

ADVOCACY FOR ELEMENTARY MUSIC EDUCATION

STRATEGIES TO USE WHEN YOU'RE FACING BUDGET CUTS:

1. Enlist the support of fellow music educators at the middle school and high school levels. They will have parent support groups in place that can help fight for your music program. Remind them that a high school music program will not exist without elementary music.
2. Partner with your colleagues in the visual arts, physical education, dance, etc. If one area is being cut, others will most likely be on the chopping block soon. Join forces to demonstrate that a comprehensive elementary education is essential for developing the "whole" child. You should also remind people that all of your subjects are listed as core subjects in the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB).
3. Gather your strongest parent supporters and/or school PTA to develop an Advocacy group. This group of parents and community members will be vital in taking your message to the school board and administration. Officials will listen much more quickly to voters than teachers. Web resources with directions to build your own parent support group can be found at www.wmea.com/support.
4. Research the web for statistics and resources that may pertain to your situation.
 - www.menc.org
 - www.amc-music.org
 - www.supportmusic.com

HOW TO BE PROACTIVE:

1. Invite key decision makers to your classrooms and performances. These people include your school administrators, school board members, your mayor, city council, etc. Show them what a difference music makes in the lives of children.
2. Publicize your program to the community. Take your program to the community. Develop a strong base of community support for your music program by showing voters your students making music. Tips for publicizing your program can be found in the *Music and the Media* document at www.wmea.com/support.
3. Build strong relationships with fellow music educators at the high school and middle school levels. Also, establish a firm partnership within your school with the visual art and physical education teachers. These partnerships allow you to rely on their support in a crisis.
4. Keep advocacy information in front of your parents. For example, build a web site for parents that allows them interaction with the students in your music program or provide advocacy information in performance programs. Below is an example of an excellent elementary music web site:
 - <http://www.ndaviess.k12.in.us/elemshare/Teachers/cmcatee/default.htm>
5. Contact your state music associations. We are here to offer you direction, support and resources.
 - Wisconsin Music Educators Association (WMEA)
1005 Quinn Drive, Waunakee, WI 53597
608-850-3566
www.wmea.com