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INTRODUCTION

Music and arts education programs can come under fire for many reasons – lack of funding, competition for class times, a shortage of qualified teachers, block scheduling, and lack of community support. Whatever the reason, there’s only one sure line of defense against losing a school music program – you.

By recent count, only 25% of public schools have a music program that extends through the 8th grade. If those of us who support music education stand by and watch, that percentage will only get smaller.

Thousands of you have used The Music Advocate’s Toolkit to help strengthen and save your local music programs. The American Music Conference (AMC) has received hundreds of letters of support from those of you who have devoted the time and energy to do something positive for your children. The materials in this updated kit are designed to help build a bridge between music advocates and those charged with making the hard decisions that chart the course on all education issues in your community.

There are volumes of material written about music education advocacy. Much of it addresses specific scenarios and goes into great detail on tactics and strategies. Our goal here is not to duplicate those efforts but to provide an introduction into the world of advocacy. The kit is focused on a single purpose — communicating the results of the latest music

and the mind research to your community, especially the local school board.

Creating dialogue and understanding between you as an advocate and your local school board can yield benefits for your kids in the here and now. This kit contains many helpful, proven tips that you can use today to guarantee that your kids will have music programs tomorrow.

The American Music Conference is committed to making its members better advocates by providing them with the tools, the facts and the plan on how to use them. While you don’t have to be an AMC member to be an advocate, we urge you to join AMC and help give the music community a powerful voice that will be heard by the American public and decision makers everywhere.

To learn more, visit the AMC Web site at www.amc-music.org. Kit materials and updates will be made available online. Also be sure to visit SupportMusic.com, the Web site of the Music Education Coalition. It features tools and topical information to help you build a great case for music in your local schools.

The contents of this kit are designed to arm you with the basic tools you need to be an effective music advocate. The tools work. Adapt them to your local situation and use them in your day-to-day efforts. Become a music advocate and help ensure a quality education for all our children.



What's Our Goal?

"If we could tell every school board in the nation about the research that shows how important music instruction is to academic achievement, we would declare a major victory."

-AMC Advocacy Task Force

What To Do First?

Advocating for music education is not complicated. It doesn't require a special degree. It just takes commitment. If you've never been an active advocate, we're here to help you get started. If you've got some experience, the materials in this kit will help make your efforts easier and more effective.

The first section of this book is a "quick start guide" — a short how-to, organized by topic. The guide won't cover each and every situation, so you'll find yourself adapting the tools to your own needs. We're assuming that you're a pretty clever individual and can bring your own creativity to the project. That's what this kit is all about.

Who Can Use This Kit?

Music education advocates come in all forms, and this kit will be helpful to all music advocates including:

- **Parent Groups**
- **Music Teachers**
- **Band Directors**
- **Music Retailers**
- **Arts Alliances**
- **Music Education Professors**

There will be nuances to the goals of each of these groups, but there is something here for all of them.

Who Can This Kit Influence?

The local school board is the grass roots point of contact for advocacy efforts. They are the decision-makers for every local district and are largely influenced by the will of the local population. Successful advocacy movements influence local decisions by demonstrating public support for their positions. This is our focused goal.

Showing district-wide support for music programs is a very powerful way to influence the decisions of the school board. The contents of this kit will help you organize that support and demonstrate it to the school board in a very clear way. The core of the kit is a PowerPoint® presentation that you can give to your local school board which summarizes the powerful “music and the mind” research that has been recently published. There are also other materials designed to help you make the presentation as effective as possible.

National associations and alliances focus their energy at the federal and state level. Many of these associations also offer materials and information to local advocates. Visit SupportMusic.com to join the national effort and register to receive the latest information.

Getting Familiar with the Kit

There is a lot of information in this kit, but it’s broken down into pieces that make it simple to understand and digest. All the computer files have been prepared using Microsoft Office. Other word processing and presentation applications may also be able to open, print and present the files.

Here’s a quick rundown of the sequence in which you should look at the pieces:

