

SupportMusic.com Coalition Teleconference  
Tuesday, June 21, 2011

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**NEXT CONFERENCE CALL: September 8, 2011 – During July and August, you will receive two newsletters. Please forward any suggestions for newsletter items, particularly “success stories” and issues faced in local districts, to [supportmusic@namm.org](mailto:supportmusic@namm.org) Deadlines: JUNE 30 & JULY 28 Publication Dates: JULY 7 & AUGUST 4**

**SUMMARY**

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**Welcome and Overview**

*(Mary Luehrsen, NAMM)*

The SupportMusic Coalition is a grassroots effort to keep music education strong across our nation and internationally through our partners around the world. We are dedicated to supporting a quality music education taught by highly qualified teachers with a standards-based, developmentally appropriate curriculum.

If anyone would like to become a member of the SupportMusic Coalition's Steering Committee, please send an email to [supportmusic@namm.org](mailto:supportmusic@namm.org) to get involved.

## National Updates

### • Do Something Campaign Overview and Results

*(Laurie Lock, Tom Calderone, VH1 Save The Music Foundation; Melanie Stevenson, DoSomething.org; Kaitlyn Lee, student, Mountain View High School)*

**Background:** Do Something and VH1 Save The Music Foundation partnered for the second year to engage teens in advocacy through a "Battle for the Bands" competition. From March 1 through May 1, teens submitted to a panel of expert judges their videos and/or community-based advocacy projects on the importance of music education. R&B artist Keri Hilson and *Glee*'s Amber Riley were the celebrity spokespersons.

**Kaitlyn Lee:** When Kaitlyn learned that proposed budget cuts totaling \$24 million were under consideration by her school board and superintendent – and that one proposed cut was to completely eliminate the district's 5<sup>th</sup> grade orchestra and band – she and several other students and parents attended school board meetings to express their concerns and talk about how important music education was to them personally and as members of the school band. They also submitted a petition and letters. Some school board members were unaware that the proposed cuts would eliminate 6.3 music teachers' jobs, and didn't have a clear picture of the impact of the cuts on the middle school and high school programming.

About 35 students worked together (behind the scenes and as performers) to stage an instrumental flash mob at a local bowling alley. It was designed to raise awareness about the proposed budget cuts to the music education program. A YouTube video went viral, and the students talked to community members about their cause. The results of this student awareness campaign will not be known until September when the budget vote occurs, but so far, no teachers have lost their jobs. Students learned it's important to speak up and fight for what you believe in.

**Melanie Stevenson:** DoSomething.org is a national organization that is focused on empowering young people to take action on the issues they care about. Not only is the "Battle for the Bands" a video contest, which is splashy, it also offers teens deep substance and advocacy materials culled from SupportMusic, VH1 and other sources. This year, 20,000+ teens got involved in videos and advocacy projects in their local communities (such as school board presentations and petitioning, instrument drives and creating advocacy videos), an increase over the 2010 campaign. One participant flew to NYC to perform at the annual event for DoSomething.org supporters.

**Tom Calderone:** From the first year to the second year, we had a bigger opportunity for lead-up time. We used the VH1 platforms on television, including the NFL Pepsi Fan Jam around Super Bowl XLV (featuring Jason Derulo and Kid Rock). Mobile was determined to be the best way to reach the target audience; in 2009 & 2010, there were about 4 million viewers on both airings.

**Laurie Lock:** The campaign certainly highlights how mobile is changing the world and how people are relying on mobile apps to get their content and information.

**Tom Calderone:** The first year was primarily about uploading videos. But, with mobile activation, and using the three platforms (VH1, DoSomething and VH1 Save The Music), it just turned into something much larger. With PSAs on VH1; exposure on the high-def music station, Palladia; and VH1 Classic (geared towards parents enabling their kids to participate), as well as the quality of celebrity artists involved (on PSAs as well as the judging panel), the campaign hit all cylinders this year.

