

THE GREATBATCH SCHOOL OF MUSIC AT HOUGHTON COLLEGE

A SURVEY TO DETERMINE IF TEACHERS BELIEVE THEY ARE PREPARED TO
INCLUDE CHILDREN WITH AUTISM

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

ILLUSTRATIONS.....	iii
ABBREVIATIONS.....	iv
ABSTRACT.....	v
INTRODUCTION.....	1
CHAPTER 1. REVIEW OF LITERATURE.....	3
MUSIC AND THE CHILD WITH UTISM.....	9
PURPOSE OF TUDY.....	10
CHAPTER 2. METHODOLOGY.....	12
CHAPTER 3. RESULTS.....	14
CHAPTER 4. DISCUSSION.....	20
STUDY CHALLENGES.....	24
CONCLUSION.....	26
BIBLIOGRAPHY.....	27
APPENDICES	
APPENDIX A: Autism in Music Survey.....	29
APPENDIX B: Email.....	30
APPENDIX C: Question Two Responses.....	31
APPENDIX D: Question Five Responses.....	34
APPENDIX E: Question Six Responses.....	40
APPENDIX F: Question Eight Responses.....	47

ILLUSTRATIONS

Figures

1. Question 1: How long have you been teaching?.....14
2. Question 2: Have you had training in special education? If yes, how much and what type?.....15
3. Question 3: How effectively do you believe that you are teaching students with autism?.....16
4. Question 4: Do you believe mainstreaming students with autism is effective in teaching them music skills?.....16
5. Question 6: Would you prefer to teach students with autism in a self-contained class?.....18
6. Question 7: How involved are you in the development of IEPs for students with autism?.....18

ABBREVIATIONS

ADA	<i>Americans with Disabilities Act</i>
ASD	<i>Autism Spectrum Disorder</i>
BEH	<i>Bureau for the Education of the Handicapped</i>
CDC	<i>Center for Disease Control</i>
DSM-IV-TR	<i>Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders</i>
ESEA	<i>Elementary and Secondary Education Act</i>
IDEA	<i>Individuals with Disabilities Act</i>
IEP	<i>Individual Education Plan</i>
PDD	<i>Pervasive Developmental Disorder</i>
PDD-NOS	<i>Pervasive Developmental Disorder-not otherwise specified</i>
UDL	<i>Universal Design for Learning</i>

ABSTRACT

There are more and more cases of Autism reported every day. Music educators, just like every other teacher, have to learn to teach these students. Through a survey teachers were asked how they perceived they were teaching students with Autism along with how involved they were in preparing for said students. The results stated that teachers feel they are not prepared to teach students with Autism and are not very involved in preparing for them. Through the survey the reader can see that music educators could be better prepared for the increasing number of students with Autism entering their classrooms each year.

INTRODUCTION

“All children have musical potential.” Our job as educators is to find the best way to draw it out.¹ There are many problems and difficulties that affect today’s elementary music teacher. Among these is teaching children with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD). A collegiate student studying elementary music education may only be required to take one class that focuses on inclusion, a contemporary term that refers to students with disabilities that are placed in regular education classrooms who have help brought to them instead being pulled out of the general education classroom.²

Students with disabilities were rarely placed into public schools until the mid-1970s; when they were allowed into the schools, they were not provided special treatment or extra help. In 1966 Congress mandated a Bureau for the Education of the Handicapped (BEH) under Title VI of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA). This Bureau would send grants to states in order to begin, or to improve, programs for students with disabilities. It was the first “education of the handicapped act.” Public Law 94-142 began “education for all” policies in the year 1978. Currently named the Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA), this law would allow for a more equal education for students with disabilities.³ This law was revisited in 1990 with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). The ADA “provides broad civil rights protection for individuals with disabilities.” The ADA of 1990, Public Law 336, 101st Cong., 2d session states “All students must have access to classes and ensembles that are available to the general school

¹ Marcia Humpal and Jacquelyn Dimmick. “Special Learners in the Music Classroom.” *MENC: The National Association for Music Education* 81, no. 5 (Mar., 1995): 21.

² Elaine Bernstorf and Betty Welsbacher, “Helping Students in the Inclusive Classroom,” *Music Educator’s Journal* 82, no. 5 (March 1996): 21.

³ Edwin Martin, Reed Martin, and Donna Terman, “The Legislative and Litigation History of Special Education,” *The Future of Children* 6, no. 1 (Spring 1996): 33.

population.”⁴ Unlike before, when students with disabilities would just be present in the classroom, teachers were called on to prepare for these students to be reached academically.⁵ Although these students were finally given their rights, educators now face the challenges of teaching students with ASD in the classroom. Various methods and protocols were developed to aid teachers with their new task; however, teacher education, training, and professional development in these areas seemed to favor classroom teachers and exclude music teachers.

⁴ Kimberly McCord and Emily Watts. “Collaboration and Access for Our Children: Music Educators and Special Educators Together.” *Music Educators Journal* 92, no. 4 (March 2006): 26.

⁵ Alice Hammel “Inclusion Strategies That Work.” *MENC: The National Association for Music Education* 90, no. 5 (May 2004): 33.

CHAPTER ONE

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Autism has existed for many years. Scientists and researchers do not know for certain the etiology of Autism. Many believe that it is a neurodevelopmental disorder that may be influenced by a variety of factors. One of the factors could be structural differences in the brain. It is possible that an Autistic brain grows more rapidly. The rapid growth appears to affect certain parts of the brain that make it difficult for the child to interact with his or her environment during infancy. Over the years, Autism has been called many things and placed under many different classifications. Currently Autism is grouped under Pervasive Developmental Disorders (PDD) or Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD) by the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders* (DSM-IV-TR), published by the American Psychiatric Association in 2000. Some additional disorders that are grouped under ASD are Asperger's Disorder (syndrome), Childhood Disintegrative Disorder, Rhetts's Disorder, and Pervasive Developmental Disorder-not otherwise specified (PDD-NOS). It was initially thought that 1 in every 2,500 births would be a child with Autism, however a recent report conducted by the Center for Disease Control (CDC) states that 1 in 68 children are born with Autism. This is a 30% increase from two years ago when it was 1 in 88 children.⁶ Boys are three to four times more likely than girls to be affected by Autism. There is also a higher rate within families. If one sibling has Autism, the others are more likely to be diagnosed with it as well.⁷

⁶ Miriam Falco, "Autism Rates Now 1 in 68 U.S. Children: CDC," [www.cnn.com](http://www.cnn.com/2014/03/27/health/cdc-autism/), <http://www.cnn.com/2014/03/27/health/cdc-autism/> (accessed April 3, 2014): 1-2.

⁷ Andrew Egel, Katherine Holman, and Christine Barthold, *School Success for Kids with Autism*. Waco, TX: Prufrock Press, (2012) 9.

In 2004 congress passed a law--the *Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004* (IDEA). This Act allows the people who are involved with the child who has Autism's Individual Education Plan (IEP) to have access to the IEP files. The IEP is instrumental in assisting those who are helping the child. The IEP files can include demographic information, diagnostic statements, test results describing the child's current level of functioning, support services required, monitoring procedures, evaluation activities, as well as the student's strengths, needs, goals, and accommodations. The IEP is essential for the student to progress from grade to grade. There are specific meetings designated to each student with an IEP. A well-planned meeting consists of an agenda, a recorder for notes, assigned tasks for each team member, and most importantly, a timeline for when the tasks should be completed. The IEP is created by a specific team of professionals. This team can consist of; a general educator, special educator, related service personnel, administrator, parent or guardian, even the child's music educator.

IEPs are very important in order to help include the students in regular education classes. "Mainstreaming" is a term that has been used since the 1970s, but "inclusion" is a more recent term. Gone are the days of pulling children with disabilities out of class in order to teach them. Now students are able to stay with their peers and be a part of the regular education world. Separate education is only necessary when "the nature or severity of the handicap is such that education in regular classes with the use of supplementary aids and services cannot be achieved satisfactorily."⁸ Not only does inclusion help the student with Autism, but it can also help the remainder of the class as well. The other students are able to realize that not all people are the same and that many times they will need to work together in order to achieve their goals. Teachers are able to adapt lessons so that it helps the entire group instead of only being absorbed

⁸ Bernstorf, 21.

by the student with needs. The Universal Design for Learning (UDL) has caused a shift in educators' thinking. The UDL requires architects to design buildings that are accessible for people with disabilities. Now teachers do not think only about each individual child that comes into the classroom, but about how each student who comes through the door can be reached.⁹ No two children are the same, therefore teachers can assume that no two learning styles are the same. Educators are called to vary teaching methods so that every student might be reached every day.

“Disability does not equal deficit; disability equals difference, and difference equals uniqueness.”¹⁰ The child with Autism needs even more variation in the presentation of material until educators are able to find the best way to teach that specific student. Many times teachers or even parents give up in frustration because they are trying the “tried and true” method instead of trying something new. Autism causes an abstracting problem. This means that the child needs to learn in a different way. The child has an inability to understand relationships. He may not understand the idea of symbols and he may not understand speech; which is not too hard to understand his difficulty if one thinks of speech as auditory symbols. It may seem as though he cannot speak as well even though the vocal tract is healthy.¹¹

Many times both receptive and expressive communications are impaired in individuals with ASD. They are not able to understand simple directions, questions, or instructions. They have a tendency to repeat words or phrases immediately or have a delayed repetition of the word.¹² This is known as echolalia. Many times they will repeat the word or phrase over and over as a sign that they are retreating to their comfort zone. Students with Autism will tend to

⁹ McCord, 30.

¹⁰ Egel, 152.

¹¹ Bernstorf, 23.

¹² Egel, 13.

withdraw into themselves when they feel uncomfortable. This may seem the normal course of action to the child, but in fact it can interfere with his skills and everyday learning and life. It is important for music educators to collaborate with the student's homeroom teacher to determine the best strategy to bring the child out of his comfort zone and into the music classroom with his peers.¹³

As well as being used for comfort, echolalia could mean that the student is indicating affirmation, making a request, or it could be a response to incomprehensibility. This is why it is important for the teacher to get to know his students in order to comprehend what is meant by each of the student's actions. Despite the impaired communication, the students often exhibit a literal understanding of what is said. The students do not, however, grasp the concept of sarcasm or humor. They also may show signs of physical repetitive behavior. Some stereotypical behaviors are; body rocking, spinning objects, spinning themselves, hand flapping, and repetitive vocalization. Individuals with Autism may also have a tendency toward tantrums and noncompliance.¹⁴

Some children with Autism also have Sensory Processing Disorder (SPD). They are not able to do what most people are able to do subconsciously. Many times people take walking and talking for granted, but these particular students are sometimes not able to process these things together. They may have trouble walking up stairs or remembering to put out their hands when they fall. This could also affect these children in the classroom. Some youngsters may be under responsive and disrupt the class with hand flapping, spinning, or chewing inedible objects, while other students may be over responsive and very sensitive to the sights and sounds around them.

To make things more difficult the teacher may encounter students who are under responsive one

¹³ Ryan Hourigan and Amy Hourigan. "Teaching Music to Children with Autism: Understandings and Perspectives." *MENC: The National Association for Music Education* 96, no. 1 (Sept. 2009) 41-42.

