

## TRENDS OF MANIFESTATION OF THE INCLUSIVE SCHOOL CULTURE IN THE CONTEXT OF MUSIC EDUCATION

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**SUMMARY.** The article presents the analysis and scientific assessment of trends of the inclusive school culture, manifesting themselves in the context of music education. It is maintained that school culture grounded on the philosophy of inclusive education and enriched with advanced educational processes, in this case, with artistic/musical activities, not only marks the school's uniqueness but also highlights the importance of the educational process, unites and empowers its participants to work together naturally to achieve a common goal. Building the inclusive school culture, music education correlates with all of its main features manifesting themselves in reality: the collaboration of participants of the educational process, dissemination of best practice, favourable microclimate ensuring the manifestation of a successful situation not only in the educational process but also in concert activities, and the like. Music activity grounded on the philosophy of inclusive education becomes an aspiration building the inclusive school culture, which undoubtedly helps to create the society grounded on tolerance of differences, which seeks to envisage every learner's needs and possibilities.

**Keywords:** school culture, inclusive school, music education.

### Introduction

Changes in a global world in recent years promote a new look at the role and future of our state. Characteristic features of today's society are constant change, global operation, information overload, an abundance of technology, the continuous creation of knowledge, and its pragmatic use.

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Therefore, to withstand the challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, individuals seek not only to acquire the necessary knowledge but also to purposefully adjust their learning and process information in ways that enhance their learning, develop creativity, and help to act in the conditions of constant change. Changing processes of the education system inspire striving to both consistently manage change and perceive reality and situations, effectively plan and manage activities of the school as an organization<sup>3</sup>. It becomes evident that the educational community must prioritize the ability to create collective knowledge and values and share them with each other in developing the idea of *school culture*<sup>4</sup>, which unites and enables participants of the educational process to work naturally together towards the common goal, relating the success of all education not only to concrete outcomes but also to the successful activity, the ability to conform to the spirit of the time and its material manifestation<sup>5</sup>. The school as a community and a place where challenges can be overcome creates possibilities for strengthening collaboration and mobilization of all its participants. It is a progressive organization that regularly promotes and mobilizes community events, strengthens the community's individual members, respecting their peculiarity, specific needs (of genders, cultures, social strata, and generations), at the same time urging every individual to contribute to seeking common goals. From this perspective, school culture acquires universal significance in any processes of the school's as the organization's activities. Thus, it is no coincidence that the issue of school culture arises in various contexts because it is namely culture that determines the activeness of its members, meaningful activities, success, satisfaction – a strong sense of identity. Many scholars<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Kvederaitė, Nida. *Šiuolaikinės mokyklos kaip besimokančios organizacijos bruožų raiška (Manifestation of Features of the Modern School as a Learning Organization)*, 2009.

<sup>4</sup> School culture is perceived as an area linking many factors into a whole, reflecting manifestation of education, determining achievements of education, creating conditions for the spread of the personality's maturity, marking uniqueness of the school, and representing it.

<sup>5</sup> Survutaitė, Dalia. *Mokyklos kultūros raiška (Manifestation of School Culture)*. Vilnius. Publishing House of Vilnius University of Education Sciences, 2016.

<sup>6</sup> Ouchi, William G.; Wilkins, Alan L., "Organizational Culture." *Annual Review of Sociology*, 1985, Vol. 11, pp. 457–483, <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev.so.11.080185.002325>; Stolp, Stephen; Smith, Stuart, C., *Transforming school culture: stories, symbols, values, and the leader's role*. USA: ERIC Clearinghouse on Educational Management, University of Oregon, 1995; Ravasi, Davide; Schultz, Majken. "Responding to organizational identity threats: Exploring the role of organizational culture." *Academy of management journal*, vol. 49, Nr. 3., 2006, pp. 433–458; Gruenert, Steve; Whitaker, Todd, *School Culture Recharged: Strategies to Energize Your Staff and Culture*. Alexandria, Virginia USA, 2017; Watson, Marilyn; Hodges, Jeff. *School Climate and the CCRPI*. Georgia Department Education, <https://slideplayer.com/user/13973200/>, 2017; Nisser, Desiree von Ahlefeld. "Can collaborative consultation, based on communicative theory, promote an inclusive school culture?" *Issues in Educational Research*, 27(4), pp. 874–891, <http://www.iier.org.au/iier27/von-ahlefeld-nisser.pdf>, 2017.

interpret school culture as a value system followed by the organization itself and support the functional approach that defines school culture as the system of core values, which is acknowledged by the organization's members, influences their behaviour, is supported by the organization's stories, myths, and manifests itself through traditions, ceremonies, rituals, and symbols<sup>7</sup>.

