

SupportMusic.com Coalition Teleconference
Tuesday, March 22, 2011

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PARTICIPANT LIST (see end of report) – Please send email to supportmusic@namm.org to record your attendance or to correct/amend. Minutes and MP3 files of teleconferences are archived on www.supportmusic.com and via your smartphone with our new Smartphone app at www.nammfoundation.org

NEXT CONFERENCE CALL: APRIL 27, 2011 – Please forward any agenda suggestions, particularly “success stories” or issues faced in local districts, to supportmusic@namm.org

SUMMARY

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Welcome & Overview
(Mary Luehrsen, NAMM)

Please send email to supportmusic@namm.org to log in that you attended this teleconference. You may access past recordings and written summaries of calls at www.supportmusic.com and via your smartphone at www.nammfoundation.org (the sm.com app will load to your phone). Listen to Carol Channing (February 24, 2011 call) whenever you're feeling blue or un-inspired!

Greetings New Affiliates
(Mary Luehrsen, NAMM)

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| OREGON | Girls Rock Camp
http://www.girlsrockcamp.org |
| CALIFORNIA | MusicStar
http://www.musicstarlearning.com/ |

National Updates

(Mary Luehrsen, NAMM)

- **Federal Budget Update: Continuing Resolution(s) and Budget**

(Heather Noonan, League of American Orchestras; Arts Working Group)

In the **Federal budgetary debates**, now focused on Continuing Resolutions for FY11, the Arts Working Group is monitoring how outcomes will affect education funding. They are keeping their eyes on **two fiscal years simultaneously: FY11 and FY12**. For FY11, \$40 million has been cut from the DOE, including the Arts in Education Fund (and its two competitive grant programs). These multi-year grant programs are used to fund both professional development and arts integration programs for high priority risk populations. On March 2nd, a Continuing Resolution signed into law eliminated the entire budget for the Arts in Education program at DOE, including its competitive grants programming as well as funding for VSA Arts and a national initiative at the John F Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts.

Next steps include one more short-term stop-gap spending bill for FY11 and **a six-months Funding Bill currently under Congressional consideration**. Advocates hope to get funding for Arts Education reinstated into the FY11 spending bill. One slightly encouraging sign is that the Senate has included \$25 million for Arts Education funding in their budget. Multi-year grants, which depend upon these funds to continue programming, should be OK through the current school year but, if funding is not reinstated, programs will fall by the wayside. The \$25 million Senate bill is now in the hands of the House.

Now is an important time for advocates to be in touch with Senate and House representatives to stress the value of direct and dedicated funding for arts education, not only for FY11 but also for FY12. Congressional members are at home this spring for an unprecedented amount of time – they are in recess now, as well as from April 18-29. This is a perfect time to **schedule visits with them in their home offices**, and to **invite them to attend performances** of arts education programs in actions.

National Arts Advocacy Days will be held on April 4-5 in Washington, DC: This is the time to reach critical mass. If not able to attend in person, please contact your representatives by email and phone.

Regarding the **Reauthorization of the ESEA**, President Obama has made several public statements about the need for Congress to act now to rewrite the ESEA. Though an actual rewrite is unlikely this year, first drafts are now in relevant committees, and smaller portions of the ESEA may be enacted throughout the year.

Two aspects of the ESEA are attracting attention, and arts education advocates have much to contribute to these discussions:

- **New forms of assessing student progress.** In assessing student learning, ie, “beyond the bubble,” arts advocates have a great deal of experience to add regarding performance and portfolio-based assessments.

- **Measuring the status and condition of arts education in schools.** We are calling for more robust support for Federal assessments. In Fall 2011, the DOE will release its first survey results in 10 years, providing an important opportunity to speak about arts education at both state and local levels. The FRSS will be released in two stages – a “soft” launch in summer will offer a ‘first look.’ In the fall, the full report will include a comparison of arts education programs offered prior to NCLB. It is anticipated that this before and after comparison will reveal an **equity gap**.

- **San Diego Unified School District Update**

(Karen Childress-Evans, Visual and Performing Arts - VAPA)

Background: San Diego Unified School District (SDUSD) is the 2nd largest in the state, and received The NAMM Foundation's "Best Communities for Music Education" Award in 2010. They have a huge and very active advocacy base.