¹⁴ Egel, 14.

day and over responsive the next. Students with Autism may have a slower response time to given cues, or their attention may be diverted elsewhere. They may also have difficulty with movement activities, and may even have trouble comprehending and retaining information given in class. In most cases the children will need to take some extra time to get adjusted to what is happening in the classroom and even the classroom itself.¹⁵

Autism is not a new disorder, but it may be a new disorder for some music educators. It is important that the teachers are prepared to successfully handle the challenges presented by teaching students with Autism, especially if it means the success or failure of one student. Not only is it helpful to know about the disorder but it is also very helpful to know how to teach to the student.

Many music educators are not involved in the planning process which can mean that they do not know everything about the child when teaching. In order to keep abreast of the situation, a music teacher could go to the administration before the school year begins and request all of the IEPs for students in his classroom. Music educators can also talk to the student's classroom teacher to learn more about the child. Some students will also be accompanied to music class by a paraprofessional. A paraprofessional is a great support between teacher and student. Paraprofessionals are also able to assist the student if he is off task or falling behind in class.¹⁶ Music educators who take advantage of these opportunities would be well-informed and educated as to whom they will be teaching and what the best plan is for teaching these children; however, there is evidence that shows they do not always follow this protocol.

In 1981 a survey, "Music Educators' Participation and Professional Needs", conducted by Janet Perkins Gilbert and Edward P. Asmus, Jr. determined that music educators felt less

¹⁵ Hourigan, 44.

¹⁶ McCord, 27-33.

prepared or comfortable in working with students with disabilities. As of 1981, 62.9% of surveyed music educators reported contact with students with disabilities. Around 2/3 of the educators were familiar with Public Law 94-142, which, as stated above, began “education for all.” Even though these teachers were familiar with the law, many reported that it was not currently used in their classroom. This law helps the students to get the best education that they can from the teacher. If the teacher is not developing goals and objectives from the IEP, then he is not allowing the student to get the best education. The study concluded that even though these teachers were familiar with the law and taught students with disabilities, a large group did not feel the need to learn more about how to teach these students.¹⁷ In a survey distributed in Arizona, 75% of those surveyed said that mainstreaming was the only option for students with disabilities in their schools. 41% of them said that they had no training for these students and 20% said that the only training they had was from workshops and in-service. Still almost 62% of the educators surveyed said that they “feel successful in... teaching of special learners”, yet only about 33% said that special learners were integrated well in music classes. Sadly, 72% said that they rarely if ever participate in the decision of placing the student in mainstreamed music class.¹⁸

¹⁷ Janet Perkins Gilbert and Edward Asmus, Jr., “Mainstreaming: Music Educators’ Participation and Professional Needs.” *MENC: The National Association for Music Education* 29 (Spring, 1981): 31-37.

¹⁸ James Frisque, Loretta Niebur, and Jere Humphreys. “Music Mainstreaming: Practices in Arizona.” *MENC: The National Association for Music Education* 42 (Summer, 1994): 97-100.

MUSIC AND THE CHILD WITH AUTISM

“Music is particularly important in the education of mentally handicapped children since it helps to develop listening and language skills, physical coordination, and general awareness.” We do not need to look any further than babies and animals to know that sounds are important for communication. They respond to sound instinctively and they use sound to express themselves. Musical sounds, however, largely belong to humans. Some animals may “sing”, but it is really just their way of communicating. Musical sounds created by humans can evoke instinctive responses and serve as a means of expressing our feelings. If someone is sad, they would listen to a different type of music than they would listen to if they were feeling happy. For students with Autism it is the same way. They can use music to communicate. There are two different aspects to music; active listening and performing. With active listening the teacher plays music to try to get a response from the child. With performing, the teacher would allow the child to make sounds or music to communicate something. It is very important for children to be involved in music. It may be their only chance to convey what they are thinking or feeling.¹⁹

Students with Autism can thrive in music classes and it allows them to do exponentially better in their other classes as well, even to the point of pouring their emotions into the music. Some children and people with Autism used to be called *idiot savants*. This simply means that they seemed quite low in IQ in everything except music. Below we see one such case.

“The blind negro Tom has been performing here to a crowded house. He is certainly a wonder....He resembles any ordinary negro boy 13- years-old and is perfectly blind and an idiot in everything but music, language, imitation, and perhaps memory. He has never been instructed in music or educated in any way. He learned to play the piano from hearing others, learns airs and tunes from hearing them sung, and can play any piece on first trial as well as the most accomplished performer....One of his most remarkable feats was the performance of three pieces of music at once. He played Fisher's Hornpipe with

¹⁹ David Ward. *Sing a Rainbow: Musical Activities with Mentally Handicapped Children*. London: Oxford, 1979: 1-5.

one hand and Yankee Doodle with the other and sang Dixie all at once. He also played a piece with his back to the piano and his hands inverted. He performs many pieces of his own conception - one, his "Battle of Manassas" may be called picturesque and sublime, a true conception of unaided blind musical genius.... This poor blind boy is cursed with but little of human nature; he seems to be an unconscious agent acting as he is acted on, and his mind a vacant receptacle where nature stores her jewels to recall them at her pleasure."²⁰

This boy could not only play or sing anything that he heard, but he composed his own music.

Could music have been an outlet for his emotions? His music was described as "sublime", therefore, how can one create such an emotive piece without knowing anything about feelings?

This boy's music may have been his only way to connect to the world, after all, it says that he was "an idiot in everything but music..." Another such case of a musical prodigy named Stephen Wiltshire. He was first discovered for his drawings, but it was later realized that he was also very adept at music. It was said that he could not only improvise, but put a little of himself into the music. How would a child be able to perform music with such emotion if he could not feel the emotions?²¹ Therefore it is very important to allow students to participate in music classes as it may be the only way that they can convey their emotions and it may be the only chance they get to succeed.

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of this study was to determine how teachers perceive they are teaching students with Autism. The survey was designed as it was to find out how teachers believe they are teaching students with Autism. In determining how teachers believe they are teaching students with Autism the reader can then determine how best to adapt teaching styles in order to

²⁰ Oliver Sacks. *An Anthropologist on Mars*. London: Picador, 1995: 179.

²¹ Gordon Graham. "Music and Autism." *Journal of Aesthetic Education* 35, no. 2 (Summer, 2001): 39-47.

best suit his students. With research and the survey the reader will better understand what teachers think of their ability to teach students with Autism.

CHAPTER TWO

METHODOLOGY

In order to determine how music teachers view their ability to address the challenges of inclusion a survey was developed and distributed to gather information. The questions (see Appendix A) were designed to elicit information about the amount of education music educators receive related to children with Autism. The survey gathered demographic information (how long a respondent had been teaching and how much education he had received in regard to teaching children with autism), questioned the educators about their beliefs about mainstreaming, and requested information about how educators may or may not alter their lesson plans when a child with autism is in their music classroom.

The survey was then posted on a survey site, www.surveymonkey.com. Survey monkey was chosen for this survey since it is very accessible and helps the surveyor gather information quickly. The site is also desirable because it gives percentages and allows the user to view each of the responses separately or as a group. The surveyor can also post a link to the survey anywhere online or in an email and allow the people taking the survey direct access to take the survey from any computer or mobile device. The participants were selected based on certain criteria; namely they had to be music educators. The survey was posted online on several different Facebook sites that were frequented by music educators; one page titled “Music Educators” and another that was a group of Houghton College alumni. The survey was also emailed to music educators. The first group of educators that were emailed were professors of Houghton College and some recent graduates of the same. The email (see Appendix B) then asked participants to forward the link to other music educators.

As the responses came in, the website tallied up how many responses were made and kept track of the answers. The website also determined what the percentage was for each multiple choice question. For short answer questions, the website kept track of all the answers in the order in which they were received. Short answers were read and examined for themes and categories.

CHAPTER THREE

RESULTS

After studying the 128 responses to the survey, the data was collected. The results yielded helpful information for future music educators.

Question number one asked the participant to report how long he had been a teacher. This helped to better determine who was taking the survey. It also showed what level of experience the teacher had. The survey stated that 58.59% had been teaching for 11 years or longer, with 40 educators teaching 11-20 years, 19 educators teaching 21-30 years, and 16 educators teaching greater than 30 years. There were 23 educators who had been teaching for 0-3 years, and the remaining 30 have taught for 4-10 years.

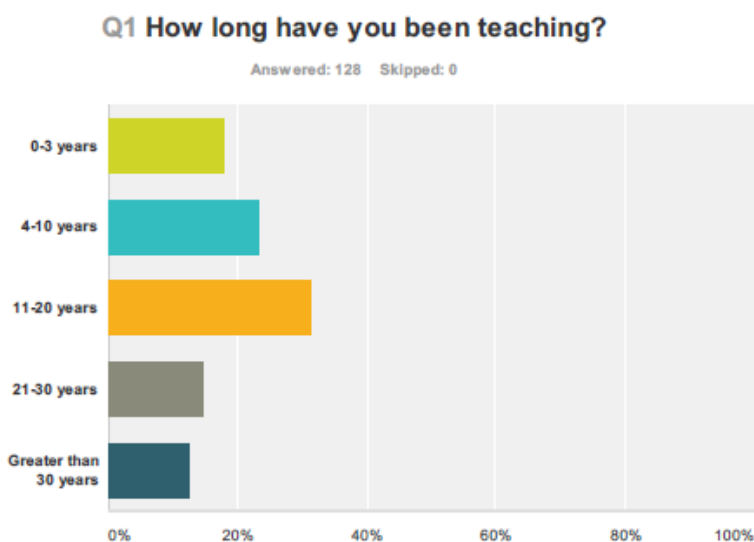


Figure 1. How long have you been teaching?

The second question (See Appendix C) asked if the music educator had any training in special education. 52.34%, or 67 educators, surveyed had never received special training. The 62 educators, or 48.44% of teachers who had had training and were not specializing in special

education or somehow involved personally with a person with Autism had limited training, usually amounting to one or two undergraduate classes and/or a couple of workshops. Even some of the workshops were developed with the general education staff in mind.

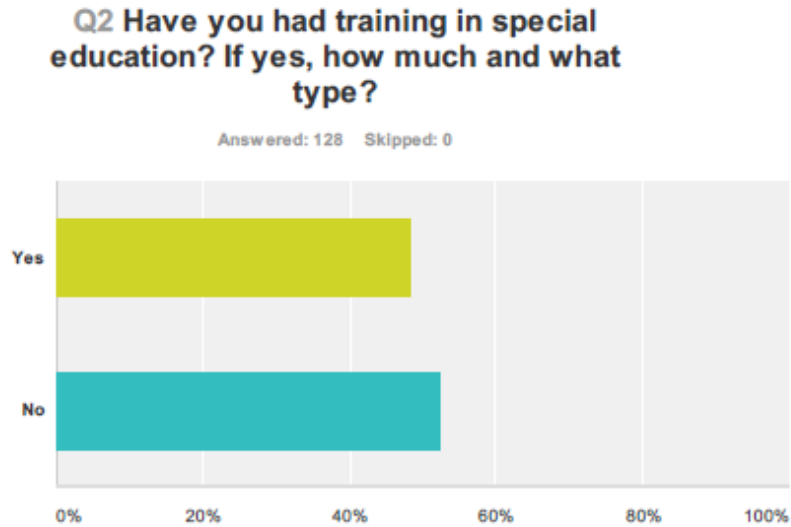


Figure 2. Have you had training in special education?

