



NYSSMA®

A State Unit of **NAfME**, National Association for Music Education

53rd Annual Joseph R. Sugar NYSSMA Day in Albany

Asks 2026

1. **NYSSMA continues to advocate for bills (Bills S6318A and A6490B) which address the omission of music education from the state's list of recognized academic subjects.**
 - a. Currently, Music (and the Arts) are regulatory which does not provide accountability measures if schools do not offer these programs to students.
 - b. The federal level **Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)** defines a “well-rounded education” as one that includes Music (and the Arts) along with other academic subject matter.
 - c. We advocate for the subject matter, Music (and the Arts) to be moved from regulatory to statutory designation. (like Mathematics, English, Physical Education, etc.)
 - d. This change will ensure that Music (and the Arts) education are incorporated into the public school curriculum for all students in rural, suburban and urban areas, providing equitable access.
 - e. Federal Title I funds may be utilized to supplement state and local support for a well-rounded education, including Music (and the Arts).
 - f. The Senate bill, sponsored by Rachel May, passed the Senate floor on June 6, 2025. The Assembly companion bill is sponsored by Landon Dais and continues to gain bipartisan support.
 - g. This is year two of the bill. We need additional support within the Assembly. (There are approximately 48 assembly members supporting the bill. 76 members are necessary to move forward.)

The Ask:

1. ***Are you willing to support this bill and see it through committee to the legislative floor?***
2. ***If so, are you willing to sign on as a co-sponsor?***

2. **NYSSMA advocates for full funding of School Foundation Aid and Expense-Based Aid, along with the New York State Board of Regents request for a \$12 million increase in Cultural Education funding.**
 - a. The Governor has proposed a 2.96% increase in Foundation Aid to ensure at least a 1% annual increase for every district.
 - b. Because state law does not explicitly name Music (and the Arts) as essential subjects, any reduction in aid poses a serious threat to equitable arts access.
 - c. Full funding ensures that educational quality is not determined by zip code, income, or demographics.
 - d. Cultural Education funding supports the State Museum, Library, Archives, public broadcasting, and Summer Schools of the Arts. (Critical resources that promote cultural literacy, civic engagement, and student readiness for college and careers)

The Ask:

1. ***Are you willing to support maintaining of full School Foundation Aid funding?***

3. **NYSSMA continues to advocate for the restoration of the position of Music Associate at the NYSED office of Curriculum and Instruction. For this reason, we advocate for the position to be included within the Governor's 2026-2027 State Budget.**
- NYSED curriculum associate positions were eliminated as a result of the recession that occurred in the 2000s. Currently there is no music specialist for the subject area.
 - With updated 2017 Arts Learning Standards and expanded initiatives, including Media Arts, Alternate Graduation Pathways, and Individual Arts Assessment Portfolios, the need for dedicated leadership in music education at NYSED is imperative.
 - Legislators are asked not only to support adding this line item in the final budget, but also to ensure funds are released and positions are filled.

The Ask:

- 1. Are you willing to support the addition of a line item in the Governor's Proposed Budget?***
- 2. Are you willing to support maintaining its inclusion in the finalized version of the Budget?***
- 3. Are you willing to follow-up after the budget is finalized to ensure that the Executive Office of the Budget releases the funds for State Education Department Curriculum Associates?***

4. **NYSSMA continues to advocate to restore full funding for the New York State Summer School of the Arts program, and to return to NYSSSA the School of Orchestral and Choral Studies.**
- Founded in 1976, NYSSSA is a nationally recognized, highly competitive pre-professional training program in Dance, Music, Theatre, and Visual Arts that has produced generations of leaders in the arts.
 - After COVID-related reductions in 2021, the program shifted to regionally based enrichment.
 - NYSSMA asks legislators to restore full funding of \$2 million and ensure the program remains in the final budget.
 - The currently proposed Governor's budget maintains funding for the regionally-based arts enrichment programs and provides funding to redevelop the site-based program to take place once more in Summer 2026.
 - Graduates from NYSSSA are in the forefront of their professions including the arts

The Ask:

- 1. Are you willing to restore full funding (\$2 million) for the state's New York State Summer Schools of the Arts, proven training ground for outstanding talent.***
- 2. Are you willing to support maintaining its inclusion in the finalized version of the Budget?***

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