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Fwd: NC Music Educators Association Advocates Join More Than 300 Music Education Supporters on Capitol Hill

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To: Molly Steur <msteur@ednc.org>

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From: Susan Heiserman <sheiserman@ncmea.net>
Date: Tue, Jun 30, 2026 at 10:11 AM
Subject: NC Music Educators Association Advocates Join More Than 300 Music Education Supporters on Capitol Hill
To: <hmcclellan@ednc.org>

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE



North Carolina Music Educators Association Advocates Join More Than 300 Music Education Supporters on Capitol Hill

Raleigh, N.C. (June 30, 2026)

On June 24, 2026, more than 300 music education leaders, advocates, and future educators gathered in Washington, DC, to highlight the importance of music education and advocate for stronger federal support during the annual Hill Day hosted by the National Association for Music Education (NAfME). Leaders from North Carolina were among participants from across the nation who traveled to the nation's capital to champion equitable access to music education for all students.

The North Carolina delegation included nine educators, collegiate members, and advocates who met with congressional offices representing communities across the state.

“Music education has a transformative impact on students, schools, and communities, yet far too many young people across the country still lack access to these opportunities,” said NAfME President Cecil Adderley. “Advocating for increased access to music education is essential, and we are proud to stand alongside dedicated educators, students, and supporters who are committed to ensuring every child can experience the benefits of music learning. We are deeply grateful to the advocates who joined us on Capitol Hill to elevate this important issue.”

NCMEA’s Executive Director Susan Heiserman said, “Music keeps students in school, improves school climate, supports academic development, and teaches skills that will help students succeed no matter which path they choose. Every student should have the opportunity to experience music in school, and federal programs and legislation help make that possible. It was a privilege to join our outstanding group of current and future music educators in advocating on behalf of North Carolina’s students and music teachers.”

During meetings with members of Congress and their staff, advocates shared personal stories illustrating the profound impact music education has had on their own lives and on the students and communities they serve. These conversations helped demonstrate the value of music education and underscored the importance of federal policies that support a well-rounded education that includes the music and the arts for every student.

Key policy priorities discussed during Hill Day included robust federal funding for programs such as Titles I, II, and IV-A of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act; the Assistance for Arts Education Program; the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA); and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). These federal investments play a critical role in expanding access to music education by supporting underserved students, providing professional development opportunities for educators, and funding musical instruments, instructional materials, technology, facility improvements, and other essential program resources.

Advocates also urged congressional support for legislation designed to expand access to high-quality music and arts education, including the Arts Education for All Act, HBCU Arts Act, Reimagining Inclusive Arts Education Act, Equitable Arts Education Act, and the Guarantee Access to Arts and Music Education (GAAME) Act of 2026.

North Carolina Music Educators Association and NAFME extend their sincere gratitude to the educators, collegiate students, and supporters whose dedication and advocacy help advance the goal of ensuring every student has access to a high-quality music education.

North Carolina Music Educators Association is the federated state affiliate of the National Association for Music Education (NAFME), a collaborative community dedicated to advancing music education and supporting music educators at all levels.

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Download photo at: <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1P2GGHB31YMqTsktp0MQjdRI2KdOAKLia/view?usp=sharing>

Photo caption: Front row (L-R): Cris Lim, Western Carolina University; Lola Mestas, Meredith College; Azariah Ropp, East Carolina University; Emily McManus, Western Carolina University. Middle row (L-R): Susan Heiserman, NCMEA Executive Director; Carolina Perez Guerrero, NCMEA President; Lenora Helm Hammonds, Berklee College of Music. Back row (L-R): Josh Cvijanovic, Leesville Road High School; Michael Sanders, John Taylor Williams Secondary Montessori

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