

MMEA surveyed 213 music educators across Mississippi and found that 88% oppose House Bill 2.

The Mississippi Music Educators Association (MMEA) strongly opposes HB 2 and urges lawmakers to reconsider legislation that would destabilize public education and harm students across our state. Across hundreds of responses, several consistent themes emerged:

1. Strong Opposition to HB 2

- An overwhelming majority of respondents oppose HB 2 and urge lawmakers to vote no.
- Many educators explicitly stated they have not encountered a single colleague who supports the bill.

2. Loss of Public School Funding

- Educators overwhelmingly believe HB 2 will divert public dollars away from public schools.
- Music and arts programs are often the first to be cut when funding declines.
- *One Mississippi Music Educator writes, "When funding is taken from public schools, extracurricular programs such as music and the arts will suffer. Music is often the first area reduced or eliminated when budgets shrink, limiting access for students who rely on public schools for these opportunities."*

3. Disproportionate Harm to Rural and Low-Income Communities

- Rural districts with limited tax bases are especially vulnerable.
- Students who lack transportation or financial flexibility will be left behind in under-resourced schools.
- *One Mississippi Music Educator writes, "For many students - especially in rural and economically disadvantaged communities - public schools provide the only access to music education. Reducing funding to these schools threatens to deepen existing inequities and limit opportunity."*

4. Threats to Music and Arts Education

- Music programs require stable enrollment, long-term planning, and consistent funding. HB 2 would cause student populations to fluctuate annually, which would destabilize band, choir, and elementary music programs.
- Many respondents fear job losses, program elimination, and reduced access for students.
- *One Mississippi Music Educator writes, "Music programs depend on stable enrollment, long-term planning, and sustained funding. When student enrollment becomes unpredictable, programs become impossible to staff, schedule, or sustain."*

5. Increased Teacher Workload and Burnout

- Educators are already overworked and underpaid. Larger class sizes, fewer resources, and reduced planning time would worsen working conditions.
- The teacher pay raise included in HB 2 was widely viewed as insufficient and used to mask harmful policy changes.

6. Lack of Accountability for Private Schools

- Strong concern that private schools receiving public funds would not be held to the same academic, testing, admissions, or special education requirements as public schools.
- Respondents repeatedly called this inequitable and unconstitutional.
- *One Mississippi Music Educator writes, "Public schools are required to serve every student and meet extensive academic and accountability standards. Redirecting public funds to institutions without the same obligations creates an uneven and unfair system."*

7. Disruption to School Culture and Student Stability

- Many compared HB 2 to a "transfer portal" for K-12 education.
- Frequent student movement would erode program continuity, school identity, and community cohesion.
- *One Mississippi Music Educator writes, "Music programs are not extras. They provide belonging, structure, and a reason for many students to stay engaged in school. When these programs are reduced or eliminated, students lose far more than a class - they lose connection."*

8. Failure to Include Educator Voices

- Educators consistently expressed frustration that lawmakers did not consult teachers or administrators.
- Many urged legislators to spend time in classrooms and speak with educators in states where similar laws have already caused harm.

Quantitative responses to the survey are found on pages 5-11 of this document. To access qualitative responses to the survey, please click [here to access the companion document detailing free-response submissions](#).

Public education is a public good. Public funds should remain in public schools. MMEA urges a NO vote on House Bill 2.

Issued on behalf of the Mississippi Music Educators Association.

Andy Beasley
President, Mississippi Music Educators Association

Dr. Hannah Gadd Ardrey
Advocacy Chair, Mississippi Music Educators Association

LETTER TO LAWMAKERS:

Dear Members of the Mississippi Legislature,

The Mississippi Music Educators Association (MMEA) recently conducted a statewide survey of 213 music educators. Of those respondents, 88% expressed opposition to Mississippi House Bill 2 (2026). This response reflects the strong and consistent concerns of educators who work directly with Mississippi students every day and who understand the realities facing public schools across our state.

On behalf of MMEA, we respectfully but firmly oppose House Bill 2. As written, this legislation threatens the stability of public education in Mississippi and places public K-12 music programs - and the students who depend on them - at significant risk.

MMEA represents music educators serving students in every region of the state, including urban, suburban, and rural communities. Our members see firsthand how music education supports student engagement, academic growth, social development, and school connectedness. House Bill 2 would undermine this work by redirecting public education funds away from public schools and toward private and alternative educational settings that are not subject to the same academic standards, accountability measures, or equity requirements.