SDUSD has lost \$400+ million over the last two years in state revenue. Currently its Visual and Performing Arts (VAPA) department has 36 full- and part-time teachers going out to 120 elementary schools as well as coaching/mentoring offerings at secondary schools. **Next year, there is a plan to eliminate all VAPA staff.** Childress-Evans is among many who have already received lay-off notices; 45 instrumental and music teachers across districts have lost jobs. Things are in dire straits. The school board has always supported arts education programs – and advocates are writing letters, showing up, holding rallies – but it's difficult to do anything with no money.

On the state level, **Tom Torlakson, CA State Superintendent of Public Instruction, has suggested that in a worst-case scenario, CA schools would lose one month of instruction.** It is now past the deadline to include a tax extension on the June ballot (Republicans were missing one vote to get it onto ballot) and a Special Election would be fiscally irresponsible since it costs money. The Governor's budget includes K-12 funding, with a promise not to cut it.

However, Torlakson calls this a state of emergency and notes that **\$18 billion has been cut from education in the last three years** – or 1/3 of the State's annual spending on K-12 schools each year. **\$4.5 billion must be cut from the State budget and it looks like it's coming out of the schools.** Each district will have to do lay-offs in order to be fiscally responsible. Since the State budget process is not in synch with that of the school districts, preliminary lay-off notices are necessary and have been used for the last few years; morale is terrible however, all have been brought back.

PTAs, advocates and school boards are organized and have gone to Sacramento to have discussions with legislators, as have Superintendents and those in County Offices of Education. **People are cautiously optimistic,** but this is the worst situation Childress-Evans has seen since beginning to work for SDUSD seven years ago. **Letters should be sent to legislators to urge them to support Governor Brown's efforts to obtain funding for education.**

For questions or additional information (including a body of compiled research), please contact Karen Childress-Evans at Kchildressevans@sandi.net ; she is glad to help 'across state lines' and write letters for others.

- **Conn-Selmer Institute**

(Grant Johnston, Division of Education, Conn-Selmer)

On **June 12-15, 2011, the Conn-Selmer Institute (CSI) 2011 will be held on the Bethel College campus in Mishawaka, Indiana.** Outstanding faculty members, including Dr. Tim Lautzenhiser, Marcia Neel and many other nationally recognized master educators, music business and industry professionals, will offer two tracks of motivational training sessions – one for college students entering the field of music education, and one for existing teachers. The 2nd Annual Hal Leonard Reading Band Clinic is among many highlighted offerings.

Please visit www.csinstitute.org for complete details and registration – and share widely.

- **Buffalo Public Schools**

(Dr. James Williams, Superintendent, Buffalo Public Schools)

Mary Luehrsen: *Congratulations on being named recipient of the 6th Annual VH1 Save The Music Foundation Award for Distinguished Support of Music Education at the American Association of School Administrators' National Conference on Education. You have come to our attention as a Superintendent of a large urban school district who, even with the current economic realities, is working to assure that music education is part of the core curriculum in Buffalo. Why is this so important now and what are your current priorities for music for your students in Buffalo?*

Dr. Williams: Music is so important, especially in urban school districts – from pre-school, kindergarten and first grade on – because not all children come from rich family life. We concentrate on the basic skills to help to get them prepared. In my opinion, **by the third and fourth grade, in order to take students to the next level of proficiency, the arts and humanities must come in to keep the interest there and to get them into critical thinking and problem solving.**

In my 42 years in education, **music has been a part of my profile** – when I was a high school principal, an elementary school teacher, and even as a Superintendent in Dayton, Ohio as well as here in Buffalo – **because it gets the attention of the youngsters.** And we try to infuse it into English, math, sciences and social studies to keep the youngsters forward. Over the years since I've been here, I've made a concerted effort NOT to cut the budget in those particular areas.

We use our Title 1 funds and our General Fund dollars to strengthen music programs. And, we get strong community support here in the arts. In Buffalo, we work with the Buffalo Philharmonic, for example. It's a challenge, but I really think we need it for children, especially in urban school districts. **You must make music a PART OF educating children, and not an add-on.**

Mary Luehrsen: *Can you give us some examples of how you're using Title 1 funds – and any other sources of funding you're using – to ensure that opportunity exists for music education programs for children?*

Dr. Williams: Title 1 funds have been around since 1964, and it's my personal belief that we have not used them correctly. **Title 1 Funds were meant to be used to close the achievement gap in math and science for minority students, and I think you can still do that by infusing music in.** So, you can teach reading and math through music – you can teach any discipline by infusing the arts into the teaching and learning. We work very hard in addressing that need with the infusion of arts into our curriculum. All of our schools are Title 1 designated schools except for three, so it's not complicated to restructure those dollars in order to add and support music.

