



Oregon School Activities Association

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August 31, 2017

To: Superintendents, Principals and Athletic Directors

From: Peter Weber, Executive Director
Kelly Foster, Associate Director

Subject: Music Copyright Laws Update

At the recent 2017 OSAA Administrators Workshops, our staff discussed music copyright laws and how they pertain to our member schools. Even though these laws have been around for many years, there has been an increase nationally in the number of violations for music that is performed/played in a public setting without obtaining the proper licenses. (NOTE: there is a difference between having a Public Performance License and a license to perform and/or alter music.)

Playing Music at School-Hosted Sporting Events

The OSAA has been in contact with all three of the main music licensing agencies that cover Public Performance Licenses (ASCAP, BMI, and SESAC). As discussed at the workshops, the licensing companies do not currently offer a license for K-12 institutions. At this time, the OSAA has been able to obtain language from the licensing companies which encourages schools to follow past practices until this issue can be resolved by either providing a licensing option for schools or offering an exemption. We are continuing to work through this complicated issue with the NFHS and the licensing companies and will keep you updated.

Music and Performance Groups

Please note that the exemption referenced above does not extend to your groups that may be performing music or performing to it, like a music or spirit group. Please ensure that those groups are still pursuing those works through a legal source. If it is a music group, make sure they have legally obtained the sheet music or any necessary custom compilation licenses. Spirit groups (cheer or dance/drill) should also use providers that can issue a license to perform music, alter music, or any licenses necessary for mashups/custom compilations. The NFHS suggests using a provider from this list: <https://www.usacheer.org/presssafety/preferred-providers>.

NFHSLearn Courses

The NFHS has released free courses on NFHSLearn that will help schools navigate these music copyright issues. There will be separate courses for administrators, spirit groups, and music groups. We will notify schools when these courses are available and encourage that the appropriate staff members in your school take the appropriate course <https://nfhslearn.com>.

Please direct and questions you may have regarding music copyright laws to Kelly Foster (kellyf@osaa.org or 503.682.6722 x231) in our office.