

Inclusion in Music Education

Students with disabilities have the capacity to participate in music experiences at a variety of different levels of engagement. Music educators need to understand the students' abilities as well as areas of deficit to develop effective strategies to support students' success. The music educator should consult with special education teachers to build a repertoire of strategies for inclusion for specific students. Music educators can access additional information about students' abilities, goals, and possible accommodations when familiar with the individual student's IEP. Successful inclusive music educators develop creative approaches, maintain high expectations for their students, and utilize principles of Universal Design for Learning (UDL) to create effective learning opportunities for all students. The three guiding principles of UDL are:

1. Provide multiple means of representation – utilizing a variety of visual, auditory, and kinesthetic formats for presenting information.
2. Provide multiple means of expression – creating a variety of options for students to demonstrate knowledge and understanding.
3. Provide multiple means of engagement – developing a variety of motivating, challenging, and age/developmentally appropriate music experiences to enhance learning.

Teachers will need to develop instructional strategies to accommodate students' broad range of cognitive, behavioral, communication, physical and social abilities. *Many students with disabilities will participate at the same levels and in the same ways as their peers without disabilities; and they should be encouraged to do so. Some students will need small response accommodations in how they demonstrate competence to participate successfully in the Model Cornerstone Assessments. Students with expressive communication difficulties due to sensory or language impairments, and students who are unable to use handwriting for journaling because of motor or processing difficulties may need assistive technology devices to communicate what they know and can do. Students with more significant disabilities may need additional response accommodations. Suggestions for including students with more severe cognitive or physical disabilities are provided in the Model Cornerstone Assessments.*

Music Education Resources for Inclusion

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Useful Websites:

- American Music Therapy Association at www.musictherapy.org
National Association for Music Education at nafme.org
Song resources for teachers at <http://www.songsforteaching.com/index.html>

Credits

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