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**MUSIC EDUCATION WITHIN AN AUTISM SUPPORT CLASSROOM:
BUILDING COMMUNITY AND EDUCATIONAL SKILLS**

by

Emma Tilly Lamberti

A Thesis Submitted to the Bucknell University Honors Council

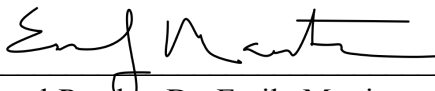
For Honors in the Department of Music

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Approved by:



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Table of Contents

Acknowledgments	iv
Table of Contents.....	v
Index of Figures.....	vii
Abstract	viii
Introduction	1
Purpose Statement & Research Questions.....	7
Literature Review	8
ASD: Social Skills, Behaviors, Academic Skills.....	8
Music Education for Students with Disabilities.....	10
Music Education for Students with ASD	14
Community and Educational Skills.....	17
Methodology.....	19
Procedures.....	19
Lesson Activities.....	20
Data Collection	21
Participants.....	26
Discussion & Findings	29
Discussion of Cycles 1-3	29
Findings	36
Best Practices for Music Education	40
Limitations	46

Areas for Future Research 46

Conclusion 47

References 49

Appendix A- Institutional Review Board Approval 55

Appendix B- Cycle 1 Curriculum..... 62

Appendix C- Research Findings from Cycle 75

Appendix D- Cycle 2 Curriculum..... 80

Appendix E- Research Findings from Cycle 2..... 94

Index of Figures

Figure 1: The Cyclic Process of Action Research..... 21

Index of Tables

Table 1: Interview Questions During Cycle 1..... 23

Table 2: Example of PECS Used for Interviews 24

Table 3: Updated Interview Questions for Cycle 2 26

Abstract

The purpose of this action research study was to explore how music education might provide a sense of community, develop educational skills, and discuss general best practices for teaching students with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) in a middle school autism support classroom. To examine community, educational skills, and best practices, this study completed two cycles of action research. The curriculum in Cycle 1 consisted of typical music lessons for a general music classroom. Interviews with teachers and students, video observations, and researcher reflections after each lesson were used to inform the development of Cycle 2. Cycle 2 retained the overall structure of Cycle 1 but with alterations to better support community and educational skills. Lessons included repetitive aspects, such as ending and closing with a hello/goodbye song, but new elements were added to enhance engagement for the class. For example, partner work was emphasized through instrument playing and folk dancing and more physical movement was added throughout the lesson. Suggestions for a hypothetical third cycle are also discussed. Overall, it is imperative that teachers communicate with the student, special education teachers, parents, and paraprofessionals to understand the student best. When teaching students with ASD it is good practice to include repetition with appropriate variation, multiple modes of engagement within activities, incorporate student interests, provide opportunities for partner work without teacher oversight, and maintain positive and excited enthusiasm throughout the lessons.

Introduction

Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) refers to a broad range of conditions characterized by challenges with social skills, repetitive behaviors, speech, and nonverbal communication (CDC, 2022). Under a medical definition, ASD is a neurodevelopmental disorder typically diagnosed in childhood. ASD is described as a spectrum, as each individual with autism will have their strengths and challenges. The characteristics of ASD vary greatly depending on the individual; some may be nonverbal or have delayed movement skills. Others may have different social communication, learning, and/or attention difficulties than what is typically seen as “socially acceptable”. Many students may have highly focused interests, skills, or talents. Many also may have high attention to detail and/or strong concentration. Students may have sensory sensitivities, methodological approaches to thinking, and/or highly creative problem solving.

There are many terms for ASD, both with respect to diagnostic or legal purposes and the individual’s identity: autism, high-functioning autism, atypical autism, Pervasive Developmental Disorder Not Otherwise Specified (PDD NOS), and Asperger’s syndrome. “High- and low-functioning” autism is no longer used to describe autism as it is seen more on a spectrum than specific ability levels. PDD NOS, otherwise known as atypical autism, is typically diagnosed in early childhood as this disorder is based on development milestones of communication and social skills. Since ASD has been now seen in adults without developmental delays, many children are diagnosed with PDD NOS or atypical autism when they show developmental delays, then with ASD as a paired or separate diagnosis later in life (Pierangelo, 2003). “Asperger’s syndrome” is a term that is no longer used as a diagnostic label in the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders* (DSM) but some individuals with ASD choose to use the term (Slagstad, 2023). The term “Asperger’s” also has an important history to note. Hans Asperger,

the scientist whom the term was coined and named after, supported the Nazi regime and eugenics to kill children with disabilities, including those with ASD. It is essential to understand the history of ASD and disabled people considering the significant pattern of oppression of treatment of these individuals. Every individual has their own preference for the label of their disability, so it is key to refer to the student as what they prefer to identify with.

People with disabilities have fought for their rights for centuries. Before and during the 1800s, people with disabilities did not have federal rights in the United States (ADL Education, 2022). This led to forced hospitalizations into institutions and asylums and forced sterilization. These practices were declared as a “purification” and a “merciful act for their sakes” (ADL Education, 2022, para. 2), further silencing and segregating people with disabilities from the rest of society. In the 1900s, with more conversations around civil rights, the disabled community was increasingly vocal. During the Great Depression in the 1930s, The League of Physically Handicapped advocated for their right to employment (Longmore & Goldberger, 2000). Many groups were formed by both members of the disabled community and by parents of children with disabilities.

In 1954, *Brown v Board of Education* abolished school segregation, declaring it unconstitutional to segregate children based on unalterable characteristics such as race (Yell, 2019). Following this landmark declaration, people with disabilities and their advocates sought to improve their right to an education, as people with disabilities were still being denied access to school. The *PARC v. The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania* (1971) and *Mill v. Board of Education* (1972) provided tremendous steps for people with disabilities as they secured their right to free, appropriate public education. (Chapin, 1978). Alongside these lawsuits, there was increasing advocacy across the country by students with disabilities and their parents for the

deinstitutionalization and more appropriate rights to education and care. These movements demanded more legal action to be enacted which helped to pass the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. This law provided equal employment opportunities within the federal government and federally funded programs, prohibiting discrimination regarding physical or mental disabilities.

Several years later, the Education for All Handicapped Children Act was passed to guarantee public education for all children with disabilities in 1975 (ADL Education, 2022). In 1990, the law was renamed the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), and it furthered the funding and rights of students with disabilities. IDEA developed the ideas set within the Education for All Handicapped Children Act but went further. It ensured the right for students with disabilities to be mainstreamed, which is when a student with a disability is placed into a class with students without disabilities. IDEA also created the implementation of the Individualized Education Plan (IEP), which is a legal document for students with disabilities created by the student's support team (e.g., teachers, counselors, parents, and administrators) and implemented throughout their education to support their access to education. Depending on the student's needs, it may or may not be appropriate to place a child in a mainstream classroom. They may benefit more from their support classroom in the special education department. In 1990, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) was also passed, which aimed to ensure the equal access and treatment of people with disabilities for employment and public accommodations.

These laws extend to all disabilities, including ASD (ADL Education, 2022). The widespread awareness and rights for people with ASD is a relatively recent occurrence. Autism characteristics were first described in the early 1800s, but it was not until the early 1900s that Leo Kanner, a Johns Hopkins University psychiatrist, wrote about children with "autistic

disturbances of affective contact” (Hardman et al., 2017, p. 263). Autism was not described as a specific category of disability until IDEA recognized it in 1990. Before IDEA, since there was no category for ASD, students with ASD were labeled as having a “serious mental and emotional disturbance” (Hardman et al., 2017, p. 264). As a result, students with ASD were placed in classrooms with teachers who were not equipped for their specific needs. Now, with IDEA identifying autism as a disability category, there are specialized services available for the person with ASD and their families.

These laws and many aspects of disability legal rights follow a medical/deficit model of disabilities (Dobbs, 2012). The medical model describes a person’s physical or mental disability or limitation as inherently pathological. The medical/deficit model describes disabilities as needing treatment or a cure by a variety of medications, medical professionals, and systems. Many people who are disabled appreciate the legal label of being called disabled under a medical/deficit model due to the rights they receive from the federal programs. Yet, this medical/deficit model poses many challenges for people with disabilities in education. An alternative model describes disability as socially constructed (Bagatell, 2010). This is called a social model of disability.

The social model describes society as filled with physical, attitudinal, communication, and social barriers (Dobbs, 2012). This model challenges society to change its attitudes and processes to celebrate human diversity while also acknowledging the benefit of sometimes needing disability labels (PWDA, 2023, para. 4). For example, people thinking under a medical model of autism might believe that individuals with ASD would be better off with treatment to improve their quality of life. Yet, advocates for the social model wish to view autism as a normal variant in the diverse human genome variability and that autism should “not be compared, for

example, to curing cancer but instead the antiquated notion of curing left-handedness” (Harmon, 2004, p.1). As a young boy with ASD said in an interview with Harmon (2004), “people do not suffer from Asperger’s, they suffer because they’re upset from being left out and beat up all the time” (p. 1). This quote is directly in line with the idea of a social model of disability, that it is not the disability causing the suffering, but rather the environment. Accordingly, people thinking under a social model of disability might believe that individuals with ASD would be better off if society improved access and inclusion.

ASD has transformed from being seen as a disease needing to be cured to an identity and a community of individuals (Lord et al., 2018). The ongoing transition from the medical model to the social model is a historical and social transformation accomplished through legislation changes demanded by the autistic community. There is still more improvement required for a shift toward disabilities being viewed through a social model (Bagatell, 2010). Autistic activists like Jim Sinclair and Donna Williams are strong leaders in the anti-cure and anti-deficit model of autism, highlighting that having autism is a part of their identity, not something to grow out of.

Many teachers may feel anxious when teaching students with ASD due to inadequate training on how to accommodate varying needs for each child and may refrain from creating an inclusive classroom (VanWeelden & Whipple, 2014). The lack of training results in many students with ASD lacking access to essential music classes, as the music classes do not accommodate their needs.

Many students with disabilities, such as those with ASD, do not receive a music education K-12 (VanWeelden & Whipple, 2014). There has been an increase of students with ASD in the classrooms in the last 10-20 years, with a current rate of about 1 in 44 children in the United States being diagnosed with ASD (CDC, 2022). Many music teachers still feel unprepared to

teach students with disabilities due to the lack of education they have received about ASD (Grimsby, 2019). It is essential that music teachers are educated about ASD, as the increasing prevalence of autism in education means educators will be teaching these students more frequently. The training to teach students with disabilities should be done from the beginning of their teacher education, such as in undergraduate classes.

Community in the classroom is a supportive environment where all students “feel a sense of belonging and share a common interest, experience, or goals” (Columbia CTL, 2023, para. 2). The concept of community has been studied within general classrooms, but there is a lack of research regarding the perceptions of community within an ASD support classroom (VanWeelden & Whipple, 2014). Often, many students with ASD and other disabilities are separated and secluded from their classrooms, and sometimes within their own support classroom. Creating community in a classroom, especially among students with disabilities, can further support their learning and social experience in school (Lee, 2016).

This thesis is not only advocating that there is a need for more inclusivity within music but is also making an active effort in beginning to address this inequity. The aim of this project was to shed light on teaching students within an autism support classroom, unlike previous research that focused on mainstreamed education (e.g., Darrow & Adamek, 2018; Draper, 2022; Hammel & Hourigan, 2017). My research explores ASD through a social model of disability to avoid the problematic parts of the medical model. I will draw upon prior research done within mainstreamed classrooms when appropriate to learn about general teaching suggestions for students with ASD. This project supports educating teachers about equity and inclusion of students with disabilities within music classrooms, which is a greatly underrepresented topic within music education (Laes & Westerlund, 2018). As a person with a disability, I center the

work and perspectives of students, teachers, and researchers with disabilities to help create more inclusive spaces within research.

Purpose Statement & Research Questions

The purpose of this action research study was to explore how to develop community, support students' educational skills, and implement effective music teaching strategies in an Autism Support Classroom for local middle school students. Community in a classroom is defined as a space where students can feel a sense of belonging and connection with other students with the shared goal of music-making (Berry, 2017). The educational skills this class focused on were listening to directions, prepositions, and counting from one to ten. Effective teaching strategies are defined as teacher behaviors and classroom processes that produce positive student outcomes (Ko & Sammons, 2013). The present project was guided by the following research questions:

1. Do the music lessons create a sense of community among the students, students and teachers, and their community within the music class? How so?
2. How do the music lessons impact students' educational skills within the music lessons?
3. What are generally good practices for music teachers of students with ASD?

Literature Review

Autism Spectrum Disorder: Social Skills, Behaviors, and Academic Skills

Children with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) can have difficulty interacting with peers of the same age due to varying social skills and behaviors. Boyd and colleagues (2008) identified how setting events can promote peer-related social behaviors in students with ASD. Setting events refers to the conditional or environmental situations that cause a behavior to occur. For example, if a student with autism is constantly in loud and overstimulating classrooms, it may cause an emotional outburst due to the continuous exposure to overstimulating environments. The authors suggested identifying setting events that promote positive peer-related interactions. The study found that small groups and child-directed activities increased the likelihood of social interactions between children with ASD and their same-age peers. Decreased adult engagement had a positive effect on social behavior as well. The study also notes that there may be issues of prompt dependency in children with ASD, where they rely on adult prompts to engage in social interactions. Incorporating social interactions into the individual's social skills may help promote more positive experiences for the student and encourage more positive peer relationships and interactions. The more training of the teacher and more interest from the child in social interactions can result in higher effectiveness of these practices. The study concluded by calling for future research to clarify the effects of setting events on the social behaviors of typical peers in comparison to children with ASD.

It is important to discuss the benefits and challenges of inclusive classroom settings for students with ASD. McKenny and colleagues (2016) discussed the importance of monitoring the social-academic behavioral progress of students with ASD in these inclusive classroom environments. The authors highlight the need to develop appropriate assessment criteria, goal-

setting techniques, and interventions for students with ASD. The current standard, Individualized Education Plans (IEPs), for students with ASD tends to reflect the restrictiveness of a student's educational setting rather than individual needs. Additionally, IEPs often leave out important information about how to accurately measure success, motivation, and engagement in students with ASD in general education classrooms. The authors suggested that Functional Behavior Assessment (FBA) can help to identify areas of deficit and environmental factors that promote the acquisition of social, behavioral, and academic skills. Not only are there benefits for the students to be in an inclusive setting, but the authors argued that “students with ASD bring a unique perspective and presence, which can help to identify instructional concerns in the class” (McKenny et al., 2016, p. 319). The researchers found that students with ASD showed improvement over time in their ability to orient themselves toward whom they were speaking with and engage in appropriate conversations with teachers. The authors suggested that these improvements may be due to increased comfort and familiarity with the classroom environment and the development of higher-order conversation skills.

