

FAQ - Keeping Music Education Strong Webinar May 12, 2020

Topic: The New COVID-19 Teaching Reality

Q Are you aware of any personnel/organizations with music technology skills working on the ability for ensembles to play and sing together in realtime?

A Rather than attempting to re-create ensembles online, many are rethinking their approach altogether and are weighing many different options like chamber music, student-student mentoring, composition, etc. Many great ideas are emerging and being shared. For more of this kind of information, we recommend you join the Facebook Group "Music Teachers Creating Online Music Learning" [here](#).

Q Has there been a study on parts per million playing wind instruments? (Re Aerosol Distribution)

A The College Band Directors National Association (CBDNA) is working on such a study in collaboration with NAFME, NAMM Foundation and the National Federation of High Schools. The hope is to have it completed and reported on by mid June.

Q With the school year cut short, many fifth grade students have been denied the opportunity for instrument testing. How do you think this will impact the coming school year with young people starting band and orchestra in schools?

A Some instrument makers and merchants are coming up with creative ways to help students try instruments from their homes. This might include anything from providing a virtual instrument zoo – showcasing features and answering questions – to providing plastic “beginning” mouthpieces for students to try out.

If possible, we suggest working with your district to hold a virtual meeting - or set of meetings - with parents and students to demonstrate and discuss the instruments prior to the start of school. Perhaps you'll decided to allow students to switch to a different instrument in the first 2 weeks of school if desired – so long as a new, sterilized instrument, is available for a switch.

Q Were the SEL for your state included in the music standards or are they a different document? We just wrote new standards for my state last summer, and now I am intrigued!

A The SEL Arts Framework will be stand alone but the Essential Questions and Enduring Understandings for the SELArts will be embedded in the arts standards.

Q What are we doing about the [McKinsey & Co 4-phase chart](#) that says "possibly focus on core content (eg no gym, arts class)"?

A Our stance is that a narrowing of the curriculum like this is not good for kids, with the understanding that all classes, including music classes, will need to be offered differently next school year. Lean in to the fact that your administrators want students to be engaged and strong emotionally, and speak to how your music offerings will help do just that. This, by the way, may not be what administrators are looking at; however, most are familiar with peices like the [AEI's A road map to reopening](#), which speaks to the importance of serving the whole child. That's precisely where we can come in and be of service to the school, community and our students.

Additional information and guidance from the U. S Department of Education COVID-19 ("Coronavirus") Information and Resources for Schools and School Personnel can be found at <https://www.ed.gov/coronavirus>. States are also providing more detailed guidance.

Q Are we also seeing trends between primary and secondary grades with these task force plans?

A Task forces in states are working to have stakeholders across the P-20 spectrum to ensure they tackle specific grade levels as well as points of transition.

Q I worry that elementary general music is often overlooked, since so much attention and focus goes to performance ensembles. Does NAFME have advocacy resources focused on our youngest children?

A This will not be overlooked at all. How this is provided will be critical moving forward. NAMM and NAFME have many resources: [5 Ways to Support Your Music Program](#), [NAMM Foundation Advocacy Resources](#), [NAFME Advocacy Center](#)

Topic: Federal Education Aid

Q I know the HEROS Act was just released by the House. Are there funds earmarked for education?

A Yes. H.R. 6800, The Health and Economic Recovery Omnibus Emergency Solutions Act – the HEROES Act – was passed by the House of Representatives on May 15, 2020. It contains the Education State Fiscal Stabilization Fund, which would provide \$90 billion for grants to the Governor of each State for support of elementary, secondary and postsecondary education – and, as applicable, early childhood education programs and services.

Q Is the proposed HERO funding for education in the form of competitive grants or funding formula?

A As mentioned, the HEROES Act provides funding to go to governors for support of K-12 schools, postsecondary institutions and some early childhood education programs and services. Funding for local educational agencies (LEAs) will be based essentially on the proportion that each LEA receives under Title I part A of ESEA.

Q Can you share revenue loss projections for all states? Are they folding in Federal Catagorical Funds into the “emergency pot” allowing spending flexibility with limited funding?

A The [Center for Budget and Policy Priorities](#) is a good source for this information. [Article: Some States Are Better Prepared Than Others](#)

Q Is the Federal waiver for states loosening Title I, Title III and/or Title IV compliancy regs for 19-20 FY? How about 20-21 FY?

A Section 3511 of the CARES Act provides for National Emergency Education Waivers for schools to repurpose existing K-12 education funds that are provided under ESSA for specific purposes. All 50 states have applied for waivers, which cover the academic year ending September 30, 2020. There is not yet any provision for waivers for 20-21.

Q Will the supplemental funds mentioned be administered as a competitive grant? Or formula funding?

A It is formula funding to backfill state dollars – not competitive.

Q Does phase IV of the CARES ACT include education funding?

A The so-called Phase IV is the proposed HEROES Act. It is in addition to the CARES Act law already enacted. At this point, HEROES still is proposed legislation that now has been passed by the House of Representatives. The proposal includes about \$90 billion for state grants to K-12 schools and public higher education institutions to meet education needs due to the pandemic. However, the Senate has not acted on this legislation, and its fate in the Senate is very uncertain.

Q Is there any way for the government to help fund our subscriptions for services like MusicFirst, either partially or completely?

A As with most governmental funding, the answer is, it depends. Keep in mind that all your public education dollars are governmental dollars, so if your school is paying for these subscriptions already, the government is paying for them. If you are asking about the federal stimulus dollars, or other federal dollars, it is certainly a possibility. The federal stimulus dollars outlined in the HEROES Act would flow/replenish state dollars for education, so they can and will fund anything that was funded out of state dollars in the past.

