

Proactive Advocacy Scripts

Music advocacy can often be most effective when it is proactive, simple, and brief. Here are a few examples that you can use to get started, specifically categorized by applicable audiences at the school board, central administration, and building levels. Simply fill in your school-specific details to the script examples that are provided or use them as examples to draft your own script.

School Board/Central Administration Level

School Board and District-Wide Administrative Meetings happen every month and they are the perfect opportunity to make yourself, your students, and your students' achievements visible in a proactive advocacy step for your program. Parents and students are the most influential people at a school board meeting. Having parents and/or students respectfully attending the monthly meeting in the program's "swag" is a great advocacy tool where no words need to be said. However, here are some templates for stakeholders to use when they need to speak at a school board meeting.

For Directors:

After a School Sponsored Trip

"Good Evening. My name is (fill in here) and I am the director of (fill in ensemble here). I would like to thank the school board and administration for allowing the (fill in the ensemble here) to travel to (fill in destination here) on (fill in the dates here). This opportunity that you supported allowed our students to perform for a larger audience and make anyone from the (name the school district) proud. The students also had an amazing opportunity to travel outside of our community, learn life skills in a safe environment, and grow as young musicians. Thank you for supporting our students in all that they do! Thank you for your time this evening."

Recognizing Students' Musical Achievement

"Good Evening. My name is (fill in here) and I am the director of (fill in ensemble here). On (date of event being acknowledged) at (location of event), (name student/students) from (name of school) were selected through the audition process to participate in (Honors, District, Region, State). There, students from across (identify the demographic area represented) gathered for (days) to put together pieces they had been working on individually for a wonderful concert. These opportunities allow our student musicians to grow and mature as people and musicians. I'd like to take this opportunity to thank the school board, the administration, and my colleagues for supporting our student musicians. Thank you for your time this evening."

Recognizing Group Achievement

“Good Evening. My name is (fill in here) and I am the director of (fill in ensemble here). On (date of event being acknowledged) at (location of event), the (name the ensemble) participated in the (name event). This event allowed our students to be adjudicated to let all members of the ensemble know what they are doing well, what they need to improve, and how they can get better at what they are aspiring to do *together*. While at this event, (name the ensemble) achieved a score of (identify here) to place (wherever). I’d like to thank the school board, administration, parents, and my colleagues for supporting this opportunity for growth to our music students. We look forward to going in the future and continuing to make the (name the school district) proud! Thank you for your time this evening.”

For Parents:

Acknowledging the Programs Value to Your Student

Option 1: “Good Evening Everyone. My name is (fill in here). I am the mother/father of (name student) who is a (fill in grade level) at (name the particular school). I just wanted to publicly acknowledge what (student’s name) involvement in (name the ensemble) has done for my student. The transition from (elementary/middle/high school) to (middle/high/college) was made so much easier because of (student’s name) involvement in (name ensemble). I just wanted to thank the board, the administration, and (name educators) for being real partners in the success of (name the student). Thank you for your time this evening.”

Option 2: “Good Evening Everyone. My name is (fill in here). I am the mother/father of (name student) who is a (fill in grade level) at (name the particular school). I just wanted to thank the school board, administration, and (name the educator) for the wonderful trip the (name the ensemble) had. This was a great opportunity for our students and their constant support of all our students. Thank you. Thank you for your time this evening.”

Option 3: “Good Evening Everyone. My name is (fill in here). I am the mother/father of (name student) who is a (fill in grade level) at (name the particular school). I just wanted to let the (name of the school district) board members and administration know that because of the wonderful (name ensemble) my (daughter/son) won a music scholarship/placement in a school of music. I just wanted to thank you all for your continued support of the (name ensemble). Thank you for your time this evening.”

Acknowledging the Programs Value to the School Community

Option 1: “Good Evening Everyone. My name is (fill in here). I am the mother/father of (name student) who is a (fill in grade level) at (name the particular school). I just wanted thank the board and the administration for their support of the (choir/orchestra/band) program. My student is learning so much and enjoying their involvement. Thank you so much for keeping this program as part of the (name the school district). Thank you for your time this evening.”

