

School Board Endorsements - Advocacy Tips

Attend a school board meeting and have students ask the school board for a music education endorsement.

Sample Talking Points

Academic Benefits of Music

- Students in music programs scored 57 points higher in the verbal portion, and 47 points higher in the math portion of the SATs than students with no arts participation.
- Students who participated in music programs receive more awards and academic honors.
- In schools with strong music classes, cases of low self-esteem, shyness, and school delinquency are decreased.
- Schools with strong music programs have better school attendance.
- Schools with strong music programs have higher graduation rates, especially for minority students.

Challenges Facing Music Education

- A school budget crisis often turns into a music education crisis. Music cuts do not save most school districts money in the long run! bit.ly/MusicCutsBenham
- Music education classes often lack adequate funding.
- Music teachers are given inadequate instruction time to properly teach students.
- 94% of public schools have music programs; however, 57% receive an hour or less of instruction per week.
- Music classes held in inappropriate spaces (cafeteria, closets, etc.) often can result in inadequate learning or no learning at all.

Building Relationships

One of the most important elements of advocacy is relationship building. It is an element that is present in each step in the advocacy cycle and requires continuous maintenance and care. It is vital to ensuring the success of your current and future advocacy goals.

Parents, Boosters, and Community Arts Supporters

Parents, boosters, and community arts supporters are the strong base of grassroots support for music education. This network should be continuously built regardless of whether or not an advocacy campaign is in full swing. Some ideas for relationship building include:

- using email and social media to pass on monthly updates
- have an advocacy segment at booster meetings and concerts
- get community arts supporters to sign-up for Music Friends to keep them up-to-date on national issues
- Give updates at PTA/PTO meetings on occasion to reach other parents.

Media

The media is another group key to advocacy. When a crisis or a need arises, it is better to already have an established relationship with your local media. Introduce yourself to the local education reporter. Invite media representatives to concerts. Plan ahead for any media releases. Report ensemble results of your program to reporters via email. (Please note that most schools do not allow release of individual names or results because of privacy issues.) Newspapers want stories about students achieving great things!

Adapted from MENC Music for All-Students; Planning Music Education Advocacy

Music Education Resolution for School Boards

WHEREAS

The study of music contributes to young people's development through heightened skills in listening, reading, self-expression, and creativity; and

WHEREAS Music education in the schools includes a broad range of types of music and active musical experiences; and

WHEREAS Music and the other arts significantly enhance the morale and quality of the school environment; and

WHEREAS It is the stated objective of the public school to prepare children for a productive role in our society; and

WHEREAS The Oregon Music Education Association and NAFME: The National Association for Music Education has designated March as Music In Our Schools Month; now,

THEREFORE Be it resolved that the School Board of _____ in _____ School District, for its own part, rededicates itself to the maintenance of a music education program that will be relevant to the needs of the children placed in its care.

Date

School Board Signatures