HB 2 would further destabilize public school systems that are already navigating limited and unpredictable funding. While districts remain responsible for facilities, transportation, staffing, special education services, and extracurricular offerings, HB 2 would allow funding to shift with student movement. The imbalance created when “funding follows the child” makes long-term planning difficult and places the success of smaller and rural districts at risk.

Music education is especially vulnerable in this environment. Strong music programs rely on consistent enrollment, long-term planning, certified teachers, and sustained investment in instruments and instructional materials. When budgets shrink or fluctuate, music and other arts programs are often among the first to be reduced or eliminated. For many students - particularly those in rural or economically disadvantaged communities - public schools provide the only access to music education. HB 2 threatens to reduce that access and deepen inequities.

MMEA is also concerned about the lack of accountability attached to public funds under this bill. HB 2 permits taxpayer dollars to flow to institutions that are not required to meet the same expectations and transparency regarding testing, admissions practices, staffing qualifications, and services for students with disabilities. Public funds should come with public responsibility and oversight. Afterall, *public* school is a *public* good.

Additionally, this legislation places added strain on an already overextended educator workforce. Music educators, like all teachers, are managing increasing class sizes, expanding responsibilities, and persistent challenges related to recruitment and retention. HB 2 introduces additional uncertainty without addressing educator workload, compensation, or sustainability.

Mississippi has made meaningful progress in public education in recent years due to the dedication of educators and targeted investments in public schools. House Bill 2 risks reversing that progress by shifting resources away from the system that serves the overwhelming majority of Mississippi students.

MMEA urges lawmakers to reject House Bill 2 and instead pursue policies that:

- Fully fund public education through MAEP
- Require accountability and transparency for any institution receiving public funds
- Support educator retention through stability, respect, and meaningful compensation
- Include educators and administrators in the policymaking process
- Public education is a public good. Public funds should remain in public schools.

For the benefit of Mississippi's students, educators, and communities, **the Mississippi Music Educators Association respectfully urges a NO vote on House Bill 2.**

Issued on behalf of the Mississippi Music Educators Association.

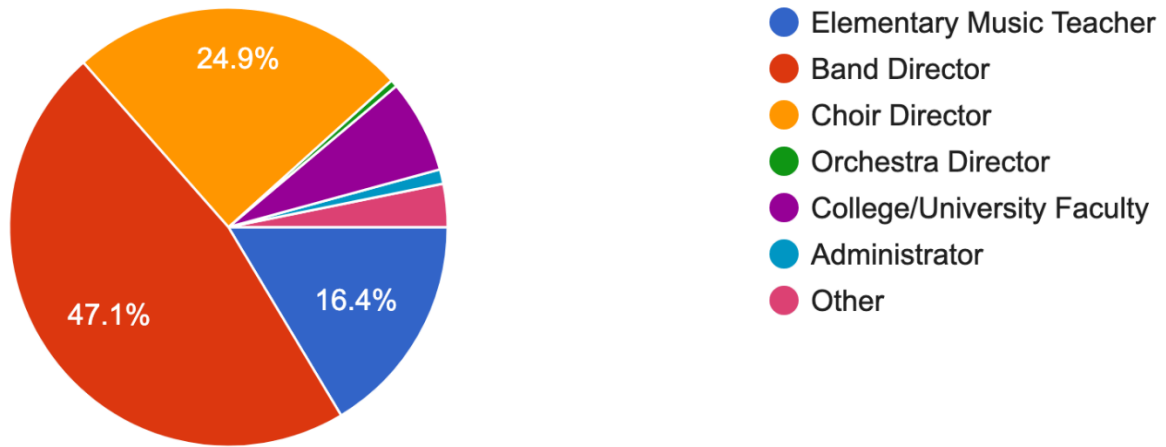
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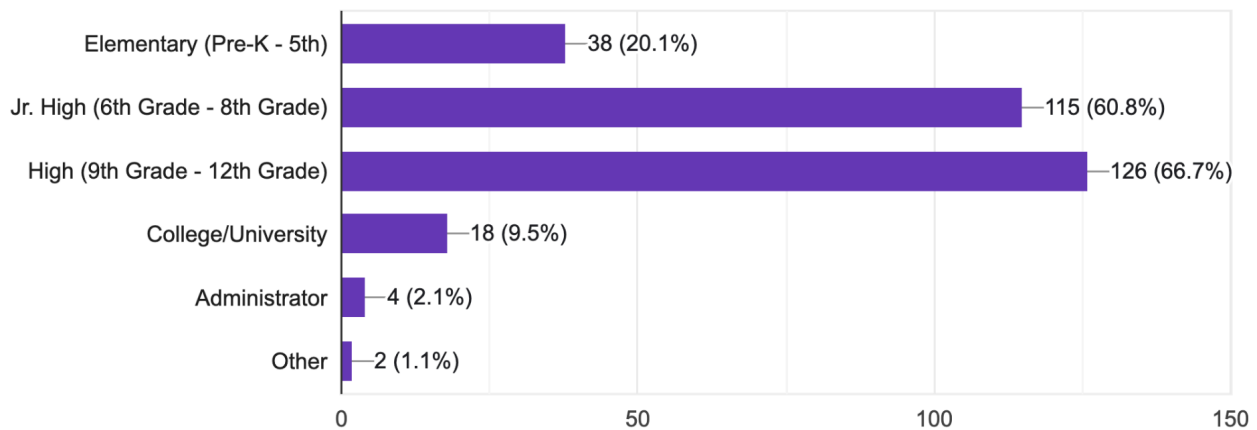
*For additional information, please visit **www.msmea.org** or contact the Mississippi Music Educators Association at **missmmea@gmail.com***