Please visit <http://www.dosomething.org/battle> for more information about this year's campaign. View the grand prize winning advocacy project / flash mob video by Mountain View High School at: <http://www.dosomething.org/project/battle-for-bands/mountain-view-high-school-band>

**Mary Luehrsen:** This is a great example of raising the awareness on the national level as well as having a vehicle for local activity. Please download the free SupportMusic smartphone app at [www.nammfoundation.org](http://www.nammfoundation.org). A new resource has just been added (share with your school leaders!): "What School Leaders Can Do to Increase Arts Education," by The Arts Education Partnership.

• **Americans for the Arts (AFTA) Conference (June 16-18, 2011), San Diego CA**  
(Narric Rome, AFTA)

The opening address was presented by Bobby Shriver (Santa Monica City Council member, co-founder of the (RED) campaign to combat AIDS and poverty in the developing world), and the closing address was delivered by Ben Cameron (current program director of Arts at Doris Duke Charitable Foundation and former executive director of Theatre Communications Group).

Highlights of the 2 ½ days of panels and programming included:

- National Arts Education Council convened
- Two peer group meetings, one on higher education and one on nationwide successes in arts education
- Panel on the report, "Ready to Innovate: Cultivating Creativity for Strong Workforces"
- Brief on Rachel Goslins' report for the Presidential Commission on the Arts and Humanities (PCAH), "Re-investing in Arts Education"
- Panel by PCAH member, Kristine Forrester, on "Research You Should Know About"
- "The Intersection of 21<sup>st</sup>-Century Skills and the Arts" with presenters Lynne Kingsley (American Alliance for Theatre & Education) and Kathi Levin (National Art Education Foundation)
- "Heating Up STEM into STEAM" panelists: Massachusetts Senator Stan Rosenberg (D-Amherst); business leader/philanthropist Harvey White (formerly with QUALCOMM, Inc.; currently chairman of SHW2); and Dr. David Verdugo (Superintendent, Paramount Unified School District, LA).
- Panel on "Bringing Arts Education Home," about local advancement of arts education

Overall feedback was that there are definitely challenges, in terms of pink slips, program cuts and administrative changes and priorities, but the focus was on looking for successes even amidst economic pressures. About 800 people attended and the 2012 AFTA conference will be held in San Antonio. Please visit [www.artsusa.org](http://www.artsusa.org) to learn more about the conference and to access on-demand webcasts and other materials.

• **MENC Music Education Week (June 24-28, 2011), Washington DC**  
(Mike Blakeslee, MENC)

Music Education Week will have three major components:

- Two-day professional development academies for members on choral music, general music, instrumental music, marching band, music supervisors and research;
- Forums for about 150 state leaders and a meeting of the MENC National Assembly on advocacy, how to better make connections between national level advocacy and state / local essentials;

- Meetings with elected representatives on The Hill.

Discussions will occur on innovative approaches to music education, new ways to reach new audiences within schools, in-house strategic planning, and on the Blueprint to re-vitalize national educational standards. The latter discussion will focus on the continuing work of the National Coalition for Core Arts Standards, a group made up of MENC and its sister national arts organizations, as well as AEP, The College Board and SEADAE.

On Sunday, June 26, at The Kennedy Center, afternoon performances will feature the MENC All-National Honor Orchestra, Band and Mixed Choir and, that evening, the winning compositions of the 2011 Student Composers Competition will be performed by the U.S. Army Brass Quintet. On Monday evening, the MENC All-National Honor Jazz Band will perform a shared concert with The US Army Blues. On Monday, June 27<sup>th</sup> at 8:30 AM, there will be a large advocacy meeting with webcast; some of it will be edited for later on-demand web viewing. For additional information, please visit: <http://www.menc.org/events/view/music-education-week>

**Music Education Advocacy Overview:** Throughout the 13,800 school districts in the US, the mood varies. There is fear, in general, brought on by the economic downturn and there are concerns about the way programs, students and teachers are evaluated. Folks realize that the Recovery Act funding is ending and that “the cliff” is approaching. And, there is talk, especially in states that have received Race to the Top funds, about the required evaluations of teachers based only on student scores in reading language arts and math. From a music teacher’s point of view, this is an untenable position, a false measure of progress, and it will make it very difficult to keep quality programs going.

