

**All Students Deserve Music:
Developing a Modified Music Curriculum.**

By

Sara Route

University of Wisconsin-River Falls

Submitted in partial fulfillment for the degree of
Masters in Science in Education – Fine Arts

August 2012

Advisor: Kristin Tjornehoj, Ph.D.

Table of Contents

List of Tables	1
Table 1: Schools that offer modified music	23
Table 2: Schools who want to see modified music offered	23
Table 3: Cognitively disabled in choir	26
Table 4: Cognitively disabled in band	26
Table 5: Learning about modified music in college	27
Abstract	2
Chapter 1: Introduction	3
Chapter 2: Literature Review	4
Every Student Deserves Music Class	4
Communicate to Ensure Students will be a Success in Music Class	10
Music Benefits the Mind	14
Effective Music Benefits all Students.....	18
Chapter 3: Method	20
Chapter 4: Results	22
Survey of Wisconsin Teachers about Modified Music	22
Chapter 5: Application	29
Beginning to create a curriculum	29
Chapter 6: Conclusion	37
Chapter 7: References / Bibliography	40
Chapter 8: Appendices	43
A. Creative Movement and Singing lesson plan	43
B. Creative Movement lesson plan	44
C. Creative Movement: Freezing-Stopping lesson plan	45
D. Basics in Rhythms and Playing Instruments lesson plan	46
E. Basics in Rhythms and Playing Instruments lesson plan	47
F. Jazz lesson plan	48
G. Assessment Rubric	49

Abstract

Students with severe cognitive disabilities deserve to have a music class designed to fit their specific needs. This entire project correlates with that statement and begins the journey on how Wisconsin music teachers prepare the cognitively disabled adapted music class and why. One of the questions to be addressed is: do other schools in the state of Wisconsin offer a modified music class? Wisconsin music teachers were surveyed in regard to questions that arose around the topic of students with disabilities. Do any schools in Wisconsin have a curriculum already in use for cognitively disabled music? Do teachers have resources available to them? How many Wisconsin schools offer a program designed for cognitively disabled music needs? The second aspect this project will show is how to begin creating a modified music curriculum for the cognitively disabled. There is a significant amount of research that emphasizes the role music can play in helping people learn, grow, and heal. Many of the resources explored maintain that by combining music therapy and general music, cognitively disabled students can improve physically, cognitively, socially, and musically. When given the tools, general outline, and ideas, each teacher can develop an adequate program to serve the cognitively disabled through a music program designed for their specific needs. This project outlines ideas to help cultivate a cognitively disabled music curriculum. While this music curriculum is designed with severe cognitive disabilities in mind, it could be used to benefit all young people. All students deserve to experience music at a level they can perform, understand, develop from, enjoy, and appreciate.

Keywords: Cognitive disabilities, curriculum, music therapy, general music

All Students Deserve Music: Developing a Modified Music Curriculum

As a newly graduated teacher, a small school district (three hundred in the high school) hired me to teach 6-12 grade choral and general music. Aside from being an overwhelmed first-year teacher with choral and general music duties, modified music for the cognitively disabled was also in the high school schedule. The class consisted of six students who were severely cognitively disabled (two examples being Down Syndrome and Traumatic Brain Injury). Through general observation it was easy to see why music was an important part of the day, as students would light up with excitement when they entered the music classroom. However, questions arose about the curriculum or lack thereof. Was the material being taught appropriate or should it reflect more music appreciation type lesson plans? Were students being assessed correctly? What would be adequate assessments? The Wisconsin Department of Instruction and Wisconsin School Music Association seemed the next logical place to find help but neither had assistance in the area of music for the cognitively disabled. This led to taking a graduate course in education psychology which began an interest in music therapy. Reading literature for that class indicated that cognitively disabled students need material and instruction presented in a variety of styles, with a variety of teaching techniques. The music classroom is no exception; all students can participate in music when given the tools to do so.

The need for cognitively disabled music arose because the middle school sent cognitively disabled students to choir while the high school had a specific music class time for cognitively disabled students. It rapidly became evident that the high school students were benefitting a lot more from having their own music class, even one with the limitations of a teacher who had no experience with cognitively challenged students. The classroom teacher of the cognitively disabled students had praise for how the students were learning and growing from music class.

This led to another question, do any other schools in Wisconsin have a similar modified music program or do other schools only have inclusion based music education?

Through general observation, teachers can see that when students are given a music class geared toward their abilities they will blossom with creativity; improve physically, cognitively, socially, musically; and learn many concepts that are essential to life. The purpose of this project is to determine how music affects cognitively disabled children in the classroom by examining how music stimulates the mind, how music therapy can help students with disabilities, why students should be offered a music class geared toward their specific needs, what is the need in Wisconsin schools, and how to begin to create a modified music class curriculum.

Literature Review

Every Student Deserves Music Class

When examining students with disabilities, inclusion seems to be the educational goal. Inclusion is when students with disabilities are put in the general classroom for most of the school day, including all special classes like music (Darrow, 2009). Modified instruction within the regular classroom can be a great asset for students with disabilities, but not every student has the ability to sing Mozart's "Requiem" or play an instrument in the band. According to Adamek and Darrow (2010) more than half of students with disabilities are educated in the regular classroom for at least 80% of the school day (11). Bassett and Cullen (2011) wrote the book *The IEP from A to Z* said "Access to mainstream is an absolute right of students with disabilities but the issue of appropriateness seems to have gotten lost in the shuffle... it is necessary to ask the question where does the student do his or her best learning... if the answer is that the student learns best in a less complex, specialized environment, in which there are fewer students, fewer distractions, and many more opportunities to learn and practice the skills they will need to be

successful, then that is the least restrictive environment in which the student can receive a appropriate public education.” (78) Cognitively disabled students deserve a musical outlet as much as any other student. This became the basis for my study research; that cognitively disabled students deserve a music class that is geared toward their abilities and needs.

Music educators are often asked to facilitate cognitively disabled students within the regular classroom. Alice Darrow (2009) points out several obstacles to this method of teaching - one example is the knowledge barrier. She speaks of teachers not having the range of knowledge and skill needed to adapt curriculum and instructional methods to develop appropriate goals and interventions for specific students (Darrow, 2009). E. Pontiff (2004) agrees that teachers lack the preparation to teach special learners along with training on how to do so. Ryan Hourigan (2007) showed a staggering absence of special needs preparation in music education with little research into the effects of special needs experiences for teachers in music education. Music teachers are expected to teach cognitively disabled students, and modify classroom instruction, but they are not given the time or knowledge to do so. The issue of time and the adaptability of middle and high school classes (band, orchestra, and choir) lead music teachers to another question of priority: If middle and high school music is adapted too much, will the needs of the other students suffer?

Current trends in Wisconsin schools include a focus on curriculum building, one development level being differentiated instruction. Band, orchestra, and choir teachers may have one-on-one instruction time through lessons, but they find it difficult to create a modified lesson plan that severely cognitively disabled students understand and embrace. Darrow (2008) discussed an adaptation as being any adjustment in the learning environment, materials, or instruction that would help students to succeed on their own levels. Louisa Leaman (2008)

pointed out that the needs and abilities of the cognitively disabled students will dictate the appropriate level of sophistication of the lesson and the amount of time needed to teach the students. She further discussed that students who have limited mobility will need a lesson designed around what instrument they would be able to play by themselves (Leaman, 2008).

It is critical for music teachers to modify curriculum to reach all students including cognitively disabled. In the article “Teaching Special Learners: Ideas from Veteran Teachers in the Music Classroom” Pontiff (2004) states:

Correct classroom placement can make the difference between a successful music experience for the special learner and a miserable situation for all. It’s no surprise to veteran teachers to hear that special learners have been placed in music classes more out of convenience to the overall schedule rather than what was appropriate for the child. (Pontiff, 2004)

Cognitively disabled students need to be given the option of a modified music class created to fit their needs. Alice Darrow, a leading expert in this field, has been addressing this issue for several years. In 1999 she wrote the article “Music Educators’ Perceptions Regarding the Inclusion of Students with Severe Disabilities in Music Classrooms,” where she specifically discusses the music classroom being a common placement area for students with disabilities mainly because administrators and parents have a limited knowledge of how demanding the average music classroom can be (Darrow, 1999). In middle and high school band, orchestra, and choir, students have to focus on reading music, reading lyrics, reading and understanding music symbols, and creating a musical interpretation of a selection of music. For students with cognitive disabilities this is often a challenge that restricts them from being successful in the inclusion based musical setting.

