteer labor, in addition to the amount of funds directly spent on lobbying. Note the specificity of the regulation—it refers only to actions that are trying to directly influence legislation. Advocacy campaigns that generally promote music education and whose goal is to educate legislators, but that do not specifically mention a particular bill, do not fall under the IRS definition of lobbying.

501(c)(3) organizations wishing to use additional resources may choose to apply for a 501(h) election. This election allows the nonprofit to spend up to 20 percent of the first \$500,000 of its annual expenditures, 15 percent of the next \$500,000, and up to a total of \$1 million on direct lobbying. It also allows for 5 percent of the first \$500,000 of its exempt purpose expenditure, 3.75 percent of the next \$500,000, and so on, up to \$250,000 a year to be spent on grassroots lobbying.

Some state MENC Music Educator Associations (MEAs) contract with lobbying firms to assist with representation at the state level, just as MENC does at the federal level. These are appropriate uses for funds as approved by your state board of directors. The advantage of such a firm or such individuals is they bring a broad knowledge of legislative rules, how bills are actually moved through committees, and a network that will allow you access to key legislators. Depending on the background of the person or firm you hire, they may be able to assist with government agencies, which usually develop implementation rules that affect schools.

Please note that some MEAs are registered with the IRS as 501(c)(6) organization and therefore are subject to far fewer lobbying regulations.



# The Advocacy Cycle



# Strategic Planning

---

Strategic planning is often overlooked in advocacy efforts, but it is the cornerstone of success. Any organization conducting an effort to influence policy should have a larger plan in mind. What is the long-range goal? Given the current situation, what are the steps (short-term goals), if implemented, that will lead to the accomplishment of that goal? These are vital questions for each music education association conducting an advocacy campaign. The strategic planning work is essentially building a “road map” that defines where you wish to “go” and the “route” that will be taken to get there.

Typically, a small group—perhaps, the executive committee and the government relations chair—will have a preliminary conversation and explore the possibilities before taking action or asking others to assist. The small group is also useful between board meetings to provide guidance and immediate reaction to legislative information and direction as it becomes available.

When the general plan has been devised, seek full board input and approval. If the “macro” objectives are defined, it becomes easier to break down tasks to a manageable level and determine what can be accomplished in a smaller period of time, such as a legislative session. It also facilitates assessment of achievements, as well as revising plans that are not immediately successful. Advocacy failures can be closely examined to see which of the small tasks were not achieved and need to be reviewed to ensure success at the next opportunity.

Parts of the strategic plan should be shared with potential advocacy partners. Education organizations and business groups make particularly strong partners and can offer ideas about how to collaborate on broader educational topics to further strengthen the overall strategic plan and its goals.



As larger objectives are achieved, it also becomes reasonable to review the Legislative or Advocacy Strategic Plan against the largest goals to see if the policy changes that have been managed are, in fact, moving music education in the direction that is most advantageous. Most organizations will want to review strategies at the end of each legislative session to see what has been accomplished, what new policies have been adopted that will affect music education, and what the next steps should be.

# Organize

---

A typical planning committee for an advocacy project would consist of the state president, president-elect, coalition or government chair, and representatives from various sections of the state, as well as the association's executive director. Carefully select people who will be willing to do their share of the work as well as delegate responsibilities to other members in their area. No one person should have the bulk of the responsibilities.

Each committee member should create a list of people to help facilitate the various activities of this project.

While a project of this nature can seem overwhelming, it really isn't when each person takes on a relatively small responsibility. Many hands make light work, as the saying goes—and it's true! Keep the committee small, but try to recruit several volunteers.