Option 2: “Good Evening Everyone. My name is (fill in here). I just wanted to thank (name the director), the students of (name the ensemble), the (name school district) board of directors, and the administration for their performance at (name venue, event, or activity) on (date). The students were wonderful ambassadors of the (name the school district) and programs offered. Thank you for your time this evening.”

Option 3: “Good Evening Everyone. My name is (fill in here). I am the mother/father of (name student) who is a (fill in grade level) at (name the particular school). I just wanted to thank the (name the ensemble) and (name the director) for all that they do to make (name the school) such a wonderful community for all our students. (Write a personal statement of your experience with the ensemble and its members.). Thank you for your time this evening.”

Support for the Program

Option 1: “Good Evening Everyone. My name is (fill in here). I am the mother/father of (name student) who is a (fill in grade level) at (name the particular school). As the district prepares the budget for the coming school year, I just wanted to let the board and the administration know how much my daughter/son has enjoyed their opportunity to participate in band/orchestra/choir at (name school). Music opens doors for all students. Thank you for your time this evening.”

Option 2: “Good Evening. My name is (fill in here). I am the mother/father/guardian of (name student) who is a (fill in the grade level) at (name the school). As (name the educator) retires, I just wanted to thank (name the educator) for their years of service to (name the program) and encourage the administration to continue their support of the (name the program) at (name the school or school district) as we say thank you to (name the educator) and the district for valuing music education for our students. Thank you for your time this evening.”

For Students:

Invitation to attend the concert from a student: Have a student hand write a letter inviting a specific school board member to attend the concert. Be sure they include the details of time and place and send it several weeks ahead of the performance. You can send it via school mail or home mail, whichever is most appropriate. Elementary students can copy simplified scripts or just add a single handwritten line and their name to a printed invitation. Make sure that the student sends a thank you response to the school board member for either attending or even for just responding to the invitation.

Sample Invitation Script:

Dear *School Board Member’s Name*,

I am a *junior* and *sing/play the name of instrument* in the *Name of School’s Ensemble*. I would like to invite you to attend our concert on *Date of Concert*. It will be performed at *the specific location* at *the time of the concert*. The concert usually lasts about *usual length of concert*. I like *singing/playing in the name of ensemble*. My favorite song in this concert is *name of song*. I hope that you will be able to attend this performance. We have been preparing our music to share with our families and friends. I think that you will enjoy it as well.

Sincerely,
Student's Name

Sample Thank You Note Script:

Dear *School Board Member's Name*,

Thank you for coming to our concert! (*or for getting back to me about your schedule.*) I am glad you were there to enjoy the music. (*or sorry you couldn't make it this time.*) It is important to me and my friends to see people supporting the music that we love to perform. (*or hope you can make it next time.*)

Sincerely,
Student's Name

Invitation to participate in the concert from a student: Many times, we program a closing piece in our concert that might be less musically challenging so that we can either incorporate large group involvement (band and chorus) or audience participation. This type of piece can also allow us to invite guest musicians, such as school board members (and administrators) to participate as well. You might be surprised at the people who would be willing or even anxious to take you up on the offer.

- First select a piece that is both suitable for your concert and easy enough to assimilate your guest musicians with little rehearsal time. (It could be a simplified triangle part.)
- Have a student hand write a letter inviting a school board member to participate in performing in one of the songs in the concert. Be sure they include the details of time and place of the concert, the opportunities to play and/or sing, and send it several weeks ahead of the performance. Elementary students can copy simplified scripts or just add a single handwritten line and their name to a printed invitation.
- Make sure that the student sends a thank you response to the school board member and that YOU get them the music and instructions early and plan at least one opportunity for them to rehearse with you close to the concert. OR the student should send a thank you for even just responding to the invitation.
- Follow up with details on the rehearsal and performance and a thank you.
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Sample Scripts for Invitation to Participate:

Dear *School Board Member's Name*,

I am a *sophomore* and *sing/play the name of instrument* in the *Name of School's Ensemble*. We are inviting some special musical guests this year to join us in performing one of the selections in our concert. I am writing on behalf of my director, *name of director*, to invite you to join us in performing *name of song* in our concert on *Date of Concert*. It will be performed at *the specific location at the time of the concert*. Do you play any instrument or sing? Would you be interested and willing to join us in performing? *Name of director* will get you the music and information that you need if you are interested. His district e-mail and phone number are listed below.

