Guarantee Access to Arts and Music Education Act of 2023 (GAAME ACT)

Rep. Nydia Velazquez

The role of music in providing students with a well-rounded education cannot be forgotten, and we must ensure that students across the nation have equitable access to this valuable resource. ESSA enumerated music and the arts as part of a well-rounded education in 2015, opening pathways to federal funding previously unavailable. Federal funding streams have increased the availability of music and the arts in schools, but we are still far from providing equitable access to those courses across the country. A research study conducted in 2022 found that only 17% of American public high schools offered music and all three major arts disciplines (visual art, dance, theater), and that schools which lacked access to music and major arts disciplines were disproportionately located in low-income areas or had student populations that were majority BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, People of Color). The GAAME Act will further incentivize federal funds to be used to improve access to music and the arts for disadvantaged and low-income students, taught by certified arts and music educators.

The GAAME Act will amend the Elementary and Secondary School Act (ESEA) to encourage the use of Title I funds to:

1. Bolster the number of certified music and arts educators available.
2. Purchase equipment for music and arts courses (sheet music, instruments, etc.)
3. Provide further professional development for certified music and arts educators
4. Improve access to sequential, standards-based arts and music education taught by certified educators.