Typical advocacy assignments might include the following:

1. Checking legislative calendars.
2. Checking legislative Web pages for specific information on legislators and education issues that may affect music.
3. Getting information to the media:
  - **Sending** press releases
  - **Writing** letters to the editor of newspapers
  - **Writing** op-ed pieces
  - **Submitting** guest editorials to TV and radio
  - **Appearing** with legislators on a TV or radio show
4. Passing school board resolutions and state/local official proclamations.
5. Planning content for legislative folders.
6. Copying materials and filling legislative folders.
7. Disseminating information to educators making visits.
8. Helping plan a reception, breakfast, or dinner to build relationships with legislators:
  - **Asking** music stores to help with funding
  - **Making** it easy for legislators to attend (location, location, location)
  - **Inviting** a very good small group to perform
  - **Taking** lots of pictures and putting them in the state magazine
  - **Sending** a copy of the magazine to legislators, enclose a copy of photo for further use in their publications
9. Helping organize student honors performance groups at the state capital (e.g. Arts Advocacy Day, Music In Our School Month, National Anthem Day).
10. Recognize that music educators are only one portion of the public that needs to be responding to any legislative initiative. Many music educators connect to booster organizations that are highly supportive and can be mobilized to participate in e-mail and phone call networks. Be sure to create a mechanism that includes these groups.

# Analyze

---

To effectively speak for legislative support for music education, you must know the educational climate in your state. Do your homework! There are several ways to accomplish this.

1. **Focus.** Stay on Topic! Stay focused on children and music education. Keep an eye on the general education debate as well.
2. **Use the Internet.** All state legislatures and departments of education have Web pages, and many legislators have their own individual Web pages. A great deal of useful information can be learned by thoroughly exploring this resource. You need to know:
  - how the legislature is organized in your state (number of members, etc.)
  - how the leadership is structured
  - how the legislative functions work (bills, committee meetings, etc.)
  - members of specific committees (education, appropriations, etc.)
  - voting records of members
  - the total education budget for your state
  - how money is allocated to schools and districts
  - what percentage of the budget is allocated for music/arts education.
3. **Use the telephone.** Ask legislators or staffers their views on certain education issues that are pertinent to music education in your state. Call the department of education to get specific information on education policy or statistics. Involve music program advisor/music specialist).
4. **Read the newspaper.** Collect newspaper articles or other written materials that describe issues, actions, and opinions.
5. **Know the arguments.** Have ready answers when presented with uncomfortable questions or disagreements.
6. **Compile data.** Suggestions include
  - Total number of students AND the number of students in music/arts education
  - Add numbers of students involved in music festivals, solo and ensemble contests and All-State
  - Award winners/ SAT scores/ Participation in music programs
  - Economic impact in your state
  - How the arts contribute to success in a variety of ways.
7. **Know your message.** After analyzing all materials available to you, determine what you want to say to the legislator. Every MEA member who speaks for music education should use accurate information. (Theme should be the same; the exact message can vary.)
8. **Practice.** Take all the information you have gathered and carefully plan what to say. A visit from a professional, prepared, and knowledgeable educator will have a tremendous impact.

# Seek Partnerships

---

When working towards an advocacy goal, it is critical to work with partners that are seeking the same, or similar, goals. Partners bring a new perspective to your issue and may point out previously unrecognized problems or solutions. Partners also increase the number of grassroots supporters backing your measure increasing the likelihood for achieving your goal. Partners also can give legitimacy to an issue that a solo organization may have not had previously. While you may have to broaden the scope of your legislative request, having the additional support that a coalition brings is often worth it; however, never participate in a coalition whose purpose will negatively affect music education.

Remember, partnerships need not be permanent and, in fact, some partnerships may only be relevant for one particular issue area. On the other hand, there are many groups who will be consistently good partners, so you should be sure to create lasting relationships with these entities.

Good partners for music education advocacy tend to fall into three distinct groups—the arts, education, and business communities.

## Arts Community

Those in the arts community understand how critical music education is in terms of value for the child, but also in creating those artists that go on to make their livings as artists and those who are lifelong patrons of the arts.

**Examples:** State Arts Associations, Arts Education Associations, Kennedy Center Arts Alliances, Music Teachers National Association, Community Bands, Orchestras, and Choral Ensembles, State Arts Agencies, local Americans for the Arts groups, state Humanities organizations.

## Education Community

Partnering with education groups is useful because it demonstrates music educators are thinking outside of our specific issue area and are seeking what's best for each student. Subject-specific groups are good partners and often have identical or very similar issues. School Board, Superintendents, and Administrator organizations are particularly useful because those can be music education adversaries—especially when they are forced to make tough funding decisions. By partnering with them from the beginning you already work out policy issues that might arise when pushing your advocacy agenda.