The concert usually lasts about *usual length of concert*. I like *singing/playing in the name of ensemble*. My favorite song in this concert is *name of song*. I hope that you will be able to attend this performance. We have been preparing our music to share with our families and friends. I think that you will enjoy it as well.

Sincerely,
Student's Name
Director's Name, Phone, E-mail

Sample Script in Response to Invitation RSVP:

Dear *School Board Member's Name*,

Thank you for deciding to perform with us in our concert! (*or for getting back to me about your schedule.*) I am looking forward to seeing you. (*or sorry you couldn't make it this time.*) It is important to me and my friends to see people supporting the music that we love to perform. (*or hope you can make it next time.*)

Sincerely,
Student's Name

School Board Meeting “Thank You” Presentation by student(s): School Board Meetings are for official business, are agenda driven, and usually are already filled with items. In order to be effective, you want to get on the agenda, be short (know the expected time frame), and be focused on a positive point.

- Identify the person in charge of setting the agenda several weeks ahead (usually the superintendent or board president) and contact them to be placed on the agenda
- Make sure that you ask about the expected time limitations. It is usually very brief, 2-5 minutes. Whatever it is, be respectful and stick to it. That will be appreciated by the board.
- Have a student or small set of students prepare a short, focused presentation using a written script practiced ahead of time. You can use music and/or visuals BUT ONLY if it is practical to the time and space that you have for the presentation. Be practical! One student dressed in the new uniforms they just bought will do. OR 2-4 students singing unaccompanied the last refrain from the concert closer (even in unison), done!

Option 1: “Good evening, school board members. Thank you for giving me time to speak to you. My name is *student's name*. I am a *fourth-grade* student at *Name of school*. I am learning to play the *name of instrument*. I have the chance to learn to play the *name of instrument* because this board approved the funding to buy the instrument for our school district for students like me. Ever since I saw *name of music teacher* show us the instruments we could sign up for in band, I knew which one I wanted to play. But my family didn't have any way to get me that instrument. But *name of music teacher* told my family that the school board bought some instruments so that I could still sign up. I was so happy. I love to come to school and go to my band lessons. I am getting better at reading the notes. I am excited about playing in the concert this year. I wanted to thank you for giving me and other students the chance to learn to play musical instruments. Thank you.”

Option 2: “Good evening, school board members. Thank you for giving me time to speak to you. My name is *student's name*. I am a *senior* at *Name of school*. I am going to be pursuing a degree in *name of degree program* from *name of institution* next year. I wanted to speak to you about the impact of the *name of new music technology equipment* this board approved has had on our music technology classes. The world of technology is always evolving. It is an industry that rapidly changes and has ample employment opportunities. Adding *name of new music technology equipment* to our music lab has enabled us to access some of this up-to-date music technology that is being used in the music industry. I am able to use this equipment to create my music assignments and to interface with current software. I was able to use the equipment to create pieces for my portfolio for my college interviews. So, I wanted to take the time to explain how the decisions you make impact the students in our district and to thank you. Thank you for your time.”

“Thank You” note (communication) to School Board from a student: School Board Meetings are for official business and usually are already filled with items. Sometimes you will not be able to get on the agenda for the in-person board meeting. However, you can still make an impression with the board via an official written communication. Most commonly, school boards publicly report on official communications with the board. So, writing a letter is less impactful, but still leaves an impression.

