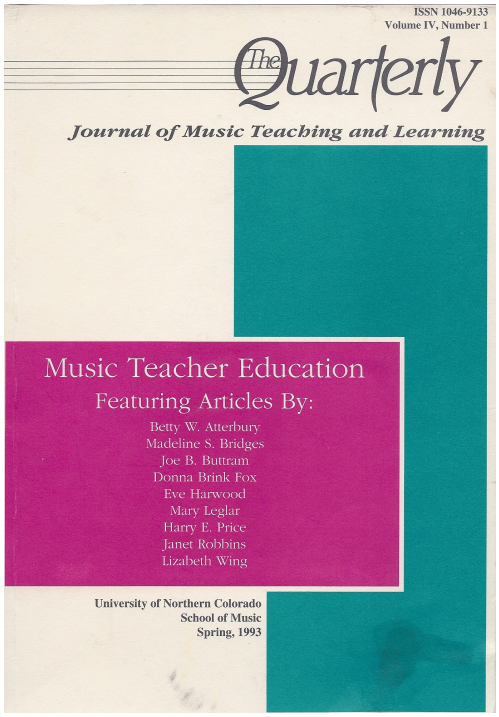

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It is with pleasure that we inaugurate the reprint of the entire seven volumes of The Quarterly Journal of Music Teaching and Learning. *The journal began in 1990 as* The Quarterly. *In 1992, with volume 3, the name changed to* The Quarterly Journal of Music Teaching and Learning *and continued until 1997. The journal contained articles on issues that were timely when they appeared and are now important for their historical relevance. For many authors, it was their first major publication.* Visions of Research in Music Education *will publish facsimiles of each issue as it originally appeared. Each article will be a separate pdf file. Jason D. Vodicka has accepted my invitation to serve as guest editor for the reprint project and will compose a new editorial to introduce each volume. Chad Keilman is the production manager. I express deepest thanks to Richard Colwell for granting VRME permission to re-publish* The Quarterly *in online format. He has graciously prepared an introduction to the reprint series.*

Preparing Teachers For Mainstreaming

By Betty W. Atterbury

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In the 18 years since the passage of the federal law entitled The Education of All Handicapped Children Act, music teachers have faced increasing challenges in meeting the needs of the exceptional children who are entering their classrooms. Indeed, some music educators face overwhelming problems as children who were once segregated from their peers are "mainstreamed" into regular classrooms. Inevitably, some exceptional children are poorly placed (or, as teachers who are struggling with the situation might say, "dumped") into music classes, and the music teacher can be faced with a real professional crisis.

While mainstreaming is a matter of law—and I believe that it is inherently right—teachers who have not been prepared for the reality of mainstreaming, as well as the exceptional children in their classes, need more than understanding and compassion. They need real help in devising actual classroom change based on overriding general principles such as adaptation, intensification, and social success. Younger teachers in particular have not received adequate preparation for the daily challenge of mainstreaming. Something was missing in their preparation.

As a profession, the field of music education must seriously consider the preparation of undergraduates in terms of the actual practices subsumed under the label of mainstreaming. In any elementary school today, at least five percent (and often closer to ten percent) of students receive special education services. These students are enrolled in general music classes. Future music education teachers need and deserve preparation that will enable them to educate these children along with the others.

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Why

Many music educators can glibly cite the title or number of the law which set the goal of mainstreaming for exceptional students: The Education of All Handicapped Children Act, PL 94-142, passed in 1975. But why was this law needed? Why did the American education establishment, the purveyor of democracy, have to be forced via federal legislation to provide equal educational opportunity to all the children in our country?

One answer is that the educational needs of handicapped children were often beyond the financial means of individual school districts and indeed of the individual states. In addition, the advocates for education of exceptional students learned from the political campaigns of others—particularly the Civil Rights Movement—that the federal level was where real change could be made.

Unfortunately these advocates were not well organized when the first significant federal education legislation in over a century became law. The Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) of 1965 was a result of President Lyndon B. Johnson's determination to improve educational services and facilities for poor children. But advocates for the handicapped quickly marshalled their collective forces to began what Diane Ravitch in *The Troubled Crusade* (1983) describes as a "brilliant political campaign for federal protection" for the handicapped.