**Examples:** State School Board Associations, Administrators' Associations, Social Studies Teachers Association, Humanities Teachers, State Superintendent Associations

## Businesses

Some community businesses have a stake in music education—particularly music manufacturers and music shops. Seek out partnerships with these businesses. Since the survival of both groups is dependent on music education, you will find ready made partners.

**Examples:** Public Relations firms, Chambers of Commerce, Law Firms, Banks, Fundraising Companies, Tour Companies, Exhibitors at your state conference, Economic Development Councils

# Act

---

Now you are ready to put your plan into action. There are a variety of ways to get your point across to your legislators and the legislature as a whole. The most targeted and best-known technique is the legislative visit. Other techniques might include testifying in committee, bringing a group to perform at the state capitol building to demonstrate the benefits of music firsthand as well as legislative correspondence.

Please note that when taking legislative action, this should be done using personal time and resources. As a school or state employee you may not use public resources to advocate your cause. This applies to the use of work e-mail, phone, photocopy machine, letterhead, etc.

## The Legislative Visit

The legislative visit is a very important tool for communicating with legislators. Legislative visits need not necessarily occur at the state capitol. Often the best time for a visit is in the district when the legislature is not meeting.

1. **A legislative visit might include 3–4 people, but generally not more than 4.** It is most effective if there are community supporters, booster parents, and fine arts activists joining a music educator on such a visit.
2. **Be on time and even early.** Lateness can be viewed as being unprepared.
3. **Explain** who you represent and why. Introduce everyone in your group.
4. **Use Talking Points** to plan out what message(s) you want to get across during your meeting. Talking points should be short (no more than a single page) and usually bulleted, so that main facts can easily be seen. It is usually important to restrict the talking points to a single issue. If you believe that more information is needed, provide it in a separate document that can accompany the talking points.
  - Be sure to refer to a bill number (if there is one).
  - State the organization's position on the issue (for or against).
  - Provide several points that support your position.
  - Offer to provide more information (via a Web site, phone number, e-mail, etc.).Helpful Talking Points can be found on the MENC Web site in a page called "Facts and Figures." Access it at <http://www.menc.org/information/advocate/facts.html>. See "Sample Talking Points" in the Resource section.
5. **Practice** what each person will say before the meeting. Make sure each person says something.
6. **Get to the point.** The first person that speaks will set the tone and establish the atmosphere of the meeting. Be prepared with succinct answers to the members' questions.
7. **Use personal anecdotes to illustrate your point.** Legislators will remember the anecdotes better than the facts. Too many statistics can be overwhelming.

8. **Be prepared** with your own information, and know the politics of the issues.
9. **Be factual and honest.** Don't misstate or overstate your position. Building an honest relationship with the legislator is vital to future communication.
10. **Make your points without disparaging your opponents.** Trying to make your own situation look more important by criticizing others is one way to destroy your credibility.
11. **Listen carefully.** Listen to find out what factors are on the mind of the member, and try to respond to those concerns. Make sure you do not do all the talking.
12. **Provide** the legislator with a folder of information. The legislator needs to have accurate information available when issues affecting music education occur. A folder should consist of a few items that are presented in a condensed and easy-to-read format. Providing the legislator with pages and pages of information will be counterproductive, and he or she is unlikely to read everything. Contents could include:
  - Business Card. Be sure to include your business card so that the legislator or staffer can easily contact you in the future.
  - State or Local Fact Sheet. Your legislator is interested in what happens in your state, not necessarily the entire nation. Although some national statistics will be useful, it is best to keep things on a state/local level. Make sure they are an easy-to-read format—preferably bulleted.
  - List of local student performance dates and locations.
  - MENC Facts and Figures Brochure or MENC Statement of Principles. These can be found at [www.menc.org](http://www.menc.org).
  - Creative Industries Reports. These reports from Americans for the Arts detail the economic impact of the arts on each congressional district.
  - Critical Links. A publication from the Arts Education Partnership that examines the effects of arts learning on students' social and academic skills.
13. **If a member doesn't agree with you, don't become argumentative.** It is also good to understand his or her position. You may wish to make the point that you represent a large number of constituents but do so politely.
14. **Be polite.** Never yell, threaten, or become overly argumentative. Don't take the visit personally, and don't hold a grudge.
15. **Follow up after the meeting.** Write a letter of thanks for the meeting that reiterates your position. Provide the legislator with more information if asked. Don't forget to thank legislators who are in agreement with your position for their support.
16. **Continue** to build a relationship with members of your legislature. These are the people who will be in the position to help keep music education strong. An ongoing relationship can yield great benefits over time.