1. Watch the DVD, “VH1 News Special Report: The Case For Music Education.” You’ll get a sense for how the media has reported on music and the mind research as well as some important insights from Secretary of Education Rod Paige.
2. Read the “Learning to Play” brochure. This brochure contains very powerful information for parents and decision makers. We’ll suggest many ways to put the brochure to use.
3. Put the CD-ROM into your computer (PC or Mac). Open the file “ResourceList.pdf.” This file will give you easy access to all the resources on the CD-ROM. Clicking on any of the file names listed will automatically open the specific file. The application “Acrobat Reader” is necessary to view the Resource List. If you don’t have a copy of Acrobat Reader installed on your computer, a free copy of the latest version is included on the CD-ROM. Just double-click the Acrobat Reader Installer icon and follow the instructions.
4. From the ResourceList.pdf, view the PowerPoint Research Presentation (file name: ResearchPres.ppt), including the “Notes Pages” (under “view” menu). This research makes a compelling case for establishing, keeping and enhancing school music programs. It’s important for your local decision makers to acknowledge this research.
5. While you’ve got PowerPoint open, review “The Advocate’s Plan” presentation (file name: AdvocatesPlan.ppt), reading the “Notes Pages” (under “view” menu). This presentation will give you an excellent overview of the “ideal” and typical school districts as well as insight into school financial issues.
6. Read the rest of this guide book. It will give you a complete rundown of everything in the kit and how to use it.

“Learning to Play” Brochure

This is the workhorse of the kit. It highlights six important research studies and sends a clear message to parents that their kids can enjoy significant benefits if they enroll in their local school music program. Here are some suggestions:

- **Distribute it through music retail stores.**
- **Suggest that music directors send it to parents as part of their recruitment strategy.**
- **Send it to school board members.**
- **Distribute it at school concerts and recitals.**

Bulk quantities of the brochure are available from AMC. See the order form on the CD-ROM for ordering details (file name: OrderForm.pdf). There is also an electronic copy on the CD-ROM (file name: LearningToPlay.pdf).

The Music Advocate’s Guide

Making a School Board Presentation – Section 2

To make the right decisions, your local school board needs to have the right information. This section is a step-by-step guide to making sure that the school board gets that information and a sense of public support for music. The Research Presentation (file name: ResearchPres.ppt) provides the information in a compelling way.

You’ll see how to schedule the series of press releases to your local media, and how to communicate with the board to make your presentation most effective. And most importantly, you’ll have compelling content and a professional script to deliver your presentation with maximum impact.

Advocacy Tips – Section 3

Music advocates are people like you. Over the years, they’ve discovered strategies and tactics that work. In this section, we’ve summarized many of those strategies and tactics and organized them into a practical guide.

Financial Impact: A Case History – Section 4

Many school districts are unaware of the negative financial impact of losing a music program. In many cases, it costs a district more to replace music teachers with full-time equivalent staff. Noted advocacy expert Dr. John Benham has studied numerous school districts and has saved music programs around the country by presenting the hard facts to local school boards.

The PowerPoint presentation, “The Advocate’s Plan” (file name: AdvocatesPlan.ppt) outlines the budget process and helps us “lay people” understand some of the unique aspects of school budgeting.

This is an excellent presentation to make to an advocate’s group. This “case history” is an excellent example of what may be going on in your own district. It’s important information that every school music advocate should know.

DVD

Digital video programming is more flexible and useful in the computer age and this update of the Music Advocate’s Toolkit includes DVD video to better serve your needs. The new DVD is introduced by noted advocate and motivational speaker Dr. Tim Lautzenheiser. He’s appeared before hundreds of advocacy groups and has helped thousands of advocates to be more effective. Tim’s message is worth hearing – and remembering.

DVD – “VH1 News Special Report: The Case for Music Education”

Scientists, educators, policy makers, celebrities and kids talk about the positive effects of music education. First thing to do is to watch the DVD yourself. You'll probably realize, “So-and-so should see this.” Get it to them. You can also:

- **Offer it to music directors for parent’s night and to show to other teachers**
- **Show it to parent groups**
- **Distribute it to local facilities with waiting rooms (music studio, doctor, dentist, etc.)**
- **Show or distribute the DVD to local service groups (Rotary, Kiwanis, etc.) Note that there is a long program (A) and a short program (B) on the DVD to accommodate varying presentation time limits.**
- **Each program has chapter markers to give you instant access to various topics relating to music education.**
- **You are permitted (encouraged, actually) to duplicate the video programming onto DVD or VHS for school board members and other advocates if you wish.**

DVD – Video Public Service Announcements (PSAs)

Many recording artists started playing music in school and understand the difference that music can make in a young person’s life. Vanessa Carlton, Michael McDonald and Brian McKnight have created video public service announcements expressing their views.

Your local TV or cable outlets may use PSAs. We suggest you inquire through the station’s community relations department. The PSAs are available in broadcast – compatible BetaSP format from the American Music Conference. Contact Sharon McLaughlin at AMC – (760) 431-9124 or sharonm@amc-music.org – for more information.

Also, see the order form on the CD-ROM for ordering details for any additional materials (file name: OrderForm.pdf).