Question number three asked how effectively teachers taught students with Autism. The majority of the answers, 53.91%, were “somewhat effectively”. Several of the respondents categorized themselves in the “very effectively” category, 8.59%. 17.97%, or 23 educators, stated that they were “sometimes effectively. There were still 3.13% who decided that they were “not at all effective.” The remainder, 16.41% were undecided.

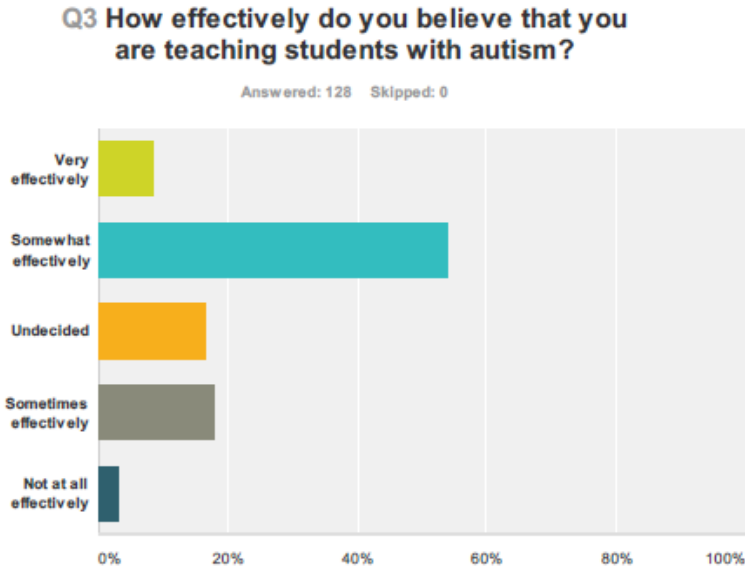


Figure 3. How effectively do you believe that you are teaching students with autism?

The fourth question asked if the educators believed mainstreaming students with Autism is effective. With 66.41%, the majority leaned toward “yes”, it is effective, while the rest decided that mainstreaming students with Autism is not effective.

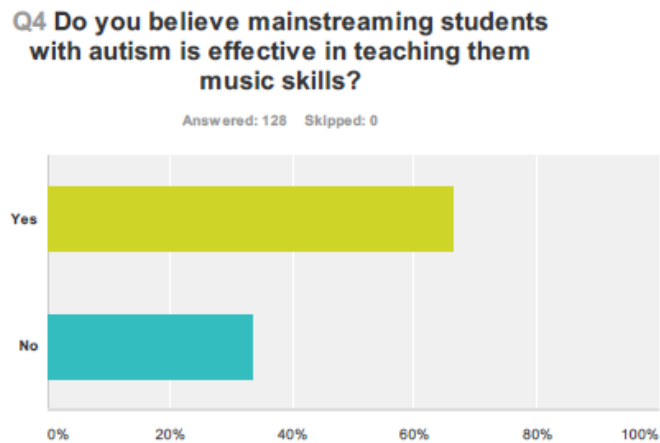


Figure 4. Do you believe mainstreaming students with autism is effective in teaching them music skills?

Question number five asked why the educators believe students are mainstreamed. In order to better gather information from this question a tally was kept of the categories and themes. The majority of those surveyed believed the students with Autism needed time with their

peers in order to learn life and social skills. Another theme was the belief that keeping the students together is best for their learning. A great many others wrote that the students excel when in music and that music class is a chance for them to express themselves; that they learn greatly. The second most common answer had to do with scheduling; there was not enough time or money to have these students in a separate class setting. Several of the answers went so far as to say that the administration did not want to deal with children with Autism. Still other responses were from teachers who believed that it was the law to have the students mainstreamed or that it was a preparation period for the student's homeroom teachers. Most agreed that the placement of the students had to be made on a case-by-case basis (See Appendix D).

The response to question six (See Appendix E), "Would you prefer to teach students with autism in a self-contained class?" was split almost perfectly down the middle. 51.2% would rather teach students in a self-contained classroom, while 53.6% said they like them mainstreamed or mixed with regular education students. Some themes came forward when the responses to the short answer portion were analyzed. Many who voted for a self-contained classroom brought up points about being able to tailor the class to the students with Autism; they could then learn at their own pace and possibly help to build their self-esteem. Another of the answers stated that having students with Autism mainstreamed was good for the "normal" education students as well. Many believed that "both" was the way to best teach these students. These teachers believe that the students should have a chance to learn in a self-contained classroom but then be mainstreamed with the rest of their class for general music, having the best of both worlds, as it were.

Q6 Would you prefer to teach students with autism in a self-contained class?

Answered: 125 Skipped: 3

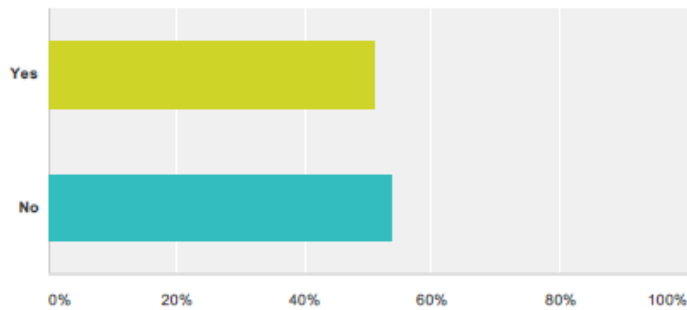


Figure 5. Would you prefer to teach students with autism in a self-contained class?

When asked how many of the respondents were involved in the development of IEPs in question seven, the majority stated “never involved” or “rarely involved”. These two answers captured 75.78% of the vote. 40 educators stated they were “rarely involved” and 57 educators stated that they are “never involved”. 21 educators, or 16.41% of respondents, said that they were “somewhat involved”. The remainder were “very involved” (7 respondents) or “undecided” (3 respondents).

Q7 How involved are you in the development of IEPs for students with autism?

Answered: 128 Skipped: 0

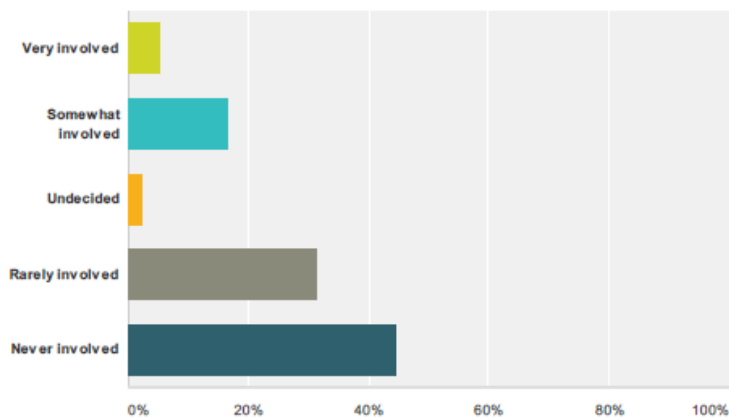


Figure 6. How involved are you in the development of IEPs for students with autism?

In question eight the majority of the teachers that were surveyed commented that they did not normally change their plans at all to accommodate students with Autism. There was one teacher who said that he never really thought about it and still others who simply said they never alter their plans. There were also very few that had completely different plans for their students with Autism. Most of these came from teachers who had self-contained classrooms. Many of the responses were of altering plans on the go, differentiated instruction, and self-monitoring. There were also many who have broken down and/or simplified their lessons or simply lowered their expectations of the students (See Appendix F).

In summation, the results indicated that experienced music educators are not prepared to teach students with autism. These teachers have little or no training in special education and they are not involved in the planning of the students IEPs. A few of the teachers do alter plans for their students and believe that mainstreaming is the best option for students with Autism.

CHAPTER FOUR

DISCUSSION

The results of the survey indicate that many music educators are still not where they should be in regard to teaching students with Autism. There is still a lack of training as well as a great lack of planning on their parts.

The pool of responders had a considerable amount of experience in the classroom. This kind of information can add to the validity of any survey which is why the question was included. Although there may have been a lot of experience in the classroom with the respondents, there was not a lot of experience with teaching students with disabilities; in this case, students with Autism. It was very disheartening to read responses such as “one college course” and “Really only a basic course, years ago.” Educators are called to teach their students no matter what the student’s difference is. This survey shows that teachers are not properly prepared for the growth of the number of students with Autism in schools. With a 30% increase in the last two years,²² students with Autism are becoming more prevalent than ever, and they still need to be taught.

The majority of responders said that they taught “somewhat effectively” which indicates that most teachers are confident in how they are teaching these students with Autism. Educators are confident in their teaching ability with mainstreamed students as well. Two thirds of the respondents answered that mainstreamed students could still learn music skills.

The fifth question yielded a wide range of responses. Some were positive and others were negative. Some of the answers stated that students with Autism “come alive” and are able to function at a higher level. The respondents also state that being mainstreamed can help the

²² Falco, 1.

students feel more together with their class. Being mainstreamed can also be a great avenue for teaching students with Autism other life skills. One of the answers stated that the teacher reverse mainstreams; instead of placing students with Autism into a general education classroom, the teacher brings general education students into the classroom with the student with Autism and teaches to the students IEP goals. Hammel wrote that if a student's IEP plan is not working it is good to revise the plan, make sure that there are set dates for the trial period of the new plan. If the new plan is not working it is important to revisit the plan again.²³

Although the answers were split down the middle, a narrow majority still thought that mainstreaming the students was the best way for them to learn. Many stated that peer teaching cannot be overlooked as a beneficial way of teaching. One of the educators wrote that they have recommended teaching the student with Autism at a lower music level. This can give the student a boost of self-confidence when he is able to succeed with the other students in the classroom. Egel writes that using other students to assist in the classroom will also help to further the learning of not only the student with Autism, but everyone included. Pairing academically stronger students with students with Autism helps the student with Autism to feel included and helps to keep him on task. The stronger students can help the child with Autism to feel a part of the group and important.²⁴ Peer-mediated intervention (PMI) uses the student's peers to help teach the student with Autism proper social cues and interactions. Students as young as three years old have been used in assisting a child with Autism. Under PMI, teachers and staff provide training and opportunities that increase the likelihood of interactions. By selecting peers who are well-liked and regularly interact with a variety of different students, the teachers help the students with Autism to succeed. Under PMI, the teacher teaches the students the best ways to

²³ Hammel, 35-37.

²⁴ Hammel, 34-35.

engage students with Autism through demonstration and gives them explicit reinforcement ideas. The teacher then gives the students time throughout the day to have natural interactions with each other. The student with Autism also has a time to practice with the teacher so that he has an idea of what to expect and knows how to carry on a conversation without getting overwhelmed. Video models are also used to demonstrate. The students with Autism watches the video and then rewinds points that may be confusing to him.²⁵

Very few of the music educators surveyed were involved in developing the IEPs for the students with Autism. Many times students with Autism excel in music class, a music educator may be a very good resource to include in the IEP team. The music classroom has a different environment from any other classroom, and so the music educator could provide a new perspective for the student's benefit.

Many different ideas of how to incorporate students into the music classroom as well as how to alter plans in a way that could best benefit the student with Autism were received through the survey. There are several notable responses that should be mentioned. Some of the teachers make it as simple as simplifying the instrumental parts in band. VanWeelden says that Orff is also a good way to help teach students by incorporating many different sensory experiences. Orff teaching involves visual, motor, and auditory senses. With this technique one can help to minimize the dichotomy of "smart" versus "special" learners too. Many of the instruments can be prepared so that they only have the notes needed for the song. This gives the student with Autism a great confidence booster and allows him to play songs along with the other children without feeling "slow" or confused.²⁶ If it is a choral or instrumental rehearsal, modeling and rote singing are good techniques. One could even have the entire class sing only the part that

²⁵ Egel, 60-62.

