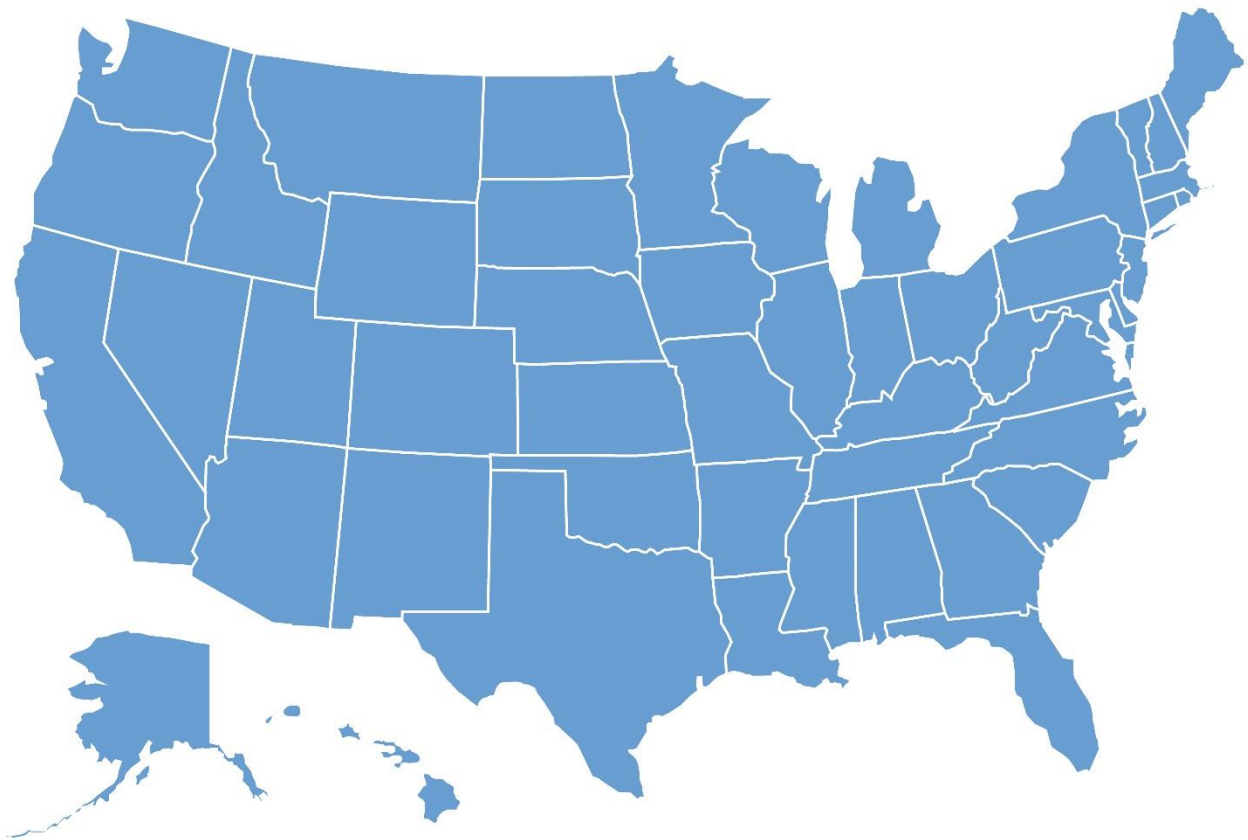




# State Standards Adoption and The 2014 Music Standards





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Released on June 4, 2014, the [National Core Arts Standards](#), including the [2014 Music Standards](#), are **voluntary** in nature, as are all national standards in the United States. In order for the Music Standards to become required for use in a school or district, a state must adopt or adapt the standards through a formal, regulatory process. While the Music Standards were written by the field and for the field of music educators, NAFME and the members of the [National Coalition for Core Arts Standards](#) **fully expect states to spend time reviewing and revising the Music Standards to fit the needs of the music educators and music programs in their state.** This formal process of revision allows state Music Education Associations (MEAs) and individual music education leaders the opportunity to participate and create the best set of music standards for their state's students.

