



Bob Morrison on music and arts in education, culture and the economy...

April 27, 2007

U.S. House Unanimously Passes Resolution Supporting School-Based Music Education

Members of Congress passed House Concurrent Resolution 121 unanimously, showing a display of continued support from Congress for music education as part of a complete education for all children.

This provides another tool for advocates to use when making the case for the importance of music in our schools.

Tip of the hat to NAMM for leading the effort to make this happen!

110th CONGRESS 1st Session
H. CON. RES. 121

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

Whereas school music programs enhance intellectual development and enrich the academic environment for students of all ages;

Whereas students who participate in school music programs are less likely to be involved with drugs, gangs, or alcohol and have better attendance in school;

Whereas the skills gained through sequential music instruction, including discipline and the ability to analyze, solve problems, communicate, and work cooperatively, are vital for success in the 21st century workplace;

Whereas the majority of students attending public schools in inner city neighborhoods have virtually no access to music education, which places them at a disadvantage compared to their peers in other communities;

Whereas the arts are a core academic subject, and music is an essential element of the arts; and

Whereas every student in the United States should have an opportunity to reap the benefits of music education: Now, therefore, be it

*Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate concurring),
That it is the sense of the Congress that music education grounded in*

ABOUT . . .

Music for All

Our mission is to create, provide and expand positively life-changing experiences through music for all. Music for All is one of the most influential organizations in supporting music, music making and music makers.

The Blog of Music for All is the home for the ramblings of Music for All's founder.

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RECENT ENTRIES

rigorous instruction is an important component of a well-rounded academic curriculum and should be available to every student in every school.

Passed the House of Representatives April 25, 2007.

Read the entire [news release!](#)

Posted by musicforall at [12:45 PM](#) | [Comments \(2\)](#)

April 19, 2007

You CAN Make a Difference

I often use this space to provide advocacy advice and suggest strategies for use in saving, maintaining, and expanding programs for everyone to consider. Not today.

Instead, I want to share with you an actual exchange with a band director whose program was in an immediate crisis.

Panic Button

I was recently on vacation with my family in Washington D.C. I spend so much time there on business that I rarely get to actually take in and enjoy the wonderful historic and cultural offerings this magnificent city has to offer. When I travel I carry my Treo 650 Smartphone so I can stay on top of any issue that may need a quick response.

One item linked to my email address is a "Panic Button" on our Web site that was created for someone to press if they were facing an immediate crisis and needed an immediate response. This is part of our deep commitment to help individual music supporters be as effective as possible when a music program is at risk.

After a fantastic day touring the capital, visiting where money is made, walking the Smithsonian Gardens, visiting the Washington Monument, the World War II and Lincoln Memorials, we headed back to our hotel near the White House to rest before dinner.

Checking my email the following appeared (Note: The name has been changed for privacy purposes):

[Continue reading "You CAN Make a Difference"](#)

Posted by musicforall at [4:56 PM](#) | [Comments \(1\)](#)

April 18, 2007

Music, Arts Education and the Presidential Campaign

One of the activities we have become known for is our efforts to see where candidates for elected office stand on the arts in general and music and arts education in particular.

It is no secret that this years campaigns for President are already. One candidate, who has been a friend to Music for All as well as a personal friend of mine is one of those folks

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running for President, Mike Huckabee. Since I admit to having a personal bias for him, and to ensure all the candidates receive fair coverage, I have set up a blog specifically focusing on [Mike Huckabee's support for arts education](#).

We are in the process of inviting ALL of the candidates to share their positions (and hopefully passions!) for the arts so we may share them with you. We will profile each candidate over the next few months based on public records to allow each of you to form your own opinion and make informed decisions as you look for a candidate to support.

I admit it... I Like Mike. To learn about WHY I like Mike [click here!](#)

Posted by musicforall at [8:32 AM](#) | [Comments \(0\)](#)

April 12, 2007

100 years ago today...

A group of music educators gathered starting the process that would lead to the creation of what today is MENC: The National Association for Music Education

As the music supervisor in Keokuk, Iowa, Philip Cady Hayden put out a call to music supervisors to gather together to discuss general problems and present papers, and 104 came out to attend. Three days of discussion and performances were held in the Westminster Presbyterian Church in Keokuk, including a demonstration clinic presented by Hayden himself on the rhythm techniques he had developed.

[Check it out!](#)

Posted by musicforall at [12:04 PM](#) | [Comments \(0\)](#)

April 3, 2007

Spring Break!