Regarding ESEA Reauthorization and charter schools (aka “school choice”): as any publicly funded school, don't they have a responsibility to provide a well-rounded education for every child in these schools? We are working to raise consciousness about teacher evaluations: teachers need to be evaluated on their specific contributions and the specific disciplines they're engaged in.

- **ESEA Update: Statute Report**  
(Leo Coco, Nelson Mullins)

There have been some significant new developments regarding the Reauthorization of ESEA.

- Looking at the two houses of Congress, the Senate has been working on ESEA at the highest levels since the end of 2010. They've tackled how Reauthorization should look in a comprehensive way, including making recommendations and adjustments where needed on all the different Titles of the bill. Senators Harkin, Enzi and Alexander are leading the way. Things have slowed down, due to a focus on higher education and particularly on for-profit schools and the gainful employment regulation that came out of the USDOE.

- The House approach is very different from that of the Senate. The House wants flexibility, and how they define flexibility is becoming a little clearer. They are looking to write six to eight small bills versus one large comprehensive bill. They've decided to tackle some of the smaller issues before tackling the more complicated ones, like teacher evaluations and some of the more important accountability measures. To date, the Committee has mainly focused on two areas:

- cuts to education programs that are deemed duplicative (with arts education being one of them)
- writing a bill called the “Empowering Parents Through Quality Charter Schools Act

- Senate deadline is now July 4, but that may move to Labor Day. In the House, there is no deadline. USDOE Secretary Duncan and President Obama have put a big push on to get ESEA done. There has been talk of “regulatory relief” or “regulatory flexibility” under current law, and Duncan has used the phrase ‘unleash energy at local level,’ but we do not know what that means. It seems clear now that ESEA Reauthorization is not likely to happen before the beginning of the school year.

**PLEASE NOTE:** Summer is a great time to meet with your representatives via office visits or at Town Hall meetings. The House will be out in recess for a week beginning June 27<sup>th</sup>, and the Senate will be out the week of July 4<sup>th</sup>. August is also a good time to meet with elected officials.

**TIP & RESOURCE:** Provide your representatives with information about the importance and value of a well-rounded education that includes the arts (check out the SupportMusic smartphone app for several resources and talking points). Download [http://www.nammfoundation.org/system/files/NAMM%20Supportmusic%20adv%20doc%202011\\_0.pdf](http://www.nammfoundation.org/system/files/NAMM%20Supportmusic%20adv%20doc%202011_0.pdf) for a handy two-page summary of “How to Meet with Your Members of Congress This Summer.” It includes links to their schedules, town hall meetings, talking points, research and “the ask:”

**BROAD MESSAGE:** It is critical that the U.S. Congress complete this year reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act--- formerly known as No Child Left Behind-- - to correct the significant problems with current law.

**SPECIFIC MUSIC EDUCATION MESSAGE:** Children need a well-rounded education that includes music and the arts in order to be educated for full and successful lives as citizens in our democracy and as participants in the global economy.

**BOTTOM LINE ASK:** Clarify existing law regarding funding eligibility for music and arts education in ESEA (formerly NCLB)---- this proposed language DOES NOT change existing law nor add any cost.

**Bob Morrison (question):** Leo, if no action is taken this year, what do you think the chances are of ESEA being reauthorized next year?

**Leo Coco:** I think they, like all of us, have been overwhelmed by the early onslaught of the 2012 Presidential election cycle. This poses a complication for the legislative process, making it difficult to move legislation forward. If it doesn't happen this year, it probably will not happen until 2013.