Darrow (2008) addressed age appropriate lesson planning for students with disabilities. Even if middle school students are functioning at an elementary level, they deserve to perform middle school age appropriate music (Darrow, 2008). In middle and high school, putting cognitively disabled students in a 'class of convenience' to quote Pontiff, will only frustrate them more as their peers learn the lesson faster and better than they can. Pontiff (2004) points out the careful thought, study, and planning it takes to be successful with students with disabilities. By middle school, music teachers will have anywhere between 30 to 100 students in the music classroom at one time. Even with a paraprofessional, it's not easy to make sure cognitively disabled students understand what they are doing or are achieving success. Adamek and Darrow (2010) make the point that the use of 'reverse mainstreaming' where students from general education join students with disabilities during their modified music class, could be the best solution for making sure every student is getting the most out of the classroom situation. Students with disabilities could still have peers in their class while also being able to take part in the lesson designed appropriately for their needs. In having a class designed to fit whatever goals are set for the cognitively disabled, not only would they benefit by being able to do the lesson provided, but they would also thrive by being able to succeed in the lesson plan designed for the appropriate ability level provided.

There are four specific disabilities this paper focuses on: Down Syndrome, Williams Syndrome, and Traumatic Brain Injury and Autism. The first disability to be explained is Down Syndrome. According to the National Down Syndrome Society, Down Syndrome occurs when an individual has three, rather than two, copies of the 21st chromosome. A few of the common physical traits of Down Syndrome are low muscle tone, small stature, an upward slant to the eyes, and a single deep crease across the center of the palm. The site goes on to say that with

quality educational programs, a stimulating home environment, good health care, and positive support from family, friends and the community enable people with Down Syndrome to develop to their full potential (NDSS, 2010). Music is one of the most positive settings to create a positive community for people with Down Syndrome to help develop that full potential.

The second disability that would benefit from a modified music outlet would be Williams Syndrome. According to the Williams Syndrome Association it is a genetic disease that is characterized by medical problems, developmental delays, and learning disabilities. As children with Williams Syndrome develop they often struggle with spatial relations, numbers, and abstract reasoning (WSA, 2010). The WSA states people with William Syndrome love music. They are extremely sociable and experience the normal need to connect with others; however, people with Williams Syndrome often don't process social cues well and this makes it difficult for them to form lasting relationships (WSA, 2010). In a society that is filled with social cues, students can gravitate towards modified music because teachers can create a class where the cues are easy to learn and understand. The teacher can also make sure students have plenty of social experiences with something they already love: music.

The third disability that would benefit from a modified music outlet is Traumatic Brain Injury. Traumaticbraininjury.com states that if a student has a Traumatic Brain Injury, it will be categorized as mild or severe. Generally, in the cognitively disabled classroom the category will be severe and the deficits may range from impairment of higher level cognitive functions to comatose states. People affected may have limited function of their arms or legs; abnormal speech or language; loss of thinking ability, emotional problems, and-or deficits within vision, hearing, smell, or taste. Recovery is often only going to be functional, and personalities may change (TraumaticBrainInjury.com, 2004). Modified music could be very valuable to Traumatic

Brain Injured students because they would have an outlet created for their level of ability. The student could feel good about accomplishing a musical technique or song within a class of peers who aren't ahead of them or making them socially uncomfortable.

Only the first three disabilities that are addressed in this paper should automatically be put into a music therapy based class, but every student deserves the best music class option available for their specific disability. Therefore the fourth example of a disability that requires this communication and discussion about which music outlet is best is autism. Autistic students have been known to thrive in band, choir or orchestra. In the book *Music in Special Education* authors Adamek and Darrow state:

Students having the most prevalent disabilities, such as specific learning disabilities or speech and language disabilities may or may not have problems functioning in the music setting. In fact, music educators may not even be aware that a student has one of these disabilities if it is a mild form of the disorder (5).

Autistic students have also had limitations within the disability that would allow them to succeed better in a music class designed for specific needs. Many autistic students can and will perform well in band or choir, but there are occasions that call for a quieter or more structured setting in music. Adamek and Darrow (2010) stated, "The characteristics of autism may be present in a wide combination of behaviors and levels of severity, so a group of children all diagnosed with autism can have very different abilities, personalities, and skills"(194). Iseminger (2009) says that by knowing that autistic students have distinct emotional and physical needs music teachers will be able to adapt their classrooms to be accommodating. Autistic students are a good example of the need for communication between all educational parties to ensure the best outlet

for music. Each school, student, and parent needs to be involved in the decision-making process about which music education outlet is best for each specific student.

Communicate to Ensure Students will be a Success in Music Class

Janet Montgomery (2006), Amy Martinson (2006), and Alice Darrow (2009) commented on the frustration that teachers (specifically music) feel because they aren't sure of what to teach with cognitively disabled children. The response was and continues to be to work with special educators and music therapists. Pontiff (2004) stated "teachers need to be sure to talk to the special education teachers, professionals such as speech pathologists, social workers, counselors, and music therapists to make sure lessons are well planned around specific students' needs".

Ryan Hourigan also addressed the frustration felt by music teachers and the need for communication in his article, "Preparing Music Teachers to Teach Students with Special Needs".

To quote Hourigan:

Fieldwork in the special education classroom could help music methods teachers stay current with changing trends and feel more comfortable with inclusion as a topic in the music methods classes. In addition, methods teachers could build relationships with special educators and music therapists in their community for consultation on this topic (Hourigan, 2007).

Hourigan (2007) was working with student teachers in music on what would make them more comfortable teaching students with special needs. Exposure, experience, and communication with adaptive programs that begins in college should help young music teachers understand the need and expectations for teaching cognitively disabled students. This knowledge will extend into their teaching careers. Communication with special educators will help a music teacher

succeed by learning about specific student needs and laws that have been created to ensure students receive the best education possible.

Cognitively disabled students have specific needs and therefore will require more communication due to having more federal assistance in place. IDEA stands for Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. It authorizes and shapes how federal funds are given and spent, it grants rights to students and parents, and it helps with the relationship between parents and students and their educational agency (Turnbull, 2005). Individuals with Disabilities Education Act lists thirteen disability categories under which students could be eligible for special education services, which include specific learning disability, speech or language impairment, mental retardation, emotional disturbance, multiple disabilities, hearing impairment, orthopedic impairment, other health impairment, visual impairment, autism, deaf-blindness, traumatic brain injury, and developmental delay (Adamek & Darrow, 2010, p.4). By communicating with the special education department, music teachers will have a better understanding of the school guidelines, parent expectations, and how teachers should work with these specialized students. Jennifer Walter (2006) found in her research, that most regular education classroom teachers were taught about Individuals with Disabilities Education Act in their college career while music teachers only had a brief introduction to IDEA, if any introduction at all. Walter (2006) pushes music teachers to educate themselves on the law and also communicate with trained professionals. Whether working with disabilities in the modified or inclusion setting, communication between the special education staff and music department may be a key part in how successful students are in music.

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act has a requirement that every student with a disability will have an Individualized Education Program or IEP that guarantees that students

receive aids and services for their educational needs (Turnbull, 2005). An Individualized Education Program (IEP) is a written statement for each student with a disability (Walter, 2006). The focus in an Individualized Education Program is academic, developmental, and functional evaluations (Turnbull, 2005). The Individualized Education Program will have academic and social objectives, modifications necessary for progress in both special and regular education classes, supplementary aids, support services, and the beginning and end dates of services (Walter, 2006). Parents are important in IDEA and are on the committee for the Individualized Education Program meeting along with a panel made up of educators (Turnbull, 2005). According to Walter (2006) in her article “The Basic IDEA: The Individuals with Disabilities Act in Your Classroom” music educators have the right and responsibility to attend Individualized Education Program (IEP) meetings for each student to provide music class goals, objectives, modifications, accommodations, and support services. The best way to communicate with everyone involved is to take advantage of attending the Individualized Education Program meeting, during which the music teacher can talk to both parents and trained professionals at one time. This will create the foundation for the music teacher to give the professional opinion on which music class would be in the best interest of the student. Discussions between students, parents, special education professionals, and music professionals will help decide the best music fit for each student and add it to the students Individualized Education Program.

Margaret Fitzgerald, a music teacher who adopted three cognitively disabled boys, told of her experience in, “I send my best Matthew to school every day”. The school reached a point where they could no longer educate the oldest boy, Matthew, in ways appropriate for him. They recommended he be put in a specialized program that would fit his needs. Fitzgerald told about how hard it was to hear this news as a parent, but how it was the best course of action for her

oldest son. Her other two boys did fine in the public school inclusion setting with their disabilities, but Matthew needed more (Fitzgerald, 2006). Music educators need to talk to parents, special education teachers, and reference students Individualized Education Program when deciding how to proceed with the best music option.

Parties involved need to focus on the question, what is best for the student? Each disability is different and needs to be addressed specifically. In the same article Fitzgerald (2006) also discussed helping a boy with a brain injury through drumming in band. Fitzgerald used her article to try to help people understand each student is different and needs to have the best education available, which further proves the point that one student may thrive in an organized ensemble where another may thrive in a smaller, specifically modified music class. According to Adamek and Darrow (2010) in their book *Music in Special Education*, they want professionals involved to find what is best for the student and said:

Rather than consenting to the practice of placing all students with disabilities into the general education music class with their same-aged peers, the music educator can suggest the most educationally beneficial placement for the child. Placement suggestions can be made based on: the characteristics of the student, including the student's abilities; the primary focus of the music class; the general education options that are available for the student in the school; and opportunities for partial participation (106-107).