²⁶ Shirley McRae. "The Orff Connection... Reaching the Special Child." *MENC: The National Association for Music Education* 68, no. 8 (Apr., 1982) 32-24.

they are on so that they get the sound in their ear. Praising the student will give them the sense of confidence that they need to succeed. Free periods can also be used to further education for students with Autism.²⁷ One of the teachers had a student who could not stand the loudness of the music in the classroom. This particular teacher began lowering the music from the speakers and his piano playing in order to make this student more comfortable. As time progressed the music was made louder and now the student loves music class. She was even able to perform on stage. Another of the responses is about having a separate area where the student with Autism can use headphones and play a music computer game when the instruments come out so that he is not overwhelmed by the sound. McCord writes about a few of the programs available for students; Band in a Box, Children's Songbook, Finale, Music Ace and Music Ace 2, and SuperSwitchEnsemble. Band in a Box allows the teacher to add music to the already prerecorded songs. The song highlights as it progresses giving the student a better chance to follow along on his own. Children's Songbook songbooks can be ordered online and are a good source of worldly children's songs. Finale is used for upper level students, but it is a great resource when it comes to composing their own music. The Music Ace programs allow the student to learn the fundamentals of music notation. These programs will also let the student create his own music. SuperSwitchEnsemble is a set of games that can be downloaded online and helps with teaching music.²⁸ A good website for information on Autism can also be found at <http://autismpdc.fpg.unc.edu>.²⁹ Hourigan stated that the teacher may also want to invest in a pair of noise reducing headphones to block out some of the sound. Some other things that may trigger

²⁷ Kimberly VanWeelden. "Choral Mainstreaming: Tips for Success." *Music Educators Journal* 88, no. 3 (Nov., 2001): 56.

²⁸ Kimberly McCord, "Music Software for Special Needs." *MENC: The National Association for Music Education* 87, no. 4 (Jan., 2001): 31-26.

²⁹ Egel, 55.

a child's bad behavior or distraction would be a brightly lit room, some setups, strong smells, and odd textures.³⁰ Still another educator stated that it is important not to put the spotlight on the child with Autism; giving him unwanted attention can result in a meltdown or in the student withdrawing from the classroom. Many of the respondents wrote that it is important to rely on the classroom paraprofessionals if they attend with the student. One of the teachers creates storyboards for some of the songs so that the student who cannot read as well is able to follow along with the story of the song. Students with Autism process speech differently and so cannot understand puns and sarcasm.

STUDY CHALLENGES

While great learning experiences came about through the survey, there were several problems. One of the problems that arose was the distribution and collection of enough responses in order for the survey to be relevant. The survey was first emailed to music educator peers and the hope was that they would take the time to answer and also forward the survey to any other music educators that they knew. The part that was not taken in to account was that the email pool was from a small liberal arts school where everyone knew everyone else. After receiving seven answers to the survey, no more responses came in. The survey was then posted in several places online that music educators might see it; a music educators Facebook page and a Houghton College Choir alumni Facebook page. Another difficulty was that the target audience for the survey was very specific. Only music educators could participate in the survey. The survey was initially posted to the Facebook page titled "Music Educator's" and did not receive any

³⁰ Hourigan, 42.

responses. It was posted again on the same page a couple of weeks later and received one hundred and ten responses in a single night.

While yielding favorable results, there are several things that could have been improved upon in the survey questions. Although the answers were predominantly positive in “question three”, it is a question that could be interpreted in many different ways. Everyone’s standards are different when it comes to judging and no person can say what “somewhat effectively” really means. If this survey were to be replicated, the question and answers would need to be revised in order to get a more accurate result from the respondents. The question would gain better results if it was “What percentage of students with autism achieve a passing grade in your class?” The answers would then be “0%-25%”, “26%-50%”, “51%-75%”, or “76%-100%”. “Question four” should also be rewritten. This question should include an option to explain why the teacher believes that mainstreaming students with autism is effective in teaching them music skills, instead of only a yes or no answer. The other questions can tell us a little about what the children can learn in a music classroom, but many of them do not write about whether or not the child is actually learning music skills.

One of the most popular responses to “question five” was that it depended on the student. This fact was overlooked when creating the survey, Autism is part of a spectrum disorder and there are a wide range of disabilities from student to student; they will all function at different levels. The “final question” yielded the results desired, but it seems that the answers could have been expanded on greatly. Many of the answers were only a couple of words or one sentence. One of the teachers stated that there was too much to write down in a short answer on a survey. The fact that Autism is part of a spectrum disorder was also mentioned frequently. If this survey was to be redone the surveyor would need to take this into account.

CONCLUSION

The results of the survey indicate that music educators do not believe that they receive the training necessary to teach students with autism. Many teachers are doing their best to teach these students with the minimum training that they have, but the respondents to the survey still do not believe that they are completely effective. A small majority wrote that they would not prefer to have students in a self-contained classroom due to the lack of participation with regular education students. The educators believe that the student will learn better if able to study alongside their peers. The results of the survey also show that teachers do not often plan ahead for students with autism; they change plans during the class. IEPs can be obtained before class so that the teachers know how to plan ahead for each individual student.

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APPENDIX A

AUTISM IN MUSIC
1. How long have you been teaching? a. 0-3 years b. 4-10 years c. 11-20 years d. 21-30 years e. Greater than 30 years
2. Have you had training in special education? If yes, how much and what type? a. Yes b. No Explain
3. How effectively do you believe that you are teaching students with autism? a. Very effectively b. Somewhat effectively c. Undecided d. Sometimes effectively e. Not at all effectively
4. Do you believe mainstreaming students with autism is effective in teaching them music skills? a. Yes b. No
5. Why do you believe that students with autism are mainstreamed into music class?
6. Would you prefer to teach students with autism in a self-contained class? a. Yes b. No
7. How involved are you in the development of IEPs for students with autism? a. Very involved b. Somewhat involved c. Undecided d. Rarely involved e. Never involved
8. How often do you alter your lesson plans for students with autism? And in what way?

APPENDIX B

Dear Educator,

Thank you for taking the time to open this email. My name is Noah Alessi and I am currently working on my thesis at Houghton College. My thesis statement is "Prominent Strategies for Incorporating Students with Autism Spectrum Disorders into the Elementary Music Classroom". I am hoping to include in this thesis paper a collection of surveys that will better help music educators when dealing with students with autism. If you click on the link below you will be asked several questions relating to this topic.

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/5JYP5YC>

Also, if you are so inclined, please forward this email to any and all music educators that you may know!

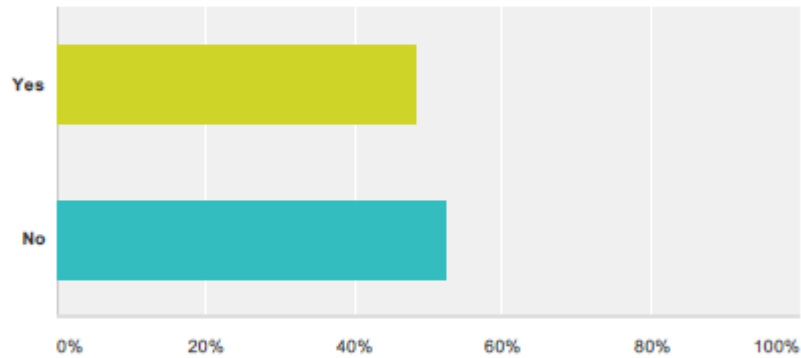
Thank you for your time,
Noah Alessi

APPENDIX C

Autism in Music

Q2 Have you had training in special education? If yes, how much and what type?

Answered: 128 Skipped: 0



Answer Choices	Responses
Yes	48.44% 62
No	52.34% 67
Total Respondents: 128	

1	My undergraduate certification program required that I study and work with Special Needs information. In addition to that, while student teaching I was required to teach a high school Music Theory class to Students with Special Needs.
2	Only a long term sub for BOCES music therapist. No formal classes on special education was required for degree.
3	Classes during my undergrad and masters. Also, I have taken staff development in Special Education.
4	Just Staff Development offerings!
5	one graduate class and special ed. summer program
6	I am presently teaching a private Student who is disabled, his left hand is not firm as us, but he love music. He is now learning to read notes on the stave. Has been introduced to notes of the C scale
7	1 required Special Education Class for my degree.
8	undergraduate and graduate classes, mild exposure in student teaching placements
9	Certificate in Sp. Ed during my B. Ed. Along with two practicums
10	Multiple workshops on various topics including autism
11	Coursework. 6 ugrad cred. 3 grad cred. Son with autism led to vast amount of personal research
12	3 grad credits on teaching students with autism
13	Course work at Bachelor, Masters, and Specialist level. Regularly teach in special education classroom.
14	My bachelor's degree was in music therapy
15	worked with developmentally and emotionally handicapped students for a year as a BOCES Teacher Assistant

16	Professional development clinics. I student taught at Upstate Home for Children, a school for students with severe mental and physical handicaps. I also have 2 autistic nieces.
17	other than regular ed classes that deal with students with special needs
18	I took one class in my undergraduate schooling.
19	One college course
20	Concentration in Special Education in Music at the Crane School of Music.
21	Autism workshops, I am a parent of an autistic child.
22	A couple of classes in my Masters' program.
23	Taught in a unit for children who were iQ 65 and under for 8 years
24	One core curriculum class on students with special needs as part of my undergrad program. More of a general overview. ASD and music workshops at Boston Conservatory in the last year.
25	Workshops and training sessions.
26	On the job training mostly, but also a fabulous on line class out of JMU "music for special learners". I services. Conferences.
27	Elective class on teaching music to children with special needs
28	Worked as a Paraprofessional for 8 1/2 years prior to finishing my bachelor degree...
29	Undergraduate special education courses
30	Undergraduate classes, school in-services
31	Two classes. Standard course requirements for educators.
32	Autism spectrum - 8 hours with refresher each year. Others, but I don't remember right off hand.
33	6 semester hours
34	I took a class on educating exceptional learners as a part of my undergraduate coursework.
35	1 course on exceptionalities in the classroom
36	special ed para first before getting my education degree. special ed courses for differentiation for degree.
37	I have taken one college course in my undergraduate education called Exceptional People.
38	Really only a basic course, years ago.
39	1 undergrad class addressing the needs of special learners
40	I took a survey course and a class on autism.
41	Sunshine Sullivan's special education class
42	Just some Superintendent's day training sessions, and some short workshops. Nothing extensive.
43	Professional development classes after school
44	Several classes on teaching children with disabilities in the music classroom, one was specific to children with autism.
45	I took a required course in college.
46	One undergraduate course, entitled "Educating Exceptional Learners," as well as in-service presentations while a teacher are the extent of my training.
47	I had an introductory course for my early childhood education degree.
48	No formal training, but worked in a special education classroom for preschool age children during college, and have various life experiences through my mom's work in special education my whole life and my brother, who has Asperger's syndrome.
49	One three-hour graduate level class "Teaching Special Learners in the Regular Classroom." I actually took the same class twice. Took in in Colorado and then when I moved to Maine they made me take it again.
50	2 college courses
51	3 undergraduate credits called Intro to Special Education
52	I had one undergrad class, one masters class, and have taken countless workshops and clinics. I also grew up with a mother who was a Special Educator.
53	No official. Our district occassionally offers short workshops but none have been helpful for my discipline.
54	2 classes some workshops
55	Music for Special Learners - class.
56	1 undergrad class
57	I have a degree in Inclusive Childhood Education and currently teacher three-year old special education to students with a range of disabilities.
58	Currently working on my master's in special education
59	I took a course called Educating Exceptional Learners in college
60	Graduate level course work