From the Civil Rights Movement, these ad-

vocates had learned that a federal mandate was needed in order to move toward federal legislation. The mandate was achieved through successful court rulings on behalf of education for the handicapped in Pennsylvania in 1971 and the District of Columbia in 1972. The wording of the later ruling is particularly significant. Ravitch notes, "The federal court held that under the due-process clause of the Fifth Amendment to the Constitution, every school-age child in the district must be provided with 'a free and suitable publicly supported education regardless of the degree of a child's mental, physical, or emotional disability or impairment'."[1] Those familiar with PL 94-142 will recognize similarities of language between this court ruling and that of the law.

The other steppingstone between the ESEA of 1965 and PL 94-142 of 1975 was the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. This law included a section numbered 504, described by Ravitch (1983) as the handicapped person's equivalent of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. Title VI included language that empowered federal officials to withdraw funds from any program violating antidiscrimination laws and regulations. Section 504 contains a similar financial motivator for compliance:

> No otherwise qualified handicapped individual in the United States shall, solely by reason of his handicap, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance.

This short paragraph has enabled children in wheel chairs to more easily attend symphony concerts because ramps have been built, or to use public bathrooms or transportation. In a relatively short time, the American public has become accustomed to providing and paying for these enabling physical facilities for the handicapped.

PL 94-142 has been described by Pittinger and Kuriloff[2] as the most prescriptive education statute ever passed by Congress. The basic purpose of the Education for All Handicapped Children Act is to insure that all exceptional learners receive an education appropriate to their individual needs. The law includes language requiring an annual Individualized Education Program (IEP) for every exceptional student in the country and establishes due-process safeguards for parents. Under the heading "Least Restrictive Environment" the law includes the following words: "...to the maximum extent appropriate ...handicapped children... are educated with children who are not handicapped." These words have resulted in the practice of mainstreaming. They are followed by another section which states that "special classes, separate schooling or other removal of handicapped children from the regular educational environment occurs only when the nature and severity of the handicap is such that education in regular classes with the use of supplementary aids and services cannot be achieved satisfactorily."[3] The statement sounds fairly innocuous and appropriate for our democratic society.

> "Teachers who have not been prepared for the reality of mainstreaming, as well as the exceptional children in their classes, need more than understanding and compassion. They need real help in devising actual classroom change..."

Why, then, do some general music teachers have such overwhelming problems with mainstreaming? One answer is that while the legislation seems acceptable, it is also quite vague, resulting in innumerable interpretations in individual school districts. Unprepared music teachers who do not understand the wording of the law may accept without question such statements as "The law says that all children must be mainstreamed in music and art" or "The entire special-needs class must be mainstreamed into your 10:00 a.m. fifth grade class, because that is the law." Misreadings and misinterpretation of

the words "least restrictive environment" in hierarchical and often patriarchal school systems that discourage teachers from being independent thinkers is part of the reason that music teachers feel so much frustration.

A key to understanding the intent of the legislation is the phrase "to the maximum extent appropriate." These words certainly imply that not all exceptional learners should be mainstreamed. Indeed, the federal regulations drafted in 1977 state: "Removal occurs...when the nature of the handicap is such that education in a regular class, with the use of supplementary aids and services, cannot be achieved." Seldom are general music teachers able to request and receive supplementary aids and services for mainstreamed students; in fact, few practicing teachers—or other educators, for that matter— know about these words in the law. Even fewer general music teachers have been able to successfully request removal of an exceptional child from the classroom because that child was unable to receive a *musical education* in the class.

Study of the sections of PL 94-142 should be an important part of every future music teacher's preparation, along with the examination of related state regulations and analysis of whether they mirror or differ from federal law. Teachers need to be able to request correct mainstreaming decisions and placements; therefore, developing our undergraduate music education students' understanding of the language, meaning, and implications of applicable law is a necessary and important first step in their becoming informed advocates for appropriate musical education for all exceptional learners.

A current concern about this landmark law has the potential to influence all public school teachers. A major reason this law was passed was the cooperation of a number of organizations, each advocating for one particular category of exceptional child. Following passage of the law, members of these organizations served on the committees that drafted the regulations defining each exceptionality.

The problem now being examined involves both the funding and reporting requirements of PL 94-142. In regard to reporting, each state agency must send to Washington annual statistical reports on the numbers of children served, using the categorical labels found in the regulations. The Department of Education amasses the information for an annual report to Congress. This reporting process results in an emphasis on the use of labeling categories derived from the wording of the law, and the way funding is reported.