It appears that most experts agree that students should have the option of a modified music class geared for their specific needs or outcomes. Consultation is still needed as not every student with a disability should automatically be assigned modified music, but it is evident that many will benefit from having music adapted for them. When music teachers are given time to create a specific music curriculum and incorporate it into the school day or if a music therapist is hired to

teach a modified music class, then cognitively disabled students will have a better chance at having their needs met. Schools and parents advocating for providing the best education for each student should include music instruction.

Music Benefits the Mind

Don Campbell, writer of *The Mozart Effect*, has researched the value of music as a tool to help stimulate the mind, body, and develop social skills. He has dedicated a large portion of his life to figuring out why and how music stimulates the brain, especially the developing brain. Campbell's *The Mozart Effect for Children: Awakening Your Child's Mind, Health, and Creativity with Music* will best serve the research purpose of this paper on students with disabilities. Through years of experiments, Campbell states "Listening to, singing, or moving to music has been shown to increase reading ability, memorization skills, vocabulary recall and creativity" (p. 173). In having a specific music class for cognitively disabled students, all three—listening, singing, and moving; can be accomplished in the time given to music class. In creating a modified music class, the teacher can choose to make it age-appropriate in music selections, while including the movement and listening that will help students build cognitive abilities.

Campbell goes on to say that accurate listening instills grace, consciousness, and intention in the child's movements as it also enhances self-confidence and social skills (p. 178). Campbell addressed active learning through music, finding that movement and music are used to actively teach students to stimulate different parts of the memory system (p. 185). Students can also increase social intelligences by having musical contact with other cultures, concerts and performances (Campbell, p. 203). Whether students are in regular education or special education most would benefit from all skills stated above. Many elementary music lesson plans and curriculum incorporate these ideas into their lesson designs. Cognitively disabled students

usually have inclusion based education in elementary school and because of this do receive the benefits in elementary music. However cognitively disabled students could grow even more if a music class was offered throughout middle and high school that carries on with Campbell's concepts.

L. Gooding also looked at social skills in "Enhancing Social Competence in the Music Classroom". Gooding stated "research has indicated that children are often motivated to become involved in music because of the social aspects of music making...which will then continue the positive peer interactions students receive when they are in music" (Gooding, 2009).

Professionals and parents in favor of full inclusion of all students in performance based music classes need to ask, if inclusion is only giving students a taste of stimulation, is it worth keeping in its entirety? When a music class is designed for and around the specific needs of the cognitively disabled students, it could be used to benefit cognition, social skills, motivation, and physical movement throughout the school year.

Music working within the brain is ground breaking research, and has become popular in the last ten to twenty years. There are studies that show music has a positive influence on the brain. In the book *This is Your Brain on Music*, Daniel J. Levitin said:

Recent findings from my laboratory and those of my colleagues are showing us that music is distributed throughout the brain. Through studies of people with brain damage, we've seen patients who have lost the ability to read a newspaper but can still read music, or individuals who can play the piano but lack the motor coordination to button their own sweater. Music listening, performance, and composition engage nearly every area of the brain that we have so far identified, and involve nearly every neural subsystem (9).

Could this be the evidence needed to show that music is needed for each and every student? If simply allowing cognitively disabled students a music class, which in turn improves their quality of life, isn't that enough to move forward in creating the modified music program? In "Music and the Mind", Zinna Riley states:

According to the New York-based Institute for Music and Neurologic Function, music also appears to animate and organize brain activity and can help care givers and Dr's[doctor's] communicate with patients, including those suffering from amnesia and various memory problems who may be unresponsive to speech. Other studies in music have also shown how music can influence heart rate, respiration, blood pressure, pain perception, physical health, and increases in self-esteem (Riley, 2008).

In the specific disabilities discussed earlier in the paper, each student had physical health issues along with cognitive issues. Music can help work to heal the body along with the mind. Schools should also be using this research to help students with disabilities.

Another book completely dedicated to how music has and continues to influence people is *Music and the Mind*, written by Anthony Storr. He speaks of how people who are born deaf can still hum and make sounds. Storr discusses how music unifies people, whether it is through a concert, funeral march, or radio performance. Music does bring people together in singing the same song, learning the same dance, or playing the same musical game. Cognitively disabled students should have the same sense of unity within a class designed for their needs.

Music stimulates the mind when given the opportunity to do so. A well-balanced curriculum will be the key in giving students the greatest benefit. Zinna Riley (2008) dug into how music therapy benefits people and where music therapy benefits began. In her research, Riley discovered that the beginning of music therapy was right after World War II when

hospitals began to discover the healing qualities of music. Riley found music therapy was used to improve developmental and learning disabilities, help mental health issues as well as age-related conditions, and rehabilitate those who suffered from brain injuries, physical disabilities, and pain (Riley, 2008). If music therapy has been implemented by the medical profession since World War II, why is it taking so long for schools to tap into the same knowledge?

Darrow (2007) explains that students with severe disabilities may not be capable of achieving at the same level as other students without such handicaps. She pointed out that there are many ways to make adaptations to enhance learning, creating adaptations in a variety of ways in the music education class and music therapy session (Darrow, 2007). Darrow partnered with Mary Adamek (2010) to write the book *Music in Special Education*, where they point out the differences between music education and music therapy. Music education focuses on music-related goals, such as performing and analyzing music, while music therapy can address students' development in cognitive, behavioral, physical, emotional, social, and communication areas (Adamek & Darrow, 2010, p. 104). In creating a middle or high school modified music class, elementary style general music lesson planning and the incorporation of music therapy may be needed for the class to be successful. The article, "Partnering with Music Therapists: A Model for Addressing Students' Musical and Extramusical Goals" by Janet Montgomery and Amy Martinson (2006), showed that students with disabilities need a music class that will work with their physical, cognitive, emotional, and social being. If cognitively disabled students are put into choir, orchestra, or band, they won't be getting exercises to work with the areas both articles above listed.

Effective Music Benefits all Students

This leads into a discussion about assessment. Bassett and Cullen (2011) wrote the book *The IEP from A to Z* and said “Although standardized assessment procedures are clearly preferable for determining level of functioning in some skill areas, they are not always appropriate (or even available) for many of the skill areas addressed (for example, theory of mind)... in such cases, one must consider other options.” (88) Montgomery et al (2006) went further to discuss that music teachers assess the outcome of music learning: can the student keep a beat, read music, follow the chart, and understand the meaning, while the music therapist will assess if the students have improved physically, cognitively or developed socially. Music teachers can’t use the same outcomes in music learning with disabled students; instead, they will need to gravitate towards music therapy goals to observe student improvement (Montgomery, 2006). In the article “Enhancing Social Competence in the Music Classroom” Gooding said:

Music can be used to simultaneously teach social, leisure, and aesthetic skills. Because music is nonthreatening and allows for successful participation in individuals with varying ability levels, music activities can be used as an effective tool for social interaction. Research has shown that the benefits of musical involvement include facilitation of self-expression, development of interpersonal skills, facilitation of positive changes in social behaviors, stimulation of nonverbal expression, development of group cohesion, and improvement in on-task behaviors (Gooding, 2009).

By modifying music in schools, each school/teacher can create lessons around which outcomes and assessments are needed, differentiating lessons based upon the classroom needs. Examples are creating a rhythm pattern on the board for the higher functioning student’s to learn or simply

marching to a beat for the lowest functioning students. Students will be assessed differently based on whatever skill needs were appropriate for their ability level.

Rachel Katz (2007) did a study titled *Beyond the Classroom: The Implementation of Creative Movement and Music in Schools for the Disabled* about the importance of creative movement and music specifically for the cognitively disabled. She did a two week study of nine students whose ages ranged from 14 to 24. The students all had different disabilities: Down Syndrome, Cerebral Palsy, Mild Mental Retardation, Epilepsy, Paralysis, and Speech Impediments. The program was designed to promote and improve coordination, confidence, creativity, and physical development. She found that even though movement games, dance, and music activities were only conducted over a short period of time, the developmental benefits in terms of physical and coordination growth were clearly apparent (Katz, 2007). In the book, *Kids on the Move: Creative Movement for Children of all Ages*, Kassandra Boyd, Melanie Chalk and Jennifer Law (2003) write:

Creative Movement is a joyful way to explore movement through music, develop physical skills, channel energy, stimulate imagination and promote creativity. It provides children with opportunities for noncompetitive, success-oriented and creative experiences. Music and movement are in every child. As teachers, we must let it out! Remember observation is participation. Always try to create a positive learning environment, and don't force the child to participate (i).

People with cognitive disabilities also have health and movement issues. Music in the school day can help students become more mobile and flexible while they are also having fun and working on cognition and memory through the joyous environment of music.

