



NYSSMA
NEW YORK STATE SCHOOL MUSIC ASSOCIATION

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Music Educators from Across New York State to Advocate During 53rd Annual *Joseph R. Sugar NYSSMA Day in Albany*

Annual Event Kicks Off Music In Our Schools Month

February 23, 2026 - Westbury, NY – New York State legislators will be visited by music educators and administrators on Monday, March 9, 2026 during NYSSMA's 53rd annual Joseph R. Sugar NYSSMA Day in Albany.

"This annual event is invaluable to our membership as they meet in-person with their local legislators in Albany," said NYSSMA president Kathy Perconti. "For more than fifty years, we've joined with our elected leaders to advocate for a high-quality, sequential, and comprehensive music education for the more than one million (1,000,000) students in New York."

This year, music educators continue to push for the passage of companion bills S6318A & A6490B that address the change to the education law, in relation to music education's place in the curriculum for public school students. This change will ensure that music education is incorporated into the public school curriculum for all students in rural, suburban, and urban areas, making music statutory and providing equitable access.

The companion bills have received bi-partisan support and passed a floor vote in the Senate on June 6, 2025. NYSSMA will continue to advocate for these bills to move forward on Monday, March 9th.

Music In Our Schools Month originated in New York State in 1973 as a single-day concert at New York City's Lincoln Center. Created by the New York State School Music Association, it was one of the first public events held to support music education programs. In 1985, NAFME adopted the idea and now celebrates Music in Our Schools Month across America each March.

In 2010, NYSSMA named the event after the late Joseph R. Sugar, who served as NYSSMA's president from 1980 to 1981, and as NYSSMA's Government Relations Chairperson for many years after. He also served as Eastern Division President of The National Association for Music Education (NAfME), based in Reston, VA.

NYSSMA, the New York State School Music Association, celebrates its 93rd year of advocacy for music education and is proud to be one of the largest state affiliates of The National Association for Music Education (NAfME).

The mission of the New York State School Music Association 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.

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