## The Path to Adoption

Every state has its own path to standards adoption, based on its own set of educational law and rules. In this section, the term adoption refers to the creation and acceptance of a new or revised set of state level arts standards by a state authorizing body, most often the [State Board of Education](#). This can include adopting the Music Standards outright, or revising them to meet the local needs of the state. The pieces outlined below are the common steps found in the adoption of a new set of state standards, regardless of the amount of revision anticipated. To learn more about your state's own pathway to standards adoption, NAFME recommends you contact your state's [SEADAE member](#). [SEADAE](#) members are the arts education consultants for state departments of education, and are normally involved in the revision of state arts standards. They can update you on the timeline for revision for your state, as well as the individual steps your state takes to revise standards.

Common Steps	Music Educator Involvement
<p>1. <b>Creation of a Standards Revision Committee</b></p>	<p>A state will put out a <a href="#">call to the field</a>, asking individuals to participate as writers or revisers of arts standards. <b>Most</b> states will revise all arts areas (dance, media arts, music, theatre and visual arts) at the same time. A few states do this one discipline at a time (e.g. Kansas).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Are you on the list that will receive this call via email or social media? How does your state alert educators to the opportunity to serve?</li> <li>• Are you willing to serve? Standards revision is a large undertaking, and requires time above and beyond your normal teaching duties. Consider applying only if you can commit to the timeline included in the call for writers.</li> </ul>
<p>2. <a href="#">Survey of the field on use of current state arts standards</a></p>	<p>A state will put a call out to educators for their opinions on the current set of state standards. This will be done with a deadline to receive input, utilizing online and sometimes paper surveys. A state will most likely also welcome and collect written comments received via email during this review time as well.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Again, will you be asked for your opinion? How does this information get shared by the Department to educators? Is it all online? Are there in person meetings to attend?</li> <li>• Can you tell if the state is interested in utilizing the 2014 Music Standards in the revision process? Can you request that they do so?</li> </ul>
<p>3. <b>Drafting of a revised set of arts standards</b></p>	<p>The revision committee, made up of practitioners and others (higher education faculty, community members, parents, administrators), will meet and draft a revised set of arts standards. They utilize the input from the survey to the field, as well as the state’s current arts standards and other standards, including the National Core Arts Standards, as resources in the revision process.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Does the revision committee include music education leaders in your state? Does the revision committee include music educators representing the broad range of music offerings in your state, K-12?</li> </ul>
<p>4. <b>Publishing a first draft for <a href="#">input from the field</a></b></p>	<p>A state may share early drafts of the revised standards for input from you – the practitioner. This round of sharing is meant to shape revisions to meet the needs of the field. Taking the time to participate in the early draft process is crucial if you wish to influence the final end product!</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Do you know when the drafts are available for review?</li> <li>• Is the state holding in person meetings? Online meetings? Just releasing the drafts with a survey? What are the ways in which you can participate?</li> <li>• Have you participated in giving thoughtful feedback on the drafts?</li> </ul>
<p>5. <b>Revising the draft arts standards based on field input</b></p>	<p>The revision committee will meet and revise the draft based on input from the field.</p>

**Repeat steps 4 and 5 as necessary. A state may release multiple drafts of the standards based on the state's timeline and requirements of state education law and rule. Check with your SEADAE member or MEA leadership to learn more about what's the "norm" for your state – and remember to participate when asked for your input!**

<b>6. Present a final public draft to the authorizing body for review</b>	<p>A final, public draft is given to the adoption body, in most states, this is the State Board of Education. To learn which body has authority in your state, visit <a href="#">this webpage</a> – and click through to learn more! The adoption body will review the draft and create an opportunity for public input on that draft through the state's formal adoption process. This usually includes posting on a specific public website, including a survey for input, and often will include in person or live meetings where people can come give testimony about the draft set of standards.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Do you know how your state handles standards adoption? Do you know where to find notice of public meetings or opportunities for input?</li></ul>
<b>7. <a href="#">Formally adopt the final version of the arts standards</a></b>	<p>The adoption body formally adopts the revised standards. If major revisions have been requested in the public review of the draft standards, this step may be delayed and steps 4-6 repeated until a new draft incorporating the major changes has been created.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Where and when do formal adoption meetings take place in your state? How can you participate if you would like to?</li><li>• Where are results from these formal meetings posted?</li></ul>

## Opportunities for MEAs and Music Education Leadership

Regardless of the steps involved in your state's adoption process of new arts standards, there are opportunities for participation throughout for music education leaders. These opportunities help support the creation of a quality new set of music standards for the students in your state –and for use by your peers! Links below are to examples from states where state Music Education Associations have stepped up and participated in the revision process. If you have an example to share showcasing how you have partnered with your state in this process, email the example to [lynnt@nafme.org](mailto:lynnt@nafme.org).

