

SupportMusic.com Coalition Teleconference  
Thursday, November 17, 2011

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**NEXT CONFERENCE CALL: December 14, 2011 – LIVE! Midwest Clinic, Chicago, IL**  
**Please forward any agenda suggestions, particularly “success stories” or issues faced in local districts, to [supportmusic@namm.org](mailto:supportmusic@namm.org)**

**SUMMARY**

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**Welcome and overview**  
*(Mary Luehrsen, NAMM)*

The SupportMusic Coalition supports community advocacy to ensure that every child has access to high quality music teachers and to assure that quality music and arts education is part of the core curriculum.

**ANNOUNCEMENT:** If anyone would like to serve as a Guest Moderator for an upcoming conference call, please send an email to [supportmusic@namm.org](mailto:supportmusic@namm.org)

## Welcome This Month's Guest Moderator

*(Laurie Tobian Schell, Laurie Schell Associates)*

### THEME: "Gathering Momentum - Reports from Across the Nation"

- **Organizing Local Coalitions to Support Music and Arts Education** (*Ron Bolles, [South Bay Alliance for Arts Education](#); Jeffry Walker, [San Jose Alliance for Arts Education](#); Patty Larrick, [Stanislaus Alliance for Arts Education](#)*)

**Laurie Schell:** Four years ago, the California Alliance for Arts Education (CAAE) acted as a catalyst for the formation of [local community advocacy coalitions](#) throughout the state. Although the State of California offers some guidance and statewide policies, it is local decisionmaking and local budget making that really determines the health of local arts education programming. Actively participating in local control, within a framework of support, helps to keep arts education strong in communities that have been buffeted by recent and ongoing budget cuts.

These local coalitions empower people to speak up for the arts. They are composed of representatives from arts, education, business, parents and all sectors of society. Three of the 25 community coalitions will give an overview of what they're doing, types of stakeholders, primary audience, what they're most proud of, and their biggest challenges.

**Ron Bolles:** The South Bay Alliance for Arts Education (SBAAE) is in southernmost CA, near the Mexican border, and was formed almost 2 ½ years ago. There are seven different school districts - the largest is Sweetwater Union High School - and the coalition includes representatives from Sweetwater; a local community college Dean; a theater arts director; Dr. Kimberly Feilen (San Diego State University professor and author who initiated the LoCAL Collaborative studying Community Arts in South Bay); a local business leader from Young Audiences; a former principal and teacher now serving on the County Board of Education, and others.

**Laurie Schell:** Please tell us about your work with local school boards and how you maintain a visible presence.

**Ron Bolles:** Our mission is to be at the ready whenever the arts come under attack. Last year, when our school district was prioritizing cuts, they held four community town hall meetings; we attended all of them to plead the case for arts education. There was a great turn out, and the district expressed their appreciation to us. They told us we were articulate, non-threatening, knowledgeable, and were very respectful of leadership and the challenges they face.

We have worked on our website development and created a Facebook group page that quickly went viral: over 2,000 people signed on within three days. This made a huge statement, and was a great awareness boost. That's what we are most proud of.

**Laurie Schell:** And, your greatest challenge?

**Ron Bolles:** Trying to involve parents and the business community - our group is heavy on educators.

**Jeffry Walker:** The San Jose Alliance for Arts Education (SJAAE) is located in the northern part of CA in the Bay Area/Silicon Valley. San Jose is the 10<sup>th</sup> largest city in the US, and is located in Santa Clara County. There are 400,000 K-12 public school students in 33 school districts, and it's an area of great geographic, economic and ethnic complexity and diversity. Our primary focus is on the San Jose Unified School District in central San Jose.

We formed in March 2011, and our first meeting attracted a diverse group of 40 parents, teachers, administrators, community leaders, and representatives from foundations, arts organizations, the Board of Education, business and media (including Public Access TV).

At our second meeting in May, nearly half of the original group expressed interest in participating in a leadership role. We moved the conversation forward a bit, but also identified our biggest challenge, which is that our group has "too many leaders."

In October, we experienced our most proud accomplishment to date: the San Jose Teachers' Union has now, for the first time, formed an Arts Caucus. This acknowledges the need for formal representation by an interest group representing the arts (and, similar to other caucuses, will give the arts and teachers of the arts a direct presence in the union).