I. EDUCATION BACKGROUND

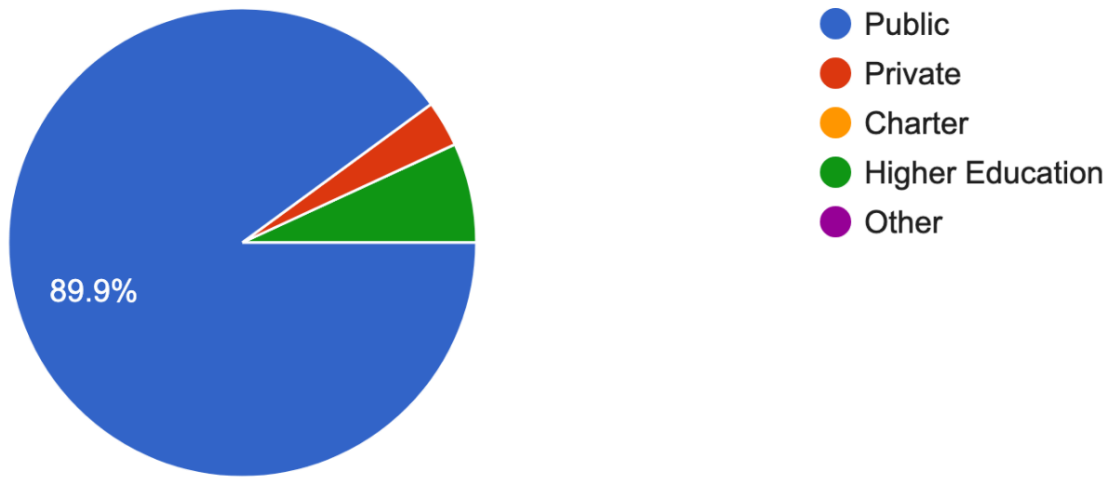
1. Primary Role



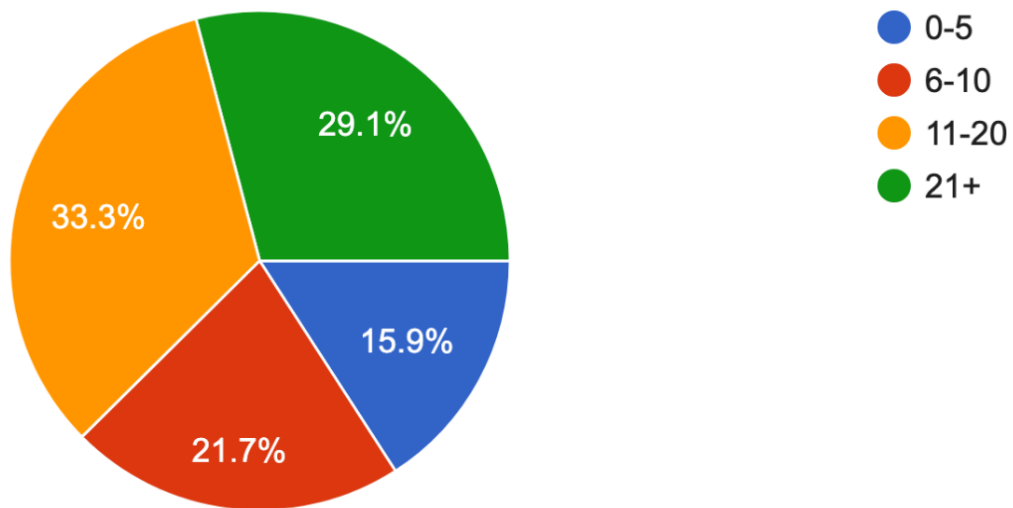
2. Grade Level Currently Teaching



3. School Setting

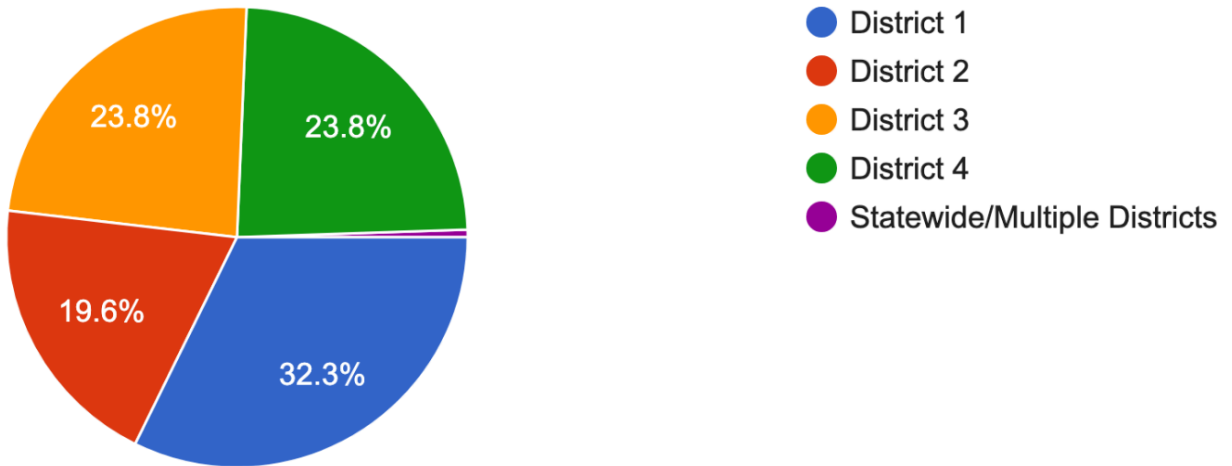