According to the authors<sup>8</sup>, it is necessary to pay special attention to every participant of the educational process; i.e., education needs to be personalized, acknowledging that people's experiences, needs, and strivings differ and that learning takes place in different ways and at different paces. Hence, the vision of the advanced society is associated with the knowledge and development of experiences, needs, and abilities of every one of its members. The rapid change in social and cultural life is altering not only educational institutions but also the conception of educators. School culture can act as the context favourable for the unfolding of the personality, encouraging its creativity, measured by a rational, common sense<sup>9</sup>. Such a conception of culture is related to innovations, collaboration, experiential learning based on every person's abilities, interests, and common goals. Along with the change in attitudes towards children, activities of students who have the diversity dimension undoubtedly become part of school culture, emphasizing a new model of education from a social and cultural perspective – *inclusive education* aiming at all learners' active involvement in the learning process.<sup>10</sup>

The analysis of scientific studies reveals a growing interest in the ideas of inclusive education, but there is a lack of research highlighting links between the latter modern educational phenomenon and the manifestation of school culture. No works investigating educational processes forming the inclusive school culture have been found. In this respect, it is relevant to analyze the environments of inclusive artistic/musical learning favourable for today's educational reality, which is characteristic of (self-)formation of school culture. It is assumed in the article that music education plays a special role in building the inclusive school culture because according to

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<sup>7</sup> Stolp, Stephen, Smith, Stuart, C., "Transforming school culture: stories, symbols, values, and the leader's role." USA: ERIC Clearinghouse on Educational Management, University of Oregon, 1995; Zollers, Nancy et al., "The relationship between school culture and inclusion: How an inclusive culture supports inclusive education". *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education*, 25 Nov, 2010, pp. 157-174.

<sup>8</sup> Ainscow, Mel, "Education for All: Making it Happen." *Support for learning*, 10 (4), 2007, pp. 147–155.

<sup>9</sup> Biesta, Gert, Burbules, Nicholas C., *Pragmatism and Educational Research*. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, USA, 2003.

<sup>10</sup> *Goal 4: Ensure Inclusive and Quality Education for all and Promote Lifelong Learning*, 2016, <http://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/education/>.

scholars<sup>11</sup>, this field of education is equated with multicultural cognition grounded on the development of the learner's intellectual abilities, arousal of the emotional beginning, and formation of the relationship with oneself and the surrounding world. Taking into account these arguments, it is meaningful to analyze and scientifically assess trends of the inclusive school culture, manifesting themselves in the context of music education.

**The research aim** is to reveal the trends of manifestation of the inclusive school culture in the context of artistic/music education.

**Research objectives:** to discuss the conception of school culture; to reveal the features of the inclusive school culture; to highlight the influence of music education on building the inclusive school culture.

**Methods** used in the article: analysis of pedagogical, philosophical, methodological literature, and documents on education.

### **The conception of school culture**

Recently, *school culture* has become a widely used concept in describing the manifestation of increasingly modernising educational processes. This is entirely natural, because along with changes in strivings of the education system, the conception of the school as the organizational culture, determined by increasingly mass educational processes, competition, changing societal requirements and learners' expectations, growing interest of the state, requirements for accountability, and the like, is inevitably changing.

In the general sense, school culture is understood as a united transformation of the institution, and everything that takes place in it – the educational process, management, relations with the community, and external contacts – affects students' manifold education. In other words, *school culture* is a highly important segment in the educational process, as students learn not only in the lessons but also every day, living school life. Thus, to evaluate school culture as certain peculiar features and value orientations, it makes sense to discuss the phenomenon of school culture that is differently defined in scientific studies: authors present the diversity of conceptions of the analysed phenomenon and their effect on the educational process in different ways (see Table 1).

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<sup>11</sup> Goleman, Daniel, *Transparency: How Leaders Create a Culture of Candor*. Jossey – Bass, San Francisco, 2008; Samama, Leo, "Creative Music Education: Theory and Practice". *European Perspectives on Music Education 2 Artistry*. Helbling, 2013, p.p. 77 - 86; Westerlund, Heidi. *Visions for Intercultural Music Teacher Education*. Cham, Switzerland, 2019.

