“You Are Stupid, But You Play So Well!”
Policy, Inclusion and Teacher Activism in Finnish Music Education
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The Resonaari music school offers the international community cases of rather uncommon conceptualization of inclusive music education that are in many ways unique and illuminating. The repositioning of inclusion constructed by Resonaari fleshes out some key policy mandates established in Finland, specifically, the notion that “equal opportunity in education is realized when all, whatever their background, have the opportunity to pursue education without their background predetermining participation or learning outcome” (Ministry of Education and Culture, 2012: 10)

This study outlines and examines the intersection between policy, inclusion and activism, using Resonaari and the Finnish context to locate the challenges and opportunities within inclusive music education. Exploring conceptual and document analyses, interviews and observations, the study suggests ways in which interactions with and through policy thinking can be framed from an activist standpoint. Activism in this context means transformative professionalism that comprises developing new ways to work inside and outside the school institution (Sachs 2003).

The results point to Resonaari’s policy capacity to act in anticipation of future needs; pro-active adaptation to changes in the teaching and learning structures; and institutional consciousness on how to aid in the reconstruction of the educational life for participants whose society-defined ‘conditions’ are challenged via the formation of musical agency.