Wang and Spillane (2009) synthesized previous research on how to increase social skills for students with ASD. The researchers specifically focused on evidence-based practices, which are educational or behavioral interventions demonstrated to be effective through rigorous research. Video modeling was found to be an effective intervention. Video modeling uses a video recording to provide a visual aid for a target behavior. This provides a specific example of how to approach a particular behavior, such as how to brush your teeth. This can be a positive tool within the classroom or for the student at home to learn and enforce specific skills.

Music Education for Students with Disabilities

Social Model in General Music Special Education Classrooms

There is a need for music educators to challenge their implicit beliefs about students' capabilities and use the social model of disability within music education to disarm systems that restrict many from participating. Draper (2021) addresses this by challenging music educators to think using the social model of disability, thinking of it as an ability mindset. Through an ability mindset, music educators might begin to challenge their implicit beliefs about students' capabilities, "moving beyond adaptations and modifications to inquire into how music environments, curricula, and instruction may be inherently disabling" (Draper, 2021, p. 280). Draper studied the positive impact that music instruction had on individuals with disabilities through the program, Academy of Music and Arts for Special Education (AMASE). AMASE followed a social model and recognized the importance of acknowledging challenges with specific disabilities while also seeking to break barriers to music education for these students. This program analyzed how many aspects of their program were "inherently disabling" (p. 280) and re-created a program framed around the social model. This resulted in more students with disabilities participating and having a leadership role in the lessons.

Laes and Westerlund (2018) also looked at the impact that a non-traditional music program had on disabled students through a social model lens. This music program was held in a Finnish university special education course where musicians with learning disabilities conducted workshops for preservice music teachers over three years. They argued that pedagogical models of music education need to embrace a social model of disability. Students with disabilities are less likely to be included in music education programs than their nondisabled peers, resulting in fewer students with disabilities as professionals in the field of music (Laes & Westerlund, 2018).

Therefore, more music education programs can create inclusive spaces for students with disabilities. More participating in programs would allow for those who have been marginalized to take a leading role. They also argued that it's crucial that preservice music teacher programs "embrace inclusion and diversity throughout the entire breadth and width of music teacher education programs, rather than as a separate 'special' course" (Laes & Westerlund, 2018, p. 43). They argued that special education classrooms need to have more inclusion for students with disabilities to have a leadership role by emphasizing the social model in all spaces of music education, beginning in preservice teacher programs.

Music for General Special Education Classrooms

An action research project by Draper (2019) looked at an elementary music class to design, implement, and evaluate interactions between students with severe disabilities and typically developing students in the elementary classroom. Overall, the findings were that working together and helping each other resulted in high rates of positive interactions (Draper, 2019). Draper found that "clear communication with paraprofessionals describing appropriate boundaries for helping may be important for teachers seeking to improve classroom interactions between all students" (p. 33). The students with disabilities needed different kinds of support but were just as capable of participating in the musical activities and partner assignments. Yet, when student partners engaged in academic tasks such as notating, reading, or writing music, there were fewer positive interactions between the students and higher prompting from the teacher for them to interact. Instrumental activities resulted in the least amount of teacher prompting as students understood the tasks and provided support for their classmates without prompting.

Blair (2009) conducted a case study of a classroom of students with special needs whose school music classes were unavailable to them. The classroom has an already established sense

of community, set by the special education teacher, Sue. Sue understood the students' need to feel parental love and a feeling of belonging, therefore creating her classroom into a community and family. She focused on equipping students to have their own voice within a caring relationship. Blair explained that the musical instruction further added to the student's education as "having a 'musical say' when so many school experiences stifled their voices proved to be empowering for them" (2009, p. 30). Blair compared the similarities between this special education classroom to other classes with students their age as "the musical interests of these teenage students with special needs paralleled those of their peers" (p. 24). Blair highlighted that music class encourages student autonomy and self-determination within the context of a classroom that already has a strong sense of community.

Salvador (2015) examined the potential of music instruction as a tool for promoting growth and development in children with cognitive impairments. Salvador studied how a music teacher individualized instruction for students with cognitive impairments. She concluded that music instruction had a positive impact on the student's social, cognitive, and emotional development in both mainstreamed and self-contained classrooms. The students showed an increase in music-related skills and knowledge. Salvador also found that students' social and musical learning was influenced by many environments, such as the school climate, the special education teacher, and different modes of modeling positive behaviors or skills.

Fuelberth (2017) argued that choral music education should be accessible to all students, regardless of their race, ethnicity, gender identity, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, or ability. She highlighted the benefits of an inclusive choral music program, including increased student engagement, improved social and emotional development, and enhanced learning outcomes. Yet, there are many barriers for students with disabilities to join choral ensembles.

This includes a lack of student or parent knowledge of the musical offerings, the student's schedule conflicts due to off-campus programs or in-school programs, complex paraprofessional staffing needs, and the music educator's schedule (Fuelberth, 2017, p. 39). Ultimately, music educators are responsible for inclusive spaces in all music classes including choir ensembles for students with disabilities. Educators should use multiple modes of representation of the materials in the ensemble, such as minimizing clutter on sheet music, adjusting text on pages to be larger, highlighting individual parts, using hand or body signals to embody pitch and rhythm, and utilizing videos, graphics, and images to represent materials. Incorporating multiple modes of representation in ensembles results in participation from more students from various backgrounds, including students with disabilities.

Sutela's (2021) found that music and movement should be considered more widely as meaningful ways of learning music and developing agency with students with special needs. Sutela observed that more movement in all musical activities with face-to-face interactions with teachers and teaching assistants was a step toward more independent actions. The positive social interactions also promoted their engagement in musical activities (Sutela, 2021). These activities were able to improve physical skills, confidence, communication, self-awareness, and student autonomy. Music-and-movement activities should be applied in special education to enable students with disabilities to exercise agency and achieve empowerment. All educators need to provide support for students with disabilities to see themselves as capable musicians. Sutela argued that regardless of the school system in place, student agency is developed through equal access to and adequate support of learning, achieved through music-and-movement lessons.

Music Education for ASD Students

Lindblom (2017) discussed the positive impact of music on social inclusion for young First Nations people diagnosed with autism in British Columbia, Canada. The author presented two case studies that highlighted how music has provided these young people with a sense of belonging, pride, and accomplishment. She argued that “music is a school subject that is social and interactive and can help build a sense of belonging” (Lindblom, 2017, p. 270). In both cases, the participants struggled with social isolation and exclusion, but through involvement in music programs, they were able to form friendships, build confidence, and develop musical skills. The researcher argued that music programs that are culturally responsive and inclusive can create more individualized and inclusive instruction. Thus, music programs can promote social inclusion and enhance the well-being of young people with diverse backgrounds and abilities. The music program should encourage students to engage with music in their culture and what they identify with, as it resulted in higher engagement from the students in the music program. This was especially important for the students with ASD as they connected with other students through nonverbal communication by sharing their culture through a folk dance or song recording.

Hogle (2021) discussed the use of play-full intersubjectivity (shared understanding) as a tool for promoting inclusion in music education for students with ASD. Play-full intersubjectivity is defined as a type of interaction that involves shared attention, joint engagement, and mutual understanding between teacher and student. Through a case study of a young student with ASD, the student who once struggled to engage in traditional music instruction methods was now engaged in musical activities using play-full intersubjectivity. The music teacher was able to create a more inclusive and engaging learning environment for the

student with playful intersubjectivity. Through peer scaffolding processes, students could further their musicianship skills. This could result in more musical performances or musical making. Play-full intersubjectivity also promoted social communication, creative expression, and musical learning in learners with ASD. The author suggested that play-full intersubjectivity can be a useful strategy for music educators seeking to promote inclusion and engagement for learners with diverse learning needs through “(a) fun through play and humor; (b) a feeling of family that created comfort, fostering empathetic responses; and (c) musical agency within music-making” (Hogle, 2021, p. 219).

Music Education for Students with ASD in Full-Inclusion Context

Draper (2022) conducted a multiple-case study of two students with ASD in a full-inclusion music education context to see how their experiences align with stakeholder perspectives regarding the role of music education for this population. The findings included three themes: The Not-So-Atypical Benefits, A Focus on Strengths, and A Culture of Inclusivity. She argued that documenting the educational practices and elucidating the beliefs of stakeholders regarding music education for students with ASD in an inclusion setting may offer insight into “best practices while interrogating perceptions regarding unique benefits for this population” (Draper, 2022, p. 132). She discusses the challenges and benefits of providing music education for students with ASD in a full-inclusion setting. Draper emphasized the importance of creating an inclusive environment that supports the diverse learning needs of all students, including those with ASD, in their music classes. This can be through teaching strategies such as using visual aids, incorporating movement and sensory activities, and creating opportunities for social interaction. The author suggested that music education can be a powerful tool for promoting social and emotional development, enhancing communication skills, and improving academic

outcomes for students with ASD. Draper also stated that providing effective music education in a full-inclusion context requires ongoing training and support for music educators, as well as collaboration with other professionals and families to ensure that the needs of all students are met.

Hillier and colleagues (2012) discussed the positive impact of a music intervention on adolescents and young adults with ASD. The study involved a group of 12 participants who received 10 weeks of music intervention, including individual and group sessions focused on music therapy, songwriting, and music production. The researchers found music intervention had a significant positive impact on the participants' social skills, communication, emotional well-being, and self-esteem. They found that music can have a positive impact on the psychological factors of students with ASD. Following completion of the music program, students showed significantly “higher self-esteem, significantly lower self-reported anxiety, and significantly improved attitudes toward peers” (Hillier et al., 2012, p. 209). Music intervention had positive effects on individuals with ASD such as the sensory and emotional regulation benefits of music, the social and communicative aspects of musical interaction, and the creative and expressive opportunities provided by music-making. Positive music interventions are achieved through a dedication from the teacher to an inclusive music classroom by providing a structured environment for students with ASD as this helps lower their anxiety. For example, this music program includes predictable structures of the lessons, by remaining consistent between lessons and reviewing the activities that would happen during the lesson with the students. The lessons were consistently organized, took time at the same time, and place each week, and with the same teachers and staff each lesson. Music intervention can be a powerful tool for promoting positive

outcomes and highlights the importance of providing accessible and inclusive music programs for individuals with diverse learning needs.

Community & Educational Skills

Parker (2016) studied how four different choral teachers created community in their classrooms. They defined community from the Latin word *communitas*, which is the Latin word for fellowship and partnership and emphasized interdependent connections between individuals. The data were collected through interviews, written and observational data, and artifacts. She found four themes that influenced a student's community in a classroom: Support and Care, Fostering a Sense of Belonging and Acceptance, Quality Creates and Inhibits Community, and Program Legacy and Vision. Also, there were differences among the teacher's focuses between student and teacher and ensemble and teacher, and that sometimes it is difficult to build interdependent relationships among students due to the nature of large ensembles. Strong examples of community building included teachers who promoted students outside projects and connected their classes with local artists. It was key that teachers provided the structure for projects to occur but with maximum student autonomy over their projects. Teachers believed they created *communitas* "by fostering the highest quality music-making" and "by engaging in considerable interpersonal relationship building and rebuilding with students throughout their time in the choir" (Parker, 2016, p. 233). Yet, teachers develop community most with students through asking "thoughtful questions, encouraging leadership, and seeking student musical decision-making" (p. 233).

Adderley (2003) studied how high school music classrooms motivate students to join and stay in ensembles relying on the social climate of the classroom. The importance of social climate emerged as a "pervasive element as students noted the importance of relationships for

their well-being and growth” (Adderly, 2003, p. 190). This social climate also included inter-student relationships as this resulted to be a consistent theme throughout all domains of student’s responses. Students reported that music classes and ensembles provided students with an outlet in a smaller group setting otherwise not achievable in large school settings. Music class also allowed students to form connections with others away from their homes to further support students throughout their high school years. Adderley argued for the important need for music teachers to foster strong relationships and community within their classrooms and ensembles to not only motivate students to engage in music but also stay and enjoy their time within the classes.

Community in music environments is best achieved through student autonomy within a structured class environment with collaborative projects or lessons. Inner-student collaboration without teacher oversight is key for student relationship development, furthering community between students. Yet, students also need to feel connected with their music teacher, which can tie the community of the classroom together as a whole. This is achieved by asking students thoughtful questions, being a positive figure for them, understanding them as a wholistic individual, and consistently allowing music class to be a space where they feel welcome.

Methodology

Procedures

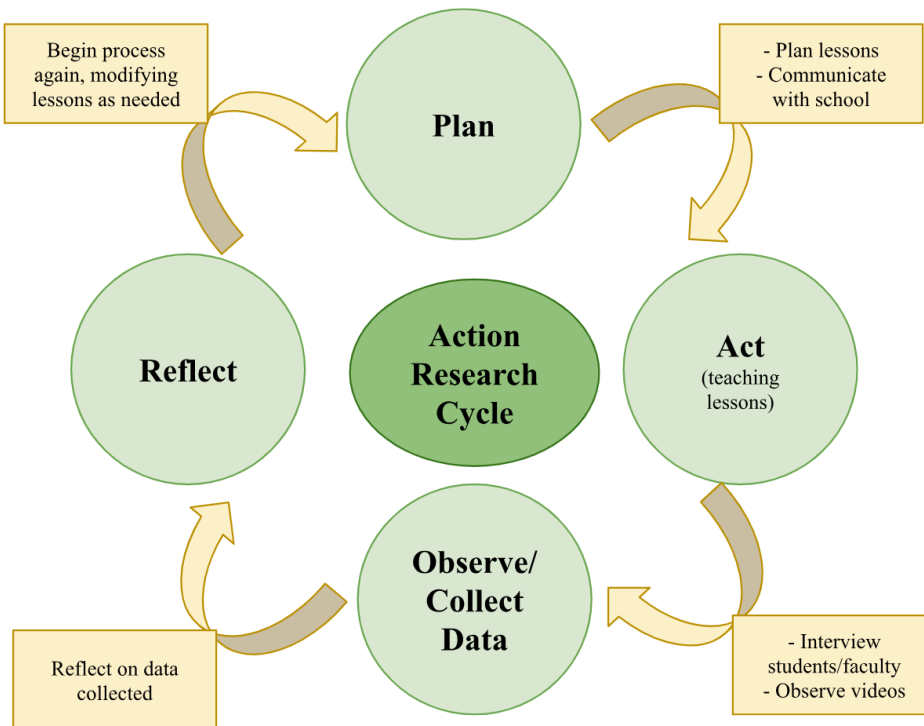
Prior to beginning data collection, approval to conduct research was granted by the Bucknell University Institutional Review Board (IRB) (see Appendix A). Next, I contacted a local middle school in central Pennsylvania and the special education department to receive permission to conduct this project in their autism support classroom. I then received consent from legal guardians. Finally, throughout the study and prior to each lesson, I also received assent from the students.