- **Dudamel: Let The Children Play (documentary film)**  
*(Mary Luehrsen for Alberto Arvelo, director and filmmaker)*

On June 23, FathomEvents.com will show the documentary film, “Dudamel: Let The Children Play,” at participating theaters for one night only. For further information, please visit <http://letthechildrenplayonthebigscreen.com/>

**Welcome New Affiliates**  
*(Mary Luehrsen)*

WASHINGTON  
MARYLAND

Moore Brothers Music, LLC  
Music 4 More, Inc

**“Music Education School Wrap-Up”**  
**Guest Moderator: Dee Jones, National PTA**

**Topics/Speakers**

• **Jazz Appreciation Month Initiatives and Updates**

*(Joann Stevens, Smithsonian Institution)*

Jazz Appreciation Month (JAM) is a global initiative by the Smithsonian Institution's National Museum of American History. The 10<sup>th</sup> annual JAM was celebrated in April in the USA and in 40 countries. This year's theme, “Women in Jazz: Transforming a Nation,” highlights women jazz artists and their advocates who helped to transform race, gender, and cultural relations in the US. The International Sweethearts of Rhythm, founded in 1937 at the Piney Woods School in Mississippi, was the first integrated female big band, and six surviving members were honored at the JAM Launch. Other women featured during JAM and throughout the year at more than 30 events are Mary Lou Williams, Lena Horne and Ella Fitzgerald, among other iconic artists.

In addition to the JAM Launch (featuring The International Sweethearts of Rhythm), three other areas of concentration were women in jazz; jazz, kids and communities; and jazz across borders (Latin jazz). During the JAM Launch, media pioneer Kathy Hughes (Radio One, TV One) participated; Hughes' grandfather founded the Piney Woods School in 1909, and her mother was a trombonist with the International Sweethearts of Rhythm. About 30 million African-Americans listen to Hughes' Radio One each month.

Plans are underway for the April 2012 JAM; the theme will likely be related to anthropology, identity of jazz and crossing (geographic as well as stylistic, ie, hip hop, etc.) borders with jazz. To request complimentary posters or for additional inquiries, send an email to: [jazz@si.edu](mailto:jazz@si.edu). For further information, including webcasts, blogs, jazz resources, events, history, PSAs and more, please visit:

[http://www.smithsonianjazz.org/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=11&Itemid=12](http://www.smithsonianjazz.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=11&Itemid=12)

**PTA Reflections Program Update**

*(Betsy Landers, National PTA)*

Betsy Landers is the 52<sup>nd</sup> president of the National PTA, an association with 4.5 million members. The Reflections Program is one of National PTA's premier programs, and in the past 40 years, about 11 million students have participated. The program encourages students (pre-K – age 18) to express themselves and receive positive recognition for original artistic efforts in six categories: visual arts, photography, literature, music composition, dance choreography and film production. Students in four age categories advance from local level participation and judging to council, district, state and then to national competition. National level recognitions include awards, monetary prizes (to students and to their PTA units), and the opportunity to perform at a national level. The 2010-11 Reflections Program theme was “Together we can....” Winners were recognized at the 115<sup>th</sup> Annual National PTA Convention and Exhibition in June in Orlando FL.

Applications and further information are available at [www.pta.org/2032.asp](http://www.pta.org/2032.asp) The theme for the 2011-2012 Reflections program will be “Diversity means.....”

**Loudoun County School Year-End Update**

*(Jim Harmon, Loudoun County Public Schools & Frederick County school board member, VA)*

Jim Harmon is music and arts supervisor (Loudoun County, the 4<sup>th</sup> largest school district and county in the state of VA) and a school board member (Frederick County, the 19<sup>th</sup> largest in VA). The arts are alive and well in both counties.

Loudoun County is one of the wealthier communities in the USA, with well-staffed schools and fine programs in chorus, band, orchestra and one of the few secondary schools in the nation that has a guitar program. General music and music theory are offered in high school and there is a full program in the elementary schools.

Frederick is a smaller county, with not as much financial support, but arts education is still an important part of the community.

Both counties have taken financial hits: in Loudoun, there have been no raises for the past three years, and in Frederick, the same has been true for four years. In both communities, the arts are highly valued and well appreciated.

Loudoun County has received the “Best Communities for Music Education” award multiple times and uses the Advocacy Toolkit and other SupportMusic materials to help keep music education strong and to highlight that arts education is a valuable commodity.

Harmon stressed the importance of being vocal: “You’ve got to talk with your politicians. I tell our teachers every year that we are ‘downstream’ of politicians and, if we don’t tell them what’s important and valuable to us as a populace, they don’t know. The more they hear from us, the more that arts education will have a value to them when it comes time to vote.”

