



The Music Education Policy Roundtable is a public policy coalition that advocates for a high-quality music education for all students. This collaborative group—comprising more than 115 music organizations, trade associations, and businesses—is unified in its commitment to advancing federal legislation that supports and expands access to robust music education programs in schools nationwide. Through a shared set of legislative recommendations, we aim to translate our core beliefs into action: music education should be delivered by certified music educators through sequential, standards-based instruction and made available to all students, regardless of personal circumstance or background.

Despite the proven value of music education, nearly four million students across the country still lack access to music instruction in their schools. Especially in low-income and rural areas, these gaps often mean that students miss out on the many benefits of music education. Research has shown that these programs support academic achievement, reduce absenteeism, and promote students' overall development. At the federal level, “music and the arts” were formally recognized as part of a well-rounded education in the 2015 reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), known as the Every Student Succeeds Act. This recognition highlighted the value of music education and expanded access to federal funding streams that support arts instruction in public schools. While federal education programs continue to play a critical role in supporting music education nationwide, increased investment is necessary to ensure equitable access to a comprehensive education that includes music and the arts.

Federal Appropriations

Supporting Students

Title I — Intended to provide all children significant opportunity to receive a fair, equitable, and high-quality education, and to close educational achievement gaps.

- We request funding of **\$18.68 billion** in FY 2027.

Title IV, Part A — A flexible block grant program that supports a well-rounded education (including music and the arts), safe and healthy students, and the effective use of technology.

- We request funding of **\$1.6 billion** in FY 2027.

Nita M. Lowey 21st Century Community Learning Centers — A competitive grant program that provides financial support to local communities for after-school, before-school, and summer learning programs for students in low-performing schools.

- We request funding of **\$2.09 billion** in FY 2027.

Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) — Provides funding for special education services and supports to ensure students with disabilities receive a free appropriate public education, including access to music and arts learning opportunities.

- We request funding of **\$16.66 billion** in FY 2027.
- We also request that Congress explore pathways for the federal government to provide **40% of funding** for IDEA.

Supporting Innovation in Music and the Arts

Assistance for Arts Education Program — Supports professional development for arts educators, accessible instructional materials, and strengthened partnerships among schools, districts, and arts organizations.

- We request funding of **\$40 million** in FY 2027.

National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) — Regularly awards arts education grants that support direct learning and increased skills in the arts through activities offered by school districts, arts organizations, or community arts groups.

- We request funding of **\$213 million** in FY 2027.

Supporting a Well-Prepared and Experienced Educator Workforce

Title II — Supports student achievement by strengthening the skills and expertise of educators and principals, and by increasing the number of effective educators in schools.

- We request funding of **\$3 billion** in FY 2027.

Augustus F. Hawkins Centers of Excellence Program — Supports comprehensive teacher preparation programs at Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs), Tribal Colleges and Universities, and other minority-serving institutions.

- We request funding of **\$30 million** in FY 2027.

Federal Legislation

Arts Education for All Act (H.R.2485), introduced by Representative Suzanne Bonamici (OR–01)

We urge passage of the Arts Education for All Act, which would expand arts education opportunities for early learners, K–12 students, and youth involved in the juvenile justice system. The bill would:

- Support professional development for arts educators and strengthen oversight of arts education programs under ESEA
- Require research on arts education through the National Center for Education Research
- Mandate data collection on arts education through the National Center for Education Statistics

HBCU Arts Act (H.R.2664/S.4496), introduced by Representative Alma Adams (NC–12) and Senator Angela Alsobrooks (MD)

We urge passage of the HBCU Arts Education Act, which would amend the Higher Education Act to allow federal HBCU grant funds to support arts, arts education, and cultural programs. New allowable uses include:

- Financial assistance for students in arts and cultural programs
- Outreach programs and development offices for arts and cultural departments
- Comprehensive wraparound student services, including mentorship, work-based learning, counseling, and career advising
- Apprenticeships, internships, and fellowships developed in partnership with nonprofit organizations

Reimagining Inclusive Arts Education Act (H.R.3852), introduced by Representative David Scott (GA–13)

We urge passage of the Reimagining Inclusive Arts Education Act, which would expand access to music and arts education for students nationwide, particularly in underserved and underfunded communities. The bill would:

- Provide grants to support the professional development of arts educators
- Fund inclusive curricula, adapted lesson plans, and accommodations for a wider variety of students
- Prioritize funding for Title I schools to ensure arts educators with fewer resources have access to professional development opportunities

Equitable Arts Education Act (H.R.5399), introduced by Representative Sydney Kamlager-Dove (CA–37)

We urge passage of the Equitable Arts Education Act, which would expand access to arts education by providing dedicated funding to Minority-Serving Institutions. The bill would:

- Establish a competitive grant program for Minority-Serving Institutions to support arts education initiatives
- Provide financial assistance and wraparound support for students in arts, arts education, and cultural programs
- Expand paid apprenticeships, internships, and fellowships through partnerships with nonprofit organizations
- Broaden the definition of the arts to include diverse disciplines and practices

Supporting Program Infrastructure and Research

Federal Data Collection and Reporting

Comprehensive federal data collection and reporting of arts education—including gaps in access, participation, and quality—are essential to ensuring that all students have access to high-quality arts learning opportunities.

We urge the immediate reinstatement of federal arts education data collection—previously conducted by the Institute of Education Sciences and the National Assessment of Educational Progress—to address gaps in access, participation, and quality.

To learn more about the Music Education Policy Roundtable, visit bit.ly/NAfMEMEPR.