My research followed an action research methodology, a form of applied research in which “the primary purpose will be to increase the quality, impact, and justice of the educational practice” (Gall et al., 2007, p. 597). More specifically, I followed the cyclic nature of action research: I created a curriculum for the students in the support classroom, collected and analyzed data while teaching the curriculum (e.g., teacher interviews, student interviews, researcher journal, and video reflections), and then reflected and modified the curriculum based on the data for a second cycle of planning, acting, observing, and reflecting (see Figure 1). I conducted this project in two cycles with each cycle lasting two weeks during the Fall 2023 semester. The first cycle served as a “baseline” and consisted of generic general music classes, not tailored to the goals of community building and specific educational skills. During the reflection week between the first and second cycles and after reviewing my data, I tailored the lessons to the needs of the students and the project’s goals. Broadly, this included repeated activities from Cycle 1 and new activities focusing on specific educational skills and developing community such as partner work. During the second cycle, data were collected again through video observations, student

and teacher interviews, and daily reflections. I generated a second set of ideas to inform a hypothetical Cycle 3.

Figure 1

The Cyclic Process of Action Research



Lesson Activities

Although lessons were not the same for every lesson during the project, and various aspects of the lessons changed between Cycle 1 and Cycle 2, all lessons followed a consistent structure with similar activities. Every lesson began with a "Hello Song." The purpose of the "Hello Song" was a greeting activity; it welcomed the students, set the tone for the day, and practiced remembering a song for the students. Many lessons also contained a parachute activity. During the activity, the students shook the parachute with more force during louder dynamics and softer with quiet dynamics. The purpose was to reinforce active listening and to see if students understood loud versus quiet. All lessons had a folk dance. Students danced either in

pairs or as a large group with specific choreography and to a song. The purpose of this activity was to reinforce steady beat, promote community, counting, and/or active listening to phrasing or melodic lines. Lessons also all included the “Bumblebee” chant. In this activity, the students as a group spoke the words to a rhyme at a steady beat: “Bee, bee, bumblebee, stung a man upon the knee, stung a pig upon the snout, Bee, bee, bumblebee.” The purpose of this chant was to prepare to teach students quarter note and eighth note rhythms while reinforcing steady beat. Another activity was tapping to the beat of music. The students tapped instruments or wooden rhythm sticks to songs as a group. The purpose was to explore fast versus slow beats and for me to learn about their favorite songs or music they listen to. Finally, every lesson concluded with a "Goodbye Song," a song we had sung together to support community and signal the end of the lesson. All lessons for the two cycles of the project are in Appendices B and D.

Data Collection

Sources of data included interviews with students and support classroom teachers, researcher journal observations, and notes from the video recordings. The videos, research notes, and interviews were analyzed after each cycle to connect common themes throughout the interviews and classes to identify points for change or improvement for the second cycle. The interviews were audio recorded and transcribed. These data were compiled and used to inform the development of new curricula for Cycle 2 and a hypothetical Cycle 3 (see Appendices C and E). To protect the confidentiality of students, the teacher, and the school, each student and teacher was assigned a pseudonym, and the school's location was kept generic.

Written consent forms from parents and assent from students were acquired before data collection (see Appendix A). The consent forms were sent home to guardians detailing the research, and students were invited to participate on the day of each lesson. The students were

not required to participate as a part of their class or for a grade. Their participation was on a volunteer basis, and they were not required to participate as a part of their ASD class. They were expected to attend eight lessons, which were about 45 minutes long. In total, this was about six hours.


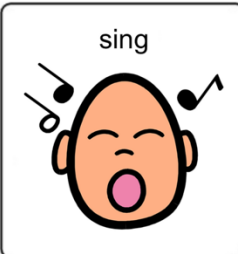


An interview followed each lesson. Each student was interviewed at least once during the Cycle. Depending on the students' schedule, some were interviewed after every lesson. Questions for students during Cycle 1 are shown in Table 1. With guidance from their support teacher, it was recommended to ask about their enjoyment levels of the class along with their favorite and least favorite activities with pictures. For the students who use alternate forms of communicating other than talking, I used a Picture Exchange Communication System (PECS). PECS is a broad term for the use of small pictures of items to respond to questions, as seen in Table 2. All questions were formatted to allow students to use their pictures to respond. The pictures they used were ones they were already familiar with and used by their classroom teacher. For the teachers, I asked them the questions in Table 1. These interviews were audio-recorded and then transcribed for analysis. Questions were updated before Cycle 2 for the nonverbal students to fit their communication needs better and are provided in Table 3.

Table 1*Interview Questions During Cycle 1*

Questions for Students	Questions for Teachers
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What was your favorite activity? <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How did this activity make you feel? (picture of activity, pictures of emotions) 2. What was your least favorite activity? <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How did this activity make you feel? (picture of activity, pictures of emotions) 3. What would you like to do more of in the future? 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What do you think is working well? 2. What do you think is not working well? 3. Do you see a sense of community throughout the students in the lessons? 4. How can I further foster a sense of community? 5. What could I do to help them feel more of a sense of community in the lessons? 6. Do you see any growth during the music lessons in educational areas where they struggle otherwise? 7. Can you provide specific examples of their growth in their educational goals? 8. Is there anything you'd like to add?

Table 2

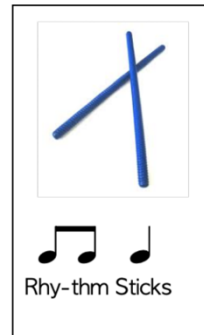
Examples of PECS Used for Interviews

<i>Items</i>	<i>Pictures</i>
Boomwhackers:	
Singing:	
Parachute:	
Ribbons:	

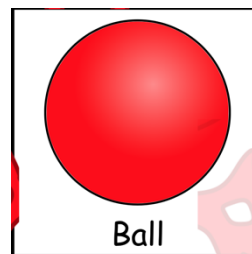
Dancing:



Rhythm Sticks:



Bouncy Balls:



Emotions:

Today I am Feeling...



A grid of 18 emotion cards arranged in three rows and six columns. Each card features a small cartoon face with a specific expression and a label for that emotion. Above the grid, the text "Today I am Feeling..." is written, followed by three small faces with different expressions.

happy	good	great	sad	bad	mad
silly	tired	anxious	sorry	worried	scared
angry	frustrated	cold	hot	sick	lazy

Table 3*Updated Interview Questions for Cycle 2*

Instructions: Press Yes or No on the iPad to respond:

Questions for Nonverbal Students

1. Did you like drumming?
 2. Did you like dancing?
 3. Did you like singing?
 4. Did you like playing with the parachute?
 5. Did you like to play with the boomwhackers?
 6. Did you feel happy during the lesson today?
 7. Did you feel sad during the lesson today?
-

Participants

The middle school in this study offers support for students with ASD through mainstream classes and a support classroom. There were varying developmental goals for each student, yet most of the students who remained in the support classroom were not receiving a music education from a music teacher. I taught in the Autism Support Classroom with their teacher, Mrs. Jones.

The class consisted of six middle-school-aged students. The students did not receive a music education since they were not mainstreamed into the general music education classrooms in the school. Some students were mainstreamed into specific classes, including science, math, and physical education. These students came and went from the support classroom throughout the day in between their mainstreamed classes. There are typically three to four support teachers plus Mrs. Jones in the classroom, with some specialized teachers, such as a speech language teacher and a physical therapist, who also came in once a week or bi-weekly.

The classroom had individual desks, but students often worked together at a large table, with Mrs. Jones teaching specific subjects and the additional teachers supporting specific

students. The students had a mix of subject-specific lessons, such as math problems or vocabulary words and life-skill lessons, such as counting money, buying food at a grocery store, and cleaning. Mrs. Jones often incorporated life-skills into their subject-specific materials as well. The students had a sensory-break and play area, where they had various toys, coloring, and sensory-calming toys such as a body sock (a stretchy-material that compresses against the body and can provide a calming effect) and a small tent where they could sit and read with headphones.

One girl (Lily) and three boys (Connor, David, and Brody) from the Autism Support Classroom showed constant enthusiasm and participation in the music lessons. The students had typical middle school interests, such as Disney, Barbie, animals, and video games. Many of the boys loved superheroes, often wearing red because they said it was the color of Spiderman who was “the coolest superhero ever” according to Brody. Lily was adorned in crowns and costume jewelry because she called herself the princess and loved to talk about Barbies. All the students were extremely sweet and kind. Most loved to be in school and working with their teachers. Many students also enjoyed working together on projects and were excited when each other succeeded at a task, but they also valued their time alone. This meant they could work by themselves at their own desk or take a break in the sensory-play area.

During the first lesson, students were a bit shy to participate. Brady was particularly nervous to try the activities, but soon enough he and the others were giggling and enjoying their time during the folk dance. At the end of the lesson, Brady came up to me and said, “Miss Emma, that was the most I’ve ever laughed in years!” Despite whether that was true or not, I was very touched that he shared that information with me and further showed how much he enjoyed the class. After the first lesson, students ran up to me with new toys, projects, or worksheets

when I entered the room. Since I was visiting in the fall, Halloween and Thanksgiving fell during our time together. Our lesson was on Halloween, which they reminded me of the week before.

The students kept reminding me that they were not going to wear costumes, but they were going to wear all orange and black, which they called “dressing up as pumpkins.” The students wanted me to know so I could also wear orange and black, which made me feel very included and special, and further shows how thoughtful they were to make sure I knew. They were thrilled to see I remembered when I was also dressed in orange and black, which I felt showed I cared about them and what they were excited about.

Discussion & Findings

The purpose of this action research study was to explore how to develop community, support students' educational skills, and implement effective music teaching strategies in an Autism Support Classroom for local middle school students. The present project was guided by the following research questions:

1. Do the music lessons create a sense of community among the students, students and teachers, and their community within the music class? How so?
2. How do the music lessons impact students' educational skills within the music lessons?
3. What are generally good practices for music teachers of students with ASD?

Two cycles of action research were conducted for this project. Cycle 1 consisted of basic music lessons. Video observations, a researcher journal, and student and teacher interviews informed Cycle 2. Cycle 2 was modified to further fit the students' educational needs and further promote community in the class.

Discussion of Cycles 1-3

Cycle 1 followed a curriculum that included standard general music lessons focusing on topics of steady beat, loud versus soft dynamics, basic ABA song form of verse and chorus, and quarter note/eighth note rhythms. These music concepts were explored through singing, dancing, playing instruments, chant-speaking, and active listening. All lessons began with the same "Hello Song" and ended with the same "Goodbye Song." Cycle 1 lesson plans are in Appendix B.

There were four 45-minute lessons over the course of two weeks with two lessons per week. Typically, they were on Tuesday and Thursday afternoons. There were always four of the same students in the class, and occasionally, two other students would join depending on their

availability. Students were generally excited about the lessons based on their enthusiastic reactions when I entered the classroom. After the first couple of lessons, they often jumped up to help me with my bags and instruments, wanting to see what new things I might have brought or to see their favorite instrument from the last lesson. Connor often walked towards me and followed me around, almost as a way of saying hello since he is nonverbal. I wrote in my journal, “Connor recognizes who I am, and he runs up to me when I enter the classroom and becomes very excited by making some verbal sirens, which the teachers told me meant he was happy. He would then use his iPad to press two words, "Happy Music.” All the students loved to help me set up the instruments, move desks for more dancing room, and ask what we were going to do in the class. Lily loved to help me put away my instruments at the end of class, and Brody loved to help me walk my things to the elevator. After about three lessons, they began singing or speaking the chants and songs that they remembered from previous lessons with excitement to do those activities again in the lesson.

I was able to gauge interest in activities and lessons through interviews with the students and teachers. Overall, student and faculty interviews revealed that the students really enjoyed the lessons and all the activities. One teacher mentioned in an interview, “Students love when you walk into the classroom, they know music class is about to begin and you can see them light-up!” Students did not specify a specific interest in any one activity over another in the interviews, except Connor (who is nonverbal) indicated more interest in playing instruments and dancing more so than the singing and listening activities. The interest in more movement-based activities revealed that not all my activities included multiple modes of engagement for all students to participate. For example, the “Hello Song” did not include any motions for students who were nonverbal. This resulted in them often standing with little engagement until the song was over.

Moving into Cycle 2, I made sure that all activities included many ways that students could participate, such as a song with corresponding motions rather than just the singing. Overall, students liked every activity based on their interviews. Three out of the four students interviewed stated they preferred dancing over singing.

The teachers' interviews revealed that all students were engaged and excited to participate in the lessons. They also noted in the interviews that the repetition of the lessons' activities was extremely helpful for the class, as they remembered previous activities and were able to build upon them. Additionally, one teacher said, "it's impressive and exciting to see the students remembering the activities from lesson to lesson, they do not always have this kind of memory in other subjects." Many teachers had a similar remark in the interviews, stating the structural repetition of the lessons seemed helpful for students to remember the activities, songs, chants, and movements. They also mentioned students interacted with each other more while playing instruments. They did not have much to say about the community building between students. Taking the student and teacher interviews, observations, and personal research notes together, I created a Research Findings table (see Appendix C). These findings were used to create activities and strategies for the Cycle 2 curriculum (see Appendix D).

Cycle 2 was broadly structured like Cycle 1, with four lessons over two weeks. The overall music concepts of the lessons remained the same as Cycle 1 (steady beat, loud versus soft, etc.). Based on my personal observations of how the students were progressing with each activity, they needed more time and experience with understanding these music concepts. The students especially seemed to need more time exploring verse versus chorus because they were unable to correctly answer comprehension questions about verse and chorus during the lessons.

Based on the Cycle 1 findings, some activities remained the same and others were changed for Cycle 2. Some activities remained the same, as repetition for students with ASD is extremely important and some activities were working well for these students, but I thought they could use more time on them. For example, students struggled to speak the whole “Bumblebee” chant at the end of Cycle 1. I decided to keep with the same chant but add in an additional playing component, to both reinforce the chant and offer a new mode of engagement for nonverbal students. This also offered a new challenge of playing and speaking for some students who seemed to remember the chant more easily.

In addition, I repeated activities between cycles depending on either keeping a similar lesson format or to further reinforce a concept. The activities that remained the same were: “Hello Song” and “Goodbye Song,” shake out, tap to the steady beat, *pengwi bai anoga* song, and the same “Bumblebee” chant. I kept these activities based on my observations of the lessons. The “Hello Song” and “Goodbye Songs” allowed for a similar structure. The other activities were kept since students still struggled with them at the end of Cycle 1.

I changed activities for Cycle 2 based on teacher and student interviews and video observations. I kept a folk dance since they really enjoyed it but changed it to include partner choreography. Partner work was to promote more community between students based on the interview responses from the teachers that students did not seem to interact much with each other. The “Bumblebee” chant was changed to include instrument playing with partner work and performance. This allows for students to have another collaborative activity with both speaking and movement involved. I changed the lessons to include different activities, including ribbon dancing to reinforce verse versus chorus (based on video observations), new chants or songs to provide more variety (based on teacher interview feedback), and more instrument time (based on

the student interviews where they expressed interest in playing new instruments and to provide a nonverbal option for students). One teacher said in an interview that, “[the students] don’t seem to understand the verse or chorus concept very well” which also led me to incorporate rhythm dancing. Another teacher said, “the repetition is very good for them, but it might be a bit too repetitive after many lessons.” This motivated the change for new chants, songs, and instruments. Based on video observations, I included a parachute activity only twice during Cycle 2 instead of every lesson because they loved the activity but seemed to understand the loud versus soft dynamics well, so they did not need more practice. I also made sure to include multiple modes of expression for each activity, such as using motions during a song, since some students were nonverbal. This was based on my observation that nonverbal students seemed less engaged in the singing and chant activities since they did not have a mode of engagement that worked for them.