Our audience is broad, and we are working to raise awareness and relevancy of issues.

Our challenges include trying to keep the mix of people strong and deliberate, and also to coordinate the efforts of the San Jose Teacher's Union Arts Caucus with others across the state; we play matchmaker and conversational connector from local to state and national levels. We also seek to connect the high tech community with the diverse ethnic cultures throughout the San Jose area.

**Patty Larrick:** The Stanislaus County Coalition is located in the Central Valley, a strong agricultural region. Modesto, the largest city, has about 200,000 people, and there are 26 school districts countywide. In March, a [kick-off event](#) was held at the Gallo Center for the Arts in Modesto. In addition to the Gallo Center and Gallo Winery, the area is strong on agri-business, real estate and smaller petroleum businesses, and the coalition is trying to connect to these businesses.

This coalition has focused on the reality that those who tell the best stories make the best case. If speakers are coherent, they get the support of local businesses. The cultural and education communities are also a large part of this coalition, which has representation from the Carnegie Arts Center, the Stanislaus Arts Council, the superintendent from the County Office of Education, program managers for after school and at-risk student programs, and early childhood representatives as well.

People who speak up at school board meetings have considerable influence, so we're recruiting people who are willing to speak respectfully and who can be clear about community support for arts education. We are considering hosting a community forum and are very pleased with our website development.

There were 60 people at our kick-off event, and of those, 40 are interested in moving in and out of leadership positions to be determined by their interest and areas of influence in helping to meet the goals of the coalition.

**Laurie Schell:** All of these coalitions reinforce the idea that 'it takes a village,' and that action must be constant and vigilant. One of the challenges is to engage the business community and perhaps this something that NAMM members can help local coalitions achieve.

- **VAPA Update**

*(Karen Childress-Evans, Visual Arts and Performing Arts, [San Diego Unified School District](#))*

As revenues in the State of California are still in trouble, school districts are poised to take a huge hit. The San Diego Unified School District (SDUSD) started the school year with almost all teachers returning, and 100% of elementary school students receive instrumental music. However, staff positions for four resource people – dance, theater, visual arts, music – were returned with no funding for programs (ie, no monies for instrument repair, transportation, etc.) though money did eventually appear. The school board then wanted the district to use award monies received from The Kennedy Center and The National School Board Association to pay bills, but VAPA refused, and decided to create a Glee Club Sing Out event with the support of all school employees. It attracted about 200+ volunteers who tap danced, sang, took tickets, ran silent auctions, provided food, and more. Though they raised only \$8,000 to help offset the \$250,000 deficit, there were additional benefits besides money: a local pest control business funded the event, and [an article and video, "Staff Sing to Preserve Arts for San Diego Students,"](#) attracted positive attention. People are continuing to contact VAPA to make financial contributions.

- **The New NAFME Position Statement on Teacher Evaluations**

*(Johanna J. Siebert, Ph.D., [Webster Central School District](#))*

The new ["NAFME Recommendations for Music Teacher Evaluations"](#) document is now available. It relies upon a wide range of materials (listed on a Resources page) from the National Institute for Excellence in Teaching, NEA, Charlotte Danielso's "Framework for Teaching," and documents and recommendations from states receiving RttT funds.

The Position Statement has already been used in meetings with the USDOE and in school district/other types of planning and administrative sessions to determine what should be included in teacher evaluations. It's broken into two big areas – what measures of student achievement should be used, and what does successful teacher evaluation incorporate. Some student achievement data will be used in parts of a teacher's evaluation and, depending on the state and other variables, it will also be

based on other areas such as reflections, environment, instructional methods, and preparation. For example:

- behaviors that are directly attributed to that individual music teacher
- evaluations should be conducted by administrators who are highly qualified
- a multi year cycle allows for appropriate professional development and growth
- multiple measures – planning preparation, the classroom, how are students obtaining 21<sup>st</sup> century skills through music
- asking districts to avoid school-wide measures that are not directly related to music achievement, ie, ELA scores, math scores

**Laurie Schell:** How are people now using the statement?

**Johanna Siebert:** States are using it to design their evaluations and to gather input from teachers. It's already being used at the DOE in regards to ESEA Reauthorization. It's out there pretty publicly now, and it includes separate recommendations for music teachers who are challenging current evaluation methods and suggests what can they do in their districts.

