

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

New Harris Poll Links Music Education to Advanced Studies and Higher Incomes



National Association for Music Education and Artist Steven Van Zandt Endorse Findings

No Child Left Behind Act is Leaving Music Education Behind, Despite Proven Benefits

Washington, DC – At an event with actor and musician "Little" Steven Van Zandt and MENC: The National Association for Music Education, Harris Interactive today released an independent poll which shows a positive association of music with lifelong educational attainment and higher income. Nearly nine in ten people (88 percent) with post graduate degrees participated in music education. Further, 83 percent of those with incomes higher than \$150,000 or more participated in music.

With the No Child Left Behind Act currently up for reauthorization in Congress, a discussion on music education is more important right now than ever. Music is recognized, on paper, as a core academic subject but with actual testing in only a narrow range of subjects, music is usually one of the first programs to be cut.

"Research confirms that music education at an early age greatly increases the likelihood that a child will grow up to seek higher education and ultimately earn a higher salary. The sad irony is that 'No Child Left Behind' is intended to better prepare our children for the real world, yet it's leaving music behind despite its proven benefits," said Dr. John Mahlmann, Executive Director of MENC: The National Association for Music Education. "While music clearly corresponds to higher performing students and adults, student access to music education had dropped about 20 percent in recent years, thanks in large part to the constraints of the No Child Left Behind Act."

Musician, actor and music education activist Steven Van Zandt adds, "Obviously, music is a big part of my life and I've had remarkable experiences as part of the music industry. That is why I am now combining my life's work and my passion for music education. The Harris Poll and other studies like it document the fact that you don't have to be a rock star to benefit from music education. Music benefits everyone in all walks of life. Through my Rock and Roll Forever Foundation, I am working with professional music educators on the development of 'Little Steven's Rock and Roll High School.' This curriculum will be available at no cost to schools and can help future generations learn about music, history, culture and the arts – all through Rock and Roll."

"If you want to be a CEO, college president or even a rock star, the message from this survey is: take music," Mahlmann added. "As with reading, writing and arithmetic, music should be a core academic focus because it is so vital to a well rounded education and will pay dividends later in life, no matter the career path taken."

Respondents of the Harris Poll cite skills they learned in music as helping them in their careers today. Seventy-two percent of adults with music education agree that it equips people to be better team players in their career and nearly six in ten agree that music education has influenced their creative problem solving skills. Many also agree music education provides a disciplined approach to problem solving, a sense of organization and prepares someone to manage the tasks of their job more successfully.

An earlier Harris study shows significantly higher graduation and attendance rates in schools with music programs (90.2 percent compared to 72.9 percent and 93.3 percent compared to 84.9 percent, respectively).

Other studies show the value of music programs to our future generations:

- Students in top quality music programs scored 22 percent higher in English and 20 percent higher in math on standardized tests mandated by the No Child Left Behind Act (University of Kansas)
- In 2006, SAT takers with coursework in music performance scored 57 points higher on the verbal portion of the test and 43 points higher on the math portion (The College Board, Profile of College-Bound Seniors National Report for 2006)

"Parents, educators, state legislatures and the Congress need to take these studies seriously. This relationship between music education and better performance in life is not accidental. How are we supposed to continue as a creative society without exposing our students to the arts? Rock and Roll shapes our culture and is the great equalizer among people of different racial, social and economic background. It belongs in the schools!" said Van Zandt.

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[Click here to view the Harris Poll Report](#)

Attributable Quotes: Dr. John Mahlmann

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Attributable Quotes: Steven Van Zandt

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About MENC

MENC: The National Association for Music Education, the world's largest arts education organization, marks its centennial in 2007 as the only association that addresses all aspects of music education. More than 130,000 members represent all levels of teaching from preschool to graduate school. Since 1907, MENC has worked to ensure that every student has access to a well-balanced, comprehensive, and high-quality program of music instruction taught by qualified teachers. MENC's activities and resources have been largely responsible for the establishment of music education as a profession, for the promotion and guidance of music study as an integral part of the school curriculum, and for the development of the National Standards for Arts Education.

About Harris Interactive

Harris Interactive is the 13th largest and one of the fastest-growing market research firms in the world. The company provides innovative research, insights and strategic advice to help its clients make more confident decisions which lead to measurable and enduring improvements in performance. Harris Interactive is widely known for The Harris Poll, one of the longest running, independent opinion polls and for pioneering online market research methods. The company has built what it believes to be the world's largest panel of survey respondents, the Harris Poll Online. Harris Interactive serves clients worldwide through its North American, European and Asian offices, and through a global network of independent market research firms. More information about Harris Interactive may be obtained at www.harrisinteractive.com.

About Little Steven's Rock and Roll High School

The Rock and Roll Forever Foundation: To educate and promote the history and achievements of Rock and Roll music as well as other traditional and modern music forms. To save, safeguard, archive, and collect important Rock and Roll and other musical documents, histories, or artifacts. To preserve original analogue tape master recordings. To help save or safeguard important Rock and Roll music sites or venues, and to raise public awareness of the historical significance of certain music sites or venues. To provide scholarships, fellowships, or grants to young aspiring musicians. To teach the history of Rock and Roll and its origins and document its impact on our nation's and world culture. To donate or provide access to musical

instruments, training, recording equipment, and other musical skills to those who might otherwise not have the opportunity to receive them. To insure that the tremendous cultural and artistic benefits and achievements of Rock and Roll music be passed down to future generations.

Referenced Studies

[Examination of Relationships between Participation in School Music Programs of Differing Quality and Standardized Test Results](#)

Christopher M. Johnson and Jenny E. Memmott, University of Kansas
Journal of Research in Music Education, Winter 2006

[Understanding the Linkages Between Music Education and Educational Outcomes](#)

Harris Interactive
July 2006

[Choices, Changes, and Challenges Curriculum and Instruction in the NCLB Era](#)

Center on Education Policy
July 2007

[2006 College-Bound Seniors Total Group Profile Report](#)

The College Board