To better support students’ educational skills, I included prepositional phrases in the transitions between activities and throughout the lesson. Mrs. Jones explained in an interview that her goal was for students to better understand prepositional phrases I used specific language during transitions to include clear prepositional phrases such as “put the instruments on the table” and “take two rhythm sticks from the bucket.” They followed this very well, most of the class following it without needing an extra prompt.

I followed the same procedures as Cycles 1 and 2 to draw conclusions for a hypothetical Cycle 3. Through student and teacher interviews and video reflections, I created suggestions for what to change and keep for a Cycle 3 curriculum. The Cycle 2 interviews from the students offered similar feedback to Cycle 1 that they enjoyed the lessons and the activities. Yet, the students offered specific interests in the new folk dance which had partner work and playing the

instruments with the “Bumblebee” chant. Interests in the “Bumblebee” chant was reflected in my journal, “The BumbleBee chant was very successful for a lot of the students, [David] and [Lily] were pairs again which I think went well since they were laughing and smiling. I encouraged the students to face each other and play with each other more, which may have been why students were giggling more.” The teachers also mentioned these two activities as important since the students seemed to maintain eye contact in the partner dance more so than they do in other classroom settings or conversations. Teachers also mentioned in interviews that the partner performance for the “Bumblebee” chant gave the students confidence and was a “huge step for [the students] who are sometimes too shy to speak up in class.” Teachers responded in interviews that all students were engaged in partner work and performance. One teacher said, “It was great to see all the students performing for each other. They seemed to really enjoy watching each other play!” This was a unique situation for them to see since the teachers sometimes struggled to get students to present or speak up in other classes. All this specific feedback from the interviews, video observations, and researcher notes was compiled into a Research Findings table to advise changes or similarities in a hypothetical Cycle 3 (see Appendix E).

In a hypothetical Cycle 3, I would include more opportunities for solo performance in the class, along with having students do improvisation work since that was an activity I did not include at all in my curriculum. The lack of solo performance and improvisation was based on my video observations and researcher journal. It is a general practice in music education to provide these opportunities, as they are important for student’s musical development.

The next step to reach the musical goal of basic rhythmic notation would be to include iconic notation, as this is a typical next step for musical lessons and would be a great visual aid for many of the students, as suggested by teacher interviews. Visual aids allow students to work

around with physical cards of the chant to perform their own chant rendition for the class. Visual aids, such as iconic notation, provide more performance opportunities and improvisation practice for the students. Using similar visual aids with new instruments or genres of music can allow for students to have variety within the repetitive structure of a familiar lesson. Providing novelty with some familiarity is a key strategy I observed from the videos that created more musical growth within the lessons. Providing many musical cultures, genres, and types of instruments provides students with more musical knowledge of music from around the world.

I recommend using the same folk dance as they needed some more time to solidify the movements. After about two more lessons, change the song and dance moves. It is essential that it remains a partner or small group dance, as this was an important collaborative activity. Based on video observations, I am interested in how activities might allow for more student collaboration without teacher mentoring so that students can interact with each other more than with just a teacher.

Also in Cycle 3, incorporating more specific educational skills would be a main goal for Cycle 3. These include goals for specific students, such as answering “yes or no” questions. It also includes building upon previous skills (prepositional phrases and counting to 10). There is also the opportunity to create new goals for the entire class, such as counting from 10 to 20, along with more complex prepositional phrases. This is based on teacher recommendations from the interviews.

I would maintain a repetitive pattern for the lessons, with the starting and ending of the “Hello Song” and “Goodbye Song” based on the positive response from all teachers’ interviews on the students’ success with repetition. Repetition is also supported by the video observations and researcher journal, as students began to understand the concept of verse versus chorus

through different activities and repetition. In addition to the concepts, Connor was tapping on his own to the steady beat at the end of Cycle 2. This was an exciting improvement as noted in my journal, “He needed some reminders and help moving his arms to tap the rhythms sticks together, but I have seen so much improvement in him doing it by himself!” I also recommend including a new activity or brand-new chant for the “Bumblebee” chant since they seem to know it very well after eight lessons based on the video observations.

Findings

Research Question 1: Do the music lessons create a sense of community among the students, students and teachers, and their community within the music class? How so?

The music lessons allowed students to collaborate, thus allowing for a greater sense of community between the students and between the teachers and students. Teachers noted in their interviews that students worked together during the partner performance practice time. Offering more space for students to do work with each other without direct instruction from the teacher allowed for the most student collaboration. Partner folk dances were another opportunity for student-driven collaboration to occur. Teachers noted in the interviews that students looked at each other more frequently while laughing and having fun during the dances. They had positive feedback about the lessons overall for the students, stating they enjoyed themselves and noticed students interacting with each other in Cycle 2.

Based on the student interviews, students said they preferred the dance and instrument playing together over other activities. A conclusion could be made that this was because of the interactive nature of those activities, meaning they enjoyed the partner work and working together. They chose these activities over the more individual activities, such as learning a song or tapping along to the beat. Based on teacher interviews and the video observations, these

activities also promoted the most student interaction and teamwork. One teacher stated enthusiastically, “They were really looking at each other during the dancing!” The teachers had a general response to the partner dance that showed that the students were trying to work together with eye contact, which was not often seen in social situations. The eye contact was seen in the video observations, but many other pointers also contributed to this being a collaborative and bonding activity. Students laughed together when they both or one of them made a mistake, and they often reminded each other of the dance moves that were to come next. These are all factors that can contribute to students bonding and eventually feeling a sense of community with one another.

Research Question 2: How do the music lessons impact students’ educational skills within the music lessons?

The music lessons impacted the students’ educational skills by addressing skills they were already developing with their support teachers and building upon overall developmental goals. During teacher interviews, the teachers recommended specific educational skills for Cycle 2. These included prepositional phrases such as “put in the bucket,” “take out,” “on the table,” etc. While reviewing the videos, I noted that by incorporating these phrases throughout the lessons, students understood the directions and followed them well. Teachers also mentioned in the interviews they were “impressed” and “excited” to see the students following these directions so well. Based on what I observed in the lessons and through the videos, Connor and David needed different ways to understand directions. Simplifying the directions, such as offering two different instruments to pick from, allowed Connor and David to follow the directions more clearly. Yet most of the time, and especially in the later lessons, all students were following the directions without any teacher support. This was observed throughout the video observations,

confirming that students did seem to get better in later lessons by following the directions after only being told once.

Through repetitive lessons, the students knew what to expect during lessons and were enthusiastic to know which activities we were going to do that day. Having a similar structure allowed the students to feel less anxious about the lessons and to be excited about new activities, such as learning a new song or chant. The excitement and decreased anxiety were observed in the lessons, videos, and based on the teacher feedback of students “always being excited” for music class. From my journal reflection in Cycle 2, “Brody seemed nervous to try the new chant, but after lots of practice, he was smiling and happily dancing along.” From watching the videos, students seemed the most timid in the first couple of lessons. After they were familiar with me and the activities we were doing, they immediately lit up and became very eager to participate. The teachers also mentioned in the interviews they were happy to see the students engaged in a lesson for 45 minutes while doing things such as performing in front of the class and trying new things like a new dance. Repetition is important for students with ASD, but there is also a certain balance to keep.

Incorporating multiple places to practice educational skills for both the whole class and specific students is key. Educational skills should be included in many of the activities and wherever else appropriate (such as in transitions, comprehension questions, homework, etc.). This class’s specific educational skills with prepositional phrases and directions were included in the transitions between activities and their counting practice with the “Shake Down” and folk dance. In the partner work for the “Bumblebee” chant, I encouraged some pairs to count each other in to play together, which was also practicing their skills of counting to 10.

Research Question 3: What are generally good practices for music teachers of students with ASD?

The students benefited from repetition with age-appropriate variety. This was supported by the classroom teachers who shared during the interviews that the students really grew by having repetition. They saw how the students were remembering activities, which was often lost, especially over long periods of time. Exposure to similar activities within short periods of time allowed the activities to not feel too long. This also allowed students to be constantly engaged and helped them to remember information better. Students having space to express themselves was an important aspect according to the teachers in the interviews, as they rarely were given autonomy to choose for themselves in much of their academic careers. Music teachers therefore should listen to their students' interests, as students will feel heard and represented in lessons, which they may not feel in much of their school day.

For this specific class, having group activities where everyone interacted was important. According to the teachers, from general discussions about the students' days and from personal observation, much of their day might be spent individually working by themselves or with a teacher. Therefore, based on observing their upbeat behaviors during the classes, students seemed to enjoy being together and were enthusiastic to work in pairs or small groups.

Asking students what they like and dislike allows them to feel heard as well, which was a common theme from the teacher interviews and video observations. Music teachers must approach each lesson with enthusiasm and positivity, as their energy and manners can dictate if the students will also be excited for the lessons. This can depend on the age of the students, but this class really enjoyed being silly together. More positive engagement was seen when the

teacher also showed enthusiasm and excitement for the activities rather than just presenting information.

Best Practices for Music Education

Best Practices for Building Community

Encourage Partner Work. Students with ASD might have no issues with social skills, but others may struggle with verbal and/or nonverbal communication. Social interactions often rely on conversations and nonverbal cues such as handshakes, hugging, and eye contact. These social interactions are often the ways people become close through conversing and working together. These kinds of social interactions can be challenging for students with ASD. Partner work may be a space where students can practice social skills, allowing the students to develop connections with others. Music educators should develop activities with partner work to promote student collaboration. The activities should allow the partners to contribute equally, along with space for fun and creativity. This can include improvisation, practice performances, and discussions together. Ideally, partner work is something students should look forward to as it allows students to get to know each other better. Students with ASD may benefit from activities that promote collaboration in a low-stress environment, such as many of the activities provided for this class. This will hopefully result in students being more comfortable around each other and creating a space of familiarity and belonging, which are all important aspects of creating a sense of community in the music class.

Demonstrate Positive Social Interactions. Music teachers are encouraged to demonstrate positive behaviors and social interactions for students. Students with ASD may struggle with social communication and appropriate behaviors, which can lead to social isolation. Teachers can model the behaviors or work with students individually to equip them with the

tools they may need to have positive interactions with other students. These strategies can provide students with the confidence to work with others. The overall goal would be for students to have beneficial, meaningful conversations or exchanges, resulting in further bonding. These interactions can and should be encouraged in the music classroom through guidance from the teacher's activities and downtime.

Encourage Safe Environments for Performance in the Class. Within a repetitive framework, music teachers should foster positive performance spaces for students. Performance can allow everyone to see each other's work and offer support for one another. These performances should be spaces where the students feel successful and not fear. Safe and successful performance time promotes positive social spaces for students with ASD. It also allows students to express themselves verbally or nonverbally. When students feel confident in front of their peers, it can promote more positive interactions between students. More confidence-building social interactions allow the students to feel more equipped to handle other social situations that may feel more daunting. By supporting each other in a group effort, students feel a sense of support from each other and confidence to do new things. For example, Brody was often very quiet in music class. When he saw other students performing, he gained the confidence to perform for them. He performed a smaller section of the chant that was more manageable for him to remember. From then on, he was more excited to try new activities and challenges in the music class. It is important to provide students with ASD with a more manageable assignment so that they feel successful. This is especially important in performance, which may seem more daunting for a student struggling with anxiety to perform in front of the class.

Allow for Student-Directed Opportunities within the Classroom. A keyway for students to connect with each other is to have times in the lessons where students collaborate with minimal teacher orchestration. Students with ASD may benefit from some teacher involvement, but it is also important to practice working with other students as well. Sometimes student-directed work can be guided by a paraprofessional or teacher, but other times this may be intentional time that a student has with another student. Providing experiences where the student will be successful can show the student that they can achieve tasks without additional support. Additionally, the students can have more bonding time with other students their age. The student with ASD is, therefore, seen more as a peer and not as an outsider to other students in the class. Allowing for productive, enjoyable student collaboration time with minimal teacher involvement can further develop student relationships and promote community in the classroom overall.

Best Practices for Incorporating Educational Skills

Communicating with Special Education Team/Parents. Music educators can benefit from learning about the student through communication with the special education team and parents. Communication may be a way for music educators to know what skills students are developing. They should encourage the special educators to give a full scope on skills (e.g., speech, verbal cues, communication, nonverbal cues, physical, sensory, behavioral, emotional, etc.) that students are developing and that can (or already might be) incorporated into lessons. Reviewing their Individualized Education Plan or 504 Plan is also pertinent as this can provide detailed information.

Incorporate Educational Skills into Every Aspect of the Lesson. Non-musical educational skills should be incorporated into every aspect of the lesson as appropriate. This can develop the student's skills outside of the special education class or therapy lessons, further

enforcing them in outside contexts. Incorporating non-musical skills may require creativity, such as creating a song to fit a specific educational skill. As seen with the transitions in this curriculum, be deliberate about what wording to model positive behavior or specific words as the teacher. Educational skills may not be a topic to highlight but may be a passive part of the activity just for the student to internalize the concept further outside of their special education classroom or therapy. Some skills may be applicable to transitions, where students can work on their ability to follow directions, or the activity can be individualized for that student to practice a certain skill.

Seek Insight from Others. Music educators only can see a snapshot of the student's learning on that day. They should not be afraid to ask for additional help from other teachers to see what tools they use in their classrooms. It may provide specific insight into what other teachers are incorporating into their classes for the students. Finally, communicate with the paraprofessional or support teacher if the child has one. If they have a paraprofessional, it is imperative to provide them with specific instructions so the paraprofessional can help the student focus on the specific educational skill.

Best Practices for Teaching Strategies for Music Educators of Students with ASD

Embrace Repetition. Students with ASD thrive with repetition and consistency. Repetition calms nerves, as they know what to expect and it allows them to focus on the class rather than being worried about what is going to happen. Repetition can mean having the same activity to open a class and another to always close it. Students know the class is beginning and ending when they hear they are doing those activities. The overall lesson structure should follow a general schedule, such as starting with a "Hello Song," a movement activity, then a book, song, etc. but always ending with a "Goodbye Song". How repetitive the structure of the class should

be depending on the specific students. The structure of starting and ending with the “Hello Song” and “Goodbye Song” without a specific schedule in between those starting and ending activities was appropriate for the students in this study. For other classes, it may be appropriate to have consistent activity structures throughout all lessons. Ultimately there needs to be a balance between repetition and novelty.

