

SCRIPT_Arts-Based Education -Key to Success; Model of Practice: Aruba (Dutch Caribbean)

[Slide 1] **ES**Welcome to our 2022 ABLE ASSEMBLY Conference Session, “ Arts-Based Education – Key to Success; Model of Practice: Aruba (Dutch Caribbean).” Presented by Elise S. Sobol, Ed.D. and Rose-Marie Provence, MSc.

[Slide 2]-My name is Elise Sobol. I serve as an Advisory Board member of both the Berklee Institute for Arts Education and Special Needs and the Fundacion Muchila Creativo in Aruba. I am sitting at my desk in my home office in Melville, Long Island against a white wall with a framed logo of Muchila and four framed diplomas with a smiling photograph of me in cap and gown. I am a brunette with medium colored skin and shoulder length hair. I am wearing a navy-blue dress with a patterned scarf and tortoise framed reading glasses. My colleague Rose-Marie Provence, Founder/Director of Fundacion Muchila Creativo comes to you today from her brightly colored office in the sunny Dutch Caribbean Island of Aruba. She is sitting at her desk and will introduce herself to you later on in our presentation.

[Slide 3] Our Agenda will cover four points: 1) describing the steps that were taken to develop the arts-based education model of practice we are sharing with you; 2) information about our successful music teacher education preparation workshops; 3) explanation about the innovative Learn to Workplace program for students with disabilities and 4) we will conclude our presentation with contact, references, resources, and website information.

[Slide 4] I bring to our topic my experience as a P-12 music educator in both general and special music education as well as a college professor specializing in teacher education preparation. My most recent full time academic position was Visiting Associate Professor of Music Education at New York University where my appointment included being the Director of Music Education undergraduate through doctoral programs, the Coordinator for Music Licensure Programs, and the Founder/Director of Continuing Education in Music, a community outreach program for adult learners with/without disabilities.

From 1993-2019 I served the New York State School Music Association as the State Chairperson for Music for Special Learners. My responsibilities included being a resource for members in all counties throughout New York State and most primarily as a leader to help shape policy and practice concerning inclusive music education. My career years have paralleled the passing and reauthorizations of U.S. landmark legislation laws for special education and civil rights. To do my part to support the movement, through professional writing, speaking, and active teaching, my key messages were that there

was no greater lively art than music for bringing out the learning potential of a student, that there is an immortal spirit with full capacity to learn in each and every child regardless of their disability and that to this end, every child *should* and *can* have school success.

During these years of active service to the New York State School Music Association, I was fortunate to be invited to share my message of music success for special learners globally with international educators and practitioners. My text *An Attitude and Approach for Teaching Music to Special Learners* first came out in 2001, followed by multiple editions [Figure 1- photo of text covers at the end of this presentation].

In 2003, Rose- Marie Provence established Fundacion Muchila Creativo to promote the Arts and Culture in the Aruban community.

In Fall, 2004 my co-presenter brought nine teacher education candidates to New York University from the Instituto Pedagogico Arubano to observe curriculum/teacher education practices. Serving as their music chair, Rose-Marie Provence was a highly experienced, well respected, Dutch trained music educator and a certified music therapist. When she visited my music in special education classes she saw a new approach to teaching - a demonstration of my then, unique multi-modal/multi-sensory facilitative style of music instruction that featured aural, visual, tactile, and kinesthetic participation for 100% student engagement.

This attitude and approach for successful music inclusion reached a wide range of diverse learners with a variety of cognitive, communicative, behavioral and emotional, physical or sensory traits.

As Rose-Marie Provence watched all participants experiencing joy in the music activities, she became convinced that she wanted to bring this type of teacher education preparation to Aruba. She developed a plan for sponsorship in collaboration with her Foundation. August 2005, I arrived in Aruba to give my first set of professional development workshops entitled "Reaching Higher with Music in Education" [Figure 2-newspaper clipping at the end of the presentation].

[Slide 5] The professional development workshops were supported whole heartedly by the Minister of Education as something for the betterment of the Aruban community. Over time, Rose Marie Provence and I added themes to the series so that her teacher candidates and other Aruban educators could apply these successful evidence-based teaching practices in their own classrooms. Teachers came from Aruba, Bonaire and Curaçao to learn more about applying arts-based teaching to optimize success of *all* their learners. The themes were built sequentially *Reaching Higher with Music in Education, Part I*; *Reaching Higher with Music in Education: Building Cultural Connections Part II*. At

this 2006 series participants completed a compilation of Aruban Music for Teaching and Learning with Integrated Curriculum Lessons K-12.

