



NYSSMA[®]

A State Unit of NAfME, National Association for Music Education

To: NYSSMA Members attending the Joseph R. Sugar NYSSMA Day in Albany, 3/6/17

Fr: Alan Orloff, Government Relations Committee Chairman

Re: Schedule – 44th Annual Joseph R. Sugar NYSSMA Day in Albany

THE SCHEDULE FOR MARCH 6, 2017 IS AS FOLLOWS:

- 8:30 AM Arrive at the Empire State Plaza – *Park in visitor parking area*
- 9:00 AM – 9:30 AM Orientation Meeting – Meeting Room 6
- 9:30 AM – 11:30 AM Visits with Legislators. Present your legislator with the NYSSMA “keepsake” during your appointed visit. Remind the legislator of the 11:30 AM concert in the South Gallery of the Empire State Plaza and the Evening Reception in Meeting Room 6. Let each legislator know if any student constituents are performing and invite them to have a photo taken during the evening reception.
- 11:30 AM Concert: All State Instrumental and Vocal Jazz Ensembles.
Performances are held in the South Concourse of the Capitol’s Empire State Plaza.
- 1:00 PM – 2:00 PM Lunch, Meeting Room 6 – NYSSMA members may invite their legislators to meet them in Room 6 for lunch and informal discussions. Please allow the legislators to get their lunch as quickly as possible, as they have afternoon sessions. While only Legislators may be invited to lunch, all Legislators and staff are invited to the evening reception.
- 1:30 – 3:00 PM NYSCAME Meeting in Meeting Rm.7 behind the Egg
- 2:00 PM – 5:00 PM Continued legislative visits. Remind legislator of the evening reception.
- 3:00 PM – 5:00 PM County Presidents Meeting, Meeting Room 7 behind the Egg.
- 5:15 PM Meet in Meeting Room 6 to prepare for reception, Empire State Plaza
- 5:30 PM – 7:30 PM Concert and Reception – All State Jazz Ensembles

Alan Orloff, Government Relations Chairperson, 17 Cobb Ct., Huntington, NY 11743

Phone: 631.365.3763 • GRC@nyssma.org • www.nyssma.org

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The 44th Annual Joseph R. Sugar NYSSMA Day in Albany Information for Legislators – March 6, 2017

Who we are: 4,500 members of the New York State School Music Association

Who we represent: 1.8 million school music students of New York State and the households that support their music education.

Why we are here: To advocate for our students, families and members:

The reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) creating the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) creates a new day for music education. For the first time ever, music has been recognized as a stand-alone subject in a “well-rounded education” as described in ESSA.

Learning music contributes to student achievement in four important categories:

1. Success in society -

”Data shows that high earnings are not just associated with people who have high technical skills. In fact, mastery of the arts and humanities is just as closely correlated with high earnings” *

2. Success in school and learning -

”Schools with music programs have significantly higher graduation rates than do those without programs (90.2% as compared to 72.9%).”

”Students at schools with excellent music programs had higher English and Math test scores across the country than students in schools with low-quality music programs.” *

3. Success in developing intelligence -

”Children who take music lessons show different brain development and improved memory over the course of a year, compared to children who do not receive musical training.” *

4. Success in life -

”The life of the arts, far from being an interruption, a distraction, in the life of the nation, is close to the center of a nation's purpose - and is a test to the quality of a nation's civilization.” — *President John F. Kennedy*

*Data from National Association for Music Education

What We Want:

Every student, pre-K-12, deserves a high quality, comprehensive, sequential, multi-discipline Music education taught by a certified Music teacher no matter what kind of school they attend.

All ESSA Title I, II, and IV funding streams must be applied for and distributed properly. ESSA designates Music as a stand-alone subject, part of a “well rounded education”. Title IV Student Support and Academic Enrichment Grants (SSAEG) need to be supplemented by legislation beyond the Tax Cap to fund and grow these programs.

Funds in the budget for restoring jobs at SED are finally being released. We have been without an Associate in Music Education for over 8 years. We ask legislators to use their influence to make sure that all funds are released and that this position is restored.

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NYSSMA – WHO WE ARE!

Support data for our 2017 Legislative Talking Points

Your Legislative Talking Points sheet identifies us simply as:
“the 4,500 members of the New York State School Music Assn.”

Here are many more facts for your use about “who we are”:

“The Mission of the New York State School Music Association (NYSSMA®) is to advocate for and improve music education across New York State by promoting and producing appropriate activities and programs for its membership and students in member school music programs.”