Offer a Variety of Activities Within Lessons and Overall. Within a repetitive framework, create activities that are different from each other. Appropriate variations allow the lessons to feel less repetitive. Lessons should all have movement, singing, chant, instrument playing, dance, discussion, active listening, and combinations of each to remove the repetitive aspect. Students need a wide variety of experiences with topics, so repetition does not mean doing the same activity for each lesson, but rather concentrating on specific topics over a long period of time with many different activities. Some classes will need more time with specific activities, such as more lessons with longer chants or songs. When considering a variety of activities, students should be exposed to many different genres, instruments, and types of music during this process.

Have Multiple Modes of Engagement for Each Activity. Each activity needs to have multiple modes of engagement for students with ASD. This means including different opportunities for student engagement, such as the song includes a movement component as well. Different modes allow students who are verbal, nonverbal, limited physical movement to participate in every activity. Students should be encouraged to participate however they are able, such as both playing an instrument and singing or just playing an instrument. Multiple modes of engagement also allow students to be more interested in activities as they are not just offering one kind of activity. For example, learning a song that also includes instrument playing allows

those who prefer playing instruments to be more engaged. Multiple modes of engagement create a more inclusive environment and improves student motivation.

Be Conscious about Questions. Students with ASD may need more processing time to speak in conversations, especially while answering questions. Allow time for students to respond, especially to open-ended questions. It may feel awkward to allow silence or space, but this allows the student to process. Some students may need to be asked “yes or no” questions and “this or that” questions to help them voice their opinions. Other students might benefit from the use of a Picture Exchange Communication System (PECS) to answer questions. If students are already using PECS in their classroom, be sure to be consistent with their special education teacher’s process. Communicating in ways that are comfortable and appropriate for the student will allow for their input, ideas, and participation in your music classroom.

Advocate For and Know Your Students. The most important and helpful tool for creating music curricula for students with ASD is getting to know and understand them. Understanding students as whole individuals will best prepare you to create lessons for them. Sometimes, it may take many lessons of trial and error to find what works best for them. It is important to know their strengths, specific tendencies, challenges, and any other information from their special education teachers, IEP team, and parents. Many students may have negative experiences with music class. From rejection to overstimulation, these may have created harmful feelings for them around music. The best thing to encourage them is to get to know them outside of the music lessons. This also goes for the special education teachers and parents, who may also have faced negative experiences with music teachers before. Advocate not only for the students to participate as much as they can, but also advocate for why music classes are important for the students!

Limitations

This study had several limitations. The findings and recommendations described in this paper may not be generalizable to all ASD classrooms. These lessons and activities were specifically designed for the students in this middle school, meaning another autism support classroom may have completely different needs. They are only guidelines and options for music teachers to learn from when applying them to their specific situations.

This study also could have benefited from more lessons within each cycle and more cycles overall. Additional cycles would provide a more in-depth review of the students and various lessons to apply different activity ideas. Having more participants would have allowed for a larger scope of educational skills and types of personalities to balance within the lessons. Student participation was also unpredictable some weeks because the students were mainstreamed into other classes and chose not to participate in music class. This resulted in some students being in only several lessons, missing some of the community-building and developing musical skills over time.

Areas for Future Research

More research is needed in the field of music education and autism. If this study were to be replicated, it would benefit from additional cycles of teaching. This could include the same exact data collection process but going beyond the two cycles. The researcher might follow a similar structure seen in the Research Findings tables after each cycle to inform the next one, based on student and teacher interviews, video observations, and the researcher's notes.

Future research might also include conducting this study within different school configurations. For example, this study might be done within schools that are in a different location from central Pennsylvania or with different kinds of resources, such as more or less

resources for their special education services. Differences in population might also produce important insights. For example, a school with a large class of students with ASD may provide different insights on how to incorporate specific student educational skills or community building amongst a larger class size.

Future researchers might also study specific educational skills, such as developing speech or physical motor skills. Finally, this study was conducted in a self-contained autism support classroom, so a future study might explore other music settings. For example, by using an action research model, the study might examine how choir or band classrooms foster community and educational skills for students with ASD.

Conclusion

This research aimed to study how music class in an ASD support classroom can promote community and educational skills. It also sought to determine best practices for music teachers of students with ASD in a general music setting. Further, strategies for building community, developing educational skills, and best practices for students with ASD within general music lessons are also offered for consideration. Collaboration was best supported during partner work, including instrument playing and folk dancing, small group/pair instrumental performances, and in small group discussions throughout the lessons. Educational skills were embedded within transition activities and songs. This was best achieved through discussion with the student's classroom teachers about what goals the students were working on outside of music class. General practices for music educators of students with ASD include embracing repetition, promoting positive peer social interactions, and understanding the students as a whole student, not just who they are in your music classroom.

Music educators should fight for all students in their classes to have equitable access throughout all instruction. Students with disabilities are disproportionately excluded due to the lack of education, resources, and training for music teachers. Yet, more research is needed to explore how this can be expanded to other musical settings and other ASD support classrooms. More research can further advocate for students with disabilities to have an effective music education. This project offers one insight into how music teachers might offer music class within a support classroom to improve community and educational skills for the students with ASD.

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Appendix A- Institutional Review Board Materials

IRB Approval Email



IRB #: 2223-140

Title: Music Education within an Autism Support Classroom: Building Community and Educational Skills

Level of Review: FULL

Dear Emma Lamberti,

The IRB has reviewed the above referenced proposal and given full approval to your proposal, and your participation as principal investigator, for a period of one year from the date of this letter.

Please keep in mind the following conditions of approval:

1. No subjects may be involved in any study procedure after the expiration date. (Principal Investigators and Sponsors are responsible for initiating renewal requests if the research will extend beyond a single year.)
2. All unanticipated or adverse events must be reported to the IRB.
3. All protocol modifications/deviations must be approved by the IRB prior to implementation, unless they reduce risk to participants. Minor modifications (e.g., changes to the subject pool, recruitment strategies, adding researchers, non-substantive changes to materials) can usually be made via email. Substantive changes to the protocol should be changed via the renewal feature of the IRB's online submission system.

Good luck with your project.

Sincerely,

Eric Kennedy

Associate Professor of Biomedical Engineering and IRB Chair

tel. 570-577-2013 | IRB Website: <http://my.bucknell.edu/irb.html>

Student Assent Script

Below is the simple script that Emma said to the students prior to the lessons to provide them with a choice to participate. Mrs. Jones is their head support teacher. There was an area in the classroom where the students were not recorded.

Emma: “We are going to begin music class now. I am going to record a video so I can look back at the lessons, but if you do not want to be recorded, please stand over here. If you don’t want to participate in music class today, please go sit at your table with Mrs. Jones.”

Teacher Informed Consent Form

Bucknell University

Name of Project: Music Education within an Autism Support Classroom: Building Community and Educational Skills

Purpose and Plan of the Research: We are inviting you to participate in the research study described below and are asking for your consent to be involved. You are invited to eight music lessons. The lessons will be general music lessons for the first four lessons, and then the last four

will be modified to focus on developing a sense of community within the classroom and developing the student's educational skills. After the first four lessons, you will be asked to participate in a one-on-one interview about your experiences with the music lessons and how they may impact the students' sense of community and educational skills. This project aims to advocate for students with autism to receive a music education by seeing the benefits of community building within the classroom and developing their educational skills.

Estimated Duration: You are invited to eight music lessons, each about 45 minutes long, twice weekly for 4 weeks. Followed by 10–15-minute interviews after the lesson during your free period or after school.

Location/Time: In the support classroom based on your availability.

Estimated Total Number of Participants: The researcher wishes to include approximately 10 participants in this study, or however many students and faculty are in the Autism Support Classroom in Fall 2023.

Voluntary Participation: Your participation in this study is entirely voluntary. If you agree to participate, you may change your mind at any time. You reserve the right to refuse to answer any question(s) and may withdraw from the study at any point without penalty.

Possible Risks or Discomforts: There are no anticipated risks for this study.

Confidentiality: Your identity and responses will be held in strict confidence. This consent form will be kept in a separate, locked file, and cannot be linked to their responses. Responses from the discussion will only be reported in anonymous notes of keywords and common themes and video recordings of the lessons and audio recordings of the interview will be destroyed once they are not needed by researchers working on this project (see below for more details on the recording). No identifying information will be reported about your identity. Any report of the research data will be written using made-up names and not include any individualized behavior that could potentially reveal your identity. The researcher's interest is in the pattern of the classes' community and educational skills.

Recording: The classroom lesson video recordings and audio recordings from the interviews will be recorded and stored securely only by the Principal Investigator, Emma Lamberti. The recording will not be shared with anyone and will be destroyed once it is no longer needed for additional notes after the data collection. If there are questions about common themes, then only Emma will go through the recording and take anonymous notes regarding additional general keywords or common themes.

Questions or Concerns: Please feel welcome to ask any questions at any time about the study and its procedures.

Here is my contact information:

Emma Lamberti, (908) 619-9380, etl003@bucknell.edu

Here is the contact information of the Bucknell faculty overseeing this project:

Nicholas Roseth, ner008@bucknell.edu

For general questions regarding the rights of human subjects in research, you may contact the Bucknell’s IRB Chair:

Eric Kennedy, 570-577-1405, eric.kennedy@bucknell.edu

Consent: By signing below, you indicate that you have read the above description and agree to participate in the research. Please return by September, **TBD** 2023.

Signature of Participant: _____ Date: _____

Signature of Researcher: _____ Date: _____

Introduction Letter to Students’ Guardians

September 2023

Dear Parents or Guardians,

I am a junior at Bucknell University in Lewisburg, PA studying music education. I am interested in studying music and disabilities with a specific interest in how to reduce barriers to music for students with disabilities. Growing up, I struggled with accessing certain music classes with my learning disability. This has inspired me to become a teacher myself with the goal of creating music classes for all students.

I visited the Autism Support Classroom at this middle school a few times in the Spring of 2022 and co-taught a music class with my professor, Dr. Kim Council. From there, I wanted to continue to provide music classes for these students. This inspired me to implement it as an

honors thesis, where I will explore how music classes can promote a sense of community and develop educational skills.

All students in the class will participate in the music lessons, but interviews and observation notes will only be collected from students with a completed consent form. More information can be found on the attached consent form. Thank you for your consideration. Please let me know if you have any questions.

Sincerely,
Emma Lamberti
etl003@bucknell.edu

Contact information of the Bucknell faculty overseeing this project:

Nicholas Roseth, ner008@bucknell.edu

For general questions regarding the rights of human subjects in research, you may contact the Bucknell's IRB Chair:

Eric Kennedy, 570-577-1405, eric.kennedy@bucknell.edu

Student Informed Consent Form
Bucknell University

Name of Project: Music Education within an Autism Support Classroom: Building Community and Educational Skills

Purpose and Plan of the Research: We invite your child to participate in the research study described below and ask for your consent for them to be involved. Your child is invited to eight music lessons. The lessons will be general music lessons for the first four lessons. Then the last four will be modified to focus on developing a sense of community within the classroom and developing the student's educational skills. After the first four lessons, the students and support teachers will be asked to participate in a one-on-one interview about their experiences with the music lessons and how they may have an impact on their sense of community and educational skills. This project aims to advocate for students with autism to receive a music education by seeing the benefits of community building within the classroom and developing their educational skills.

Estimated Duration: Your child is invited to eight music lessons, each about 45 minutes long, twice weekly for 4 weeks directly followed by an audio-recorded interview.

Location/Time: In the support classroom during the student's school day.

Estimated Total Number of Participants: The researcher wishes to include approximately 10 participants in this study, or however many students are in the Autism Support Classroom in Fall 2023.

Voluntary Participation: Your child's participation in this study is entirely voluntary. If they agree to participate, they may change their mind at any time. They reserve the right to refuse to answer any question(s) and may withdraw from the study at any point without penalty. If they do not wish to participate, there will be another non-musical activity for them to participate in.

Possible Risks or Discomforts: There are no anticipated risks for this study.

Confidentiality: Your child's identity and responses will be held in strict confidence. This consent form will be kept in a separate, locked file, and cannot be linked to their responses. Responses from the discussion will only be reported in anonymous notes of keywords and common themes and video recordings of the lessons and audio recordings of the interview will be destroyed once they are not needed by researchers working on this project (see below for more details on the recording). No identifying information will be reported about your child. Any report of the research data will be written using made-up names and not include any individualized behavior that could potentially reveal the child's identity. The researcher's interest is in the pattern of the classes' community and educational skills.

Recording: The classroom lesson video recordings and audio recordings from the interviews will be recorded and stored securely only by the Principal Investigator, Emma Lamberti. The recording will not be shared with anyone and will be destroyed once it is no longer needed for additional notes after the data collection. If there are questions about common themes, then only Emma will go through the recording and take anonymous notes regarding additional general keywords or common themes. If the student wishes to participate in the lesson but not be video recorded, they will be off camera.

Questions or Concerns: Please feel welcome to ask any questions about the study and its procedures at any time.

Here is my contact information:

Emma Lamberti, (908) 619-9380, etl003@bucknell.edu

Here is the contact information of the Bucknell faculty overseeing this project:

Nicholas Roseth, ner008@bucknell.edu

For general questions regarding the rights of human subjects in research, you may contact the Bucknell's IRB Chair:

Eric Kennedy, 570-577-1405, eric.kennedy@bucknell.edu

Consent: By signing below, you indicate that you have read the above description and agree to your child participating in the research. Please return by September, 25 2023.

Signature of Participant: _____ Date: _____

Signature of Researcher: _____ Date: _____

Appendix B- Cycle 1 Curriculum

CYCLE 1

LESSON 1

Lesson Topic/Concept: Introduction to Activities!

2014 National Core Arts Standards for Music (Link)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● MU:Pr4.3.1: Demonstrate and describe music's expressive qualities such as dynamics and tempo. ● MU:Cr1.1.K: With guidance, explore and experience music concepts such as beat and melodic contour.
PA Academic Standards (Link)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 9.1.3.E: Demonstrate the ability to define objects, express emotions, illustrate an action or relate an experience through the creation of works in the arts. ● 9.1.5.A: Know and use the elements and principles of each art form to create works in the arts and humanities.
Objectives*
<p><i>Students will be able to...</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Keep a correct steady beat as able in Shake Down and rhythm activity as a group. ● Echo correct rhythm chants as a group with rhythm sticks and voice as able with a consistent beat and with rhythmic accuracy. ● Speak (as able) the chant as a class with proper rhythm and steady beat. ● Play and speak (as able) the chant in pairs with proper rhythm and steady beat. ● Play loud and soft dynamics as a group in parachute and rhythm activity. ● Move the parachute as a group in response to the directions for the parachute activity to show understanding of the musical ideas being presented in the music.
Materials
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Parachute ● Rubber balls ● Hand Drums ● Rhythm Sticks (10 sets) ● Bluetooth Speaker ● Class Spotify Playlist
Procedures- 45 minute lesson
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Hello Song (5 minutes) <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Start standing, Teacher breaks down the song to teach b. Macro (sing full), micro (break down each part), macro, all together <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. Hello Hello How do you do, how do you do, how do you do, hello hello c. All sing together (if you're wearing [whatever students are wearing], sit down)

d. Transition: The final movement the teacher leads and is to stand up. Students are already standing for Shake Down.