## Testifying in Committee

Giving testimony in favor of or in opposition to a proposed bill is another opportunity to attempt to persuade legislators to your point of view. There are three benefits to making this effort:

1. You have the opportunity to give focused information to policymakers.
2. Your testimony is recorded in the history of that particular bill for others to read.
3. You have the opportunity to develop network relationships with other organizations that can lead to shared endeavors that may result in a favorable public policy change.

If you wish to testify, you can contact the sponsor of a bill that would benefit music education (arts education) and offer your testimony. That is simply a courtesy to the sponsoring legislator so they can attempt to orchestrate a cohesive chain of testimony that they hope will persuade the committee to favorable vote. If it is a bill you oppose, or if you simply wish to represent a point of view you can go to the committee hearing and sign up to testify. Check your legislature's Web site to learn when bills of interest will be heard in committee.

When you testify, identify yourself, any organization you represent, whether you are asking for a favorable or unfavorable vote on the proposed legislation and then briefly state your most cogent arguments. It's best to limit your remarks to three minutes or less. If you have heard testimony from a previous witness that you agree with, be sure to make reference to that agreement in your remarks.



## Legislative Correspondence

There are a variety of ways to deliver your message to your legislator when you cannot be there in person. Emails, letters, faxes, and telephone calls are all widely used methods with advantages as well as disadvantages. Be sure to use the right type of correspondence for your situation.

### E-mails

State the position in the subject line. In many cases, the body of an e-mail is not read, and if it is, only by an aide. Legislative staff does however, make note of the position and keeps an account of the subjects of positions. Many legislators will respond to your e-mails so that you know they have been received. Be sure to include your name and complete mailing address.

**PRO:** E-mail is an instant communication and can be used in emergency scenarios. E-mail is easy for grassroots supporters to send. Some legislative offices prefer e-mail communication.

**CON:** Some legislative offices disregard form e-mails. Some legislative offices completely disregard or discount e-mail.

## 1. Letters and Faxes

Launch a letter-writing campaign, but remember to keep it simple and easy for people to participate. Provide sample letters or talking points and addresses on your state MEA Web site if possible. Letters are one of the most effective means of communicating a position, especially if they are from constituents.

**PRO:** Grassroots supporters can easily reproduce form letters and faxes. There is a paper record of your request for support or opposition.

**CON:** This method takes longer to generate numerous responses. There is a delay for any mailed letters. This could add weeks if your legislature screens its mail for security reasons. Some legislators look more favorably on personalized letters than form letters or faxes.

## 2. Telephone Calls

Telephone calls can have the most immediate impact. Be polite. Stay focused on your specific issues. Be direct and to the point.

Legislators are very busy people; it may be difficult to speak directly to your legislator by phone. Be prepared to leave an informed detailed message with the legislative staff or a succinct voicemail explaining your concerns with your contact information.

**PRO:** It is possible that you will be able to speak to the legislator or the staffer and have an informed discussion on the subject. Enough calls can immobilize any office.

**CON:** There is no record of your contact with the legislator's office. Some offices do not keep track of phone calls to record support or opposition to an issue. Enough calls can immobilize any office.

# Evaluate

---

Evaluating strategies and continuing music education advocacy activities are essential to keeping music education in school curriculum.