## Advocacy Checklist for the State Standard Adoption Process

1. **Be on the Planning Team for the New Standards.** Is your state MEA involved in the planning for revised arts standards in your state? Can you be involved?
2. **Serve as Chair of the Music Standards Revision Team.** Is leadership from your state MEA involved in the revision – is it appropriate for MEA leadership to serve as chair on the Revision Team? [Are members of your MEA leadership part of the revision team?](#)
3. **Be in conversation with the state leaders of the other discipline service organizations** in your state? If you are not already in contact, check out these links to [state art education associations](#), [state dance education organizations](#), [state thespian chapters](#) and [state arts action network members](#) to learn how to get in touch and organize together in support of revising your state's arts standards.
4. **Help put out the call to your members.** Your state MEA can help alert the field to opportunities to serve – as reviser of the state music standards or to give input on the current standards and/or input on the drafts created in the revision process. Most states are looking for as many outlets as possible to alert educators about the opportunity to give input.
5. **Broadcast the standards revision information in [your communication vehicles](#)**, as well as online, and via social media. Are you [hosting sessions on the drafts at your conference](#) or festivals? Again, partnering with the state and helping them create as transparent a review process as possible is a wonderful asset to bring to the state standards process.

6. **Help identify expert reviewers** if utilized in your state’s revision process. Often, states will include “[expert reviews](#)” of final drafts along with public reviews. Can your state MEA help identify an expert reviewer – either in state or out of state?
7. **Provide public testimony or letters of support** for a revised set of standards. Providing statements of support, while advocacy, are also opportunities to point out the credibility of the new set of standards, emphasizing that they were created by the field, with the field and with input from music educators.
8. **Provide Professional Development following state standards adoption.** Once the adoption process is completed and a new set of music standards exist for your state, what role can you and your state MEA play in helping the field understand the new standards and embrace them in their music classrooms? Here are some ideas on how to make that happen:
  - a. Feature articles on the new standards in your state magazine
  - b. Feature keynotes and workshops at your state conference on the new standards
  - c. Invite members of the standards writing team to provide conference workshops and newsletter articles
  - d. Provide online support for the new standards
    - i. Link your state MEA website to the new music standards online
    - ii. Create podcasts or other short videos introducing your colleagues to the new standards
    - iii. Link to other online resources in support of the new standards
  - e. Develop a lesson bank of plans aligned to the new standards
  - f. Provide a crosswalk from your previous standards to the new standards

## State Adoption FAQs

- 1. Our State MEA is interested in advocating for a revision of our state’s music standards, but we are told by the State Department of Education that we need to wait our turn. What does that mean?**

Many states have set timelines and schedules for when standards are revised or adopted through the formal process. In some states, the legislature has to authorize the process and when it will begin, adding an additional hurdle to getting started. For states such as OH and FL, which revised their state standards while the national standards were being revised, chances are that their state standards won’t be up for revision for several years (2017 for OH) until the schedule allows for revisions again.

In addition, states stopped their revision/adoption cycles following two upheavals to their state education systems:

- The adoption of the Common Core State Standards, which included adopting new standards for two content areas simultaneously – English Language Arts and Mathematics – and then building the assessment infrastructure to assess to the new standards.
- The Great Recession, which cut back state budgets and halted many state level adoption processes due to lack of funds.

2014-2015 saw many states start to tackle standards revision in a variety of subjects. If you are being told to wait, it may be because other subjects are in the queue ahead of the arts for revision, such as science and social studies. Arizona and Montana chose to do the arts and other “non-controversial” subjects first to help “startup” the adoption process again after the hiatus created by Common Core and the Great Recession.

