



Statement by the Music Education Policy Roundtable On the *Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015*

Last week, Congress reached a compromise agreement to reauthorize the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA). The compromise bill, S. 1177, also known as the “Every Student Succeeds Act,” includes “music” and “arts” as part of the new “Well-Rounded Education” provision (previously known as “Core Academic Subjects”), which provides a number of increased opportunities for access to music education. The Music Education Policy Roundtable, music education’s premier policy coalition dedicated to ensuring the presence and preservation of school music programs, is issuing its full and formal support for S. 1177.

The bill’s inclusion of “music” and “arts” in the “Well-Rounded Education” provision provides an unprecedented step forward for music education, as it connects to a variety of significant other provisions in S. 1177:

Title I: S. 1177 stipulates the eligibility of Title I funds for all “Well-Rounded Education” subjects. With the partnership of State and Local Educational Agencies (LEAs), we have the opportunity to bolster access to a “Well-Rounded” education that includes music and arts for the nation’s most disadvantaged students.

Protecting Students’ Class Time: The inclusion of “music” and “arts” gives stakeholders a stronger point of reference when advocating for these programs, and when building state-level curricula and accountability systems. S. 1177 includes protection for students struggling in other academic areas from being pulled from music and arts courses in favor of remedial education. The bill emphasizes the importance of classroom time within these courses, as opposed to stripping them of an equally meaningful learning opportunity.

Title IV: S. 1177 requires school districts (Local Educational Agencies) to undertake a needs assessment of how they are supporting a well-rounded education in their schools, including music education, and then provides supplemental funding to strengthen programs which need assistance. This additional support signals Congress’ belief in the importance of a well-rounded education for our nation’s students, including the study of music.

Federal Grant Opportunities: S. 1177 also includes new opportunities for music and arts education through formula funding grants in Title IV. States receiving formula grants must use those monies for purposes of carrying out particular State Activities, including offering “Well-Rounded” educational experiences, such as music, to underrepresented, disadvantaged, or minority students. The bill specifically notes activities and programs in “music” and “arts” are both appropriate uses of formula grants.

The Music Education Policy Roundtable would like to take this opportunity to commend the members of the ESEA conference committee, and the leadership of both the House Education and the Workforce Committee and the Senate Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee, for prioritizing music and arts programs in this legislation. The passage of this bipartisan bill will be a historic accomplishment and will provide access to the well-rounded education our students need for success. We urge other members of Congress to follow their colleagues and vote in support of S. 1177, the “Every Student Succeeds Act.” We are available to provide any resources that may be helpful in your upcoming discourse.

Thank you for your consideration and your service to our nation.

Sincerely,

The Music Education Policy Roundtable

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

**Little Kids Rock
Music for All
Music Publishers Association
Music Teachers National Association
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
Quadrant Arts Education Research
The Recording Academy
Strathmore Hall Foundation
VH1 Save The Music Foundation
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