The CD-ROM

This is the heart of the toolkit. It contains all of the documents you’ll need to create a wide range of advocacy materials. They’re divided into three types of documents:

- **Complete “turnkey” documents, ready to print and use**
- **Nearly complete “customizable” documents where you add specifics, such as names, times and places before you print and use**
- **Building blocks and “info bites” that you can use in any communication situation such as newsletters, concert programs, and recruitment materials**

A printable pdf version of the guide book is also on the CD-ROM (file name: AdvocatesGuide.pdf). There is also a full list of the resources on the CD-ROM (file name: ResourceList.pdf) which will give you a fast and easy way to access any of the other files on the disk.

The range of materials includes handouts, mini-posters, flyers and other materials that you can print from your computer and use in your local music store and classrooms, plus celebrity radio Public Service Announcements (PSAs).

7.1 – Using the CD-ROM Resource List

When you first insert the CD-ROM, you will find a file named “ResourceList.pdf” in the contents window. We recommend you open this file first. The ResourceList.pdf will give you easy access to all of the files and resources on the CD-ROM without having to search through folders. It contains a complete list of the resources on the CD-ROM along with a short description. All the resources are linked to the pdf, so clicking on the file name will automatically open the file for you. Keep the CD-ROM in your computer whenever you use the Resource List.

The contents window will also show the Resources folder and Read Me file. The AdvocatesGuide.pdf is an on-screen version of this guide book.

7.2 –Presentations in PowerPoint

There are two Presentations on the CD-ROM – the Research presentation and The Advocate’s Plan Presentation. Both present excellent arguments supporting the establishment, continuation and support of school music programs.

The presentation can be delivered directly from a computer. If necessary however, most copy shops can output the visuals as 35mm slides or 8 1/2” x 11” overhead transparencies.

The Research Presentation covers the scientific research that supports the view that music training is a valuable component of whole-child education. Section Two contains a more complete description of the presentation.

The Advocate’s Plan Presentation shows advocates how to work effectively within the system. Education expert and long-time advocate Dr. John Benham passes along the benefits of his years of experience in this important presentation.

The educational system may seem complex and intimidating for the advocate, but this presentation cuts it down to size by focusing on the important role of the advocate who truly puts the “public” in public education. It clearly describes the decision-making process and the players, with excellent insights into the roles of each.

7.3 – Research Summaries

These are 8 1/2” x 11” mini-posters, each featuring a specific music/brain research study. They are Adobe Acrobat files that can be printed from your computer using Acrobat Reader. (A free copy of Acrobat Reader is on the CD-ROM.)

You can use the posters in the classroom and anywhere else where a quick message about music education is likely to be noticed. They have been used by advocates at music stores, teaching studios, back-to-school nights and at concert events.

7.4 – News Releases

The kit includes “fill-in-the-blanks” releases which are aimed at paving the way to a more effective school board presentation. See the Timeline in Section Two for hints about when to send the releases to the press. They also contain useful

summary information about music/brain research and local advocacy. The releases are in both Microsoft Word and Text formats.

The releases can be personalized by adding your name and the name of your local music advocacy group (look for the parentheses). Print the releases on letterhead if your group has it.

8.1 – Correspondence

The kit includes letters to help communicate important aspects of your advocacy program to the appropriate persons. Band directors, parent groups and music retailers have used these communications in email as well as snail mail.

They are ready for you to fill-in-the-blanks and are in both Microsoft Word and Text formats.

8.2 – Communication Assistants

There are many opportunities to inform parents of the benefits their kids receive from music study. Music department newsletters, band recruitment letters, concert programs, school newspapers and other communications.

We have organized “information bites” by topic and included them in Word files for you to cut and paste as you see fit.

We have also created several concert program cover templates. They feature the Einstein artwork from the cover of this kit along with compelling information about the benefits of music study. These are “editable pdfs” that can be opened in Acrobat Reader and personalized with your school information and then printed on a laser printer or by a press shop.

8.3 – Miscellaneous Advocacy Items

There are other useful items that don't quite fit into the above categories. They include charts, lists and forms to help increase your efficiency. Printable versions are included on the CD-ROM.

There are also two excellent essays on the impact of “No Child Left Behind” legislation. It is key for decision makers to understand that the arts are classified as “core academic subjects” and should be supported in the same way as other core subjects. These essays put the arts in the proper perspective and are convincing and credible tools for the advocate.

8.4 – Radio PSAs

NAMM, Sesame Workshop, MENC - The National Association for Music Education and VH1 Save The Music have produced wonderful 30 and 60-second radio public service announcements (PSAs). Each one features a famous artist (or in some cases, a famous Muppet) relating a strong message about the value of school music. We've included a “Best of ...” selection on the CD-ROM.