**Dee Jones:** What I hear you saying is: “advocate, advocate, advocate.”

### **School Budget Cuts Update**

*(Dr. John Benham, Music in World Cultures, Inc.)*

School music programs are still facing cuts. Those that are fighting seem to be winning more than losing. Using one school as an example, this spring, although no cuts were indicated, the middle school was reducing from 7 periods to 6 periods as a way to save money. This reduction meant students were unable to select music as an elective. This “nibbling” concept has been somewhat accepted by people – “well we still have our program,” but what that really means is “I still have my job” a concept I think I heard first from Karl Bruhn – but this ‘nibbling’ definitely has a significant impact on kids.

A new program to educate undergraduate level music educators about advocacy is being developed at the University of Minnesota. It has now expanded to a regional program, and the students themselves are hosting a conference on advocacy. It is hoped that the program to prepare music teachers to become advocates will continue to expand, statewide and nationally.

**Dee Jones:** What advocacy efforts have gone beyond optional to absolutely necessary to keep music education programs strong everywhere?

**Dr. Benham:** “We must get active and be proactive, not reactive. If you, as a music educator, are unwilling to advocate for music programs, I really question your right to teach.”

### **“Live from the Music For All Summer Symposium”**

*(Eric Martin, Music For All, Inc.; Andrew Swarts, senior, William Mason High School, Mason OH; Joey Neuenseawanber, graduate, Indianaville High School, Cincinnati, OH)*

Music For All's 36<sup>th</sup> annual Summer Symposium is being held for the first time at Ball State University in Muncie IN. Attendees include 750 high school students, 800 teacher students, a faculty of 150, and a total university community of nearly 2,000 people who are studying music education. Participants are being prepared to not only teach music, but also to build community and to advocate for music education.

**Andrew Swarts** is a drum major, who plays sax and piano, and this is his third year at the camp. "Summer Symposium is my favorite part of the summer. I get to see my best friends (who live thousands of miles away) and it offers many leadership opportunities. I was a shy kid the first year, but now I'm more outgoing and every year gets better. I find ways to improve myself as a whole and go back with ways to improve my program.

**Dee Jones:** How important is it to you that you have access to music education in school? When did you start and what are you currently doing to pursue music?

**Andrew Swarts:** I don't really know what I'd be doing in high school without music education. I started playing piano when I was five years old and then took up the sax in 6<sup>th</sup> grade. And it's just always kind of been there for me. From the friends' circle I hang out with to (everything else), it's really been a massive part of my life. It's developed who I am."

**Joey Neuenseawanber** is entering the University of Illinois this fall and plans to study music education. "I began to play trumpet in the 5<sup>th</sup> grade, and this is my 5<sup>th</sup> year at Summer Symposium. I love it here. Everything about it is so incredible. Like Andrew said, some of my best friends are from all over the country. And, there are many leadership opportunities at Summer Symposium; it's unlike anything else. It's a positively life-changing experience. I don't know what I would be doing without this camp."

**Dee Jones:** Why has music been essential to your high school career?

**Joey Neuenseawanber:** It really started with my marching band, that's when I really realized what music can do. I wasn't a really good player, kind of shy, but I got pure emotion from music, either hearing it or playing it. Music can be anything you make it and that really stuck with me. And I've studied music theory, jazz and classical music, and every bit of music is just pure emotion, emotion personified for everyone, whether performing or just listening. Music is so incredible and you can do anything with it and you can express any emotion with music. And that is what has really stuck with me, and (will continue to do so) into college.

**Mary Luehrsen:** This is such an important reminder: our work is all about the kids, about creating opportunities for them to be all that they can be in their lives. Music is the soundtrack of their lives, and they can express it in (many) ways, and that we will be there to guide them.

**NEXT MEETING: September 8, 2011 – Please forward agenda or newsletter article suggestions, particularly "success stories" or issues faced in local districts, to [supportmusic@namm.org](mailto:supportmusic@namm.org) Keep your eyes on school budgets over the summer and provide us with updates!**

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