



ADVOCATING FOR YOUR PROGRAM

- Attend school board meetings. Making yourself visible and showing interest is never a bad thing
- Ask your Superintendent if you can have a small group of students perform at a school board meeting--perhaps centered around a "board appreciation dinner," etc. This works well at Holiday times too.
- Invite your Superintendent and principal(s) into your classroom for important events--guest speakers, clinicians, etc. Invite them to festival, concerts, musicals, etc...and perhaps even have them play a part on a concert. Personal invitations (either from you or the students) work well!
- Utilize your booster group--parents are one of your best advocates! Encourage them to talk to school board members about the success of your program. Be careful, however--you don't want your booster group to grow larger in scope than intended.
- Utilize your students--they are the BEST advocates for arts education. Community events where your students can perform/participate are great. Be active in community service--toys for tots, nursing homes, leaf clean-ups, etc. Making \$ for the program doesn't always have to be the goal--just getting the kids out into the community can be highly beneficial.
- Advocate for yourself. Music teachers are notorious for staying in their rooms, planning amazing concerts and activities, and then not telling anyone how great things went. Write an article in your district/building newsletter, maintain a website, include information about student success on the daily announcements, etc etc etc.
- Tell people how your program helps to meet the elementary arts education state standards (or whatever standards are pertinent)
- Think about dollar per student and return on investment? What is the current investment in your program and how many students are you serving?
- Check out <http://www.nafme.org/take-action/what-to-say/> There are GREAT tips here!
- Enlist the help of parents whose students have benefitted from music classes, to bolster your case. Parent-advocates can be strong voices for your program. Be careful not to go too far with this one, as too much parent advocacy could turn a supportive building principal against you if they begin to feel too much heat.
- Don't get discouraged! Advocacy takes time, saying the same things over & over to the same people until they stop & take notice.