Not all students will perform at the same level nor should that be expected. By creating a class with music exercises woven together with music therapy ideals, students will get a lot more out of the music class-- skills that can help them improve and enjoy school. Severely cognitively disabled students would benefit from this much more than with any other music class because it would deal with all aspects of their learning needs, while creating a safe community that gives them the opportunity to learn, develop, and potentially thrive in as an individual.

Method

Students with cognitive disabilities in Wisconsin deserve a modified music class structured to meet their needs. The first aspect that will be addressed is the question: do other schools in the state of Wisconsin offer a modified music class? The answer will be found by sending out a survey to colleagues in the area, a few friends around the state, and by posting the survey virally within the Wisconsin Choral Directors Association. The survey will seek information regarding the offering of the school musically. Questions posed to teachers include: if cognitively disabled students are put into a performance based classroom, if teachers prefer full inclusion or would prefer a music class designed for the cognitively disabled classroom, and of the teachers who already do offer the class what curriculum or resources they use. Communication will occur with anyone who offers a music class designed for the cognitively disabled about which lesson plans work the best, what curriculum they use, and what should be in the curriculum that has begun to be outlined in this project.

By using general music concepts while focusing on music therapy goals, the second aspect this project will show is how to begin creating a modified music curriculum for the cognitively disabled. Often creating the general concept or outline is all that is needed to start developing a music curriculum. While adding where to find resources or what resources to use

will also helps professionals begin to start a basic curriculum and start the discussion between music teachers about what works the best. The modified music lesson plans that begin the curriculum in this paper will:

1. Outline a class that uses musical concepts with music therapy ideas.
2. Explain what inspired things in the basic curriculum outline.
3. Outline exactly what a teacher can do to create a curriculum for modified music offerings.
4. Document all resources used and state where teachers can access them.

Assessment tools will be discussed that can help the teacher show that the student has progressed within music therapy and general music goals. There will be some explanation about what is being observed and how to observe growth, since general observation or informal assessment will be the main assessment tool used. There will also be an assessment rubric attached that shows how each teacher can begin to see growth in four main areas; socialization, movement, rhythm and instruments, and listening and communication.

Teaching students with disabilities is not an exact science because they often have a hard time communicating and can't take traditional written tests to show that they are learning. A written curriculum is the first step towards understanding what works and what doesn't. Nonetheless, it will take collaboration between teachers to really assess and create a curriculum that will be designed the best for cognitively disabled students. So each teacher will have to modify the lessons to best fit the students' needs while maintaining communication with other teachers (specifically the students' core teachers), paraprofessionals, and parents. Music teachers will also have to rely on the general observations they make themselves of the student's progress.

In essence this project may be the place to start the process of providing modified music for all in the state of Wisconsin.

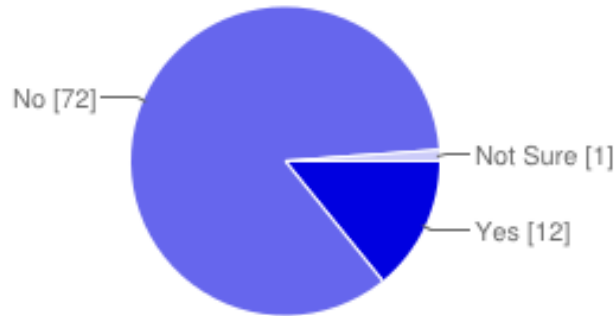
Results

Survey of Wisconsin Teachers about Modified Music

The primary focus for this project was the state of Wisconsin because that is where I live, teach, belong to professional organizations, and take pride in the high music education standards. A survey was created and sent out to Wisconsin music teachers about modified music being offered in the schools where they teach. The survey would be anonymous if teachers chose to keep it that way; if they had a modified music program, a curriculum to share, and were willing to give input, there was a place to give contact information at the end. The survey was sent to the neighboring music conferences, college professors who would be willing to send it on to teachers in their areas, and was also put out virally on the Wisconsin Choral Directors Association. Eighty-five teachers from around the state participated in the survey. All areas of music expertise that were asked to participate did: band, orchestra, and choir.

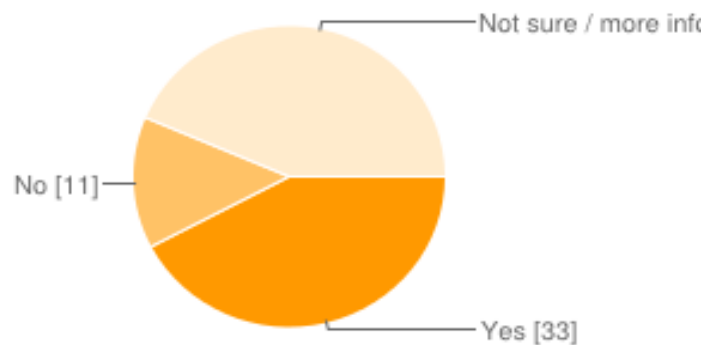
The first question was does your school offer a modified music class for students that are severely cognitively disabled in the middle or high school level? An overwhelming eighty five percent (85%) of teachers who responded said no, no class is offered in their school district. Fourteen percent (14%) of participating schools do offer some form of a modified music option, and one percent (1%) was not sure. Results were limited in that they do not reflect if the school has a combined cognitive disabled program with another school (not having any cognitively disabled students to educate), what the population size is at the school they teach in, or what capacity music may be offered if they said they do offer a modified music option.

Table 1: Schools that offer modified music



The second question asked if teachers would like to see a modified music option offered in the school district. Thirty nine percent (39%) of responding teachers said yes, while forty percent (40%) said they would need more information to make that educated decision and thirteen percent (13%) said no, they don't see a need for a modified music program. Results were limited in that they do not reflect if the school has a combined cognitive disabled program with another school, if the school is small enough that the population or staff couldn't support adding another program, or what kind of information they are looking for in order to better understand the concept.

Table 2: Schools who want to see modified music offered



This tied into the third question which asked teachers to explain why they do or do not see a need for modified music in the school.

Here are a few of the responses that stood out positively.

- *“There is occasionally a need for modified music, but I haven’t seen a need for larger areas of it. However, with that thought in mind, who knows what could happen if we opened up music to students who needed modified music and made it more accessible. Perhaps we would generate more need and interest.”*
- *“Yes, why shouldn’t CD [cognitively disabled] students have access to music, especially if it will help them physically and cognitively!”*
- *“I’ve seen the impact of music on students without special needs ~ I can only imagine how it would impact the world of a student with special needs.”*
- *“I don’t believe mainstreaming works for all students. A modified class would provide specialized instruction and may increase enjoyment.”*
- *“I believe music can be a significant tool in helping students who are cognitively disabled. I am a firm believer that there should be a place for anyone, no matter what, in the music program.”*

Many negative responses were due to small school size, lack of staff, lack of cognitively disabled students, or lack of funding, when taking on an endeavor like creating a modified music program.

- *“That would be great! However, we would need a school district big enough to fund the appropriate number of teachers, right now there would be no time for a modified music class.”*
- *“We used to offer modified music but it was a casualty of budget cuts.”*
- *“Our school is too small to have any need at this time.”*

Finally, there are a few responses that question the need to separate students or provide a different teaching technique.

- *“I just have them come to class and listen to us. I don’t know if they are learning anything.”*
- *“Yes, but not a separate class! In the General Music setting I have created an adapted program for the students who deal with cognitive disabilities. I feel it is important for that population of students to be in the classroom with others. It teaches patience and compassion to the core classroom.”*
- *“I have been open to including severely cognitively disabled students in my classroom--no need at this time in our school.”*

Even with differing opinions on the matter, the answers were overwhelmingly in favor of the creation of modified music for the cognitively disabled.

In question three there were a few teachers who commented on the students’ needs not being met in ensembles and some not so positive responses about students being placed into the regular music class because administrators don’t really know what happens there.

- *“Our students with cognitive... needs are never fully met in the general ensemble rehearsals. They are usually there for social aspects but never really develop musical skills appropriate for their level.”*
- *“Although my students and I love any cognitively disabled students in our classroom, if they cannot do basic skills like match pitch or maintain a level of focus conducive to a 50 minute rehearsal, they can detract from the education of the rest of the group.”*

Question four and five dealt directly with how many cognitively disabled students are mainstreamed into band or choir. From the eighty-five (85) who took the survey, sixty-five

percent (65%) said cognitively disabled students were put in the middle or high school choir, while thirty-three percent (33%) of responding teachers said the students were put into middle or high school band. The choral field has the larger number of inclusion with cognitively disabled students, but both percentages show that statewide there is a misunderstanding about the degree of work students are expected to do to be successful in music.

