



## Music Remains an Essential Component of a Well-Rounded Education

The mission of the New Jersey Music Educators Association is to provide access to an inclusive music education for all students by supporting music educators in their advancement of quality music instruction and practice. In this uncertain and challenging time of global pandemic, our mission is more important than ever. As we take steps to plan for the 2020-2021 school year, NJMEA advocates for music and arts education to remain fully funded and supported for our students.

The National Core Arts Standards guide us to Create, Perform, Respond and Connect. While the current health crisis brings into question how it may be possible to provide quality music instruction with restrictive guidelines in place, we work alongside many partners, including the National Association for Music Education, to provide resources to do just that. Because our content has so many benefits beyond the academic achievement, it is crucial at this time.

Social-emotional learning is embedded into our work as music educators. This need transcends all communities, but especially in a time when students have been functioning for long periods of time without interaction beyond their families and devices. Music instruction includes and enhances those aspects to school such as social awareness, leadership, expression, problem solving and other relational skills.

Community building and positive school culture are both results of music and arts programming. Providing outlets and tools for students to express themselves and collaborate is essential in creating a well rounded learning environment and education. The Every Student Succeeds Act includes music in its listing of core subjects as a result. Our organization stands firm in the belief that music should be a fully funded subject taught by certified educators with appropriate resources and materials. The high quality of education students receive in New Jersey is due in part to the vibrant music programs occurring throughout the state. There are ways to keep these alive while maintaining a safe learning environment for teachers and students, and we look forward to continuing to develop these resources.

On behalf of NJMEA and its members, thank you for your support.

Patrick O'Keefe  
President, New Jersey Music Educators Association