The annual reports of the past decade indicate that special education services have expanded far beyond the boundaries envisioned by the framers of PL 94-142. For example, between 1976 and 1986 the learning-disability population rose by 141 percent, an astonishing increase. This brings us to the funding problem that is creating such concern: State education agencies are required to provide the monies for implementing the law. The minuscule amount of federal funding that has accompanied this federal mandate has placed an incredible financial burden on states and on local school districts.

This was not the original intent of the law. When passed, the law stated that appropriations would gradually be increased so that the federal government would assume 40 percent of the cost of special education. In fact, federal funding has never risen beyond a high of 12 percent and is currently about 5 percent. Administrators, boards of education, and business managers view the expansion of the costs of special education with deep concern.

Some leaders in special education also believe that "education in the least restrictive environment" has not really occurred for most handicapped children. Rather, they point to a growing emphasis on identifying and labeling children and a parallel proliferation of special teachers and special services for the exceptional population. They complain that children with special needs are once again being isolated and given fewer educational opportunities than their peers.

In answer to this concern, some schools are seeking more effective ways to provide the "least restrictive environment" by holding the classroom teacher responsible for educating all children placed in his or her classroom. Instead of referring a student for special services, which necessitates testing, meeting, and labeling, such districts are initiating pre-intervention programs for students.

"[A] glibness with special education language can too easily replace an emphasis on careful consideration of the individual exceptional child."

In these programs, strategies for helping students with learning or behavior problems are suggested and tried prior to the student's placement into the regular classroom.

In this way, it is hoped, far fewer children will be referred for initial testing, evaluation, and special placement. Presently, referral for exceptional students results in 73 percent of the children being placed, so there are strong financial reasons to support this trend. And for those who are adamantly opposed to categorization and labeling, this approach seems to offer a genuine way for all learners to be taught in the least restrictive environment.

This new direction is called "teacher assistance," "school support," or "school appraisal," and it provides assistance to classroom teachers. If indeed this new direction becomes widely accepted in schools, then future music teachers must to be prepared to use this help for students who exhibit learning or behavior problems.

Why do we have mainstreaming? A federal law mandates this practice. Prior to 1975, exceptional children were not receiving an education equal to that of their peers. We must prepare our future music teachers for this aspect of their teaching career because the vague wording of the law encourages different interpretations that often result in mainstreaming situations that are not in the students' best interest. Ineffective and poor mainstreaming practices can result in burnout for some music education teachers, and for many others it may produce a stressful and unsatisfying teaching experience. It is incumbent upon all those involved in undergraduate music teacher education to foresee the problems that our students will face, and if at all possible, to give them the tools which will enable them to become satisfied, competent, and happy music educators for years to come.

How

How do we prepare our undergraduate students for this teaching and scheduling reality? In the best of all possible worlds, the curriculum would include a separate course title: "Music for Exceptional Learners," or something similar. At the University of Southern Maine, a one-credit course with this title is required during the student-teaching semester, so students have the opportunity for direct observation and case study. This is not the ideal situation—a three-hour course would be better—but it is better than no course at all.

In situations where the addition of a separate course is impossible, the elementary methods course is a good place to include this type of information, for we know from a number of surveys in music education that very few performance teachers teach exceptional students. To incorporate information about exceptional students into the methods class, one might use as a rule of thumb the statistic that five to ten percent of students in public school settings receive special education services, and allocate that amount of course time to the topic. Quick arithmetic in terms of my own methods course, which meets twice a week for a semester, indicates that five percent of the course time amounts to one and one-half course meetings—hardly enough time to adequately prepare undergraduates for the stress, challenge, and reality of mainstreaming.

A third option would be to incorporate information about special learners and ways of accommodating their individual differences in all aspects of a methods course. For instance, demonstrations of individual activities or complete lessons could include ways of accommodating exceptional learners and explanations of these accommodations to students. Students' written lesson objectives, plans, and teaching experiences could incorporate a recognition of mainstreamed students.