- Identify the person in charge of receiving the communications several weeks ahead (either the board secretary or board president) and the place to send a hard copy letter
- Have a student write a short letter focused on one specific topic to thank the board.

Option 1:

Dear *School Board President’s (or Secretary’s) Name*,

My name is *student’s name*. I am a *fourth-grade* student at *Name of school*. I am learning to play the *name of instrument*. I have the chance to learn to play the *name of instrument* because this board approved the funding to buy the instrument for our school district for students like me. Ever since I saw *name of music teacher* show us the instruments we could sign up for in band, I knew which one I wanted to play. But my family didn’t have any way to get me that instrument. But *name of music teacher* told my family that the school board bought some instruments so that I could still sign up. I was so happy. I love to come to school and go to my band lessons. I am getting better at reading the notes. I am excited about playing in the concert this year. I wanted to thank you for giving me and other students the chance to learn to play musical instruments.

Sincerely,
Student’s Name

Option 2:

Dear *School Board President’s (or Secretary’s) Name*,

My name is *student’s name*. I am a *senior* at *Name of school*. I am going to be pursuing a degree in *name of degree program* from *name of institution* next year. I wanted to speak to you about the impact of the *name of new music technology equipment* this board approved has had on our music technology classes. The world of technology is always evolving. It is an industry that rapidly changes and has ample employment opportunities. Adding *name of new music technology equipment* to our music lab has enabled us to access some of this up-to-date music technology that is being used in the music industry. I am able to use this equipment to create my music assignments and to interface with current software. I was able to use the equipment to create pieces for my portfolio for my college interviews. So, I wanted to take the time to explain how the decisions you make impact the students in our district and to thank you.

Sincerely,
Student’s Name

School Building Level

Morning Announcement recognizing music student achievement: Make sure that you are recognizing your music students' achievements in your building for their teachers and their peers. You should do this for the large ensembles. However, make sure to do it for the individual student accomplishments as well.

Sample Scripts:

Option 1: Congratulations to *students' names* for being selected to 7th & 8th Grade District Honors Band. These students will be representing *name of school* at this festival on *name of date*.

Option 2: Congratulations to the following students for being elected as Chorus Officers for the *name of school year*. President – *student name*; Vice President – *student name*; etc.

Option 3: Congratulations to the 3rd and 4th grade Orchestra for their outstanding performance at the Spring Concert last evening. All of the students did a great job!

Music Trivia Contest about Faculty: One subtle way to get your students (and faculty) to wrap their heads around the idea that music education isn't just for music teachers is this interesting trivia contest. Again, you might be surprised at the willingness of some of your colleagues to participate. There are two parts: an initial faculty survey and then the trivia contest.

- Send out a short, simple survey to your faculty asking them a few questions about their own musical experiences. Make sure you have the teachers' buy-in for sharing out the information in the trivia quiz.
- Compile the answers and look for both trends and outliers
- Come up with some interesting Trivia Questions that you can use either as a one-time quiz, an ongoing trivia contest, points, prizes, however deep you want to get into it.

Sample Scripts:

Teacher Survey: Did/do they play an instrument/sing, name the instrument(s)

Who is their favorite artist?

What if any is their best live concert experience?

Did/do they play/sing in an ensemble?

Trivia Questions: Which teacher saw David Bowie perform live?

How many teachers were in their HS orchestra?

Which 2 teachers rock out to Beyoncé?

Invitation to speak at the concert: This is a creative way to encourage administrators or school board members to not only attend, but also get involved in special concert offerings! Most administrators will jump at the opportunity to connect

with parents and students in a non-threatening environment. These invitations should typically come from a teacher who works in the same building as the administrator (i.e., the elementary general music teacher invites the elementary principal and the high school choir teacher invites the high school principal). To help educate the audience (and the administrator), consider collaborating on their speech!