Table 3: Cognitively disabled in choir

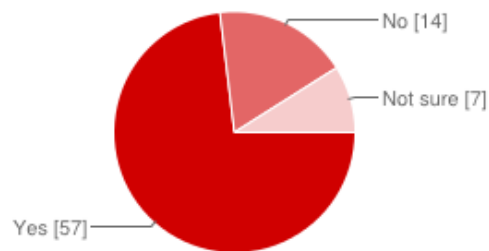
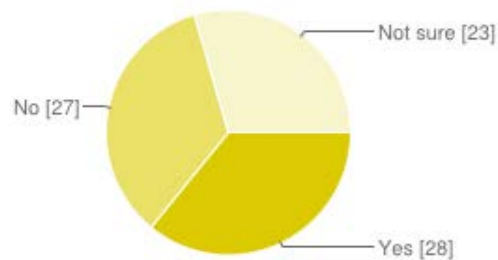
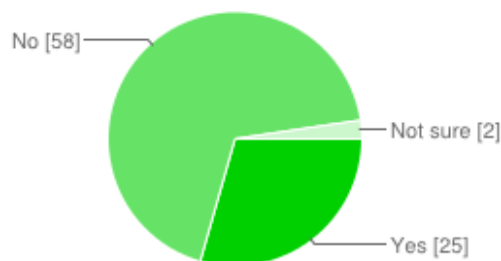


Table 4: Cognitively disabled in band



Hourigan (2007, 2009) discussed music teachers requiring more collegiate training to work with students with disabilities. Question six referred to undergraduate degrees by asking if teachers remembered learning anything about modified music in college. The largest number was no at sixty-eight percent (68%), twenty-nine percent (29%) said they had learned about adaptive programming in college, while two percent (2%) were not sure. Universities could be doing music teachers a great service by offering training into how to better work with students with disabilities.

Table 5: Learning about modified music in college



Questions seven through eleven were only for teachers who had modified programs within their schools, which meant eighty five percent (85%) of the total number of teachers who participated were finished with the survey. Question seven asked if the school district the remaining teachers taught in offered any other modified classes designed for the cognitively disabled. Many teachers referred to physical education being modified for the cognitively disabled population, while a few referred to life skills, art, and family and consumer education. It appeared that if the school had one adaptive course, they seemed to offer multiple.

Question eight asked if teachers had a modified music class, how many times per week the students meet, while question nine asked how many minutes each class received. Four responses were everyday for 50 minutes, one said modified music met two to three times a week for 44 minutes each time, and one said they meet with middle school students for 46 minutes every other day. Two responded once a week for 30 minutes, one said twice a week for 30 minutes, and one responded daily for 30 minutes. The reality of teaching a course like this is always the limitation of time. A teacher wrote "*I have made an impromptu class for CD [cognitively disabled] and Handicapped students once per week during my planning period. It has been a wonderful experience for the students, parents, and me.*"

Question ten and eleven asked if the teachers would be willing to share their curriculum and what resources they used. Most responded that they didn't have a curriculum written out or

even knew where to start. A few referred to the elementary training they had received in college and how they were using that to help, adding in modifications as needed. Some teachers asked for this project when it was finished. A teacher who is also teaching this class but chose to stay anonymous had interesting comments to share: *“I proposed this course for the first time this year in response to a growing number of special needs learners being placed into choirs. I had no examples to follow and have had to learn as I go. I was able to compile many resources throughout this semester. In many ways, this class was a total success and I would highly recommend something like this be allowed in every high school. I have been told by many of the special education staff that they had never seen these students participate so freely or so completely in any other setting.”*

The final section of the survey thanked teachers for the time they gave to take the survey and asked if they would be willing to give me contact information in order to collaborate on this project in the future. A fellow teacher from Oshkosh High School did offer to collaborate and said this about her modified music program: *“I use whatever I can get my hands on with the modified music! I have a projector/computer in my classroom and use it daily. Incorporating pictures and motions with the songs I use helps hold students attention and keep them focused. Pictures are great because some of my students can’t communicate verbally, but they can gesture. It’s one of the ways I learn about their musical interests. I use small hand held instruments as well such as rhythm sticks, hand-held jingles bells, and shakers.”*

The survey was very insightful into what Wisconsin does or does not offer students with disabilities in the form of music. It showed that many teachers and students would benefit from a modified music program but may not have the resources or understanding of where to start. The survey also showed that choir and band are often used to socialize and mainstream the

students but may not be the best fit musically. It showed that of those schools who do have a program for the cognitively disabled, many teachers already have a lot of good starts on their own, even with their limited time and resources. Communication and collaboration will be key aspects in helping music teachers across the state benefit from a modified music program. By beginning the process of compiling and creating a modified music curriculum, all music teachers will be able to use and adapt it for each individual school or teacher's need.

Application

Beginning to create a curriculum

The modified music class needs to start with a basic design of each lesson having movement, a song that works on keeping a steady beat, a melody students can sing or hum if they want or are able, a piece for listening, and some outlet for students to show creativity. In the book *Music in Special Education*, Adamek and Darrow (2010) said:

These students might not attend an inclusive music class but would likely have music instruction in smaller, self-contained adapted music classroom that is designed to meet the needs of the students with a specific or severe disability. The primary instructional focus of the adapted music class is to give the students opportunities to experience music (through singing, moving, playing, listening, and creating) and to enhance music learning at an appropriate developmental level and age level for the students (113).

Many music teachers see this design as a typical elementary music instruction, and to some degree it is. The ultimate goal is to create a class with general music and music therapy ideas and concepts mixed together. But here's a tale of caution: when first beginning to teach this class, I used the elementary ideas from college to become the basis for modified music. I brought out a book of *Old McDonald's Farm* for the students to sing with, and they mentally

shut down. They knew that they were in high school and should no longer be singing elementary songs (especially that well known). That is when I began taking more graduate classes in education psychology and began reading studies based on music therapy. The structure of the adapted music curriculum for the cognitively disabled began to reflect what I had learned and read about. Each teacher will need to assess how students react and create lessons that reflect the appropriate level desired.

Sometimes students will need to do easier songs in order to succeed and work up to harder ones. If teachers want to do something specific, it may need to be presented in a different light: tell the students that they are using a song they already know to learn a new version. By using a song they may know or have learned at a younger age to a new one, the lesson will become more age appropriate, and generally students will embrace it. The example for this concept is Appendix A, a lesson plan that uses a well-known elementary song to get into a more creative one. The *Music K-8 Magazine* created a song that allows for creative movement to be inserted within the structured “Head, Shoulders, Knees and Toes”. Students can sing, hum, or mime the original song and then step up to the rock and roll version that the *K-8 Magazine* provides; this creates structured movement for those who need it with creative movement for those more advanced. It is a challenge to find songs for students who want or are able to sing along. This is another way to let those students enjoy singing a song already learned in a fun way.

Music K-8 is a magazine created for the general music classrooms, grades kindergarten through eighth grade, but can also work in adaptive music when teachers are selective with which pieces to use. *Music K-8* works really well when used to incorporate more rock and roll

beats, fun lyrics that are relatively easy to learn, and none that would be seen as too young (examples: “The Wheels on the Bus” or “Five Little Ducks”). Adamek and Darrow (2010) said:

The use of age-appropriate music activities and materials allows students to function in a more normalized environment, an environment that is closer to that of students their same age who do not have disabilities. World music, folk music, traditional music, and classical music are a few examples of music that can span the age ranges (115).

The examples cited here use a lot of the *Music K-8* magazine but could be taught with any music venue available to teachers. Each teacher will need to design the curriculum to do whatever will work for the school and students by changing any of the lesson plans given in this project to accommodate those needs.

Through general observation of modified music, movement jumps to the front as a very important piece of the lesson. Katz (2007) discussed this in her study by saying: “For handicapped youth, communication, expression, and fundamental learning are often a difficult task, hindered by their disabilities and everyday obstacles. For this population, creative movement and music is extremely valuable” (Katz, 2007). Movement is based completely on the creativity of the individual. There is no correct answer to how a person may choose to move; students aren’t tied by ability level. They can move whatever way is comfortable (even in a wheelchair). This creates a place where every student can succeed and have fun. The book *Kids on the Move: Creative Movement for Children of all Ages*, by Boyd, Chalk and Law (2003), is also a good resource for teachers looking for a place to start with movement. The book has lesson plans designed around all types of movements, teaching ideas for the movements, and movement games.

Students may or may not be functioning highly enough to be creative with movement on their own right away. The teacher may have to create all the movement and dance routines at first and let students warm up to the idea that they can create their own movements as time goes on. With cognitively disabled students, repetition (at least in the beginning) is the best. Teachers should not be afraid to do the same lesson for as long as it takes the students to be comfortable. Often the same lesson plans may be used for two months, and still many students will copy whatever movement the teacher or adults do during creative movement time. With patience the students will become more comfortable with how they can move --knowing that they are in a safe environment and that they can create on their own without criticism.