Class time is not the only problem educators must face when considering how to prepare our music education students for mainstreaming. How can we provide music education students with an adequate background of positive interactions with exceptional students before they begin their teaching careers? Unprepared teachers can find

themselves at a complete loss when faced with teaching exceptional students. In one situation, the students ranging in age from 4 to 21 who attended the county special education center had never had music instruction because the local music teacher was afraid of them. And if you walked into the center you might understand why! One student rocked all day and cried out at any strange sounds, including musical ones. Several were in wheelchairs, and some could not talk. Almost all of the students looked very different from "normal" children. Yet these students could benefit from music teaching and had a right to the inclusion of music in their education. But the teacher was unprepared and therefore unable to meet their needs.

Future music teachers must learn to be comfortable with all types of exceptional learners. Acceptance, empathy, and understanding of these students is almost impossible to develop in a lecture setting. Students need field experiences in some of the following settings:

- in music classrooms where students are mainstreamed and/or in self-contained special classes;
- in special centers for single or multiply handicapped students;
- in local or state Special Olympics or Very Special Arts Festivals, if other options are unavailable.

Some media can be used to help in arousing students' awareness of the characteristics and needs of exceptional students. Some films and videos are better than others, but all are better than nothing. It is sometimes difficult to find media about exceptional children because of the necessary confidentiality. Parents are not keen to have their children labeled to begin with, and it is difficult to persuade them to agree to videotaping.

I became interested in exceptional learners because in my public school teaching career I was assigned a class of learning-disabled boys who were 12 years old and non-readers. I experienced great frustration and a terrible loss of confidence in my music teaching ability with that class. But I was fortunate because during the following summer I began graduate study and stumbled onto a class titled "Introduction to Learning Disabilities." My experience with the learning-disabled students motivated me to learn as much as I could about that particular exceptionality. I've noticed, however, that many music teachers who have had discouraging teaching experiences with exceptional children do not accept the experience as a challenge. In preparing our undergraduate music education majors, we cannot ignore the presence of exceptional learners who are an accepted part of the fabric of present-day schooling. Doing so would be a major disservice to our students.

What

Whether in a separate course or in a methods course, future music educators need to become familiar with several important ideas regarding exceptional students. Two of these have already been discussed: an awareness and understanding of the language of PL 94-142 and state regulations, and knowledge of and empathy with a variety of exceptional students. Other topics to be addressed include categories of exceptionality, adapting instruction and materials for different learners, and knowledge of the IEP process.

Categories

Despite the present movement toward diminishing the importance of categorization of exceptional learners, it remains unclear whether or not this trend will elicit the cooperation and support of classroom teachers, the most important participants in this new direction. For now, it seems that our future music educators must gain understanding of the different types of exceptionalities, for this is a necessary and very important part of the mainstreaming process. Understanding the differences in how students learn is critical, for those who have been labeled retarded, learning disabled, behavior disordered (or whatever language is used to describe emotionally disturbed students), and gifted are likely to be present in the future classrooms of our students. The contrasts in the impact of physical handicaps—whether hearing, sight, cerebral palsy, or other disease or injury—should also be a part of future music teacher preparation.

This background information about different categories, however, does not enable anyone to make assumptions about music teaching or learning. Rather, such information provides music teachers with important

signals that alert one to a range of possible learning behaviors, for any label is only a generalization. The various designations provide a background with which to better understand individual children, and they also provide a foundation for more effective planning of competent instructional strategies and adequate adaptation of materials for mainstreamed students. About the individual child, however, such categories tell little.

One must be very careful when teaching about labels, because a glibness with special education language can too easily replace an emphasis on careful consideration of the individual exceptional child. As early as 1904, Alfred Binet, who devised the first intelligence test, noted that "it would never be to one's credit to have attended a special school" (in Bryan & Bryan, 1978, p. 81). Sixty-four years later, in an influential article proposing that exceptional students be educated in the mainstream, Lloyd Dunn wrote the following: "We must examine the effects of these disability labels on the students... certainly none of these labels are badges of distinction."[4]

It does not seem educationally sound to abruptly stop using these labels, for they do offer educators a conceptual framework within which to consider individual learners' differences. Yet music teachers should not attempt to diagnose each exceptional child in each class, for such an approach places an unreasonable demand upon teachers who may be trying to musically educate hundreds of children. Rather, music education students must be prepared to act as professional teachers—those who have certain basic knowledge and understandings with which to intelligently read student files and consult with other classroom and special education teachers.