And we also used some of our General Fund dollars also. So, with two pots of money, and as we looked at some of our error money that we received last year, we were able to pass through some of those dollars. The dollars were given to us in a Title 1 format, so we were able to tap some of those dollars also in our schools.

Looking forward, next year I'd like to create a **Citywide Marching Band;** we now have a Citywide Marching Choir with students from all of our high schools. It's changing the way our teachers are working, because now they have to work together to meet the needs of children and not have an isolated situation at each school. Now we have strong music programs in our elementary schools, and are building them more and more in our high schools, in the vocal music programs as well as the instrumental process.

Mary Luehrsen: *We all need to learn more about how Title 1 works for music education. It's been a great mystery across the land. These funds, as Secretary Duncan says, are available for music and arts education, and we are seeking concrete examples. What advice or guidance can you share with us as we work with school districts and at state levels to assure that access to music education is not cut back or denied? Any parting thoughts?*

Dr. Williams: In 2006, when I came to Buffalo, we started our **Buffalo School Foundation. It is concentrated on the arts, and through it we align our work in the schools with the community.** The Buffalo Philharmonic has a strong arts and education program. Last summer, our four-year old Foundation was given a large amount of funding for summer programs, choir camps, art camps, so children could continue their studies throughout the summer with contributions from the community and fundraisers. In our online store, we sell t-shirts and sweatshirts. We moved to a sole source for all of our athletic equipment and the companies that receive the bids are donating to the Foundation. **We're not just waiting for Federal and State money: we're trying to deal with it locally through our Foundation.** That's the only way, in my opinion, that we're going to get kids with a 70-90% proficiency in English and math, with what the country is trying to do with test scores, because that critical thinking that is needed – that they're not getting at home during the critical formative years – must be learned in the elementary schools and then we've got to build it through the high schools.

For more information, please visit www.vh1savethemusic.com/node/5521/ and www.buffaloschools.org/

“Grassroots Advocacy for Music Education”

Guest Moderator: Menzie Pittman

Mary Luehrsen: *Menzie, you've been a part of the SupportMusic Coalition for several years, and are an active music education advocate, especially in Fairfax County, Virginia. What has been and is your role in local music education advocacy? And, do you have any current updates?*

Menzie Pittman: My role is multi-faceted, and I act as a source of information regarding the benefits of music education. I serve on the Fairfax Arts Coalition for Education (FACE) Steering Committee, a very well organized coalition. We face many challenges, but we're cautiously optimistic. I try to be the glue that brings the conversation together and helps to advance the message to directors, musicians and musicians.

• Wisconsin Update: Reedsburg Public School District

(Les Sandberg, Orchestra Teacher; Dave Moon, High School Social Studies Teacher and Faculty Advisor to Student Music Education Advocacy Group)

Menzie Pittman: *As we all know, Wisconsin is very much in the news. We welcome representatives from a small but mighty music department in the Reedsburg Public School District in northeast Madison, who are here to provide an update.*

Les Sandberg: What's happening on the state level has affected most school districts in Wisconsin and has caused a lot of uncertainty. Our school board is holding off, waiting, as far as making cuts. Last winter, as soon as we heard of possible cuts to the music department, we created some music advocacy groups, and their work has now been complicated by the events of the last couple of months. **We work locally, and when the cuts were first publicized, we got a parents' group organized** and they brought a petition to the school board. Our booster

group has provided financial support for mailings. We have great parental support to promote music education and try to convince the school board not to make the cuts.

Menzie Pittman: *What about the role that is played by your local vendors and stores?*

Les Sandberg: We don't have a local music store that we work with: the nearest store is in the Madison area, which is 55 miles away. It's very much a parents' group organization. *(Editor's Note: Later on the call, WardBrodt offered their help from Madison.)*

Dave Moon: Student advocates wanted to help, and I teach government and politics. Also, as a show of support, it would be best if the **faculty advisor to the student group was not a part of the music program in order to show that cuts to music affect people who are not in the music field.** Students do fundraising, and sell t-shirts with logos, which turns them into walking billboards for the music program and puts money back into the music program. Through our elementary concerts, they let people know about all the musical possibilities that exist in our district. The idea is that if we get kids hooked on music at a young age, it will become a self-sustaining thing. Hopefully the numbers of children involved in the music program will be so large that the school district will have no choice but to support it.