In addition, the title funds, particularly Title IV-A of ESSA could pay for something like MusicFirst in assistance for students. Remember, if using Title dollars, you will need to make that case that these funds are supplemental in nature – in addition to your state/local dollars and are supporting an important student need.

For more information, you can refer to this guidance from NAFME: <https://nafme.org/wp-content/files/2015/11/ESEA-Implementation-and-Music-Education-Opportunities-Abound-FINAL.pdf>

Topic: Logistics / Health and Safety

Q What are some ideas people are having for collecting school instruments currently at home with students? Not concerned about sanitizing; just getting the things back whole.

A Most districts are looking at return days to encourage the instruments coming back to the school, and using social distancing practices to keep parents and students safe.

Q What are some of the possibilities of what music education can look like next year? Some of us are at policy tables that are supportive but struggling and looking for creative and safe solutions.

A Our advocacy for the importance of music education will remain the same, but it is clear that there are new and important competing factors regarding scarce resources – virus testing, contact tracking, PPE, technology - to name a few. Here's what we are thinking about at the moment, in no particular order:

- Social distancing in the classroom.
- No large ensembles indoors. Too much risk and too many students in one place all at one time.
- Possible in person chamber ensembles, although potentially not for choral students and possibly not for flutists due to aerosol spread. We expect that singers will be singing at home, not in school, unless the science tells us otherwise in the future.
- Possible larger ensembles outside by using safe social distancing. For instance, flutists will need to be placed particularly carefully for marching bands and not come into contact with other players.

- A mix of in-person and on-line learning. If schools attempt true social distancing, they will not be able to have all students on the campus at one point in time. Some students will be in person while others are learning online.
- Music educators will need to be ready to teach lessons asynchronously – in essence, teaching online at the same time you are teaching in person. You might review all the work planned for this spring and think of how your students could make use of it next year in a virtual setting.
- Consider online as the place where your students practice their techniques and skills, particularly your singers who cannot sing when they are with you in person.
- If you cannot play or sing in person, but can be with your students, think about the other areas of the music standards – creating music – students composing and responding to music – students listening and analyzing and interpreting music. These can also be handled quite well online in case a school must shut down due to an increased threat of the virus in your community.
- For general music, an emphasis on the percussive instruments as recorders could be an aerosol spreading threat, like flutes.
- For general music, possibly humming instead of singing with your students. Again, this is part of the CBDNA COVID-19 aerosol study – we are hoping this is safer and a possibility with younger students.
- Creative scheduling solutions. Since you can't see all of your students at once, how can you stagger working with them throughout the day? Can you schedule them in smaller chunks of time so that the students can attend other classes, too? If classroom movement is prohibited for students, what workarounds can you do?

The National Federation of High Schools, in partnership with NAMM and NAFME, is working on draft guidance around these topics; with the hope that we can update this following the COVID-19 aerosol study in mid June. The early guidance will come out in the next 10 days. Please respond and add to it when it is out there – we'd love your input and additional suggestions.

We also recommend the Facebook Group "Music Teachers Creating Online Music Learning" [here](#) as a resource for emerging ideas.

Topic: **Advocacy**

Q I'm new to this. Where can I start advocating for music education and encourage others in our school community (parents, admin) to do the same?

A Thanks for getting started! There are lots of resources. You may want to download some of the research on nammfoundation.org., [NAfME's Civic Action Field Guide](#) offers a great overview and the [Local Advocacy Action Plan](#) is a great starting point as well.

Q Is there a link to NAFME's SEL Brochure I can forward to my administrators?

A Yes! <https://nafme.org/wp-content/files/2020/05/Music-and-SEL-Pamphlet.pdf>

Q Is there a call to action for social media platforms?

A Yes! <https://nafme.org/advocacy/grassroots-action-center/>

Q Our school district has started saying they might cut our itinerant music program because of budget. We just spent half a million building this program, I'd love to keep it. Do you have advice?

A There are many resources. You may want to download some of the research on nammfoundation.org. NAFME's [Local Advocacy Action Plan](#) is a great starting point.

Q Which federal legislators have historically supported music education?

A Frankly, we haven't met a member of Congress that was against music education. You may have members, however, who feel that music education should be funded by the local community, not from federal coffers. Most of these members can agree that flexible federal funding pots such as Title IV-A can benefit music education if flexibility is maintained so that funding decisions are made locally.

Currently in the House of Representatives, major Education champions are the Speaker, the Appropriations Committee Chair, and the Education Appropriations Subcommittee Chair, as well as the Education and Labor Committee Chair. Respectively, they are Speaker Pelosi from CA, Representatives Nita Lowey (NY), Rosa DeLauro (CT) and Bobby Scott (VA). They are in the Democratic majority in the House.

Champions in the Senate include HELP Committee Chairman Lamar Alexander, a Republican from Tennessee, who always been helpful and is the Senate's lead on education policy. Also supportive are Minority Leader Chuck Schumer (NY), Appropriations Committee Ranking Member Patrick Leahy (VT), and HELP Committee Ranking Member Patty Murray (WA).

Equally important are Republican leaders in the House and Senate – House Minority Leader Kevin McCarthy from California, Appropriations Committee Ranking Member Kay Granger (TX), and Ed and Labor Committee Ranking Member Virginia Foxx (NC), as well as Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell (KY) and Senate Appropriations Chairman Richard Shelby (AL).

Topic: **Miscellaneous**

Q What would you recommend to teachers coming right out of college going straight into their first job? I am starting my new job and I am worried I won't know how to start with these students.

A As a start, we recommend the Facebook Group "Music Teachers Creating Online Music Learning" [here](#) as a resource for emerging ideas, one-on-one mentoring and professional networking.