Adaptation

One way to think about planning is to remember the strategies used by beginning teachers. As a young teacher, each week I planned what I would teach in each grade—although I was teaching 28 or 30 classes a week, I wrote only six lesson plans. I soon learned that this type of planning was really inadequate, for classes at the same grade level were quite different. So my planning became more complex and more responsive to student needs. For our students to experience success as teachers of classes with mainstreamed learners, they must be similarly prepared to go beyond the general one-plan-for-all approach.

The first important facet of adequate planning is an awareness of the individual student's learning strengths and deficits. With this knowledge, teachers can plan the changes needed for one or more exceptional learners within a single class. Students who have deficits in reading (whether learning disability or retardation) will need special consideration, for example, in intermediate classes where reading or written evaluation is used. I strongly advocate the construction of materials that do not require students to read lengthy directions or write answers, but rather to circle the correct picture or word. It may be necessary for teachers to prepare several different versions of a single worksheet depending upon the particular needs of mainstreamed learners.

A term that comes from the learning disability field covers many of the ways that instruction can be improved for mainstreamed students: intensification. Music teachers can intensify instructional materials by such strategies as increasing the size of printed pages or worksheets, adding color to help students find the beginning of successive lines, or slowing the rate of teaching a movement sequence.

Many music educators are familiar with the term multi-sensory, which describes another important way of thinking about the principle of intensification. General music teachers particularly need to be aware of the importance of visual illustration and reinforcement of all students. For some mainstreamed learners, the combination of simultaneous aural, visual, and kinesthetic experiences is essential for their success in music class.

Another generalization that covers a multitude of ways of adapting instruction for mainstreamed learners is that of "levels-of-involvement." We are all aware that effective lessons include a variety of activities, such as singing, listening, and moving. But do we also teach our music education students to plan for both easy and more difficult types of student involvement within each activity? If not, music education students will not be adequately prepared to succeed in their classrooms. For example, when learning a song,

some children may be able to only listen and point to a picture, while others can listen and describe the text, or perhaps even discuss an abstraction within the text or music. Some students may be able to play only a one beat ostinato or perhaps a simple introduction, while others can play intricate melodic or rhythmic patterns.

Instruction can also be adapted through the inclusion of different types of classroom organization: cooperative learning, peer tutoring, and so on. These grouping techniques are not often found in many general music classes but they should be, especially in classes with mainstreamed students. At best, such class restructuring presents opportunities for all students and can overcome the critical or hostile behaviors often found in classes with mainstreamed exceptional learners.

The term adaptation covers many topics, but most importantly it describes a way of thinking about teaching that is sometimes not found in elementary general music. Because of the intense schedule and the sheer numbers of children that music teachers experience each day and week, it is much easier to think of groups rather than of individuals. But effective music teaching of groups with mainstreamed learners occurs only when the teacher is able to adapt instruction and materials in ways that enable individuals within the group to be successful learners.

IEP Participation

Several surveys of practicing music teachers have come to very similar conclusions regarding the Individual Education Program (IEP) process.[5] The common finding is that not many music teachers participate in this yearly planning for each exceptional student. Indeed, many music teachers do not know what an IEP is.

An IEP is a federally mandated annual written document which includes the student's present level of educational performance, annual goals, short-term instructional objectives, specific services to be provided, and a statement of the extent to which the student will participate in the regular educational program. The last in this list, inclusion in the regular program, is often decided by a committee that contains no specialists. Such committees are often vulnerable to satisfying parental demands by assigning the exceptional student to mainstreaming in art, music and physical education. This process often results in inappropriate placements of exceptional children, and music teachers complain of being "dumped on."

Adequate undergraduate preparation of future music educators should certainly contain information about this important document, the IEP, and the process by which it is developed. Our undergraduates must know that they need to become actively involved in determining which exceptional child is placed in which music class, and for which good reason.

Conclusion

Every child deserves and should receive a proper education, and a proper education includes music. Exceptional learners who are placed in classes where they can participate in successful musical creation and recreation and experience aesthetic pleasure are receiving an education in the least restrictive environment. When our future teachers address the topic of mainstreaming as they prepare for teaching careers, they will be more likely to provide successful settings and a genuine music *education* for all the exceptional learners they teach.

Notes

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