

Reviewed by Megan Bergeron DiSciscio

Including Everyone: Creating Music Classrooms Where All Children Learn

Written by Judith A. Jellison
New York, New York: Oxford University Press, 2015

“**T**his book is not so much about how to teach as it is about how to *think* as a teacher confronting a variety of learning challenges.” Jellison begins with an ambitious mission statement for this comprehensive examination of the state of music education and special education in the United States. Grounded in the quickly changing landscape of educational policy, *Including Everyone* lays out a plan for cultivating classrooms that include all students, avoid prohibitive labels, and transform the ways both typical and atypical students learn. Author Judith Jellison’s writing style is accessible and thorough; educators who might normally shy away from research-based writing will find this information presented clearly and simply.

The book’s four chapters are organized around the simple questions, “Who’s Here?” “What’s the Point?” “Where Do I Start?” and “Now What?” Jellison uses a combination of historical background, narrative description, and current research findings to answer each question and arm music educators with the knowledge to make difficult changes to practice.

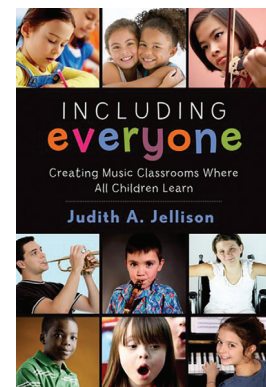
The first chapter, “Who’s Here?” provides an invaluable guide to the sea of acronyms, labels, characteristics, services, and laws that constitute special education in the United States. Information is included on the Individuals with

Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and the Response to Intervention (RTI) educational model. Jellison also points out that little research exists to inform us how students with disabilities perform *musically* compared to their typically developing peers; however, “there is a wealth of knowledge of human learning.” From this wealth of knowledge Jellison lays the groundwork for a model of inclusive music education proposed in Chapter 4.

The second chapter, “What’s the Point?” presents a strong philosophical argument, beginning with a call to challenge *why* we teach what we teach. Jellison argues that music educators and those who design curricula and standards do not spend enough time considering the “long-term music goals for our citizenry” and presents data that show low adult participation, the declining status of music education in schools, and dropping student participation and achievement. She advocates for an overall plan to support students’ transitions from elementary to secondary level music-learning experiences during the schooling years, and later to musical experiences in and throughout adulthood. The chapter ends with suggestions for designing music programs that scaffold transition and transfer of learning to support lifelong learning in music.

Readers will note the alignment of these principles with the Orff Schulwerk approach in their support of active music learning experiences that are culturally congruent and collaborative and lead to student ownership of learning.

Educators who find themselves short on time and already “sold” on the author’s mission will find the heart of this book in the final two chapters. Chapter 3, “Where Do I Start?” outlines four principles to guide decision making for inclusive, engaging, and meaningful musical experiences: (1) culturally normative



music experiences and socially valued roles; (2) frequent, positive, and reciprocal peer interactions; (3) fostering self-determination; and (4) collaboration and coordinated efforts. Each principle is addressed first through theory and research, and then via applications and strategies. Readers will note the alignment of these principles with the Orff Schulwerk approach in their support of active music learning experiences that are culturally congruent and collaborative and lead to student ownership of learning. Lastly, the chapter addresses the multitude of personal relationships that exist in the music classroom. The author examines the roles of parent, paraprofessional, and music therapist separately, and outlines strategies for building positive, collaborative, constructive relationships.

The final chapter, “Now What?” provides concrete tools to implement the curricular changes outlined in this book. Jellison uses the principles of Universal Design for Learning (UDL) to present a four-point model for effective inclusive music programs:

1. Creating a quality music program and a culture of inclusion
2. Gathering information
3. Planning and implementing strategies
4. Thinking ahead

For each of these points, the author includes detailed guidelines and strategies for collecting student information, modifying curricular goals, establishing performance standards, and assessing the effectiveness of accommodations or modifications.

For those seeking a more detailed look at the history and policy of special education, Jellison provides four exhaustive appendices: (1) a historical timeline of special education law; (2) a history of the transition towards inclusion for special education students; (3) a more detailed look at IDEA; and (4) changes in practice since 1970. Suggested extension activities and discussion questions at the end provide an opportunity for thoughtful discourse among colleagues, or could support use in a college classroom. The companion website provides a few additional resources, such as IDEA excerpts, a model IEP form, and information on Universal Design, to name a few. These are limited, however, and readers looking for a well-designed, interactive web resource might be disappointed.

In conclusion, *Including Everyone* provides tiers of information well suited to serve music educators at any level of experience. Pre-service educators will find a detailed and savvy guide to the often confusing world of special education jargon and policy, as well as clear resources for creating an inclusive classroom. Experienced teachers will find practical solutions to pervasive problems, and the inspiration and support to make difficult changes in the classroom. ■

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INDEX OF ADVERTISERS

AOSA Professional Development Conference	inside back cover
Beatin' Path	29
Carl Orff Canada	11
Malmark Bellcraftsmen	23
Music Is Elementary	35
Music Rhapsody	35
Peripole	back cover

Quaver	1
Sonor	inside front cover
Studio 49	2
Teaching With Orff	5
University of Hartford	23
VanderCook College of Music	47
West Music	13
Yamaha	9