



Music Education Funding and Credit Requirements in the 2021 Legislative Session

The continued investment in music education is vital to the future success of millions of students in the state of Virginia. Music programs benefit students socially, emotionally, and academically in ways that cannot be replicated through other courses. VMEA respectfully requests the following:

- **Fully fund music education programs at the K-12 level**, ensuring that Virginia students can fully access high-quality music education programs at their school. VMEA supports a hold harmless clause in the 2021-22 budget allocation for education based on 2020-2021 school enrollments.
- Support for the proposal by the Virginia Coalition for the Arts, along with its 5,000 members, including VMEA, to **create a high school Fine Arts requirement separate from the current Career and Technical Education requirement (CTE)**. *Position statement attached.*
- **Support HB 1929**. However, VMEA asks for consideration to add the following three items in the bill:
 - **Remediation of students:** Language to include that students not be pulled from other classes, such as electives, for remediation.
 - **Course Options:** Language to include an 8-course option to be implemented in middle school to accommodate elective courses.
 - **Revision to the funding formula for elementary art, music and physical education from 1000 students to 850 students:** Language to include that local school boards shall employ five full-time equivalent positions per 850 students in grades Kindergarten through five to serve as elementary resource teachers in art, music, and physical education. VMEA believes that the state should better fund these positions than as currently stated in the bill at "5 positions per 1,000 students".

The Virginia Music Educators Association (VMEA) is a professional association which actively supports Music Educators at every level from pre-k through college. VMEA serves approximately 2,500 members, including Active Members, Retired Members, Collegiate Members, and Associate Members. VMEA is a federated state affiliate of the National Association for Music Education (NAfME). VMEA features the state's top performers at its annual conference, including these groups in 2020: [Prince George HS Choir](#), [All VA Guitar Ensemble](#), [Collegiate Recital](#), and [Lobby Concerts with student musicians](#).

Additional Links:

[VMEA Music Education Collegiate Students and their Stories](#)

[Double duty: Va. teacher continues class while protecting US Capitol as National Guardsman](#)

[Learning Music Really Does Make Students Smart, New Study Shows](#)

[National Center for Education Statistics - 2016 Music Results](#)

[20 Virginia School Districts Named as "Best Communities for Music Education" by NAMM Foundation for 2020](#)

VMEA Mission Statement

The Mission of the Virginia Music Educators Association is to provide leadership and professional development to ensure quality music education.

Virginia Music Educators Association

Allen Hall, Executive Director
vmeaoffice@gmail.com 804-405-1659

Annamarie Bollino, VMEA President
annamariabollino@gmail.com

Statement of Support for the Creation of a High School Fine Arts Credit Requirement

We urge the Virginia General Assembly to pass legislation requiring one fine arts credit for high school graduation in Virginia. "Fine arts" is to be defined as dance, music, visual arts, and theatre.

Twenty-one states and the District of Columbia, including the addition of Arizona, Florida, and North Carolina in the past year, currently require a course or courses in the fine arts for graduation from high school. This recognition of the importance of the fine arts in the education of all students is important. Fine arts education, consisting of visual arts, dance, music, and theatre, has essential benefits to students in the realm of social-emotional learning and is a significant part of equitable access to a well-rounded education for Virginia students.

As defined in the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), a well-rounded education is not complete without the arts. Study and practice in the visual and performing arts prepare students for the twenty-first century and facilitate growth directly aligned with the 5C's: critical thinking, creativity, collaboration, communication, and civic and community engagement. In the arts students learn, develop, and exercise these skills, which have been identified as critical for all Virginia high school graduates. The arts also provide opportunities for students to hone literacy skills which in their expanded form, require students to critically examine, and communicate through images and sound as well as text.

Further, research shows that when instruction provides opportunities for students to experience learning through the fine arts, they make curricular connections with English, mathematics, science, history and social science in deep and meaningful ways and are more engaged in the learning process. Students who participate in quality fine arts programs attend school on a more regular basis and develop leadership capacities. They are also more likely to stay in school, graduate on time, and go on to graduate from college. College Board data indicate that the more students are involved in fine arts coursework and activities, the higher their SAT scores are, not only in Virginia but nationwide.

Finally, especially in these difficult times, it is important to note that the arts have benefits for student social-emotional learning. Research indicates that arts education has a multitude of benefits to support students' emotional well-being and help students cope with the social isolation and the rapidly changing reality.

In conclusion, we ask you to pass legislation requiring one fine arts credit for high school graduation in Virginia.

Annamarie Bollino, President, Virginia Music Educators Association (VMEA)
annamarietollino@gmail.com

John Brewington, Chair, Virginia Coalition for Fine Arts Education
jbrewington4@gmail.com