And, just to back up what Les was saying about the parents, **decisions are made by those who show up. When you attract hundreds of people to a school board meeting, if nothing else, you've forced the school board to take that constituency seriously.**

Menzie Pittman: *One of the things we found out in Fairfax was that passionate students are a powerful force and they want to be recognized. So, coordinating the efforts of the students and parents together is so much more powerful.*

Dave Moon: This is **not a one-time fight**; times are tough right now and unfortunately the horizon is not bright. **We're approaching these challenges as a permanent condition.**

Menzie Pittman: *If people feel there's no resistance, they'll go after it every time because they feel they CAN cut the program. Organizations like SupportMusic stand up and let people know that there is a voice on the other side.*

For more information, please visit www.rsd.k12.wi.us/ (phone and email addresses for both Les and Dave are listed in the Staff Directories).

- **Kansas Music Education Association**
(Craig Manteuffel, President KsMEA)

Menzie Pittman: *A 30-second PSA on the KsMEA home page involves a local TV weatherman. How is it helping to keep music education strong in Kansas?*

Craig Manteuffel: Meteorologist (Jay Prater), a former band and symphony tuba player in high school, is a great supporter of music education as a core academic subject. The PSA was produced with help from KAKE-TV, MENC and NAMM. Sensensey Music and SupportMusic.com are listed as resources on the PSA, which **highlights the role of music education in the development of critical thinking, communication and creativity.**

Please visit www.ksmea.org to watch the PSA. It features Wichita area students and teachers in the classrooms, and it has gone viral on Facebook, and created a lot of positive interaction among teachers, parents and school leadership. It cost \$7,500 for 40 spots, with funding

contributed in blocks of \$1,500 from each of three Kansas districts, KsMEA and from Sensensey Music. **It could be used for a nationwide audience as well.**

Menzie Pittman: *What are your current advocacy issues or concerns for music in Kansas and what are your advocacy plans?*

Craig Manteuffel: We've lost 124 positions in the last year, some from retiring teachers where positions were not re-filled; this is twice as many as the previous three years. In my district, we had three band directors and now we're down to two. Legislators say this year is worse than last year, but Kansas advocates are standing strong for music education in our state.

- **Davis School Orchestral Music Association**
(Hiram Jackson, President, Advocacy)

As an active contributor to the SupportMusic Coalition's Facebook page, **Hiram Jackson** offered his **Top Five most effective local advocacy tips:**

1. **Attend all school board meetings connected to the budget to remind board members that people care.**
2. **Collect enrollment statistics each year.** To gather statistics from past years, check listings from concert programs and yearbooks to keep track of the flow of students through music programs. Connecting student success to music programs helps to restore them.
3. **Treat concerts as a way to connect the school district to the public.** Invite a VIP (superintendent, principal, school board president, mayor, etc.) to serve as guest MC. Concerts are a very unifying and affirming experience.
4. **Make sure all demographic groups are represented.** When Davis Schools noticed many Spanish-speaking families were not participating, they began to send letters home to parents in both English and Spanish and they also now provide an interpreter at parent meetings. Music programs need to be accessible to all.
5. **Hold a continuous musical instrument drive.** Old instruments, particularly string instruments and those that may be inconvenient to sell (such as ½ and ¾ size violins) are then donated to students without access.

Menzie Pittman: *It's important to take down barriers that are non-musical: Music knows no boundaries but people do.*

Mary Luehrsen: Please visit www.supportmusic.com to access several bilingual (English/Spanish) PDFs, including research studies, pamphlets and community advocacy / coalition-building materials.

Key takeaways from “Grassroots Advocacy” presentations:

- during this bootstraps, roll-up your sleeves period, it's time to be active in your own community – write a letter, attend a school board meeting, report back to us on what's happening in your area
- in all regions of the US, the stories are the same – there are challenges as well as success stories
- involvement of people outside of music education is brilliant
- offering bilingual communications is key to breaking down any existing barriers
- keep the focus on bringing good positive thoughts to our continued work together

WardBrodt Public Service Message

(Mick Faulhaber, President)

WardBrodt created a PSA YouTube video featuring **employees' comments about the importance of music education in the schools**. The company added funding to their marketing budget to produce this infomercial ad; it received great placement around the evening news on one local TV station and has now gone viral.

Please watch at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=axbTk87Qsd0> and then share it with others.

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