



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Rachel May

Senator Rachel May Stands Up for Students with Legislation to Include Arts and Music in Curriculum

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Arts and Music Education Bill Advances Through Senate Committee

(Albany, NY) Senator Rachel May is spearheading the effort to guarantee that New York students receive a well-rounded education that includes music and art. After years of legislative inaction, Senator May's bill to include arts and music education in public schools is now moving through the Senate Education Committee. This legislation recognizes that arts and music education are not just a form of entertainment but an essential part of a

balanced education for all public school students in New York State. Arts education is currently included in basic regulations; this legislation will make those regulations part of the Education Law, ensuring the long-term accessibility of arts and music education.

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“Arts and music education are essential for students' academic success and play an important role in their creative and imaginative development. By encouraging creativity, critical thinking, and problem-solving skills, we can prepare students for success in all areas of their lives. Providing access to arts and music education will give New York's public school students the tools to thrive inside and outside the classroom,” said Senator Rachel May.

The benefits of arts and music education are undeniable, with studies showing that it has a significant positive impact on all students, including those traditionally underserved. The National Institutes of Health cites several studies detailing the benefits, including “prosocial behavior, a shared sense of success, physical coordination,” among others. Participation in the arts and music has also been linked to academic achievement. US News & World Report points to a 2005 study in Ohio that showed students enrolled in arts classes “scored higher on statewide tests in math, science and citizenship than students from control schools.”

While arts and music classes are proven to be beneficial for students, some school districts don't include them in their curriculum, and budget cuts often target these classes first. This issue is particularly prevalent in underserved communities. Americans for the Arts reports that students of color earn 30-25% fewer arts credits compared to their white peers. This legislation aims to ensure that arts and music education become a fundamental part of the public school curriculum, adding these classes to all districts and safeguarding them from the chopping block if budgets tighten.