- Regularly collect data on music education in your state. Use this data to assess your current advocacy campaign and long-term strategic plan. Release findings to the public, perhaps at a media event.
- Analyze the legislative techniques that seem the most successful in your advocacy efforts. Fine-tune your strategy for further advocacy activities and keep at it!
- Review and analyze the status and role of music education. Could things be better? Are there music education programs in every school in your state? Are they funded adequately?
- Reevaluate advocacy assignments. If one person has too much responsibility, spread out the work so no one becomes burnt out. Advocacy is a constant and ongoing process. Be sure to match abilities with tasks.



# Maintain

---

Advocacy activities must be ongoing. Try planning a regular “Day in the Capitol,” participate in the national Arts Advocacy Day, or Music In Our Schools Month to continue visits to legislators, disseminate new information, and remain in the public eye through advocacy and other efforts.

1. **Stay informed.** New research is being conducted all the time. Keep abreast of new information by frequently reviewing music education Web sites, including MENC’s. Some of the information may make a difference when presented to a legislator at a future visit.
2. **Share information.** Send letters and e-mails or make phone calls to legislators when important new information develops. Share information with all MEA members so that principals, other administrators, and schools will receive the same information. This is a great way to get new teachers involved in advocacy.
3. **Maintain a standing committee.** Keep a committee for legislative advocacy active. Rotate new people onto the committee so that planning future events won’t be brand-new every two years.
4. **Set dates.** Establish dates 2–3 years in advance (same time each year) for future “Day in the Capital” visits. This will help create a tradition of advocating for music education in your state. Dates should be publicized as much as possible to encourage more teachers to get involved.
5. **Continue building partnerships.** While it is essential to seek partnerships for any advocacy campaign, you should also work on those partnerships throughout the year. By learning from one another, we can combine efforts to achieve the most for students and education as a whole. Attend coalition or arts alliance meetings. Invite other groups to your state conference and attend other conferences. Offer to make a presentation on music education at other conferences.



# Building Relationships

---

One of the most important elements of advocacy is relationship building. It is an element that is present in each step in the advocacy cycle and requires continuous maintenance and care. It is vital to ensuring the success of your current and future advocacy goals.

## Legislators

It is critically important to build relationships with your legislators. The best way to start building that relationship is to invite your legislators to your concerts and offer them an opportunity to say a few words. That gives them an opportunity to showcase how they feel about education—particularly music education—to their voting constituents. Meetings in a legislator’s district office are another good way to check in with that legislator when the legislature is not meeting.



It is also important that you become familiar with a legislator’s staff when possible. Legislative staffers are the eyes, ears, and researchers for the legislator. When you have a good relationship with those staffers, they are likely to consider you the expert and will call on you for your opinion which they will use to influence policy.

## Parents, Boosters, and Community Arts Supporters

Parents, boosters, and community arts supporters are the strong base of grassroots support for music education. This network should be continuously built regardless of whether or not an advocacy campaign is in full swing. Some ideas for relationship building

include using e-mail to pass on monthly updates; have an advocacy segment at booster meetings and concerts; get community arts supporters to sign-up for MusicFriends to keep them up-to-date on national issues; and give updates at PTA/PTO meetings on occasion to reach other parents.

## Media

The media is another group key to advocacy. When a crisis or a need arises, it is better to already have an established relationship with your local media. Introduce yourself to the local education reporter. Invite media representatives to concerts. Plan ahead for any media releases. Report ensemble results of your program to reporters via e-mail. (Please note that most schools do not allow release of individual names or results because of privacy issues.) Newspapers want stories about students achieving great things!

# Resources: Sample Talking Points

---

## Academic Benefits of Music

- Students in music programs scored 57 points higher in the verbal portion, and 47 points higher in the math portion of the SATs than students with no arts participation.
- Students who participated in music programs receive more awards and academic honors.
- In schools with strong music classes, cases of low self-esteem, shyness, and school delinquency are decreased.
- Schools with strong music programs have better school attendance.
- Schools with strong music programs have higher graduation rates, especially for minority students.

## Challenges Facing Music Education

- There is a music teacher shortage. Each year fewer new music teachers graduate than retire. Unfilled music positions can mean decreased instruction time or even elimination of the music program.
- Music education classes often lack adequate funding.
- Music teachers are given inadequate instruction time to properly teach students.
- 94% of public schools have music programs; however, 57% receive an hour or less of instruction per week.
- Music classes held in inappropriate spaces (cafeteria, closets, etc.) often can result in inadequate learning or no learning at all.