61	very briefly in college. A module probably. Physical impaired, cerebral palsy plus learning disorders; ADHD, ADD, Aspergers.
62	Masters in sped
63	One class as part of the teacher certification process.
64	One semester of special ed. with a music concentration. I worked one on one with a deaf child.
65	We had very, very little in Potsdam for my degree - one course. That's it.
66	college courses dealing with special learners, former summer teacher of special education/music at BOCES in Ithaca, NY
67	Perhaps very generally in my undergrad, for example, a chapter on special education in a "Principles of Music Education" class or something similar. Since I can't remember if it happened or not, it's probably not worth mentioning, other than to point out the fact that I made it through a State of NY program of education without any memorable training.
68	A few classes in my undergrad degree. Lecture based classes.
69	A one semester class in college

APPENDIX D

Q5 Why do you believe that students with autism are mainstreamed into music class?	
Students do better when together	
1	I believe that in cases of autism, students should be given the opportunity to participate in the music classroom. Many students who struggle with Autism or other special needs, "come alive" and are able to function at a higher level when they are in the music classroom. That being said, "mainstreaming" these students might not be best for them. It should be assessed on a case-by-case basis.
2	I feel that the arts can connect with all children of all learning abilities.
3	Autism has varying degrees of severity. I have had several students over the years with autism. Consistency and structure I believe are key and the social interaction as a team that you can do with music will help them interact later in life.
4	whole group music experience
5	Many autistic students do well in the area of the arts. I think they are mainstreamed in order to give them an opportunity to interact with other students in a regular classroom setting. Mainstreaming these students can also boost their self-esteem.
6	Other students are role models.
7	so they can be integrated with the rest of the students and learn how to successfully "function" in a more "real life" setting
8	I believe students with autism are mainstreamed so that they may interact with other students and receive the same educational experience as them.
9	I believe they are mainstreamed into music class so they have an opportunity to interact with other students they do not see in their classroom.
10	To encourage social interactions with their peers.
11	Because most can and should feel that they can function with non-Autistic Students.
12	For most of the autistic students I have, they are able to participate without being put on the spot, and they can still be and feel a part of everything we are doing.
13	In an effort to keep them on the same level as those in their grade level. Sometimes it's the parents who push for it because they don't want their child to feel excluded
14	I have many students on the autism spectrum in my building, and I serve all students grades 1-6. Our autistic students are mainstreamed for a majority of their classes, with time in the resource room as needed and with either an individual aide or an intervention specialist co-teaching in core classes. Music benefits all students, and seeing all students work together to make music helps everyone.
15	My autistic students are mainstreamed in the regular classrooms so they come to music with their class.
16	My daughter is autistic and I teach several students with autism. I find that music is a great "equalizer" making students rely on each other and use new thinking skills they may not be used to using.
17	To assimilate with children without autism
18	Music is beneficial to all humans, regardless of cognitive ability or giftedness in music. Part of what makes us human is our ability to create and enjoy art. The positive effects of music on the mind are numerous and worth experiencing, even at a spectator level. I believe that administrators and parents understand this, and put students of many ability levels in class together without hesitation. However, mixing ability levels in the music classroom doesn't give the best possible music-learning experience for all students, though it may give a positive teamwork- and diversity- oriented

	experience.
19	To try to give them experience like their peers.
20	All students are in music classes.
21	They want them to have same opportunities as other kids.
22	Students are usually given inclusion during specials classes for three reasons, time with their peers, their teachers need the prep time, and scheduling makes it impossible for them to have their own specials class.
23	To desensitize them to the sounds heard in music and from peers, to give them opportunities to create in a group atmosphere
24	Having students with Autism in mainstreamed class with assistance could benefit both traditional and non-traditional students.
25	I believe that it gives them a chance to learn at the level of their peers. It also gives their peers a chance to help them.
Teaches life and social skills	
1	I believe that if an autistic student is mainstreamed, they learn a lot of music and other important life lesson by being included in a group. However, if the student with autism is highly interfering with other students' learning, then the situation must be looked at carefully and maybe an alternate plan must be used.
2	To develop their social skills as well as their musicianship.
3	For music skills and social skills
4	Social reasons
5	Music is a social learning experience that can be separated from the general socialization that autistic students struggle with.
6	To provide opportunities to develop social skills and improve other skills being taught.
7	social interaction with other students
8	To give them an opportunity to learn in a social setting that reflects how most of society functions closer than their self-contained class.
9	It is not for educational purposes. The kids are in the classes for social skills, which I believe are important, but they do not mainstream them in most academic classes, because they cannot manage the material.
10	Social experience
11	It helps them assimilate to a somewhat mainstream environment.
12	for socializing in a mainstreamed environment
13	Many students with autism have trouble responding to people and their environment, but music provides them with an avenue to do so. Many students with autism respond favorably to music education.
14	To encourage their socialization.
15	Social skills
16	To provide them with the least restrictive learning environment...and sometimes just for socialization.
17	To be in the least restrictive environment and to build social skills.

18	For inclusion and social purposes. Also for many students it can be great!
19	Music is a great way to teach social skills. I do a greeting song every class and my student with autism has grown to love greeting her classmates in this way.
Gives the homeroom teacher a prep period	
1	To give them somewhere to go for a break for the classroom teacher.
2	Mostly for the same reason all special needs students are mainstreamed into music. It serves as prep time for classroom teachers and is not viewed as rigorous
3	It is an easy way to provide preps for teacher and satisfy gen ed minutes in an IEP
4	Frequently it is a time that the resource facilitators are taking breaks. Also, students with autism respond positively to music.
5	It's not educationally based. Their teachers need a prep too.
6	Teachers use us as a break. Some students are in their classroom all day except for special areas.
7	Scheduling and planning periods.
8	Because schools want to mainstream everyone, whether or not they should. Not to sound callous, but kids are sometimes placed in classes so other teachers can get their break
9	It gives their teacher a break in their day, or a prep period.
They shouldn't be mainstreamed	
1	They need private teaching, they have the ability. Their memory is strong.
2	I have worked in Special Education setting for our local BOCES. My brother has autism. I do not believe they are getting the most out of their music education while being mainstreamed. I believe they are mainstreamed because administrators "don't know what to do with them." In my district, "special" areas have always been considered a 'dumping ground.'
3	We're not considered a "real class"
4	Mine are not mainstreamed.
It is cost and/or time effective	
1	Most smaller districts might have 1-3 autistic students and it would not be cost effective to pay a music teacher for such a small class.
2	I believe it is due to time restraints and the scheduling of music classes. I feel it is beneficial to regular students to be with special needs students and to accept their behaviors.
3	There is not time to have a separate class, but having them in the general music class does provide social goals for them
4	To save money. They need to be with their peers in the music class but also need help to understand music in a way that works for each of them as an individual. It's a spectrum so there is no one size fits all way to teach music to these students. We need a lot of individual time with each of these students to find out how they access music and help them to gain that access. Not cheap by any means and public schools really don't seem to care much about providing the correct resources to help these students.
5	Because most school administrators either don't know/don't care how much goes into a music class or they feel they have no other option because of scheduling.
6	No special Ed music classes are offered
7	Ease of scheduling.

8	Administration; staffing
9	least restrictive learning environment; social skills; most cost-effective for the school district
10	Budget constraints... More insistent and demanding issues that need addressing ..Only one music teacher, only once a week music classes..
11	Often due to scheduling limitations or the want for these students to be around their peers as much as possible.
12	Money
13	Ease of scheduling, lack of understanding of what a different experience those students may require
14	Ease of scheduling
15	It's convenient for scheduling purposes.
16	Because there is no room in the schedule to have them come seperatly.
17	Easier for administration--sometimes part of IEP
18	For scheduling reasons
19	It is easier on the schedule.
20	In my school all students are inclusive in music, mostly due to cost and schedules
21	our school does not offer special education music classes, so every child is mainstreamed. Scheduling and staffing is probably the reason we mainstream. Sometimes this is good and appropriate, other times it's not
22	So as to not alienate them from the other students. Also for scheduling reasons. Mainstreaming them gives their one-on-ones a break.
It is the law/ they have to be	
1	governmental policy
2	part of their IEP - they get the opportunity - perhaps an aide that knows the student and their abilities would be great
3	In our situation there is no choice Most students are mainstreamed (Australia)
4	Our school mainstreams all students.
5	Our district has very few self contained classes
6	Mainstreaming is district policy in many schools.
7	I believe that often, administrators think that it is something easy that they can do.
8	State law
9	The ones I see mainstreamed are mainstreamed in all their classes.
10	In my state, it is to fulfill a requirement for hours mainstreamed with their peers. Many times, they are in whatever class is convenient for their teachers, not with their peers or grade level.
11	They are mainstreamed because there is often no other choice. I would much prefer to help my low-functioning students in a separate class because the amount of sensory overload in regular

	class is often too much for them.
12	The mildly autistic ateamstreamed the whole day at my school.
They can express themselves	
1	Much of the time, the students with autism are functioning at a high enough level to be integrated successfully in music class and it is often one of the areas that said students are able to effectively express themselves.
2	often times they can express in music more effectively than with words; (devil's advocate -> gives their aides/paraprofessionals a break?)
3	because we music teachers have a better shot at reaching them (and usually have more patients with autistic students)
4	Many students with autism respond very well to music because of the hands on aspect and the repetition of music. I have rarely had problems with my autistic students in the classroom, even if they struggle in other classes.
5	Most of my students with autism have the same musical capability as my other students.
6	They can enjoy and learn the concepts. They may do it in different ways but they can learn. They do have difficulty if they have sensory issues though.
7	The students I have dealt with showed a special skill with music that the mainstreaming fostered.
8	Autistic children's response to music is great. I watch them following directions sung to them much better than verbal directions.
9	A lot of students with Autism excel in the arts.
10	Because music can help them as a means of therapy, a subject to focus on, or simply for enjoyment.
11	Students who are low speakers often learn our music. It is a good thing for their self-esteem when they participate in a concert with the rest of the choir!
12	Music is a high-functioning class. Autistic students are usually high-functioning. The "course-work" is up to their caliber, and they have an easy time in that learning environment.
13	I believe that the limitations that come with autism would not limit a child in the general music classroom as they may in other classrooms. Many children with autism also benefit from music therapy. I have seen this first hand in my classroom through the use of the Music Together program.
14	Music is another language entirely. I've helped with students who become a different individual when they are in a musical setting. I saw one student whose paperwork indicated he was mute and unresponsive, but sang and did motions just like his peers who did not have autism. Music is his connection with the world outside his autism. He now sings with the radio in the car and sings the star-bangled-banner in the hallway, and sings the apple song while he walks with his mother in the grocery store. That said, I believe mainstreaming is effective up to a certain level. Perhaps after elementary or jr. high levels the connection will be harder to make as music becomes more academic. Again, depends on the student.
15	Because they need to be communicated with in a different way.
16	Most of my students on the autism spectrum are able to function fairly well in music class.
17	I have observed a number of students with autism who have functioned very successfully when mainstreamed in performing ensembles. They often times are quite accomplished and make a significant contribution to the music making of the ensemble.
18	They are capable musicians, sometimes with musical skills superior to students without autism.
19	Usually if they are high functioning they are immediately drawn to the emotive power and intellectual stimulus involved in music.
Not sure why	
1	I would have preferred a "not sure" button. The only autistic children I've had in class are ausberger's (sorry for the misspelling).