Spring has finally sprung so we are off for the next few days. We will reurn the week of 4/9!

Posted by musicforall at [3:20 PM](#) | [Comments \(0\)](#)

March 29, 2007

Music for All National Festival

It was very gratifying to see Music for All umbrellaing a national festival celebrating the best of music making by some of the finest students across the country. All the ensembles were unbelievable in their caliber. It was also the first time since our merger that the spirit underlying the premise of the merger really took on meaning.

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One of the stunning moments for me personally was to watch the national honor orchestra from our Orchestra America program. This 80+ member orchestra was arguably the finest high school orchestra ever assembled.

See for yourself:

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Congratulations to ALL of the ensembles that were participating and the more than 2000 young men and women who embodied the spirit of "Music for All." A special tip of the hat to the great Music for All staff for creating and managing such a world class event with such elegance, grace and commitment to the cause of Music for All!

Posted by musicforall at [12:41 PM](#) | [Comments \(0\)](#)

March 22, 2007

Don't Be Silent!

This has been a very busy two months. I have had the distinct pleasure of traveling around the country from coast to coast, visiting with educators and parents, politicians, and policy makers – Senators and Governors, education leaders of all stripes, students and a few activist musicians along the way.

Two events during my recent travels have had an impact on my thinking. I recently had the honor to present the Keynote Address at the largest single gathering of music educators in the world, the 2007 Texas Music Educators Association Convention. This was followed shortly by my participation at the 2007 Arts Advocacy Day in Washington D.C. where I witnessed something remarkable.

In Texas, Sir Ken Robinson and I created a two-session double-header tag-team (I am running out of hyphenated metaphors) focusing on creativity and the change to our global economy and the connection to music and arts education every day in our classrooms. At the end of Sir Ken's session we had the opportunity to hear the Texas Commissioner of

Education, Dr. Shirley J. Neeley, speak about her vision for education in Texas as well as the challenges and opportunities for music and arts educators to advance the arts in our schools. She herself is an arts education advocate. She went on about the challenges of standardized testing but maintained a steadfast commitment to ensuring the state requirements would be enforced – requirements that include instruction in music and all of the arts.

She ended her remarks with this on emphatic, repeated statement:

Don't Be Silent

Don't Be Silent

Don't Be Silent!

[Continue reading "Don't Be Silent!"](#)

Posted by musicforall at 4:25 PM | [Comments \(0\)](#)

March 12, 2007

The Secretary of Education Says....

On the eve of Arts Advocacy Day Secretary of Education Margaret Spellings released the following statement:

STATEMENT BY EDUCATION SECRETARY MARGARET SPELLINGS ON
2007 ARTS ADVOCACY DAY

U.S. Secretary of Education Margaret Spellings today made the following statement on the celebration of 2007 Arts Advocacy Day:

I am pleased to join the many artists, administrators, arts educators, parents, and others in celebrating 2007 Arts Advocacy Day.

The No Child Left Behind Act recognizes the important role that arts have in our schools for a well-rounded education.

The arts are a unique tool to stimulate and enrich learning. Not only do the arts encourage our children's imagination and creativity, but they can also teach lessons of history, math, and other subjects in a more memorable and profound way. The arts also, as President George W. Bush has said, "...allow us to explore new worlds and to view life from another perspective," a critically important skill for today's global economy.

Our education system is improving because of the concerns and involvement of so many who advocate for the arts. Leaders in states and local communities can and should ensure that the arts remain part of every student's education.

What does this mean? Stay tuned to this blog for further commentary on what this really

means!

Posted by musicforall at [10:13 PM](#) | [Comments \(0\)](#)