# Sample Thank You Letter to State Legislator

---

Dear \_\_\_\_\_,

On behalf of the music educators in your district, we would like to thank you for your support for (name and number of legislation).

We thank you for adding your voice with other state legislators, school administrators, school board members, and others who have been strong advocates for music education.

As you already know, strong music programs in our schools help our children and communities in real and substantial ways. The benefits of music education result in success in four areas—in school, in developing intelligence, in life, and in society.

- Music education develops better communication skills and cognitive skills useful in every part of the curriculum, which helps students find **success in school**.
- Research shows music study actively contributes to brain development therefore music education leads to **success in developing intelligence**.
- Music education brings countless psychological, emotional, and physical benefits contributing to success in life.
- Music education shapes individual abilities and character through decreasing use of all substances (alcohol, tobacco, illicit drugs) and broadens students’ understanding and appreciation of the world around them, which leads to **success in society**.

We commend you for your leadership and look forward to continuing to work with you on these important issues.

Sincerely,

(sign your name)

Type Your Name Here

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail (optional): \_\_\_\_\_

# Sample Advocacy Letter to State Legislator

---

Dear \_\_\_\_\_,

As a constituent and music educator, I am writing to request your support for (insert number and name of legislation) that is being considered by our state legislature to support music programs in our state's schools.

This legislation is important because it is critical that all children are able to participate in school music programs. Strong music programs in our schools help our children and communities in real and substantial ways. The benefits of music education result in success in four areas—in school, in developing intelligence, in life, and in society.

- Music education develops better communication skills and cognitive skills useful in every part of the curriculum, which helps students find **success in school**.
- Research shows music study actively contributes to brain development; therefore, music education leads to **success in developing intelligence**.
- Music education brings countless psychological, emotional, and physical benefits contributing to **success in life**.
- Music education shapes individual abilities and character through decreasing use of all substances (alcohol, tobacco, illicit drugs) and broadens students' understanding and appreciation of the world around them, which leads to **success in society**.

Music education should consist of a full, balanced, sequential course of music instruction taught by qualified teachers. On behalf of the students, the schools, and the communities in your district, please join me in protecting and advancing opportunities for all children to receive a high-quality music education.

You, as one of our state legislators, have a role in making this a reality with your vote and support for this important legislation. I hope I can count on your support.

Sincerely,

(sign your name)

Type Your Name Here

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail (optional): \_\_\_\_\_

# Sample Meeting Request Letter to State Legislator

---

Dear \_\_\_\_\_,

On behalf of the music educators in your district, we would like to request a meeting with you on (Date and Time) to discuss the status of music education in our district. Attending the meeting will be \_\_\_\_\_ (name of the attendees, their titles and the organizations they represent.)

As you may know, strong music programs in our schools can help our kids and communities in real and substantial ways. The benefits of music education can be measured in four categories:

- Music education develops better communication skills and cognitive skills useful in every part of the curriculum, which helps students find **success in school.**
- Research shows music study actively contributes to brain development; therefore, music education leads to **success in developing intelligence.**
- Music education brings countless psychological, emotional, and physical benefits contributing to **success in life.**
- Music education shapes individual abilities and character through decreasing use of all substances (alcohol, tobacco, illicit drugs) and broadens students’ understanding and appreciation of the world around them, which leads to **success in society.**

Please contact me at either (insert both day-time phone number and e-mail address) to confirm our appointment. We look forward to meeting with you to discuss this important part of every child’s education.

