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## The Benefits of Music Education in the Mild to Moderate Special Education Classroom, Grades 3-5

Kimberly Lloyd  
*Dominican University of California*

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# The Benefits of Music Education in the Mild to Moderate Special Education Classroom, Grades 3-5

KIMBERLY G. LLOYD

DOMINICAN UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA

SCHOLARLY & CREATIVE WORKS CONFERENCE

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# Statement of the Problem

- ❖ A local arts organization in need of a new assessment tool to measure the impact of music on students...
  - ❖ Linked to IEP goals
  - ❖ Tracked through their educational careers
  - ❖ On a per student basis



## Research Question

- ▶ Does music education impact 3<sup>rd</sup> – 5<sup>th</sup> grade students with mild to moderate disabilities in developing their academic, social and/or behavioral goals as identified in their Individualized Education Programs (IEPs)?



# Literature Review

- ▶ Research shows that there are benefits to including the arts in general education
  - ▶ *Champions of Change: The Impact of the Arts on Learning*, Edited by Edward B. Fiske
  - ▶ *Critical Links: Learning in the Arts and Student Academic and Social Development*, Edited by Richard J. Deasy
- ▶ Literature on the benefits of including the arts in special education is limited

# Study

- ❖ Qualitative case study
  - ❖ 9 week music program in a 3<sup>rd</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> grade SDC
  - ❖ Document review of IEPs
  - ❖ Teacher, parent, music teacher interviews
  - ❖ Music class observations
  - ❖ 3 participants

# Participants

Carmen*	Luis*	John*
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 9 year old female</li><li>• Disability: ID</li><li>• Goal: To verbalize her wants and needs</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 8 year old male</li><li>• Disability: ID, SLD</li><li>• Goal: Follow teacher directions</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 9 year old male</li><li>• Disability: ASD, ID</li><li>• Goal: To participate in group activities</li></ul>

*\*To protect confidentiality, students were assigned a pseudonym.*

# Findings

- ❖ Music program offered social and behavioral benefits

Carmen	Luis	John
IEP goal stayed at baseline	IEP goal met	IEP goal met

- ❖ There continues to be a need for research on this topic



# Comments/Questions

*“The arts provide all sorts of wondrous opportunities for all children. However, for exceptional students [students with disabilities], the arts are often a savior, a respite, and a solace that give these children a chance to express themselves and feel good about themselves.”*

--Sally Smith, founder of the Lab School for Children with Disabilities