These PSAs are an excellent opportunity to “suggest” that your local radio stations consider using the spots as part of their community service responsibilities.

Note that some of the PSAs are edited to run in March, Music In Our Schools Month, others for Back to School time or any time during the year. The MENC CDs can be ordered using the form on the CD-ROM (file name: OrderForm.pdf).

9.1 – About the Files

The CD-ROM is both MAC and PC compatible. Here are some notes about the files:

- **Word processing documents are in Microsoft Word 6.0/98 (file suffix .doc) and should open in most other word processing programs with minor formatting differences.**
- **The files are also saved in “Text Only” (file suffix .txt) format which will contain all the copy without formatting or images. Use these files if your software can’t open the “.doc” files.**
- **Some Documents are in Portable Document Format (file suffix .pdf) and can be viewed or printed using Acrobat Reader. If you don’t have Reader installed on your computer, a free copy is included on the CD-ROM.**
- **The presentations are in Microsoft PowerPoint 98 (file suffix.ppt).**
- **The radio PSAs are standard audio files that will play on any CD player. When you insert the CD into your computer, you will see two disk icons. The icon labeled “Audio CD” will contain the PSAs.**
- **See the “Read Me” file on the CD-ROM for other technical issues.**



SECTION TWO MAKING A SCHOOL BOARD PRESENTATION

School board members are elected to represent their constituents in matters affecting the running of the school district. Most are sensitive to public opinion and appreciate knowing what's on your mind. In a free society you have an opportunity to show and tell them how you feel about the importance of music in your children's education.

Presentation in PowerPoint

In business and politics, PowerPoint is the preferred way to make a computer presentation. We have created a PowerPoint presentation for you to deliver to your local school board. The presentation covers the scientific research that supports the view that music training is a valuable component of whole-child education. It is an excellent way to inform your school board about the rising tide of music-brain research. It can help you head off a potential music program crisis before it develops, and can help build a case for music program reinstatement or establishment. It will take approximately 6 minutes to deliver and includes:

- **14 slides highlighting key research**
- **"Notes pages" with a suggested script for the presentation**

If you are not familiar with PowerPoint, we suggest giving it a whirl. It is a Microsoft® product and is included with the Office software suite. It's simple to learn the basics of the program, and this presentation is fairly basic. If you are not inclined to learn it, most copy shops can output the visuals as 35mm slides or 8 1/2" x 11" overhead transparencies.

Presentation Timeline

The first step in a successful presentation is to scout the terrain. Attend a meeting or two and observe the format and dynamics of a typical meeting. Introduce yourself to each board member as a concerned parent and get their names and titles.

Find out how often the board meets and how far in advance they schedule agenda items. This varies widely around the country, so ask the board secretary for the details of getting a presentation on the agenda.

In this day and age, a school board often finds itself under pressure on a number of fronts, and can be understandably wary of strangers bearing presentations. Before you request to make the presentation to the board, ease them into

the issue by sending each member a “Learning to Play” brochure. Use the “BrochtoBrd.doc” cover letter in the “Correspondence” folder on the CD-ROM.

The next order of business is to get your presentation on the school board meeting agenda. Use the “ReqtoBrd.doc” letter in the “Correspondence” folder on the CD-ROM.

Ideally, you’ll want to have 4 weeks before the presentation to conduct your press and advocacy efforts. Once you confirm the presentation date with the board, start your timeline ticking.

In some instances you may not have the full 4-week lead time. The best advice we can offer is to do the best you can with the hand you’re dealt.

4 WEEKS BEFORE

Send “Research” (file: Research.doc) press release to local media.

This 400+ word mini-feature will raise the issue of music and childhood development in your community. Getting the message out to the public is an important first step in setting the stage for a successful school board presentation.

Your local paper may be a daily, weekly or you may have both that serve your area. If the paper has a science, education or arts editor, send the release to them. If not, send it to the features editor. Also send the release to the local broadcast media. It will put the issue on their radar as well.

The releases have a fill-in-the-blanks format for you to put your name and your group’s name in the appropriate space. If your group has letterhead, use it for the release. If not, make sure that the editor has a contact name and number to call if necessary. Also make sure that the press contact (perhaps yourself) is available and able to answer questions about the release.

3 WEEKS BEFORE

Send “Support” (file: GroupSuprt.doc) press release to local media

The same media that received the “Research” release should get this one. Those members of the community who have read the “Research” release will see that there is a local group that supports music and the brain research. Make sure that you include the contact information for your group in the body of the story so interested individuals can call to join.