2. Shake Down (2 minutes)
 - a. Later we are
 - b. Counting down from 8, we are going to shake each of our arms and legs
 - c. Say which arm and which leg throughout the countdown, and remind them of the correct arm and leg to use.
 - d. Transition: sit down as teacher passes out rubber ball, do not bounce until the teacher says so*

3. Rubber Ball activity (3 minutes)
 - a. Song: Uptown Funk
 - b. Verse: rolling ball on ground
 - c. Chorus: bouncing and catching on beat
 - d. Transition: The teacher goes around and takes rubber balls, teacher hands them hand*

4. Hand Drums (5 minutes)
 - a. Dont touch drums, has anyone played a drum before?
 - b. Teach rest position, play position
 - c. Technique: how you play, hand positions
 - d. Exploration- take some time now to play with the drums with the proper technique
 - e. **Rest position and stand**

5. Chant- Prepare of Ta titi (10 minutes)
6. Chant:

Bee Bee Bumble bee
Stung a man upon his knee
Stung a pig upon her snout
7. Bee Bee Bumble bee
 - a. Have the class tap with a steady beat (macro- micro-macro)
 - i. The teacher performs chant for class
 - ii. "Repeat after me"
 - iii. Tap rhythm on lap and chant it
 - iv. Tap rhythm on shoulders and chant all together
 - v. **sit and pick up drums in playing position**
 - vi. Tap the rhythm on the instrument w/speaking
 - vii. Tap the rhythm no speaking
 - viii. Pair up and practice the rhythm together
 - ix. Go around the circle and play the chant together as pairs
 - x. **Everybody stand and march in place now starting with Jonny (point to student) follow the leader and hand me your drum, return back to your spot in the circle, and chant the bumblebee chant with me as we march!**

8. Steady Beat: Tapping the beat on rhythm sticks (8 minutes)
 - i. Songs: Lion Sleeps Tonight (who knows the lion king?), I Ain't Worried
 - ii. Instructions: As we tap with the songs, please be gentle with the sticks
 - iii. Have students tap on the sticks, and have each student in the circle choose where to tap (on the ground, on lap, etc.)
 - iv. **Everyone place your rhythm sticks on the ground and grab a corner of the parachute (teacher is playing it in the circle)**

9. Parachute activity (6 minutes)
 - a. Songs: In the Hall of the Mountain King (start at :50) and All of Me by Count Basie
 - i. (listening and showing the music through movements with parachutes)
 - b. Directions: move the parachute faster with loud sounds, quieter with less force, and more gracious like a wave for soft dynamics
 - c. How did we move the parachute when the music was louder? Softer?
 - d. **Place the parachute in the center and sit around it in a circle**

10. Rakes of Mallow [folk dance](#) (6 minutes)
 - a. Cultural Explanation: Explain the background behind the song
 - i. Irish dance and song
 - b. Teacher shows dance
 - c. Teach dance moves:
 - i. In circle- 16 count walking right, 16 counts walking left
 - ii. Jump jump clap clap, repeat 4 times
 - iii. Bring circle in 4-beats, bring circle out 4-beats
 - d. Dance to the song, calling out counts and dance moves
 - e. Song: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QNEhHvM260M&ab_channel=DeeAnnaHedges
 - f. **In the same circle, stay standing and sing Goodbye Song**

11. Goodbye Song (2 minutes)

Assessment

- In Shake Down, the students will correctly follow the teacher as a group and shake each arm and leg while counting down to help keep the steady beat.
- The class will keep a steady beat by tapping with rhythm sticks to the beat of the song, following the teacher to see how fast and slow to go.
- The class will repeat the correct patterns a group after the teacher as they speak and tap with their rhythm sticks with rhythmic accuracy and consistent beat.
- Through tapping with more or less force with the rhythm sticks, the class will play loud and soft dynamics during the echo activity, repeating the correct dynamics that the teacher played with.
- The class will shake the parachute with more or less force to demonstrate when the music is getting louder and softer.

LESSON 2**Lesson Topic/Concept: Word Rhythms, Enforcing Lesson 1**

2014 National Core Arts Standards for Music (Link)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● MU:Cr1.1.3a Improvise rhythmic and melodic ideas, and describe connection to specific purpose and context such as personal and social. ● MU:Re9.1.2: Apply personal and expressive preferences in the evaluation of music for specific purposes
PA Academic Standards (Link)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 9.1.5.A: Know and use the elements and principles of each art form to create works in the arts and humanities.
Objectives*
<p><i>Students will be able to...</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Individually discuss what kind of musical sounds they prefer loud or soft ● Learn three different and distinct traditional Chinese instruments by listening to a solo song of the instrument and answer comprehension questions accurately. ● Sing and sign simultaneously as able the chorus of What a Wonderful World with correct words, signs, and rhythms as able
Materials
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Mallets (2 for each student and teacher- bring extra because not sure of exact number of paraprofessionals and students attending) ● Drums ● Cultural Exploration Google Slides ● Parachute ● Youtube Videos: Beethoven and Gillespie ● Rubber balls (1 for each student and teacher- bring extra) ● Bluetooth Speaker ● Class Playlist
Procedures- 40 minute lesson
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Hello Song (1 minute) <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Song Link <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. Note: sing without video, change to include movements for the student who is picked to choose to clap their hands, lap, shoulders, etc. b. <i>Transition: The final movement the teacher leads and is to sit at desks. Students are then sitting for the cultural exploration activity.</i> 2. Rubber Ball activity (3-4 minutes) <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. See which songs they like most from playing last week, along with these songs:

- i. Can't Stop This Feeling (if need more time: Happy by Pharrell, Walking on Sunshine)
 - b. Students follow the teacher with movements with a bouncy ball, beginning to introduce musical form and also motor skills like catching a ball.
 - c. Verse: rolling ball on ground
 - d. Chorus: bouncing and catching
 - e. Bridge: toss back and forth
 - f. *Transition: teacher goes around and takes rubber balls, teacher hands them 2 rhythm sticks*
3. Hand Drums: (2 minutes)
 - a. Show me rest position, Show me playing position
 - b. Repeat after me
 - i. (rhythm patterns again w/ high and low)
4. Steady Beat: Tapping the beat on the drums (8 minutes)
 - i. Songs: Lion Sleeps Tonight, Ain't Worry About It Now
 - ii. Instructions: As we tap with the songs, please be gentle with the sticks
 - iii. Have students tap on the sticks, and have each student in the circle choose where to tap (on the ground, on lap, etc.)
5. Chant- Prepare of Ta titi (10 minutes)
 - a. Have the class tap with a steady beat (macro- micro-macro)
 - i. Teacher chants
 - ii. "Repeat after me"
 - iii. Tap rhythm on lap and chant it
 - iv. Tap rhythm on the floor and chant all together
 - v. Tap the rhythm on the instrument w/speaking
 - vi. Tap the rhythm no speaking
 - vii. Pair up and practice the rhythm together
 - viii. Go around the circle and play the chant together as pairs
6. What a Wonderful World song, sing with chorus (4 minutes)
 - a. Q: "Who knows the song What a Wonderful World by Louis Armstrong? Do you like it? Why don't we listen to it, and sing along if you know it but you can also follow my signs as we do it!"
 - b. Teacher signs and sings along, students only sing or sign along (as able)
 - i. *(Note: Students could catch onto signs as we did them in the April lesson, so maybe see how the first lesson goes and perhaps can teach signs more quickly than described here)*
 - c. Signs: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=isMVH0ccQOY&ab_channel=WePlayAlong
7. Rakes of Mallow [folk dance](#) (6 minutes)
 - a. Who remembers where this dance is from? (Ireland)
 - b. Teacher show dance

- c. Remember dance moves:
 - i. What's the first move?
 1. In circle- 8 count walking right, 8 counts walking left
 - ii. After that?
 1. Bring circle in 4-beats, bring circle out 4-beats
 - iii. Finally:
 1. Jump jump clap clap, repeat 3 times then 4-count to hold hands and begin circle again.
- d. Dance to the song, calling out counts and dance moves
- e. Song: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QNEhVvM260M&ab_channel=DeeAnnaHedges
- f. **In the same circle, stay standing and sing Goodbye Song**

8. Goodbye Song (2 minutes)

- a. Same melody as Hello Song but switched to "Goodbye" instead of "Hello", "See you next time" instead of "Let's make music", and "my friends" instead of "my darling"

Differentiation

I focus each lesson to have a very similar sequence and pattern to lessen anxiety for my students. I hope when they recognize this pattern they can find joy in knowing what's coming next. I also plan to talk to their support classroom teacher about how best to introduce new activities, maybe it's having a written plan on the board every lesson or prepping them for new things for the next class.

Assessment

- With rhythmic sticks, the class will repeat the word patterns with rhythmic accuracy and a consistent beat, which they will both speak and play (as able) as a group.
- The students will pair up and talk to each other or play for each other their preferred dynamic, either loud or soft, and the teacher will walk around as they talk.
- The teacher will help remind the class of each move in the beginning of the dance, but then will stop talking to assess if the students are following each other with the correct choreography and a consistent beat.
- The students will follow the teacher for the correct signs during the chorus of What a Wonderful World and as a group will be assessed if they are doing the correct signs to the words with the correct rhythm while singing.
- Students will dance according to how the string vs woodwind vs drum sounds. They will then share which instrument they like the sound of the most and why (if able).

LESSON 3**Lesson Topic/Concept: Present Ta TiTi and Present ABA Form**

2014 National Core Arts Standards for Music (Link)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● MU:Cr1.1.3a: Improvise rhythmic and melodic ideas, and describe the connection to specific purpose and context (such as personal and social).
PA Academic Standards (Link)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 9.1.5.A: Know and use the elements and principles of each art form to create works in the arts and humanities.
Objectives*
<p><i>Students will be able to...</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Sing along with accurate pitches and words or participate with the corresponding movements as able for Hello and Goodbye Song. ● Chant and play all word rhythms as a group by echoing the teacher. ● Sing accurate rhythms and pitches and/or perform correct dance motions as able to Pengwi song as a group.
Materials
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Rhythm Sticks (2 for each student and teacher- bring extra because not sure of exact number of paraprofessionals and students attending) ● Iconic notation ● Boomwhackers ● Boomwhacker Slides ● Youtube for Boomwhacker Song ● Cultural Exploration Google Slides ● Ribbons/Scarves, one or two for each students ● Rubber balls (1 for each student and teacher- bring extra) ● Bluetooth Speaker ● Class Spotify Playlist
Procedures- 40 minute lesson
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Hello Song (2 minutes) <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Song Link <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. Note: sing without video, change to include movements for the student who is picked to choose to clap their hands, lap, shoulders, etc. b. <i>Transition: Stay sitting in circle for cultural exploration</i> 2. Rubber Ball activity (3-4 minutes) <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Favorite songs played plus: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. Better When I'm Dancin' b. Verse: rolling ball on ground

- c. Chorus: bouncing and catching (try to bounce to the beat)
- d. PRESENT: verse and chorus
 - i. Ask students if they have heard of verse and chorus, explain that chorus is repeated, and verses fill the space between each chorus and often have different words.
 - ii. Do the song again and have students show with bouncy balls and speak (say verse when the verse starts, and chorus when the chorus starts) when we change from verse to chorus
 - 1. (Stop before the bridge- don't discuss in order not to confuse with verse and chorus.)
- e. *Transition: teacher goes around and takes rubber balls, teacher hands them boomwhackers*

3. Cultural Exploration: Shoshone Song (5 minutes)

- a. [Pengwi](#) (only first line)
- b. Teacher sings song with motions, students tap steady beat
- c. Cultural Background: Shoshone song (show on map where they live in America), give translation
- d. Sing again, break down for students who can sing along
 - i. Start with neutral syllable, then add words
- e. What is this song about? Where is it from?
- f. Teach Motions: Pengwi= fish motion, anoga= wave motion with hands
 - i. When we sing with do what motion for pengwi? Anoga?
- g. Stand in circle and perform motions
- h. *Transition: Students sit in circle and teacher passes out bouncy balls*

Pengwi Bai Anoga

Northwestern



- i.
- j. *(repeat first measure twice, end on second measure)*

4. Bee Bee BumbleBee (5 minutes)

- a. Holding drums, Walk in a circle on beat chant:
- b. Tap drums along while following along

5. Rakes of Mallow [folk dance](#) (4 minutes)

- i. Perform dance, no review
- ii. In circle- 8 count walking right, 8 counts walking left
- iii. Bring circle in 4-beats, bring circle out 4-beats
- iv. Jump jump clap clap, repeat 3 times then 4-count to hold hands and

begin circle again.

- b. Dance to the song, calling out counts and dance moves
 - c. Song: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QNEhVvM260M&ab_channel=DeeAnnaHedges
 - d. **In the same circle, stay standing and sing Goodbye Song**
6. Goodbye Song (2 minutes)
- a. Same melody as Hello Song but switched to “Goodbye” instead of “Hello”, “See you next time”

Assessment

- At this point, the students will be familiar with the Hello and Goodbye song and the teacher will lead less and allow the class to lead by singing along with the correct pitches and words as a group
- The class will be assessed that they are playing the correct word rhythms as they demonstrate that they can play and chant the correct patterns without the teacher with the consistent beat and rhythmic accuracy
- The students will demonstrate that they understand the musical ideas of loud and soft by dancing with the ribbon with the correct movements that correspond to the dynamic.

LESSON 4**Lesson Topic/Concept: Active Listening and Performance**

2014 National Core Arts Standards for Music (Link)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● MU:Cr2.1.K: With guidance, organize personal musical ideas using iconic notation and/or recording technology. ● MU:Pr4.2.3: Demonstrate understanding of the structure in music selected for performance. ● MU:Cr2.1.3a: Demonstrate selected musical ideas for a simple improvisation or composition to express intent, and describe connection to a specific purpose and context
PA Academic Standards (Link)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 9.2.3.L: Identify, explain and analyze common themes, forms and techniques from works in the arts ● 9.1.5.A: Know and use the elements and principles of each art form to create works in the arts and humanities.
Objectives*
<p><i>Students will be able to...</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Perform in pairs their word rhythm of choice on boomwhackers with iconic notation for the class with accurate rhythms and a consistent beat. ● Play individual correct boomwhacker notes according to iconic notation of Hot Cross Buns with accurate rhythms. ● Listen to music and describe the musical ideas (such as instruments they heard, loud and soft parts, etc.) expressed through drawing on their own paper and then discussing what they heard to a partner.
Materials
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Boomwhackers ● Youtube for Boomwhacker Song ● Boomwhacker Slides ● Cultural Exploration Google Slides ● Rubber balls (1 for each student and teacher- bring extra) ● Bluetooth Speaker ● Class Spotify Playlist
Procedures- 40 minute lesson
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Hello Song (2 minutes) <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Song Link <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. Note: sing without video, change to include movements for the student who is picked to choose to clap their hands, lap, shoulders, etc.