**Table 1**

<b>The conception of school culture</b>	<b>Authors</b>
School culture unites and enables the participants of the educational process to work naturally together towards a common goal.	Abawi et al., 2017; Nisser, 2017; Duoblienė, 2018 <sup>12</sup>
School culture reflects the manifestation of education, which determines educational achievements, marks the uniqueness of the school.	Survutaitė, 2016; Watson, Hodges, 2017 <sup>13</sup>
School culture is a systematic and continuous process determining the planned change of education.	Fullan, 1998; Hopkins, Ainscow, West, 1998; Stoll, Fink, 1998; Dalin, Rolff, Kleekamp, 1999; Hargreaves, 1999; Nind, Rix, Sheehy et al., 2005; Dewitt, 2011 <sup>14</sup>
School culture is a system of values, followed by the organization itself.	Ouchi, Wilkins, 1985; Stolp, Smith, 1995; Peterson, 2020; Brandes, Crowson, 2009; Zollers et al., 2010 <sup>15</sup>

### **Diversity of conceptions of school culture**

- <sup>12</sup> Abawi, Lindy; Carter, Susan et al., "Inclusive Schoolwide Pedagogical Principles: Cultural Indicators in Action." *New Pedagogical Challenges in the 21st Century-Contributions of Research in Education*, 2017, p.p. 34 - 55; Nisser, Desiree von Ahlefeld, "Can collaborative consultation, based on communicative theory, promote an inclusive culture?" *Issues in Educational Research*, 27(4), pp. 874–891. <http://www.iier.org.au/iier27/von-ahlefeld-nisser.pdf>, 2017; Duoblienė, Lilija. *Pohumanistinis ugdymas (Post-humanist Education)*. Vilnius, Publishing House of Vilnius University, 2018.
- <sup>13</sup> Survutaitė, Dalia. *Mokyklos kultūros raiška (Manifestation of School Culture)*. Vilnius. Publishing House of Vilnius University of Education Sciences, 2016; Watson, Marilyn; Hodges, Jeff, *School Climate and the CCRPI*. Georgia Department Education, <https://slideplayer.com/user/13973200/>, 2017.
- <sup>14</sup> Fullan, Michael. *Pokyčių jėgos: skverbimasis į ugdymo reformos gelmes (Change Forces: Probing the Depths of Educational Reform)*. Vilnius, Tyto alba, 1998; Hopkins, David; Ainscow, Mel; West, Mel, *Kaita ir mokyklos tobulinimas (School Improvement in an Era of Change)*. Vilnius, Tyto alba, 1998; Stoll, Louise; Fink, Dean, *Keičiame mokyklą (Changing Our Schools)*. Vilnius, Margi raštai, 1998; Dalin, Per; Rolff, Hans-Guenter; Kleekamp, Bab. *Mokyklos kultūros kaita (Changing the School Culture)*. Vilnius, Tyto alba. 1999; Hargreaves, Andy, *Keičiasi mokytojai, keičiasi laikai (Changing Teachers, Changing Times)*. Vilnius, Tyto alba, 1999; Nind, Melanie; Rix, Jonathan; Sheery, Kieron et al. *Curriculum and pedagogy in inclusive education: values into practice*. London, RoutledgeFalmer, 2005; DeWitt, Peter, "Creating an Inclusive School Culture." *Education Week's blogs*, September 2011.
- <sup>15</sup> Ouchi, William G.; Wilkins, Alan L., "Organizational Culture." *Annual Review of Sociology*, 1985, Vol. 11, pp. 457–483, <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev.so.11.080185.002325>; Stolp, Stephen; Smith, Stuart, C., *Transforming school culture: stories, symbols, values, and the leader's role*. USA: ERIC Clearinghouse on Educational Management, University of Oregon, 1995; Peterson, Kent, *The Shaping School Culture*, 2020, Jossey – Bass, San Francisco; Brandes, Joyce; Crowson, Michael, H.; "Predicting dispositions toward inclusion of students with disabilities: The role of conservative ideology and discomfort with disability." *Social Psychology of Education*, June 2009, 12(2), pp. 271–289; Zollers, Nancy et al., "The relationship between school culture and inclusion: How an inclusive culture supports inclusive education". *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education*, 25 Nov, 2010, pp. 157-174.

The information given in Table 1 illustrates that scientific studies present a wide range of approaches describing school culture, but in a general sense, culture is perceived as a model of essential beliefs, which helps to perceive, feel, and solve group problems. Some scholars explain school culture as a system of values, followed by the institution, which remains the axis of school culture, because it is acknowledged by the members of the organization, influences their behaviour, is supported by school stories, myths, and manifests itself by traditions, ceremonies, rituals, and symbols. Others emphasize that it is difficult to define culture, as culture is not expressed clearly in some institutions – it is difficult to notice and capture it, while other institutions have clearly manifesting value approaches that are firmly rooted not only among employees but are also reflected in the environment. Thus, based on the definitions given by various authors, it can be stated that the core of school culture is not just the values that employees adhere to – it is the area that unites a range of factors into the whole. School culture unites and enables participants of the educational process to work naturally together towards a common goal. And the most important point is that school culture influences the person's activeness, students' teaching/learning, reflects the manifestation of education, highlights the significance of the educational process, and marks the school's uniqueness. School culture undoubtedly acquires universal significance in any process of school activities.

