



**National Association
for Music Education**

MUSIC EDUCATION
POLICY ROUNDTABLE

To: President-Elect Donald Trump and the Trump-Pence Transition Team

From: The Music Education Policy Roundtable

Date: 1/11/2017

CC: Education Secretary Nominee, Betsy DeVos

On behalf of the Music Education Policy Roundtable, we would like to express our congratulations to President-Elect Donald Trump and Vice President-Elect Mike Pence on winning the 2016 presidential election. The Roundtable looks forward to working with the Trump administration and the U.S. Department of Education, to further music education in America.

For five years now, the Music Education Policy Roundtable has advocated to ensure the continued presence and perseverance of high quality music programs in America’s schools. Consisting of 35 music education organizations and businesses, the Roundtable believes all children, regardless of circumstance, should have access to high-quality in-school music programs.



Intertwined with our great society, music is central to America’s history and how we share that history and tradition with our nation’s children. Music education provides a variety of assets for our students, improving quality of life, and creating impactful and successful citizens within our society. We sincerely hope to work with the Trump administration to develop policies which support and enrich these essential school music programs.

The following are policy proposals the Music Education Policy Roundtable hopes the Trump administration takes into consideration on behalf of advancing music education in America’s schools:

- **Support and Continue the Proper Implementation of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)**

Last year, the passage of ESSA marked a historic moment for public education. Through bipartisan support, the law includes a specific mention of “music” as a part of a “Well-Rounded Education,” providing opportunities to increase access to music education for all students. We

hope to see continued support for the law, and encourage active communication between the administration and authorizing congressional committees to ensure guidance and regulations issued by the U.S. Department of Education reflect congressional intent, increasing state and local voices in decision-making regarding public schooling.

- **Maintain Equitable Access to a Well-Rounded Education for All Students**

One of the integral missions of the Music Education Policy Roundtable is promoting the study and making of music by all, regardless of circumstance or background. Today's educational culture emphasizes the great need for 21st century skillsets and by incorporating a well-rounded curriculum that includes music, we provide the essential professional skills students need to succeed in not only academics, but also in the workforce. Unfortunately, the access to a music education is not available in every American public school, be it district or charter, or for every child.

- ***Access to Music Education within Minority Populations***

According to the [National Endowment for the Arts](#) (NEA), fewer than 30 percent of both Hispanic and African American students reported receiving any arts education, in comparison to 59 percent of white students. Crafting effective and inclusive policies will create pathways to lifelong achievement for all students.

- ***Access to Music Education within Charter Schools***

Studies from Arizona and California show that students within charter schools have substantially less access to music and arts education than students enrolled in district schools¹. As affirmed in ESSA, music education is an essential component to a well-rounded education, which should be embraced and made available to all students in all schools - charter and district.

- ***Collecting Accurate Data on Access to Music and Arts Education within our Nation's Schools***

Every decade, the U.S. Department of Education collects [survey data](#) on access to music and arts education through the Fast Response Survey System (FRSS). The next FRSS arts survey should be administered in the 2019-2020 school year. We look forward to continuing this important data collection tradition to help us better understand access to music and arts education and how we as partners with the U.S. Department of Education can grow access to music and arts for all students.

- ***Collecting Accurate Data on student performance in music and arts education through the Nation's Report Card, NAEP.***

This April, the U.S. Department of Education will partner with the National Assessment Governing Board to release the findings on the 2015-2016 NAEP Arts Assessment. This is an excellent opportunity for the administration to broadcast its support for a well-rounded education, including music and arts. In addition, the administration can work with the Governing Board and arts partners including the Roundtable to insure the continuation of the NAEP Arts Assessment next scheduled for 2024.

- **Increase State and District Flexibility by Supporting Funding in Critical Well-Rounded Areas**

The inclusion of “music” as part of a “Well-Rounded Education” provides a significant number of opportunities for increasing access to music education for students at the state and local levels. The specific enumeration of music in statute further articulates music’s eligibility for Title I-A, Title II-A, and Title IV-A funding. In order to make these opportunities a reality for students, the Trump administration must follow ESSA’s congressional intent, and ensure states, districts, charters, and local schools have the most flexibility to spend their federal dollars where needed. Robust funding for all well-rounded programs, including Title IV, Part A, must be a priority to protect this flexibility.

- **Reauthorize the Higher Education Act (HEA) & the Student Debt Crisis**

Throughout the recent election cycle, candidates have recognized the prevalent student loan crisis within the United States. With ESSA the law of the land, the long overdue reauthorization of HEA represents the next step in reforming federal education policy, through a thorough examination of the post-secondary education landscape. The Roundtable is devoted to serving the future of the music education profession. In light of ESSA’s commitment to providing all students with access to a well-rounded education, we hope HEA is reauthorized to support music and well-rounded educators through teacher preparation programs, teacher recruitment and retention opportunities, and student loan forgiveness eligibility.

- **Reauthorize the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act**

As education and economic needs change in the 21st century, the educational environment must be prepared to adapt and incorporate innovative programs to fulfill those demands. We hope that the next reauthorization of the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act integrates a well-rounded curriculum, so that schools can pioneer innovative courses, such as music technology and recording arts. Through revising this legislation, we give students the opportunity for success in non-traditional careers that consist of high-skill and high-wage occupations.

- **Support Military Readiness of Armed Forces**

One of our nation’s most important assets are our service men and women. Unfortunately, in recent years, our public education system has failed to sufficiently prepare young Americans for military service. According to [The Education Trust](#), more than 1 in 5 high school graduates aspiring to join the Army could not score high enough on the military entrance exam to enlist. Studies have shown that schools with music programs demonstrate significantly higher graduation and class retention rates than those without such programs. By delivering robust funding to key well-rounded programs, like music, we strengthen our nation’s national security through providing educated, able, and qualified personnel.

- **Support U.S. Military Music Ensembles**

With dedication and integrity, U.S. military music ensembles connect American citizens of all generations through our country's musical heritage. These servicemen and women set one of the highest examples of musical achievement, pride in nation, and further the aspirations of all citizens, including young American music students across the nation. In addition, members of these ensembles uphold a significant role in music education by contributing countless hours of service each year, through special student outreach in a variety of demonstrations, clinics, and other educational interactions with students. As ambassadors for the Armed Forces to students, citizens, and other countries, we ask that the Trump administration continue to support funding for U.S. military music ensembles.

ⁱ <http://azarts.gov/resources/arizona-arts-education-research-institute/>.

2010 Study showed significantly different access to music and arts education for Arizona's charter schools than for district schools. 80% of district schools representing 92% of student enrollment, and 30% of charter schools representing 42% of the charter school population, have either a highly qualified music or visual arts teacher. Comparatively, only 51% of district schools representing 69% of the student population, and 11% of charter schools representing 18% of the charter school population, have highly qualified teachers for both music and visual arts. – page 13 of 2010 Summary.

<http://www.createca.dreamhosters.com/artsed-dataproject/>

In California, a 2016 report shows that the lowest participation rates for students in arts education were students attending schools designated as elementary/high combination (22%), students in schools locale designation of "rural" (35%), charter schools (27%), where 75% or more of students are eligible for free/reduced lunch (35%), Title I school wide (36%) and where the majority of students in the school are African American (32%). – page 10 of the Executive Summary.



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