



The Music Education Policy Roundtable 2014 Federal Legislative Agenda

Mission and History:

The Music Education Policy Roundtable is a coalition of music and music education organizations and companies dedicated to advocating for the presence and perseverance of school music programs in America's schools, taught by certified music educators, imparting sequential, standards-based music education to students across the nation.

Originally conceived of and formalized by the National Association for Music Education (NAfME) and American String Teachers Association (ASTA), the Roundtable "coin" has come to represent the unification of a great many prominent music institutions under a single banner, working in harmony to support the policy adoption of best practices in music education, and the furthering of music making experiences by all children, in schools and communities, throughout America.

Roundtable Guiding Commitments:

- ❖ To stand in unison for the perseverance of the teaching of sequential, standards-based music education in America's schools.
- ❖ To utilize the coalition's Federal Legislative Agenda to support music education in statute, ensuring consistency of policy goals amongst Roundtable member-groups, whenever possible.
- ❖ To foster, facilitate and engage grassroots advocacy capacity building activities being conducted by Roundtable Member-Groups in the field, in efforts to protect music education programs.
- ❖ To regularly interact with and share our policy work with music and arts education supporters all across the country, in order to bolster the overall impact of our collective advocacy efforts.

Roundtable Directive:

- ❖ To ensure that Congress maintain the status of the arts as a **CORE ACADEMIC SUBJECT** in any reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA).
 - Legislative Request: In order to ensure that all students receive a comprehensive education including sequential, standards-based music education as part of the core curriculum, we ask that Congress maintain the status of the arts as a core academic subject in any reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA).

Roundtable Federal Legislative Recommendations:

- I. Music educators should be **EVALUATED** by qualified individuals utilizing reliable measures germane to their field.
 - Legislative Request: Congress and the U.S. Department of Education should offer guidance language recommending that music educators be evaluated on how well their students learn and achieve in their respective discipline. Accountability for any and all such measures of evaluation should be directly attributable to certified music teachers. New evaluation systems should be developed in the context of the number of students being taught and instructional time available, limiting the use of data to reliable measures. Likewise, observation-based teacher evaluations should be limited to those conducted by individuals with expertise in music education.
- II. The U.S. Department of Education should collect **RESEARCH** to support the field of music education.
 - Legislative Request: Congress should mandate that the U.S. Department of Education develop and carry out the process of collecting and disseminating federal data pursuant to the status of music education programs in order to generally benefit the field, and to assist organizations working to accurately gauge the landscape and provide support to educators in areas of the country where music education is threatened.
- III. **ACCOUNTABILITY** provisions, which include a measure of music success, are essential.
 - Legislative Request: Congress should include in any reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), accountability provisions that include a measure of and for student achievement in music, to be implemented in a manner that ensures fairness to all students.
- IV. **FUNDING** should be made available to music programs through all appropriate ESEA-authorized programs.
 - Legislative Request: Congress should ensure that all appropriate federal funding streams authorized under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), particularly Title I monies, are made available for purposes of teaching music and for music education teacher training.
- V. School day **ACCESSIBILITY** to music education programs should be increased across the country.
 - Legislative Request: Congress and the U.S. Department of Education should offer language acknowledging the nationwide trend of reduced school day time for music education programs, and recommending that this trend be reversed, via an increased focus on the delivery of comprehensive curriculums of learning.
- VI. **CHARTER SCHOOLS**, consistent with all public schools, should provide students with a comprehensive education, including access to sequential, standards-based music education.
 - Legislative Request: The U.S. Department of Education should offer guidance language to those involved in the development and administration of public charter schools, recommending that curricular decisions be made with an eye toward providing all students with a comprehensive education, including music taught by certified educators.
- VII. Music conveys valuable benefits in **EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION** and should be available under federally funded early childhood education programs.
 - Legislative Request: Congress should ensure that all appropriate federal funding for early childhood education, including but not limited to those funds made available under Head Start, Early Head Start, and the Child Care and Development Block Grant, as well as any proposed legislation, is made available for early music education and for purposes of early music education teacher training. Further, Congress and the U.S. Department of Education should issue guidance language clarifying the availability of funds under such programs for the purpose of early music education.