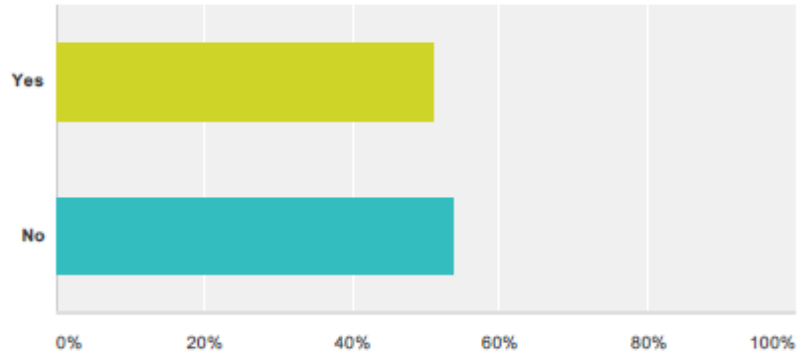
2	Not sure
3	I don't know!
4	I have a few students in my music classes with autism.
5	Not sure why (i teach in Peru) but i can say that in the cases were i have had they brought a new level of responding to music and being creative that no mainstream kids had.
6	NA
Case by case	
1	As to the above question, it really depends on where the student is on the spectrum. High functioning students mainstream well, but others do not.
2	The autism spectrum is broad. Many students on the higher functioning levels can do fine in regular classes.
3	It depends on their placement in the spectrum - for some it is for socialization, some who are highly functional do well in my class
4	My answer for #4 is It depends on the needs of the individual student whether or not mainstreaming is the best setting for the child.
5	I tried to check yes and no...which is my real answer. It really depends on the individual student. Often, we re-verse mainstream & bring in grade level peers in smaller groups, and do more of the IEP goals for the student with autism, rather than traditional music classes. Often, the traditional class is a sensory overload, due to the large class size & increased sound, it can actually be more aggravating & frustrating for some. However, other students really benefit from being with other students, and the social interaction can help with interpersonal goals for some. Students with autism should still be provided the same opportunity as their peers, they often do incredibly well with the instruments, patterning, and really excel in music!
6	Every student is different, but in my experience, students are capable of connecting with the material being taught in my ensemble classes in a way that helps the student, just like every other student, but it also puts them in a situation where they are effectively working with other students, and this can help them to develop their social skills.
7	Question 4 does not take into account where they are on the spectrum. Students who can be successful in a mainstreamed class should be, those who require much more accommodation or highly modified lessons are better served in a self contained music class.
8	Many times this is an area that they have success and love it. Each student with autism is different and needs and accommodations are different.
9	I think #4 is hard to answer. It depends on where on the spectrum the child is. I believe that often students are mainstreamed into specials for social reasons. In my school I make the decision which students are mainstreamed into music and which have their own self-contained classes. Some even take both.
10	Yes & No to the previous question. Every student is different with different needs. Autism is a spectrum disorder therefore it's hard to say ALL should or ALL shouldn't High functioning students who aren't disruptive in class should be mainstreamed. It gives them another chance to interact with other students.
11	I am going to answer from the angle of the one autistic student I had, which was in a basic level HS chorus class. I suppose she was put into an integrated chorus because that was the only option. Also, this particular girl had the skills to function normally, and in many cases better than the other singers in class.

APPENDIX E

Autism in Music

Q6 Would you prefer to teach students with autism in a self-contained class?

Answered: 125 Skipped: 3



Answer Choices	Responses
Yes	51.20% 64
No	53.60% 67
Total Respondents: 125	

YES	
One on one, more individual time	
1	Absolutely. I would love to see adaptive music just like physical education classes. Middle school students even at their age do NOT learn the same way as regular children. They need so much more time and attention to explain and explore music concepts.
2	More one on one attention.
3	I teach a music class in a self-contained class room. The children love music and are successful at improvising rhythms in a call and response. They play rhythms and improvised melodies on recorders. The students in the self-contained classes need to be there and would function in the regular class.
4	I feel I am able to teach the students according to their individual needs and spend more time working with smaller groups of students based on their skill level and abilities.
5	One at a time is easier to handle. I don't think I would be able to handle all the variables with multiple children.
6	Due to my lack of experience.
7	it would allow for individualized instructions

8	More individual attention and more attention to appropriate teaching strategies.
9	Students with autism have special needs that are best addressed in a self-contained class. I have taught students with autism in both self-contained and mainstreamed classes. Often, I am not able to fully address the needs of my students with autism when they are mainstreamed because they learn at a different pace than "typical" students. Additionally, I am not always able to fully help my "typical" students when there are students with autism in the classroom, because of both educational and behavioral issues displayed in class.
10	I would be able to give them so much more attention. Instrument playing would be much less intimidating for them in a smaller group!!
11	Self-contained classes are, by their nature, smaller and allow more flexibility in teaching individuals the skills they need in a safe environment. It may also be helpful to include the students with special needs in the regular classroom in addition to their music study in a self-contained class to foster the idea that they are, indeed, valuable, contributing members of society.
12	For lower functioning and/or students who are unable to succeed in regular class. I once had a low functioning student with autism who was in my third grade recorder class. It was torturous for him because the sound was too much. No amount of appealing to sped teachers helped and I was not able to modify for him because he couldn't get past sitting with his hands over his ears. I had to explain to mom and she came and observed and chose to get him private music lessons outside of school.
13	I teach mine in private piano lessons.
14	One on one if possible
15	Smaller class size and it would better meet their needs at their level.
16	I got a lot out of teaching the special ed. kids in a smaller setting. They got more one on one attention.
17	They become easily lost in a large group setting. They deserve more individualized attention so that their skills may be nurtured.
Too much noise	
1	Particularly for those students who are sensitive to noise levels
2	I am actually torn on this, because in my experience these kids are very music smart many times. But the loudness and commotion are hyper sensitive triggers for them.
3	In my experience, I have worked with a couple of autistic children. One didn't read music memorized everything; the other couldn't stand the noise of others playing (in a percussion lesson)
Adapt better	
1	Focus on developing appropriate brain based functionally-reconnecting music with these students would be beneficial
2	I believe I would be able to teach them more constructively and adapt more to fit the students' needs and abilities.
3	I could modify the curriculum - it's tough when I have a grade level curriculum and they are not able to meet the curriculum for various reasons
4	I do not have the training to adequately teach such different perspectives of mainstream students and autistic students in the same class, there is always one (or more) frustrated parties
5	Teaching in a self-contained setting would allow for better planning and ability to provide experiences appropriate to skill and ability.

6	Many autistic students excel in music but differently than other kids. They excel in the performance not written ideas. I would structure the class for maximum behavior management and musical success.
7	But I would need training...
Comfort	
1	Because of this special student i have i would help others like him.
2	I think they would be more comfortable in this setting and I would be able to gage their progress better in a smaller setting with just these students. I could target things specific to this group of students.
3	It has worked very well for me to teach my students with autism in one group with their aides.
4	Lessons could be tailored specifically for them and other classes would not be disrupted. They'd be happier too
NO	
Students do better when together	
1	See above. Students with special needs should be given the opportunity to participate. This experience could change their lives! I have had severely handicapped students in my ensembles and some have had life-changing experiences. I cannot advocate denying students that opportunity.
2	I would want them to be able to interact with the other students.
3	whole group music experience
4	I would prefer to teach students with autism in a classroom where there are many varying levels of academic and social awareness. If a student with autism cannot feel included in music, there is little hope in the more "academic" classes.
5	their goals for us are social- which is better addressed in the group. They have specific music and social goals with a music therapist
6	I can address the social goals, and in my school, they also get music therapy
7	I like how they can be part of the bigger picture, fitting in with the whole group.
8	My experience is that the children learn more cooperatively than alone -peer teaching is amazing!
9	I'd rather they be assisted by other students.
10	I feel that the best music classes are those that have a wide variety of learners. Those who pick things up quickly are able to help demonstrate and lead those who need more repetition or further instruction. It should be noted that my school does not serve students with severe autism. We have a specialized unit for autism at another of our elementary buildings for students who have severe special needs. My autistic students are communicative and able to function within their mainstreamed class.
11	Many of the goals for our students on IEP's have life skill components. It's a different mindset, I teach children, not music....
12	I am lucky to have small general music classes (7-10) students so I am able to work one on one with each student.

13	Many of my autistic students are highly successful with music and can lead their classmates.
14	I have felt that working with the special ed teacher/para we have been making progress.
15	General music is a group activity and students with autism should have the opportunity to experience the group dynamic.
16	They need the example of children without autism
17	Being in a class with children who don't have disabilities allows for role models, socialization, and peer tutoring. It allows them to feel like they are a part of the school community.
18	I know the limitations and triggers of my students and there is a plan in place during the class hour. They are doing great and enjoy class.
19	I think it is important for those students with autism to experience the same things as their peers.
20	Buddy system works for most kids with autism.
21	They add value to the class. Other students need to have experience interacting with those who have autism.
22	General Music - could go either way, but I prefer mainstreaming. Instrumental Music - self contained classes would be a excellent so better address the individual needs of the child or to approach the instruction at a different pace, with a different emphasis, etc
23	It is also a social opportunity for the students.
They respond well	
1	In severe situations I recommend to their special ed. teacher that the students stay in a lower level of music where they can benefit the most. These students still benefit from being able to interact with their peers and be in a "normal" room. Even at an elementary level I have seen students awareness of their difference and how it effects their self esteem. It is important for these students to have times where there are successful with everyone.
2	unless they're far off the deep end on the spectrum, mainstreaming seems effective at least in my experience
3	It is unnecessary for many students to be in a self-contained class because they do respond so well in a mainstreamed music class.
4	The atmosphere in a autism class is so different than a mainstre class. The autistic students are all so excited to be there and feel more comfortable because they are with their friends.
5	Students that I have had in my music classes with autism tend to respond very well to music and the activities needed to learn to play. They tend to be able to achieve the same musical ideas and techniques as my non-IEP students.
6	My experience is with autistic students mainstreaming in the classroom. Most respond very well to this approach, although students who are unable to mainstream should still have the opportunity for music instruction in a self-contained class.
7	I think that this short-changes music and it's potential.
8	If properly supported I have seen them have great success in a variety of musical activities
9	Again, with regards to the only autistic student I have had... The girl in question had an interest in music that went beyond my work with her in chorus class. She took lessons privately and I helped her prepare NYSSMA solos also. In this specific case, as mentioned previously, this girl made the mainstream chorus class better by being a better singer and musician than other students, so not only did she contribute under normal circumstances, she was an asset beyond "normal" expectations.

