

May 22, 2014 AMP Webinar: All Politics is Local How you Play a Part in Your Community

Speakers:

Mark Despotakis, Market Development Director, Progressive Music

Christopher Woodside, Assistant Executive Director at the National Association for Music Education (NAfME)

Notes from Mark Despotakis:

- The squeaky wheel gets oiled - those who show up have the best chance for success. Be visible, be present.
- How do you advocate:
 - Overtly:
 - Show up at meetings where votes and decisions are being made, speak.
 - Write letters.
 - Strategically:
 - Showing up at concerts, board meetings, other events (even if they aren't your own school - remember, you are advocating for not just your kids, but long term for your grand kids and beyond. Nothing politically moves quickly.
 - Paying attention at the federal, state, and local levels (resources below).
 - Talking to teachers: What are the issues they face?
- Don't forget you are the taxpayer - learn what's needed and be vocal (respectfully). i.e.: talk to teachers, understand issues, vocalize those needs to the appropriate audience. Realize that you can say things teachers cannot.
- School boards are accountable to you.
- How to form a coalition:
 - A group of like minded people coming together for a cause.
 - Differs from a booster organization - booster organizations usually focus on fundraising. Coalitions typically focus on the importance and quality of music education.
 - Generally, music coalitions are district wide.
 - Be relentlessly positive, not negative.
 - Partner with teachers, music businesses.
- Work at the local level: school board and administrators.
- Work at the state level: pay attention to education news, find the non-profits who work at the state level and follow them and get to know them.
- National orgs:
 - Arts Education Partnership (<http://aep-arts.org>) Look at ArtScan. This will tell you education policies for your state and compare them to other states.
 - NAfME
 - supportmusic.com
- Getting parents engaged is hard. You have to keep at it. Everyone is busy.

Notes from Christopher Woodside:

- Emphasized National Association for Music Education - NAfME.
 - They do federal lobbying, have paid lobbyists.
 - Coalition facilitation and participation at various levels and with various different groups.

- Capacity building at the state and local levels. They have affiliate organizations across the country.
 - Distance learning and in person sessions for music educators.
 - Planning and task force development efforts for state Music Education Advocacy groups.
 - Annual NAFME Hill Day Event in Washington DC.
 - Forming partnerships with Key Allies in the community.
 - NAFME Music Advocacy Groundswell on the NAFME web site.
 - Collegiate engagement.
 - Advocacy campaigns.
- Look up NAFME's "Music Advocacy Cycle" - a high level "how-to".
- "Broader Minded" www.broaderminded.com. Focuses on the inherent value of music education on what it brings to a person. Provides talking points for advocates.
- Look up NAFME's Legislative Agenda on their web site. Several critical points around funding adequacy, accessibility to programs, evaluation, providing music education in charter schools, federal funding for music programs through early childhood education programs.