

Examination of Inclusive Practices in Rural and Urban Music Education:

Perspectives from the Field

Heather Haynes Smith, Ph. D. & Anastasia White

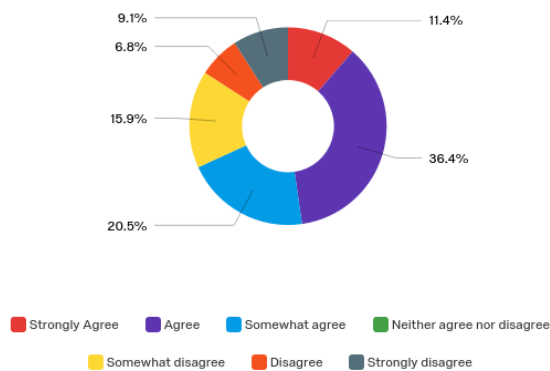


Review of the Literature

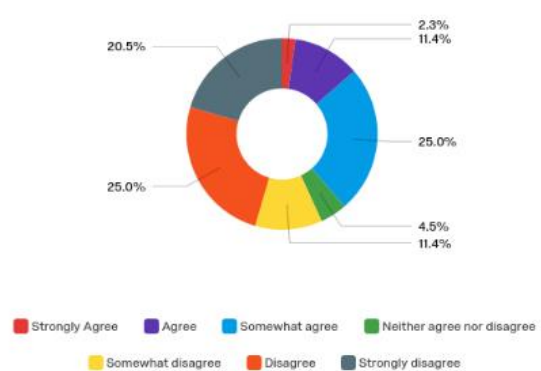
This study reflects the intersection of current conversations in music education, special education, and teacher education. In his survey of 600 K–12 instrumental music educators, Hoffman (2011) found that although 42% of respondents had **no pre-service training in special education**, 97% were currently teaching students with special needs. Literature suggests professional development may be a more effective way of training music educators (Conway, 2011). It is important that this professional development include **self-reflection** and **group discussion of varied experiences** (Conway, 2007; Conway, 2011; Conway, Hibbard, & Albert, 2005; Conway, Hibbard, Albert, & Hourigan, 2005). Hoffman's (2011) survey also revealed that while 13.6% of the total school-aged population nationwide received special education services, "students with special needs accounted for 6.8% of all students participating in bands, orchestras, and other instrumental musical ensembles".

Responses Regarding Pre-Service Training on Inclusion and Inclusive Instruction

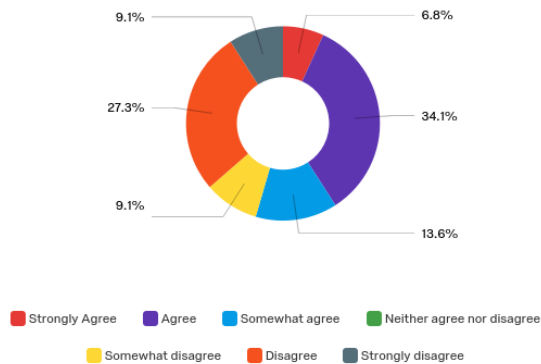
I learned about inclusion in my pre-service teacher program.



My courses or training included opportunities to volunteer and/or complete service-learning with students with disabilities.

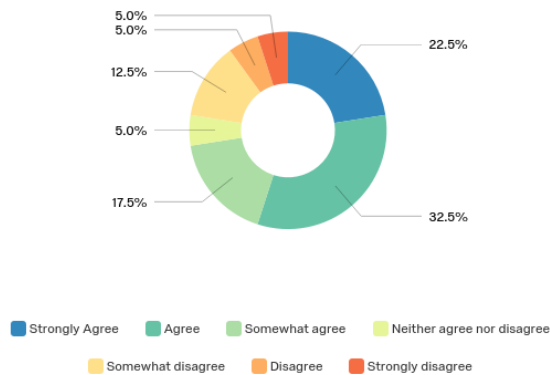


My courses or training included observations of inclusive classrooms.

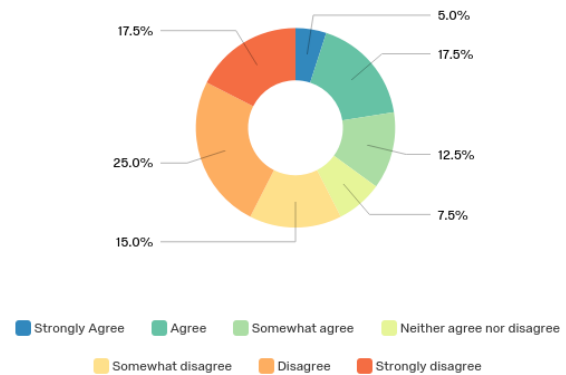


Responses Regarding Professional Development on Inclusion and Inclusive Instruction

I learned about general special education teaching strategies in professional development or other in-service training



I learned about inclusion in the music classroom in professional development or other in-service training



The findings of this mixed method study (n=40) suggest that music educators perceive a need for more relevant professional development regarding inclusion in their classrooms. Every music educator who participated in the interviews (n=6) expressed frustrations about the lack of music-specific professional development regarding inclusion. All interview participants said their school districts dedicated about half a day of in-service training to inclusion, but music educators believed very little, if any, of the information presented was relevant to their classrooms.

Most of the participating educators had attended sessions at the Texas Music Educators Association (TMEA) conference regarding inclusion and while they acknowledged that these sessions were very beneficial, they expressed a desire for more in-depth professional development exploring a wider range of disability groups. Many educators also believed that TMEA, TODA (Texas Orchestra Directors Association), and TBA (Texas Bandmasters Association) conferences provided some of the only relevant professional development regarding inclusion for music educators.

References

- Conway, C. (2007). Setting an agenda for professional development policy, practice, and research in music education. *Journal of Music Teacher Education*, 17(1), 56-61.
- Conway, C., (2011). Professional development of experienced music teachers: Special focus issue. *Arts Education Policy Review*, 112, 55-59.
- Conway, C., Hibbard, S., & Albert, D. (2005). Voices of music teachers regarding professional development. *Arts Education Policy Review*, 107(1), 11-14.
- Conway, C., Hibbard, S., Albert, D., & Hourigan, R. (2005). Professional development for arts teachers. *Arts Education Policy Review*, 107, 3-9.
- Hoffman, E. (2011). *The status of students with special needs in the instrumental musical ensemble and the effect of selected educator and institutional variables on rates of inclusion* (Doctoral dissertation). University of Nebraska, Lincoln.