BOTH	
1	I would like to do both, with the other students and just them alone.
2	Both of course. I prefer to prepare them to participate before inclusion.
3	This goes along with question 4 for me. I think there needs to be a crossover of self contained and mainstreamed classes. This gives the autistic students the security to explore without feeling pressure from other students. It also gives all students a different perspective of how to learn and perform music.
4	I do both and this is much more effective.
5	While I answered "yes," I believe the best answer actually to be "sometimes." It depends on the form of autism and the individual ability of each student with autism to thrive in and contribute to the mainstream classroom.
6	I have done it both ways. If the child is ready and able to be mainstreamed, it is not an issue. The self-contained class has teachers and assistants who come with the class for support. That works well too.
7	Yes and No. I think that teaching students with autism in a self-contained class would allow teachers to go at the most appropriate pace for these students. However, I don't think they should be in a self-contained class at all times because with music a lot of autistic students can really excel and it is important for them to be able to share these accomplishments/successes with their peers. I like having small group band lessons with my autistic student alone, but love having him in the full band setting as well.
8	Yes and no would be my response but i mark no. I would say it has it's advantages but also disadvantages. I think a self contained class can bring too much focus on the dissability rather than abilities. Sometimes letting a kid with autism just do whatever he or she wants with some musical instruments will raise a full load of developmental capabilities both physical and mental.
9	I would like to do both
CASE-BY-CASE	
1	It would depend on where the children were on the spectrum. There are pro's and con's to mainstreaming and self-contained. It depends on the child, the program, and classes offered. This needs to be the best fit for the child and their musical experience.
2	I think it would depend on the level of the autism. Right now I teach music to Kindergarten and First grade only. In first grade, we have 7 students who have severe autism in a group of 110 students. The other kids totally support and help the autistic students, but each one comes with an aide to my classroom, which really helps if they happen to get out of control. I still believe that much learning is achieved by the autistic students and the other students if both are working together in a learning environment.
3	It really depends on individual needs, whether they are verbal or nonverbal, age, concepts, strengths, etc.
4	There is such a wide range of functional levels that each autistic student may be, whether higher or lower functioning than that of non-autistic students. Not to mention, the various learning levels of those NA students. We are all so unique in our development. There is only so much you are able to teach without moving too far ahead of some students, or leaving others too far behind. I currently teach private music lessons to an autistic 5th grader who was attending a non-specialized school. While some of her skills (writing being one) are on a level level than her current grade level, she actually reads on a 9th grade level. However, comprehension and focus have been a problem. She was recently switched to a school that specializes in teaching autistic students. Not only has she improved some of her lower level areas, her focus and speech (answering questions, rather than just repeating them) has greatly improved. It only took a matter of 3 months with this school and I started noticing improvement, even though she only sees me once week. I don't think selfcontained classes are enough. I think specialized schools are even better, as you tend to get more teachers who are trained to work with those students, not just trained to with various disorders in

	general.
5	really depends on the severity of the disability...I have students that function very well in the mainstreamed classroom and then others who could not at all
6	I think it depends on the setting and the student and what their social and educational goals are. In my current teaching situation, we have a Lifeskills class and I think the class as whole would benefit from having adaptive music.
7	No, with the exception of students that are very low functioning, then I feel it is more to their benefit to have a separate music class more geared to their level with a great deal of repetition.
8	Again depends on their level of function - those who are at the lower level could benefit from specifically designed lessons
9	And no. Depends on the level of autism. I have good results with smaller classes
10	My answer to #6 is it depends on the needs of the individual student.
11	While every student is different, and the different characteristics of each student should be considered before enrolling them in a mainstream music class, my experience with mainstreamed students with autism has been wholly positive, both for the students in question, and for their classmates. I would not prefer to teach these students in a self-contained class, as they would lose the benefit of performing with an ensemble, and we would also lose the social benefit of working in an ensemble setting.
12	It really depends on the individual. If the student is aural sensitive they may not spend much time in your class because it's too much for them.
13	Sometimes yes, sometimes no. I have autistic students in my performing ensembles. Depends on the level of autism.
14	To this and also question #4- I think that it CAN be effective to teach autistic students in a mainstream class, but not in every case. It depends heavily on the circumstances, the class, the child, and the teacher. Ideally, I would prefer to teach students with autism in a self-contained class, but I know that schedule-wise it would never happen.
15	It depends to the situation. Many aspegers and students barely on the spectrum and very successful when mainstreamed. Others have more challenging needs are more successful in a self contained class where their needs can be the focus.
16	This depends very much on where on the spectrum the student is.
17	It depends on the child. Usually, no. I find that no matter the level on the spectrum, students have a better overall musical experience when integrated.
18	Same explanation as above. yes AND NO. Some are extremely needy due to their disorder. In that case a higher teacher to student ratio would be more effective. It really all depends on the student.
19	Autism is a spectrum disorder, therefore there are students with autism whose least restrictive environment is the general education classroom. Other students with more severe autism may have their needs best met in a self-contained classroom until they can develop the ready to learn behaviors necessary to be successful in a classroom with non-disabled peers. However, I believe that no level of autism is so severe that the child should be in the self-contained classroom all day for all subject areas.
20	Yes, for lesson pace-based reasons. Although I support selective mainstreaming, for instance in a music classroom but not in a math class. (Again, it really depends on the student). Depending on the student, they can thrive in a setting where they are expected to function as their peers do who do not have autism. An inclusive classroom can be nurturing to both sides of the world of autism.
21	Although it mostly depends on the severity in which they fall on the spectrum.
22	It depends on the severity of the autism, but usually autistic students blend seamlessly into the music classroom.

23	Unless they are extremely distracting.
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APPENDIX F

How often do you alter your lesson plans for students with autism? And in what way?	
I don't alter my plans	
1	I don't alter the plans but as I do with any class, I adjust the teaching to the learning styles in the room. Each class has it's own chemistry. This is what I call the "art" of teaching and is necessary to get the most out of every one of the 700 students I teach.
2	not often...
3	I teach music privately at home.
4	The students I have experienced are able to function well in a large group. I have never altered music for ensembles, only altered materials to either appease the student, as in "if you stay focused today, we will read your favorite story at the end".
5	Not very often specifically for students with autism. My teaching has been primarily overseas where students have not been diagnosed with any special learning needs.
6	I do not alter my lesson plans, but the special ed. teacher does let me know if certain things "set a student off." I do make adjustments and try to make it work for everyone, but sometimes I can't . I had an autistic student that would scream last year if I grabbed a remote...she hated MUSIC. I always made sure the music was played at a softer level than I usually do, and the students were fine with that. I also played the piano softer and...gradually she became less scared of the whole music situation. She even went on the stage for our musical in March! She is in first grade now and LOVES music. yes, some days she gets teary-eyed but she has come SO far..!m so proud of her!
7	Not usually needed for performance ensembles
8	Never, I respond to each student's individual needs, whether they are autistic or not. I do not write different lesson plans for sections with mainstreamed autistic students.
9	I hope that the aid helps to modify it - I have NO knowledge of the restrictions or ability levels of these students.
10	Not often
11	I rarely alter since I only have 2 at this time.1 in 2nd trade and the other in 3rd.
12	I don't really alter my lesson plans for my students with autism. One student is sensitive to noise so I make sure he has his head phones if we are doing a loud activity.
13	I haven't had to alter my plans.
14	Very rarely
15	Not often. In the choral setting, I have found that autistic students possess the same ability level of every other student.
16	I keep a fast paced class with a variety of activities. So it's a rarity. The only thing I do is generally use classroom instruments a bit more because it's a good incentive.
17	Hardly ever. I just give them lots of reinforcement.

18	Never.
19	I have not had to alter my plans.
20	I have never had to specifically alter my lesson plans. My biggest alteration has been where they stand for performances or where they sit in class so they are successful.
21	Never
22	Not at all for the time being as I have none. Previously, my autistic students tended to be very high functioning and didn't require any specific modifications.
23	I wouldn't say I do change it.
24	We don't have any curriculum or guidance for teaching students with autism.
25	Hmmm. Don't think I have had to alter.
26	Never.
27	Rely on aide that student often has
28	Rarely, unfortunately. Many, many students at my school have behavior issues, and there are only a few noticeably autistic students, so they get a bit lost in the shuffle.
29	Not very often. If she decides, she doesn't want to participate, I ignore her behavior and move on. (She also has a 1 on 1 aide).
30	I no longer am in a public school, so it's hard to say. When I was, I had such a heavy load, I couldn't make a lot of special plans. Luckily I had great kids that helped each other and the administration made sure all special needs were in 1 smaller class. Autism was challenging. Tourette's was almost worse.
31	Not often. My lessons are already designed to individualize instruction to all students.
32	I turn the music down if necessary. I normally don't think about it. :(
33	I never had to because of my particular students' skills in music... there was no need to change my plans to accommodate her skills.
34	never
35	I do not alter my lesson plans for students with autism.

Give them extra help

1	In my ensembles, I do not regularly alter lesson plans for these students. I am, of course, willing to provide extra help as needed, re-explain directions, and help in any way I can.
2	Daily, I self monitor for the children in my classes and what they need to be successful.
3	On a daily basis. I modify equipment we are using to better suit their needs. I alter their goals to match their ability. I add visual aids, or examples depending on their needs and what works for them.
4	I keep an eye on them more often, spend more time in their area during individual work time (music theory class), seat them next to stronger players, simplify their parts
5	Frequently when I was teaching classroom music. I now teach band so do not currently have any autistic students, although I have had high functioning Autistic students in band many times. Lessons are altered depending on individual needs. Sometimes more visuals are needed, notes

	written in, organizational assistance, a binder at home and at school, occasional individual lesson aside if student is getting frustrated or overwhelmed, possible less frequent full rehearsals if sensory overload.
6	I wouldn't say "alter", but rather plan for differentiation for all students in every lesson.
7	I always try to adapt my lessons in some way for my students with any disability. It really depends on the lesson. Sometimes, it's giving the student more concrete activities. Other times students have difficulty with things that are perceived as normal by the masses (sound levels, textures, etc.). In those cases, I adapt the lesson to fit the students needs. An example would be letting a student wear headphones to 'buffer' the sound of a recording.
8	sometimes- loud sounds bother them, change of class structure
9	Not so much alter as modify for the individual student as needed, which is occasionally.
10	Minimally. I have a class of other students who have to meet standards. They come with Aids so I rely a lot on them to adapt the activity.
11	Not at all in plans written but adapting in class as needed.
12	Typically I don't need to alter my lesson plan, I just alter my approach to the lesson and add activities.
13	Differentiation is generally" at individual pace"
14	I tailor it to the students with autism individually.
15	I do make accommodations for students with autism in my general music classes and of course abide by the testing modifications specified in each student's IEP. In my ensemble rehearsals, I do not find it necessary to alter my lesson plans for students with autism.
16	I generally don't. Just give additional help as needed.
17	Adaptable for each student.
18	Because I teach in a mainstreamed classroom, I rarely alter the content of my lesson plans for students with autism. I do, however, alter my classroom strategies. For example, I might spend more time prepping students for the song we will be listening to (if there are sudden or loud noises), or I might write in notes for a song we are learning.
19	Rarely.. If I do, it's on the fly as needed.. I see EVERY student in the ENTIRE district. Only so much time in each class period. :(sad face.
20	I mostly simplify instrumental parts and give instructions in smaller parts. I do this more often with my autistic students who are more severe. I also have to work to keep my students with autism more engaged by keeping close proximity to those students.
21	Rarely. I have only changed my plan to accommodate the student(s) when the need arises. Most high-functioning autistic students in my classroom need little intervention from me to participate well in the ensemble.
22	Movement based lessons
23	I have very few autistic students in my classes. The few students that I have with autism are allowed to change their location in the music room if the noise level is too high for them.
24	I feel I'm flexible in adjusting to all students, if something isn't working, you have to adjust in order to make progress. I don't currently have any autistic children in my program.
25	I have not altered the actual lesson plans in my performing ensembles, but have been sensitive to the needs and sometimes fragile psyches they may possess. Though not necessarily adapting my lesson or rehearsal plans, I have chosen the words of my delivery carefully upon occasion with the autistic student in mind.