- b. Transition: The final movement the teacher leads and is to stand up. Students are already standing for Shake Down.*
2. Shake Down (2 minutes)
 - i. Counting down from 8, we are going to shake each of our arms and legs
 - ii. *Transition: Already in circle, stay standing for cultural exploration.*
3. Rubber Ball activity (3-4 minutes)
 - a. Walkin on Sunshine: same as last week to enforce what learned
 - i. Ask comprehension questions about verse vs chorus
 - ii. “When do we roll vs bounce?”
 - b. Verse: rolling ball on ground
 - c. Chorus: bouncing and catching (try to bounce to the beat)
 - d. Bridge: toss back and forth
 - e. *Transition: teacher goes around and takes rubber balls, teacher hands them their boomwhackers*
4. Ribbon Activity (5 minutes)
 - a. Song: Happy by Pharrell
 - b. Directions: walk to the right in a circle moving the ribbons during verse, stop walking and dance in circle formation as they like during chorus. (similar movements to parachute activity in Lesson 2)
 - c. *Transition: Place the ribbons on the ground and stay standing*
5. Bee Bee Bumble Chant- march in a circle to the steady beat as we speak the chant!
6. Boomwhackers (10 minutes)
 - a. Boomwhackers (7 minutes)
 - i. Echo BumbleBee chant after teacher- Play with both boomwhackers
 1. Notes: C, F,G, A, Bflat, C (upper octave)
 - ii. Practice playing one at a time: Verse 1 and chorus
 1. Explain that the letter/color corresponds to boomwhacker they have. When character is bouncing on it, thats when they hit the boomwhacker.
 2. Show screenshots of the follow-along song and point to each note one at a time in slower rhythm. Also sing along if able.
 - a. Some students may need support from teacher to help move their arm for when it is their note turn.
 - iii. Follow along with video: (When the figure lands on your colored note, hit!)
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kvnxdHq6HEg&ab_channel=music+ation
 - iv. *Transition: Put the boomwhackers in the bucket as teachers get the parachute out*
7. Shoshone Song: Stand

- a. Who remembers the Shoshone Song we sang last week? What was it about?
 - b. Tap steady beat while teacher sings the song
 - c. Whole class sings the song, still tapping steady beat
 - d. Tap rhythm of song while singing
 - e. Tap steady beat on the hand drums, marching in place
8. Folk Dance: Rakes of Mallow [folk dance](#) (3-5 minutes)
- a. Comprehension questions: “What is our first dance move? Show or tell”
“Where is this dance from?”
 - b. Remember we are going to
 - c. Do dance without song and have students count out loud as able to enforce the correct number of beats per dance move.
 - d. Count in our heads now!
 - e. Song:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QNEhHvM260M&ab_channel=DeeAnnaHedges
 - f. *Transition: In the same circle, stay standing and sing Goodbye Song*
9. Goodbye Song (2 minutes)
- a. Same melody as Hello Song but switched to “Goodbye” instead of “Hello”, “See you next time” instead of “Let’s make music”, and “my friends” instead of “my darling”

Assessment

- The students will demonstrate that they were actively listening by drawing the corresponding sounds on their paper, and then through explaining what they drew to the class.
- The students will play their chosen rhythms with their partner for the group, and they will both chant and tap their rhythm with a consistent beat and accurate rhythm
- The students will follow the teacher as they point to each note in Hot Cross Buns to practice playing their individual notes, and the teacher will watch the class, knowing which student has which note to informally assess the students.

Appendix C- Research Findings from Cycle 1

Research Findings from Cycle 1

Educational Skills: Red

Building Community: Blue

Good Teaching Practices: Green

Source	Note	Specific Music Idea
Video Observations	Include movement consistently throughout the lesson.	Add movement to hello/goodbye songs, include steady beat tapping while learning new song, don't rely on just talking or just playing.
Video Observations	Have multiple modes of engagement with each activity.	Instead of just singing, including tapping/playing/hand motions for students who don't sing.
Teacher Interviews/Video Observations	Repetition is important for students with autism.	Keep including hello/goodbye songs, and repeat activities.
Teacher Interviews	Include multiple levels of engagement in an activity for students of various levels.	For teaching a song: - Include tapping the beat while learning - Include motions for the song - Allow students who can tap and sing to do so, but encourage participation to the student's ability Create goals for some students to work towards (such as walking on beat in the folk dance), but look for just their comprehension of dance order for other students.

Teacher Interviews	Include Prepositions (in, out, down, up)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ask student to “put instrument in bucket” or a command such as that includes a preposition - Include a song that utilizes these actions (like the bunny jumped into the hole) and use motions that represent this (such as pointing up for the word up)
Teacher Interviews	Include “This to” phrasing	<p>Ask students to “bring this instrument to” another student</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ask a different student for a different activity to help clean/pick up things
Teacher Interviews	Include collaborating between students with activities	<p>Include partner work in some activities, students who need more support are paired with a teacher</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Instrument playing (such as a rhythm chant), put two people together to practice and then play for the class
Student Interviews	Students enjoyed all of the activities, keep including the various activities in each lesson.	<p>Keep including the various activities (singing, dancing, playing an instrument, listening to music)</p>
Video Observations/ Student Interviews	Don't only use drums for the bumble bee chant, include various instruments	<p>Offer instrument exploration so it isn't the same instrument each lesson they play the chant with.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Incorporate boomwhackers some days - They love the tambourine and maybe introduce a new instrument to them as well

<p>Immediate Reflections/ Video Observations</p>	<p>Provide positive feedback for students when they do the activity, even if it is a small step forward.</p>	<p>Provide constructive feedback and notice when some students participate to encourage other students to participate as well.</p>
<p>Video Observations</p>	<p>Address behaviors automatically. (this covers both good practices and community since if this is addressed, students in the overall class interact with each other more positively than getting annoyed at each other because one of them is misbehaving.</p>	<p>Comment on the positive behaviors in the class, place students next to well-behaving students or in between teachers, and/or offer a distracting element so the behavior doesn't occur (i.e. only having a smile instead of walking in on 4 in the folk dance)</p>
<p>Video Observations</p>	<p>Allow students feedback to express how they feel/think about the activity</p>	<p>Incorporate moments where students can answer how the music made them feel, along with how they liked the activity and why they liked it. Offer a feeling chart for students who are nonverbal.</p>
<p>Student Interviews/Video Observations</p>	<p>Allow students time to respond to questions</p>	<p>Don't be afraid of some silence while the student is thinking, and then offer a suggestion.</p>
<p>Immediate Reflections</p>	<p>Encourage participation from the student sitting out (who is choosing not to participate) (this covers both good practices for encouraging all students to join in, but also helps that student feel more of a part of the class)</p>	<p>Ask (student) if they would like to participate today, and when they show interest in the lesson ask if they would like to participate again.</p>

<p>Immediate Reflections/ Video Observations</p>	<p>Use various forms of musical genres</p>	<p>I've been using a lot of pop and things I know the student's like, but make sure to include more variety in addition to this (such as instrumental, not just Disney songs, jazz, funk, etc.)</p>
<p>Teacher Interviews</p>	<p>Include a new folk dance (repetition is good but it's also good to introduce new ideas) Educational skill- helping them be comfortable with new things, not only sticking to familiar activities. Also, good practice in general, to not bore the kids</p>	<p>Include a dance that also has themed song, such as Apple Tree</p>

Appendix D- Cycle 2 Curriculum

CYCLE 2

Educational Skills: Red
 Building Community: Blue
 Good Teaching Practices: Green

LESSON 1

Lesson Topic/Concept: Halloween Theme: Instrument Exploration, Partner Performance-1st Line

2014 National Core Arts Standards for Music (Link)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● MU:Pr4.3.1: Demonstrate and describe music’s expressive qualities such as dynamics and tempo. ● MU:Cr1.1.K: With guidance, explore and experience music concepts such as beat and melodic contour.
PA Academic Standards (Link)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 9.1.3.E: Demonstrate the ability to define objects, express emotions, illustrate an action or relate an experience through the creation of works in the arts. ● 9.1.5.A: Know and use the elements and principles of each art form to create works in the arts and humanities.
Objectives*
<p><i>Students will be able to...</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Keep a correct steady beat as able in Shake Down and rhythm activity as a group. ● Echo correct rhythm chants as a group with instruments and voice as able with a consistent beat and with rhythmic accuracy. ● Speak (as able) the chant as a class with proper rhythm and steady beat. ● Play and speak (as able) the chant in pairs with proper rhythm and steady beat. ● Play loud and soft dynamics as a group in parachute and rhythm activity. ● Move the parachute as a group in response to the directions for the parachute activity to show understanding of the musical ideas being presented in the music. ● Sing Pengwi song as a group as able and perform the motions to the correct words
Materials
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Parachute (they have at school) ● Ribbons ● Hand Drums ● Percussion Instruments (bells, little tambourines (they have at school), etc.) ● Google Slides ● Bluetooth Speaker ● Class Spotify Playlist

Procedures- 45 minute lesson

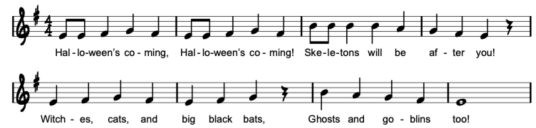
1. **Hello Song (5 minutes)**
 - a. Start standing, Teacher breaks down the song to teach
 - b. Macro (sing full), micro (break down each part), macro, all together
 - i. Hello How do you do, how do you do, how do you do, hello hello
 - c. All sing together (if you're wearing [whatever students are wearing], sit down)
 - d. *Transition: The final movement the teacher leads and is to stand up. Students are already standing for Shake Down.*

2. **Shake Down (1 minute)**
 - a. Later we are
 - b. Counting down from 8, we are going to shake each of our arms and legs
 - c. Say which arm and which leg throughout the countdown, and remind them of the correct arm and leg to use.
 - d. **Take out a boomwhacker from the pile, sit on the floor**

3. **New Chant: Halloween is Coming**
 - a. Boomwackers Steady Beat
 - b. Teacher demonstrates (Macro-micro-macro), repeat after me

Halloween's Coming

Folk song


 - c.
 - d. *Place boomwhackers in the bucket and Take out a ribbon from the table and stand in a circle*

4. **Ribbon activity (3 minutes)**
 - a. Song: Happy, Monster Mash
 - b. Verse: walk in circle
 - c. Chorus: Stand and Dance (dance how this song makes you feel!)
 - d. *Place ribbons in this bucket and take an instrument from the center*

5. **Instrument Exploration (7-10 minutes)**
 - a. Rest vs Play
 - b. Pointing at iconic notation: Repeat after me (speak and play parts of the Bumblebee chant)
 - c. Play the whole chant

6. Bee Bee Bumble bee
 - a. Pass your instrument to the right and try a new instrument now
 - b. Repeat after me (speak and play parts of the Bumblebee chant, then altogether)
 - c. With your partner, play this line (Bee Bee Bumble Bee) on your instrument,

here's a reminder of how it goes *play* (Partner up people, some students with teachers if needed)

- d. Go around the circle and play chant with partner
 - e. Go around the circle and ask each student "Did you like [instrument #1] or [instrument #2]?"
 - f. *Place instruments on the desk and stand in a circle*
7. **Parachute (5 minutes): Loud vs Soft**
- a. Directions: move the parachute faster with loud sounds, quieter with less force, and more gracious like a wave for soft dynamics
 - b. How did we shake the parachute when it was quiet? (Softly) When it was loud? (faster/more shaking)
 - c. Song: All of Me, Hall Mountain
 - d. *Take an instrument from the table*
8. **Pengwi Bai Anoga Song w/ motions- (3 min)**
- a. Remember this song, it is about a fish in the water
 - b. Tap steady beat, Teacher demonstrates with motions
 - c. Class repeats
 - d. March steady beat and do the motions and sing
 - e. When we sing pengwi, is that the fish or the water? Anoga? (do the motions to help them)
9. **Steady Beat (3 minutes): With instruments, tap along to the steady beat**
- a. Song: Halloween Music!
10. **Rakes of Mallow folk dance (6 minutes)**
- a. Cultural Explanation: Explain the background behind the song
 - i. Irish dance and song
 - b. Teacher shows dance
 - c. Teach dance moves:
 - i. In circle- 16 count walking right, 16 counts walking left
 - ii. Jump jump clap clap, repeat 4 times
 - iii. Bring circle in 4-beats, bring circle out 4-beats
 - d. Dance to the song, calling out counts and dance moves
 - e. Song: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QNEhHvM260M&ab_channel=DeeAnnaHedges
 - f. **In the same circle, stay standing and sing Goodbye Song**
11. **Goodbye Song (2 minutes)**
- a. Include movements (right hand, left hand)

Assessment

- In Shake Down, the students will correctly follow the teacher as a group and shake each arm and leg while counting down to help keep the steady beat.

- The class will keep a steady beat by tapping with rhythms to the beat of the song, following the teacher to see how fast and slow to go.
- The class will speak the correct BumbleBee chant as a group after the teacher as they speak and tap with their instruments with rhythmic accuracy and consistent beat.
- Each student will speak or play the BumbleBee chant with their partner for the class with rhythmic accuracy and a steady, consistent beat.
- The class will shake the parachute with more or less force to demonstrate when the music's getting louder and softer.
- The class will sing as able as a group the correct words, notes, and rhythms to Hello, Goodbye, and Pengwi Bai Anoga.