**Laurie Schell:** And, how can advocates use this information?

**Johanna Siebert:** They can use it to see that music gets adjudicated on the inherent merits and qualities of the music curriculum and not upon someone else's work in another content area. Evaluations have to have integrity, and have to evaluate what each teacher is teaching. They must be based on judging a child's success in music (as opposed to including other subjects).

**Bob Morrison:** We used some of NAFME's information to craft our own statement of principles around teacher evaluation in New Jersey. It was particularly helpful in discussions tied to student performance, and we used that information with our State Taskforce that is in charge of the entire teacher evaluation process for the DOE. The State Taskforce is now using that information as it relates not only to music and arts education, but also to help inform their work around the non-tested areas. Having a model that shows how to evaluate properly for each teacher's body of work is really critical because there is a movement right now to judge non-tested teachers based on school-wide measures of performance in reading and math – and that is not appropriate for our field.

**Johanna Siebert:** If we are truly looking to improve student learning, then we need to look at how music teachers impact student achievement in music. Visit the [NAFME Groundswell page](#) for more information.

- **Rock Club Project**

*(Steve Skillings, [JamHub](#); Dr. Art Prince, [Gahanna Lincoln High School](#), Gahanna-Jefferson Public Schools, Gahanna, Ohio)*

JamHub is a piece of gear that creates a silent rehearsal studio, though the sound is loud and clear for students. There are videos and photos on the JamHub site to show

how it works (for example, several rock bands may play together in one room by using a cluster of mixers). Students become confident in their ability to learn, knowing they're not holding others back, they can progress at their own rate, and it protects their hearing. Schools are excited because it allows music teachers to add electric guitar, electric bass, drums, and the study of rock and pop to existing programs. This creates excitement for the music program, even as an after-school program, which in turn leads to advocacy from kids and parents. Students can study Bach and Beethoven as well as The Beatles and Beyonce, which helps to build support from administration and parents.

"The head of department called me today saying that he may actually 'be in love with me,' for taking the initiative with the JamHub studio. He said what we are doing is simply amazing, and that the kids and parents are blown away when they actually hear this style of music being made."

– quote from a high school teacher

There's a great deal of music industry involvement, and all are eager to see this program succeed. D'Addario, Taylor, Korg, Roland and many other equipment manufacturers are already participating, which is an important factor when programs and advocates are looking for local business support.

**Dr. Prince** is assistant principal at Gohanna, which is located in a suburb of Columbus, Ohio. Last spring, a group of Gohanna students and their band, Peligro 614, won the *SchoolJam USA* NAMM contest and were named "Best Teen Band." These sophomores and a freshman won a trip to Germany and received funding to purchase equipment for the school. They got the JamHub system, started an after school music club, and began to connect with kids in the traditional school music programs. Gohanna hopes to expand the club. Local businesses are helping out with instruments; the program is helping students and the community make connections with each other. People are working together to raise funds for various projects, and in-roads are being made into the existing, and already strong, traditional band, choir and other arts programs.

**Laurie Schell:** How well is the program now integrated into existing music programming?

**Dr. Prince:** It's a slow process. The JamHub Rock Club room is across from the choir room, and some choir students now across the hall to practice silently during regular class time and in the Show choir context. Students that play guitar and other instruments with the jazz band or orchestra or for the dance and drama departments are also using the JamHub system and we hope to integrate more students and programs as time goes on. If anyone has any questions, please contact [Steve@jamhub.com](mailto:Steve@jamhub.com). Randi Levy has a program in Germantown, MD, (read about it in this [CounterPoint column](#)) and Mike Huckabee is one of our biggest advocates.

## NATIONAL UPDATES

- **ESEA Updates**

(Narric Rome, [Americans for the Arts](#); Christopher Woodside, [NAME](#))

**Narric Rome:** On October 20<sup>th</sup>, the Senate Education Committee marked up a piece of legislation on the Reauthorization of ESEA that was expected months (actually, years) ago. Sen. Harkin (D-Iowa) had promised a bi-partisan bill since the spring. Early in the fall, USDOE Secretary Duncan proposed that he would provide state waivers to remove many NCLB provisions and replace them with new state guidelines. Duncan's step pushed Chairman Harkin and the ranking member, Sen. Mike Enzi (R-WY), to bring out the bill they had been working on, and it was marked up last month. Since then, they've held one hearing, and the bill is on stand-by, awaiting Senate consideration.