### **Features of the inclusive school culture**

The discussed conception of school culture shows that in seeking quality, a jointly developed vision involving all members of the organization, common goals, and responsibility for success are highly important. These are cultural norms inherent to the school as the organisation, which contribute to the institution's improvement. On the other hand, international policy and scientific studies<sup>16</sup> increasingly highlight the model of *inclusive education* grounded on democratic values, aimed not only at active communication and collaboration between the participants of the educational process but also at striving to adhere to the principles of equality, justice, and accessibility in the

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<sup>16</sup> D'Alessio, Simona; Donnelly, Verity; Watkins, Amanda, "Inclusive education across Europe: the move in thinking from integration for inclusion." *Revista de Psicología y Educación*, Vol. 1, Núm. 5, 2010, pp. 109-126; Bertran, Marta, "Factors That Influence Friendship Choices in Children Under 3 in Two Schools: An Approach Towards Child Culture in Formal Settings in Barcelona." *Childhood*, 22 (2), 2015, pp. 187–200; Pawlina, Wojciech; Drake, Richard L., "Authentic Learning in Anatomy: a Primer on Pragmatism." *Anatomical sciences education*, 9 (1), 2016, pp. 5–7; Wain, Kenneth, *Philosophy of lifelong education*. Routledge, 2016.

educational reality, prioritising meeting the needs of learners' self-expression. It is recommended that the educational process should be modelled in such a way that no person is left aside, regardless of the child's, his/her parents' (guardians') race, religion, political views, nationality, health, class, or any other circumstances such as physical, mental, natural possibilities, etc.<sup>17</sup>

Based on the arguments set out and bearing in mind that inclusive education primarily requires an internal change in the school, it makes sense to refer to the works of Nisser, Abawi, Carter, and others, Gruenert<sup>18</sup>, who present the concept of the inclusive school culture; i.e., inclusive education ideas are integrated into the object of the school's culture. This way, the model of the inclusive school culture (ISC) is formed, the basic idea of which is not only to recognize every person's value but also to seek the essential goal of creating the school *for all*, forming a fundamentally new, socially and culturally diverse school. The arguments set out presuppose the assumption that school culture activities grounded on the philosophy of inclusive education, in this case, the ISC, become the means helping to fight against discrimination and exclusion of students who have the inclusive aspect, to build the society grounded on tolerance of differences and to seek that no person is left aside.<sup>19</sup>

Forms of inclusive education can be particularly effectively developed in artistic disciplines. Students' occupation, better school attendance, students' enhanced motivation to learn, and even an increase in the number of students while forming new classes are just a few of the advantages of artistic manifestation that can benefit the formation of the inclusive school culture. Artistic and especially musical expression help to form a creative, responsible, and open personality, ensuring development, adaptation, and recognition of every person's individual abilities, giving every child the right to learn according to his/her individual abilities. It is namely art and, more specifically, music with the system of means provided by its positive influence that can have a positive effect and purposefully develop the progress of the modern inclusive society. Based on the analysis of scientific literature in a broad sense, the following

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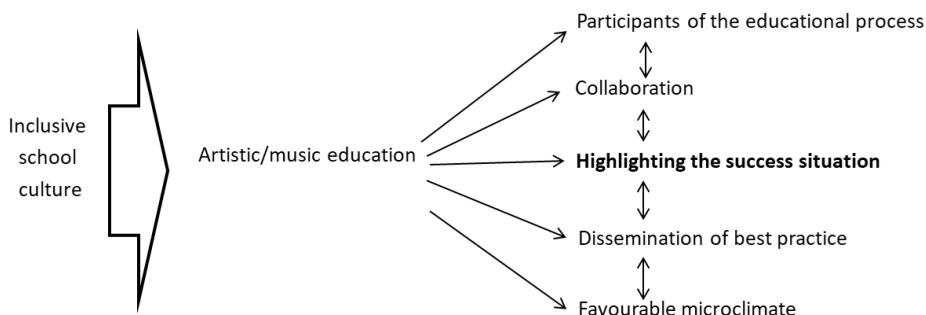
<sup>17</sup> *Convention on the Rights of the Child Article 2*, 2003.

