

Good Morning!

Below is The Post-Pandemic Planning Guide, Vol. 5. We hope these resources are useful.

All the best!

Craig



Welcome back to your Post-Pandemic Planning Guide! It’s hard to believe, but we are halfway through our recruiting window, so let’s build some momentum heading down the backstretch. Whatever the challenges your program faced this year, let’s push through and work together to bring back the music!

This week, we’re focused on creative problem-solving! You might have learned your schedule has changed, so we will discuss some alternatives to teaching another music appreciation course. We also discuss new funding opportunities available through ESSER.

Not Another Music Appreciation Class!

Music educators may be asked to teach or create a non-traditional class to accommodate this year’s master schedule. The first course that often comes to mind is Music Appreciation but [here](#) are SEVEN alternatives that can be conducted with minimal funding and still align with music educators’ interests.

If you’re in a position to create an innovative course, talk to your administration about your strengths as a music educator, your students’ needs, and how you can utilize facilities that are already available in your school.

Show Me (How to Get) the Money!

As part of the recent COVID-19 relief package, approximately \$54.3 billion is already being distributed to support K-12 schools. These funds offered through the Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) provide schools, including music programs, additional resources to offset the impact of COVID-19.

[Here](#) is a recent article from NAFME, including ways in which your program may be able to utilize some of the funds.

- Watch [this](#) 10-minute video to find the information for your specific state and learn how your program can benefit.

Many districts are not aware of this comprehensive package and how to access it. It is essential to have a conversation with your school principal or the individual responsible for accessing federal funds on your district’s behalf. These decisions are taking place now, so you must communicate your needs to allocate funds to your program.

- Make an appointment now to meet with your principal.
- Review [the list of suggested items](#) that can be purchased for your program under ESSER guidelines, and get your shopping list ready.

Another resource comes out of the Every Student Succeeds Act. One of the most exciting and impactful provisions of ESSA is the availability of Title IV-A funds. These grants are provided to states then re-granted to districts to provide students with additional educational opportunities, courses, healthy and safe schools, and teacher training, equipment, and supplies. There are numerous possibilities for this renewable funding source, and it can indeed alter the trajectory of music education in every school district.

- Watch [this 6-minute video](#) to learn about how your district can distribute and use Title IV-A funds.
- Download the complete Title IV-A Toolkit [here](#).

Retention Tip of the Week

Mail a letter home to all of your band and orchestra parents and guardians, thanking them for their continued support during this trying time. If you do not already do a weekly or monthly newsletter home, this letter could be an email. If you are already in the practice of sending out regular electronic communication, physically mail this letter. Make it feel different and more unique than your regular communications centered around student achievements, upcoming events, and ensemble business.

Recognize that your ensemble parents and guardians are choosing to keep their children involved in an activity that, as Lowell Mason said when he was advocating for music’s place in the school curriculum, helps children “physically,” “intellectually,” and “morally.” Implore them to reach out if they have any questions and to keep encouraging their children to work through these unorthodox times because brighter, more musical-filled ones are just around the corner. The discipline and perseverance they display this year will serve the entire program well when those skills are harnessed after the pandemic ends!

Contributing Author: Dr. Sarah Labovitz (Arkansas State University)

RESOURCE ROUND-UP

- The Office of Elementary and Secondary Education published [an excellent FAQ](#) on ESSER funds.
- The NAMM Foundation has a [ready-to-go brochure](#), “Why Learn to Play Music?” that you can share with parents and guardians.

Step-by-step, we are going to get back to making music, together! In case you previous volumes of the Post-Pandemic Planning Guide, it can be found [here](#)!

We will touch base with you again in two weeks and can’t wait to see your momentum continue to build towards a successful start to the upcoming school year!

P.S. Perhaps you have some thoughts on how we can improve these blasts, awesome content that’s helped you, or want to share what you are doing now to prepare for Fall 2021. [Drop us a line here](#) — we’d love to hear from you!