In the meantime, advocates are reviewing the bill and hope to strengthen the role of the arts in the bill's provisions. Specifically, there's a "well-rounded education" amendment that was included by Sen. Bob Casey (D-PA); the Casey Amendment provides support for many of the subjects that aren't reading and math that have been left behind in the last decade.

The Senate probably won't get to this bill this year. The House has nothing like it at this point: although there are a couple of small pieces of legislation, they will have nothing significant this year. Bottom line: we're working on this significant piece of Senate Legislation and are also preparing for the House response.

**Chris Woodside:** The "well-rounded" funding pot as it appears in the Casey Amendment is where the lion's share of the arts lobbying is now taking place. Because the time line is so hazy, it's hard to know whether we're about to have something happen or if the process could take several months or a year or two more. We're a voice on The Hill right now, we're informing our memberships, we're saying it's important that they make calls to their representatives, and to the Committees and key members, as appropriate. This is, of course, a two-pronged attack: Secretary Duncan's waivers are hovering over us from the Department side, and the Congress is working on the ESEA Reauthorization. They're sort of friends, sort of competitors. We're not sure who's going to come out with something first, and so we are having conversations with both parties/both sides. It's an interesting situation for everyone involved.

**Mary Luehrsen:** What can we do to help from the community level? Which side should we be pushing in on?

**Narric Rome:** This is good timing for advocates to do some outreach. Americans for the Arts and Groundswell/NAfME have sent alerts to Congress to express our support for arts education. Caution: if contacts are made, don't get into specific legislative details as they are changing rapidly. Just simply make the point that arts education should be addressed, that its role should be strengthened, and that it's important as a part of a complete education. Action Alerts are available on the Americans for the Arts website in the CapWiz section, and there's information on the NAfME site as well.

**Bob Morrison:** The first wave of NCLB waivers that went in on Monday will cover eleven states, and the next wave will be in February. It's anticipated that the first batch will be approved sometime in December. Anyone interested in this issue may find out if their state is applying for a waiver by visiting their state's DOE web site: a list of waiver applicants should appear on the home page. States are using the waivers to throw out

a lot of the education requirements and implement new policies that will have a significant impact on education policies in those states.

**Chris Woodside:** The NAFME Groundswell page also has a summary of those first 11 states and some information on where to go.

- **Advocacy Reframing Update/Steering Committee Taskforce**  
(Debra Bresnan, *ProFiles: All The Write Stuff*)

At the summer Steering Committee meeting, we discussed and reviewed the US DOE's FRSS 'first look' report and found that the national data in the report was consistent with available state data. Nationwide, a very high percentage of schools – more than 90% - do provide music education taught by high-quality instructors.

We decided to create a succinct document to positively reframe our advocacy position, with the guiding tone of "everyone else is doing it, is your school in step with the rest of the country?" Since our first meeting in July, the document has been revised extensively and we now present it to the full Coalition for use in community outreach and education.

In this new baseline document, we have moved away from deficit thinking to a position of 'leaning forward'. The Reframing Advocacy document is intentionally one-page. It is positively framed and action-oriented, with a few talking points supported by concrete statistics. It also includes a call to action to encourage membership in the Coalition.

We offer it now to everyone to use as another tool to counter potential program threats or cutbacks. It's posted as a PDF file on the SupportMusic site and featured as the December CounterPoint column as well.

**Mary Luehrsen:** This is our equivalent of an elevator speech. It would be useful as background for a school board presentation, and supports personal opinion by connecting it to the larger national advocacy position. This document expresses a tone of positive optimism for what people believe is important in children's education. If you have comments, questions, ideas for how it may be used, please pass them forward to us. We're very interested to hear your feedback.

- **National Guild for Community Arts Education Conference Update**  
(Jonathan Herman, [National Guild For Community Arts Education](#))

The National Guild is actively involved in many national partnerships, and is very interested in how active involvement in state networks (such as the CAAE model presented earlier) may be used to effectively tap into local networks.