2 WEEKS BEFORE

Send “Presentation” (file: Presentn.doc) press release to local media

This will notify the public and the press of the specific time and place that they can hear the Music Makes You Smarter research for themselves

Order slides/overheads or schedule a projector for PowerPoint presentation

We suggest that you make arrangements to visit the boardroom and see what presentation format will work best. The board secretary should be able to tell you what equipment is available and how to schedule it for use.

1 WEEK BEFORE

Rehearse presentation

This can be done in the friendly environment of your advocacy group. You'll discover any rough spots and should be able to work out any specific potential problems.

Fax "Media Alert" (file: Medialrt.doc) to print and broadcast media

This is a specific announcement to the press requesting that they cover the meeting and your presentation. It is addressed to the "Assignment Editor" who will usually determine which journalist will be sent to cover the event.

Since radio and TV news are based on immediacy, rarely will they schedule advance coverage of events. You'll be more successful in getting broadcast coverage if it's a slow news day.

PRESENTATION DAY

Arrive in time to set up

You should double-check all your technical requirements with a call to the board logistics person on the morning of the presentation. Ask them how far in advance of the meeting start time they would like you to arrive for a tech check. Be ready to go when the time comes.

Delivering the Presentation in PowerPoint

If you have used PowerPoint, this is a straightforward 14-slide presentation. A suggested script is included as "notes pages" for each slide. The notes pages expand upon the information that is highlighted in each slide. They can be printed out so you can refer to the notes during your presentation. The "Print" menu will give you options for "Microsoft PowerPoint." Select "Notes Pages" from the "Print What" option.

This presentation takes approximately 6 minutes to deliver. If you have more time, we suggest showing the short or long form program on the DVD. If you show the DVD, make sure that you have an adequate sound system available. In concert, the presentation and DVD make a powerful case for music as a core subject in any elementary, middle or high school.





Strategic Tips for Music Advocacy

1. ALWAYS REMEMBER TO DEAL WITH STUDENT ISSUES

The School Board has to deal with complex political, legal and financial issues every day. As long as you keep focused on the students' welfare, your argument will have simplicity and clarity going for it.

2. KNOW THAT YOU CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE

It's been said that ten letters to a public official or decision-maker will put issues on their radar screen, twenty-five letters will make them explore the issue, and fifty letters can change a vote. Understand and use this knowledge to your benefit. Organize a letter-writing or email campaign as soon as you become aware of an issue and have crafted a position.

3. ESTABLISH PARTNERSHIPS

Join with other arts education advocates to urge adoption of the voluntary National Standards for Arts Education at the state and local level. Encourage schools to create relationships with state and local arts councils. Call your local music teachers regularly and offer to help. Offer to take the lead on issues when they come before the school board. This will keep the students' needs in front of the decision-makers and takes the focus off the music educator.

4. REACH OUT TO THE BUSINESS COMMUNITY

Request their support and arrange student performances or exhibitions in their workplace. Also offer to make the PowerPoint presentation to inform business and service groups about Music/Brain research.

5. SHOWCASE STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

Urge teachers to showcase students' achievement for parents and the community through concerts, performances, and exhibitions whenever possible. Schedule regular student performances at school board meetings. Include the information in this kit in concert programs to create awareness of the educational and developmental benefits of study.

6. SUPPORT PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Support your district's funding request to your state to ensure that professional development opportunities in the arts are provided for all

teachers and administrators. Lobby legislators to fund postgraduate teacher-training programs. Remember your letter to the legislator counts!

7. STRIVE FOR EQUITY

Ensure that all children in your school district have equal opportunities for arts education, apply the Arts Standards to all children, and put equity on the school board's agenda. The Standards are available online at www.menc.org/publications/books/standards.htm

Tactical Tips for Music Advocacy

These tips have been circulating in advocacy circles for some time, with the most recent version being titled, "What To Do In Time of School Music Crisis." We feel that they also have application for influencing the school board during non-crisis periods.

1. PREPARE YOUR ARGUMENTS CAREFULLY

Your message is: Music belongs in the core curriculum. Be adamant on this issue. Counter arguments are going to be related to funding. Know the budget and be prepared to talk about "bang for the educational buck." Use the information in Section 4 of this guide to make your point.

2. VISIT EACH SCHOOL BOARD MEMBER SEPARATELY

Keep the visit positive. You are for students and good education, not against anything. All board members are potential allies. The short video (7 min.) on the DVD is an excellent ice-breaker and can be shown on most laptop computers. A good conversation piece.