(Approved unanimously by the NYSSMA® Executive Council on December 3, 2008)

NYSSMA is the most significant professional force for music education in the State of New York

NYSSMA is the largest, most successful National Association for Music Education (NAfME) unit in the United States.

Approximately 5000 members, comprised of educators, professionals and music industry representatives proudly belong to NYSSMA.

The music industry in New York State provides thousands of jobs and millions in state tax revenues.

Over 100,000 students participate annually in spring adjudication festivals held all over New York State.

The NYSSMA Winter conference attracts almost 4,000 participants and offers about 190 workshops and showcases.

Over 150 vendors and colleges exhibit at the Winter Conference held in Rochester, NY in November. This annual event is a huge boost for Rochester tourism revenues.

Our All-State performing groups are among the finest in the nation. They rehearse and perform at the NYSSMA Winter Conference. Over 8000 students auditioned for the honor of being an All State musician. Only 886 were selected to participate.

NYSSMA mails its magazine, the School Music News to every NYSSMA member throughout the year and keeps everyone fully informed.

The NYSSMA Manual is the definitive resource for setting standards and expectations for each instrument and voice part at every level of ability. It has been used as a template by states throughout our country. We pioneered “authentic assessment”.

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Ask #2: An ESSA Teaching Opportunity

Our 2nd talking point relates to ESSA and the Federal funding available to Music programs through Titles I, II and IV.

Title I funds access to Music Education for the most disadvantaged students.

Title II funds Professional Development

Title IV funds access to music Education as part of a Well-Rounded

Education with Student Support and Academic Enrichment Grants

(SSAEG). We also ask legislators to examine ways to supplement SSAE

Grants with creative funding beyond the tax cap.

I've attached a background packet from NAfME which will give you all the information you need to thoroughly understand and present this ask and teach Legislators what they should be looking for regarding funding under ESSA as well as an ESSA fact sheet for your own information.

Talking point 2 also allows you to explain that Arts Education can be designated one of New York State's Accountability Measures as required by ESSA and facilitate access to the Title funds. A project created by the State Education Agencies Directors of Arts Education (SEADAE) in partnership with Quadrant Research has created a website to assist states in hosting, analyzing and presenting arts education data for this required measurement. The website, www.artseddata.org, is already being used by 13 states to gather this necessary information. We need to let legislators know that New York should sign on to this project and utilize the website along with these other states if we are to be successful in obtaining all possible Title funds.

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Tips for making the most of your Day in Albany

Our Mission: to teach our Legislators how to support Music Education programs

We are here as NYSSMA to **Speak With One Voice** about the 1.8 million NYS school music students, their families and continuing the programs they want and expect.

Remember we are “Meet and Greet” advocates. We are not lobbyists!

This year we especially visit as teachers. Be proud of the fact that ESSA creates music education as a stand alone subject for the first time and that it mandates music as part of the “well rounded education” guaranteed to all students. Explain how ESSA provides funds through Title I, II, and IV programs as explained in the NAFME materials.

Remember to invite office staff to our evening reception and make sure it is on the Legislator’s calendar: 5:30 – 7:30 PM in Meeting Room 6. Confirm photo ops.

Cover all talking points (keep each point brief)

Make a separate appointment if necessary to discuss additional personal questions.

Read the Talking Point materials. Be well informed, honest, frank and open.

Know your legislator! Use this as a starting point for developing relationships with them.

Don’t belittle those who disagree with you. The next time, they may be on our side.

Don’t Beg! Remember you represent a proud and important profession. NO apologies.

Please be respectful, not argumentative.

Meeting with your Legislator -

Be informed. Be prepared. Be friendly. Be open. Be calm. Give examples. Don’t argue. Don’t get sidetracked. Don’t be afraid to admit that you don’t know. Find common ground. Build your argument. Relate your concerns as real people who are their constituents. Give the legislator a chance to agree. Move on to other talking points. Seek a commitment. Wrap up. Follow up. **Don’t give up!**

All members should visit their own legislators. Know who represents you.

There is great strength in stating: “(Legislator)”, I am not only here representing NYSSMA, but I am Jane Smith, your constituent from 10 Cherry Lane in Anytown, NY.

To find your Assemblyman: <http://assembly.state.ny.us/mem/>

To find your Senator: <http://www.nysenate.gov/>

Don’t forget to fill out your Legislative Statement Cards and turn them in at lunch.

You CAN make a difference. You can interject your voice into the political process.

Our efforts today can help children, save programs and save jobs! A noble goal indeed!