4. Years of Experience in Education

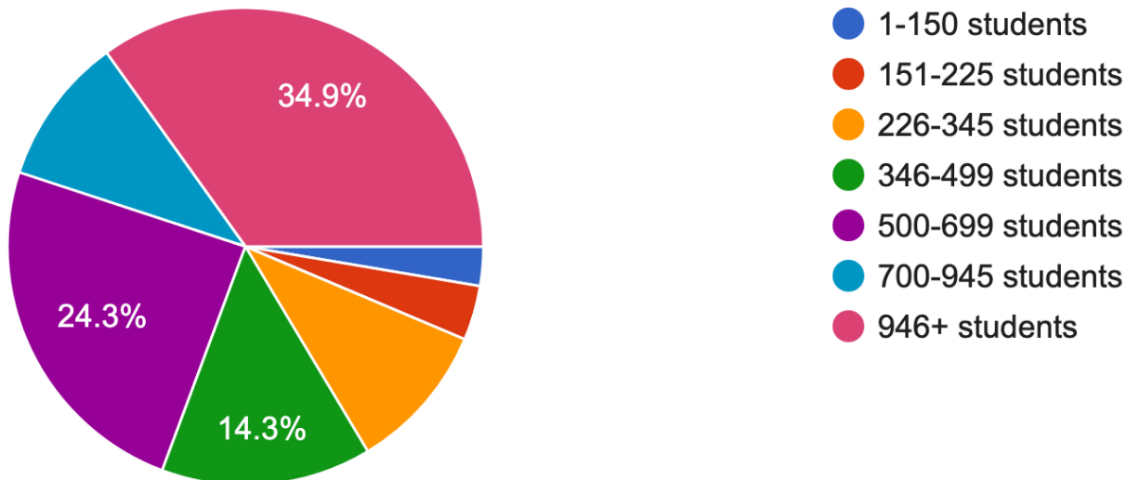


II. DEMOGRAPHICS

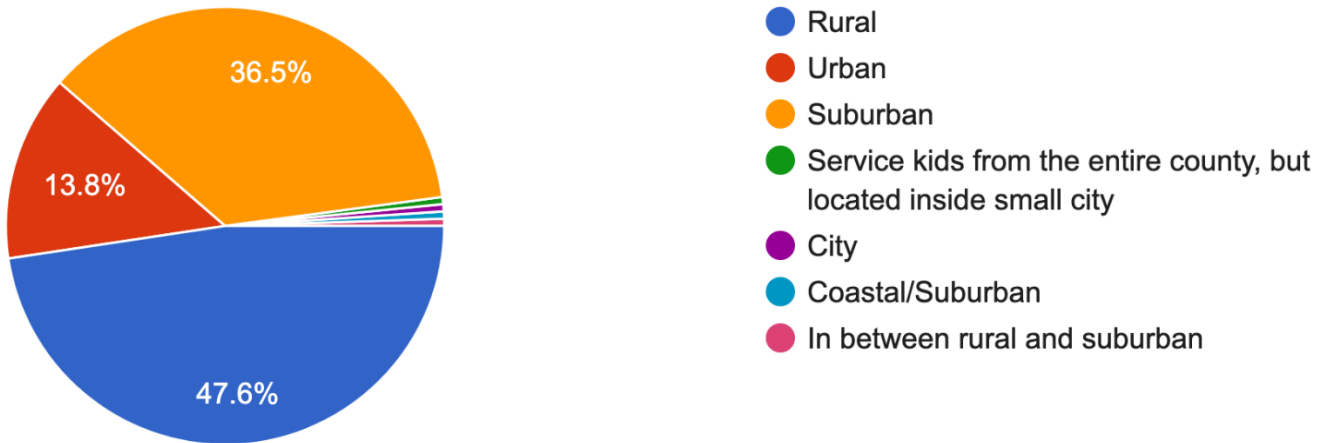
5. What region/district best describes where you work?