3. NEVER ARGUE AGAINST SOMEONE ELSE'S PROGRAM

Show that you are willing to work for the good of all students. Keep the discussion student centered, not teacher-job centered.

4. KEEP CURRENT

Understand the pressures the school board is under and the tough decisions they have to make. Attend meetings regularly and report back to your group.

5. BECOME A SOURCE OF SOLID INFORMATION

Local board members have a hard time keeping up on all the issues. They need you to tell them exactly what's happening in schools and programs. Use information to build trust.

6. KEEP YOUR CREDIBILITY

Stretching the truth and fudging will ruin your credibility. It's too precious to squander simply to gain a short term advantage.

7. ELECT MUSIC SUPPORTERS

Work to re-elect school board members who support music education. Encourage music advocates to run for office.

8. INVITE BOARD MEMBERS TO STUDENT MUSICAL EVENTS

Encourage them to experience the results of their support. Introduce them as a "friend of school music" at these events. If appropriate, ask them to say a few words. It helps them vote your way next time.

9. ANTICIPATE CRISES:

- a) Have a telephone tree/e-mail list/fax tree/ in place to quickly mobilize your local advocates (see the file: teletree.pdf on the CD-ROM).
- b) Have articulate and informed members of your group poised to talk to community groups, visit school decision-makers and speak at meetings.
- c) Make a “preemptive” presentation about the value of music during a non-crisis period.

10. MAKE YOUR VIEWS CLEAR BEFORE THE BIG MEETING

Petitions are OK, but letters and calls just before the school board meeting carry more weight. All board members should get several calls, but be careful here. There is a fine line between activism and harassment. Excessive calls to board members and calls at odd hours are likely to create a backlash. Ask trusted coalition members to make polite yet focused calls.

11. LEARN SCHOOL BOARDROOM ETIQUETTE

Get to know the rules of the school boardroom (public comment scheduling, rules on signs, time limits on remarks, etc.) by attending meetings or speaking to a school board member. Observe them closely. Address people by their proper titles. Be respectful.

12. COVER ALL POINTS, BUT DON'T REPEAT YOURSELF

Speaker after speaker talking about “how wonderful school music is” gets old fast. Use the 1, 2, 3 punch – student, parent, teacher testimonials. This works very well when presenting to a school board. Link emotional statements to facts, not opinions.

13. FILL THE BOARDROOM

Numbers count. Let the board see that there is strong support for your position among parents and community members.

14. VIDEOS

Use videos to supplement/reinforce your presentation. In addition to the DVD in this kit, videotape segments from the national news and other television news programs that would strengthen the case for school music. Make sure that the video is appropriate and brief. VH1 provides excellent video programming with VH1 Music Studio, a free resource aired on the cable music channel VH1. Programs can be taped on VH1, on the first Tuesday of every month at 4:00 am EST/ 3:00 am CST. Schedules can be viewed at www.vh1musicstudio.com.

15. FOLLOW-UP WITH “THANK YOU” NOTES

Thank administrators and board members for their positive comments and support. Thank even those who did not vote with you; there will be other battles.

16. BE PROUD OF YOUR WORK

Take control. Plan, analyze and act professionally.

17. KEEP INFORMED

Keep informed with the latest music advocacy information. Join the Music Education Coalition at www.SupportMusic.com for regular updates.

Local Coalitions: The First Steps

This is an updated version of a guide written by pioneering advocate Karl Bruhn in 1994. If there is no organized support for music education in your community, we urge you to start a local support network, or coalition, that can work together to support music in your school. Here's how to do it.

Step One: IDENTIFY POTENTIAL MEMBERS

1. A key person (music teacher, parent, concerned citizen) can call the meeting to discuss music support issues in your community. Call together all district music teachers and concerned parents, and discuss local district needs. Also invite members of the school board and school administrators. This group serves as a task force prior to convening a larger group of supporters.
2. Music merchants, symphony leaders and other music people in your state should also be contacted to be part of your team. There may be a state-wide MENC association office (National Association for Music Education) in your state (check [www. Menc.org](http://www.Menc.org)). Music education professors at a local or regional university should also be included in your support group.
3. Plan a local kick-off meeting for a core group of music teachers and identified people supporting the cause.
4. Hold your first organizational meeting.

Step Two: DEVELOP A LOCAL ACTION PLAN

1. Introduce members of task force; if desired, elect a chairperson at the first meeting.
2. Outline local needs as identified by preliminary task force meeting.
3. Review materials (videos, PowerPoint) to be presented to the school board.
4. Establish communication with key members of local advocacy group via an email list or telephone "tree" (see the file: [teletree.pdf](#) on the CD-ROM).

