



NAfME and the Music Education Policy Roundtable Support Emergency Federal Aid for Education

Background

The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic has been particularly harsh on states' ability to balance their budgets and adequately fund social services. According to the [Center on Budget and Policy Priorities](#), state budget shortfalls expected from COVID-19's economic fallout will total a cumulative \$555 billion over state fiscal years 2020-2022. These shortfalls will have extremely negative consequences for education, which is often a target for budget cuts. As cases of the virus continue to rise and states make plans for how to safely educate students during the pandemic, ensuring their ability to properly provide education services to America's students is critical.

Request

The National Association for Music Education and the Music Education Policy Roundtable call on Congress to appropriate \$200 billion in the next coronavirus emergency relief package to backfill state education budget shortfalls.

Maintaining ESSA's Commitment to a Well-Rounded Education Helps the Emotional Well-Being of Students

The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) enumerates music as part of a well-rounded education that should be available to all students. This becomes even more important during uncertain times as students increasingly need environments which support their social and emotional development. Music education has a multitude of benefits to support students' emotional well-being and help students cope with social isolation and the rapidly changing reality. Research indicates that music education has benefits for students in a variety of areas of [social emotional learning](#).

These characteristics are essential for students' development and we must ensure that students continue to have access to education that fosters them. We applaud members of Congress for beginning to address this issue in the CARES Act through the Education Stabilization Fund. However, this funding is proving inadequate to address education budget shortfalls and will not prevent students from losing access to a well-rounded education. Local education agencies have already begun to adjust curricular offerings for the coming school year and remove music courses that benefit students and their ability to cope with these troubling times.

Unlike the federal government, most state are constitutionally required to begin their fiscal years on time and with balanced budgets. As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, states are unable to do this without federal aid or draconian budget cuts. We urge Congress to address the needs of the states and the needs of our nation's children in the next relief package, and appropriate \$200 billion for education budgets.