6. Approximate School Enrollment

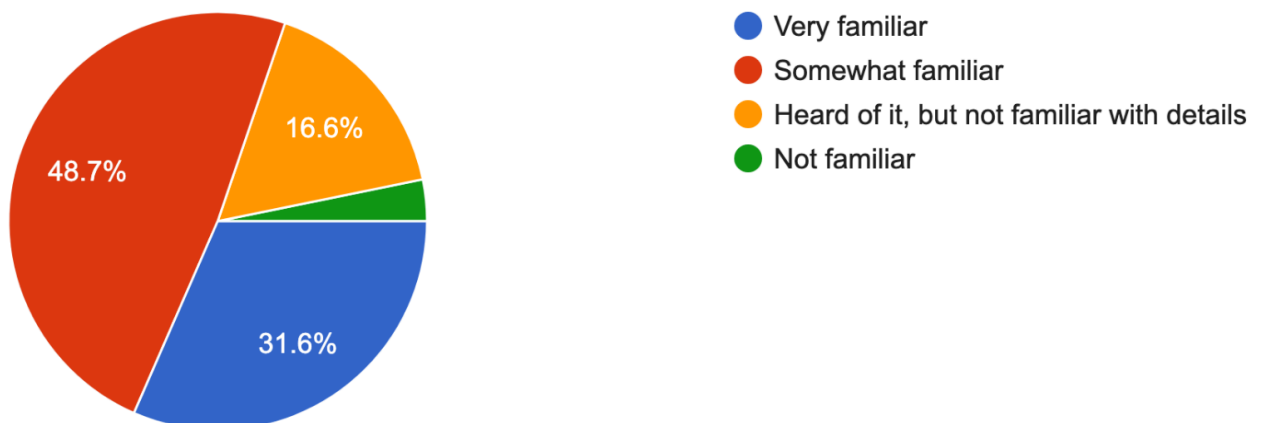


7. School Location



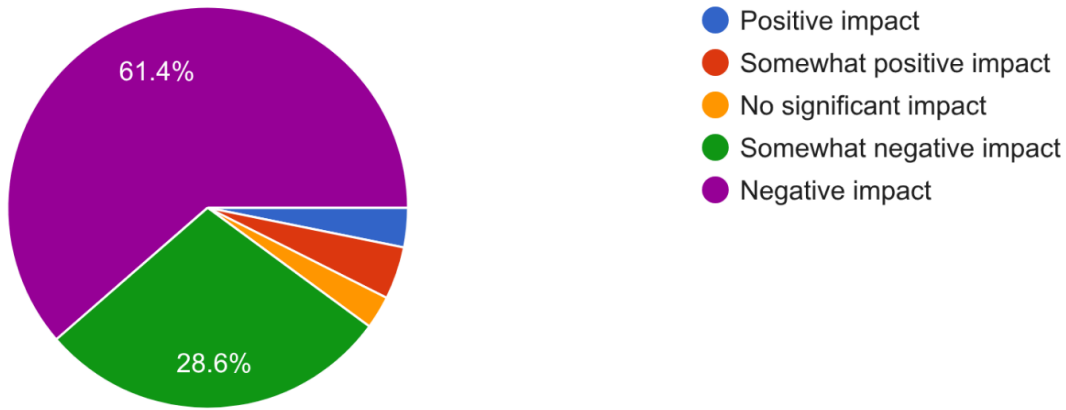
III. AWARENESS OF HB 2

8. Prior to this survey, how familiar were you with Mississippi House Bill 2?



IV. IMPACT ON MUSIC EDUCATION

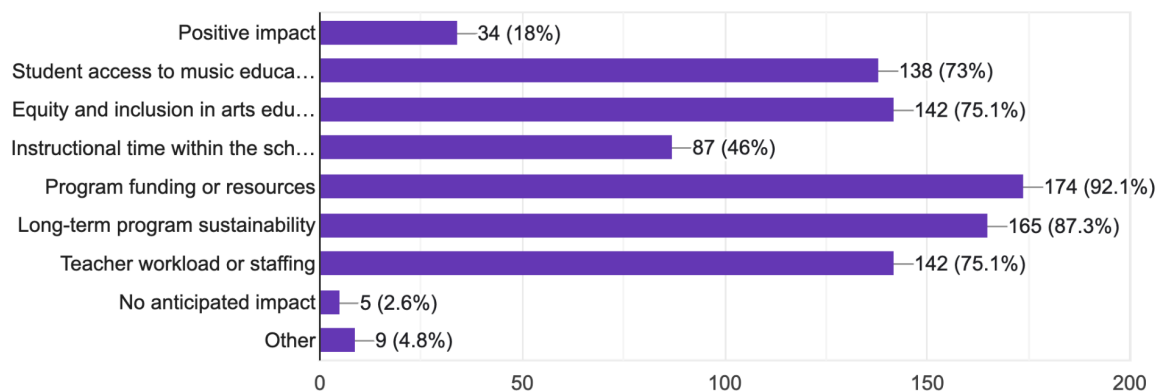
