



# LICENSING MUSIC FOR SCHOOLS

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## PUBLIC PERFORMANCE

A public performance of music as defined by the US Copyright Law is any music played outside of a close circle of associates (under 10) including friends and family that occurs in any public place.

Why do I need to purchase a license, do schools really need to do this??

Music like any other property is owned by the copyright owner. They have the right, under the law, to be compensated for the use of their property. When music is played outside of certain educational exemptions ([17 U.S.C. §110\(1\)](#)) a public performance license is needed. There are currently four (4) US-based Performing Rights Organizations (PROs) and all of them have affordable and easy to get blanket licenses that cover their entire catalogue. It is important to purchase all PRO licenses as many songs may have artists, writers, and performers in different PROs.

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### PERFORMING RIGHTS ORGANIZATIONS (PROS):

ASCAP – American Society of Composers, Authors and Publishers

BMI – Broadcast Music, Inc. – [School-based License](#)

GMR – Global Music Rights – [School-based License](#)

SESAC – Society of European Screen Authors and Composers

### EXAMPLES OF WHAT ACTIVITIES NEED A PRO LICENSE (NOT A COMPLETE LIST):

Basketball Games

Cheer and Dance

Routines

Gymnastics Routines

Football Games

Volleyball Games

Weight Rooms

Concerts that are live  
streamed

Music Performances  
that occur off-  
campus

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## COPYING AND DISTRIBUTION

When distributing copyrighted works beyond the educational exemption permission will be needed. If video is being distributed with audio (marching band show, cheer routine) synchronization permission must be secured. This can be done when arrangement/mashup permission is granted, but must be requested.

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## MORE INFORMATION

More information can be found at - <https://nfhs.org/resources/copyright/>

Take the course for your activity - <https://nfhslearn.com/courses/understanding-copyright-and-compliance>