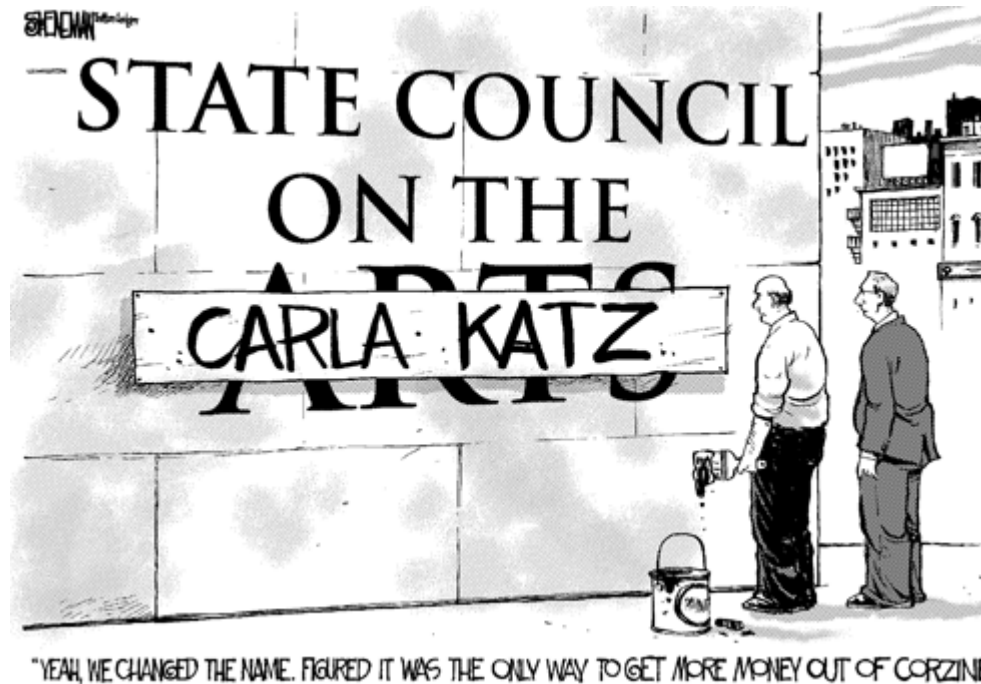
March 9, 2007

When a Deal is Not a Deal - New Jersey Arts Funding Gets Personal

Many of you may know that I have been working closely with the New Jersey State Council on the Arts on several arts education projects not the least of which is the New Jersey Arts Education Census Project. I have a great deal of respect for the work of our Council and their commitment to arts education.

Funding for the Council, not unlike other states, has always been a delicate dance. Four years ago our Governor at the time (who now thumping his book) proposed eliminating all funding for the state arts council. This led to a massive and well orchestrated advocacy effort. One of the results of this effort was the creation of a dedicated funding stream for the arts council that would provide a minimum funding level. When budgets got tight last year the Corzine Administration cut the funding for the council below what everyone thought was the funding floor.

This year's budget failed to restore the funding for the cultural agencies. At the same time news reports of our Governor's "gifts" to a former girlfriend have started to make headlines. The collision of these issues is represented in the cartoon below. The editorial from the Newark Star Ledger follows.



Don't betray arts groups

Thursday, March 08, 2007, Newark Star-Ledger

Once a deal was a deal -- even in Trenton. Apparently, not anymore. It's a lesson members of the state's cultural community are learning, and it's costing them plenty.

Under Gov. Jon Corzine's proposed budget, the state Council on the Arts, the Historical Commission and the Cultural Trust get a \$2.3 million increase from last year, bringing the total appropriation to \$25.6 million.

Not bad except it's short of what the groups were promised or even what a reasonable reading of the law setting up dedicated funding would produce.

Four years ago, Gov. James McGreevey, facing a tight budget, eliminated all funding for the arts and cultural organizations. The resulting uproar led to a compromise that eventually restored much of the money. The groups then agreed to work for passage of a 5 percent tax on hotel and motel room rates, with a portion of the revenue dedicated to the arts.

The law says that in the first year, the arts and historical groups would get \$16 million and be guaranteed more in following years, with \$27.24 million being the minimum. It's all pretty clear until you read down three more paragraphs. Sophisticated bill writers slipped in a provision that says the minimum is what the 2004 budget allocated -- just \$16 million. So the law has two definitions of the minimum.

By the second standard, Corzine is actually being generous.

The arts groups argue they're being shortchanged \$1.64 million, and they're right. Using two competing sections of the law to create confusion and, in the end, justify renegeing on a promise isn't the way to conduct business. Neither is letting the groups campaign for the hotel tax and then not giving them what they expected.

The arts groups can be faulted for being too trusting -- some might even call it naive. Imagine, they actually believed politicians would honor their promises. The legislators need to show that trust was not misplaced.

I can assure you that ArtPRIDE New Jersey (our statewide arts advocacy organization - of which I am a board member) and the other members of the arts community are not naive. We are optimists and hold out hope that our Governor and the members of our legislature will do the right thing. If any of our elected leaders are unsure of their position... all I can say is remember the spring of 2003, it's an election year, and the field has a great memory.

Posted by musicforall at [8:50 AM](#) | [Comments \(0\)](#)