Sincerely,

(sign your name)

Type Your Name Here

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail (optional): \_\_\_\_\_

# Sample Proclamation for Government Officials

---

## WHEREAS

The study of music is basic to a complete education, provides a competitive edge for successful educational reform, engages students in individual and group activity, develops creativity, problem-solving capacity, and critical and evaluative skills; and

## WHEREAS

Music education helps students acquire skills in production and performance of music, as well as an understanding of history and culture; and

## WHEREAS

The [STATE] Music Educators Association is concerned with maintaining and improving school music programs for all students regardless of their socioeconomic status or their abilities; therefore

## BE IT RESOLVED

That the [STATE] legislature recognizes and commends the [STATE] Music Educators Association for their concern for and efforts to enhance the quality of music education in [STATE] schools;

## THEREFORE

The legislature hereby proclaims the month of March 2007, Music in Our Schools Month, and endorses the observance of Music In Our Schools Month as an opportunity to support the purposes and practices of music education and encourages teachers, students, and all citizens to participate.



# Sample Resolution for Local School Boards

---

WHEREAS  
The study of music contributes to young people’s development through heightened skills in listening, reading, self-expression, and creativity; and

WHEREAS  
Music education in the schools includes a broad range of types of music and active musical experiences; and

WHEREAS  
Music and the other arts significantly enhance the morale and quality of the school environment; and

WHEREAS  
It is the stated objective of the public school to prepare children for a productive role in our society; and

WHEREAS  
MENC: The National Association for Music Education has designated March as Music In Our Schools Month, focusing on the theme [THEME]; now,

THEREFORE  
Be it resolved that the Board of Education of \_\_\_\_\_ endorses the observance of Music In Our Schools Month as an opportunity to support the purposes and practices of music education and encourages teachers, parents, students, and all citizens to participate.

The Board of Education of the \_\_\_\_\_ School District, for its own part, rededicates itself to the maintenance of a music education program that will be relevant to the needs of the children placed in its care and will reach and positively influence each child.



# Online Resources

---

These Web sites have helpful and additional information about music education advocacy.

## MENC Web Site:

<http://www.menc.org>

You will find helpful advocacy, research, and resource information. An easy way to begin is with the index, which is accessible from the home page.

Visit the Web sites of other MENC state Music Education Associations to find out what's happening in their states. Access them through the States link under "About MENC" on the MENC site.

MENC Information Resources also has information to share about advocacy issues and other topics. Call 1-800-336-3768 to find out more, or write [info@menc.org](mailto:info@menc.org)

- 1. Advocacy Resources and Information:** <http://www.musicfriends.org>
- 2. Music Education and the Law:** <http://www.menc.org/information/meandthelaw.html>
  - Suggested strategies about how to interpret and explain the new education law to your political representatives at the local level.
- 3. Arts Education Partnership:** <http://www.aep-arts.org>
- 4. "No Subject Left Behind"**  
<http://www.aeparts.org/files/advocacy/NoSubjectLeftBehind2005.pdf>
  - This document provides an overview of the implications of "No Child Left Behind" for arts education.
  - Click on <http://www.aep-arts.org/files/publications/ChampsReport.pdf>. Seven studies that show enhanced learning and achievement when arts are a part of the educational experience.
- 5. "Critical Links"** <http://www.aep-arts.org/files/publications/CriticalLinks.pdf>
  - Compendium that summarizes and discusses 62 research studies examining the effects of arts learning on students' social and academic skills.
- 6. American Music Conference:** <http://www.amc-music.org/>
  - Take a look at the pages on the brain, wellness, and public policy. Advocacy information, especially about the economic impact of the arts.
- 7. National Assembly of State Arts Agencies:** <http://www.nasaa-arts.org>
- 8. MUSIC and Science Information Computer Archive:** <http://www.musica.uci.edu/>
  - This site contains information about scientific research on music and behavior including specific references to education, child development, and other areas.

9. **Music For All Foundation:** <http://www.music-for-all.org/index2.asp>

10. **SupportMusic Community Action Kit**

- The SupportMusic Community Action Kit is designed to keep music education programs strong and active in our schools, while benefiting the entire music products industry. The kit includes a 24-page guide to grassroots advocacy, a CD-ROM with community action tools: presentation materials, handouts, petition and press release templates, and copies of the “Why Learn to Play Music?” brochure, which you can customize with your company name and address. Download it at <http://www.supportmusic.com/kit/>.

**Other MENC Resources include:**

You may obtain these and other resources by calling Rowman and Littlefield Education Publishers (RLE) at 1-800-462-6420 or visiting <http://www.rowmaneducation.com/>.

