

State Music Education Association

Advocacy Grant Program

The most important advocacy actors for music education at the state level are the state music education associations (MEAs) affiliated with the National Association for Music Education (NAfME). MEAs are active in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, the country of India, and in support of U.S. Department of Defense schools located in Europe. MEAs work with NAfME toward the general goal of advancing music education by promoting the understanding and making of music by all.

In March of this year, President Biden signed into law the American Recovery Plan, which included \$126 billion in funding for K-12 public education. This substantial investment in K-12 education is the third round of emergency funding to support schools during the pandemic. There is no better time to work at the state and local levels to restore music education, which has suffered during the pandemic, and build stronger music education programs that are accessible to all students. State level advocacy can assist music educators in understanding how these funds will make it to their school districts and how to engage in requesting funds to build more equitable music programs. In addition, state level advocacy is key to ensuring students can resume singing and playing in person while mitigating the risks of the pandemic. State MEAs have taken the lead in requesting state level guidance that is based on research and best practice.

The Country Music Association (CMA) Foundation understands the need to create advocacy resources at the state level. Guided by the generosity of the country music community, the CMA Foundation focuses on improving and sustaining music education programs everywhere while supporting worthwhile causes important to the Country Music Association. Since its inception, the CMA Foundation has given more than \$27 million to organizations enhancing the lives of students through the power of music.

CMA is partnering with NAFME to administer State Music Education Association Advocacy Grants to support the work of our state MEAs with the goal of augmenting existing advocacy initiatives and creating new advocacy opportunities.

GRANT DETAILS AND TIMELINE

- NAFME will open the application process on May 10, 2021.
- NAFME will accept applications from state MEAs through June 30, 2021.
- CMA will select up to five award winners and will announce them in partnership with NAFME in August, 2021.
- Grants will be distributed for work to be accomplished between September 1, 2021, and August 30, 2022.
- Grant awards will range between \$3,000-\$5000, though exceptions may be made for innovative ideas with a cost above this range. Up to five applicants may be chosen.
- The purpose of these grants is to provide seed money to either enhance advocacy initiatives or start new initiatives. They are not available to serve as funding for existing initiatives.
- Applications are to be submitted to both NAFME and CMA Foundation by emailing Tooshar Swain at tooshars@nafme.org and Falon Keith at fkeith@cmaworld.com.

CRITERIA FOR SELECTION

Only projects in the area of advocacy will be considered. Innovative ideas tailored to a state's advocacy needs are strongly encouraged. These may include, but are not limited to:

- Providing guidance that promotes music education examples for the Elementary and Secondary Schools Emergency Relief Funding (ESSER Funding) from the American Rescue Plan or earlier stimulus funding (CARES Act, COVID Relief bill), the Every Student Succeeds Act and/or other supplemental funding opportunities for music education
- Helping advance legislation, initiatives, or policies that promote diversity, equity, and inclusion and that are culturally proficient and responsive
- Enhancing an MEAs Advocacy/Hill Day or helping facilitate an MEA's inaugural Advocacy/Hill Day
- Enhancing, implementing, or creating state music and arts standards
- Building coalitions with traditional and non-traditional groups
- Advocating for stronger certification and licensure requirements
- Promoting access to the music teacher profession for candidates with diverse backgrounds
- Grassroots efforts using traditional methods and/or digital media

- Professional development sessions on advocacy for music educators, music education parents, and/or other stakeholders either in-person or virtually through the state MEA and with state MEA partners

*All activities must follow your state’s lobbying laws and regulations.

RESTRICTIONS

- No grant money can be used to acquire professional lobbyists or additional staff.
- All grant money must be used for advocacy efforts for the federated state organization applying. No grant money may be used for an affiliate or other organization.

COMPLIANCE WITH STATE LOBBYING LAWS AND REGULATIONS

All U.S. states and territories regulate “lobbying activities” – this can include attempts to influence legislative decisions and/or executive branch decisions regarding existing or proposed laws, rules, regulations, policies, or other government actions. State lobbying laws vary significantly across the country. In some states, only the lobbyist, the person actually communicating with public officials, must register and file disclosure reports. In other states, the lobbyist and the person or entity compensating the lobbyist – often called a “lobbyist principal” or “lobbyist employer” – must register and file reports. Many states also regulate “grassroots lobbying” – efforts to encourage members of the public to communicate with officials about issues. In addition, the amount and type of information that must be provided in a lobbying registration or report can vary from state to state.

Each applicant is responsible for determining whether the activities to be performed as part of their project will constitute regulated lobbying. The applicant is also responsible for complying with all lobbying registration and reporting requirements, including ascertaining who must register, the applicable registration fees, and the information that must be disclosed in the registration and periodic reports.

Application

STATE MUSIC EDUCATION ASSOCIATION NAME:

STATE MUSIC EDUCATION ASSOCIATION APPLICANT CONTACT:

EMAIL:

PHONE NUMBER:

ADDRESS:

What have been some of the biggest obstacles in your state that prevent access to music education for all students?
What work has your MEA done to try to address these obstacles?

What are your advocacy goals for the 2021-2022 school (fiscal) year?

How has your MEA advocated for music education at the state and local level, and how have you demonstrated a commitment to the broader cause of advocacy for music education?

How do you anticipate using the State Music Education Association Advocacy Grant to improve your advocacy efforts in FY2022?

How will you know you were successful at the end of the granting period? What will you have done as a state MEA? What metrics will you use to determine success? What will have changed because of your work?

What (if any) challenges do you anticipate along the way?

Provide a brief budget outlining how you will spend the State MEA Advocacy Grant program dollars if awarded. Please provide a timeline for grant execution.

Provide an estimate of the funds you currently spend on advocacy-related activities.

What additional information would you like to share to help us better understand your vision for your State MEA Advocacy Grant application?