<sup>18</sup> Nisser, Desiree von Ahlefeld, "Can collaborative consultation, based on communicative theory, promote an inclusive school culture?" *Issues in Educational Research*, 27(4), pp. 874-891, <http://www.iier.org.au/iier27/von-ahlefeld-nisser.pdf>, 2017; Abawi, Lindy; Carter, Susan et al., "Inclusive Schoolwide Pedagogical Principles: Cultural Indicators in Action." *New Pedagogical Challenges in the 21st Century-Contributions of Research in Education*, 2017, pp. 34 – 55; Gruenert, Steve; Whitaker, Todd,. *School Culture Recharged: Strategies to Energize Your Staff and Culture*. Alexandria, Virginia USA, 2017.

<sup>19</sup> *Goal 4: Ensure Inclusive and Quality Education for all and Promote Lifelong Learning*, 2016, <http://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/education/>.

features describing *inclusive school culture*, the ISC<sup>20</sup>, can be distinguished: the role of the participants of the educational process (teachers, students, parents), collaboration, dissemination of best practice, favourable microclimate, highlighting the success situation in the educational process, and the like (see Figure 1).

**Figure 1**



**The model of features describing the inclusive school culture**

In creating the inclusive school culture, music education correlates with all of its key features manifesting themselves in reality. Music education is especially meaningful in analysing the manifestation of collaboration in the ISC. Playing music highlights collaboration not only between teachers but also between the participants of educational processes – parents, family members, while performing and concert activities encourage both students and teachers to work together, consult with each other, and share best practices. Here, students’ achievements are rejoiced at and boasted of, mistakes and failures are tolerated. Music education undoubtedly mobilises the community, unites children and parents, because students, teachers, and parents involved in organizing music projects and events feel important. Students’ self-expression through concert activities is also revealed during the lessons, this way creating the situation of success at school, which is a step towards the formation of the inclusive school culture<sup>21</sup>. Another important feature characterising the inclusive school culture is the microclimate favourable

<sup>20</sup> ISC is an acronym for inclusive school culture, used in this article.

<sup>21</sup> Nisser, Desiree von Ahlefeld, “Can collaborative consultation, based on communicative theory, promote an inclusive school culture?” *Issues in Educational Research*, 27(4), pp. 874–891. <http://www.iier.org.au/iier27/von-ahlefeld-nisser.pdf>, 2017.



for all. Music creates friendly and sincere communication, promotes students' creativity, activity, and confidence. The educational environment not only ensures well-being and positive emotions but also provides more possibilities for each student to unfold. Thus, the inclusive culture of the school is united by the knowledge of the student's personality, individualized and student-centred organization of music education, and favourable physical and psychological environment. Music education is a favourable medium for revealing both students' and teachers' abilities, experience-sharing by giving open lessons, organizing and participating in seminars, conferences, organizing events, and festivals. The commonality of all these features is highlighting the success situation for each child because every child is noticeable during music activities, every child can demonstrate his/her abilities, every child feels important, and this constitutes the inclusive school culture in a general sense.

In summary, it can be stated that music becomes the means of building the favourable inclusive school culture, and the application of the ISC model eliminates discrimination and exclusion of students who have the inclusive aspect, all members of the organization are involved in activities, no person is left aside, every person's contribution becomes very significant, and, most importantly, successful situations for children are created.

## Conclusions

Based on the scientific analysis, it can be stated that school culture unites and empowers the participants of the educational process for the sake of the common goal, relating the success of all education to successful activities. The conception of school culture is associated with innovations, collaboration, the focus is moved from students' achievements and outcomes to every learner's individual progress, interests, personality growth, and the learning process itself. Every child's natural, physical, mental abilities are taken into account, treating the formation of school culture as encouraging and motivating to improve the educational process, helping every student to successfully get involved and actively participate in it.

The model of *inclusive education*, which is based on democratic values and distinguished in international policy and scientific studies, in addition to communication and collaboration between the participants of the active educational process, highlights striving to follow the principles of equality, justice, and accessibility in the educational reality, prioritizing meeting the needs of students' self-expression. As inclusive education requires internal changes in the school, a fundamentally new, socially, and culturally diverse school is created – the school *for all*.

In building the inclusive school culture to create the school for all, extreme importance is attached to the role of music education, as it helps to enhance relationships between the participants of the educational process, the success situation, dissemination of the best practice, psychological microclimate, etc. The musical activity of school culture, based on the philosophy of inclusive education, becomes an opportunity facilitating the creation of a society tolerating differences and seeking to notice every learner's abilities, needs, and opportunities.

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