



Dr. Katie Whipple, Undergraduate Music Therapy Program Coordinator at Georgia College and State University (GCSU), started the partnership between the BCSD and GCSU about nine years ago. Her goal is to give music therapy students real-life experience while developing the skill set of students with disabilities.

"Part of our mission is we want to reach out to the community, we want to get them involved in the arts, and we want to provide therapeutic services. We provide kind of a reduced rate cause we're a teaching clinic; we want to give our students an opportunity to learn from professional music therapists which you don't always get in a rural area where we live," said Dr. Whipple.



Music Therapy BCSD (WGXA)

According to Dr. Whipple, all of the schools in the BCSD participate in the music therapy program. The music therapists visit all of the special education classes once a week for 40 minutes to an hour. Many of the students the music therapists work with have Down Syndrome, Cerebral Palsy, Autism, or Intellectual Disabilities, and using music to develop helps them stick to the curriculum.

"It's beneficial for so many reasons, obviously it's beneficial to the college students because it gives them an opportunity to actually practice music therapy and observe professional music therapists. We're working on a lot of communication skills but we can work on a lot of different skills with kids. Sometimes we're working on motor skills, sometimes we're working on language or functional communication and sometimes it's social so learning to share," said Dr. Whipple.



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