9. Based on your understanding, how might House Bill 2 impact music education in Mississippi?



10. Which areas of music education could be affected by House Bill 2? (select all that apply)

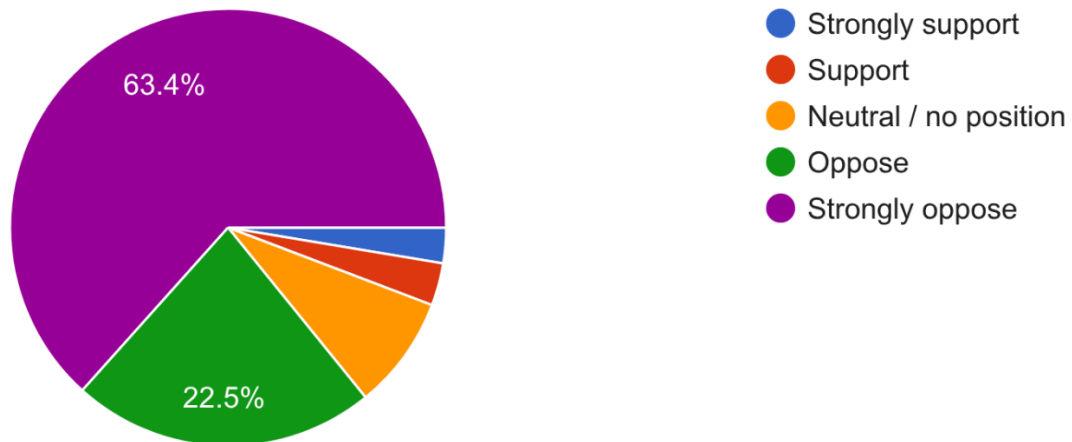
Most Recurring Response to Least (exact numbers on chart below):