LESSON 2**Lesson Topic/Concept: New Folk Dance, Partner Performance- Add 2nd Line**

2014 National Core Arts Standards for Music (Link)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● MU:Cr1.1.3a Improvise rhythmic and melodic ideas, and describe connection to specific purpose and context such as personal and social. ● MU:Re9.1.2: Apply personal and expressive preferences in the evaluation of music for specific purposes.
PA Academic Standards (Link)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 9.1.3.E: Demonstrate the ability to define objects, express emotions, illustrate an action or relate an experience through the creation of works in the arts. ● 9.1.3.K: Know and use traditional and contemporary technologies for furthering knowledge and understanding in the humanities.
Objectives*
<p><i>Students will be able to...</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Discuss with the class what kind of musical instruments they prefer that they played today and why. ● Students will be able to perform for the class the 1st & 2nd lines of the BumbleBee Chant. ● Students will successfully perform the new dance moves with a steady beat and count out loud.
Materials
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Parachute (they have at school) ● Ribbons ● Hand Drums ● Percussion Instruments (bells, maracas, little tambourines (they have at school), etc.) ● Google Slides ● Bluetooth Speaker ● Class Spotify Playlist
Procedures- 40 minute lesson
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Hello Song: (5 min) <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Start standing, Teacher breaks down the song to teach b. Macro (sing full), micro (break down each part), macro, all together <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. Hello Hello How do you do, how do you do, how do you do, hello hello c. All sing together (if you're wearing [whatever students are wearing], sit down) d. <i>Transition: The final movement the teacher leads and is to stand up. Students are already standing for Shake Down.</i>

2. Shake Down: (1 min)
 - a. Later we are
 - b. Counting down from 8, we are going to shake each of our arms and legs
 - c. Say which arm and which leg throughout the countdown, and remind them of the correct arm and leg to use.
 - d. *Take out a ribbon from the table and stand in a circle*

3. Ribbon activity: (3 min)
 - a. Song: Happy
 - b. Verse: walk in circle
 - c. Chorus: stand and Dance
 - d. *Place ribbons in this bucket and take an instrument from the center*

4. Instrument Exploration: (7-10 min)
 - a. Rest vs Play
 - b. Repeat after me (speak and play parts of the Bumblebee chant)
 - c. Play the whole chant

5. Bee Bee Bumble bee
 - a. Repeat after me (speak and play parts of the Bumblebee chant, then altogether)
 - b. With your partner, play this line (Stung a Man Upon His Knee) on your instrument, here's a reminder of how it goes *play* (Partner up people, some students with teachers if needed)
 - c. Go around the circle and play chant with partner
 - d. Go around the circle and ask each student "Did you like [instrument #1] or [instrument #2]?"
 - e. *Place instruments on the desk and stand in a circle*

6. Parachute, Loud vs Soft: (5 min)
 - a. Directions: move the parachute faster with loud sounds, quieter with less force, and more gracious like a wave for soft dynamics
 - b. How did we shake the parachute when it was quiet? (Softly) When it was loud? (faster/more shaking)
 - c. *Take an instrument from the table*

7. Pengwi Bai Anoga Song w/ motions: (3 min)
 - a. What is this song about?
 - b. Tap steady beat, Teacher demonstrates with motions
 - c. Class repeats
 - d. March steady beat and do the motions and sing
 - e. When we sing pengwi, is that the fish or the water? Anoga? (do the motions to help them)
 - f. Walk in a circle and do the motions

8. Steady Beat: (3 min)
 - a. With instruments, tap along to the steady beat

b. Place instruments in the bucket and stand with a buddy

9. New folk dance: Kinderpolka (6 min)

- a. Explain the background behind the song
 - i. German dance
- b. Teacher shows dance moves without partner
- c. Everyone practice by themselves
- d. Announce the partners, and have people practice with partners
- e. Teach dance moves:
 - i. 4 times: step touch step touch march march march
 - ii. 2 times: Tap thighs- 2, clap hands- 2, tap each other hands- 3
 - iii. 2 times: No, no, no,
 - iv. Bow to each other
- f. Dance to the song, calling out counts and dance moves
- g. Song: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Fz563R8oell>
- h. **In the same circle, stay standing and sing Goodbye Song**

10. Goodbye Song (2 minutes)

Assessment

- Students will say their preferred instrument to the class after playing them and why.
- The teacher will help remind the class of each move at the beginning of the dance but then will stop talking to assess if the students are following each other with the correct choreography and a consistent beat.
- Students will perform as partners the Bumblee Chant first and second lines with a steady beat and correct words/rhythms for the class.

LESSON 3**Lesson Topic/Concept: Apple Tree Song and Game, Partner Performance- Add 3rd Line**

2014 National Core Arts Standards for Music (Link)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● MU:Re8.1.1a: With limited guidance, demonstrate and identify expressive qualities (such as dynamics and tempo) that reflect creators’/performer’s expressive intent. ● MU:Cr1.1.1a: With limited guidance, create musical ideas (such as answering a musical question) for a specific purpose.
PA Academic Standards (Link)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 9.1.5.C: Know and use fundamental vocabulary within each of the arts forms. ● 9.1.5.E: Know and demonstrate how arts can communicate experiences, stories or emotions through the production of works in the arts.
Objectives*
<p><i>Students will be able to...</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Sing along with accurate pitches and words or participate with the corresponding movements as able for Apple Tree Song. ● Perform as partners the first, second, and third lines of the Bumblebee Chant with rhythmic accuracy and correct words.
Materials
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Parachute (they have at school) ● Ribbons ● Hand Drums ● Percussion Instruments (bells, maracas, little tambourines (they have at school), etc.) ● Google Slides ● Bluetooth Speaker ● Class Spotify Playlist
Procedures- 40 minute lesson
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Hello Song (5 minutes) <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Start standing, Teacher breaks down the song to teach b. Macro (sing full), micro (break down each part), macro, all together <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. Hello How do you do, how do you do, how do you do, hello hello c. All sing together (if you're wearing [whatever students are wearing], sit down) d. <i>Transition: The final movement the teacher leads and is to stand up. Students are already standing for Shake Down.</i> 2. Shake Down (1 minute) <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Counting down from 8, we are going to shake each of our arms and legs b. Say which arm and which leg throughout the countdown, and remind them of

- the correct arm and leg to use.
- c. *Take out a ribbon from the bucket and stand in a circle*
3. Ribbon activity (3 minutes)
- Song: Happy
 - Verse: walk in circle
 - Chorus: stand and Dance
 - Comprehension Questions: When do we dance? When do we walk?
 - Place ribbons in this bucket and take an instrument from the center*
4. Pengwi Bai Anoga
- Tap along with boomwhackers as we sing our song
 - Place boomwhackers on the side, march in place, and do the hand motions
 - Place boomwhackers in the bucket and stand with a new buddy*
5. Instrument Exploration (7-10 minutes)
- Rest vs Play
 - Repeat after me (speak and play parts of the Bumblebee chant)
 - Point to iconic notation as needed
 - Play the whole chant
6. Bee Bee Bumble bee
- Pass your instrument to the right and try a new instrument now
 - Repeat after me (speak and play parts of the Bumblebee chant, then altogether)
 - With your partner, play (Bee Bee BumbleBee and Stung a Man Upon His Knee, Stung a Pig Upon her Snout) on your instrument, here's a reminder of how it goes *play* (Partner up people, some students with teachers if needed)
 - Go around the circle and play chant with partner
 - Go around the circle and ask each student "Did you like [instrument #1] or [instrument #2]?"
 - Stand in a circle with instruments*
7. Steady Beat (3 minutes): With instruments, tap along to the steady beat
- Place instruments on the desk and stand up for our song!*
8. Apple Tree:
- Who has gone apple picking? Who likes apples?*
 - Teacher sings Apple Tree song (macro-micro-macro, repeat after me)
 - Game: Everyone tapping on your lap, The teacher starts and taps each student's shoulders, if the song ends on you, then you tap each student's shoulder
 - Get a boomwhacker and sit on the floor in a circle*
9. Folk dance: Kinderpolka (6 minutes)
- Explain the background behind the song
 - German dance
 - Teacher shows dance moves without partner

- c. Everyone practice by themselves
- d. Announce the partners, and have people practice with partners
- e. Teach dance moves:
 - i. 4 times: step touch step touch march march march
 - ii. 2 times: Tap thighs- 2, clap hands- 2, tap each other hands- 3
 - iii. 2 times: No, no, no,
 - iv. Bow to each other
- f. Dance to the song, calling out counts and dance moves
- g. Song: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Fz563R8oell>
- h. **In the same circle, stay standing and sing Goodbye Song**

10. Goodbye Song (2 minutes)

Assessment

- As a group, the class will sing the Apple Tree song together with rhythmic and melodic accuracy with teacher guidance.
- The partners will perform together the first, second, and third lines of the BumbleBee chant with rhythmic accuracy and correct words while tapping the steady beat with the instrument.

LESSON 4**Lesson Topic/Concept: Reinforce/Performance, Partner Performance- Full Chant!**

2014 National Core Arts Standards for Music (Link)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● MU:Cr2.1.K: With guidance, organize personal musical ideas using iconic notation and/or recording technology. ● MU:Pr6.1.4a: Perform music, alone or with others, with expression and technical accuracy, and appropriate interpretation.
PA Academic Standards (Link)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 9.2.3.L: Identify, explain and analyze common themes, forms and techniques from works in the arts. ● 9.1.5.C: Know and use fundamental vocabulary within each of the arts forms.
Objectives*
<p><i>Students will be able to...</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Perform the whole Bumblebee chant with their partner with rhythmic accuracy and correct words while playing the instrument at a steady beat. ● Dance with a partner the correct dance moves at the right time with consistent beat and counting out loud.
Materials
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Parachute (they have at school) ● Ribbons ● Hand Drums ● Percussion Instruments (bells, maracas, little tambourines (they have at school), etc.) ● Google Slides ● Bluetooth Speaker ● Class Spotify Playlist
Procedures- 40 minute lesson
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Hello Song (5 minutes) <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Start standing, Teacher breaks down the song to teach b. Macro (sing full), micro (break down each part), macro, all together <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. Hello Hello How do you do, how do you do, how do you do, hello hello c. All sing together (if you're wearing [whatever students are wearing], sit down) d. <i>Transition: The final movement the teacher leads and is to stand up. Students are already standing for Shake Down.</i> 2. Shake Down (1 minute) <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Later we are b. Counting down from 8, we are going to shake each of our arms and legs

- c. Say which arm and which leg throughout the countdown, and remind them of the correct arm and leg to use.
 - d. *Take out a ribbon from the table and stand in a circle*
3. Instrument Exploration (7-10 minutes)
 - a. Teacher demonstrates the whole chant, class repeats
 - b. Play the whole chant
4. Bee Bee Bumble bee
 - a. Repeat after me (speak and play parts of the Bumblebee chant, then altogether)
 - b. With your partner, practice the whole chant!
 - c. Go around the circle and play chant with partner
 - d. Go around the circle and ask each student "Did you like [instrument #1] or [instrument #2]?"
 - e. *Place instruments on the desk and take out a boomwhacker*
5. Parachute (5 minutes): Loud vs Soft
 - a. Directions: move the parachute faster with loud sounds, quieter with less force, and more gracious like a wave for soft dynamics
 - b. How did we shake the parachute when it was quiet? (Softly) When it was loud? (faster/more shaking)
 - c. *Take an instrument from the table*
6. Apple Tree
 - a. Review (Teacher sings song, students sing after)
 - b. *Stand for Ribbon activity*
7. Ribbon activity (3 minutes)
 - a. Song: Shake it Off
 - b. Verse: walk in circle
 - c. Chorus: stand and Dance
 - d. *Place ribbons in this bucket and take an instrument from the center*
8. Thanksgiving Song: Instruments Steady Beat
 - a. *What is in two weeks? Who eats turkey on Thanksgiving?*
 - b. Instruments in rest position, Tap along without instruments: Use Macro-micro-

Gobble Gobble

Lyrics Anonymous

Beth Thompson
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The tur - key is a fun - ny bird, Its head goes bob - ble, bob - ble. And
all he knows is just one word, And that is, "Gob - ble, Gob - ble!"

macro to teach song

- c. Everyone sing together and tap the steady beat
- d. *Put the boomwhackers in the bucket and stay standing in a circle*

9. Pengwi Bai Anoga Song w/ motions- (3 min)
 - a. Remember this song, it is about a fish in the water
 - b. Tap steady beat, Teacher demonstrates with motions
 - c. Class repeats
 - d. March steady beat and do the motions and sing
 - e. When we sing pengwi, is that the fish or the water? Anoga? (do the motions to help them)
 - f. *Find you partner for the dance*

10. Kinderpolka (6 minutes)
 - a. Explain the background behind the song
 - i. German dance
 - b. Teacher shows dance moves without partner
 - c. Everyone practice by themselves
 - d. Announce the partners, and have people practice with partners
 - e. Teach dance moves:
 - i. 4 times: step touch step touch march march march
 - ii. 2 times: Tap thighs- 2, clap hands- 2, tap each other hands- 3
 - iii. 2 times: No, no, no,
 - iv. Bow to each other
 - f. Dance to the song, calling out counts and dance moves
 - g. Song: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Fz563R8oelI>
 - h. **In the same circle, stay standing and sing Goodbye Song**

11. Goodbye Song (2 minutes)

Appendix E- Research Findings from Cycle 2

Research Findings from Cycle 2

Educational Skills: Red

Building Community: Blue

Good Teaching Practices: Green

Source	Note	Specific Music Idea
Video Observations	Incorporate more student performance/improvisation.	Have the students sing and play for the class, have partners dance the dance for the class/taking turns dancing, have students 'move' the bumblebee chant (or a similar chant using the same rhythm) around where they perform a pattern that they like
Video Observations	Incorporate educational skill(s) into songs/chants, not just transitions.	Select or compose song that incorporates a motion of something on top or below something (like Bear went over the mountain)
Student Interviews/ Video Observations	Include more partner work, moving students around to have newer partners.	Have students sing the song together, make sure to have Connor with a different student.
Video Observations/ Faculty Interviews	Create new chants that utilize the same rhythms, use iconic notation. Students needed a new challenge along with the need for repetition as well.	A chant about what they are interested in (games, Disney, etc.). Make iconic notation cards for students to physically work with. Modify as needed for Connor.
Video Observations	Remove tapping the sticks activity, replace with a different activity. They were growing bored of this.	Replace with another chant from above,

Video Observations	Encourage support teachers to allow students to work amongst themselves more.	During things students are very comfortable with, such as the bumblebee chant.
Video Observations	Include a 'present' portion of the chorus vs verse, as students seemed to understand the concept after four lessons.	Incorporate a simple song with verse vs chorus (Barnacle Bill, for example). Have students internalize it, then introduce verse versus chorus. Do the same for "Happy".
Video Observations/ Faculty Interviews	Incorporate more different educational skills, asking for feedback from support teachers. (At least one more).	Ask Mrs. Jones what other concepts they are working on, such as phrases or outside lessons, then incorporate into songs/chants/where applicable. Can also have specific student goals as well, such as phrases that David is trying to work on.
Immediate Reflections	Stay with hello/goodbye songs, but add a movement.	Include a wave or some kind of eye contact motion with partner work where students who cannot verbally engage can physically. Also another mode of engagement, and can incorporate more partner work.
Immediate Reflections/ Student Interviews	Introduce a new instrument/different genres.	Introduce more areas of new music to the students, utilize the drums in the classroom (which they just got on the last lesson), have a lesson on African drumming, etc.

Video Observations/ Student Interviews	Keep with the variety of activities, but offer a little more time with certain topics.	Sometimes the activities were too rushed, allowing for some more time especially with new activities such as new chants. Don't be afraid to do it multiple times, have students engage in a different way (tap on shoulders, march, etc.)
Video Observations	Make sure to provide positive feedback to every student in each class.	To ensure students aren't feeling left out and to avoid only complimenting one student over multiple lessons, provide positive encouragement to each student.