In Appendix B: Creative movement, the lesson will approach how to let every student be creative. By bringing in outside objects, an example being a beach ball, teachers can get students really excited for what they get to do next by making music into a game. Whoever has the ball gets to do the "solo" dance, which can inspire the class to get excited to move, while the rest of the class can march to the beat or sway in place. Showing approval no matter what the student may decide to do is important as students may do the same movement every time or hardly anything. Teachers need to be patient and accepting of that since it is what students are comfortable doing. Communication will be a key aspect in understanding what each student is capable of doing by discussing the activity with the regular classroom teacher or parents. Teachers don't want to be responsible for making a student who may have a back issue try to bend to touch his/her toes or accept next to nothing from a student who excels at movement on a daily basis.

In Appendix C's lesson plan, teachers will see if students understand when the music tells them to freeze or stop moving. This plan will allow for creative movement as a group, no

student has to feel singled out, and the teacher can encourage students to move around the room and to do whatever comes naturally. Adamek and Darrow (2010) don't think motivation will be a problem in an engaging music classroom. If teachers choose music that's appropriate, treat each lesson like a game, and let students creatively have fun, the students will do the lesson. One key is to remember to go at whatever pace the class sets; teachers shouldn't push any students too fast or get frustrated if it takes longer than originally thought to create movement. Each student and disability is different and needs an individualized approach.

For students with disabilities, keeping a beat may be the most successful activity that they accomplish. The music teacher who agreed to collaborate on this project created a similar modified music program. One day we were discussing curricula with a music therapist. The collaborating teacher said she had tried to do a lesson with her students to the song "We Will Rock You" from the 1970's rock band Queen with the students hitting their legs twice and then clapping once to the beat (where it fits into the song). It didn't work out the way she had hoped, they had a really hard time doing the exercise. The music therapist said that didn't surprise her because many people with cognitive disabilities can keep a steady beat; however when the teacher adds anything else, like two different ranges of motion (example being hitting the legs followed by clapping hands), the students may be doing more than they can handle. When designing a program, teachers should try to remember to work at the pace of the students (which may be different for each student in the cognitively disabled classroom). Simply tapping their legs or clapping the beat may be all that the students can do to start with, and this may mean the world to the core classroom teacher or parent.

Appendix D and E are rhythm and instrument lesson plans. Appendix D is used to ease students into playing instruments by keeping a simple beat with rhythm sticks or mixing it

between that and clapping. After the students have mastered how to keep a beat, listen to directions (when to start and stop), and almost find the beat on their own, the teacher can choose to add more instruments. Some students won't ever find or keep the beat on their own or will always be after the beat, so each teacher may have to decide when students are ready. In Appendix E, the emphasis is learning new beats through a rhythm book titled *Tanka Tanka Skunk* by Steve Webb, which may lead to creative rhythmic expressions on their own. By using music therapy ideals teachers can create goals to assess if students can communicate well enough to follow directions: can they say "Tanka Skunk" on the beat while using an instrument, switch instruments when told to, and stop when asked to. Adamek and Darrow (2010) pointed out those three skill areas of need: communication, social interactions, and self-direction (167). All three can be fit into any basic rhythm lesson. Cooperation by sharing instruments helps with social interactions; the students seeing which instrument they want to try next will show motivation. Having to ask for that instrument creates the need for some form of communication. Therapy assessments that will better the life of that student in helping them acquire the skills to better communicate with the world around them.

As education progresses, all areas of learning have found that adding visual stimulation and examples often help students remember, learn, and communicate. It is the same concept when working with the cognitively disabled. Appendix F is a jazz unit where students learn about jazz music and playing the instruments through pictures, videos, and mime. Students in the general education population will often be willing to come in and play the instruments live for the cognitively disabled students and let them touch and handle the instruments. The same concept can be expanded to include multiple lessons on rock instruments, orchestra instruments, and world instruments. As most teachers have learned already, rock instruments are usually the

favorite as everyone wants to play guitar (even air play). Putting movements, feelings, and pictures to a word not only help students to understand but also create a bond with the instrument and type of music.

With the use of multiple types of clip art, pictures (new and historical), videos (YouTube is a great resource), cartoons, the students can gravitate to the different type of visualization they associate with best. What student doesn't appreciate a good cartoon now and again? The winter is a good time to introduce cognitively disabled students and general education students to ballet by watching *The Nutcracker*. In both situations, I have used Walt Disney's *Fantasia*'s clip of *The Nutcracker* to familiarize students to the music before watching the actual ballet. The students, especially cognitively disabled, are able to better understand what they were watching because they've already heard and seen it once before.

Appendices have been attached, written out as individual lesson plans, yet all could be paired together. The survey showed that there are many ideas for how long and how many days a week students should meet for modified music. The perspective of this music educator is that music everyday would be best, and 30 minutes seems to be the adequate amount of time to keep students attention.

Teachers should mix and match lessons to best serve the needs of the class, everything listed can fit into a thirty minute lesson: movement, rhythm, play, visuals, and social interactions. Music teachers would be wise to remember students will get bored if they spend an entire half hour on instruments or playing the dance game with the beach ball. An example of a typical modified music class would be: starting with a group dance where the students follow and do what the teacher does, getting rhythm sticks and keeping a steady beat for the next song, being creative with beats on the third song or maybe adding in more instruments and switching them,

reviewing what the jazz instruments are through pictures, “mimic playing” them to a jazz song, watching a jazz clip, marching around the room (each student having a turn to lead), ending with the freeze song. In some higher functioning cognitively disabled classrooms this may not be enough to fill the time, so teachers may have to add in even more exercises and instruments. Collaboration between the band and choir teachers is also beneficial in this situation, as either teacher could take the higher functioning cognitively disabled students into the band room and teach them easy drum rhythms on actual drums. Modified music should continually be adapting year after year to best serve whoever is in the class.

Both general music and music therapy goals should be addressed with each lesson and assessment. The school district that I currently work for gives each cognitively disabled student a pass or fail grade. Many other teachers in other districts also use a similar system. Our school goes a step further by sending home written assessments once a semester. The rubric used for that is attached in Appendix G. The assessment focuses on Socialization, Movement, Rhythm and Instruments, and Listening and Communication. At the bottom of the rubric is a space for comments which again is beneficially in keeping communication open between teachers and parents.

Each assessment should be based upon the individual student and how this child will personally grow or achieve success in the music classroom. Modified music is designed for the student, for the individual needs, and, therefore, assessments will have to follow the individualized education program (IEP). Interaction between the music teacher and all involved in the IEP will help music teachers understand whether to assess more musical goals, music therapy goals, or mix the two together. Bassett and Cullen (2011) caution teachers from preferring only “norm-based or formal” assessment but further pointing out that informal

assessment may be the only reasonable way to determine functional performance of severely cognitively disabled students. This refers to the ability to see assess students informally each time you have music by watching to see if they understand the cues given, if the student has motivation to perform music themselves, if they retained from the last class how to do certain tasks. By taking out the idea that the only way to assess students is through tests or written work, students will have more opportunities to grow and learn.

Finally, each teacher will need to learn the cues of the students, as that will show when they are finished with something for the day and want to move on or even hate the activity and never want to do it again. As in any teaching situation, the students will communicate how they feel and what they like to do. Which will also lead the teacher to assess differently then they may be used to in their other classroom settings when figuring out what to do next and how to achieve a successful music class.

Modified music should be a class offered to all students with severe cognitive disabilities and any other special needs that would benefit. It should offer an outlet for self and musical growth and understanding, movement, rhythm, listening, and creativity. Modified music could be the class to help students grow in numerous areas of need. Cognitively disabled students should have a place in the music program and a music class where they can excel and be great.

Conclusion

The research in this paper has provided information supportive to the concept of music stimulating the mind and positively affecting cognitively disabled children in the music classroom. By hosting specialists at the state level and local school levels, and continuing education into music therapy, it can continue to help students achieve more success in not only music class but also with life skills. Wisconsin teachers would benefit from more materials,

discussion, and a modified music class outline, but many agreed that students should have the option of a modified music program designed to fit their needs. The reality of limited funding and time often keep teachers from designing a program of their own. What this project shows is the benefit of creating a modified music class. It shows that teachers are interested in a curriculum or a basic lesson outline. Finally, offering an idea of where to begin in finding resources.

Leaman (2008) talks about how it doesn't matter if teachers have experience teaching disabilities, they only need enthusiasm. Cognitively disabled students may not thrive in band, orchestra, or choir, but they do thrive with music as a general concept and deserve a class structured for their needs. Through communication, everyone involved can work together to create a modified music class that will help students achieve success. By designing a class to include general music and music therapy concepts, teachers can understand the curriculum and what goals are attainable. Through understanding how music influences the brain, body, and community, the teacher can have classroom expectations that reflect positive personal growth and performance. Cognitively disabled students deserve a class that will not only help them learn but also help them appreciate the world around them.

Cognitively disabled students are some of the most enthusiastic students I have ever had the pleasure to work with in my classroom. Pontiff (2004) finished his article with discussing how rewarding it is to teach special learners because they love any and all music. One of the most rewarding parts of my career has been teaching the modified music program to cognitively disabled students. When special education teachers share stories with me about students accomplishing something better or faster due to the help they received from music class, it solidifies the need for modified music across the state.

