



**National Association
for Music Education**



**MUSIC EDUCATION
POLICY ROUNDTABLE**



**Statement by the Music Education Policy Roundtable on Potential
Cuts to Music Education in North Carolina Public Schools**

On behalf of the National Association for Music Education (NAfME), and the 35 music organizations represented on the Music Education Policy Roundtable, we strongly encourage the North Carolina General Assembly to reevaluate its class size mandate, which may reduce access to elementary school music in North Carolina.

Last year, the North Carolina General Assembly approved its 2016-2017 State Budget proposal, which included a mandate to [reduce class sizes](#) in grades K-3. Although the idea of smaller pupil to educator ratios is prized, allowing teachers to give more individualized and focused attention to their students, legislators were unaware of the unintended consequences created by such a stringent mandate. By not providing supplementary funding to help school districts facilitate additional hiring of teachers for the increased number of smaller classes, many North Carolina school districts are now faced with the difficult decision of cutting school music and arts education programs for the upcoming 2017-2018 school year.

It is the Music Education Policy Roundtable’s continued belief that more resources should be made available to provide all students, regardless of personal circumstance or background, with access to a dedicated and rich experience with music. Music programs are highly valuable in engaging students (in particular at-risk students) by improving their overall participation and attendance rates, and provide students with the skills we know they will need to succeed in high school, college and career, including collaboration and self-efficacy. By removing these courses from regular instructional hours, students all across North Carolina risk losing the many benefits that a high quality music education provides at the elementary level.

Furthermore, music education is now deemed essential as part of a “Well-Rounded Education,” as stated in federal law (Title VIII, Sec. 8002 of ESSA) in the recently enacted Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). Focusing on what makes a student whole, incorporating a broad and rich curriculum that

includes music, allows students to reach beyond the typical quantifiable markers of academic achievement. Music education at all grade levels encourages the development of essential 21st - century skills such as critical thinking, collaboration, and creative problem-solving. By eliminating these programs, students risk losing the benefits of these skills, which can have a positive lifelong impact.

The Roundtable strongly urges the North Carolina General Assembly to reassess its mandate and propose an alternative that allows districts the flexibility to reduce class sizes, while maintaining students' access to school music. Thank you for your consideration and we welcome the opportunity to engage in further dialogue regarding this very important matter of supporting music and arts education in our schools.

Sincerely,

The Music Education Policy Roundtable

**National Association for Music Education
American String Teachers Association
American Choral Directors Association
American Orff-Schulwerk Association
American School Band Directors Association
Barbershop Harmony Society
Chorus America
College Band Directors National Association
Conn Selmer
Drum Corps International
Education Through Music
El Sistema USA
The Gordon Institute for Music Learning
GRAMMY Foundation
Guitar and Accessories Marketing Association, Inc.
Jazz at Lincoln Center
J.W. Pepper & Son, Inc.
League of American Orchestras**

**Little Kids Rock
Music for All
Music Teachers National Association
Music Publishers Association
Music Sales Group/MusicFirst
National Association of Music Merchants
National Association of Music Parents
National Music Council
Organization of American Kodály Educators
Percussive Arts Society
Phi Mu Alpha Sinfonia
Progressive Music
Quadrant Arts Education Research
The Recording Academy
Strathmore Hall Foundation
VH1 Save The Music Foundation
Winter Guard International**