



**National Association
for Music Education**

Music Education Rapid Response Plan

This resource is designed to support educators and advocates who are working to respond **quickly** and **effectively** to proposed cuts to music education programs.

Situation Overview:

- Is the root cause of the proposed cut(s) or reduction(s) related to budget cuts, staffing reductions, or changes in course offerings?
 - **If budget or staffing challenges are cited:**
 - Are reductions being applied equitably across all academic subjects?
 - What criteria are being used to determine which courses are being affected?
 - **If curricular offerings are cited:**
 - Are reductions being considered in other curricular areas as well?
 - How are decisions made regarding which courses or programs are being reduced or eliminated?
- What other reductions/eliminations are being considered?
- Is there an opportunity for public engagement, such as a board meeting or public town hall, before the decisions are final? If so, when and where?
- Where does this decision originate (school board, superintendent, or state)?
- Does the reduction or elimination of these courses/classes result in noncompliance with state requirements/music education policies?
 - [Arts Education Partnership \(AEP\) ArtScan](#) provides an overview of state policies.

Collect Impact Data:

- How many students are currently served by music education?
 - What positive connections can be made to student engagement and academic performance? (attendance, GPA, graduation rates, school culture/identity)
 - What positive impact does the music program have on the broader school community? (performances, parent engagement, service projects, economic impact for local retail providers)
 - Music courses can typically hold a larger student capacity. Where will those students go if courses are reduced or eliminated?
 - What awards and/or recognitions have been received by students, schools, or the district ([NAMM Best Communities](#), All-State, state recognitions)?
 - How will these cuts impact the K–12 educational continuum for music education?
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Coalition Partners:

- Who can be engaged in support of these advocacy efforts?
 - Parents/caregivers, students/alumni, colleagues (K–12 vertical alignment educators and non-music/arts educators)
 - Music-related businesses (vendors, performance venues, private studios)
 - Community organizations or business leaders
 - State legislators
 - Who can influence decision-makers?
 - Can news media get involved?
 - Example: [Alaska Public Media News Article](#)
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Questions for Decision-Makers:

- What criteria are being used to determine reductions/cuts?
- Are there reductions in non-student-facing positions to consider?
- How does the reduction or elimination of these courses/classes result in noncompliance with state music education requirements and policies?
- Did the district research other examples of school districts that preserved music and arts education in the face of budget cuts? (e.g., [Mesa Public Schools](#); [Fort Worth ISD](#))
- Are music/arts courses disproportionately being cut or eliminated? If yes, how do the decision-makers plan to address this inequity?
- How will the board conduct and share an impact analysis if these classes or courses are eliminated?

Talking Points and Next Steps:

Alignment with District's Strategic Plan:

- How does music education support the strategic goals of the district?
 - Student engagement
 - Academic achievement
 - Equity and access
 - Community connections
 - Workforce readiness
- Talking Points:
 - Music education directly exemplifies [\[district goal\]](#).”
 - “Cutting music education undermines our commitment to [\[district goal/mission\]](#).”
 - “These courses align with [\[district plan/goal\]](#), therefore setting students and educators on the path to success.”
 - “Music education strengthens durable skills such as collaboration, communication, and critical thinking skills that employers and higher education consistently value.”

Student and Community Testimony:

- Collect stories from:
 - Students (impact on learning and school engagement)
 - Parents (student growth and commitment to education)
 - Community (community identity and economic value)

Next Steps:

- How will the testimony and solutions be submitted to decision-makers (e.g., written correspondence, speech, or online petition)?
 - Consider using the “[Advocating for Music Education](#)” template letter to present to the board or create a letter-writing campaign.
- What is the timeline to get in front of decision-makers?
 - Are there deadlines to submit public comments?
- Who will carry the message to decision-makers?
 - If speaking at a public meeting, consider having several speakers ask questions of decision-makers using the “Questions for Decision-Makers” section above.
 - If time is limited in public meetings, encourage supporters to stand and be recognized during a speech.
- Who will be responsible for follow-up and future relationship building?
- How can you amplify your outcome?
 - Consider sharing an update with supporters and posting on social media.

Additional Resources:

- [Why Music Education Is Important flyer](#)
 - [NAfME Advocacy Leadership Force Representative](#)
 - [NAfME Local Advocacy Action Plan](#)
 - [NAfME Coalition Toolkit](#)
 - [NAfME Opportunity to Learn Standards](#)
 - [Arts Education Partnership \(AEP\) ArtScan](#)
 - [Federal Funding to Support Arts Education](#)
 - [Music Is Education Coalition](#)
 - [NAMM SupportMusic Coalition: Connect with music industry partners](#)
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Final Thoughts:

As content experts and advocates, you are the key to collaborative solutions. Position music education courses as essential to student engagement and success, thus aligning with district goals.



About NAfME

The [National Association for Music Education \(NAfME\)](#) is a collaborative community that supports music educators and advocates for equitable access to music education. The only association that addresses all aspects of music education, NAfME, together with its affiliated state music education associations, advocates at the national, state, and local levels and provides resources and opportunities for teachers, students, parents, and administrators. Founded in 1907 and representing more than 57,000 members teaching millions of students, NAfME advances the music education profession and promotes lifelong experiences in music.