



The Music Education Policy Roundtable Directive: Maintaining the Arts as “Core”

Overview:

- ❖ 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).

Key Points:

- More than any other talking point, music advocates most often rely on the federally protected status of music and the other arts as “core” to the American academic experience in order to effectively make their case. Principals, administrators, school boards and parents alike, respect this definition and apply weight to it during budget cutting season (others won’t take music education seriously if we don’t).
- Constraints on funding continue to limit the prevalence of strong music education programs and, hence, the level at which such programs can, correspondingly, help students develop and achieve in the 21st century. Maintaining core academic subject status for the arts aids in increasing overall accessibility to such resources fundamental to the honing of effective programs, and, in turn, leaves a lasting impact on students’ lives (the benefits of music go beyond school).
- Music educators have, in past decades, developed a meaningful body of legislative, systemic, and research-oriented support for music and the other arts as part of a full and balanced education. ESEA’s definition of the arts as a core academic subject is the total embodiment of that statement, and an important benchmark for the cause.

Background:

As Congress, the U.S. Department of Education and the Obama administration continue their efforts to reform education policy both through legislative and regulatory maneuvers, music advocates must ensure that the current funding and programmatic directive that we, in the greater arts education community, have worked so very long and hard to advocate for and maintain, is not eroded or diminished in any way via the advancement of new measures. To that end, the protection of the “core academic status” of the arts is the primary objective of The Music Education Policy Roundtable in any ESEA reauthorization effort. We also seek to avoid the adoption of any related policy alterations that might also result in the “unintended consequence” of eroding the arts in education, in other ways.