The Guild's mission is to support and advance lifelong learning in the arts. We are a very broad coalition of organizations, disciplines and institutions who have joined together with a shared commitment to quality and access to arts learning. We have members in about 45 states; our work focuses on resources, research, professional development, networking opportunities, advocacy, and we also do some granting programs.

This conference was our largest ever – 600+ participants convened in Boston. Some of the big themes really resonated. Eric Booth’s keynote address focused on “arts for many purposes” and he outlined various strands we all care about – of course, skill building in the arts, but also career development in the arts, community development, youth development, political or social change type art – all are represented within the community arts world and among educators. We talked about siloing and how organizations can work together and learn from each other through engagement and dialogue, and some exciting models were offered for how to do that.

The role of arts in youth development was also a big theme, and it was informed by our “Engaging Adolescents” initiative (funded by The NAMM Foundation). This project is our attempt to increase teen participation in arts learning by enhancing the effectiveness and scope of existing programs and catalyzing new ones. There is a Guidebook and also several training opportunities: this is very practical information and more is freely available on their website.

- **SupportMusic Coalition Steering Committee Update**  
(Mark Despotakis, [Progressive Music Company](#))

In addition to the above updates on the ESEA and to the document created by the “Reframing Advocacy” Taskforce, the Steering Committee has also established an Outreach Taskforce to focus on encouraging NAMM businesses to become Coalition Affiliates and to give us some business perspective. We have also been planning conference calls for next few months (Dec and Jan), and have reviewed a map of nationwide affiliates, now 250 - 270 organizations.

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

<b>ARIZONA</b>	Scott Lang Leadership, Scott Lang, President
<b>CALIFORNIA</b>	Encinitas Alliance for Arts Education, Sandra Jordan, Coordinator
<b>INDIANA</b>	Paige's Music, Mark Goff, President
<b>NEVADA</b>	Absolute Music LLC, Steve Gibson, Owner & General Manager
<b>NEW YORK</b>	Music 4 Everyone, Bert Gallmon, CEO
<b>TENNESSEE</b>	Amro Music Stores Inc., Pat Averwater, President

**NEXT MEETINGS:**

- **WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 14, 2011 2 PM PST**  
*LIVE! Midwest Clinic, Chicago, IL*  
Hyatt McCormick Hotel
- **FRIDAY, JANUARY 20, 2012**  
*LIVE! The NAMM Show, Anaheim, CA*
- **FEBRUARY 2012 – NO MEETING**

**Please forward any agenda suggestions, particularly “success stories” or issues faced in local districts, to [supportmusic@namm.org](mailto:supportmusic@namm.org)**

**NOVEMBER 2011 Teleconference Participants: TO CORRECT/AMEND, PLEASE SEND EMAIL TO [supportmusic@namm.org](mailto:supportmusic@namm.org)**

**Total participants dialed in to the call = 47**

1. Americans for the Arts, Narric Rome
2. Contemporary Music Center, Menzie Pittman
3. Gahanna Lincoln High School, Gahanna, OH, Art Prince \*\*
4. GRAMMY Foundation, David Sears
5. JamHub, Steve Skillings
6. League of American Orchestras, Heather Noonan
7. Music Education Consultants, Inc., Marcia Neel
8. NAFME, Christopher Woodside
9. NAMM, Mary Luehrsen
10. NAMM, Candace Snedecor
11. NAMM, Charese Wolfe
12. National Guild For Community Arts Education, Jonathan Herman
13. Quadrant Arts Education Research, Robert Morrison
14. Quincy Jones Musiq Consortium, Stephanie Scherpf
15. ProFiles: All the Write Stuff, Debra Bresnan
16. Progressive Music, Mark Despotakis
17. San Jose Alliance for Arts Education, Jeffrey Walker \*\*
18. Laurie Schell Associates, Laurie Tobian Schell
19. South Bay Alliance for Arts Education, Ron Bolles \*\*
20. Stanislaus Alliance for Arts Education, Patty Larrick \*\*
21. Visual Arts and Performing Arts (VAPA), Karen Childress-Evans
22. Webster Central School District, Johanna J. Siebert, Ph.D. \*\*

\* New Affiliate

\*\* Invited Guest

11.29.11 DB