



AMERICAN STRING TEACHERS ASSOCIATION

March 13, 2007

Dear Member of Congress,

As a National CoSponsor of Arts Advocacy Day 2007, I would like to take a moment to briefly explain the importance of music and arts in our schools. Research has proven that the serious study of music complements other areas of academic study. In the era of *No Child Left Behind* and the constant drive for better tests scores, what better way to enhance math and science skills than through the study of music?

The American String Teachers Association (ASTA) is committed to advancing string education and performance in the United States and around the world. Our 12,000 members include educators, performers, string industry representatives, students, and string enthusiasts. ASTA guides and enables music advocates and enthusiasts to support, save, and strengthen music programs nationwide.

As I am sure you know, the arts are a core academic subject under the *No Child Left Behind Act* (NCLB). ASTA believes that as a core academic subject, the arts should remain fully funded and in public schools. Tragically, science and math pressures associated with NCLB often times force the arts out of schools. When school budgets become tight, the arts are historically one of the first programs to be cut. Members of Congress need to know that music and arts programs are just as important as math and science, and actually enhance these vital programs.

As we work together to reauthorize and implement NCLB, let's ensure that all children have the opportunity to learn and to grow with the arts. I ask you to please commit yourself to a vision of future artists who are also leaders, scientists, and mathematicians by supporting music and arts in our public schools.

Sincerely,

Donna Sizemore Hale

Donna Sizemore Hale
Executive Director

"Musical training is a more potent instrument than any other for education."
- Plato, circa 400 B.C.