Sample Scripts:

Invitation

Dear _____,

The Music Department is currently in the process of planning the all-district (band/choir/orchestra) event on (date). As we prepare, we have discussed the appropriate way to open the concert as it encompasses our (#-12) grade levels and would love to invite all of our building principals to share highlights of their building's music program. Would you be willing to participate in this introduction of the concert? We have done this in the past and it's always a nice way to recognize the students for their hard work!

Thank you,

Director Name

HS Principal Speech

At _____ School,

- Share information of curricular ensembles and music classes (what they are, who can participate, how often they meet, how many students participate, etc.)
- Share information of extracurricular ensembles (what they are)
- Recognize students who have participated in PMEA festivals
- Share any other program highlights (Marching Band Achievements, etc.)

At _____ Middle School,

- Share information of curricular ensembles and music classes (what they are, who can participate, how often they meet, how many students participate, etc.)
- Share information of extracurricular ensembles (what they are)
- Share any other program highlights (adjudication results, other special performances, county festival participation, etc.)

At _____ Elementary School,

- Share information of curricular ensembles and music classes (what they are, who can participate, how often they meet, how many students participate, etc.). *These classes serve as the foundation for music learning in our district. Students can then begin large ensemble music experiences in _____ grade by electing to participate in the curricular ensembles.*
- Highlight performance opportunities that students have had.
- Without further ado, we are thrilled to introduce the first ensemble of the evening, this year's _____ grade band of # students.

Invitation to participate in the concert from a student: Many times, we program a closing piece in our concert that might be less musically challenging so that we can either incorporate large group involvement (band and chorus) or audience participation. This type of piece can also allow us to invite guest musicians, such as an administrator (or school board member) to participate as well. You might be surprised at the people who would be willing or even anxious to take you up on the offer.

- First select a piece that is both suitable for your concert and easy enough to assimilate your guest musicians with little rehearsal time. (It could be a simplified triangle part!)
- Have a student hand write a letter inviting the administrator to participate in performing in one of the songs in the concert. Be sure they include the details of time and place of the concert, the opportunities to play and/or sing, and send it several weeks ahead of the performance. Elementary students can copy simplified scripts or just add a single handwritten line and their name to a printed invitation.
- Make sure that the student sends a thank you response to the administrator and that YOU get them the music and instructions early and plan at least one opportunity for them to rehearse with you close to the concert. OR the student should send a thank you for even just responding to the invitation!
- Follow up with details on the rehearsal and performance and a thank you!

Sample Scripts:

Invitation

Dear *Administrator's Name*,

I am a *sophomore* and *sing/play the name of instrument* in the *Name of School's Ensemble*. We are inviting some special musical guests this year to join us in performing one of the selections in our concert. I am writing on behalf of my director, *name of director*, to invite you to join us in performing *name of song* in our concert on *Date of Concert*. It will be performed at *the specific location at the time of the concert*. Do you play any instrument or sing? Would you be interested and willing to join us in performing? *Name of director* will get you the music and information that you need if you are interested. His district e-mail and phone number are listed below.

The concert usually lasts about *usual length of concert*. I like *singing/playing in the name of ensemble*. My favorite song in this concert is *name of song*. I hope that you will be able to attend this performance. We have been preparing our music to share with our families and friends. I think that you will enjoy it as well.

Sincerely,
Student's Name
Director's Name, Phone, E-mail

Thank-you Note

Dear *Administrator's Name*,

Thank you for deciding to perform with us in our concert! (*or for getting back to me about your schedule.*) I am looking forward to seeing you. (*or sorry you couldn't make it this*

time.) It is important to me and my friends to see people supporting the music that we love to perform. (or hope you can make it next time.)

Sincerely,
Student's Name

“Thank You” note to administrator from a student: Everyone appreciates being appreciated. Make sure that your building principal gets their warm fuzzy. Have a student hand write a letter thanking an administrator for attending the concert or any other significant task that they have done to support your program.

Sample Script:

Dear *Administrator's Name*,

Thank you for always coming to our concerts! It means so much to me and my friends to see you supporting the music that we love to perform.

Sincerely,
Student's Name