26	I try to have more one-on-one time with those students. However, due to time constraints and testing, I can only give them so much time without taking away from the rest of the students. I would love to have a separate class that can have completely modified requirements and activities so that students can get more out of the program.
27	Usually the students are capable of doing what everyone else is doing in class, but I find that they sometimes prefer to do work alone instead of in a group or sit apart from the class depending on their mood. I am willing to make those allowances when necessary.
Simplify the lesson/ lower expectations	
1	I differentiate on all levels with all students. I simplify tasks for autistic students.
2	Provide quiet location to practice recorder and test after class. break lessons down into smaller parts
3	This concerns what I do in my voice studio. I no longer teach full time in the schools. I break things down a bit more for my student than I do with others. I do physical warm ups that relate to the development and awareness of her body (especially for breathing and posture). I always have her read all the lyrics. Since her reading level is really high, I like for her to have that success each time she comes to a lesson. During the lesson, I do not allow her to just give me short answers. If she says yes or no to something, I try to get her to tell me why, or at least to answer with a yes or no and repeat the question with a statement. If I ever feel she is just strictly repeating an answer rather than confirming one, I rephrase the question. Since she is a private student, I plan the lesson around her and her needs. There isn't too much altering of lesson plans due to this.
4	I alter my teaching strategies along the way of the activities.
5	Modify and adjust as needed just like I do with every other child with a special need
6	On a regular basis. I alter the lesson in whatever way allows the student to participate with the best chance of success.
7	Usually lesson plans are altered to progress at that student's pace- we go slower and tend to follow their interests rather than re-directing focus to stay exactly to the plan. I have only had two autistic students and I enjoyed working with them once I altered their learning environment to be one-on-one. Teaching autistic students to play violin or piano in a mainstream setting was difficult and detrimental in my opinion.
8	Where necessary I adapt lessons specifically do the older students who come with classes that are of the same age, but do not function at that age level - instead of recorder they may play xylophones or drum with help from their ESE aide
9	As needed - usually just not having them do anything in front of the group if they are uncomfortable.
10	Many times the altering comes for the level. For autistic students in 2nd or 3rd grade I would probably teach a kindergarten or 1st grade lesson.
11	I adapt for all of my students on a continuous basis. I have back up plans in place, but I try to give all students a chance with the original plans.
12	I require different levels of performance for them, according to their certain attributes
13	I don't. I give them extra time and a lot of leeway. I sometimes make progress and others don't seem to be learning.
14	Any written work will be modified to be shorter with less questions. Any playing tests are modified to be shorter sections.
15	frequently when doing written work I have them complete it verbally with myself or the aide. For performances, I think it's important to let them have the experience though sometimes it creates anxiety and we have to alter expectations at the last minute.

16	Typically, my grading procedures are altered for students with autism that reflects what they are capable of doing. If necessary, I will also adjust activities that require advanced musical abilities.
17	Not much, I just change my expectation of how & how much they are involved.
18	I alter them as necessary- I have a couple of kids who won't sing so I do not require it of them. I scaffold instrument-playing, movement, and composition/improvisation. I think the biggest obstacle with many is that they only ever echo me so it is harder to see them make choices for themselves.
19	In small group band lessons, my autistic student is often in his own one on one lesson. Therefore, the pace of the lesson can be completely determined by his attitude and needs for that day. Some days he gets very stressed out about playing certain high notes and so we take several short breaks during the lesson. Other times he is focused and able to get through the material much faster. In full band rehearsals, occasionally we will be rehearsing and I can noticeably tell that he missed an entrance and cannot jump back in so I will stop the group and restart them for his sake. Others in the group are completely understanding and want him to be with us, because he is an awesome bass clarinet player!
20	Sometimes. I keep certain classes calmer with a slower pace, make sure I give plenty of time for projects, no timed quizzes... Knowing what causes meltdowns helps change my plans.
21	Not often. What is altered is what expectation is for them as compared to other students.
22	I don't alter the lesson plan, but I do make accommodations regarding seating placement, assessments and playing instruments.
23	In accordance with their IEP I will alter due dates, forms of presentation, or time-lines.
24	It makes me plan ahead. Knowing their abilities and needs when we do activities.
25	Regularly. I find ways to both adapt lessons and also add challenges appropriate to the student. One student I had with Asperger's had had particularly negative experience with music classes before coming to me and was very noise sensitive and had some fine motor difficulty, so rather than forcing him to sit in a room with 25 kids playing guitars and try to succeed at something not reasonable for him, I set him up at a computer and let him pilot a new music program I wanted to try. Sometimes I arrange total differences like that, and other times I just alter what I am doing with other students slightly.
26	I don't specifically alter my lesson plans, but I do make accommodations and have adjusted expectations depending on which spectrum the student is and at what level of functioning within the class.
27	Sometimes, usually I need to adapt them so the students aren't over stimulated.
28	I make many accommodations but they rarely alter the lesson plan for the entire class.
29	My lessons are fairly differentiated from the beginning and any modifications I make are fairly simple and in the moment. Although, I do not teach any students with severe autism.
30	I generally make accommodations whenever they are in the class. The specific intervention depends upon the student. Just like any other student their abilities can vary greatly.
31	At the moment I don't teach anyone with autism but when I did I just made sure my resources were different and that the areas were safe for learning.
32	Quite a bit. Alterations depend on what the lesson is and what the level of autism is for the student. In most cases with my student I have to alter the type of tests I give to verbal from written
33	The lesson plan is rarely altered, because all students must pass the same exams. However, the instruction is highly individualized and is altered on a daily basis if necessary.

Write completely different lesson

1	Being middle school music I alter every activity and lesson. This makes it difficult I teach 2 lessons at the same time. I will have to demonstrate sitting next to the student for hands on. The focus time is only a few minutes depending on the student. I use pictures of music symbols to manipulate on a touch screen to look at and label to play the keyboards.
2	Every lesson plan for my students with autism is designed with them specifically in mind. Too much to write here, but you may email me at amy.richter@henhudschools.org
3	Weekly. We make up songs that teach concepts that they are working on that week. It may be alphabet, counting, or other skills. The students love to play rhythms and toot on recorders, strum guitar. Much of the "music" is not good music, but the joy on the face of the students is priceless. When Grandparents tell you how much of an impact that music class makes in these autistic children's life, you know that you are on the right track.
4	I alter my lesson plans for all of my students that learn differently. Musicians typically learn in different ways, some are visual and some are aural learners. It is important as educators that we differentiate instruction to meet all of our students' needs.
5	I have a class for students with disabilities so this class is totally planned and taught for their needs. In classes where students are mainstreamed, I make the accommodations necessary to help the student...extra help, time, pair with a friend, etc...
6	I have two adaptive classes, so each class has its own lesson plan.
7	Most lessons I change to suit the children My children with autism seem to better with short input and the practice and then rewards - ie iPad app to enforce etc
8	Every week. My school houses the ASD program for the district that I teach in.
9	Often. Depending on the class, I have to have huge modifications ready.
10	I read IEP's and the accommodations page. I consult with their teacher about each student. I use a picture schedule (we use Boardmaker) and sometime create storyboards for certain songs. I try to minimize verbal directions (if needed for a particular student), use preferential seating, and use other students to model movement/playing instruments.
11	Very little in inclusion classes. In the self contained class, lesson plans are very focused on student ability and needs. I find that class to be very successful.
12	Regularly, based on the students needs, and accommodations listed in their IEP.
13	I am constantly readjusting and altering my plans for special needs and students who are neurotypical.
14	daily before in planning and during class adjustments.
15	Constantly. I adapt to 504s, IEPs, and specific things that I can foresee either being a challenge or a struggle. I'd much rather have children succeeding than not. It could be as simple as printing lyrics to a song with large pictures instead. Again, it depends on the needs of the child.
16	weekly. Hard to give an accurate number. Their sensory needs are different often.
17	As the special education teacher in a co-taught inclusive classroom, my top priority is meeting the needs of my students with disabilities, many of which are diagnosed with ASD. I often adjust my lessons in regard to my students sensory needs be that sensory seeking or sensory defensive. I also consider how I can break down a task into simple one step direction with adult modeling and support.
Case by Case	
1	I currently am not working with any students with autism.
2	Really depends on the individual students. Some need modification, others actually need a stretch. Some of our severe autistic students we work in a more therapeutic setting & work with a

	smaller group of peers to reach their IEP goals: including gross and fine motor, alternate forms of communication, peer socialization goals, speech goals, language arts goals, and sensory exploration. Our MD unit for example, is done as a reverse mainstream and changes activities many times within one lesson, but other mainstreamed students in other classes need modified curriculum for playing skills, but they still participate in group ensembles, dances, and singing.
3	Every student is different and requires some degree of customization of both what content is being taught, and the manner in which the content is taught. I have been fortunate enough to have had the opportunity to spend extra time with smaller groups of students, including the students with autism. During these focus groups (sectional rehearsals & small ensemble (string quartet) rehearsals), I have had more opportunity to break things down in a variety of different ways so as to be more accessible for learning. In some cases, little adjustment was necessary. In other cases, it was necessary to substantially change the part to be more accessible to the student.
4	I don't alter, but rather differentiate for those students. There is a wide range of characteristics for students with autism...depending on where they fall on the spectrum...this survey doesn't seem to cover that...
5	Right now I am an independent piano teacher, but I used to run a day care, where there were autistic kids.
6	As needed. Modifications depend on the student. Sometimes it's reminding them to make eye contact (if they are able), it might be to have them write down assignments. I have set up safe spaces in the room for them to go to.
7	I adjust as they need me to. Each student learns differently, so I do my best to teach the skills they need in the best way they'll understand and recall later.
8	It depends on the student. Sometimes with wording and games to make sure things are concrete and not play on words, etc. Sound and noise level are other things I consider depending on the student
9	Broad question, since there are many forms of autism. Depends on the student, and your observation of their needs specific to their type of autism. If the student has a form that mostly affects his social skills like aspergers, I wouldn't hardly alter my lesson at all. I may even make it more challenging since aspergers often accelerates their academic skills. Only the way I handle situations such as group work where they may struggle socially - I may choose partners myself instead of letting students choose themselves. It's tough to work with students with autism in classrooms where mainstreaming is happening too. Although I fully support the concept, it's tricky to personally modify lessons for the single student when you have 20-30 other students to tend to. Not to say it's impossible to do so if you plan ahead. It's the on-the-spot modifications that aren't on paper that can be tough while managing a whole class. A classroom aesthetic strategy (have them sit close to you or in a space where they can work well) can save time. From my teaching experiences, I haven't had to alter my overall lesson plan for students with autism as long as they have a good para-pro/aid who is present, informed and attentive.
10	If I had a student with autism, I would have to learn how to communicate with them, or refer them to someone who can.
11	I currently do not have any autistic students.
12	Haven't had much opportunity except for student teaching. There weren't any autistic children in my classroom at Tully.