[See Figure 3 and Resource page for link to the complete compilation at the end of the presentation].

Additional workshops followed: 2011 *Reaching Higher with Music in Education: Musical Intelligence in the Classroom* and 2018 *–Reaching Higher with Music in Education: Inclusive Classroom Success for Lifelong Learning*. Topics centered from basic information on teaching and reaching exceptional children to meeting expectations for standards-based instruction through the arts and embracing culturally responsive pedagogy.

[Slide 6] By 2019, Fundacion Muchila Creativo became a recognized Center for supplemental arts-based activities for children, youth, and senior citizens. The importance of arts to sustain one's culture through education was undeniable. Schools island-wide were participating in the programs of Muchila and word of opportunity traveled to educators and performing artists around the Netherlands and the Dutch Caribbean. As an inclusive instructional and visionary leader in her community, Rose-Marie Provence saw that more was needed for students with disabilities to compete independently in the workplace. The stage was set. She moved forward to meet these goals. In 2020, she retired from full time teaching and established Muchila's Secondary Arts-Based School, a learn to workplace skills program for students with disabilities aged 16-25. The first of its kind, the school program was just recognized with the prestigious 2022 Appeltje van Oranje Award by The Netherlands as among the top 10 social initiatives in the Dutch Caribbean. It gives me great pleasure to introduce to you, my esteemed colleague Rose-Marie Provence who will now tell you more about her unique school.

[Slide 7] **RP** Thank you, Elise. I'm Rose-Marie Provence, Founder/ President of Muchila Creativo an Arts Foundation for children, youth, and adults, and director of the Arts-Based secondary school for students with disabilities. During my career, I have seen how studying the arts and culture enhances school success at all levels, for all learners.

[Slide 8] Every child is entitled to a good education to prepare them to participate in the community. It is their civil right.

Children who need additional support are also entitled to an appropriate education that challenges them, that reaches out from their possibilities and rises above their limitations. Schools must take care of all students and be responsible to offer every child a good education.

Muchila Creativo noticed that it could do better for its youth in special education. Driven to fill the educational gap in Aruba, in 2020 Fundacion Muchila Creativo opened the first Secondary Arts-Based school for youth with disabilities, first of its kind in the Caribbean.

[Slide 9] The vision of our school is that the students who follow this prevocational program will be able to get work in the community. We try to enhance the quality of life of these students. They will be fulfilled for life in terms of knowledge, skills, and gifts to look forward to. It makes students understand that there is a path to follow.

Muchila’s Secondary Arts-based School meets six educational objectives:

- 1) the students will learn to give shape to language, arithmetical concepts, science, orientation on the world, skills and techniques through a digital program and go through a creative process by means of knowledge, skills, and attitude through the Performing Arts (Music, visual arts, theater, and movement) and through the “Learn to Workplace.”
- 2) the students will learn to express their feelings, ideas and experiences.
- 3) the students will learn to verbalize their opinion and to communicate.
- 4) the students learn to work together as a team.
- 5) the students learn to reflect on their own work and from another and
- 6) the students gain knowledge about and receive appreciation for aspects of cultural heritage.

You can now view the detailed model of Muchila’s Secondary Arts-Based School in the video we have made for you. Please stop this presentation and click the link for video in our Resources page then return to this presentation after you view the video.

View Video with narration by Rose- Marie Provence.

[Slide 10] **ES** Thank you Rose-Marie. We are very excited to share information about Muchila’s Secondary Arts-Based Learn to Workplace school. Here is a link for you to browse through the website. Additionally, please click the link for the flyer under our Resource page. We shall continue to report on the success of this model of practice. We hope the handouts and references will be helpful and inspire you in your work.

[Slide 11] Should you be interested in setting up an arts-based education learn to workplace program in your own communities, please do not hesitate to reach out to us. Our contact information is: Elise Sobol at elisesobol232@gmail.com and Rose-Marie Provence at provence.rosemarie@gmail.com.

Together: Enjoy the rest of the conference!

Together: Thank you! In Papiamentu we say, “Masha Danki”.

Additional Resources: 2006 K-12 Aruban Music Integrated Curriculum.pdf

2022 Flyer: Muchila Secondary Arts Based School.pdf

2022 Video: Arts-Based Education - Key to Success Model of Practice:
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