



# broader minded™

## ESSA Highlights

Last week, after years of stalled negotiations and Congressional stalemates, Congress put No Child Left Behind away for good and passed by an overwhelming majority a new version of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA).

This new bill, titled the **Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)**, is an enormous victory for music education advocates. We are truly on the verge of a new day for music education, with opportunities to use federal funding to increase access to music education for all students, especially the most vulnerable.

Among the most important provisions for music education in the bill:

- **A New and Clear Intent to Support Our Nation's Schools through a Well-Rounded Education:** This is a huge departure from NCLB, which focused heavily on student academic success narrowly defined as reading and math.
- **Enumeration of Music as a Well-Rounded Subject:** Replacing the Core Academic Subject language from NCLB, this language clearly articulates that music should be a part of every child's education, no matter their personal circumstances.
- **Requirements for Well-Rounded Education:** Schools will now be able to assess their ability to provide a well-rounded education, including music, and address any deficiencies using federal funds.
- **Flexibility of Title I Funds to Support a Well-Rounded Education:** All Title I programs, both schoolwide and targeted, are now available to provide supplemental funds for a well-rounded education, including music.
- **More Professional Development for Music Educators:** Funds from Title I, II, and IV of ESSA may support professional development for music educators as part of supporting a well-rounded education.
- **Flexible Accountability Systems:** States must now include multiple progress measures in assessing school performance, which can include such music-education-friendly measures as student engagement, parent engagement, and school culture/climate.
- **Protection from "Pullouts":** The new ESSA discourages removing students from the classroom, including music and arts, for remedial instruction.

Passing this law with music listed as a stand-alone subject kicks open the door of opportunity to ensuring music's place in every school — and leading in the decision-making for what that looks like.

Learn more about ESSA and what it means to you at <http://bit.ly/NCLBends>

Becoming a NAFME member is more important now than ever before. Learn more about membership at [jointoday.nafme.org/takeaction](http://jointoday.nafme.org/takeaction)



**National Association  
for Music Education**