

## **-MENC Government Relations Strategy- ... As of February 2008**

*Objectives:* The objectives of MENC government relations activities are those of MENC:

- “To improve the quality of music teaching and learning
- To increase support for music education in schools and communities”

*Arts in Education Community Goals:*

To that end, the MENC Government Relations Department is currently working with MENC leaders and with our allies in other associations and organizations to accomplish several joint goals. For more information on these collaborative efforts, please refer to the “Strengthen Arts Education in the Elementary and Secondary Education Act: Legislative Recommendations” document.

*MENC Advocacy and Government Relations Goals:*

Continue to bolster support for music education by:

- Formulating new congressional partnerships
- Bolstering political support on Capitol Hill through grassroots advocacy measures such as “ask” letters and issue awareness campaigns
- Promoting and disseminating the results of recent polls conducted by Harris Interactive showing a correlation between overall lifetime success and a quality music education
- Supporting MENC projects such as The National Anthem Project and proposing other congressional appropriations endeavors

*Strategies:*

**-For Achieving Arts in Education Community Goals-**

We continue to work with key congressional staff, as well as our allies in the arts in education community, to refine this language for the reauthorization of NCLB. Although the law formally expired on September 30, 2007, we expect that Congress will likely continue to take advantage of the automatic extension and delay reauthorization until after the conclusion of the 2008 Presidential election. Notwithstanding this development, MENC continues to tout the community’s recommendations in preparation for Congress’ eventual full debate of the law’s reauthorization by:

- a. Refining draft language

- b. Preparing members for an advocacy push that will come at the time of voting on the new bill with:
  - i. Online materials and newsletters
  - ii. Advocacy and legislative alerts when appropriate
  - iii. Utilizing ... *And Music for All* book to promote the ask
  - iv. Legislative staff and committee meetings
  - v. Leadership training
  - vi. Local advocacy activities
  - vii. Tools such as targeted brochures and advocacy guides

-For Achieving MENC Advocacy and Government Relations Goals-

We seek increased congressional support for music education-centric projects, such as The National Anthem Project, from the United States Congress and other prominent leaders in the education community. MENC also continues to meet with supporters on Capitol Hill to discuss a variety of exciting, new ventures (more to come soon!). In addition, we prepare for the celebrations of the Second Annual National Anthem Day and the First Annual "March Forth" Music Day. Lastly, the wildly successful events of 2007's National Anthem Project are to be repeated in Washington, DC over the Flag Day weekend in June 2008. Mechanisms for completing these projects include:

- a. Continued partnerships with congressional members such as U.S. Representative C.A. Dutch Ruppersberger (MD-2) on projects such as The National Anthem Project and H.R. 2894 the "Star-Spangled Banner and War of 1812 Bicentennial Commemorative Coin Act"
- b. Capitol Hill visits – meetings with congressional staffers regarding funding, and other means of support for The National Anthem Project and other MENC projects, enlisting support for music education appropriations, generally

*Additional Goals and Support:*

The MENC Government Affairs Department stands ready to assist state efforts with data selected for, and documents formatted to address, state-level issues. Contact [chrisw@menc.org](mailto:chrisw@menc.org) for more information.

We continue to strengthen our alliances with other key organizations by supporting issues such as National Endowment funding, visa processing for visiting international artists, and "whole child" initiatives in education reform.

All government relations goals are supported by ongoing MENC public relations work. Watch the MENC Web site for announcements regarding upcoming initiatives in this area.