Step Three: IMPLEMENT THE LOCAL ACTION PLAN

1. Expand participation in your support group; spread the word and carry out your local action plan.
2. Support school board candidates that support music in school; make it part of their agenda for election. Participate in budget hearings and learn about the budget process.
3. Publicize efforts and rally support for all music and art events (shows, concerts, etc.)

Step Four: JOIN THE NATIONAL EFFORT AT SUPPORTMUSIC.COM

SupportMusic.com is an advocacy effort that unites various national and regional organizations with parents and community leaders seeking to improve access and opportunity in music and arts learning. You can register your organization at www.SupportMusic.com/join.html.



SECTION FOUR

FINANCIAL IMPACT

SCHOOL FINANCIAL CRISES

AND THE FULL TIME EQUIVALENT

(FTE) CONCEPT

A school financial crisis usually exposes the real educational philosophy of any administrator or board. When forced to make choices, their priorities come right to the surface.

The greatest factor in a financial crisis is the status of the General Fund. It is usually the largest fund and it pays for salaries and related costs of personnel. Between 85% and 90% of the total budget of a district may be dedicated to personnel. Therefore, a financial crisis nearly always effects staffing. Resultant cuts will be based upon what are commonly called Full Time Equivalent (FTE) values.

“Average” Teacher Full Time Equivalent (FTE)

A 1.0 FTE is essentially the definition of a full time teacher based upon the number of courses taught per day, and the AVERAGE daily student load of a teacher. If the normal teacher load is 5 classes, that would be the basis for 1.0 FTE. One of those five classes would then equal .2 FTE, and so on.

In the sweeping generalities of the budgetary process, ALL teachers are calculated as having the same number of students and making the same amount of money (“average teacher salary”). As we will see, this budgetary assumption is often misleading when it comes to music teachers. The financial reality of a situation can be far different from the budget estimate.

Music Teacher FTE

The FTE value of a specific teacher is based upon the ACTUAL student load of that teacher as he/she relates to the average value of 1.0 FTE. The more students assigned to a specific class or teacher, the greater the financial value of that teacher. This is normally the music performance teacher (band, choir, orchestra). Therefore, it is never financially advisable to eliminate a music performance teacher!

Average Student Loads Comparison (Music/non-music)

Music teachers typically handle larger classes than non-music teachers ...

| FTE | Classification | Classes x Students | Student Load |
|---------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------|--------------|
| 1.0 | Non-music Classroom Teacher | 5 x 30 | 150 |
| 1.0 | Music Performance Teacher | 5 x 40 | 200 |
| 2.0 Teachers | | | 350 |

So eliminating a music teacher automatically requires more non-music teachers!

| FTE | Classification | Classes x Students | Student Load |
|---------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------|--------------|
| 1.0 | Non-music Classroom Teacher | 5 x 30 | 150 |
| 1.0 | Replacement Teacher | 5 x 30 | 150 |
| .4 | Replacement Teacher | 2 x 25 | 50 |
| 2.4 Teachers | | | 350 |

1.0 FTE Music Teacher = 1.4 Classroom Teacher; Music Teacher Financial Value = 1.4 FTE

This table illustrates the relative value of a music performance teacher to a regular classroom teacher. In this case, the average student load of a 1.0 FTE teacher is 150 students, and the average student load of a music performance teacher is 200 – a common comparison. Numbers will, of course, vary greatly from district to district. It is also important to realize that only part of a music performance teacher’s load may be in band, choir and/or orchestra; and therefore, they may not actually be a 1.0 FTE in their area. Each teacher load must be carefully calculated or your figures will be inaccurate, potentially undermining the credibility of your analysis. (See the Music Participation Survey on the CD-ROM, file name: MuPartSurvey.doc).

A Case History

The significance of this disparity is seen in Chart 1 – a real-world case in FTE miscalculation.

In this district case study, the administration proposed the elimination of 5.2 FTE band and orchestra instructors to “save” \$156,000.

There were 2,529 students (grades 4-12) involved in those two programs. Cuts would have necessitated the elimination of nearly 1,800 students the first year, requiring the addition of 6.4 FTE classroom teachers to replace the 5.2 FTE music performance teachers proposed for elimination.

In other words, instead of saving \$156,000, they would have been required to spend \$192,000 the first year on replacement teachers with lesser FTE value.

The problem gets worse.