1. If you are being asked to wait at the back of the line, you may want to [share the successes from Arizona](#) as a model for your state to consider. In 2015, Arizona unanimously adopted new Arts, Physical Education and Foreign and Native Language Standards, even with a highly politicized State Board of Education.
2. In addition, you can always help the state gather [baseline data](#), such as surveying the field on the usage of your current state standards, to help jumpstart the process once you are at the front of the line.
3. Finally, you may wish to create a [crosswalk between your current state standards and the Music Standards](#) to show what is already in alignment with the new national standards and what isn’t.



- 2. Our state MEA is interested in advocating for revision of our state music standards, and we have had some success with our relationship building at the state. We are now finding, however, that the players keep changing at the state level, and they are telling us to wait.**

**What can we do?**

While it can be frustrating to re-educate an ever-changing landscape of political appointees and staff, building, maintaining, and re-building relationships with policymakers is an on-going part of advocacy. Thank you for having built quality relationships to the point of *almost* forward momentum! Will the messaging you utilized successfully with prior leaders work with the new ones? Are there other music advocates in your community with positive connections to the new leaders that you can utilize in your advocacy? Are there additional partners in the arts education community, such as state level [art](#), [dance](#), and [theatre](#) teacher associations, or your [state Citizens for the Arts organization](#), which could help move forward these conversations? Continue to work every avenue, and thanks for your continuing patience to build and maintain relationships over time!

- 3. While our state MEA is interested in the new Music Standards, we have invested a lot in the current set of state standards, and those standards are tied to significant projects of ours. Is it OK to wait on advocating for changes to our state standards until we can build a purposeful timeline for that change?**

Of course! Again, NAFME and the National Coalition for Core Arts Standards fully expect each state to approach the use and utilization of the new National Core Arts Standards as needed to fit the needs of your state. As you build out a timeline that meets the needs of other policy tools you have helped create (assessments, teacher evaluation tools, instructional time requirements), you may want to engage your colleagues in [creating a crosswalk](#) between your current state music standards and the Music Standards. That crosswalk can then help you determine the level of change that will be required if your state chooses to revise their music standards based on the new national set of standards.

**4. How do I approach my state with the possibility of adopting or adapting the Music Standards when they are branded as Core Music Standards? Core is an ugly word right now in my state.**

Not only did states stop the “normal” routine of revising and adopting standards due to the Great Recession and the advent of Common Core standards, but the entire standards development and adoption process became deeply politicized. Many factors have contributed to that politicization, including the controversy surrounding the Common Core State Standards. The Common Core standards have been viewed as being mandated by the federal government, and so any standards affiliated or associated with the Common Core brand are deemed to be federally mandated as well.

As far as the Music Standards are concerned, nothing could be further from the truth:

1. The Music Standards are not part of, nor have ever been a part of, the Common Core State Standards. The [CCSS](#) were developed utilizing a very different process, and with a very different level of transparency. NAFME prides itself and the work of the National Coalition for Core Arts Standards in making certain music and arts educators were [invited into the process of revising our national standards every step of the way](#).
2. With the exception of funding professional artists to meet with the standards writing teams in 2013, **no federal funds were utilized in the creation of the Music Standards.**
3. National in the context of these standards means that revision team members came from throughout the country, and were organized utilizing your national service organization, NAFME. **In addition, these new standards were created in partnership with the states** through SEADAE, the organization of state department of education directors’ of arts education. [States were surveyed](#) during the development of the new national standards to make certain state needs were being met in the creation of a new set of national standards. The states responded resoundingly that they wanted an updated set of national standards, and, in fact, several states promised to hold off on their standards revision calendar in order to use a new set of national standards in their revision process.
4. **The federal government is not mandating that states use these new standards at all, nor are the national associations affiliated with these standards, including NAFME.** As mentioned up front, the expectation is for every state to revise and adapt these standards to fit the needs of their local schools and communities.
5. The use of the term core in the overall title of National Core Arts Standards merely refers to the fact **that the arts are, and should be, core academic subjects.** This is recognized at the federal and state level in educational policy, including the [Every Student Succeeds Act](#) (title viii), which includes music and the arts as well-rounded educational subjects.