1. Program funding or resources
2. Long-term program sustainability
3. Teacher workload or staffing
4. Equity and inclusion in arts education
5. Student access to music education
6. Instructional time within the school day
7. Positive impact
8. Other
9. No anticipated impact

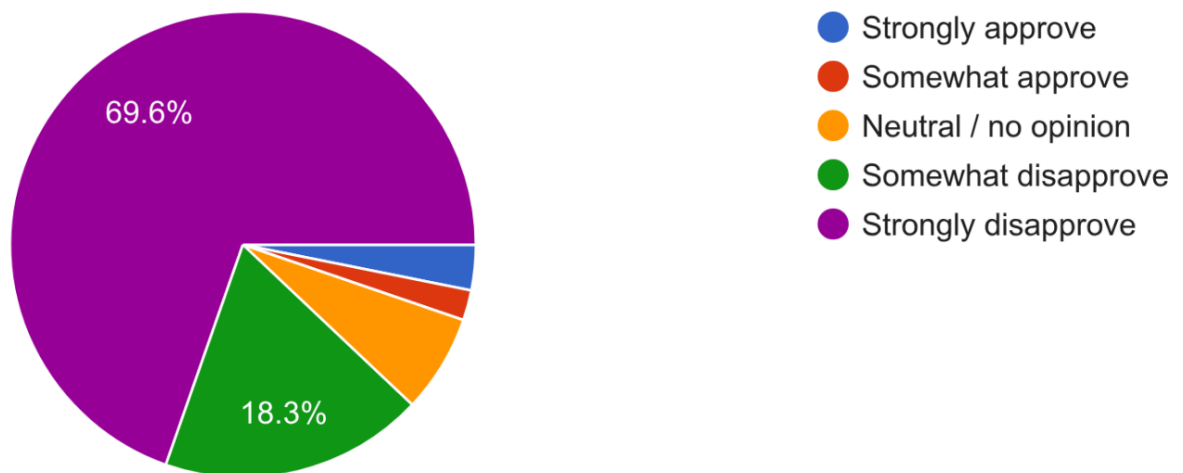


V. LEVEL OF SUPPORT

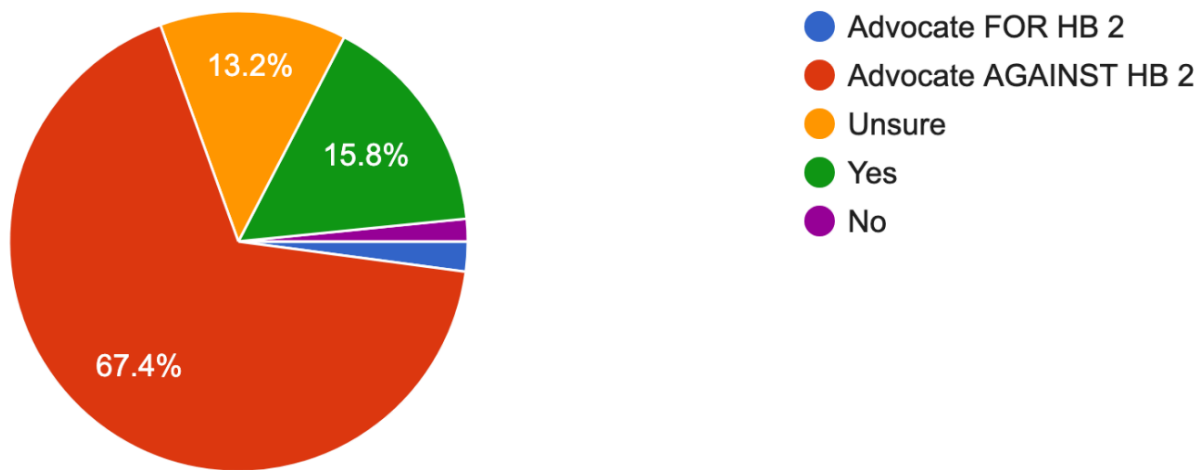
11. What is your position on House Bill 2 as it relates to music education?



12. Overall, do you approve or disapprove of HB 2?



13. Would you support professional organizations, such as NAFME or MMEA, advocating for or against House Bill 2?



14. Do you believe legislation such as House Bill 2 should be evaluated for its impact on students' access to a well-rounded education, including music and the arts?