Extensive national case studies indicate that the elimination of an elementary feeder system will cause a minimum 65% loss in student participation at the

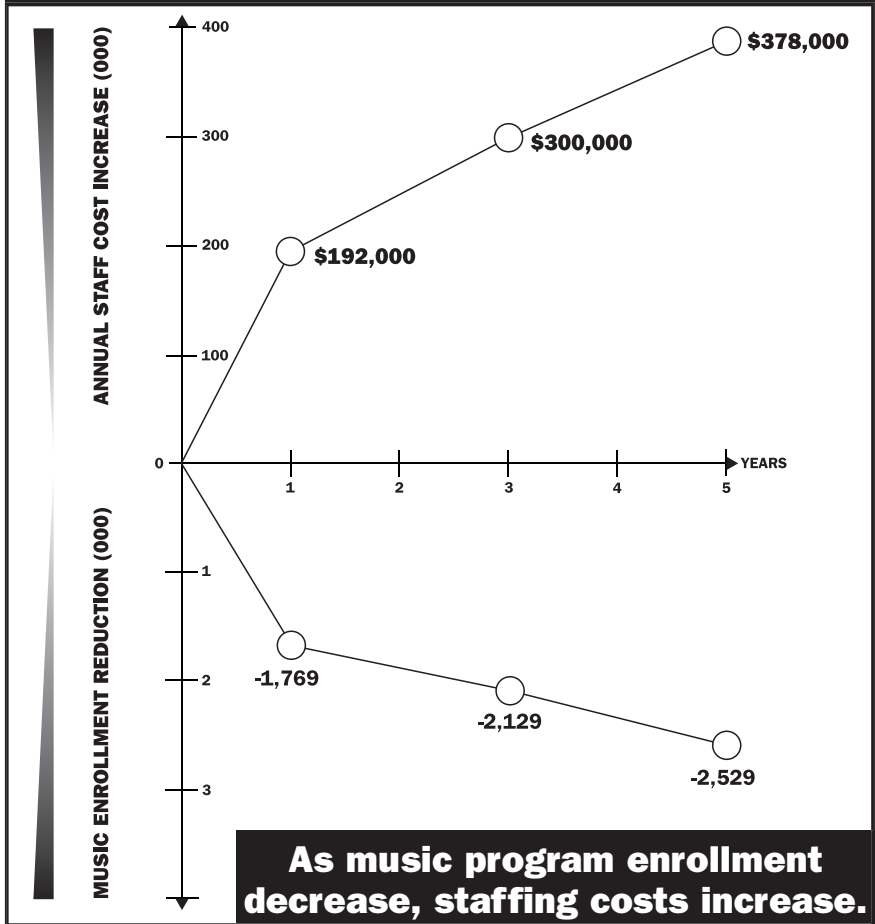
secondary level within two to four years. This is in part because no new elementary students will be started (in this case) until year three, and a similar amount of students will have been graduated. So by year five, the annual budget miscalculation would exceed \$500,000.

Short-sighted thinking on the part of administrators and boards, as well as a failure to realize the high FTE value of music teachers, have led many districts into an unpleasant budget shock.

Music study is valuable and essential in educating well-rounded citizens, both for its intrinsic value and as a building-block of intelligence. It is also a financially efficient way to provide for our children's education. When a music program is threatened, the entire community is in danger of suffering a loss. Music advocates are our first line of defense.

Reverse Economics?

District "X" planned to save \$156,000 by cutting 5.2 FTE music teachers ...
Instead, annual staffing costs would actually increase by \$378,000 after 5 years ...
... Resulting in an annual budget miscalculation of \$534,000!



WANT MORE INFO?

Dr. John L. Benham has been involved in school district crisis intervention since 1981. His diverse background includes roles as parent, music teacher, administrator, businessman and two-term member of a local school board. He, and those under his mentorship, have saved and restored over **\$61 million** in music programs that were targeted for cuts.

He is the author of two excellent books on music advocacy and he is available as a consultant to school districts and advocacy groups. His books can be ordered through the address below.

**How To Save Your School Music and Arts Programs –
A Handbook for the Arts Advocate** **\$18.00 US***

**The Georgia Project: A Status Profile on Arts Education
in the State of Georgia** **\$18.00 US***

*(*Plus shipping and handling... \$5.00 US)*

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The American Music Conference is a national non-profit educational association founded in 1947, dedicated to promoting the importance of music, music-making and music education to the general public. AMC's goal is to build credibility for music and music education, especially at an early age, and to expand that portion of the population that enjoys and makes its own music.

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NAMM, founded in 1901, is the international voice of the music products industry, representing more than 7,700 retailers, manufacturers, wholesalers and publishers in the United States and more than 85 other countries. NAMM is dedicated to growing the global music products industry through the development of groundbreaking research, programs and partnerships that create more active music makers worldwide.