

**THE BERKLEE INSTITUTE'S
LEADERSHIP NETWORK FOR ACCESSIBLE ARTS EDUCATION
MAY 29, 2025**

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SUMMARY: Transcription Highlights of the Thursday, May 29, 2025 Leadership Network for Accessible Arts Education meeting, via zoom. Audio Description here:

<https://mail.google.com/mail/u/0/?tab=rm&ogbl#inbox/QgrcJHrhzchtRkqJZTzQtlxXTVXTZVSCv wQ?compose=CllgCHrgldpfrWLjLNmwRNsKPCbQMTnSGVqmMtlhjVHvjxTkBwntFzKBMD MSQFvdnXkTxcjB&projector=1&messagePartId=0.1>

Steering Committee Members present: Dr. Elise Sobol, Suzanne Joyal, Krishna Washburn, and Mehdi Raoufi. Hosted by Dr. Rhoda Bernard, Founder/Managing Director of BIAAE.

Attendance included network members from across the United States, our guest speaker Gosia Bagley, Executive Director of ChiME (Chicago Center for Music Education), Joyful Signing and members of the Steering Committee. In keeping with network members' privacy, anonymity is maintained, to keep a safe and open valued learning space for all. Participants introduced themselves, discussed their interest and work in the accessible arts education field, and listened intently to each other.

This is the last meeting and learning session of the 2024-2025 season, Steering Committee member, Dr. Elise Sobol gave a recap of our season starting with

- **September 26, 2024** Global Braille Joy: Re-Visioning Postal Art, with [Amber DiGerlando](#)
- **November 7, 2024** The Critical Role of Administrators in Supporting Accessible Community Arts Education, with [Nicole Agois](#), [Dr. Piper Hutson](#), [Scott Turner](#)
- **January 23, 2025** Creative Sound Play, Working Memory/Cognitive Flexibility, with [Hayes Greenfield](#)
- **March 27, 2025** Demystifying Grants Fundraising with [Sarah Benvenuti](#), [Benvenuti Arts](#)
- **May 29, 2025** Growing Through Music with ChiME with [Gosia Bagley](#), [Executive Director](#)

Dr. Rhoda Bernard shared updates for the Berklee Institute for Accessible Arts Education:

First, The ABLE Conversations Symposium is scheduled for November 22, 2025 from 11:00 - 2:30 PM ET. Online [Registration link open](#). The featured keynote speakers will be Dr. Anne Palmer and torrin a. greathouse, please read biographical information on each website link.

Second, [Accessible Arts Education](#), Rhoda Bernard's first publication will be available in the Fall, pre-orders accepted now by Solution Tree Publishing.

All attendees were welcomed and after brief introductions, our guest speaker Gosia Bagley began her presentation on Growing with ChiME. The Chicago Center for Music Education (ChiME) recently celebrated its 44th year in operation. As a 501c3 organization, this fact alone is empowering to all individual arts leaders. A slide deck was prepared by Gosia Bagley to guide attendees through the learning content LNAAE ChiME Presentation, **excerpts are used with her permission.**

- Purpose of ChiME - Access, Joy of Music-Making, Life Skills Through Music
- Highlighted history from beginnings as a Suzuki-Orff School for Young Musicians in 1981 to the Chicago Center for Music Education in 2025
- ChiME's mission: to provide access to evidence-based therapy and engagement-based music programs that develop critical skills and foster self and social growth.
- ChiME's vision: that their work will inspire a higher level of humanity through music by providing opportunities for students to tap into their creativity, express themselves musically, be part of an inclusive community, and reach their true potential.
- ChiME's core values are: accountability, response-ability, and teamwork.
- ChiME's programs encompass both a Performance Model with classroom music, after-school programs, early childhood classes and private lessons with a Therapeutic Model with classroom music, buddy band, and music therapy.
- Locations encompass home base in West Town, partner schools and organizations across the city.
- Impact across communities: 3,300 students this academic year through its programs; 27 organizational partnerships; 18 public school partners; 197 classrooms receiving ChiME performance and therapeutic classroom music curricula; 20 individual music therapy clients; 151 number of individuals who received private lessons; 2,745 private instrument lessons; 50 number of campers; 40 current number of participants in Classes for Little Ones; 68% economically disadvantaged backgrounds; 35% have disabilities (2024).
- ChiME's success is due to its solid and realistic mission and employees are mission driven and passionate; programs make an impact; they are a community.
- ChiME encourages professional development for practitioners; employees are encouraged to continue their own artistic practice. ChiME offers a discount for their own professional development for lessons and classes additionally.
- Barriers: funding, personnel, private lesson identity question, building awareness that music is essential for human development and learning effectiveness
- Vision for the future: scale - reach more students; impact more people; bring everyone to the table making sure the table is designed for their success focusing on access and inclusion.
- Understand that a key take away for the future is that the organization needs to stay on top of current trends and situations in order to creatively find new sources of fundraising for the sustainability of programs and community services that it provides.
- Recap of ChiME's recipe for success: supportive network of friends; engaged Board of Directors; funding from private foundations, city and state governments, and private donors; annual fundraising gala

Network members who attended Growing with ChiME were inspired. Even though Illinois adopted the National Core Arts Standards (NCAS) and in 2016 has a mandated arts component for the P-12 school population, there are inconsistencies in implementation across the city. Between robust music programs in some Chicago Public Schools and limited or absent music education in others, ChiME, as one community music school organization, provides both a performance and therapeutic model to proactively provide accessible music education to its PreK-12 learners. We all expressed gratitude to our guest speaker Gosia Bagley for her

impactful presentation and wish her a long and rewarding career as Executive Director of ChiME.

The meeting concluded with discussion on topics for the **2025-2026** year. Dates and calls for participation will be posted on the Leadership Network for Accessible Arts Education website. We are grateful for everyone's participation and send best wishes for a successful summer!

The Berklee Institute's Leadership Network for Accessible Arts Education Steering Committee.

Notes Submitted by E. Sobol, 6.29.25, approved by guest speaker, and steering committee.