

### Ryan Meeks - Equity Statement

Music is an experience found across all cultures. As such, it is important that music educators engage in a critical examination of the dominant perspectives of music and music-making. Recognizing and honoring the wide-ranging knowledge, experiences, values, and challenges that students may bring to our classrooms, we must develop innovative pedagogies and create accessible and inclusive environments that lead to meaningful learning experiences for all. I consistently work to help pre-service teachers examine their experiences, beliefs, and assumptions while challenging them to broaden their perspectives and create relevant and meaningful music learning opportunities—opportunities that are not only culturally responsive but culturally sustaining. Similarly, we must support our in-service colleagues through the development of targeted professional development offerings, strategic professional communities, and easily accessible print and online resources. It is vital that we provide accessible pathways for entry to the music teaching workforce and encourage colleagues from all backgrounds to pursue professional leadership roles at local, state, and national levels. It is not enough to simply acknowledge the existing barriers to educational opportunities in music, we must actively work to dismantle these barriers and amplify the voices of marginalized students, teachers, artists, and leaders.