Students with severe cognitive disabilities deserve to have a music class designed to fit their specific needs and by having a course designed to help those with disabilities it could be a positive impact for these students. Through communication music teachers, scholars, and therapists, can better understand successes, challenges, best practices, research, and workable lessons to create a curriculum that will continue to improve the class and experience for students. This project created a discussion and awareness for music education in Wisconsin. It concluded that resources do not exist to serve middle and high school cognitively disabled students in the area of music, which leads me to look toward music therapy as inspiration and guidance for the future. Disseminating the developed lesson plans and findings about working with cognitively disabled students can be done through conferences, websites, and workshops. When music educators openly communicate and collaborate is when the positive difference will be made, and music will continue to provide a strong venue to serve students.

References

- Adamek, M., Darrow, A. (2010). *Music in Special Education*. Maryland: The American Music Therapy Association, Inc.
- Bassett, J., Cullen, D. (2011). *The IEP from A to Z: How to Create Meaningful and Measurable Goals and Objectives*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Boyd, K., Chalk, M., Law, J. (2003). *Kids on the Move: Creative Movement For Children of All Ages*. Texas: Creative Publishing.
- Campbell, D. (2000). *The Mozart effect for children: Awakening your child's mind, health, and creativity with music*. New York: William Morrow.
- Council for exceptional children. (2010). Retrieved from <http://www.cec.sped.org/>
- Darrow, A. (2009). Barriers to effective inclusion and strategies to overcome them. *General Music Today*, 22(3), 29-31.
- Darrow, A (1999). Music educators' perceptions regarding the inclusion of students with severe disabilities in music classrooms. *The Journal of Music Therapy*, 36(4), 254-273.
- Darrow, A. (2007). Adaptations in the classroom: Accommodations and modifications: Part I. *General Music Today*, 20(3), 32-34.
- Darrow, A. (2008). Adaptations in the classroom: Accommodations and modifications, Part 2. *General Music Today*, 21(3), 32-34.
- Demski, J. (2008). And access for all. *T H E Journal*, 35(1), 30-35.
- Fitzgerald, M. (2006). I send my best Matthew to school every day: Music educators Collaborating with parents. *Music Educators Journal*, 92(4), 40-45.
- Gadberry, D. (2009). Is inclusion working in the music classroom? *Kodaly Envoy*. Retrieved from Professional Development Collection database.

- Gooding, L. (2009). Enhancing social competence in the music classroom. *General Music Today*, 23(1), 35-38.
- Hourigan, R. (2007). Preparing music teachers to teach students with special needs. *Applications of Research in Music Education*, 26(1), 5-14.
- Hourigan, R. (2009). Pre-service music teachers' perceptions of fieldwork experiences in a Special needs classroom. *Journal of Research in Music Education*, 57(2), 152-168.
- Iseminger, S.H. (2009). Keys to Success with Autistic Children. *Teaching Music*, 16(6), 28-31.
- Katz, R. (2007). *Beyond the Classroom: The implementation of Creative Movement and Music in Schools for the Disabled*. Samoa: SIT Samoa.
- Leaman, L. (2008). Finding their voices. *The Times Educational Supplement*, (4816), Retrieved from lexisNexis Academic Collection database.
- Levitin, D. (2006). *This is your brain on music: The science of a human obsession*. New York: Dutton Adult.
- Mcleskey, J., Landers, E. (2006). Classic articles in special education and exploratory investigation. *Remedial and Special Education*, 27(2), 68-76.
- Montgomery, J., Martinson, A. (2006). Partnering with music therapists: A model for addressing students' musical and extramusical goals. *Music Educators Journal*, 92(4), 34-39.
- National down syndrome society. (2010). Retrieved from <http://www.ndss.org/>
- Peretz, I. (2008). Musical disorders from behavior to genes. *Association for Psychological Science*, 17(5), 329-333.
- Peterson, C.K. (2010). Encouraging Cognitive Connections and Creativity in the Music Classroom. *Music Educators Journal*, 97(2), 25-29.

- Pontiff, E. (2004). Teaching special learners: Ideas from veteran teachers in the music classroom. *Teaching Music, 12*(3), 52-58.
- Riley, Z. (2008). *Music and the Mind: PBS*. Retrieved from <http://www.pbs.org/independentlens/musicfromtheinsideout/mind.html>
- Schwartzberg, E., Silverman M. (2012). Effects of pitch, rhythm, and accompaniment on short- and long-term visual recall in children with autism spectrum disorders. *The Arts in Psychotherapy, 39*, 314-320.
- Schellenberg, E. (2005). Music and cognitive abilities. *American Psychological Society, 14*(6), 317-320.
- Storr, A. (1992). *Music and the mind*. New York: The Free Press.
- traumaticbraininjury.com. (2004). Retrieved from <http://www.traumaticbraininjury.com/>
- Turnbull, H. (2005). Individuals with disabilities education act reauthorization: Accountability and personal responsibility. *Remedial and Special Education, 26*(6), 320-326.
- Walter, J. (2006). The basic IDEA: The individuals with disabilities act in your classroom. *Teaching Music, 14*(3), 22-26.
- Webb, S. (2003). *Tanka Tanka Skunk*. New York: Orchard Books.
- Williams syndrome association. (2010). Retrieved from <http://www.williams-syndrome.org/>

Appendix A

Cognitively Disabled Music Lesson Plan: Creative Movement and Singing

Objectives:

- Students will sing.
- Students will follow the teacher in movement.
- Students will begin to understand their bodies better in making creative movement.

Materials:

- *Music K-8 Magazine*, Volume 15, Number 1: The Body Boogie.
- *Music K-8 CD*, Volume 15.

Procedure:

- 1) Tell students that they will join the teacher in singing “Head, Shoulders, Knees and Toes.”
- 2) Show students the actions for “Head, Shoulders, Knees and Toes.”
- 3) Discuss that after singing through it once, students will then hum head; after singing through it the 2nd time students will hum head and shoulders; after singing through it the 3rd time students will hum head, shoulders and knees; the 4th time students will hum all 4. [I stop after the 4th because they are high school and like to keep the class moving.]
- 4) Sing the song with the actions and humming at appropriate times.
- 5) Tell students that they may now dance creatively however they want at the beginning and in the middle of the next song but will do the same actions of “Head, Shoulder’s, Knees and Toes” when the song lyrics say to: adding some additional ones like back and hips.
- 6) This is a boogie woogie version from *K-8 Magazine*, but I still encourage the students who want to sing to do so.
- 7) Push play for the song “The Body Boogie” from *Music K-8 Magazine’s CD: Volume 15*.
- 8) Let students do any dance movements they want during “the body boogie is the best” portion of the song and the beginning.

Assessment:

- Teacher will assess that the students understood how to move different parts of their body.
- Teacher will assess which students can/will sing.
- Teacher will assess that students understand how to follow directions.
- Teacher can fill out written assessment provided in Appendix G.

Appendix B

Cognitively Disabled Music Lesson Plan: Creative Movement

Objectives:

- Students will create movement.
- Students will begin to understand their body better in making creative movement.
- Students will begin to understand fast vs. slow tempo.

Materials:

- *Music K-8 Magazine*: any issue
- Any dance CD
- Ball (beach or rubber): doesn't have to be expensive.
- Streamers (can be made out of streamers and tape).

Procedure:

- 1) The Ball Game.
- 2) Have the students get into a circle (not too far apart or too close).
- 3) Explain that the ball game begins with students gently tossing the ball to each other or the teacher.
- 4) When students get the ball they get to do whatever dance-move they want, for as long as the student wants, (within reason not the entire song): teachers may want to demonstrate with another adult or student.
- 5) Play the dance song you selected and start to pass the ball, teachers should clap or show approval somehow after each creative movement, especially if it's outside of the students normal comfort zone.
- 6) Ask if the song was fast or slow (if teachers are also using streamers a good idea would be to make the song with the ball the fast one).
- 7) Put the ball away and have the students pick up streamers (or hand them out).
- 8) Tell students they may move however they want around the room with their streamers to the music.
- 9) Play the dance song you selected (if teachers started with the ball game and a fast song it would teach the students better by dancing to a somewhat slow song).
- 10) After you've finished ask the students if the song was fast or slow.
- 11) If the student's struggle with the tempos, add in a visualization to help them understand the differences in music.

Assessment:

- Teacher will assess that the students understood how to move different parts of their body.
- Teacher will assess comfort in creativity.
- Teacher will evaluate that students understand fast or slow in music.
- Teacher can fill out written assessment provided in Appendix G.

Appendix C

Cognitively Disabled Music Lesson Plan: Creative Movement: Freezing-Stopping

Objectives:

- Students will create movement.
- Students will begin to understand their body better in striking a pose.
- Students will begin to understand when to stop moving.

