

Berklee College of Music

## Research Media and Information Exchange

---

ABLE Assembly Conference Session Materials

ABLE Resource Center Formats

---

4-9-2022

### What Does Inclusion Truly Look Like, and Who Gets to Decide?

Elizabeth Staal

Follow this and additional works at: <https://remix.berklee.edu/able-assembly-conference>

---

#### Recommended Citation

Staal, E. (2022). What Does Inclusion Truly Look Like, and Who Gets to Decide?. Retrieved from <https://remix.berklee.edu/able-assembly-conference/88>

This ABLE Assembly Conference Session Materials is brought to you for free and open access by the ABLE Resource Center Formats at Research Media and Information Exchange. It has been accepted for inclusion in ABLE Assembly Conference Session Materials by an authorized administrator of Research Media and Information Exchange. For more information, please contact [jmforce@berklee.edu](mailto:jmforce@berklee.edu), [mburke3@berklee.edu](mailto:mburke3@berklee.edu).

# **What Does Inclusion Look Like, and Who Gets to Decide?**

**Elisabeth Staal**

ABLE Assembly 2022

# OVERVIEW

- Why ask this question?
- What does inclusion look like?
- Who decides what inclusion looks like?
- Findings
- Moving Forward

# Why this question?

What Does Inclusion Look  
Like, and Who Gets to Decide?

# Why this question?

1. Contribute to a collective understanding of what pursuing inclusion entails
2. Promote intentionality and challenge complacency
3. Emphasize the power in decision-making and centering student and community voices

# Research



Institute for Arts Education  
and Special Needs

- Survey to practitioners
- Field examples

# Survey Questions

1. How do you personally define inclusion of students with disabilities participating in arts education programs?
2. Whose perspectives or what influences inform how you define inclusion?
3. In the context of students with disabilities participating in arts education programs, please define how inclusion is operationalized in your work.
4. Who decides, or whose perspectives inform, how inclusion is operationalized in your work?
5. (Optional) Do you identify as being disabled or having a disability? This question is asked because it is important to know how voices of the disability community are or are not represented in this work. This question is entirely optional.

# Pause & Answer

1. How do you personally define inclusion of students with disabilities participating in arts education programs?
2. Whose perspectives or what influences inform how you define inclusion
3. In the context of students with disabilities participating in arts education programs, please define how inclusion is operationalized in your work
4. Who decides, or whose perspectives inform, how inclusion is operationalized in your work?



# Defining Inclusion

## Aspirational

“Inclusion of students with disabilities takes place when all individuals can belong and make meaningful contributions to the organization, space, and program.”

vs.

## Operationalize

“...creating learning environments where students can meaningfully interact with materials, learning processes, content, and with their peers in ways that account for and value multiple ways of being and doing.”

# Influences & Decision-Makers

## Operationally

- Partner schools
- Administration
- Staff
- Budget
- People with disabilities

# Compelling Examples of Practice

- Advisor model
- Student feedback loops
- Community partnerships

# Findings

- How can student voice be centered more in decision making?
- Are people with disabilities given decision-making power?
- Are student choices restricted because of their disabilities in ways that are unnecessary?
- How can our personal definitions of inclusion be realized in how we operationalize inclusion?

# So, what now?

- Continuously ask yourself questions
- Consider how you can immediately center voices of students and the disability community in your work

# Thank you!

Elisabeth Staal

[elisabeth\\_staal@gse.harvard.edu](mailto:elisabeth_staal@gse.harvard.edu)



Institute for Arts Education  
and Special Needs