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Reflections on this year's Day in Albany from Alan Orloff, NYSSMA GRC

Once again, preparing for the 44th Annual Joseph R. Sugar NYSSMA Day in Albany has been a great honor and a great responsibility. There are states that have never gone to their Capitols to talk with their Legislators. Joe's legacy of 44 consecutive years establishing lines of communications with the Legislators who control our Music Education programs is pure genius, as is his creation of what has now become Music in Our Schools Month (MIOSM). We celebrate MIOSM with our annual visitation day.

Here's my personal take on what we might find in Albany this year. Please understand that this is just how I see it. It's not official, just my views:

We arrive in Albany at a time when NYSSMA has been included at the highest levels of discussions about our profession. We have a supportive Commissioner in Mary Ellen Elia and meet regularly with high-level SED officials. We have strong contacts on the Board of Regents. We have been included with an important seat at the table in creating the new NYS Arts Standards, which will be rolled out later in the spring. We are acknowledged as the "go to" organization for all things relating to Music Education. We are respected for the strength of the NYSSMA Brand, our over 80 years of service to the school music students of our state and by many legislators with whom we have developed strong relationships over the many years of trekking up to the hill. As a profession, we have been honored by being made a Stand-Alone Subject in the Every Student Succeeds Act, an integral, unremovable part of that acts definition of what every student must have to achieve a "well rounded education".

However, we cannot ignore the elephant in the room, the national political scene. Just this week Representative Steve King of Iowa introduced a bill to repeal the Elementary and Secondary Education Act that establishes ESSA. The bill also starts a program of de-funding public schools by creating a voucher system and increasing the privatization of education through expanding charter school programs. We have been through an unprecedented Presidential campaign that has left our nation divided, angry, confused and worried.

I crafted our first "ask", that every student, pre-K-12, deserves a high quality, comprehensive, sequential, multi-discipline Music education taught by a certified Music teacher no matter what kind of school they attend with the possibility that a bill like H.R. 610 or a Federal Secretary of Education like Betsy DeVos could be in our future. I wish I had not been so prescient. That said, I just can't care about what is going on in Washington, what my neighbor thinks or how they voted or about 10 second sound bites and unsubstantiated Facebook posts that seem to be all anyone uses before they angrily give in to fast twitch reactions without thoughtful research. Let us all stand above the fray at the 44th Annual Joseph R. Sugar NYSSMA Day in Albany. We are MUSIC, more important than anything, profound, life changing, joyous, integral, and crucial throughout all time for all humans. We go to Albany to insure the finest possible music education for every child, now and into the future.

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TEN TIPS

HOW TO VISIT WITH YOUR LEGISLATOR

1. DO YOUR HOMEWORK

Get to know your legislators before meeting. Locate their biographies, background, interests, and voting records. Know what committees they sit on and what bills they sponsor. Preparation leads to success.

2. MAKE AN APPOINTMENT

Legislators keep busy schedules. It is important to have an appointment and to be on time for the appointment. Despite best efforts, legislators often assign their staff to constituent meetings. Don't be frustrated (see # 8).

3. FOCUS

Your appointment may be short, so clearly address the issues at hand. Sell the "big picture" and demonstrate how your issues impact the whole community. Provide background materials to refresh the legislator, inform staff and cover details.

4. BE POLITE

Be reasonable and respectful. Remember that you are a diplomat for your concerns. Open antagonism and frustration can jeopardize long-term relationships.

5. BE ACCURATE

Credibility is key if you want to be taken seriously. If you don't know the answer to a question, don't guess. Let the legislator know you will provide the missing information later.

6. MAKE A PERSONAL CONNECTION

Use your firsthand knowledge. Parents, teachers, laborers all bring invaluable experience. Look for opportunities to connect with the legislator, such as a similar upbringing, shared interests, mutual school, common friends.

7. SEEK AN ANSWER

Politely ask your legislator for his/her position on the issue. If you are in agreement, discuss ways you can both forward the issue. If you disagree, seek opportunities to address his/her concerns.

8. DON'T UNDERESTIMATE STAFF

Legislators trust their staff to filter information, provide sound advice and handle many concerns. Staff are invaluable resources because of their proximity to the legislator – don't underestimate their role.

9. FOLLOW UP

Always send a letter of thanks to your legislator. Use this as an opportunity to restate your positions and seek common ground. Of course, thank him/her for any support, and give a gentle reminder of any commitments that were made.

10. REPEAT 1-9

Your initial meeting is only the beginning. If legislators never hear from you again, they may lose sight of your views. Continue to provide them with information and insight. Staying involved is the surest way to make your voice heard.