Materials:

- *Music K-8 Magazine*: Volume 14, Number 2-November/December 2003
- *Music K-8 Magazine*: Volume 17, Number 4- March/April 2007
- Any CD with freeze type dance music
- Chairs

Procedure 1: Freeze

- 1) Teach the students that when the *Music K-8 Magazine*'s song "Freeze" from Volume 14, number 2, says freeze, it means stop.
- 2) Demonstrate for the students what it looks like to dance creatively and freeze (stop).
- 3) Play the song and let students dance creatively and freeze when supposed to. Dance with the students so they have the visual understanding through watching the teacher.
- 4) Assess if the students understand where and when to stop.
- 5) When students have been assessed to understand the task, try a different song or the version without words.

Procedure 2: Wiggleworm/Statue

- 1) Teach the students and/or show through pictures what statues look like.
- 2) Explain when the song "Wiggleworm/Statue" from the *Music K-8 Magazine* Volume 17, number 4, says stand like a statue, they have to freeze in the position of a statue.
- 3) Demonstrate for the students what freezing like a statue may look like.
- 4) Have the students practice wiggling like a worm with the teacher and practice being statues.
- 5) Play the song and do the dance.
- 6) Assess if students wiggle creatively and know when and how to create a statue.

Procedure 3: Musical Chairs

- 1) Show the students how to make a circle around chairs (have enough for everyone to win the first time).
- 2) When the music stops, demonstrate to them how to sit.
- 3) Explain the game, that if the student doesn't find a chair to sit on, they have to stand to the side until one student wins.
- 4) Let the students play the game and see who wins.
- 5) If there is a wide range of cognitive functioning in class teachers may want to create two circles, one for each level of ability.

Assessment:

- Teacher will evaluate that the students understood when to stop dancing.
- Teacher will evaluate that students understand when the music stops, or says to stop, or change.
- Teacher can fill out written assessment provided in Appendix G.

Appendix D

Cognitively Disabled Music Lesson Plan: Basics in Rhythms & Playing instruments.

Objectives:

- Students will keep a beat.
- Students will follow the teacher's instructions telling when to stop, start, and what beat to follow.
- Students will use instruments correctly.

Materials:

- Any *Music K-8 Magazine*.
- Any music rhythm CD: African Drumming, Latin Rhythms, etc.
- Rhythm Sticks, shakers, hand drums, jingle bells, etc.

Procedure 1:

- 1) Bring out rhythm sticks and show them how to use them correctly.
- 2) Start by keeping the beat in any 4/4 meter song.
- 3) A nice option of song is: "4/4 Meter" from the *K-8 Magazine*: Volume 15, Number 1.
- 4) Keep a steady beat using rhythm sticks.
- 5) When students have kept a steady beat, discuss how to make different sounds with rhythm sticks.
- 6) Play another song and have the students follow directions by changing the sound, stopping (resting) when the teacher tells them, and keeping a steady beat.
- 7) Repeat 1-6 until students are assessed as being comfortable with creating a steady beat and listening to the teacher's directions.

Procedure 2:

- 1) Bring out more instruments (if you have them) and demonstrate how to use each correctly.
- 2) Hand them out.
- 3) Have students keep the beat to a drumming CD.
- 4) Switch instruments so everyone has a turn.
- 5) Allow some fun "creative time" for students to play more than just the beat.
- 6) Assess if students understand the teacher's directions: when to switch, how to play the instruments correctly, and if they can be creative on their own.

Assessment:

- Teacher will assess that the students understand how to keep a steady beat.
- Teacher will evaluate that students are able to use the instruments properly.
- Teacher will evaluate that students understand how to follow direction.
- Teacher can fill out written assessment provided in Appendix G.

Appendix E

Cognitively Disabled Music Lesson Plan: Basics in Rhythms & Playing instruments.

Objectives:

- Students will keep a beat.
- Students will follow the teacher in when to stop, start, and what beat to follow.
- Students will use instruments correctly, and politely switch with other students.

Materials:

- Tanka Tanka Skunk by Steve Webb
- Any music rhythm CD: African drumming, Latin rhythms, etc.
- Rhythm sticks, shakers, hand drums, jingle bells, etc.
- *Music K-8 Magazine*, Volume 15: Number 4, March/April 2005 edition.

Procedure 1:

- 1) Bring out rhythm sticks and remind students how to use them correctly.
- 2) Take out the book *Tanka Tanka Skunk* by Steve Webb and work with students on how to hit the sticks on the syllables and say the words if they are able.
- 3) Read the book using rhythm sticks with the syllables.
- 4) Put in a rhythm CD like African drumming.
- 5) Bring out more instruments and remind students how to use each correctly as you hand them out.
- 6) Switch instruments so everyone has a turn.
- 7) Assess if the students are more creative when allowed to play with the different beat patterns being learned.

Procedure 2:

- 1) Use the *Music K-8* magazine, Volume 15, number 4's song "Play Me a Cowbell."
- 2) Remind students how to correctly use the instruments and hand out a cowbell, tambourine, rhythm sticks, and drum.
- 3) The song is designed so each instrument gets to play a solo (or as 2 if the group is bigger) and then as a full instrument group.
- 4) Have students switch instruments after playing together as a full group of instruments.
- 5) Assess that students can solo play creatively, play well as a group, and follow directions on when to switch instruments.

Assessment:

- Teacher will evaluate that the students understand how to keep a beat pattern.
- Teacher will evaluate that students are able to use the instruments properly.
- Teacher will evaluate that students understand how to follow direction.
- Teacher will evaluate if students can make creative rhythms.
- Teacher can fill out written assessment provided in Appendix G.

Appendix F

Cognitively Disabled Music Lesson Plan: Jazz

Objectives:

- Students will see which instruments play jazz, what they look like.
- Students will hear what jazz sounds like.
- Students will watch jazz related clips.
- Students will learn how jazz instruments are played.

Materials:

- Power Point slides / pictures of the jazz instruments.
- Pictures showing how people play the instruments.
- Disney's *Melody Time* and *Make Mine Music* DVDs.
- Any other Jazz clips that may be appropriate.
- *Music K-8 magazines* or Jazz music that is appropriate.

Procedure 1:

- 1) Show students the slides of whatever 3-4 instruments you want to start with (trumpet, saxophone, trombone, drum set).
- 2) Have them mimic with you how they would play the instrument if they had it (example play the saxophone by imagination).
- 3) Play "Feelin' Jazzy" from *Music K-8*, Volume 19: number 4.
- 4) Have students "mimic play" the instruments (saxophones, trumpets, drums, etc.) with the music. Add snaps on the off-beat or jazz hands to get other movements involved.
- 5) Show any great jazz clip of people performing (examples: Louis Armstrong or Duke Ellington clips on YouTube).

Procedure 2:

- 1) Show students the jazz clip from Disney's *Melody Time*: "Blame it on the Samba."
- 2) Learn a new instrument the trombone through pictures and imagination play.
- 3) Play "All Jazzed Up" from *Music K-8*, Volume 17: number 4.
- 4) "Mimic Play" all the instruments again.
- 5) Play another jazz song that students can "play" the instruments during.

Procedure 3:

- 1) Start with a jazz song students have already learned with instruments they already know.
- 2) Show more instruments on power point or with pictures (keyboard, clarinet, bass).
- 3) Add another song that would play these new instruments.
- 4) Work up to a song where you can play all the instruments learned, and creatively put them together in different orders.
- 5) Showcase student performers from the jazz band by having them come to class and play instruments.

Assessment:

- Teacher will evaluate that the students understand how the instruments work.
- Teacher will evaluate that students are able to associate instrument names with pictures, or playing movements.
- Teacher can fill out written assessment provided in Appendix G.

Appendix G

Assessment Rubric

To be used for individual progress of the student with parents, and IEP team: not necessarily grading. Many schools will use a pass / fail concept of grading which works well for the class.

Name of Student: _____

A number system will be used to determine how much growth the student has had in music throughout the semester. 1 will be the starting number and 5 will show the most growth. The rubric isn't for a grade: students will be scored by pass fail for participating: the rubric is for the music teacher, classroom teacher, and parents to see where the most growth was achieved.

Socialization:

Student can follow directions:	1	2	3	4	5
Student works well in a group:	1	2	3	4	5
Student shares with other students:	1	2	3	4	5

Movement:

Student can create his/her own movement:	1	2	3	4	5
Student stops and starts as directed:	1	2	3	4	5
Student can lead the group in marching:	1	2	3	4	5
Student participates in marching:	1	2	3	4	5

Rhythm and Instruments:

Student can keep a steady beat:	1	2	3	4	5
Student can play instruments:	1	2	3	4	5
Student can exhibit creativity in playing:	1	2	3	4	5

Listening and Communication:

Student displays active listening to musical pieces:	1	2	3	4	5
Student can communicate what they want or enjoy:	1	2	3	4	5
Student can respond to music in some way which may include by not be limited to singing or humming:	1	2	3	4	5

Comments: _____