- ***The Gifts of Music.*** A collection of testimonies to the impact and importance of music and music education. (Stock # 1022)
- ***Building Support for School Music: A Practical Guide.*** A “how to” manual that will help organize your approach, analyze your school situation, set the necessary goals and get to work. (Available at [www.menc.org/networks/boosters/bssm/bssm.html](http://www.menc.org/networks/boosters/bssm/bssm.html))
- ***Music Makes the Difference: Music, Brain Development, and Learning.*** A collection of articles documenting the value of music education. (Stock # 1668)
- ***...And Music for All, 3rd Edition.*** Messages from members of Congress expressing their support of music education. (Stock # 1001)
- ***TIPS: Public Relations.*** Suggestions for implementing effective public relations strategies in support of your school music program. (Stock # 1090)
- ***Growing Up Complete: The Imperative for Music Education.*** A 1991 report to Congress and the Administration based on the principle that music and other arts have intrinsic value and are essential for a comprehensive, well-balanced education.



# Research Links

---

## 1. Dana Foundation

- <http://www.dana.org/news/publications/detail.aspx?id=4356>
- <http://dana.org/artseducation.aspx>
- This is a scientific attempt to provide a comprehensive picture of the role of arts education in changing the brain.

## 2. University of Toronto

- <http://www.psychologicalscience.org/pdf/ps/musiciq.pdf>
- Dr. E. Glenn Schellenberg (Department of Psychology, University of Toronto at Mississauga) examined the effect of extra-curricular activities on the intellectual and social development of six-year-old children.
- August 2004 issue of Psychological Science, a journal of the American Psychological Society.

## 3. University of North Carolina – Greensboro

- <http://www.uncg.edu/mus/mri/info.html>
- The Music Research Institute's purpose is to conduct research that advances the understanding of music and to share new knowledge for the good of society. Research projects have been initiated in nine areas: biomusic, neuroimaging, music-related hearing loss, genetics, music medicine, ethnomusicology, music performance and A+ Schools (<http://aplus-schools.uncg.edu/>) (public schools whose curriculum is driven by an integrated arts approach).

## 4. NAMM Foundation/Research

- <http://www.nammfoundation.org/ResearchTools/>
- The NAMM Foundation Research Division, formerly the International Foundation for Music Research (IMFR), was founded in 1997 to support scientific research to explore the relationship between music and physical and emotional wellness, with particular attention to the elderly population, the impact of music making on at-risk youth, and music education and the effects of music and music making.
- Grants funding update: <http://www.nammfoundation.org/Grants/update.html>
- Funding report: <http://www.nammfoundation.org/Grants/Funding%20Report.pdf>

## 5. Education Commission of the States—Former Chairman Huckabee's Initiative on Arts Education

- <http://www.ecs.org/ecsmain.asp?page=/html/projectsPartners/chair2005/Huckabee.asp>
- The mission of the Education Commission of the States is to help state leaders identify, develop, and implement public policy for education that addresses the current and future needs of a learning society. Former Arkansas governor Mike Huckabee served as commissioner of ECS from 2004-2006. His initiatives provided a host of arts education resources.

**6. *American School Board Journal*, special report, June 2006**

- <http://www.asbj.com/specialreports/0606SpecialReports/0606index.html>
- *A Rich Picture: The Why and How of Arts Education*
- Special four-part issue including topics of the promise of arts education, partners for the arts, drawing and the brain, and arts at the core.

**7. Hewlett Foundation—Review of Arts Education Literature:**

- <http://www.hewlett.org/NR/rdonlyres/0CCCD673-A18D-44FC-B3B6-DA56A4CBD808/0/LiteratureReviewFINAL.pdf>
- A useful synthesis of arts education literature, pre-K through high school, covering the last 10 years focusing on performing arts disciplines and early childhood programs, in curriculum-based school programs, programs provided by performing arts and cultural organizations, and programs provided by non-arts community organizations.

**8. Music in Education National Consortium's *Journal for Learning through Music***

- <http://www.music-in-education.org/>
- A collection of thoughtful, research-based essays on the topic of how learning takes place via the arts.